“REFUSING TO JOIN THEIR WATERS AND MINGLE INTO ONE GRAND KINDRED STREAM”: THE TRANSFORMATION OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA IN THE CIVIL WAR ERA

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Ryan C. Bixby
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“REFUSING TO JOIN THEIR WATERS AND MINGLE INTO ONE GRAND KINDRED STREAM”: THE TRANSFORMATION OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA IN THE CIVIL WAR ERA

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Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

Encamped near Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, on September 15, 1861, Col. John White Geary of the 28th Pennsylvania Infantry wrote to his wife, Mary Church Henderson Geary. Geary described the majestic scene before him as the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers converged at a point before traveling toward the Chesapeake Bay. Sitting at the confluence of these two important waterways, Geary depicted the Potomac River as being “a clear beautiful stream, it’s [sic] resistless tide rushing headlong over the rocky surface of its channel and roaring with the voice of many waters.” Conversely, Geary perceived the Shenandoah River as being “very muddy at present, and rolls its waters along with equal haste, into the same channel with the Potomac, but the waters seem to refuse to commingle and become one.” Geary juxtaposed his description of these two bodies of water “refusing to join their waters and mingle into one grand kindred stream” against the United States’ inability to overcome its own political, economic, and social differences and reunite as one country.

Geary’s metaphor also can be applied to the contested borderland of Jefferson County, West Virginia. Four years of continual encampments, foraging, marching, and skirmishing during the American Civil War significantly transformed Jefferson County’s social, economic, and political institutions. This borderland county served as a contested and negotiated landscape as both Union and Confederate armies sought to gain control of the region’s valuable industries and transportation networks. By relying upon
agricultural resources to subsidize their provisions, soldiers also temporarily altered local cultivators’ farming practices. The Union and Confederate armies also utilized the natural and man-made landscape for military purposes. The contestation of public and private space compelled residents to engage in negotiated relationships with soldiers. Furthermore, whereas Jefferson County inhabitants began the conflict within the political borders of Virginia, by the conclusion of the war, residents found themselves part of the newly formed state of West Virginia. This dissertation seeks to understand how four years of continual encampments, foraging, marching, and skirmishing during the Civil War significantly transformed the natural landscape and socio-economic structures of Jefferson County.
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Prior to coming to the University of Akron, Rich Martin, John Craig, Thomas Pearcy, and the late David Dean Dixon pushed me to be a better student and historian. I came to the history discipline circuitously, initially majoring in political science at Slippery Rock University. Rich Martin’s class, “The Historical and Political Legacies of the Vietnam Era,” demonstrated how I could incorporate my passion for politics with history. I will forever be grateful for the time that I spent with David Dean Dixon. Through History Club trips and Old Stone House events, he taught me the importance of captivating your audience through historical storytelling.
This project never would have been possible without the generous financial support provided by the History Department at the University of Akron. The department provided me with a research and writing fellowship that permitted me to travel to multiple archives. An Andrew W. Mellon Research Fellowship at the Virginia Historical Society allowed me to spend a week at their archives working with their outstanding staff and collections. I also spent one invaluable summer in Jefferson County through the George M. Nethken Graduate Fellowship at the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War.

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<tr>
<td>AAS</td>
<td>American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts</td>
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<td>BECHS</td>
<td>Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, New York</td>
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<td>DMR</td>
<td>David M. Rubenstein Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>FHS</td>
<td>Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky</td>
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<td>HRL</td>
<td>Stewart Bell Jr. Archives Room, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, Virginia</td>
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<td>HSP</td>
<td>Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td>Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana</td>
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<td>JCHS</td>
<td>Jefferson County Historical Society, Charlestown, West Virginia</td>
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<td>JMUSC</td>
<td>Carrier Library, James Madison University, Special Collections, Harrisonburg, Virginia</td>
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<td>LV</td>
<td>The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia</td>
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<td>MHS</td>
<td>Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts</td>
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<td>SHC</td>
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<td>WVSA</td>
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Encamped near Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, on September 15, 1861, Col. John White Geary of the 28th Pennsylvania Infantry sat down to write a letter to his wife, Mary Church Henderson Geary. Geary described the majestic scene before him as the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers converged at a point before traveling toward the Chesapeake Bay. While Geary sat at the confluence of these two important waterways, he depicted the Potomac River as being “a clear beautiful stream, it’s [sic] resistless tide rushing headlong over the rocky surface of its channel and roaring with the voice of many waters.” Conversely, Geary perceived the Shenandoah River as being “very muddy at present, and rolls its waters along with equal haste, into the same channel with the Potomac, but the waters seem to refuse to commingle and become one.” Geary juxtaposed his description of these two bodies of water “refusing to join their waters and mingle into one grand kindred stream” against the United States’ inability to overcome its own political, economic, and social differences and to reunite as one country.¹

¹ John White Geary to “My Beloved Wife,” September 15, 1861, Box 1, Folder 3, Geary Family Papers, 1846-1913, Collection no. 2062, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, hereinafter cited as HSP. Spelled Harpers Ferry today, the town’s spelling prior to the twentieth century was Harper’s Ferry. Since this study focuses on the nineteenth century, this work will utilize the nineteenth century spelling of the town.
Geary’s metaphor also can be applied to the contested borderland of Jefferson County, West Virginia. Although no large-scale engagements occurred within Jefferson County, the daily warmaking activities still led to changes within the region. This borderland county served as a contested and negotiated landscape as both Union and Confederate armies sought to gain control of the region’s valuable industries and transportation networks. By relying upon agricultural resources to subsidize their provisions, soldiers temporarily altered local cultivators’ farming practices. The Union and Confederate armies also utilized the natural and man-made landscape for military purposes. The contestation of public and private space compelled residents to engage in a negotiated relationship with soldiers from both armies. Furthermore, whereas Jefferson County inhabitants began the conflict within the political borders of Virginia, by the conclusion of the war, residents found themselves part of the newly formed state of West Virginia. This dissertation seeks to understand how four years of continual encampments, foraging, marching, and skirmishing during the Civil War significantly transformed the natural landscape and socio-economic structures of Jefferson County.

Focusing on the wartime experiences of Jefferson County, West Virginia, this dissertation traces the formation of the county through the Reconstruction period. By using a microhistory approach, this allows for an exploration of the distinct settlement patterns, socio-economic development, and natural landscapes that occurred within Jefferson County. For example, although Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown are located within Jefferson County, these two communities developed differently. Whereas skilled craftsmen lived in Harper’s Ferry due to the presence of the Federal Armory and Arsenal,
Tidewater aristocrats and their slaves settled in Charlestown. County studies also provide historians the opportunity to examine the lives of county residents, thereby demonstrating how events impact the daily lives of individuals. For instance, while there exist a number of studies that analyze John Brown himself and his failed raid in October 1859, few works examine the local response to this failed insurrection. By approaching the Civil War through a county perspective, scholars can trace not only the socio-economic and environmental changes wrought by the conflict, but also how these modifications compared to the pre-war and post-war periods. An examination of border counties, such as Jefferson County, illuminates the diverse experiences that occurred within the South during the Civil War. Furthermore, a study of Jefferson County presents a unique perspective as the region encountered nearly six years of military occupation. No other border county experienced the same length of occupation and endured a similar level of transformation as did Jefferson County during the Civil War.²

While some Civil War home front studies, such as Daniel Sutherland’s *Seasons of War*, limit the focus of their works to the years of 1861 to 1865, this dissertation asserts that the conflict caused both short-term and long-term changes that directly influenced

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the environmental and socio-economic structures of Jefferson County in the post-war period. Several examples of the long-term alterations examined in the dissertation include: the logistical problems that arose due to continual encampment by Union and Confederate soldiers, the termination or decreased production of industrial complexes, the creation of institutions of higher education, modifications of agricultural practices, and the formation of new state and political institutions. While Martin Crawford’s *Ashe County’s Civil War* provides an examination of the long-term socio-economic effects of the war, the area of Ashe County, North Carolina, did not experience any significant skirmishing. Therefore, Crawford’s study does not allow for an analysis of how fighting transformed the environmental and agricultural landscapes of the region. Other works, such as Jonathan M. Bryant’s *How Curious a Land*, examine the long-term effects of the Civil War, but Bryant’s study fails to provide an examination of the effects of warfare upon the environment. Bryant suggests within his work that in order to understand a specific community, an analysis of the physical environment needs to be completed, however, he misses this opportunity to explore this theme fully within his own book.3

Millard Kessler Bushong’s *A History of Jefferson County, West Virginia, 1719-1940* represents the principal work yet done on Jefferson County since 1941. Bushong’s study provides an extensive background of the county history, but does not offer in-depth analysis regarding the socio-economic or environmental impact of the Civil War upon the county. Published over seventy years ago, Bushong also fails to acknowledge African

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Americans or women in his book. Other studies, such as William D. Theriault’s *A History of Eastern Jefferson County*, Nicholas A. Redding’s *A History and Guide to Civil War Shepherdstown*, Joseph Barry’s *The Strange Story of Harper’s Ferry*, Chester G. Hearn’s *Six Years of Hell*, Dennis E. Frye’s *Harpers Ferry under Fire*, and Kevin R. Pawlak’s *Shepherdstown in the Civil War* focus on the different regions or towns within Jefferson County. These invaluable works contribute to understanding the complex wartime history of the county, but stop short of offering a complete county analysis. James L. Taylor’s *A History of Black Education*, Evelyn M. E. Taylor’s *Historical Digest of Jefferson County, West Virginia’s African American Congregations*, and Hannah N. Geffert, ed., *An Annotated Narrative of the African-American Community* present the rich heritage of African American history within Jefferson County. The limited African American voice within previous works fails to demonstrate the important role that African Americans had in shaping the development of Jefferson County. Dawne Raines Burke’s institutional study of Storer College, *An American Phoenix*, further contributes to the diversified African American experience in the post-war period. These various county histories provide multiple perspectives that emphasize the multiplicity of narratives within Jefferson County. By consulting a wide-range of local histories, soldiers’ journals and correspondence, and other secondary works, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic and environmental effects of the Civil War upon Jefferson County.4

Analyzing the relationship between humans and nature, the emergence of environmental history as a field of study in the 1970s coincided with the rise of the environmental movement. Initial environmental works examined how humans reacted to nature rather than viewing these interactions as a negotiated relationship. Although war and nature intersected, military and environmental historians often overlooked each other’s scholastic contributions, thereby failing to integrate these two different interpretations within a cohesive narrative. The first studies that began to incorporate the themes of warfare and the environment into their works generally focused on the twentieth century. The detonation of bombs, expansive entrenchments, and modernized weaponry led historians to analyze how contemporary warfare influenced the natural environment. Works such as Antoinette M. Mannion’s *Dynamic World*, Richard P. Tucker and Edmund Russell’s *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*, Jay E. Austin and Carl E. Bruch’s *The Environmental Consequences of War*, and Chris Pearson’s *Scarred Landscapes* serve as examples of studies that focus on the relationship between the natural landscape and war in the twentieth century. Although these works do not discuss

the Civil War, the authors examine themes found in relation to nature and warfare in the nineteenth century, such as the presence of disease, modified landscapes, and the varying perspectives of environmental change.\(^5\)

The theme of warfare and the environment represents a newer field within Civil War historiography. Historian Jack Temple Kirby first raised this important connection in 2001 when he posted an article on the National Humanities Center website. Noting that Civil War and environmental historiographies often paralleled themselves, Kirby described the different ways in which the Civil War affected the natural landscape.

Kirby’s article served as the beginning point from which Civil War historians started to explore the historical relationship between warfare and the environment. Connected to an examination of the environment and the Civil War lies the historical agency of nature. Rather than viewing nature as a victim of human activities, environmental studies analyze not only the relationship between man and nature, but also how nature responds to man.

Lisa M. Brady’s instrumental work represents the first manuscript-length study that

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analyzed the historical agency of nature and how the war transformed the environmental landscape. In *War upon the Land*, Brady focuses on large-scale campaigns, such as Major General Philip Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign, to understand the relationship between war and the environment. Published in the same year as Brady, Megan Kate Nelson’s *Ruin Nation* devotes several chapters to the environmental transformations wrought by the Civil War. Whereas Brady’s study analyzed the wartime effects upon the environment in large-scale campaigns, Nelson’s chapters provide a broader interpretation of the different ways in which the conflict transformed the natural landscape. Andrew McIlwaine Bell’s work, *Mosquito Soldiers*, also demonstrates the historical agency of the environment by exploring how two diseases, specifically malaria and yellow fever, influenced the outcome of several Civil War campaigns. Kathryn Shively Meier’s book, *Nature’s Civil War*, also focuses on disease in the Civil War, but Meier examines how soldiers perceived the environment and how they believed that nature affected their physical and mental health. Most recently, Brian Allen Drake’s edited collection, *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green*, presents a wide-range of environmental topics related to the Civil War. Including essays on disease, weather, and how the natural landscape influenced military strategy, this piece demonstrates the breadth of environmental subjects related to the war. Two other works discuss themes related to nature, but both manuscripts do not offer an in-depth environmental analysis. Biologist Kelby Ouchley’s reference book, *Flora and Fauna of the Civil War*, demonstrates how soldiers continually discussed the various flora and fauna that they encountered during the conflict. Ouchley’s work, however, does not examine how
combatants viewed the ecological changes caused by warfare. Robert Krick’s *Civil War Weather in Virginia* offers a discussion regarding the meteorological events of the conflict, but does not provide an exploration of how these weather conditions affected wartime activities. The different theories and analysis used within these various works serve as a framework for examining the relationship between the Civil War and the natural landscape of Jefferson County. In her historiographical essay, “From Battlefield to Fertile Ground,” Lisa M. Brady suggests that scholars need to expand the field of the Civil War and environment to include non-Southern areas and borderland communities. This dissertation seeks to build upon these environmental works and answer Brady’s call for additional scholarship relating to the environmental changes within borderland counties.6

Located at the tip of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, Jefferson County, West Virginia, provides an intriguing opportunity to explore the impact of the Civil War on a

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borderland community. Similar to other borderland studies, the settlement patterns, economic development, and political debates over slavery led to the contestation of space within Jefferson County. Northern settlers who first came to the Lower Shenandoah Valley in the eighteenth century used this natural conduit to travel from Pennsylvania into Virginia. Tidewater Virginians also immigrated to Jefferson County during the eighteenth century. The competing socio-economic interests of these settlers remained prevalent within the region through the Civil War. Jefferson County held regional significance due to the presence of industry and transportation networks. Attracted to the region’s two important waterways, the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, several businesses formed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The establishment of the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry offered residents a significant number of employment opportunities. Furthermore, the creation of this commercial venture at the beginning of the nineteenth century spurred the growth of arms-related businesses and the social landscape of Harper’s Ferry. The existence of the federal economy in Jefferson County contributed to the introduction of a regional economy. The construction of three transportation networks, specifically the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, connected Jefferson County merchants and farmers with the markets of Baltimore, Alexandria, and Georgetown. With the extension of rail lines and canal, Jefferson County’s economic landscape became diversified. The strong agricultural production within the region also contributed to economic growth as entrepreneurs established grist mills to process the grains
harvested by local farmers. John Brown’s Raid in October 1859 plunged Jefferson County into the national debate over slavery and ultimately marked the beginning of the Civil War for county residents.⁷

Jefferson County experienced nearly six years of military occupation as a result of Brown’s Raid and the Civil War. The level of destruction caused by the conflict has generated a debate amongst scholars. Mark Grimsley and Mark Neely, Jr., argue that the conflict did not represent a total war as soldiers generally demonstrated restraint toward the civilian populace. Both Grimsley and Neely contend that the amount of destruction caused during the conflict tended to be exaggerated by participants and citizens. Conversely, Charles Royster asserts that both the Union and Confederate armies targeted the civilian population in the attempt to decrease moral on the home front. Daniel Sutherland, James M. McPherson, and Edward Hagerman all support various notions that the Civil War did indeed comprise of a total war. Jefferson County residents endured a total war as the conflict affected every aspect of their lives. The presence of valuable natural, economic, and agricultural resources within Jefferson County led Union and Confederate forces to vie for control of the region. The natural environment experienced various levels of modification as soldiers repurposed standing timber for multiple uses and transformed the landscape for strategic purposes. Both the Union and Confederate

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armies recognized the strategic importance of the region’s businesses, such as the Federal Armory and Arsenal and Abraham Herr’s mill, and the vital transportation networks that traveled through the area. Jefferson County inhabitants experienced four years of hardship as soldiers foraged their farms for supplies and livestock and sometimes conducted searches of their private homes. These wartime actions led to both short-term and long-term changes within Jefferson County. Ultimately, the daily activities of warmaking, including armies marching, encamping, foraging, and skirmishing, transformed the natural and socio-economic landscapes of this borderland county.  

The first part of the dissertation explores the formation of Jefferson County and the socio-economic development of the region. Chapter two, “‘This Scene is Worth a Voyage across the Atlantic’: The Settlement of the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” traces the multi-ethnic settlement of the area during the eighteenth century. Comprised of Germans and Scotch-Irish from Pennsylvania and Maryland, as well as Virginia aristocrats from the Tidewater region, these different groups established Jefferson County’s agricultural and social foundations. The settlement of the region also created the foundation for the competing socio-economic interests in the nineteenth century. As the region’s population

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increasingly grew during the eighteenth century, residents expressed a desire to form a new county separate from Berkeley County.

Chapter three, “Guns, Cement, and Transportation: The Economic Development of Jefferson County in the Early Nineteenth Century,” discusses the formation of several vital industries and transportation networks within Jefferson County during the early nineteenth century. With the opening of the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, Hall’s Rifle Works at Harper’s Ferry, and the cement mill at Shepherdstown, these three industries served as important contributors to the local economy. Coupled with the establishment of smaller businesses throughout the region, these companies required an efficient mode of transportation to reach the urban markets located along the Atlantic seaboard. The arrival of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and the Winchester and Potomac Railroad in the 1830s facilitated the economic connection between western Virginia and these markets. While the formation of industry occurred in Jefferson County during the early nineteenth century, the other important component of Jefferson County’s economy was solidified through agricultural production, particularly the cultivation of wheat, in the antebellum period.

Chapter four, “‘A Most Fertile County’: Agricultural Production in Jefferson County during the Antebellum Period,” explores the growth of Jefferson County’s diversified agriculture. Jefferson County farmers were among the leaders in wheat production in the state of Virginia during the antebellum period. In addition to the cultivating of wheat, planters also harvested corn, oats, rye, and potatoes. Farmers also raised livestock, including sheep, pigs, and cows. This strong agricultural presence
contributed to the growing number of flour mills in Jefferson County as mills processed grain not only for local consumption, but also to sell at the markets of Baltimore, Alexandria, and Georgetown. As Jefferson County’s antebellum economy continued to develop, political concerns within western Virginia began to emerge regarding the competing political desires of eastern and western Virginia.

Chapter five, “‘War at Harpers Ferry’: Political Conflicts in Virginia and John Brown’s Insurrection at Harper’s Ferry,” begins by examining the divisive political relationship within Virginia. The political division of the state over legislative representation and the institution of slavery later contributed to the desire to establish the new state of West Virginia. The growing sectional tensions within the United States exploded after John Brown’s failed slave insurrection at Harper’s Ferry in October 1859. The chapter analyzes Brown’s Raid, but from the perspective of the residents of Jefferson County. How did county inhabitants react to the invasion of their homes, the failed slave insurrection, the state of paranoia that developed from the incident, and the trial and execution of Brown and his followers? As a result of this invasion, local residents became heightened in their fears of an impending conflict between the North and South. Furthermore, the state of Virginia, as well as other Southern states, began to contemplate the possibility of secession.

The second part of the dissertation examines the different socio-economic and environmental effects wrought by the Civil War. Rather than providing a detailed military account of the skirmishes that occurred within Jefferson County, these chapters analyze how the four years of continual marching, encamping, foraging, and skirmishing
transformed Jefferson County. Chapter six, “‘War has Done Fearful Work Here’: The Economic Changes Wrought by the Civil War,” describes the economic modifications caused by the war. Jefferson County’s economic landscape suffered a devastating blow during the first month of the conflict when Lieutenant Roger Jones set fire to the Federal Armory and Arsenal. Other Jefferson county businesses experienced varying levels of success as some companies shut down while others attempted to maintain regular business operations. The region’s three transportation networks also endured damage throughout the conflict, as the Confederate army attempted to limit the availability of these systems to aid in the Union war effort.

The following chapter, “‘All Desolated with War’: The Changes to the Environmental and Agricultural Landscapes Wrought by the Civil War,” describes how the environmental and agricultural structures of Jefferson County were affected by the armed conflicts that occurred within the region. Although no large-scale battle occurred in Jefferson County, the continual military presence within the region transformed the natural and agricultural landscapes. Both armies encamped, marched, and foraged throughout Jefferson County during the entirety of the war. These actions altered the natural and man-made landscape as soldiers cut down trees for breastworks and encampments, cut down trees and requisitioned fence rails for firewood, and cleared forests for military strategy. Although the requisitioning of crops and livestock, the burning of fields, and the destruction of fences did not have a permanent effect on agricultural productivity, this chapter argues that these short-term changes still represent noteworthy alterations that Civil War historians often overlook. As a result of these
events, some farmers were forced to re-invest in their farms during the post-war period through the construction of fences, fertilizer, and livestock.

Chapter eight, “‘The Condition of Our Border is Becoming More Alarming Every Day’: The Social Changes Wrought by the Civil War,” analyzes the melding of the home front and battlefield. As Jefferson County remained a militarized space throughout the entire war, this military presence led to a transient population. When Union troops controlled the region, Union supporters maintained residence within Jefferson County, but when Confederate forces gained control of the area, some Union sympathizers relocated. The same situation also occurred for Confederate supporters. African American slaves from Jefferson County and the surrounding region also became transient as they migrated to Harper’s Ferry throughout the war. Since the town served as a Union supply depot, refugee African American slaves sought to gain their freedom by crossing into Union lines. The interaction of soldiers and civilians sometimes led to a contested relationship over the public and private spheres. Whereas supporters attempted to provide provisions to their armed forces, these same citizens also desired to not offer enemy forces the same supplies. The relationship between citizens and soldiers also could become strained. Extreme examples of this contested relationship occurred when General David Hunter ordered for the burning of private homes in July 1864.

The final chapter of the dissertation, “‘The Country All Around Us Lay Utterly Desolate, Without Enclosures, and Without Cultivation’: The Socio-Economic and Political Effects of the Civil War,” examines the different short-term and long-term changes wrought by the Civil War. In terms of politics, Jefferson County had entered the
war as part of the state of Virginia, but exited the war now part of the newly formed state of West Virginia. Unable to vote in the 1863 state election, Confederate sympathizers found themselves politically unrepresented and without a political identity. Moreover, after the war, two lawsuits embroiled the region in political turmoil, as Charlestown residents sued for the relocation of the county’s seat from Shepherdstown and Jefferson County inhabitants sought to return their area to the state of Virginia. The chapter also compares the economic and agricultural landscapes of Jefferson County in the post-war to the antebellum period. How did Jefferson County’s economy change from the antebellum period and what aspects remained consistent? The chapter also examines the social changes that developed in the post-war period, particularly with the emergence of an African American community, within Jefferson County. This presence of African Americans led to the establishment of black churches and schools. One educational institution that will receive specific attention is the formation of Storer College at Harper’s Ferry. The establishment of Storer College would have a long-lasting impact on not only the social landscape of Jefferson County, but its students would also contribute to the preservation of John Brown’s memory.

The concluding section of the dissertation examines the competing memories of John Brown’s Fort and the Faithful Slave Memorial. Following the war, county residents remained hesitant to remember Brown and his supporters, but a group of Storer College students and Northern philanthropists sought to preserve his memory and promote his legacy. Presently located nearby each other, Brown’s Fort and the Faithful Slave Memorial present conflicting memories of the Civil War. Conversely, the Faithful Slave
Monument, which was erected in 1931 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of the Confederacy, reinforces the notion of a benevolent institution of slavery and a paternalistic relationship between African Americans and whites. Just as Geary had described the refusal of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers to come together, these two groups were not able to agree upon the interpretation of Brown and his failed slave insurrection.
CHAPTER II

“THIS SCENE IS WORTH A VOYAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC”: THE SETTLEMENT OF THE LOWER SHENANDOAH VALLEY”

On October 25, 1783, Thomas Jefferson stood on a rock overlooking the town of Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. As he took notes regarding the environmental, demographic, and political composition of the state of Virginia, he commented upon the magnificent sight before him:

The passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge is, perhaps, one of the most stupendous scenes in Nature. You stand on a very high point of land. On your right comes up the Shenandoah, having ranged along the foot of the mountain a hundred miles to seek a vent. On your left approaches the Patowmac [Potomac] in quest of a passage also. In the moment of their junction they rush together against the mountain, rend it asunder and pass off to the sea. The first glance of this scene hurries our senses into the opinion that this earth has been created in time, that the mountains were formed first, that the rivers began to flow afterwards, that in this place particularly they have been so dammed up by the Blue Ridge of mountains as to have formed an ocean which filled the whole valley; that, continuing to rise, they have at last broken over at this spot and have torn the mountain down from its summit to its base….This scene is worth a voyage across the Atlantic.⁹

Mesmerized by this view, Jefferson’s observations notated the important natural features of the surrounding area and the impact that the waterways had in transforming the

physical environment. As Jefferson poetically described, the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers carved a gap between the Blue Ridge Mountains, and through this geological process, created the land upon which some of the county’s first settlers occupied in 1740. Jefferson’s comments also alluded to the potential waterpower available from these bodies of water that future industries would attempt to harness. Besides the potential energy source, the region also offered a bounty of natural resources that would be used for impending industrial pursuits and agricultural cultivation. Echoing Jefferson’s remarks less than a century later, Jacob Richards Dodge, a statistician with the United States Department of Agriculture, praised Jefferson County and the rest of the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia in 1865 as “for the variety and fertility of its soils, fine water-power, central position, salubrious and delightful climate, beauty and grandeur of scenery in plain and on mountain, it can literally, and with severity of truth, be said to be unsurpassed, if equaled in the United States…”¹⁰

Before the arrival of white explorers and emigrants, several Native American tribes traversed through present-day Jefferson County following migratory animal herds. While many of these indigenous groups never established permanent residency, they still modified the natural landscape prior to the arrival of any white settlers. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, European explorers began navigating through the Shenandoah Valley seeking westward passages and economic opportunities. Shortly thereafter, white

settlers started relocating to western lands as they sought to develop agricultural and industrial pursuits. Among those who settled the area then known as Frederick County included Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Quakers from Pennsylvania and Maryland, as well as Virginia aristocrats from the Tidewater region. The competing socio-economic views held by these different groups influenced the formation and development of Jefferson County. Furthermore, these settlers also held divergent opinions regarding the institution of slavery. As the population totals escalated within the Lower Shenandoah Valley during the late eighteenth century, this demographic increase eventually led to the creation of Jefferson County from Berkeley County in 1801. The progressive settlement of the region ultimately stimulated the agricultural and industrial development, as well as the establishment of trading and transportation networks, that occurred during the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{11}

Located at the northern tip of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, Jefferson County, Virginia developed according to several geographical features. Jefferson County, as well as neighboring Berkeley County, ecologically resembles the rest of the Shenandoah Valley, or the Valley of Virginia, as this entire region contains mountainous terrain, navigable waterways, fertile soils aided by large limestone deposits, and an array of coniferous and deciduous trees. The Shenandoah Valley, which extends approximately from the Tennessee state line to the Potomac River at Harper’s Ferry, reaches a length of three hundred miles and an average width of twenty-seven miles. The Allegheny and

\textsuperscript{11} When referring to descendants of Presbyterian or other Protestant dissenters, the terms Scotch-Irish or Scots-Irish are often used interchangeably. For the purposes of this study, the term Scotch-Irish will be used.
Blue Ridge Mountains, which extended parallel with the Shenandoah Valley, formed a natural barrier that allowed the region to develop independently from other parts of Virginia. Furthermore, until the construction of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in the nineteenth century, the mountainous terrain made travel arduous and long for those who wanted to reach trade markets located along the Eastern seaboard. The Shenandoah Valley also served as a natural division between the Piedmont and Trans-Allegheny portions of Virginia as large plantations formed within the Piedmont region while semi-subsistence farmers inhabited the Trans-Allegheny.12

In addition to the mountains, the flow of the primary waterways in Jefferson County also influenced the development of the area. Considered part of the Atlantic Slope basin, the region’s waterways flow eastward toward the Atlantic Ocean rather than the Mississippi River basin. The Potomac River watershed begins in the western portion of modern-day West Virginia and flows northeasterly before turning in a southeasterly direction toward Harper’s Ferry. The Shenandoah River, on the other hand, originates near Port Republic, Virginia and flows northeast for nearly ninety miles until it reaches Harper’s Ferry. At this point, the two watercourses combine and continue onward to the Chesapeake Bay. The directional flow of these bodies of water led settlers in the nineteenth century to form commercial networks with Mid-Atlantic cities, specifically Alexandria, Virginia and Washington, D.C., rather than the urban markets located in the

Tidewater region, such as Virginia’s capital city of Richmond. Eventually, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal followed alongside the path of the Potomac River toward these Mid-Atlantic markets. During the initial settlement phase, however, the shallow depth, the significant amount of rocks, and presence of natural limestone formations within the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers made navigating these waterways difficult for flatboats. Although these waterways later provided economic and industrial opportunities, these watercourses also were prone to flooding. Beginning with two recorded floods in the eighteenth century, the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers represented a continual threat to the businesses and communities located alongside the waterways. Several other smaller bodies of water, including the Opequon Creek, Bullskin Creek, Evitts Run, and Town Run also contributed to the growth of the region as residents established settlements and various types of mills along these waterways. After the Civil War, the economic connections that formed as a result of the flow of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers served as a contributing factor in the decision to include the Eastern Panhandle, which included Morgan, Berkeley, and Jefferson Counties, within the newly formed state of West Virginia.13

Other environmental factors also impacted Jefferson County. Incorporating Charles E. Closmann’s definition of the environment as the “climate, landscape, flora, fauna, soil, water, and built settlements with which human communities interact,” several of these identified environmental factors directly affected the growth of the area. Considered to be a temperate climate, the spring weather begins early “with gentle and frequent showers,” while the summer and winter months offer moderate temperatures that provide for longer growing seasons in comparison to northern climates. The average length of a growing season in Jefferson County ranges between 150 and 180 days. This mild climate also receives a substantial amount of precipitation with the average annual precipitation of thirty-five inches for Jefferson County.

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15 Dodge, 61.

The combination of the moderate temperatures and adequate precipitation rates, along with the presence of a soil rich in limestone and shale of the Carolinian faunal area of the Upper Austral zone, provided county residents opportunities to engage in agricultural production. The limestone, which originated during the Cambrian and Ordovician periods, formed “from the precipitation of calcareous matters to the beds of lakes or seas by chemical action or shell-forming organisms.” The decomposed remains of these organisms deposited calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium which later became the soils of the Shenandoah Valley. The gray limestone soils present within the southern portion of Jefferson County resemble that found in neighboring Clarke County, Virginia. Referred to as the Athens formation, this limestone is “composed chiefly of variable proportions of gray to black shale and compact impure black limestone, with a few interbedded fine-grained sandstones or siltstones.” The significant presence of limestone within the soil naturally increased the fertility of the dirt. Farmers recognized the benefits of the limestone to their agricultural endeavors. By the early twentieth

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17 Earl L. Core, *Plant Life of West Virginia* (New York: Scholar’s Library, 1960), 21; David T. Gilbert, *Waterpower: Mills, Factories, Machines & Floods at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 1762-1991* (Harpers Ferry: Harpers Ferry Historical Association, 1999), 18; and Walker, *Statistical Atlas*, plate XIV. The Cambrian age, which occurred 543 to 490 million years ago, was followed by the Ordovician age that lasted from 490 to 439 million years ago. Walker indicates that the geographical formations within the Shenandoah Valley formed between the Cambrian age and the Silurian age which occurred between 438 and 418 million years ago. Walker attributes the formation of the Alleghany Mountains to the Carboniferous period, which occurred 359.2 to 299 million years ago, and Permian period, which lasted between 298 and 252 million years ago; thus indicating that the geological formations within the Shenandoah Valley occurred prior to the creation of the Alleghany Mountains.

18 Raymond S. Edmundson, *Industrial Limestones and Dolomites in Virginia: Northern and Central Parts of Shenandoah Valley* (Richmond: Virginia Conservation Commission, 1945), 5, 17; and Harvey Birch Vanderford, *Managing Southern Soils* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1957), 202-203. In geological terms, limestone can be defined as being composed predominantly of calcium carbonate (CaCO3) or dolomitic limestone which contains forty to forty-five percent of magnesium carbonate (MgCO3).
century, local businesses in Jefferson and Berkeley Counties began extracting limestone and dolomite, both carbonate minerals, for commercial purposes. Despite the significant presence of limestone soils in Jefferson County, there existed several sections within the region that did not possess the same type of soil. The area near present-day Bakerton and Engle, instead consisted of a red clay soil which twentieth century entrepreneurs later utilized in the production of bricks.19

The forests of Jefferson County also offered economic potential. Part of the Atlantic, or Eastern, forest, the trees in the area consisted of a mixed deciduous forest with several coniferous species. Although no one ever conducted any surveys regarding the size of these forests prior to the arrival of European explorers, researchers suggest that approximately 24,000 square miles of land in present-day West Virginia were originally wooded. Once humans started settling the area, Native American and European farmers began clearing a large percentage of these forests for agricultural purposes and to construct houses and other buildings. Although the farmers wanted to extract these trees from their future agricultural lands, the presence of hardwood forests also signified to them the presence of fertile soils. Conversely, settlers considered lands that contained large tracts of pine trees to be less desirable for planting grounds. Despite


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the fact that these cultivators harvested a significant portion of the forest, many of these farmers still maintained individual woodlots for personal consumption, such as heating and cooking. Planters also relied upon the forests to supply needed fence rails to protect their crops from foraging livestock. In addition to the demands placed upon the forests by farmers, several nineteenth century businesses also utilized the timber for industrial purposes. Prior to European settlement, several Native American tribes depended on the region’s plentiful natural resources.  

The Adena tribe, also referred to as the Mound Builders, represented the first Native American group known to have transformed Jefferson County’s natural landscape. The Adena served as potentially the only documented Native American tribe who ever permanently resided in the area. Living in the region approximately four thousand years ago, the Adena culture spanned from present-day West Virginia to the Mississippi River Valley. This Native American group erected large earth mounds that served as monuments and burial places. The Adena were hunter-and-gatherers, but the group also planted several crops, including corn, pumpkins, and gourds, to provide sustenance for

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their communities. Unfortunately, white settlers destroyed the Adena mounds in Jefferson County during the seventeenth-century when establishing towns and agricultural fields, thereby leaving no structural evidence of the Adena’s existence within the area. While no visible marks still remain upon the landscape, the Mound Builders purportedly lived near the important Pack Horse Ford, a popular crossing point along the Potomac River. Although no other Native Americans permanently settled in Jefferson County, their temporary presence within the region altered the natural landscape.²¹

Jefferson County’s environment offered a cornucopia of natural resources to other indigenous groups who traversed the Lower Shenandoah Valley. Traveling along the Warriors Path, indigenous groups, such as the Shawnee and Conoy, followed herds of elk and buffalo throughout the Shenandoah Valley. Although the Iroquois never established sedentary villages within the Shenandoah Valley, they claimed regional hunting rights. Furthermore, the Iroquois declared the Shenandoah Valley a cantuckee, which permitted any Native American group to use the region as their hunting grounds, but prohibited any tribes from permanently residing there. The Tuscaroras, also known as the Sixth Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy, temporarily moved into Jefferson County during their migration back to their former New York homelands in the early 1700s. Enticed by the region’s fertile soils, the Tuscaroras established an agricultural basis to provide for their people. Before planting corn, beans, and squash, the Tuscaroras used a slash-and-burn

agricultural practice to clear their farmlands of forests and underbrush. Tuscarora farmers utilized the potash from the burnt vegetation to fertilize their fields. Although the Tuscaroras only remained within Virginia for a short period, they modified the natural environment through their agricultural practices. Following the enactment of the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, the Tuscaroras relocated back to New York under the hospitality and sanctuary of the Iroquois Nation. This agreement vacated lands within the Shenandoah Valley of Native American occupation, thereby allowing white colonizers to encounter a more peaceful and orderly settlement of the area in the eighteenth century.22

Tensions between Native Americans and European settlers had been present within the state of Virginia even prior to the exploration of Jefferson County. Initially, English settlers established communities within the Tidewater region, only progressing slowly toward western lands controlled by indigenous groups. Upon discovering the potential economic value of tobacco, Virginian demands for western lands began to intensify in the seventeenth century. Needing more lands to plant their staple crop,

Virginian farmers sought to establish large estates to increase their agricultural harvests. The planting of tobacco quickly exhausted the Tidewater soils after only several growing seasons, thereby forcing farmers to look westward in search of additional lands. The quest for new acreage led Virginians to either negotiate or force Native Americans to vacate their lands, as demonstrated by the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, and thus pushing the tribes further westward into smaller parcels. Leaving behind numerous acres of unproductive fields within the Tidewater region, the desire for additional lands led to the exploration of modern-day Jefferson County approximately sixty years after the first European arrival within Virginia.23

Under the commission of Virginia governor William Berkeley, John Lederer sought to discover a feasible westward passage across the Allegheny Mountains to the Indian Ocean. Lederer’s third exploration brought him near the mountainous region of the modern-day Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. On August 25, 1670, Lederer embarked from the falls of the Rappahannock River with surveyor Colonel John Catlett, nine horses, nine colonists, and five Native American guides. As he preceded into the Virginian interior, Lederer commented on the bountiful presence of wildlife, writing that “for other provisions, you may securely trust your Gun, the Woods being full of Fallow, and Savanae of Red-Deer, besides great variety of excellent Fowl, as wilde Turkeys, Pigeons, Partridges, Pheasants &c.”24 Lederer finally


entered the area near present-day Harper’s Ferry, thus becoming the first white person to view any part of contemporary West Virginia. After reaching his destination, Lederer attempted to locate a passage that Native Americans called “Zynodoa,” which probably referred to the gap that had been carved out by the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers at Harper’s Ferry. Unable to find this intended passage, Lederer terminated his exploration and returned to Jamestown to report his findings to Governor Berkeley.25

Following Lederer’s adventures and a failed attempt by Swiss prospector Louis Michel at forming a Swiss community at the mouth of the Shenandoah River, Lord Thomas Fairfax the 6th inherited of the majority of the land that later became Jefferson County. Fairfax’s inherited land grant stated that he owned the property “beginning on the Chesapeake Bay, lies between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, crossing the Blue Ridge, or rather passing through the Gap along the Potomac at Harper’s Ferry, then with the Cohongoruta to its source in the Alleganies; then by a straight line, crosses the Great North Mountain and Blue Ridge to the head waters of the Rappahannock, wherever that might be.”26 Rather than living on these lands, Fairfax decided to sell parts of his

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landholdings to Tidewater elites and other groups who sought to establish residency within the Shenandoah Valley.\footnote{Guthheim, 82; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 7; Theriault, 11; Edgar B. Sims, Making a State: Formation of West Virginia, Including Maps, Illustrations, Plats, Grants, and Acts of the Virginia Assembly and the Legislature of West Virginia Creating the Counties (Charleston: State of West Virginia, 1956), 4; and Cartmell, 2.}

In addition to selling some of his property, Lord Fairfax also rented some of his lands, offering settlers low rent payments of two schillings sterling per one hundred acres in return for them improving the parcels upon which they resided. The improvement of these lands raised the value of Fairfax’s property without the landowner actually completing any of the work. However, not everyone who resided on Fairfax’s lands went through the appropriate legal channels. Instead, some Pennsylvania and Maryland colonists illegally laid claims to Fairfax’s land either by the simple act of settlement, which constituted a single room cabin and the planting of a cornfield, or by tomahawk rights, which consisted of a settler deadening a few trees for a prospective clearing and carving one’s initials into the tree’s bark to indicate who made improvements to said lot. Those who illegally squatted on these properties also took advantage of the uncertainty surrounding the actual land ownership. Since multiple parties occasionally laid claims to the same parcel, illegal inhabitants sometimes settled on these disputed properties as it proved difficult to evict the squatters or charge them with illegally residing on the land.\footnote{Samuel Kercheval, A History of the Valley of Virginia, 3d. ed. (Woodstock: W. N. Grabill, 1902), 157, 247-248; Fast and Maxwell, 8; F.Vernon Aler, Aler’s History of Martinsburg and Berkeley County, West Virginia: From the Origins of the Indians, Embracing Their Settlement, Wars, and Depredations, to the First White Settlement of the Valley; also Including the Wars between the Settlers and Their Mode and Manner of Living. Besides a Variety of Valuable Information, Consisting of the Past and Present History of the County, Including a Complete Sketch of the Late Wars, Strikes, Early Residents, Organizations, etc., Accompanied by Personal Sketches and Interesting Facts of the Present Day (Hagerstown: The Mail Publishing Co., 1888), 54; Dodge, 29; and Guthheim, 87.}
While Lord Fairfax owned a significant amount of western lands, individuals also could receive a land grant from the English crown or the Virginian colonial government. Both the English crown and Virginian government wanted to increase the settlement of the colony. The crown stipulated that each adult male could be granted fifty acres of land as long as they proved that they had paid for their own voyage to the colonies. Often referred to as a headright system, a new colonist agreed to settle on a parcel and pay the crown an annual quitrent of one schilling per fifty acres. Additionally, the Virginia government promoted the settlers to occupy the western portion of the colony by passing an act in 1722 that allowed families to move westward and live on government-owned lands rent-free. Virginia required, however, that the families remain on their designated parcel for a period of ten years. These families eventually could purchase the plot from the colony if the inhabitants developed the land and made it “civilized.” Regardless of whether or not settlers legally obtained land within the Shenandoah Valley, the colonization of this region began to intensify during the early eighteenth century.29

The emigration of colonists to the Shenandoah Valley constituted the second “leap” of settling the frontier with the first step being along the coastline of the Atlantic Ocean. This second phase began in the early eighteenth century and lasted until approximately 1765 with the majority of migrants residing on lands located east of the Allegheny Mountains. Rather than crossing the mountainous terrain of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains, the formation of a natural corridor in between these two

geological barriers funneled travelers up the Shenandoah Valley. Traveling along the Philadelphia Wagon Trail, settlers entered what was then Frederick County by crossing the Potomac River at Pack Horse Ford. Among the different groups who migrated southward from Maryland and Pennsylvania and settled in the Lower Shenandoah Valley included Germans, Scotch-Irish, English, Dutch, Huguenots, and Quakers. While some of these settlers decided to relocate because of the rich limestone soils, others sought to pursue different economic opportunities. Furthermore, some groups desired to create independent religious enclaves as they had been previously persecuted while living in Europe and other American colonies. Alongside these Northern migrants came families from the Tidewater region of Virginia who desired to cultivate new fields or make a profit from their extensive landholdings. Therefore, the mixture of Germans, Scotch-Irish, Tidewater Virginians, and a small number of other groups created an ethno-cultural society that employed varying agricultural, cultural, and trading practices; and thereby assembled competing economic and political interests within the region.  

The German and Scotch-Irish represented the majority of the initial emigrants who relocated to Jefferson County and the Lower Shenandoah Valley. A myriad of factors, including poor harvests and expensive land prices, led Scottish and Irish immigrants to leave their homes in the eighteenth century for the British colonies. Similar to the Scotch-Irish, German migrants also relocated to North America as a result of the living conditions in their former homelands. The combination of “the tyranny of

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30 Slotkin, 37; Fast and Maxwell, 6; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 9; Wayland, German Element, 23; Gutheim, 81; Branch and Philippon, 33; and Wayland, Twenty-five Chapters, 79. Among the different religious groups that settled in the Shenandoah Valley included Ulster Presbyterians, Lutherans, Pietists, Mennonites, Moravians, and Labadists.
autocratic rulers, devastation caused by numerous wars, and crop failures” led these German colonists to leave the Rhine Valley in search of a better life. The opening of western lands as specified in the Treaty of Lancaster (1744) attracted some immigrants who arrived in Virginia to migrate to the interior of the colony rather than settle in the Tidewater region. Beginning in the 1720s, German and Scotch-Irish emigrants began moving into Jefferson County, as well as other areas of the Lower Shenandoah Valley. Although this emigration process started in the 1720s, the 1740s represented the height of Germans and Scotch-Irish settlement within the region.

The geographic features of the Shenandoah Valley and the availability of farmlands led many German and Scotch-Irish colonists to settle in Jefferson County and the Lower Shenandoah Valley. The honeycombed geography of valleys and gaps contained within the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains allowed these settlers to form scattered, ethno-centric settlements. While this voluntary seclusion contributed to the limited communication and exchanging of ideas with other colonists, this geographical privacy also provided German inhabitants with a peace of mind that they would be protected from being placed in the middle of Native American-settler confrontations that they previously experienced in Pennsylvania. When choosing a place to settle, German


migrants typically looked for fertile, limestone soils as they possessed a familiarity with these types of soil while living in southeastern Pennsylvania. The Scotch-Irish preferred establishing settlements in mountainous areas conducive for raising livestock, such as cattle, sheep, and hogs. Rather than growing surplus crops that could be sold at markets, the Scotch-Irish raised the livestock to provide sustenance for their families while the sheep’s wool offered a material that could be utilized for producing clothing. William Beverly, who received a land grant in the Shenandoah Valley from Lord Fairfax, wrote to a friend in Williamsburg in 1732, telling him about the willingness of settlers to purchase land along the Shenandoah River. “Ye northern men are fond of buying land there, because they can buy it, for six or seven pr: hundred acres, cheaper than they can take up land in pensilvania [sic], and they don’t care to go as far as Wmsburg,” wrote Beverly. Therefore, the availability of cheap, quality land enticed these German and Scotch-Irish migrants to establish settlements within Jefferson County and the Lower Shenandoah Valley.

33 Quoted in Wayland, *German Element*, 25.

34 Gutheim, 81, 130; Wayland, *German Element*, 20, 22-23; Wust, viii; McGregor, 7; Branch and Philippon, 33; Kennedy, *Scots-Irish*, 27; Leroy C. Miller, *The Shenandoah Valley in Virginia: An Economic-Geographic Interpretation* (Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1939), 3; Grady McWhiney, *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1988), 56, 69; Leyburn, 262; Rolla Milton Tryon, *Household Manufacturers in the United States, 1640-1860* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1966, 47-48, 99; and Helms, 736. While living in Pennsylvania, the Germans also encountered ethnic discrimination and ridicule from other colonists; therefore migrating to unsettled lands provided the Germans an opportunity to no longer endure cultural intolerance. The incorporation of hogs into their mixed farming represented a modification within their agricultural practices as until the Scotch-Irish immigrated to the British colonies, the Scotch-Irish did not raise hogs as they did not believe in consuming pork. However, once they moved to the colonies, the continual presence of the hog within frontier communities led the Scotch-Irish to change their position on the issue and begin raising hogs for consumption.
Although ethnically different, the German and Scotch-Irish emigrants who moved to Jefferson County and the Lower Shenandoah Valley also demonstrated several common agricultural characteristics. The majority of these settlers tended to be self-sufficient farmers, or semi-subistence cultivators, who lacked formable access to transportation networks. Unable to procure products from long-distance markets easily, residents therefore cultivated a diversity of foodstuffs and raised livestock for their families’ consumption. These farmers participated in mixed-farming by planting a variety of crops, including wheat, barley, corn, oats, rye, and potatoes. Farmers planted these different agricultural products as they offered versatility within one’s diet. After clearing a small plot of land of trees and undergrowth, cultivators planted a manageable size farm that they and their immediate family could maintain independently. Agrarian tasks were divided usually according to gender. Men were held “responsible for field crops, large livestock, and clearing land” while women were “responsible for garden crops, small livestock, and domestic production.”

Each of these groups performed chores deemed essential to the continued operation of the farm. Despite these gender labor divisions, when intense periods of work occurred women completed responsibilities typically associated with males, as well as their own routines.

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By the middle of the eighteenth century, farmers living in the Shenandoah Valley began to increase their involvement in local markets. After establishing permanent residency, subsistence cultivators began producing surplus crops which they could then sell or exchange for goods and services at local markets. In 1762, the same year that Shepherdstown received official recognition from the Virginian colonial government as a town, the Virginia General Assembly also authorized the creation of a semi-annual agricultural fair to be held in Shepherdstown. As a result of the growing importance of farming within the community, the Agricultural and Mechanical Fair would be held in June and October “for the sale and vending of cattle, victuals, provisions, goods, wares and merchandise.” In addition to selling surplus supplies at local markets, farmers oftentimes exchanged goods and services with their family and neighbors to fulfill their own families’ needs.

In addition to their involvement in local markets, farmers also engaged in long-distance trading. The French and Indian War, and later the American Revolutionary War, spurred the production of wheat and corn. The increased demand for flour and corn by military forces allowed cultivators to send their surplus harvests to markets in Philadelphia and Baltimore. While traveling through the areas of Berkeley and Frederick Counties on several occasions between 1774 and 1776, Nicholas Cresswell commented

Sachs, 3. Danhof estimates that on average, farmers cleared between five and ten acres per year in order to improve their landholdings. Leyburn notes that within Scotch-Irish culture, only women who came from lower class families were expected to work in the fields. Otherwise, Scotch-Irish women performed domestic chores, such as producing clothes, milking cows, raising the children, and preparing meals.

37 Lewis, History and Government of West Virginia, 73.

38 Sachs, 3.
on the wheat production in the area. “I am exceedingly pleased with these two counties, and am determined to settle in one of them, if ever these times are settled,” Cresswell wrote on December 9, 1774. He continued, “[The land] will produce any sort of grain, the average of wheat is about 12 bushels to the acre, but it is not half ploughed and manure of any sort is never used.”

By the end of the eighteenth century, these agricultural producers increasingly started looking beyond the local economic networks and toward the larger markets of Baltimore and Alexandria. Although area farmers started to gain access to these trade networks, their needs for other goods and services led to the growth of artisan trades.

As communities started to form within Jefferson County during the eighteenth century, small artisans opened businesses, such as sawmills, blacksmith shops, or grist mills, offering their skills and services to their neighbors. While some Germans and Scotch-Irish colonists performed these agricultural tasks on their own farms, other planters started purchasing goods and services from neighboring craftsmen and therefore establishing the communal foundation for economic connectivity. These enterprises

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39 Nicholas Cresswell, *The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell, 1774-1777* (New York: The Dial Press, 1924), 50; and Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier*, 173. At the time of Cresswell’s observations, wheat was selling in the Lower Shenandoah Valley at the rate of three shillings per bushel. Wheat sold at the Alexandria markets fetched a price of five shillings per bushel.

employed a small number of workers or the primary owner served as the only form of labor. As farmers started cultivating more wheat, entrepreneurs also began operating grist mills to process the wheat into flour before it could be sent to market. Typically, these small enterprises were located within the confines of a town with the farmers’ fields surrounding the village. Therefore farming, the raising of livestock, and small artisan operations served as the economic foundation within Jefferson County during the eighteenth century.  

The first settlers who arrived within modern-day Jefferson County probably came to the area in the late 1720s. During this period, German colonists formed the first permanent community, which later became Shepherdstown, a short distance from the Pack Horse Ford. The settlers named their community New Mecklenburg, supposedly in honor of their earlier home in Mecklenburg, Germany. Many of these German pioneers originated from Pennsylvania; however, some inhabitants also came from New York. In the early 1730s, Richard Morgan built a small log house near the fledgling community of New Mecklenburg. In 1734, Morgan sold his property to Colonel Thomas Shepherd, who later became the namesake of Shepherdstown. Shepherd’s initial tract became the principal component of Shepherdstown as he designated fifty acres of his land be divided into ninety-six parcels with each lot measuring 103x206 feet. In addition to being the

41 Charles Henry Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1964), 14; Dodge, *West Virginia*, 33; Dandridge, 52; Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier*, 147; and Bliss, 389. Martin Bruegel argues against the description of early farmers as being “self-sufficient” since many of these cultivators exchanged tools and labor with neighboring farmers in order to survive. This sharing of tools and labor not only allowed for the self-sufficient farmer maintain their farms, but it also allowed the larger surrounding agricultural community to continue to function. See Martin Bruegel, *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of a Market Society in the Hudson Valley, 1780-1860* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), 21.
principal owner of town property, Shepherd also established an economic connection by starting a ferry operation in 1765 with Thomas Swearingen. This ferry business offered services for travelers who sought to cross the Potomac River from Shepherdstown to the Maryland shore and vice versa. Shepherd also contributed to the religious foundation of the community by founding the first Episcopal Church. Besides this initial German settlement, another group of German colonists would make claim to the area during the next decade.42

The emigration of German settlers increased following the exploration of an Indian trader by the name of John Van Meter. Originally from New York, Van Meter explored the Shenandoah Valley region during the 1720s while conducting commercial exchanges. After returning to New York, Van Meter informed his sons, John and Isaac, of the bountiful area and advised them that if they ever decided to relocate, they should consider moving to that region. Following their father’s advice, the younger John Van Meter and twenty German families, including eleven of his own sons and daughters, moved to Shepherdstown and its surrounding area in 1730 with a land grant for twenty thousand acres near the Opequon Creek and the Shenandoah River. With the promise of an additional ten thousand acres, Van Meter’s brother Isaac arrived shortly thereafter with ten more German families. Altogether, the Van Meter brother’s laid claim to thirty

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thousand acres with much of this land later becoming part of contemporary Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. Colonial officials placed a stipulation upon Van Meters’ land rights that for every one thousand acres, one family must inhabit the area within two years of receiving the grant. To promote settlement, the Van Meter brothers sold a portion of their land to Joist Hite and a group of associates in August 1731.43

Hite contributed to the region’s population growth by recruiting sixteen families to settle on his tract of land. Including three of his sons-in-law, Hite and the group entered the Shenandoah Valley in April 1732, crossing the Potomac River at Pack Horse Ford. Hite’s group also included a freed African family, the Johnsons, who had previously worked for him as domestic servants. Having been freed prior to their migration to Virginia, the Johnsons represented the first Africans, free or enslaved, to reside in the Shenandoah Valley. By 1735, at least sixty-seven families resided on Hite’s parcel. To provide a form of income and subsistence for their families, both Hite’s group and the Van Meters brothers participated in similar agricultural practices as other farmers who settled in the region. Furthermore, Hite and the Van Meters’ raised livestock, including horses, cattle, and hogs, on their personal settlements. In addition to this mixed agriculture, Hite also built a grist mill on the Opequon Creek in 1738. The settlement of these German colonists forged a strong German culture within the region.44

43 Lewis, History and Government of West Virginia, 40-42; Theriault, 13-14; Conley and Stutler, 59; Mitchell, Commercialism and Frontier, 29; Charles E. Kemper, “The Early Westward Movement of Virginia, 1721-1734. As Shown by the Proceedings of the Colonial Council,” The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 13, no. 2 (October 1905): 116; and Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 11. Lewis claims that the Van Meters received a patent for 40,000 acres from Virginia governor William Gooch in 1730.

44 Aler, 54; William Sidney Laidley, “Jost Hite of the Shenandoah Valley & Descendants, [1899], p. 87, Ms79-17, WVSA; Kercheval, 45; Dandrigde, 21; Geffert, Annotated Narrative, 1; Jerry M. Johnson
The notable German influence within Jefferson County could be seen in the naming of towns, the publicizing of legal statutes, and the formation of several religious institutions. Towns that reflected this German influence included Bakerton, Keller, Molers, Myerstown, and Snyders Mill. The strong presence of Germans led the Virginia government to translate legislation into German so inhabitants could understand the laws. The growing number of German settlers also led to the establishment of multiple religious institutions. The German Reformed congregation represented the first religious group to build a church in Shepherdstown with the construction of a log meeting house in 1776. The Lutherans used the same log structure in Shepherdstown from 1776 until 1795 when they declared themselves independent of the Reformed church. The split of these two groups possibly occurred as the Lutherans wanted to continue conducting worship services in their native German language. Coinciding with their departure from the Reformed church, the Lutherans built their own meeting place, St. Peter’s Church, in 1795. By 1810, three German Reformed churches and one Lutheran church were holding worship services within Jefferson County. Besides German denominations, the ethnic backgrounds of Jefferson County’s early settlers created a diverse religious landscape.45

III, *Johnstown, West Virginia, Heritage Yearbook* (Johnstown: by the author, 1987), 3; Mary Stortstrom, “Johnstown to Celebrate 165 Years of Rich History,” *Martinsburg (West Virginia) The Journal*, August 10, 2013; Wust, 33-34; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 48; Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier*, 144; and Cartmell, 9. The sixty-seven families living on Hite’s lands accounted for 37,834 acres. Although Hite owned a tract of land that reached the Potomac River, he decided to establish his homestead five miles southwest of Winchester along the Opequon Creek. However, while Hite and a group of men constructed new homes on their property, the women and children of these builders resided in Shepherdstown for approximately one year.

45 Wayland, *German Element*, 91, 113-114; McGregor, 8; Ambler, 13; Christ Evangelical and Reformed Church, *Commemorating the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of Christ Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1747-1947, Shepherdstown, West Virginia* (Shepherdstown: Christ Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1947), 15-16; Norris, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley*, 380; Bushong, *History
The emerging presence of Scotch-Irish led to the establishment of several Presbyterian churches. The first Presbyterian Church formed in 1743 with the founding of the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church. By the time of the American Revolution, three Presbyterian congregations existed in Shepherdstown, Bull Skin, and Elk Branch. Located near Summit Point, the Bull Skin church also was referred to as the Hopewell Church. The Elk Branch church, which originally formed connections with the Shepherdstown congregation, decided to establish its own church during the 1760s. However, the Elk Branch congregation did not last long as by 1787 the remaining members of the church divided between Shepherdstown and a new church that was being formed in Charlestown. On February 17, 1787, Charles Washington deeded the newly formed Charlestown Presbyterian Church a plot of land to erect a new structure. Beginning in 1792, Reverend William Hill began serving all of these Presbyterian parishes. The presence of a full-time pastor indicated that enough Presbyterian followers lived in the area that they could support paying Hill’s salary. Similar to the presence of German and Scotch-Irish inhabitants, the settlement of other religious and social groups within the region also influenced the diverse trajectory of Jefferson County.46

While German and Scotch-Irish emigrants inhabited the northern section of Jefferson County, the southeastern portion of the county initially was settled by several

different Quaker groups. The first collection of Quakers moved to central Jefferson County near Smithfield during the eighteenth century. Searching for a potential site for a milling business, John Smith and his son traveled to Jefferson County in 1729. The Smiths chose a plot of land along Turkey Run as the waterway offered sufficient water power and the presence of limestone provided the building material for their mill. Receiving a grant from Virginia governor William Gooch in 1734, Smith, his son, and Smith’s brother Rees constructed their grist and hemp mills on their newly acquired 425 acres. By the end of the century, Smiths’ relatives divided their landholdings, thereby establishing the town of Smithfield. Although several German families moved to the new settlement, Quaker colonists made up the majority of the inhabitants. Four years after the division of the Smith family lands, the town of Smithfield received recognition from the Virginian government as an official community. At the end of the eighteenth century, Smithfield became the town of Middleway as there already existed another Smithfield in Virginia along the James River.\(^4\)

In addition to the Smith family, other Quakers settled and opened businesses within the southeastern portion of Jefferson County. William Vestal founded a bloomery forge near Keyes Ferry in 1742. Vestal formed a business partnership with John Tradan, Richard Stevenson, and Daniel Burnet that remained operational until the beginning of the Civil War. Vestal established the forge for “making Barr Iron” with Thomas Mayburry building the complex for Vestal. Vestal’s business possibly represented the

first known iron manufacturer within Jefferson County. John Semple opened a second iron business near the confluence of Elk Run and the Potomac River in 1764. The Keeptryst Furnace produced pig iron for local production. Semple’s enterprise acquired iron ore from the neighboring Friend’s Orebank located along the Potomac River. The amount of iron ore generated by these two iron companies represented the production levels of other small businesses within Jefferson County. The Keeptryst furnace continued producing iron ore until the beginning of the nineteenth century when the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry purchased the land. While some Quakers established small businesses, other settlers became involved in agricultural pursuits.  

Settling the tract of land between Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry, several Quaker families established an agricultural basis. In 1734, Israel Friend and Samuel Taylor received regal grants from Virginia. Friend raised cattle, sheep, and horses on his three hundred acres. To assist him with his domestic chores and agricultural tasks, Friend brought with him “1 negro woman and female child” and “1 old negro woman.” Thus, Friend differed from many of the other Quakers who moved to the area since he owned slaves. Taylor, who previously emigrated from Pennsylvania, owned two separate plots which totaled 325 acres. By the 1750s, several other Quaker and non-Quaker families started settling the area near Friend and Taylor’s parcels. In comparison to Friend and Taylor, Gersham Keyes and John Semple acquired more expansive land grants with each


49 Theriault, 14.
property owner acquiring over 1,800 acres apiece. Keyes planted wheat and corn, as well as raised cattle, on his large landholding. John Semple, who also owned over 13,000 acres in Maryland, produced wheat, oats, and rye on his Virginian lands. Unlike most of the landowners who resided in this area, Keyes and Semple also owned several slaves. Semple represented the largest slaveholder in the eastern portion of Jefferson County, as he owned a total of twenty-one slaves. Besides their agricultural pursuits, Keyes and Semple also established small mill operations that provided services to local farmers.

One of the last locations settled by a Quaker eventually became a leading contributor within the industrial development of Jefferson County.\(^50\)

Arriving at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers in 1740, the natural features captivated Robert Harper’s attention and thus he decided to establish residency in the area. Contracted by the Society of Friends in Winchester, Virginia, Harper initially came to the region to build mills for fellow Quakers. While on his way to Winchester, Harper supposedly stopped in Frederick, Maryland, for the night. While at an inn, Peter Hoffman, a trader who was familiar with the region, offered to serve as Harper’s guide. Although Harper intended to cross the Potomac River near Shepherdstown, Hoffman suggested an alternative route that would take them up the Shenandoah Valley through Harper’s Ferry. Ultimately, Hoffman’s shortcut altered Harper’s life as upon stopping at Harper’s Ferry, he decided to purchase a roughhewn

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\(^{50}\) Ibid., 14-15, 22-24, 31-34, 37. Keyes operated a grist and saw mill on the Shenandoah River, as well as a smithy and distillery. Whereas Semple owned twenty-one slaves, Keyes only owned two slaves. The composition of Semple’s slaves consisted of fourteen male, four female, and three children. Semple operated a grist and saw mill along the Potomac River.
home and 125 acres from Peter Stephens, who was also known as “Peter in the Hole,” for fifty guineas. Writing on March 24, 1747, Harper informed his brother, Joseph, of his land acquisition. “I like this country very much and expect to make it my home while I live,” he wrote. “I have purchased a tract of land with great water power and intend commencing a mill as soon as they [his wife Mary and her brother Griffith] arrive. It is a very rugged place, but the prospects abroad are good, everything to eat being cheap and plentiful.” Harper not only recognized the untapped economic potential of the surrounding waterways, but he also envisioned that the region held greater prospects if further developed. Eventually Harper fulfilled his noted intentions by opening up a grist mill and sawmill along the Shenandoah River. By the end of the eighteenth century, Harper’s tract became the foundation for the town of Harper’s Ferry and the Federal Armory and Arsenal. Whereas German, Scotch-Irish, and Quakers established self-sufficient farms and small businesses within Jefferson County, the Tidewater aristocrats who moved to the area presented a contrasting type of lifestyle.

51 “Descriptions of Harpers Ferry, 1821 and n.d.,” Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, Mss1 P4299 c 89, Section 2, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia, hereinafter cited as VHS.

Declining financial prospects in eastern Virginia resulted in some Tidewater elites to begin looking westward for new economic opportunities. Beginning in the eighteenth century, large estate holders from the Tidewater region started acquiring property within the Shenandoah Valley including the contemporary counties of Clarke, Warren, and Jefferson. While some of these aristocrats physically relocated to the area, others became absentee landholders who hoped to earn a profit from their land grants. By the 1770s, the emigration of eastern Virginians began to increase as the rate of migration from the states of Pennsylvania and Maryland decreased. As tobacco profits continued to decline, the financial prospects of western lands enticed former Tidewater tobacco planters to abandon their plantations and either relocate to the Shenandoah Valley or at least invest in these properties. As Tidewater elites found financial prospects that extended even beyond the Shenandoah Valley, these opportunities led the young surveyor George Washington to pass through Jefferson County, thereby recognizing the potential agricultural and geographic value of the region.53

Receiving a charter from King George II in 1748, the Ohio Company needed to survey their plot of land along the Ohio River. Therefore, the Ohio Company commissioned George Washington to accomplish this task. Embarking on his journey to the Ohio River Valley, Washington stopped at the Stephenson family estate along

Bullskin Creek. Having known the family when they previously resided in the Tidewater region, Washington’s stay provided him the opportunity to familiarize himself with the natural surroundings. Impressed with the beauty and fertility of the region, Washington accumulated property within Jefferson County during the 1750s through a series of land acquisitions. After several purchases along Bullskin Creek, Washington’s landholdings within Jefferson County exceeded two thousand acres. Washington encouraged other family members to follow suit with his older brother Lawrence Washington acquiring an additional two thousand acres. The accrual of over four thousand acres by the Washington family provided the foundation for Tidewater influence within Jefferson County.\(^{54}\)

Whereas George Washington served as an absentee landholder, his younger brother, Colonel Charles Washington, purchased land near Bullskin Creek and established permanent residency. Other Tidewater families, such as the Pages and Lees, who migrated to Jefferson County began settling near Charles Washington’s Happy Retreat estate. After subdividing some of his land into smaller parcels, Charles Washington laid out the area that eventually became known as the village of Charlestown in October 1786. As the town’s population increased during the late eighteenth century, several smaller businesses opened their doors, including a mill, tavern, blacksmith shop, and general store. By 1793, the Charlestown Academy, a private school for children who came from wealthier families, began accepting students for enrollment. The educational

institution taught multiple subjects including Greek, Latin, mathematics, and science. Charlestown also became the site for the first agricultural newspaper in what later became West Virginia in 1808 with the printing of the *Farmer’s Repository*. The *Farmer’s Repository* remained in circulation for nineteen years before it merged with the *Virginia Free Press*. As demonstrated with the formation of Charlestown, the Tidewater influence continued to resonate throughout nineteenth century Jefferson County.55

Tidewater families who migrated to Jefferson County also brought the genteel lifestyles that they previously had been accustomed to when living in eastern Virginia. Seeking to replicate their former homesteads, Tidewater aristocrats constructed Georgian style mansions that utilized the abundance of native stone and limestone. Among the estates that used the region’s natural resources included General Horatio Gates’s “Travelers Rest,” Samuel Washington’s “Harewood, General Charles Lee’s “Prato Rio,” Joseph Van Swearingen’s “Bellevue,” and Bushrod Corbin Washington’s “Claymont Court.” Along with building their estates, Tidewater aristocrats promoted a genteel lifestyle that brought leisurely activities, such as horse racing, to Jefferson County. The *Virginia Journal and Alexandria Gazette* published an advertisement on April 8, 1786, Samuel Holl opened Holl’s Tavern, which sometimes was spelled as Hull’s Tavern, in 1786 with his wife.

for a horse race of “three 3-mile heats” at Charlestown.⁵⁶ Along with reproducing their former estates, the Tidewater elites also transformed Jefferson County’s religious landscape.⁵⁷

Between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Tidewater aristocrats diversified Jefferson County’s religious community by establishing several English churches. By the late eighteenth century, the first group of practicing Methodists gathered in Charlestown to worship. As the number of Methodist worshippers continued to increase, church trustees decided to purchase a plot in Charlestown to build a church. Religious adherents to the Church of England erected St. George’s Chapel just outside of Charlestown sometime between 1750 and 1770 on land donated by Robert Worthington, Jr. This elaborate stone church consisted of building materials brought from England, including a sheet-lead roof, tiled floor, and cedar windows and doors. As the congregation increased at the end of the eighteenth century, they abandoned St. George’s Chapel and built a new church, Zion Episcopal Church in Charlestown. Although German emigrants primarily lived in Shepherdstown, several Episcopalian churches were built within the community. The first Episcopal Church was built in 1747 with a second church being erected in 1769. The Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church represented one

⁵⁶ Quoted in Norris, History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, 356.

of the last Episcopalian churches to be built in Jefferson County during the eighteenth century with it being constructed between 1780 and 1785. One of the most significant social institutions that Tidewater elites brought to Jefferson County related to the institution of slavery.⁵⁸

While Tidewater aristocrats transplanted the institution of slavery within Jefferson County, local agricultural conditions forced planters to adapt their utilization of slave labor. Although the majority of Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Quaker settlers opposed the institution of slavery for religious purposes, Tidewater elites perceived slavery as being an essential component of their genteel lifestyles. Initially, absentee landholders began sending their overseers and African slaves to Jefferson County as early as 1738. While Tidewater elites purchased large tracts of land in Jefferson County, these farms did not require the same amount of slave labor as tobacco plantations in eastern Virginia.

Jefferson County slave owners used slave labor for agricultural tasks, such as the planting and harvesting of wheat, as well as performing domestic chores. Among the initial families who brought slaves to the region included the Briscos, Throckmortons, Rutherfords, and Washingtons. Therefore, as more Tidewater elite migrated to Jefferson County and the Lower Shenandoah Valley in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the slave population continued to increase in the region. By the taking of the

first federal census in 1790, the area of present-day Berkeley and Jefferson Counties contained 2,932 African American slaves. This number represented over fourteen percent of the total county population. By the following decade, the number of slaves in the region increased to 3,971; a growth of thirty-five percent. Thus, African American slaves constituted eighteen percent of the total population. Of the total number of African American slaves residing in Berkeley County, 1,452 slaves lived in the region that later became Jefferson County. As Berkeley County’s aggregate population grew at the conclusion of the eighteenth century, residents within the southern portion of the county began to feel a growing political disconnect with their county government.59

Citing a myriad of social and political concerns, southern Berkeley County residents in the late eighteenth century sought to separate from their current county and establish a new one. The increasingly population in Berkeley County between 1790 and 1800 sparked discussions regarding the potential formation of a new county. In 1790, Berkeley County possessed an aggregate population of 19,713 inhabitants. The county’s total population increased the following decade to 22,006 residents; a growth of nearly twelve percent. Furthermore, southern county inhabitants argued that the geographical

59 Wayland, Twenty-five Chapters, 83; Wayland, German Element, 181; Freehling, Drift Toward Dissolution, 32; Hannah Geffert, “John Brown and his Black Allies: An Ignored Alliance,” The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography CXXVI, no. 4 (October 2002): 594, 595; Mitchell, Commercialism and Frontier, 108; Lawson, 15; Geffert, Annotated Narrative, 3; University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, “Historical Census Browser,” accessed March 27, 2016, http://www.mapserver.lib.virginia.edu; and Simon Newton Dexter North, A Century of Population Growth: From the First Census of the United States to the Twelfth, 1790-1900 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1966), 82, 133, 198, 222-223 (page citations are to the reprint edition). While Freehling asserts that the Scotch-Irish who worshipped in the Presbyterian Church opposed slavery, Wayland refutes this assertion by writing that the Scotch-Irish were the most likely group living within the Shenandoah Valley to own slaves. In 1790, a total of 292,627 enslaved African Americans resided within Virginia. By the following decade, the number of African American slaves increased to 346,671. Although the aggregate number of slaves increased in Virginia, for both decades, slaves represented thirty-nine percent of the state’s total population.
distance between them and the county capital of Martinsburg and the inability to conduct financial and legal matters effectively caused them political frustrations. The combination of these social and political concerns led southern county residents to petition for the creation of a new county during the autumn of 1800. By December 5, 1800, 187 residents had signed the petition expressing their desire to dissolve their political connections with Berkeley County. After negotiating the proposed geographical boundaries, the Virginia General Assembly approved the formation of a new county in January 1801. Officially recognized on October 26, 1801, Jefferson County was named after the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson; the man who had observed the region’s natural beauty nearly twenty years earlier as he sat upon the rock hovering above the town of Harper’s Ferry.  

By the end of the eighteenth century, a distinct pattern of diverse ethnic settlement had emerged within present-day Jefferson County. Prior to European exploration, several different Native American groups, including the Adena and Tuscaroras, recognized the abundance of natural resources located within the Lower Shenandoah Valley. Following the enactment of the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744, the area of present-day Jefferson County essentially became void of any Native American influence. As the presence of

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60 University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, “Historical Census Browser;” North, 82, 198; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 64-5; Brooks, 166; and Morris Purdy Shawkey, West Virginia: A Book of Geography, History, and Industry (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1922), 221. The act creating Jefferson County passed through the Virginia General Assembly stating “Be it enabled by the general assembly, that from and after the twenty-sixth day of October next, all that part of the county of Berkeley, lying eastwardly of a line beginning at Opeckon [sic] creek in the Frederick line, thence with the said creek to the bend immediately below Wallingford’s tavern, thence, running a direct line to Wyncoop’s Spring on the public road leading from Martinsburg to Shepherdstown, and thence with the meanders of the spring run to its confluence with the Potowmac [sic], shall form one distinct county, and be called and known by the name of Jefferson County. See Sims, 25; and The Historical Records Survey, West Virginia County Formations and Boundary Changes (Charleston: The Historical Records Survey, 1938), 82.
Native Americans declined, European explorers began venturing into the region during the late seventeenth century looking for passages to western lands and greater economic opportunities. These early adventurers opened the Lower Shenandoah Valley to the first phase of permanent white settlement in the early eighteenth century. Migrating from northern regions, the Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Quakers began arriving in Jefferson County in the 1720s and 1730s. In addition to these initial residents, Tidewater elites began settling in Jefferson County by the 1750s. The influx of Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Quakers led to the formation of a social and economic lifestyle that differed from that of the Tidewater aristocrats. German and Scotch-Irish farmers tended to practice subsistence farming and animal husbandry, but these cultivators also sometimes engaged in the trading or bartering for additional provisions. Whereas the majority of Germans, Scotch-Irish, and Quakers opposed the institution of slavery for religious reasons, the Tidewater aristocrats utilized slave labor for their landed estates. The competing socio-economic views of these different groups established the foundation that Jefferson County built upon during the next century.61

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jefferson County residents and external investors began attempting to harness the power of the area’s natural resources, including the rivers and fertile soils. Due to George Washington’s previous agricultural investment and geographic knowledge of the region, he championed the establishment of a Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry and the improved navigation of the

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Potomac River. The increased cultivation of wheat led to surplus amounts that farmers sought to trade at regional markets. The trajectory of Jefferson County’s nineteenth century economy depended upon the utilization of the region’s natural resources. The visible beauty of Jefferson County remained poignant among contemporary travelers. As John Caldwell, a New York businessman, approached the town of Harper’s Ferry in 1808, he critically described the local roadways as being “miserably bad, but the country beautiful and the land good.” Waxing eloquently, he found “the approach to the Ferry is strikingly picturesque.” Looking down on “the junction of the Shenandoah and the Potowmack [sic], forcing their way through the blue mountains, and proceeding in one joint stream to the ocean,” he found himself “lost in wonder and admiration,” at a landscape that defied his ability to describe “the scene itself, or the feelings I experienced in contemplating this great work of nature!”

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Visiting the United States in 1836, Irishman Thomas Cather and his traveling companion Henry Tyler stopped at Harper’s Ferry to observe the beautiful landscape. Although Cather described the picturesque scene as being “inexpressibly beautiful,” he also noted that there was “no blessing without a curse close upon it and this scenery is subject to the general rule.” Cather attributed his discouraging perception to the industrial presence within the area. “There is a most abominable little village just in the pass between the mountains,” Cather wrote. “Here is the Government Manufactory of Firearms, and the smell of coal smoke, and the clanking of hammers obtrude themselves on the senses and prevent your enjoyment from being unmixed.”

Critiquing the presence of the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, Cather suggested that the

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63 Thomas Cather, *Voyage to America: The Journals of Thomas Cather*, ed. Thomas Yoseloff (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1961), 5, 27-28. Comparing the area surrounding Harpers Ferry with Ireland, Cather wrote, “I have seen bolder and more sublime scenery and scenery of more exquisite loveliness in our country, but still it is inexpressibly beautiful.”

64 Ibid., 28.
industry detracted from the scenic view. By juxtaposing the natural and industrial landscapes, Cather implied that these two settings were not mutually compatible. Whereas Cather believed that the splendid natural view suffered at the expense of industrial growth, Jefferson County residents viewed the region’s natural resources as a vehicle to support the growing economy.

The outbreak of the Civil War significantly modified the economic landscape that emerged within Jefferson County during the early nineteenth century, particularly in terms of the weapons industries. As this diversified economy developed, different economic levels progressed and thereby became interconnected and dependent upon each other. The establishment of the Federal Armory and Arsenal, along with other arms-related businesses, formed the basis of a federal economy. This industry proved essential to Jefferson County’s economic growth as it became the leading employer and spurred the creation of other companies that provided goods and services not only to the Armory, but also for the Armory’s workers and their families. The presence of these weapons manufacturers distinguished Jefferson County from other Southern states as the region experienced a higher rate of industrialization. Prior to the Civil War, only Ohio and Kanawha counties in western Virginia surpassed Jefferson County’s industrial production rates within Virginia. In addition to the federal economy, smaller businesses also formed throughout various Jefferson County communities.65

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65 Dunaway, 159, 161, 163, 269. Dunaway describes Jefferson County as being “industrialized to a level exceeding midwestern development” since the region contained “medium firms, with $1,000 to $9,999 invested or grossed annually.” Dunaway characterizes Harper’s Ferry as a company town since the majority of its production centered on weapons manufacturing. Dunaway cites the provision of housing for the workers, through which the Armory could control and monitor their employees, as being the primary reason for her argument.
The manufacturing of weapons, as well as agricultural production, led to the formation of smaller businesses within Jefferson County. Entrepreneurs contributed to the local economy by establishing companies such as the Shepherdstown cement mill, Herr’s grist mill, and the Harpers Ferry and Shenandoah Manufacturing Company. The number of people employed at these companies varied. Smaller businesses, such as Frederick A. Roeder’s confectionary shop and Wells J. Hawks’ carriage shop, only maintained a small workforce while the Harpers Ferry & Shenandoah Manufacturing Company employed seventy people. Although these businesses did not employ as many laborers as the Federal Armory and Arsenal, the companies still fulfilled the needs of local businesses, farmers, and consumers. Different specialty stores or craftsmen trades, such as hatters, carriage makers, and wheelwrights, also contributed to the growth and diversification of the local economy.66

The establishment of these different businesses, as well as increased agricultural production, led to the need for more efficient modes of transportation within Jefferson County. Prior to the formation of any transportation networks, area businesses and farmers shipped their goods to market either using roads or on the Potomac River via the Potomac Canal Company. Both forms of transportation oftentimes proved to be unreliable and adversely affected by weather conditions. Furthermore, the Potomac

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66 Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufacturers in the United States*, vol. 1 1607-1860, with an introduction by Henry W. Farnam (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1929; reprint, New York: Peter Smith, 1949), 228-230 (page citations are to the reprint edition); 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; and 1860 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule. In 1850, Hawks employed ten hands at his carriage shop and produced an annual product value of $15,000. During the following decade, Hawks’ annual product value and number of laborers remained the same. The Harpers Ferry and Shenandoah Manufacturing Company employed seventy laborers and generated an annual product value of $32,000 in 1850. Frederick Roeder’s confectionary included one worker and produced an annual product value of $1,000.
Canal Company experienced difficulty trying to navigate the waterway as natural obstacles, such as rocks and waterfalls, proved difficult to overcome. These transportation problems led private investors and government entities, both federal and state, to finance the establishment of more reliable transportation networks within Jefferson County through the building of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and Winchester and Potomac Railroad. These transportation systems increased the economic viability of not only Jefferson County, but also the Lower Shenandoah Valley, while decreasing shipping costs. These networks also connected local businesses and cultivators to external markets, thereby allowing them to participate within a regional economy. The establishment of these different businesses and transportation networks during the nineteenth century created a diverse federal, regional and local economy within Jefferson County that continued to evolve until the outbreak of the Civil War.67

Despite lacking a significant amount of extractable resources that could be sold at market, such as coal, salt, or iron, Jefferson County’s natural resources offered a variety of benefits which industries exploited for productive means. In addition to the Federal Armory and Arsenal, other local enterprises also seized upon the availability of natural hydropower to operate machinery. While attempting to harness the potential energy of the region’s waterways, including the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, these companies often encountered varying results. The utilization of hydropower led to the establishment

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67 Hereafter, the names of the two railroads and canal will be shortened. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad will be referred to as the B&O. The Winchester and Potomac Railroad will be abbreviated as the W&P. The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal will be referred to as the C&O.
of different enterprises, including cooperages, cotton mills, iron works, and blacksmith shops. Furthermore, grist mills and sawmills also harnessed the waterpower offered by local streams to grind locally grown wheat and cutting timber. The C&amp;O Canal relied upon the Potomac River to transport goods from the upper Potomac Valley to the markets of Georgetown and Alexandria. The cement mill in Shepherdstown not only used local trees to fire their kilns and waterpower to operate their mill, but the company also utilized natural limestone as the main ingredient for their product. Besides diverting water from the Potomac River to power their industry, the Federal Armory and Arsenal also cleared timber from their woodlots located on Maryland and Loudon Heights for charcoal to maintain their fires and to build gun stocks. The abundance of natural resources within Jefferson County persuaded President George Washington to promote Harper’s Ferry as a location for the establishment of a federal armory.\(^{68}\)

Advocating for the creation of several federal armories at the end of the eighteenth century, President Washington’s decision to place a federal armory at Harper’s Ferry represented the first significant industrial attempt within Jefferson County and the primary component of the region’s federal economy. Although encountering opposition from his own Cabinet regarding the selection of Harper’s Ferry, Washington attempted to convince his naysayers by extolling the location’s natural resources. Trying to persuade Secretary of State Timothy Pickering about Harper’s Ferry, Washington argued that, “It has been represented to me, that this spot affords every advantage that could be wished

\(^{68}\) Dunaway, 168; Quinith Janssen, *Harpers Ferry Floods!* (Shepherdstown: Specialty Binding and Printing Company, 1985), 17; and Gilbert, 5. Dunaway characterizes Jefferson County as being a “resource-dependent county” since the area needed to import natural resources such as coal, iron, and salt.
for water-works to any extent, and that no place is more capable of complete defence
[sic] at small expense.”

In another letter to Pickering, Washington continued advocating for his preferred location, describing the area as being “the most eligible spot on the whole river.” Even after leaving the presidency, Washington remained committed to his plan as he commended the natural virtues of Harper’s Ferry in letters to Secretary of War James McHenry and Alexander Hamilton. Washington wrote to these men “that there is not a spot in the United States” that “combines more, or greater requisites” for a federal arsenal than at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. His letters illustrate his determined interest in promoting the region’s industrial development, as he emphasized the “centrality” of Harper’s Ferry “in the midst of furnaces and forges of the best iron,” the water power of the Shenandoah River, the region’s location “inaccessible by an enemy,” and it being “open to inland navigation in all directions” including “to the shipping Port at the Federal City, & water transportation to the Western Country,” and “for the populous & plentiful country in which it lyes [sic].”

Washington also cited the availability of large forests, which could be used for

69 George Washington, The Writings of George Washington; Being His Correspondence, Addresses, Messages, and Other Papers, Official and Private, Selected and Published from the Original Manuscripts; with a Life of the Author, ed. Jared Sparks, vol. 11 (Boston: Russell, Shattuck and Williams, 1836), 69-70. While advocating for Harpers Ferry, Washington also admitted to Pickering in the same letter that “from my own knowledge, I can speak of the eligibleness [sic] of this situation for a public arsenal; but, as I have never examined it very attentively, I am not able to speak so decidedly as to the advantages of erecting works there.” Although Washington professed being unfamiliar with the proposed site in his correspondence, he possessed some geographic knowledge of the area as he owned land in Jefferson County.


charcoal, as another reason to locate the armory at Harper’s Ferry. Commissioned by Washington and the United States War Department to determine a suitable southern location for the armory, Colonel Stephen Rochfontaine identified potential flooding and the lack of flat land as liabilities for the Harper’s Ferry site. Only after recognizing the country’s overreliance on the British for weapons did the United States Congress support building an armory at Harper’s Ferry.

Following Congress’s approval, surveyors needed to determine the precise location for the industry and begin construction of the industrial complex. Secretary of War McHenry dispatched the Armory’s first superintendent, Joseph Perkin, and engineer, James Bradley, in mid-August 1798 to evaluate Harper’s Ferry’s natural landscape. Perkin and Bradley agreed to build the factory along the Potomac River, citing that the waterway’s drop of twenty-seven feet offered a stronger current, and therefore could generate more power, than the fourteen foot drop of the Shenandoah River. The level plot of land chosen by Perkin and Bradley served as a stark contrast to the town’s

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predominantly hillside property. After determining the industry’s location, construction of the Federal Armory and Arsenal began in 1799 with workers completing several structures by the end of the year. The preliminary construction phase also included the creation of a mill race that brought water from the Potomac River to power the Armory’s five breast-water wheels. In addition to the mill race, workers also built a dam on the Potomac River to provide the industry with accessible water. Despite the initial efforts to harness this waterpower, the Armory did not gain complete access to the Potomac River until Lewis Wernwag built a new dam during the 1820s. An 1821 description of the Armory included a reference to the new waterworks, “…a canal is dug, about 1 ¼ mile in length, at the head of which is a dam made across the river of very large stones, lately repair’d & improve’d; this water is for the use of the shops, to turn the machinery for boring, grinding, polishing & turning gun stocks & barrels.” Even after Wernwag completed this structural improvement, the industry continued to experience difficulties with maintaining its energy source. The freezing of the waterway and the continual threat of flooding plagued the Armory throughout its entire existence. For example, the Armory encountered significant damage to its machines and buildings in 1852 from rising flood waters. Once constructed and operational, the Federal Armory and Arsenal began attracting a diversified workforce to fill their labor needs.

73 “Harpers Ferry History, 1821,” A&M 374, WVRHC.

74 Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 39, 42, 43-45, 48-50; Gilbert, Waterpower, 8, 26, 32; Whisker, 10, 11, 14-15, 53-54; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 28; Michael W. Caplinger, Bridges Over Time: A Technological Context for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Main Stem at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia (Morgantown: Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology, 1997), 9; and Janssen, 15. In the 1830s, Wernwag made additional improvements to the dam and widened the mill race to increase water flow. The 1852 flood not only impacted the Federal Armory and Arsenal, but also
The Armory’s initial labor force represented a varied group of workers including gunsmiths who relocated to Jefferson County and county residents. The diversity exemplified within the Armory’s workforce resembled the ethnic differences found throughout Jefferson County’s white population. Similar to eighteenth century emigration patterns, the Armory attracted Northern gunsmiths, including some from Philadelphia and Maryland, to relocate to the area. Like those who emigrated during the previous century, these laborers traveled along the Great Wagon Road to reach Jefferson County. Besides Northerners, some workers originated from the New London, Virginia magazine. Having been previously employed at the New London magazine, Harper’s Ferry superintendent Joseph Perkin possessed a familiarity with these men. In addition to Northern and Virginian laborers, a number of newly arrived European immigrants, many of whom possessed specialized artisan skills, sought employment at the Armory. The emigration of these different labor groups created tensions within the Harper’s Ferry as some white residents perceived these workers as being “foreigners” who sought to pilfer the highly competitive jobs from county inhabitants. Despite this initial surge of “foreigners,” by the 1820s the majority of the labor force originated from Jefferson County. County residents who received jobs at the Armory often had family members already working at the industry or were connected politically to a group of families and business associates known as the “Junto.” Consisting of four prominent families, specifically the Stubblefields, Beckhams, Wagers, and Stephensons, the “Junto”

numerous buildings throughout the town as nearly every building on Potomac and Shenandoah Streets experienced damage.
controlled a significant portion of the town’s mercantile businesses. In addition to employing white laborers, the Armory’s workforce also included a smaller number of African American slaves and free blacks.\(^{75}\)

Whether rented or hired, African American slaves and free blacks performed peripheral tasks at the Armory. Previous slave insurrections, such as Nat Turner’s Rebellion in 1831, led Jefferson County slaveholders to fear that African Americans, both enslaved and free, could gain direct access to arms if they participated in the manufacturing of the weapons. Therefore to ease the slaveholders’ concerns, the Federal Armory and Arsenal prohibited African American males from producing any weapons. Company records indicate that local slave owners rented their slaves to the Armory to serve as carpenters, quarrymen, wagoner, or cartmen. For example, William Thompson rented his slave, Jim, in 1848 to the business. Free African American males labored as “canal lock-keepers, plasterers, quarrymen, and stonemasons,” as well as boatmen and draymen.\(^{76}\) Free African American women also received jobs as cooks, laundresses, and

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\(^{75}\) Everhart and Sullivan, 13; Clark, *History of Manufacturers*, vol. 1, 400-401; Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory*, 40, 57-61; Dunaway, 269; John Alexander Williams, *West Virginia: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1976), 48; Paul A. Shackel, “Memorializing Landscapes and the Civil War in Harpers Ferry,” in *Look to the Earth: Historical Archaeology and the American Civil War*, eds. Clarence R. Geier, Jr. and Susan E. Winter (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 258; and Theriault, 59. Williams argues that the presence of immigrant labor indicated that Harpers Ferry was at one point an important industrial settlement. Among the Harpers Ferry armory workers who came from Philadelphia included Thomas Anneley, William Gardner, Miles Todd, Frederick Oswan, and James Greer. In regards to those Harpers Ferry armorers who previously worked with Pennsylvanian or Maryland gunsmiths, many of these laborers were considered to be knowledgeable gunsmiths in their own rights. Included among these early armorers were Michael Gumpf, George Zorger, Jacob Hawken, George Nunnemacker, Christian Kreps, and Marine T. Wickham. Wickham later became a Master Armorer at Harpers Ferry Armory and Arsenal. John Resor and Peter Resor, who owned a gun shop in Hagerstown, Maryland, were among the gunsmiths who originated from the nearby region.

housekeepers. The implementation of slave labor benefitted both the Armory and slaveholders as the business could utilize slave labor without having to invest in slaves while slave owners received an income for their slaves. As production rates grew during the nineteenth century, the number of workers employed at the Armory also increased.  

Under the supervision of Joseph Perkin, the Harpers Ferry Armory and Arsenal began manufacturing small arms in 1800. Producing 293 muskets in 1801, Armory employees increased their production rates the following year to 1,472 weapons. In 1807, the armory employed sixty-seven people, but that number rose to one hundred men the following year. The increased number of workers led the yearly production to exceed three thousand stand of arms. By 1810, the number of employees almost doubled with 197 laborers manufacturing weapons. Initially individual artisans crafted the guns by hand with each piece reflecting the personality and craftsmanship of the skilled worker. The lack of standardization at the Harpers Ferry Armory, however, made it difficult for soldiers to repair their weapons. Additionally, the quality of these weapons did not meet federal expectations as Secretary of War William Eustis wrote to Armory superintendent James Stubblefield on July 15, 1809 instructing Stubblefield to “make it your duty to establish the most rigid inspection and proof of all arms hereafter manufactured at

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Technological advancements shifted the production of arms at the Armory from being hand-crafted to laborers assembling weapons via machinery. Although these new machines, such as Thomas Blanchard’s gunstock machine, assisted in the quality and quantity of the weapons, laborers expressed concerns that arms-making had become a mechanized process. The incorporation of labor-saving machinery led to increased production rates as between 1829 and 1839, the Armory produced annually over ten thousand muskets and two thousand rifles. Although the armory maintained consistent production rates throughout the antebellum period, the Harpers Ferry industry never exceeded the production rates of its sister industry at Springfield, Massachusetts. Employee numbers continued to grow throughout the antebellum period with the armory workforce consistently numbering over three hundred laborers. The industry employed nearly 400 laborers during the early months of 1859, but a reduction in the Armory’s budget forced Superintendent Alfred Barbour to reduce the workforce to 250 laborers by the time of John Brown’s Raid. The growing number of federal employees provided the consumer base for the local economy.

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78 Brown, Jr., Guns of Harpers Ferry, 20.

79 Ibid., 10, 14, 18, 57; Everhart and Sullivan, 13; Dunaway, 164, 166; Whisker, 11, 12, 13, 16, 87, 89, 90, 91; Felicia Johnson Deyrup, Arms Makers of the Connecticut Valley: A Regional Study of the Economic Development of the Small Arms Industry, 1798-1870 (York: G. Shumway, 1970), 13; Shackel, Culture Change, 63, 83; Charles W. Snell, The Business Enterprises and Commercial Development of Harpers Ferry’s Lower Town Area, 1803 to 1861 (Denver: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1973), 7A, 7B; Elizabeth Cometti and Festus P. Summers, eds., The Thirty-Fifth State: A Documentary History of West Virginia (Morgantown: West Virginia University Library, 1966), 208; Theriault, 59; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 28-30; and Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 22-23, 67, 117-118, 137, 173. Whisker’s study identifies the first master armorer as being Joseph Perkins, thereby adding an “s” to his last name. Snell’s work indicates that the Armory employed seventy-one workers in 1807. Although several studies provide examples of the weaponry produced at the Federal Armory, an extensive list cannot be compiled since company records were lost after Federal troops set fire to the industry as they evacuated their position on April 19, 1861. For an extended financial comparison of the Harpers Ferry and Springfield armories, see Stephen V. Benét, ed., A Collection of Annual Reports and Other Important
As the Federal Armory and Arsenal continued to expand during the nineteenth century, Harper’s Ferry’s economy grew and diversified. Prior to the Armory, the town consisted of several houses, one general store, and one sawmill. Many of the businesses that formed during this period offered goods and services to the growing number of Armory workers and their families. A number of these initial enterprises, including a tavern, hotel, and several stores, were built on the “Wager Reserve,” a plot of land owned by the heirs of Robert Harper. A traveler to the region in 1821 referred to these businesses as being “a handsome monopoly” for the Wager heirs. Located near the Federal Armory and Arsenal, the lower portion of town served as the ideal location for businesses as they sought to provide goods and services to the industrial workers and their families. As the Armory’s labor force continued to increase during the antebellum period, the number of mercantile stores in Harper’s Ferry also grew. While there existed seven businesses in the lower part of town in 1825, there were forty-three stores within Harper’s Ferry at the time of John Brown’s Raid. The types of services varied, including tailor shops, bookstores, dry goods stores, and drugstores. The increased number of stores allowed for more specialty shops to open as by 1859 there existed a bakery, barbershop, blacksmith shop, confectionery, shoemaker shop, lawyer offices, and tobacco

Papers, Relating to the Ordnance Department, Taken from the Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance, from Public Documents, and from Other Sources, vol. 1-2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1878). While traveling through the region in 1808, John Edwards Caldwell estimated that the Federal Armory and Arsenal contained 25,000 stand of arms. Caldwell’s account seems improbable since 1808 marked the first time that the Armory’s production rate exceeded three thousand weapons. See Caldwell, 8-9. It should be noted that the Federal Armory and Arsenal was not included within the United States census manufacturing schedules in 1840 or 1850. The absence of the Armory from the manufacturing schedules, therefore, skews the financial statistics for Jefferson County in the antebellum period.

“Harpers Ferry History, 1821,” A&M 374, WVRHC.
shops. Advertising the opening of his “shaving and hair dressing saloon” in October
1857, proprietor James Brady informed his customers that gentlemen could receive
“prompt attention” when seeking “a clean shave.”

A clothing store, Frankel Bros., Levitoch, and Hirsh, ensured its clientele that they offered a number of items including “Fine White Linen and fancy Marseilles Shirts” as well as “Fancy Goods such as Pocket Books, Combs, Brushes, etc.”

The variety of stores in Harper’s Ferry allowed consumers to purchase different items without having to travel to larger markets to procure these items. In addition to spurring the town’s commercial growth, the increasing number of Armory laborers required the industry to build additional homes to house these workers.

Unable to provide adequate housing for the growing number of workers, Federal Armory and Arsenal officials were forced to address the problem of limited housing options. Eclipsing two hundred employees by the 1820s, the lack of housing forced some

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82 Ibid., 29.

83 Snell, Business Enterprises, 4, 7B, 18-19; Susan E. Winter, “Social Dynamics and Structure in Lower Town Harpers Ferry,” in An Archaeology of Harpers Ferry’s Commercial and Residential District, Historical Archaeology, eds. Paul A. Shackel and Susan E. Winter, vol. 28, no. 4 (Ann Arbor: Braun-Brumfield, Inc., 1994), 16, 17; Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 33-34; Whisker, 80; Jones, Harpers Ferry, 42; Shackel, Culture Change, 30-32, 39, 88-90; and Everhart and Sullivan, 13. Although Snell states that there were four businesses within Harper’s Ferry in 1803, his compiled data only indicates three businesses. Snell cites a larger number of stores in Harper’s Ferry than Winter and Shackel. This statistical difference could result from Snell including storerooms within his data set. Snell demonstrates that the number of stores in Harper’s Ferry progressively increased during the antebellum period. Snell’s numbers indicate nine businesses in 1825; twenty-two in 1835; thirty-five in 1840; and forty-three in 1859. Winter attributes some of the business growth during the 1830s to the dividing of the Wager Reserve. After James B. Wager declared bankruptcy in the 1830s, the family plot was divided into six plots. The loss of this land ended the Wager family’s mercantile monopoly and allowed several Irish residents to establish businesses on this subdivision.
families to jointly rent homes while other employees slept on the second floor and lofts of
Armory buildings until better living arrangements could be procured. Prior to 1815,
industry officials expected workers to provide their own housing accommodations. The
presence of unsanitary living conditions, as well as some laborers becoming sick with
“bilious fever,” created retention problems for Armory superintendent James
Stubblefield.\footnote{Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory*, 76. Workers who suffered from the bilious fever attributed their sickness to the perceived unhealthy natural environment, particularly the presence of water and sweltering high temperatures.} The lack of housing options and declining retention rates forced the federal government to construct government housing for Armory workers on hillside properties that overlooked the industry. As a result of this building campaign, the number of houses increased from fifteen in 1810 to eighty-nine in 1822. By the 1840s, the number of houses escalated to “nearly two hundred dwellings for laborers.” In addition to these new houses, some employees also received “garden patches,” thereby allowing families to grow their own food.\footnote{Dunaway, 269-270.} Depending upon the size and condition of the structure, the federal government charged workers an average of sixty to eighty dollars annually for this housing. Conversely, the federal government provided Armory officials with rent-free housing. The proximity of these houses to the industrial complex placed workers within a short walking distance of their place of employment. In addition to the establishment of new businesses and homes, the town’s social landscape also began to expand during the antebellum period.\footnote{Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory*, 75, 77; Whisker, 43, 53, 80, 82; Winter, “Social Dynamics and Structure,” 16; Snell, *Business Enterprises*, 4, 7A; Shackel, *Culture Change*, 30; Paul A. Shackel, “Cultural Landscape and Historic Structures Survey,” in *Domestic Responses to Nineteenth-Century*}
The growing population within Harper’s Ferry contributed to the emergence of new educational and religious opportunities. In 1825, the Methodist Episcopal Church became the first church to provide formal ministry services for town residents. Prior to opening of this church, Armory workers and their families worshiped at a facility within the Federal Armory and Arsenal complex. Less than a decade after the opening of the Methodist Episcopal Church, St. Peter’s Catholic Church began welcoming parishioners. During the antebellum period, several other denominations established congregations, including the Presbyterians (1841); Methodist Protestants (1843); Lutherans (1850); and the Episcopalians (1851). Although a formal educational system did not initially exist in Harper’s Ferry, the Federal Armory and Arsenal assumed some responsibility for educating the families of their workers. Armory superintendent James Stubblefield “recommended & encourag’d a plan for the Education of their children & four teachers are engag’d ‘to rear the tender plants & teach the young ideas how to shoot.’ The pupils amount to 200.” Besides providing educational instruction, “there is also a circulating library for the use of those inhabitants, who are members & several gentlemen in the circumadjacent [sic] parts of the town; it contains 300 volumes on various & very interesting subjects, & is calculated to diffuse useful knowledge & afford employment for...
leisure hours.”

The operator of Hall’s Rifle Works, John Hall, also sought to educate the children of his employees, but Hall’s school experienced difficulty in maintaining a student body or identifying available teachers. The educational movement within Harper’s Ferry continued to grow throughout the antebellum period as by 1848 there existed four schoolhouses. The establishment of religious and educational services allowed Armory workers to cultivate a sense of belonging to the community. By participating within these organizations, the white populace created a connection amongst each other and a perceived social investment within the community. The establishment of another arms-producing factory in Harper’s Ferry in the 1820s expanded the influence of the federal economy.

Situated on Hall’s Island and along the Shenandoah River, the establishment of Hall’s Rifle Works in 1817 strengthened the presence of the federal economy within Jefferson County. Seeking to improve the accuracy of guns used by state militias, the United States War Department hired John Hancock Hall, a gunsmith from Yarmouth,

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87 “Harpers Ferry History, 1821,” A&M 374, WVRHC.

88 Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 330-331; Christopher C. Fennell, “History of St. Peter’s Catholic Church & School, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia,” accessed January 7, 2015, http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/harper/StPeterhistory1.html; and Shackel, Culture Change, 134, 165, 166-167. St. Peter’s Catholic Church represented the only religious institution built during the nineteenth century that was not located on government property. Citing 1828 as the date for the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Fennell identifies the Free Church as being the first church in Harper’s Ferry. The Free Church remained in operation until 1845 when it burnt down. St. John’s Episcopal Church was built at the site of the former Free Church in 1852. Identifying schools and churches as being “agencies of acculturation,” Smith attributes the initial lack of churches and schools within Harper’s Ferry as creating a sense of isolation for its residents. Shackel suggests that the initial lack of formal education within Harper’s Ferry may have resulted from the town being isolated from other communities and that families believed in the traditional role of providing educational opportunities for their children. Besides Jefferson County, Ohio and Kanawha counties were the only other counties in present-day West Virginia that provided free schooling prior to the Civil War. George Ellis Moore, A Banner in the Hills: West Virginia’s Statehood (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), 8.
Maine, in 1817 to manufacture breech-loading rifles. Prior to his federal employment, Hall made several technological advancements within gunsmithing, including the development of a breech-loading flintlock rifle that discharged an average of eight shots per minute. By using precision machinery, Hall also created the process for making interchangeable parts. The production of interchangeable parts allowed gunsmiths to replace gun components with greater ease. Writing James Barbour on January 31, 1827, Col. George Bomford praised the quality of Hall’s machinery. “The machinery constructed for, and used in fabricating Hall’s rifles, executes the work with such exactness that the component parts of one hundred rifles made some years past have been joined to other parts made recently without the least difficulty,” stated Bomford. Therefore Hall’s meticulousness allowed for “all the parts fitting as exactly as if each had been separately adjusted to the particular rifle thus formed from the scattered members.”

Although Hall’s precision machinery and interchangeable parts represented an advancement within gun manufacturing, his innovations also signified a threat to the craftsmanship traditionally associated with weapons production. Relocating to Harper’s Ferry in 1819, Hall brought his advanced methodologies with him.

Although Hall’s Rifle Works did not employ as many workers as the Federal Armory and Arsenal, the industry still contributed to the overall growth of the region’s

89 Benét, vol. 1, 150.

90 Jones, Harpers Ferry, 52-53; Gutheim, 164; Shackel, Culture Change, 35-36; and Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 45. While Hall furthered the development of interchangeable parts, Springfield Armory’s superintendent, Roswell Lee, was the first person to mass-produce muskets that contained interchangeable parts. James Worsham, “Harpers Ferry Armory and the Quest for Interchangeable Parts Manufacture,” [1996], p. 2-3, 7, 11, Ms2000-023, WVSA.
federal economy. The United States War Department contracted Hall to produce one thousand guns at a salary of sixty dollars per month along with a one dollar royalty fees for each arm produced. Using an abandoned sawmill as his first industrial site, Hall transformed the former sawmill into a machine shop and built a two-story stone blacksmith shop. The growth of Hall’s Rifle Works spurred economic and residential development on Hall’s Island. Passing by Hall’s Island during the early years of operation, a traveler remarked about the growing number of buildings at the location as there was a “tavern, one store, & a warehouse on the Potomac, with a number of dwelling houses.”

Once Hall built the precision machines needed to manufacture the rifles, his employment rates began to increase. Whereas Hall employed sixteen workers in 1822, this number increased to sixty-one laborers by the next decade. Although the size of the work force fluctuated during the antebellum period, nearly sixty people remained employed at Hall’s Rifle Works at the time of John Brown’s Raid.

Similar to the Federal Armory and Arsenal, Hall’s Rifle Works sought to harness the hydropower of the area’s waterways. Unfortunately, Hall’s Rifle Works also experienced problems trying to utilize this natural resource. Since the Shenandoah

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91 Quoted in Dunaway, 269.

River’s current could not generate sufficient power to operate Hall’s machinery, Hall built a dam on waterway. Despite this improvement, Hall still found that the waterway did not provide enough power. Writing to Chief of Ordnance, Col. George Bomford on September 18, 1832, Hall complained that “Our machines are, at times, almost entirely stopped for want of water, and our business is greatly retarded by it.”\(^{93}\) Hall looked to solve his dilemma by constructing a canal about a mile and a quarter long from the Potomac River. The new canal would transport water to Hall’s Island and provide the required amount of energy to power Hall’s machinery. Hall’s Rifle Works also suffered from the unpredictability of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers as the business experienced damage from floodwaters in 1852. In spite of these difficulties, the Federal Armory and Arsenal and Hall’s Rifle Works formed the economic foundation for Jefferson County’s federal economy throughout the antebellum period.\(^{94}\)

While arms production represented the largest manufacturing entity within the area, Jefferson County also possessed a diversified local economy. In addition to Harper’s Ferry, the communities of Virginius Island, Charlestown, and Shepherdstown contained various commercial and industrial enterprises. Originally considered part of Harper’s Ferry, Virginius Island became an incorporated town on January 8, 1827. An 1821 account of the island depicted it as “containing 11 acres of fertile land, on which

\(^{93}\) Quoted in Gilbert, *Waterpower*, 47.

\(^{94}\) Hearn, *Six Years of Hell*, 3; Bushong, *History of Jefferson County*, 78; Gilbert, *Waterpower*, 47; Whisker, 46; Shackel, *Culture Change*, 34; Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory*, 276; and Brown, Jr., *Guns of Harpers Ferry*, 92. After Hall left the rifle factory in 1840, Armory superintendent John Symington ordered the demolition of the original buildings at Hall’s Rifle Works and the Federal Armory and Arsenal. By tearing down these buildings, Symington wanted to centralize the manufacturing process while increasing the company’s production levels by incorporating new machines.
there are a dwelling house and mill; it is joined to the main land by a bridge 140 ft. long.**95 The mill mentioned within the description may have belonged to the island’s first proprietor, John Peacher. Sometimes referred to as Peacher’s Island or Stubblefield’s Island, Peacher sold his property along the Shenandoah River to Armory superintendent James Stubblefield in 1823 for $15,000. Only concerned with controlling the potential waterpower near Virginius Island, the Federal Armory and Arsenal sold the physical island in 1824 to four local investors: Fontaine Beckham, Townsend Beckham, Edward Wager, and Lewis Wernwag. Following this land sale, residential and commercial growth started to occur on Virginius Island.**96

During the late 1820s and early 1830s, Virginius Island transformed into a vibrant industrial community that supplemented the region’s local economy. The economic foundation that began during the antebellum period continued to prosper until the outbreak of the Civil War. Several enterprises commenced operations during the early nineteenth century, including a machine shop, sawmill, carriage factory, flax seed mill, forge, tannery, cooper shop, and clothing factory. Many of the businesses on Virginius Island looked to fulfill local consumer demands rather than produce goods to sell at

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**95 “Harpers Ferry History, 1821,” A&M 374, WVRHC.**

**96 Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 87; Janssen, 18; Maureen DeLay Joseph, Perry Carpenter Wheelock, Deborah Warshaw, and Andrew Kriemelmeyer, Cultural Landscape Report Virginius Island Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1993), 3.8, 4.6-4.7; Gilbert, Waterpower, 52; Shackel, Culture Change, 33; and Theriault, 71. The incorporation act for Virginius Island identified Lewis Wernwag, Fontaine Beckham, Townsend Beckham, John S. Gallagher, and John G. Unseld as the appointed trustees for the town. Peacher originally purchased the land from Daniel McPherson in 1817. Besides a grist mill, Peacher also built a house and planted an orchard. Gilbert contends that Peacher built his grist mill in either 1822 or 1823, but the 1821 account suggests an earlier date. Peacher also operated a grist mill north of Harpers Ferry at the Keeptryst furnace property.**
external markets. In addition to the companies listed above, several arms-related enterprises also opened their doors. Comparable to the cultivation of wheat, weapons production created an inter-related industrial network which resulted in the creation of other businesses. On Virginius Island, Hugh Gilleece operated an iron foundry and slitting mill while Lewis Wernwag, and later his son John, owned a precision machine shop. Both Gilleece and the Wernwags produced casts for the Harpers Ferry Armory since the industry did not operate its own foundry. This industrial growth on Virginius Island also spurred an increase in the town’s population. Whereas eighty-nine people resided on the island in 1830, this number increased to 199 people by 1860. Similar to other Jefferson County industries, a number of enterprises on Virginius Island relied upon the area’s waterways as an energy source.97

The Virginius Island industries that were reliant upon hydropower experienced issues comparable to other water dependent businesses within Jefferson County. Among

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97 Gilbert, Waterpower, 52-53, 54, 56, 99; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 30-32; Caplinger, 9; Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 143, 146, 285; David Hardgrave Hannah, Archeological Excavations on Virginius Island, Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, 1966-1968 (Harpers Ferry: Harpers Ferry Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center, 1969), 123; Whisker, 40; Richard Sanders Allen, Covered Bridges of the Middle Atlantic States (Brattleboro: The Stephen Greene Press, 1959), 16; John S. Gallaher Journal, 1833-1836, Mss. MsV Ane1, Swem Library, College of William and Mary Special Collections, Williamsburg, Virginia, hereafter cited as WMSC; 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; Janssen, 18-23; and Snell, Business Enterprises, 10B. Several years after purchasing land on Virginius Island, Townsend Beckham opened a bark mill. In addition to this tannery, Beckham also owned a flax oil mill with James Stubblefield serving as a silent partner. When the flax oil mill closed in 1835, Hugh Gilleece converted the business into an iron foundry. On November 5, 1835, Gilleece paid John S. Gallaher, editor of the Virginia Free Press, for an advertisement in the newspaper promoting his new business. Gilleece established a productive business by 1850 as he employed eight men and produced an annual product value of $12,000. Gilleece sold his foundry to Abraham Herr in 1855. Gilleece also leased land on the island from Beckham, later purchasing the parcel for a chopping mill to process rye and corn. Lewis Wernwag operated a machine shop, which produced turning lathes and saws for the Federal Armory, and sawmill on the island. Wernwag sold the sawmill and machine shop to his son, John, in 1833. John Wernwag continued operating the two businesses with business partner and brother-in-law Jesse Schofield under the name, “Wernwag and Schofield.”
the Virginius Island enterprises that relied upon hydropower were a flour mill, iron
foundry, machine shop, sawmill, carriage factory, blacksmith shop, cooper shop, and two
cotton mills. Fontaine Beckham, who owned a grist mill on Virginius Island, boasted of
the island’s natural benefits in an 1832 newspaper advertisement. The *Virginia Free
Press and Farmers’ Repository* announcement bragged, “The water power is not
surpassed by any situation in the country, and a sufficiency may be obtained for almost
eligible purpose. The advantages of this concern, will so completely strike any intelligent
observer, that is needless to enlarge upon them. A man of enterprise cannot fail to turn
them to good account.”98 Beckham likely exaggerated the island’s hydropower potential
as additional structures were later built to increase the amount of energy output. At least
one canal, known as the Wernwag Canal, helped to direct water to industries located on
the island. David Hargrave Hannah posits that he potentially discovered a second canal,
which he named the South Canal, during an archaeological excavation of Virginius Island
in the 1960s. Hannah believes that the South Canal may have serviced a blacksmith shop
on the island. In addition to these man-made structures, businesses on Virginius Island
also constructed flumes, or artificial water channels, during the antebellum period to
divert additional water from the Shenandoah River. The building of these different
structures indicates that the industries on Virginius Island struggled to maintain

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98 *Virginia Free Press*, August 16, 1832; and Gilbert, *Waterpower*, 10. On July 19, 1832, the
*Virginia Free Press and Farmers’ Repository* shortened its name to the *Virginia Free Press*. 

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consistent energy levels. Included within the industries that relied upon hydropower as their main source of energy was Herr’s mill.99

Abraham Herr’s mill represented one of Jefferson County’s most prosperous flour mills. Abraham Herr, along with his brother John, purchased a parcel of land on Virginius Island in 1844 for the purpose of operating a flour mill. After buying out his brother in 1848, Herr later expanded his landholdings by acquiring most of the land on Virginius Island to expand his flour mill and build houses for himself and his employees. Additionally, Herr diversified his industrial portfolio by taking over ownership of Gilleece’s iron foundry, renaming the business Herr and Snap Foundry, and invested in the island’s infrastructure by improving the hydropower capabilities. Although Herr only employed five men at his business in 1850, his mill represented a vital component within the regional and local economy as his company reported an annual product value of $100,000. By the following decade, Herr doubled the number of employees at his mill and increased his annual product value to $233,400. Herr’s business also supported Frederick Bremmerman’s cooperage as Herr used flour barrels produced at the cooper shop. In addition to Herr’s mill, there also existed several cotton mills on Virginius Island.100

99 Gilbert, Waterpower, 10; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 30-32; Shackel, Culture Change, 12; Williams, West Virginia, 31; and Hannah, 88-89. Fontaine Beckham rented his mill to a group of investors known as “Rowland, Heflebower & Company,” during the late 1830s. The group agreed to purchase the mill from Fontaine Beckham, but before the transaction occurred, the mill burnt down in February 1839 along with 20,000 bushels of wheat. Fontaine Beckham also owned a dry goods store in Harpers Ferry and the coopers shop on Virginius Island.

Constructed in the late 1840s, the two cotton mills on Virginius Island only briefly contributed to Jefferson County’s local economy. Following the death of Lewis Wernwag in 1843, Wernwag’s son, John, and his son-in-law, Jesse Schofield decided to sell his Virginius Island property. Described as being a “splendid and well known property,” the real estate listing boasted the Wernwag’s parcel also possessed “improved water power unequalled at this time in the Basin of the Potomac,” as well as “having a natural dam distributing nearly all the water contained in the Shenandoah River, over a fall of 12 feet.” The advertisement concluded by telling potential buyers that Virginius Island proved to be a region conducive to industrial production and “is not surpassed by any in the United States.”\textsuperscript{101} Unable to locate any prospective buyers, commissioning agent, along with several other local businessmen, decided to purchase the parcel. The group formed the Harpers Ferry & Shenandoah Manufacturing Company with the intention of building two cotton mills on Virginius Island. The \textit{Spirit of Jefferson} enthusiastically promoted Giddings’s new business venture, telling its readers on September 3, 1847, “the busy Spindle and Loom are about to send forth as fine shirtings and sheetings as any other establishment of the kind in the country…and surely we should hail the day when the first yarn is twisted as a bright and glorious epoch in the

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\item[\textsuperscript{101}] Gilbert, \textit{Waterpower}, 95-96; and Janssen, 22.
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history of the Valley of Virginia.”\textsuperscript{102} Opened in 1848, Gidding’s four-story cotton factory employed seventy people by 1850, including thirty-five men and women respectively. The 1850 manufacturing schedule reported an annual product value of $32,000 for the cotton factory. Unfortunately for Giddings, by the mid-1850s, the business went bankrupt, after which Abraham Herr purchased the factory and used the building as a storage place for his grain. Similar to Gidding’s cotton mill, the second cotton factory on Virginius Island did not experience any long-term economic success.\textsuperscript{103}

The second cotton factory, which opened in 1849, was owned by Ira Stanbrough and John R. Holliday. Known as the Stanbrough & Johnson Mill or Valley Mills, the business only employed six males and eight females in 1850. In comparison to Giddings’ cotton mill, the Stanbrough and Johnson Mill also earned less revenue as the business only recorded an annual product value of $22,000 in 1850. Reportedly, weavers from England, Ireland, and Scotland moved to the region seeking employment at this cotton factory. After making a trip to the business in August 1849, a reporter from the \textit{Virginia Free Press} described the Stanbrough & Johnson Mill as employing “some of the best and most experienced hands now in this country—some of them from establishments in Manchester, England.” The correspondent also estimated that “this factory is capable of

\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Spirit of Jefferson}, September 3, 1847.

\textsuperscript{103} Gilbert, \textit{Waterpower}, 100-101, 105, 112; and 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule. Besides Giddings, John Wernwag, Jesse Schofield, Gerard B. Wager, and Calvin Page formed the initial investors of the Harpers Ferry & Shenandoah Manufacturing Company. Although Giddings’s mill employed seventy people, the owner initially had anticipated on employing between eighty-five and one hundred laborers.
manufacturing 400 lbs. of Cotton yarn, 100 lbs. of Batting, and 50 lbs. of Candle wick per day.”

Despite the potential enthusiasm surrounding the Stanbrough & Johnson Mill, a fire destroyed the business in 1852. In addition to the different types of mills found on Virginius Island, a number of sawmills and grist mills also contributed to the local economy.

Located throughout Jefferson County, sawmills and grist mills provided important services to county residents. As noted in the first chapter, both types of mills could be found within the area prior to the nineteenth century. Employing a smaller number of laborers, especially in comparison to the Federal Armory and Hall’s Rifle Works, sawmills and grist mills were located near larger watercourses, such as the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, for their needed energy source. These mills also were positioned near settlements so the businesses could provide lumber and grain to the surrounding communities. The increased number of sawmills or grist mills within Jefferson County during the early nineteenth century served as an indicator that the area was becoming further developed. The 1840 United States manufacturing schedule reported forty sawmills in operation throughout Jefferson County. This number decreased to ten sawmills by 1860, thereby suggesting the declining need for cut timber. Several of the sawmills listed in the 1860 census not only cut lumber, but also provided other services to

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104 Virginia Free Press, August 2, 1849.

105 Gilbert, Waterpower, 109; Moyer and Shackel, 5-6; and 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule.
the community by functioning as flour and chopping mills. The significant production of wheat and corn by Jefferson County farmers contributed to an increased number of grist mills in the antebellum period.  

Similar to sawmills, flour or grist mill owners placed their businesses near local farmers and waterways to maximize the location of their services. Reliant upon water power to ground their grain, flour mills were susceptible to weather-related conditions. Periods of drought, flooding, and frozen waterways negatively influenced the functionality of these businesses. To improve their ability of harnessing the hydropower, some mills dammed a nearby watercourse or created a mill race to divert water to an undershot water wheel. Waterfront property along both the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers served as excellent locations for the establishment of grist mills as both waterways served as adequate energy sources. Individual families also opened grist mills near smaller bodies of water, such as the Strider family who operated a grist mill along Elk Run. The grist mills initially built in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provided services to local farmers rather than for commercial purposes. The 1840 census returns indicated that eighteen flour mills were in operation throughout Jefferson County. By the following decade, twenty-three people listed miller as their primary profession.

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106 Cowdrey, 91; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 15; Danhof, 31; Michael Williams, Americans and their Forests: A Historical Geography (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 94; Clark, History of Manufacturers, vol. 1, 75, 175; Brooks, 58-60; United States Census Office, Statistics of the United States of America, Collected and Returned by the Marshals of the Several Judicial Districts under the Thirteenth Section of the Act of Taking the Sixth Census; Corrected at the Department of State (Washington, D.C.: Blair and Rives, 1841; reprint, New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990), 236-237; and 1860 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule. The manufacturing schedule only contains enterprises whose annual value of products exceeded $500, thus there could have been other sawmills not included within the census data.
While this number slightly declined to twenty by the taking of the 1860 census, flour mills remained a strong component of the local economy. 107

Besides flour mills and sawmills, another type of mill operated in Shepherdstown. Located along the Potomac River, the Shepherdstown cement mill originally functioned as a grist mill. Built in 1827, Dr. Henry Boteler and his business partner, George Reynolds, continued grinding grain, but also converted part of their operations into a cement mill. Using natural limestone found within the Potomac’s riverbanks, the cement mill pulverized the limestone to produce hydraulic cement. Boteler and Reynolds’ business represented only the fourth such establishment in the United States at this time. In 1829, the business partners erected a small test kiln to determine the quality of the natural limestone. After ascertaining the positive features of the product, Boteler and Reynolds built a series of three smaller kilns. These connected kilns produced an average of four hundred bushels of natural cement daily. As production rates increased, the operators of the mill erected a six-kiln vertical structure, which was lined with fire brick, to meet manufacturing demands. Production rates increased after the establishment of this new kiln with the industry averaging three hundred barrels of cement per day. Although the business never employed as many laborers as the Federal Armory and Arsenal, the Shepherdstown cement mill still represented an important enterprise within

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the local economy. According to the 1850 United States census manufacturing schedule, the cement mill employed nine workers and generated an annual value product of $21,500. Similar to businesses on Virginius Island, the Shepherdstown cement mill relied upon hydropower as an energy source.108

Relying upon the Potomac River for its hydropower, the Shepherdstown cement mill experienced issues similar to other water dependent industries. The cement mill attempted to harness the power of the Potomac River by constructing a headrace system which helped to turn the grinding stones. Besides diverting water to the grinding stones, the headrace system also allowed boats traveling on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to travel back and forth to the mill. The cement mill’s dependence upon the Potomac River meant that the industry was forced to bend to the will of the watercourse. Both high and low water levels affected the mill’s operational abilities. While low water levels prevented the mill from receiving sufficient hydropower to turn the burr-stones to ground cement or grain, high water levels also prohibited the mill from operating until flood

waters receded. The Shepherdstown cement mill also encountered operational
difficulties during the winter months when the Potomac River froze over. In the attempt
to combat some of the threats posed by the waterway, mill owners built a masonry river
wall that was intended to protect the industry from rising waters. The Shepherdstown
cement mill contributed to the local and regional economies as the natural cement was
used for several regional projects.\textsuperscript{109}

Possessing the desired ability to harden underwater, the natural cement from the
Shepherdstown cement mill was used in the construction of canals, dams, and buildings.
John H. Cocke, Jr., an agent for the C&O Canal, supported using the Shepherdstown
cement as he concluded, “There will be no objection to the use of this lime on account of
the time it requires to harden when in water, since it will set as quickly as common lime,
when in the atmosphere.”\textsuperscript{110} Writing twice to Charles Fenton Mercer, president of the
C&O Canal, in January 1828, Dr. Boteler promoted his business and the large quantities
of natural cement produced by his company. Mercer obviously heeded Boteler’s urgings
as the C&O canal used the cement manufactured at the Shepherdstown cement mill when
building locks, aqueducts, culverts, and other canal structures, particularly near the
vicinity of Shepherdstown. Although the Round Top Cement Company, which was
located near Round Top, Maryland, emerged as the top cement producer for the C&O
canal in 1837, the Shepherdstown Cement Mill continued providing hydraulic cement to
the canal throughout the antebellum period. Shepherdstown cement was also used in the

\textsuperscript{109} Kemp, 22, 28-29; and Hahn and Kemp, 11, 28-29, 43.

\textsuperscript{110} Quoted in Hahn and Kemp, \textit{Cement Mills along the Potomac River}, 33-34.
construction of several federal government buildings in Washington, D.C., as well as the Washington Monument. In addition to the different mills that existed throughout Jefferson County, other small businesses contributed to the local economy.\textsuperscript{111}

Jefferson County’s local economy included a number of different businesses, including hotels, general stores, blacksmith shops, and other artisan shops. Although these companies did not employ a large number of workers, these enterprises still played a vital role within the region’s diversified economy. As noted previously, the presence of the Federal Armory and Arsenal contributed to the growing number of small businesses within Harper’s Ferry. As the Armory workforce increased, the number of commercial enterprises also grew as by 1860 there existed forty-three businesses. For example, the Wager House Hotel and Gault House Saloon offered rooms and services to passing travelers. A general store operated by the Koonce family sold a variety of items, including molasses, silk, shoes, books, and brown sugar. To accommodate the growing number of businesses in Harper’s Ferry, Armory superintendent John Symington ordered for the construction of a market house in 1846 as several vendors had established their operations too close to the Armory’s entrance. Harper’s Ferry was not the only community within the county to contain smaller businesses. In 1840, the number of retail

stores in Jefferson County was determined to be “at or above” the “national average” of “more than one store for every 297 persons.”\textsuperscript{112} This statistic suggested that the population and economic growth of Jefferson County necessitated the establishment of specialty stores to provide residents with access to consumer goods. Another publication, the 1854 edition of the \textit{Statistical Gazetteer of the State of Virginia}, considered Shepherdstown a “place of considerable trade” and described Charlestown as comprising of “3 or 4 churches, 1 academy, 1 bank, and about a dozen stores.”\textsuperscript{113} Both of these studies indicate that Jefferson County established a diversified local economy during the antebellum period.\textsuperscript{114}

The goods fabricated and services provided by county artisans and companies primarily were designated for local markets rather than being intended to be sold elsewhere. Artisans produced pottery, clocks, plows, harnesses, shuck mattresses, and wagons for the local populace. Barney Ott’s wagon business serves an example of this type of small enterprise. Employing three workers in 1850 and two laborers in 1860, Ott’s annual value production did not exceed two thousand dollars. Opening a shop in the 1820s, an unidentified blacksmith provided a number of services to the

\textsuperscript{112} Dunaway, 304.

\textsuperscript{113} Richard Edwards, ed., \textit{Statistical Gazetteer of the State of Virginia Embracing Important Topographical and Historical Information from Recent and Original Sources, together with the Results of the Last Census Population, in Most Cases, to 1854} (Richmond: privately printed, 1855), 263, 377. William G. Shade argues that the presence of a bank within a community served an important function as not every area had a banking institution. See Shade, 142.

\textsuperscript{114} Shackel, \textit{Culture Change}, 39, 76; Edward H. Phillips, \textit{The Lower Shenandoah Valley in the Civil War: The Impact of War upon the Civilian Population and upon Civil Institutions}, ed. Loving H. Phillips (Lynchburg: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1993), 10; Wellman, 4; and Koonce Family Papers, 1844-1871, Daybook of General Store, 1845-1846, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as DMR.
Shepherdstown community, including the grinding of axes, making sleigh runners, and manufacturing wagon tongues. Solomon Miller, who also began his cloth-making business in Shepherdstown during the 1820s, sold a number of cloths, including flannel, lincy cloth, and twill blankets. Smaller Jefferson County communities also maintained an artisan presence. In the community of Bardane, also known as Brown’s Shop, several craftsmen plied their trades, including Bennett Engle, a wagon maker; William Chambers, a blacksmith; and George Brantner, a wagon maker and repairer. In the town of Millville, later referred to as Keyes Switch, the Millville Manufacturing Company began operations in 1837, producing cotton, wool, hemp, flax, and silk products. In addition to the artisans who manufactured and sold their products, other Jefferson County businesses sold items obtained from external markets.\footnote{Jefferson County Blacksmith Account Book, 1826-1868, Ms79-63, WVSA; Writers’ Program, 269, 272-273; 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; 1860 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; Solomon Miller Papers, 1821-1861, Ms80-117, Folder 2, WVSA; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 43-44, 61-62; and Commonwealth of Virginia, \textit{Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia, Passed at the Session Commencing December 1, 1845 and Ending March 6, 1846 in the Seventieth Year of the Commonwealth} (Richmond: Samuel Shepherd, 1846), 125-126. The different businesses listed above do not appear in either the 1850 or 1860 manufacturing schedule, thereby indicating that each of these enterprises did not exceed five hundred dollars in their annual value product.}

Located throughout different Jefferson County communities, specialty shops and dry goods stores offered customers a variety of goods. Joseph Entler’s dry goods store provided its patrons a number of meat products, including beef, liver, mutton, and bacon. Although beef remained one of the stores’ best-selling commodities, Entler expanded his offerings by the 1850s to include brandy, rum, tobacco, coffee, linseed oil, and whale bones. Entler also offered agricultural services through his business as he noted in his
account ledger on July 10, 1854, that he weighed hay for Edmund J. Lee at a charge of twenty-five cents. The Shepherdstown enterprise not only provided services to families who lived in the community, but also to people who resided in neighboring Sharpsburg, Maryland. The account book of Harper’s Ferry resident Lydia Hall Marmion also demonstrates the accessibility that customers possessed to goods brought from external markets as she purchased cantaloupes, watermelons, syrup, and molasses from local stores. Manufacturing census schedules indicate that tobacco proprietor Solomon V. Yantis fabricated and sold 60,000 “segars [sic]” in 1860. Since Jefferson County farmers did not cultivate a significant amount of tobacco, Yantis likely purchased his materials from an outside vendor and then sold the finished product at his store. Similar to the previously described weapons industries and mills, many smaller Jefferson County businesses also relied upon hydropower.

Although littler waterways did not offer the same hydropower potential as the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, smaller watercourses still fulfilled the energy requirements of local companies. The creek that ran through the center of Shepherdstown, referred to as Town Run, provided “motive-power for several flouring mills.” Additionally, the strength of this particular watercourse allowed for the

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118 Edwards, 377.
operation of “three tanneries, three flour mills, two saw mills, a cotton factory, and a woolen mill.” Several businesses constructed “trunks” or ditches from this watercourse that would allow the enterprise to redirect water to their industrial site. The White Henkle Cotton and Woolen Factory, which was built in Shepherdstown in 1850 and continued to operate through the end of the century, relied upon Town Run as its energy source. Webb woolen mill, which was located at the corner of Princess and High Streets in Shepherdstown, also utilized Town Run for hydropower. John Kable and David Johnson, who jointly operated the Kable and Johnson woolen mill, and Colin C. Porter, proprietor of another woolen factory, used Bullskin Creek as their energy source. Whether the largest industry within the county, the Federal Armory and Arsenal, or the smallest venture, such as Entler’s dry good store, all of these Jefferson County businesses required access to reliable transportation networks to advance their financial interests.120

During the early nineteenth century, the lack of viable transportation within Jefferson County proved to be an obstacle for both farmers and businesses who wanted to

119 Adams and Watterson, III, 2.

120 Historic Shepherdstown Commission, See Shepherd’s Town, vol. III (Shepherdstown: Historic Shepherdstown Commission, 1996), 11; 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; 1860 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; Dolly Nasby, Shepherdstown (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 25; and Marianna J. Smallwood, Something about Kabletown (Kabletown: by the author, 1983), 17. The White Henkle Cotton and Woolen Factory produced tweeds, flannel, and linsey. In 1850, the mill employed twenty-two male workers and five female laborers and held an annual value product of $30,000. The Webb woolen mill was larger than the White Henkle mill as Willoughby R. Webb had sixty workers, forty male and twenty female, and produced an annual product value of $84,000. The Kable and Johnson woolen mill, listed as Jenkins, Kable, and Johnson Wool Factory on the 1852 Howell Brown map, was smaller than the White Henkle and Webb enterprises. In 1850, the Kable and Johnson mill only employed twelve people, including eleven males and one male, and generated an annual product value of $15,000. By 1860, the business was only listed under the name of David Johnson. Eight employees worked for Johnson, producing an annual product value of $9,000. Eleven male laborers worked at the Porter woolen mill in 1850. The Porter mill produced an annual value product of $18,000. By the next decade, the Porter mill consisted of twelve employees, eight male and four female, but the annual product value for the company declined to $15,000.
conduct transactions with distant markets. Without access to any transportation networks, Jefferson County residents traveled via horse or wagon on roads that oftentimes suffered from poor conditions, either from adverse weather or the lack of maintenance. Attributing the limited accessibility to Baltimore to unfavorable traveling conditions, Abraham Shepherd complained that, “We have had but little intercourse with Baltimore laterly [sic] owing to the severe winter and bad roads.”¹²¹ James S. Lane, a merchant from Shepherdstown, also commented on the difficulty of maintaining economic relationships with distant markets. Lane informed the “Gentlemen” in a February 11, 1819, letter that “we are very much afraid that we shall run out of Coffee before we can get a supply from Baltimore.”¹²² Both Shepherd and Lane indicated that the limited access to sustainable transportation hindered Jefferson County’s ability to interact with intended markets. Therefore, the establishment of transportation networks would allow farmers and merchants to access commercial ports along the Atlantic Ocean and introduce specialized products to their customers.¹²³

Jefferson County residents were not the only inhabitants who felt isolated from distant markets as Western Virginians expressed similar sentiments. As the population continued to increase within Western Virginia during the early nineteenth century, Western Virginians argued that the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains served as

¹²¹ Abraham Shepherd to James H. Shepherd, March 8, 1831, Lucas and Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Folder 1, Ms79-171, WVSA.

¹²² James S. Lane to “Gentlemen,” February 11, 1819, Benjamin T. Towner Papers, 1817-1897, Folder 1, 1817-1841, DMR.

physical barriers between the different regions. This geographical divide also facilitated a number of socio-economic and political obstacles within Virginia. While Eastern Virginia received assistance for railroad and canal projects, including the James River Company, Western Virginians believed that the Richmond-dominated government neglected their socio-economic interests. Rather than establishing economic connections with Richmond merchants, Western Virginians favored the construction of transportation systems that would create financial relationships with Baltimore and Washington, D.C. markets. Believing that the state government preferred the transportation needs of Eastern Virginia, Western Virginians sought the financial support of other government and private entities to fund the building of regional transportation networks. Jefferson County residents openly welcomed any attempt to establish a sustainable transportation systems within the region.\(^{124}\)

Prior to the building of the C&O Canal, George Washington attempted to establish a viable transportation connection by improving the Potomac River. Although the Potomac Company failed, it signified the initial effort to provide not only Jefferson County, but western Virginia and Maryland with a transportation system. The Potomac

Company sought to deepen the waterway and create canals to bypass several unnavigable falls. This enterprise encountered too many obstacles, including financial deficits and large, unmovable boulders, which prevented the project from achieving success. After failing to improve the Potomac River beyond Harper’s Ferry, company officials agreed to forfeit its official charter on February 3, 1823. Despite the downfall of the Potomac Company, the Potomac River quickly became the focus of another transportation company.\(^\text{125}\)

Similar to its predecessor, the C&O Canal sought to establish a connection between the Atlantic markets and western lands. Company officials identified the Ohio River as being the primary western goal for their efforts. Requesting a charter from Virginia and Maryland, the C&O Canal initially received approval from Virginia on January 27, 1824. Maryland followed suit one year later, granting the company a charter on January 31, 1825. Some Marylanders expressed skepticism of whether the proposed canal would benefit their state financially, particularly in comparison to Virginia, as the terminal port for the canal would end near the markets of Alexandria, Virginia. Canal officials petitioned several government entities to financially support the construction project. Despite canal president Charles Fenton Mercer’s initial construction costs of

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\(^\text{125}\) Sanderlin, 18, 29, 31, 36, 37; Russell Bourne, *Floating West: The Erie and Other American Canals* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 207; Thomas F. Hahn, *The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal: Pathway to the Nation’s Capital* (Metuchen and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1984), 5; and Archer Butler Hulbert, *Historic Highways of America*, vol. 13, *The Great American Canals*, vol. 1, *The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Pennsylvania Canal* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1904), 65. The Potomac Company was also spelled as the Potowmack Company. To avoid confusion with the different spellings, the Potomac Company will be used in this paper.
$2,750,000, building expenses far exceeded his projections. Even before actual construction on the canal began, an ominous occurrence happened during the groundbreaking event on July 4, 1828, as former President of the United States John Quincy Adams’ spade struck a root. Adams needed to make three attempts before successfully turning over the first symbolic shovel of dirt.\footnote{Hahn, Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, 3, 5; Thomas F. Hahn, The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Lock-Houses & Lock-Keepers ( Morgantown: The Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology, 1996), viii; Stanford, 31; George Washington Ward, The Early Development of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Project (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1899; reprint, New York and London: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1973), 50-52, 55, 61, 63 (page citations are to the reprint edition); and Sanderlin, 59-60. Maryland representatives agreed to approve the C&O’s charter after reaching an agreement that allowed for the construction of a branch canal from Baltimore to Washington, D.C. The Virginia charter specified for the construction of “a navigable canal from the tide water of the river Potomac, in the District of Columbia, to the mouth of Savage creek, on the north branch of said river, and extending thence across the Allegany mountain, to some convenient point of the navigable waters of the river Ohio, or some one of its tributary streams…” For a complete reading of the entire Virginia charter see Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, Laws and Resolutions Relating to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company (Washington, D.C.: Robert A. Waters, 1855), 9-25.}

Similar to the Potomac Company, the C&O Canal also encountered a number of obstacles, including financial difficulties and natural elements, throughout the construction process. The C&O also experienced legal challenges from the competing B&O Railroad over a small piece of land near Point of Rocks, Maryland. Despite Mercer’s initial estimation, surveyor General Simon Bernard projected that the entire cost to build the canal would exceed twenty million dollars. Writing to his brother, George M. Bedinger, in June 1835, Henry Bedinger noted that the “Company as many others is frequently bankrupt, or nearly so.” Despite these economic woes, Bedinger predicted that the project would continue as “whenever their resources are exhausted, some means are devised to obtain, or create additional Supplys [sic], & work goes on.”\footnote{Henry Bedinger, “Letter by Major Henry Bedinger,” The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society 3 (December 1937): 40.} The canal’s
financial difficulties led company officials to request additional money from the Maryland legislature in 1836 through the “Eight Million Dollar Bill.” Canal workers also endured issues when building the structure as fluctuating water levels made the construction process difficult to complete and posed a threat to workers’ lives. Laborers also had to deal with several bouts of illnesses as a cholera epidemic broke out in 1832. Writing to C&O company clerk, John P. Ingle, on September 4, 1832, Henry Boteler of Shepherdstown reported the death of thirty canal workers from Asiatic cholera. “Before this letter reaches Washington, the whole line of canal from the point of rocks to WmsPort will be abandoned by the Contractors and Laborers,” noted Boteler. He continued, “The Cholera has appeared amongst them, and has proved fatal in almost every case. There has been upwards of 30 deaths nearly opposite us since friday last, and the poor Exiles of Erin are flying in every direction….It is candidly my opinion, that by the last of this week you will not have a working man on the whole line.”

Despite these difficulties, the C&O Canal transcended the different obstacles and began operations in Jefferson County by October 1833. The canal’s arrival in Harper’s Ferry signified the first transportation system to reach the region.

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128 Quoted in Sanderlin, 95, 96-97.

Once the C&O Canal reached Jefferson County, local merchants and farmers started using the transportation system to ship goods to market and for traveling purposes. Jefferson County farmers and businesses received unfettered access to the canal as previously constructed roads led to the Potomac River. Flour, wheat, corn, lumber, and coal represented the initial items shipped down the canal to the Georgetown and Alexandria markets. In turn, Georgetown and Alexandria merchants sent groceries, dry goods, fish, salt, and plaster back up the canal to the interior markets of Virginia and Maryland. Many of these products shipped via the canal consisted of bulky, unperishable goods as railroads typically transported perishable goods since trains provided faster service. Prior to the completion of the C&O Canal, farmers and millers paid between $1.25 and $1.00 to ship a barrel of flour from Harper’s Ferry to Georgetown. These shipping costs dramatically decreased with the canal to between forty and twenty-five cents per barrel. Jefferson County residents also used the canal for personal use. In May 1859, Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell of Charlestown, along with his father, L.C. Cordell, and another guest, made their way from Harper’s Ferry to Washington, D.C. Cordell wrote in his diary, “We went this way for economy, not being in any haste to get to W. & as the charge was only $1.50.”¹³⁰ Although the C&O Canal granted area companies and planters access to eastern markets, not everyone used this transportation system as they

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¹³⁰ Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell diary, May 31, 1859, Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell Diary, 1857-1861, Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell Papers, 1836-1913, DMR.
cited the shipping costs as being too expensive. The arrival of another transportation system within Jefferson County during the 1830s forced the canal to compete for shipping interests.  

Thirteen months after the C&O Canal entered Jefferson County, the B&O Railroad reached Harper’s Ferry. Baltimore merchants supported the building of the railroad as they believed that the shipping of products, including grain, from western Virginia, and ultimately further westward, to their markets would result in ample financial gains. Baltimore businesses also wanted to gain an advantage over other railroad and canal companies located in Pennsylvania and New York that also sought to gain access to western markets. After receiving a charter from Maryland on February 28, 1827, the B&O Railroad began planning the path for its rail lines. Similar to the funding of the C&O Canal, the B&O Railroad received financial contributions from several investors, including various government entities. The B&O Railroad held its ceremonial opening on the same day as the C&O Canal. Ninety-year-old Charles Carroll, the last living signer of the Declaration of Independence, participated in the event by turning over the first shovel of dirt on July 4, 1828. Actual construction of the B&O Railroad began

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131 Sanderlin, 167, 189, 205; Proceedings at a General Convention of Delegates, Representing Counties in Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia, Held in the City of Washington, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the 6th, 7th, and 8th of Nov. 1823, on the Subject of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. To Which are Added, an Extract from the Report of the Commissioners Appointed by the States of Virginia and Maryland to Survey the Potomac Canal and an Act of Virginia Incorporating the Potomac Canal Company (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Republican, 1823), 4, 6-8, 20; Shaw, 106; Gutheim, 201; Hahn and Kemp, 26; Kenneth W. Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac, 1800-1860,” in After the Backcountry: Rural Life in the Great Valley of Virginia, 1800-1900, ed. Kenneth E. Koons and Warren R. Hofstra (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 24; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 82; Bourne, 162; and Theriault, 83. Bushong cites that before the establishment of the canal, millers paid $1 per barrel to send flour to Baltimore, Maryland, and between eighty-five cents and one dollar to Georgetown.
in October 1828 with the rail lines officially reaching Harper’s Ferry, a distance of 80.77 miles, on December 1, 1834. The *Virginia Free Press* marked the arrival of the railroad to Harper’s Ferry, exclaiming, “Monday last will be remembered by the citizens of Harpers Ferry, as an important era in its history.”

While the B&O Railroad encountered some construction difficulties, the largest challenge that the rail company faced during this period came from a legal contestation with the C&O Canal.

The B&O Railroad and C&O Canal came into disputation over a piece of land which lay between Point of Rocks, Maryland and Harper’s Ferry. Both transportation systems competed for control of this narrow strip of property as the canal and railroad needed to pass through the Catoctin Mountain chain. The B&O and C&O reached an agreement in March 1833 that allowed the companies to share the parcel. The arrangement also stipulated that the B&O subscribe to 2,500 shares of C&O stock as the canal company currently was experiencing financial troubles. Finally, the B&O consented to cross into Virginia at Harper’s Ferry and “not occupy the Maryland shore of the river Potomac.” This legal decision solidified that the B&O would run westward

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132 *Virginia Free Press*, December 4, 1834.


134 Dilts, 119.
and directly through Jefferson County. Although the B&O reached Harper’s Ferry in 1834, the company encountered several issues that prevented the rail lines from crossing over the Potomac River for several years.135

Adhering to the March 1833 agreement, the western path of the B&O would travel through Virginia, but company officials still needed to determine the exact location of the pathway. Eventually, railroad officials decided to lay the track alongside the Federal Armory and Arsenal. After passing by the Armory grounds, the railroad would continue through Jefferson County by following Elk Run and then onward to Martinsburg and western Virginia. The B&O Railroad came to an agreement in 1835 with the C&O and Gerard Bond Wager, a spokesman for Robert Harper’s descendants, to build a permanent bridge across the Potomac River. Prior to the building of this bridge, farmers and merchants brought their products across Wager’s pedestrian bridge, which was owned by Gerard Bond Wager, to gain access to the railroad and canal. Designed by Lewis Wernwag, the new “s-shaped” wooden bridge consisted of “a series of straight, inclined timber struts,” that connected the rail lines of the B&O and W&P Railroad.136

135 Baer, 70-71; Reizenstein, 29; Dilts, 110, 116; John F. Stover, History of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1987), 39; Gilbert, Where Industry Failed, 41; and James P. Noffsinger, “Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, Contributions towards a Physical History,” [1957], A&M 3712, typescript manuscript, p. 30, WVRHC. The Chancellor of Maryland, Theodorick Bland, ruled on September 24, 1829, that the B&O held the right-of-way between Point of Rocks and Harper’s Ferry since the company arrived to the territory first. The C&O argued in court that they legally held the right-of-way to this land since it possessed an earlier charter that granted the parcel to the Potomac Company. A Maryland Court of Appeals reversed Bland’s decision in January 1832, granting the right-of-way to the C&O Canal. In the legal agreement, the B&O Railroad also agreed to erect a board fence between the railroad and canal to protect the horses pulling the canal boats from being scared by the trains. Despite the stipulation regarding the fence, this part of the agreement never came to fruition.

136 Dilts, 207, 218; Secrist, 19; and Allen, 16, 19. Wernwag previously built the Wager bridge in the 1820s.
The entire seven-span structure measured 830-feet long and was “supported by six undressed masonry piers, with abutments at either end.”\textsuperscript{137} The B&O bridge, which was completed in late 1836 or early 1837, consisted of a single rail line with an additional lane for wagons and pedestrians to cross the Potomac River. This bridge proved difficult to navigate, however, as it was built in a straight line as B&O officials believed that their trains would use the W&P lines when entering Harper’s Ferry. After representatives from the B&O and W&P could not come to an agreement over the use of the W&P lines, engineer Benjamin H. Latrobe, Jr., rebuilt the rail bridge in a “Y” shape. This repositioning allowed trains entering Harper’s Ferry to travel alongside the Armory grounds at a lessened angle, but the curve still proved too sharp as the B&O attempted to lessen the curve after the conclusion of the Civil War. In addition to the B&O, another railroad company provided its service to Jefferson County and the Shenandoah Valley.\textsuperscript{138}

Connected to the B&O Railroad at Harper’s Ferry, the W&P Railroad traveled up and down the Shenandoah Valley. Incorporated on April 8, 1831, the W&P Railroad began laying track in 1833 and reached its final destination of Harper’s Ferry on March 9, 

\textsuperscript{137} Dilts, 207, 218.

\textsuperscript{138} Conway, Harpers Ferry, 48; Dilts, 188, 205-206, 218-220, 239, 267-268, 276, 277; Herbert H. Harewood, Jr., Impossible Challenge: The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in Maryland (Baltimore: Barnard, Roberts, and Company, Inc., 1979), 32, 33-34, 42-43; and Stover, History of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, 53. Conway and Harewood give the end date for construction of the bridge in January 1837 while Dilts suggests completion in December 1836. Wager’s pedestrian bridge, which had been built between 1824 and 1825, replaced a ferry service that transported travelers and goods between the Maryland and Virginian borders. Wager desired to receive maximum compensation from both the railroad and canal companies for any lands that these businesses required in the construction of their systems. The 1835 deal stated that the B&O would pay Wager a “two-cent rebate on every barrel of flour shipped on the railroad from his depot.” The agreement was made retroactive to December 1834 when the B&O began shipping goods from Harper’s Ferry. Wager and his siblings received $2,333 from the railroad for the land needed to build the railroad bridge.
1836. Railroad officials boasted of the economic potential of their new line, writing in the company’s second annual report that the railroad provided “fellow-citizens of the Valley…a favorable outlet to market for their various productions.”\(^{139}\) The opening of the W&P also created excitement within the region as Winchester resident, John Bell, informed his son, Robert S. Bell, about the new transportation system. “We have just got our rail road in opporation [sic] to harpers ferry,” wrote the elder Bell.\(^{140}\) Covering a distance of nearly thirty-two miles, the W&P line connected the rich agricultural fields of the Shenandoah Valley via Harper’s Ferry to coastal markets. The establishment of the rail line also allowed Shenandoah Valley farmers and merchants to become less reliant upon the Shenandoah River to transport their goods to market. Flour represented one of the most popular goods transported by the W&P Railroad. Between 1841 and 1843, the company moved over one hundred thousand barrels of flour per year. Besides flour, the W&P also shipped a smaller amount of plaster, coal, foodstuffs, and iron. The W&P initially established a shipping charge for freight of six cents per ton per mile, but the company later reduced the tonnage rate in the 1850s to five cents per mile. Similar to the B&O Railroad, the W&P originally charged passengers six cents per mile, but the W&P

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\(^{140}\) John Bell to Robert S. Bell, March 17, 1836, John Bell Letter, 1836, Accession 37841, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, hereinafter cited as LV.
lowered their passenger rate in 1860 to 4 ½ cents per mile. In comparison to the B&O Railroad, the W&P did not achieve as much commercial success in the antebellum period.\textsuperscript{141}

The W&P encountered a number of financial difficulties prior to the Civil War. Whereas the W&P recorded a profit of $61,494.23 in 1841, this number decreased to $52,651.43 in 1843; a shortfall of $8,842.80. The W&P posted losses in both passenger and freight receipts, as well as decreased revenues from transporting mail. Diminishing passenger fees comprised the largest loss for the company as the W&P posted a shortfall of $5,743.61 during this three-year period. The W&P continued to experience economic problems during the 1850s. Despite reporting a profit of $63,555.02 in 1856, this number represented a deficit of $14,557.09 from the previous year. Railroad officials attributed the company’s most recent loss to the region’s decreased wheat production as the W&P only shipped 99,336 barrels of flour during the previous year. During the previous decade, the W&P consistently had transported over 100,000 barrels of flour. The

\textsuperscript{141} Bob Cohen, “A History of the Winchester & Potomac and the Winchester & Strasburg Railroads, 1830-1960,” p. 3, 1473 WFCHS, Box 1, typescript manuscript, Winchester and Potomac Railroad Records, 1833-1861, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, Virginia, hereinafter cited as HRL; Baer, 69; Angus James Johnston II, \textit{Virginia Railroads in the Civil War} (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 4; Dilts, 244; Bushong, \textit{History of Jefferson County}, 83; Hahn, \textit{Chesapeake & Ohio Canal}, 222; Winchester and Potomac Railroad, \textit{Twelfth Annual Report of the President and Directors of the Winchester & Potomac R. Road Co., also the Report of the Committee to Ascertain the Condition of the Road, its Management, & c. and the Report of the Treasurer of the Financial Concerns of the Company, August 5, 1843} (Winchester: The Office of the Virginian, 1843), 9; Freight Ledger of Winchester & Potomac for Halltown Station, 1831-1861, 1473 WFCHS, Box 1, Winchester and Potomac Railroad Records, 1833-1861, HRL; Charles W. Turner, “Railroad Service to Virginia Farmers, 1828-1860,” \textit{Agricultural History} 22, no. 4 (October 1948): 241, 244; and Moore, \textit{A Banner in the Hills}, 7. The first W&P train arrived in Harper’s Ferry on March 9, 1836. Prior to acquiring the W&P in 1848, the B&O Railroad attempted to purchase the W&P in 1838. Following the acquisition of the W&P, the B&O extended the W&P line further up the Shenandoah Valley, which allowed the railroad company to gain access to additional farms and businesses.
company attempted to reassure its shareholders that in all likelihood “we shall ever again have a failure of three successive wheat crops” and that “it is therefore not probable that the revenue of the company will ever reach a lower point.” These financial problems prevented the W&P from issuing any dividends to its stockholders from 1856 to 1860. The 1860 annual report indicated that the W&P continued to transport fewer barrels of flour as the railroad only carried 84,428 barrels. While the company reported a profit of $60,965.50 in 1860, the W&P’s gains remained significantly smaller than the B&O. Although the different transportation networks competed against each other for profits, the establishment of the C&O Canal, B&O Railroad, and W&P Railroad directly contributed to the growth of Jefferson County’s economy.

Although the C&O Canal and W&P Railroad did not achieve as much financial success as the B&O Railroad, the presence of these three transportation systems directly stimulated economic progress throughout Jefferson County. During the early nineteenth century, the Federal Armory and Arsenal helped establish the region’s economic foundation, but the emergence of the transportation networks allowed businesses to increase their financial potential. For example, access to the B&O Railroad assisted in

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142 Winchester and Potomac Railroad, Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the President and Directors of the Winchester & Potomac Railroad Company: Also, the Report of the Treasurer on the Financial Concerns of the Company, and the Report of the Committee to Examine the Condition of the Road, its Management, & c., October 25, 1856 (Winchester: The Republican Office, 1856, 2).

the establishment of the two cotton factories on Virginius Island. The communities of Kearneysville and Shenandoah Junction both grew as the towns lay along the B&O lines. Although Kearneysville and Shenandoah Junction had been settled in the eighteenth century, the B&O facilitated their economic growth as a tin shop, blacksmith shop, boarding house, and general stores opened in these communities after the railroad began operating. The W&P promoted commercial development on Virginius Island as the company laid a secondary track to a machine shop in 1836. The W&P also increased the profitability of the Halltown grist mill as the rail line allowed the mill to gain direct access to the distant markets of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. through its connections to the C&O Canal and B&O Railroad at Harper’s Ferry. Meanwhile, the C&O Canal offered the Shepherdstown cement mill the ability to ship natural cement to Washington, D.C. Despite the competing economic interests of all three transportation systems, the canal and railroads directed trade from the northern and western sections of Virginia toward northern markets rather than Richmond. These economic interests led some residents of Jefferson County to establish stronger socio-economic connections with Baltimore and Washington, D.C. rather than their own state capital.144

144 Sanderlin, 165; Moyer and Shackel, 5-6; Jones, Harpers Ferry, 69; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 49-50, 52-53, 57, 81; Reizenstein, 76; and Joseph, Wheelock, Warshaw, and Kriemelmeyer, 4.11. Kearneysville was named for James Kearney, Sr., whose family settled in the area. Shenandoah Junction, originally named Neil’s for one of its first residents, Lewis Neil, changed the town’s name in 1881. Reizenstein argues that the arrival of the railroad led to a growth in “population, wealth, and importance after this time.” Dilts asserts that the transportation systems increased the industrial and economic potential of the region as when the railroad arrived in Harper’s Ferry, the town was “on the verge of becoming the Potomac Valley’s leading factory town. Only Wheeling was destined to be more important in Virginia as an industrial and transportation center.” See Dilts, 186.
Alongside the formation of the Federal Armory and Arsenal, Hall’s Rifle Works, and the Shepherdstown Cement Mill, other small businesses created a diversified federal and local economy within Jefferson County during the pre-war period. The arrival of the C&O Canal in 1833, the B&O Railroad in 1834, and the W&P Railroad in 1836 provided a regional aspect as merchants and farmers gained access to eastern markets, as well as a more reliable mode of transportation. Furthermore, access to these transportation networks allowed areas, such as northern Appalachia and the Shenandoah Valley, to overcome the natural geographical obstacles of the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains. As noted by one observer in 1835, “the lands have been enhanced in value from one hundred to one hundred and fifty per cent by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road, both of which reach the county at Harper’s Ferry; and taken in connection with the Winchester and Harper’s Ferry Rail Road, which passes diagonally through the county, the Shenandoah flowing through the eastern portion, and the Potomac along the northern border, afford the citizens as many facilities for transportation as the tide water counties possess.”\footnote{Joseph Martin, \textit{A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia, and the District of Columbia: Containing a Copious Collection of Geographical, Statistical, Political, Commercial, Religious, Moral and Miscellaneous Information, Collected and Compiled from the Respectable, and Chiefly from Original Sources. To Which is Added a History of Virginia from its First Settlement to the Year 1754: with an Abstract of the Principal Events from that Period to the Independence of Virginia, Written Expressly for the Work by a Citizen of Virginia} (Charlottesville: Moseley & Tompkins, 1835), 367.} In a letter to Secretary of War John C. Spencer, the Chief of Ordnance, Col. George Bomford, bemoaned the previous decision to locate a federal armory at Harper’s Ferry as “the position does not recommend itself very highly at the present day.” However, in his November 29, 1841 letter, Bomford expressed optimism that “the railroad and canal which pass by it have
recently improved the means of obtaining supplies and also of distributing the products of the armory.”146 Similar to Bomford’s initial assessment, the Irish traveler, Thomas Cather, also doubted Jefferson County’s economic viability.

When leaving Harper’s Ferry, Cather pondered “what induced the Government to establish a manufactory at such an out-of-the-way-place?”147 While Cather was indeed correct regarding the geographical remoteness of the county, in actuality Jefferson County contained a thriving economy. The building of the Federal Armory and Arsenal facilitated population growth and a diversified manufacturing and service-based economy. Jefferson County proved to be reflective of Virginia’s overall economic development where artisans plied their trades and small manufacturers produced goods. Similar to the state of Virginia, businesses within Jefferson County included blacksmiths, bakers, carpenters, distilleries, coopers, carriage makers, millwrights, woolen mills, and flour mills. George Coleman, who worked as a carpenter between the 1830s and 1860s, serves as an example of a professional tradesmen who offered a variety of services to county residents. Not only did Coleman build houses, but he performed work for NicolasMarmion by erecting a barn in April 1847. Coleman, along with his sons Henry and John, also made repairs to Abraham Herr’s fly wheel and water wheel at his mill and the W&P Railroad bridge in 1848.148

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147 Cather, 28.

148 George Coleman Collection, Account Book and Papers of Jefferson County Resident, Ms2004-142, WVSA; and 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Census. Coleman listed three employees in 1850 and recorded an annual product value of $1,500.
Nearly two centuries after the opening of the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal, the National Park Service continues to directly correlate the existence of the industry to the growth of Harper’s Ferry as prior to the establishment of the armory, “…the town’s growth had been slow.” However, after the emergence of this enterprise, the town became “a quietly thriving industrial and transportation community.” In the 1854 edition of the *Statistical Gazetteer of the State of Virginia*, the editor described Harper’s Ferry as being “the center of considerable trade.” The town contained “four or five churches, several manufactories and flouring mills, a United States armory in which about 250 hands are employed, producing, among other articles, some 10,000 muskets annually, and a national arsenal.” Alongside this pre-war industrial development, Jefferson County established itself as an agricultural leader within the state, particularly in terms of wheat production. Businesses, such as flour mills and cooperages, profited from this strong agricultural component. Jefferson County farmers used the transportation networks established during the antebellum period to ship their product to distant markets. One author aptly described Jefferson County’s economic center of Harper’s Ferry as being “an industrial town set in an agricultural valley.” The robust industrial and agricultural base that formed within Jefferson County during the antebellum period would be transformed significantly after the Civil War.

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149 Everhart and Sullivan, 12. While industrialization did indeed play a significant role within the development of not only Harpers Ferry, but the entire county, at least one author placed too much emphasis on this financial growth by suggesting that the American Industrial Revolution began in Harpers Ferry. Jones, *Harpers Ferry*, 21.

150 Edwards, 263.

151 Williams, *West Virginia*, 31, 35.
CHAPTER IV

“THE MOST FERTILE COUNTY”: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Traveling through Jefferson County in the summer of 1820, noted agriculturalist John Skinner observed the presence of rich, agricultural fields. Skinner believed these fields to be “perhaps the most fertile county (Jefferson) in the whole state of Virginia.”\(^{152}\)

In addition to the industrial development that occurred during the antebellum period, agricultural production also emerged as a viable economic option within Jefferson County. Jefferson County cultivators demonstrated both Northern and Southern agricultural influences as some farmers implemented soil conservation, the use of fertilizers, and mechanization within their agrarian practices. Furthermore, Jefferson County farmers utilized the labor of enslaved African Americans, as well as the temporary hiring of free white laborers, to perform various agricultural tasks.

Slaveholding patterns within Jefferson County reflected the larger slaveholding patterns throughout the South as county slave owners primarily owned only a small number of slaves or rented slaves from other slaveholders. Area planters established a diversified agricultural landscape by cultivating various crops and raising several types of livestock.

The primary agricultural focus for the majority of Jefferson County farmers centered on the production of wheat as this crop spurred additional economic growth through the development of other industries that supported this agricultural venture.

Although agriculture became an important component within Jefferson County’s economy during the nineteenth century, early settlers established this agrarian base in the eighteenth century. As discussed in chapter one, German and Scotch-Irish farmers, in addition to Tidewater aristocrats, began farming when they settled the area in the eighteenth century. These early cultivators provided for their family’s needs with excess crops being bartered or traded at local markets for other goods and services. As Jefferson County’s population grew during the early nineteenth century, farmers experienced a significant increase in crop yields. Cultivators started tending a larger amount of farm lands to meet market demands. The expansion of farm lands also led cultivators to utilize new scientific methods and farm machinery for planting and harvesting to increase their production levels. This agricultural growth stimulated the formation of farming-related companies, such as flour mills, wheelwrights, and cooperages, which participated in the processing and shipping of agricultural goods. Flour milling became an important facet of not only Jefferson County’s economy, but also throughout the Northern United States during the antebellum period. The emergence of the C&O Canal, B&O Railroad, and W&P Railroad during the 1830s connected Jefferson County farmers to larger markets and thus allowed area cultivators to become active participants within these distant markets. Rather than selling their goods at local markets, agriculturalists shipped their products to markets in Baltimore, Alexandria, and Georgetown without incurring
exorbitant transportation costs. Similar to the interdependence of the area’s business community, Jefferson County farmers established strong relationships with other businesses, thereby creating a diversified economic landscape within Jefferson County in the pre-war period.\(^\text{153}\)

Comparable to the general living patterns within the United States, Jefferson County could be described as a rural, agrarian society throughout the early nineteenth century. By 1800, “approximately four of every five Americans were engaged primarily in agricultural production.”\(^\text{154}\) The percentage of Virginia inhabitants who resided in a rural setting exceeded that of the national average. Throughout the antebellum period, Virginia’s rural population remained over ninety percent. Although slightly lower than the state trend, Jefferson County’s residents also reflected a predominantly rural lifestyle in 1800 as eighty-three percent of county inhabitants lived on farms. As the nineteenth century progressed, Jefferson County residents increasingly began to move to area towns, including Harper’s Ferry, Shepherdstown, and Charlestown. By 1830, the population totals in each of these three communities exceeded one thousand inhabitants. The majority of Jefferson County’s population, however, still maintained an agrarian lifestyle. At the beginning of the Civil War, fifty-seven percent of Jefferson County inhabitants lived on farms while thirty-six percent resided in towns. Although the percentage of


\(^{154}\) Danbom, 69.
people living on farms declined, the aggregate number of inhabitants occupying farms increased by 559 people during this sixty-year span. This residential shift suggests that Jefferson County farmers needed to provide surplus goods for the rest of the county population who labored as artisans, storeowners, or Armory workers. While some townspeople maintained their own gardens, they generally relied upon larger producing farms to supplement their agricultural production. Even as Jefferson County residents relocated from farms to towns during the antebellum period, farmers and agricultural laborers still represented the majority of the county’s workforce as sixty-two percent listed agriculture as their primary job. The predominance of agricultural-related jobs indicates that Jefferson County remained a sustainable agrarian community during this period, even as it maintained a significant industrial presence. The viability of both agrarian and industrial enterprises differentiated Jefferson County from other regions within the lower Shenandoah Valley. Jefferson County’s agricultural growth in the antebellum period mirrored the overall agrarian trends found within the United States during this same period.155

Following the American Revolutionary War, agricultural production increased throughout the United States. Prior to the conflict, British colonial policies restricted the

production capabilities of colonial farmers. The British prohibited colonial cultivators from exporting certain crops, including wheat, barley, oats, and rye, since British farmers also cultivated these crops. As a result of this colonial policy, some colonial farmers planted primarily for their families’ consumption with any surplus goods being sold or bartered at local markets. Other colonial cultivators harvested various staple crops, including cotton, rice, tobacco, and indigo, which could be traded with the British in exchange for manufactured goods. After the American Revolutionary War, American farmers began producing larger amounts of grains that could be sold at distant markets. Absent of British trading restrictions, flour and wheat became an important export for the United States, particularly in the post-Mexican-American War period, as farmers sent their product to European markets. The establishment of transportation systems within the United States helped further the transition from self-sufficient farmers to market-driven cultivators as these networks established connections between farms and external markets. Furthermore, the growth of the American urban population also increased the demand for larger wheat production. In 1839, the United States Census Bureau reported that American farmers produced 84,823,000 bushels of wheat. Twenty years later, this number more than doubled to 173,105,000 bushels. Jefferson County farms mirrored this national trend as wheat became the primary crop harvested within Jefferson County’s mixed agrarian economy. The significant amount of wheat produced within Jefferson County placed area planters among the top wheat producers in Virginia during the pre-
war period. One of the principal reasons why Jefferson County became an important agricultural producer within the state of Virginia related to the region’s rich soils.  

The presence of fertile soils, as well as other climatological factors, provided Jefferson County residents the ability to become successful cultivators. As noted in the first chapter, the Lower Shenandoah Valley’s rich, limestone soils first attracted settlers to the region in the eighteenth century. Writing to Alexander Hamilton on September 15, 1799, George Washington praised Jefferson County’s natural benefits. Although intending to convince Hamilton of his plan to locate a federal armory at Harper’s Ferry, Washington lauded the fertility of the region, informing Hamilton “as far as my recollection of the spot and information go,” Jefferson County represented a “fertile and most abounding country.” The area’s soils contained calcium and phosphorus, essential minerals for plant growth, and a neutral pH base. Jacob Richards Dodge, who served as the statistician for the United States Department of Agriculture, described Jefferson County’s soil as being “of remarkable fertility, a fine limestone prairie, in a high state of improvement. More desirable farming land is scarcely to be found in the United States.” This limestone soil, however, contained large rocks which oftentimes  

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158 Dodge, 70.
made it difficult for wheat farmers to till their soil. Jefferson County’s moderate climate also proved conducive for agricultural production. Jefferson County’s average growing season ranges between 150 and 180 days; a slightly longer growing period than Northern states. The area also receives an adequate amount of rainfall with an average of between twenty-eight and forty inches falling annually. The cultivation of wheat can be affected by too much precipitation as a moist climate may lead the harvest to spoil. Ideally, wheat plants prosper when grown in a climate that averages less than thirty inches of rain annually. The moderate climate, as well as the region’s mountainous pastures, also favored the raising of sheep and other livestock. Therefore, the fertile soils and advantageous climate allowed Jefferson County farmers to establish prosperous farms in the early nineteenth century.159

The financial value of Jefferson County farms exceeded the average value of farm lands on both a national and state level. According to historian Lewis Cecil Gray, the average value for quality agricultural lands and associated buildings ranged between twenty-five and fifty dollars per acre. In 1850, Jefferson County’s average market value for farm land and related buildings stood at forty-eight dollars per acre. In comparison, Virginia’s average farm value was estimated at eight dollars per acre, while the national average was slightly higher at eleven dollars per acre. By 1860, Jefferson County’s land value increased to fifty-one dollars per acre. Virginia’s average farm value also increased

to twelve dollars per acre and the national average also grew to over sixteen dollars per acre. Jefferson County’s average farm values also surpassed its bordering counties. Located on the other side of the Potomac River, the average farm values for Washington County, Maryland, came closest to matching Jefferson County. In 1850, Washington County’s farm values averaged thirty-eight dollars per acre. Washington County’s rate increased to fifty dollars per acre by the next decade. In terms of aggregate value, Ann Butler’s farm represented the highest valued farm in Jefferson County in 1850 with a cash value of $56,000. Only two other Jefferson County farms exceeded the fifty thousand dollar threshold. According to the 1850 agricultural schedule, Willis’s farm was valued at $53,750 while James L. Ranson’s 862-acre farm was estimated to be worth $50,300. The farm of William Lucas held the most value in 1860 as agricultural census records indicate Lucas’s farm to be worth $76,081. Only two other Jefferson County farms exceeded the fifty thousand dollar mark in 1860 with Braxton Davenport’s farm being valued at $62,000 and Francis Yates owning a farm worth $53,950. Although the average value Jefferson County farm lands ranked higher than the state and national levels, the average size of area farms was smaller than the average Southern farm.\(^{160}\)

During the antebellum period, the majority of Jefferson County farmers did not own large plantations, but rather held between one hundred and five hundred acres of

land. In 1850, the average size farm in the United States was 202.6 acres. The average farm size in the United States slightly decreased by the following decade to 199.2 acres. When comparing the average size of Southern and Northern farms, Southern farms were much larger than their Northern counterpart. Whereas Southern farms averaged 400 acres in 1860, the average Northern farm only consisted of 100 acres. Southern farms tended to be larger as planters harvested staple crops, including cotton, rice, and tobacco, which required more acreage. In comparison to the average Southern landholder, Virginian farmers owned less land. The smaller farm sizes can be attributed partly to larger portions of western Virginia containing unimproved acreage and lands unconducive for agricultural production. In 1850, the average farm size in Virginia was 339 acres. This number slightly decreased by the following decade to 336 acres. The majority of Jefferson County farms were considered to be within the one hundred to five hundred acre range. Only two Jefferson County farmers, Thomas Willis and David Fry, owned over one thousand acres in 1850. Willis held the largest amount of property with 1,070 acres while Fry owned exactly one thousand acres. By the following decade, Adam Stephen Dandridge II was the largest landholder in Jefferson County, owning 1,550 acres. Dandridge was the only farmer to own over one thousand acres with the next largest landholder being Henry W. Castleman and his 939 acres. In 1860, 356 of the 463 farms in Jefferson County, or over seventy-five percent of the farms in the area, were considered to be within the one hundred to five hundred acre category. Only twelve Jefferson County farms exceeded the five hundred acre classification, leaving ninety-five
farms under one hundred acres. Besides the average farm size, scholars can analyze these landholdings by examining the number of improved and unimproved acres on a farm.\footnote{Haystead and Fite, 4, 71; Emerson David Fite, \textit{Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War} (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1963), 163; Otto, 5; Dodd, 289-290; Joseph C. G. Kennedy, \textit{Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior} (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864; reprint, Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1973), 203, 218, 222; Kulikoff, 34, 35; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule. Otto suggests that the average size of Southern farms in 1860 was 321 acres, not the 400 acres as cited by Fite. While Dodd cites the average Virginia farm size as being 336 acres in 1860, Kennedy uses a smaller number of 324 acres. Kennedy also suggests a different average farm size within the United States in 1860 as he cites 194 acres.}

To serve different agricultural purposes, farmers divided their landholdings into two categories: improved and unimproved acreage. Improved acreage referred to the land being cultivated by the farmer whereas unimproved land represented property currently not being used for agricultural production. The number of improved acres generally represented a larger number on farms as planters relied upon these lands for production. Oftentimes farmers utilized their unimproved lands for grazing purposes, allowing cattle and swine to roam freely in search of forage. Planters also maintained unimproved acreage as available woodlots which allowed farmers to utilizing standing timber for the future use of building fences and as a source of fuel. As farmers required additional farmlands, they could clear some of their unimproved lands and convert them into improved acreage. As the nineteenth century progressed, farmers in Virginia expanded the amount of improved acreage. While there existed 10,360,135 acres of improved land in Virginia in 1850, this number increased over one million acres by the following decade. The majority of unimproved lands within Virginia existed in the western portion of the state, which later became present-day West Virginia. Adam
Stephen Dandridge II’s farm did not represent the typical landholding pattern in Jefferson County as Dandridge owned almost an equal number of improved and unimproved acres. In 1860, Dandridge owned 800 acres of improved lands and 750 unimproved lands. Large landowners, such as Logan Osburn, demonstrated a different pattern of land use. Owning seven hundred acres, Osburn’s farm only contained one hundred unimproved acres. Thus, the majority of Osburn’s land was being utilized for agricultural production. Rather than focusing on cultivating one staple crop, Jefferson County farmers planted several crops and raised livestock.162

As described in the first chapter, Jefferson County’s first settlers established a diverse agricultural foundation during the eighteenth century. German and Scotch-Irish pioneers practiced mixed agriculture by tending crops and raising livestock on smaller parcels of land. Whereas German and Scotch-Irish cultivated smaller farms, Tidewater aristocrats established larger plantations on which they raised crops and livestock for profits. These agriculturists also differed in the type of labor utilized on their farms as both white laborers and enslaved African Americans worked on the Tidewater’s plantations while the German and Scotch-Irish relied upon family members and neighbors to provide additional labor when needed during harvest times. Jefferson County’s diverse agricultural landscape reflected the mixture of the agricultural influences from Pennsylvania and the Tidewater region. As settlers became more established within the region, they continued to expand their agricultural repertoire by

162 Dodd, 289-290; Kennedy, Agriculture of the United States, vii; and Otto, 4, 5. Otto asserts that an average Southern farmers only maintained ninety-seven acres of their 321 acre farms, thereby leaving the rest of their property for grazing purposes, standing woodlots, and future use.
planting orchards, including apples, peaches, and pears. Generally for personal consumption rather than commercial purposes, these early nineteenth century orchards were suitable for the moderate climate of Jefferson County. Agricultural tasks continued to be divided according to gender with men cultivating goods that could be sold for profits while women produced goods for family consumption. Even when women worked in the fields or took surplus items to market, such as butter or eggs, their work was not perceived by societal standards to be as valuable as that performed by men. During the nineteenth century, Jefferson County farmers also began to expand the amount of land which they cultivated. The growth in farmlands also led cultivators to experiment with newer methods to maintain their soil’s productivity.163

Although the region’s soils received high praise from Jacob Richard Dodge and John Skinner, Jefferson County farmers implemented several different strategies to maintain their farm’s productivity levels. Rather than purchasing more land for agricultural production, growers concentrated their efforts on the land which they already owned. Just as tobacco farmers discovered in the Tidewater region of Virginia, the continual planting of crops, such as wheat and corn, on the same parcel of land decreased the fertility of the soil. As a result of this diminished productivity, nineteenth-century Jefferson County farmers began to experiment with different methods of soil conservation to rejuvenate their fields. Rezin D. Shepherd stressed to his brother Abram

163 Conley and Stutler, 303; Cowdrey, 75; Dunaway, 152-153; Donald E. Davis, Craig E. Colten, Megan Kate Nelson, Barbara L. Allen, and Mikko Saikku, Southern United States: An Environmental History (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 2006), 139, 140-141; Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration, 72; Vanderford, 298-299; Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 825; and Sachs, 4. Gray contends that farmers did not become interested in commercial orcharding until the 1850s.
that “all necessary improvements must be made” at once. Rezin D. Shepherd emphasized to his brother that “the barn & barn yard is the first thing that requires your attention. Your fields and crops to go hand & hand…” The elder Shepherd believed that all these items needed to be addressed “in order to make your land produce.”

A letter by farmer George B. Beall highlights the different attempts made by growers to improve their property. Amidst having “not more than 1/3 of my corn gathered” and needing to thresh “1000 to 1100 bushels of wheat,” Beall noted that “I am much engulfed in ditching my marshland and altering my fences—which requires immediate action.” By digging ditches near his fields, Beall’s farmlands could properly drain and become productive fields. Intensive farming practices, including the rotation of crops, use of fertilizers, and fencing animals required more capital and labor, thus not every cultivator could afford to adopt these methods. Jefferson County farmers also joined agricultural societies to learn new conservationist techniques.

The emergence of agricultural societies began during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In addition to holding fairs and crop-related competitions, these organizations focused on the recovery of exhausted agricultural lands. Jefferson County

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164 Rezin D. Shepherd to Abram Shepherd, May 26, 1845, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Folder 1, Ms79-171, WVSA. The Shepherd family owned several farms near the Berkeley and Jefferson County border referred to as Terrapin Neck.

165 George B. Beall to Reverend William Thomas Leavell, November 25, 1850, Collection no. 41171, LV.

farmers dedicated themselves to learning new conservationist methods initially by sending representatives to the Berkeley Agricultural Society. Established in 1845, the Berkeley Agricultural Society provided cultivators with an opportunity to discuss farming techniques and different conservation approaches. Five years later, Jefferson County growers established their own Valley Agricultural Society. The group later renamed itself the Jefferson County Agricultural and Mechanical Society in 1856 to avoid confusion with another Valley Agricultural Society in Frederick County, Virginia. In 1856, the Jefferson County Agricultural and Mechanical Society consisted of 164 members and held an annual fair providing prizes for “the best 10 acres of wheat” and for “the best 10 acres of corn, and clover seed.” The Jefferson County organization also attempted to address agrarian topics, such as fruit-growing and the raising of livestock, to assist local farmers. Jefferson County farmers also demonstrated a willingness to experiment with various agricultural implements and machinery.

Jefferson County farmers used newly developed machines to assist in the process of planting and harvesting. The use of this machinery provided farmers with more efficient planting and harvesting methods. In 1860, Virginia ranked seventh in the United States in value of farming implements and machinery as planters owned over nine

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168 Avery Odelle Craven, Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606-1860 (Urbana: The University of Illinois, 1926), 104-106; Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac,” 29; Charles W. Turner, “Virginia Agricultural Reform, 1815-1860,” Agricultural History 26, no. 3 (July 1952): 82; and United States Patent Office, 209. In a second report from the Jefferson County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, the group claimed to have 802 members. Turner’s article demonstrates that Virginia farmers established a number of agricultural societies throughout the state to deal with conservationist issues.
million dollars in implements and machinery. Louisiana was the only Southern state that
goutspent Virginia on farming implements and machinery at this time. While many
Southern planters did not invest in farm machinery, as they spent any additional capital
on purchasing slaves, Jefferson County farmers owned both slaves and farm machinery.
Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell noted that on Henry Smith Turner’s farm, Wheat Land, one of
the workers was “engaged in fixing up the reaper.”169 In 1860, Jefferson County farmers
owned $119,176 worth of farming implements and machinery, which ranked fifteenth
among Virginia counties. In comparison to Jefferson County cultivators, farmers living
in Washington County, Maryland spent triple the amount of farming implements and
machinery, investing $354,938. While nearly every Jefferson County farmer possessed
some farming implements and machinery, the majority of planters only spent several
hundred dollars on farming implements and machinery. In 1850, George B. Beall
invested the most money in these farming mechanisms, owning $1,850 worth of
implements and machinery. Only three other farmers, James L. Ranson, W. Strider, and
Ann Butler, owned more than $1,500 in farming implements and machinery. Each of
these planters also owned a farm that exceeded five hundred acres. This pattern generally
held true at the taking of the 1860 census. Only six farmers owned $1,500 worth of
farming implements and machinery in 1860. All of these farmers, except for Charles
Aglionby and George W. Eichelberger, also owned over five hundred acres. Besides

169 Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell diary, May 19, 1859, Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell Papers, 1836-
1913, OCLC 32452413, DMR.
joining conservation societies and owning farming machinery, Jefferson County farmers also employed other methods to increase their soil’s productivity.\textsuperscript{170}

Jefferson County farmers also attempted to preserve soil fertility by rotating their crops. Although the idea of crop rotation existed prior to the nineteenth century, farmers increasingly used this method beginning in the 1820s. Through this practice, cultivators rotated the type of crop planted on a specific field so that the soil would not become completely depleted of needed nutrients. In addition, the various crops planted on the fields placed different demands upon the soil’s composition, thereby complementing each other’s ecological demands and helping to renourish the soils. Some planters implemented the Chester system which instructed farmers to plant corn, followed by wheat in the next agricultural cycle, and then planting timothy or clover on the fallow field for one year before beginning the rotation over again. A significant number of Shenandoah Valley farmers followed the Chester system. When John S. Skinner, editor of \textit{The American Farmer}, stopped at Henry Smith Turner’s Wheat Land estate near Charlestown, he described this farm as being “a model farm distinguished by its systematic arrangements, the fixed and judicious rotation of its crops...”\textsuperscript{171} Another rotation practice implemented by farmers dictated that planters allow a field to become a

\textsuperscript{170} Egnal, 163-164; Kennedy, \textit{Agriculture of the United States}, x, 72-73, 158-159; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule. Virginia farmers spent $9,392,296 on farming implements and machinery. Although farmers implemented various agricultural innovations within their farming practices, Lewis Cecil Gray asserts that at the outset of the Civil War, many Southern farmers continued to use one-horse iron plows. In terms of conservation, these iron plows were looked down upon as they were not conducive to deep plowing methods. Gray, \textit{History of Agriculture}, vol. 2, 795.

\textsuperscript{171} Skinner, 137.
pasture for a year before planting resumed. By serving as a pasture, the grazing livestock 
replenished the soil’s fertility by depositing their manure onto the ground. Nonetheless, 
not every farmer favored this agricultural practice as allowing one parcel of land to 
remain fallow for a year did not always lead to the soil replenishing its fertility. In 
addition, cheap, available lands within the interior of the United States enticed farmers to 
give up their lands and continue moving westward rather than attempting to rotate their 
fields while leaving another parcel uncultivated. The advancement of another 
conservation technique during the early nineteenth century complemented this rotation 
system.  

To counter the ecological effects of intensified agricultural production, Jefferson 
County farmers also experimented by adding fertilizers to their fields. Farmers 
throughout the Shenandoah Valley spent a sizeable amount of their capital on purchasing 
various forms of fertilizers, particularly since the planting of wheat exhausted soils of 
their nutrients. Named the Loudoun system after the experiments conducted by John 
Alexander Binns of Loudoun County, Virginia, this fertilizing method instructed farmers 
to plant clover on fallow fields and then allow cattle or other livestock to graze on these 
parcels. The manure deposits left by the livestock fertilized the fields. Afterward, 
farmers tilled the manure into the soil and thereby increased the soil’s fertility as the 
manure provided nitrogenous substances and replaced phosphoric acid in the fields.

172 Steven Stoll, Larding the Lean Earth: Soil and Society in Nineteenth-Century America (New 
and Peter Tracy Dondlinger, The Book of Wheat: An Economic History and Practical Manual of the Wheat 
Industry (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1908), 110. By allowing a field to remain fallow, nitrates 
could enter the soil and replenish the dirt.
Some farmers who kept their livestock enclosed also collected the manure and hauled it to their fields. John Henry Smith of Middleway indicated in his agricultural diary on March 14, 1853 that he spent the day “hauling out manure.”\textsuperscript{173} Some farmers also planted clover, timothy, vetch, or other leguminous crops, also referred to as green manure, on fallow fields. Shepherdstown farmer Willoughby Lemen indicated on October 1, 1849, that he planted clover on one of his fields. Similar to the manure, these cultivators then plowed the green manure into the soil to increase the earth’s fertility. On August 17, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff wrote in his agricultural journal that among the tasks he completed that day was “turning clover seed.”\textsuperscript{174} The natural limestone in Jefferson County’s soils helped to unlock the nitrates within the green manure so that the nitrogen could be released back into the earth. Farmers also plowed under remnants of crops, such as cornstalks, to help enrich the soils. Not all farmers supported the notions of crop rotation and manure fertilization as scientific advancements also suggested that the soil’s chemistry might need to be altered as well. Beginning in the 1840s, some planters started applying guano, or the excrements of seabirds or bats, on their wheat fields. Guano offered several valuable nutrients, including nitrogen, phosphorous, and calcium. Farmers ploughed the guano deep into the soil so the ammonia contained within the guano would release slowly. Jefferson County farmers implemented these different

\textsuperscript{173} John Henry Smith diary, March 14, 1853, Section 3, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, 1861-ca. 1960s, Mss1 P4299 c 120, VHS.

\textsuperscript{174} James Lawrence Hooff diary, August 17, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, Jefferson County Historical Society, hereinafter cited as JCHS.
fertilizer methods during the antebellum period to increase the fertility of their lands. Jefferson County agriculturists participated in a form of mixed farming by planting several different crops.¹⁷⁵

Although wheat represented the primary harvest on Jefferson County farms, area farmers also cultivated other surplus crops. After wheat, corn represented the largest marketable good for Jefferson County farmers. Corn, which oftentimes was easier and cheaper to grow, provided a substantial yield. During an exceptional harvest, Shenandoah Valley planters anticipated a corn yield of between thirty-five and fifty bushels per acre, but the typical harvest ranged between ten and twenty bushels per acre. Farmers used corn not only for personal consumption, but also as feed for livestock. Furthermore, corn could be sent to grist mills to be ground into corn meal. In terms of consumption rates, people consumed an average of five to six bushels of corn annually. During the antebellum period, Jefferson County growers exceeded local corn consumption rates. In 1840, farmers produced 70.19 bushels of corn per capita. Although this rate decreased to 18.71 bushels in 1850, this yield still surpassed

consumption rates. By the following census, the corn per capita rate increased to 24.64 bushels. In 1850, Ann Butler’s farm yielded the largest corn harvest with 5,000 bushels. While several other growers exceeded 2,500 bushels of corn the majority of farmers harvested less than 1,000 bushels of corn. In 1860, census results indicate that Francis Yates’s farm produced the most corn with 4,350 bushels. William G. Butter and Logan Osburn followed closely behind with 4,000 bushels of corn. The majority of Jefferson County farmers still harvested less than 1,000 bushels of corn. The agricultural ledgers of several Jefferson County farmers indicate that they sold their surplus corn.

Charlestown grower William H. Conklyn and Shepherdstown planter Henry Shepherd made several entries regarding the sale of corn at market and directly to other county residents. James Lawrence Hooff included several entries in his ledger in which he noted that his slaves ground corn into meal. Besides growing corn, Jefferson County farmers also grew several other small grains.  

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176 Gates, 169, 170, 172; Otto, 13, 14-15; Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 812, 816; Mary Beth Pudup, “The Limits of Subsistence: Agriculture and Industry in Central Appalachia,” Agricultural History 64, no. 1 (Winter 1990): 88; Schlebecker, “Farmers in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” 464, 466, 468, 472; United States Census Office, 236-237; Kennedy, Agriculture of the United States, 158-159; J. D. B. DeBow, Statistical View of the United States, Embracing its Territory, Population—White, Free Colored, and Slave—Moral and Social Condition, Industry, Property, and Revenue; The Detailed Statistics of Cities, Towns, and Counties; Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census; To Which are Added the Results of Every Previous Census, Beginning with 1790, in Comparative Tables, with Explanatory and Illustrative Notes, Based Upon the Schedules and Other Official Sources of Information (Washington, D.C.: Beverley Tucker, Senate Printer, 1854), 320-325; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; William H. Conklyn Account Book, vol. 1, Conklyn Family Papers, 1845-1964, Mss1 C7611 a 1, VHS; Henry Shepherd Account Book, May 9, 1844, Henry Shepherd Account Book, 1815-1862, Mss1 Sh485 b 9, VHS; and James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 19, 1860; October 9, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS. These calculations, however, do not take into account the amount of corn that farmers fed to their livestock. Otto estimates that horses and mules consumed 7.5 bushels of corn per year and hogs ate four bushels annually. Otto does not provide a per capita rate of corn consumption for cattle. Pudup provides conflicting consumption numbers for horses and mules. Pudup estimates that horse consumption of corn equaled twenty-five bushels and mules and oxen consumed seventeen bushels of corn. Pudup indicates that cow consumption of corn to be three bushels per head. Otto also estimates that the per capita rate of corn for Southerners was thirteen bushels, but this rate does not account for variations
During the nineteenth century, Jefferson County farmers also planted a smaller amount of rye, oats, and barley. Planters tended to plant a smaller amount of these grains as lower consumer demands led to lower market prices. The influence of German farmers can be seen within Jefferson County’s agriculture as German planters often planted rye to use for bread and whiskey. Rye offered the flexibility of being able to be harvested from August to mid-November and was able to grow on depleted soils. In comparison to corn or wheat, only a small number of Jefferson County farmers included rye within their agricultural repertoire. According to the 1850 agricultural schedule, Samuel Strider and Abraham Snyder each harvested the largest amount of rye with 300 bushels. These two farmers were followed by Janice Roper and Rezin D. Shepherd who reported a yield of 250 bushels. Only a small number of farmers continued planting rye by the taking of the 1860 agricultural census. Henry Moler reported the largest rye yield of 450 bushels. An additional five cultivators recorded a rye harvest that exceeded 300 bushels, including Nicholas Schawl and Richard G. Hardesty. The cultivation of oats served several purposes. Farmers fed oats to their horses, but this grain also could be mixed with corn for food for cattle and sheep. In addition, oats were one of the grains that could be planted even after soils had become partially depleted. In 1849, only seven Jefferson County farmers reported an oats harvest that exceeded five hundred bushels. George B. Beall reported the largest yield in 1849 with 800 bushels of oats. The number of planters cultivating oats increased by 1859 as twenty-one farms reported a harvest within the entire South. Jefferson County farmers harvested 988,552 bushels of corn in 1839; 287,395 bushels in 1849; and 358,267 bushels in 1859.
exceeding 500 bushels. William G. Butter’s farm recorded the largest yield with 4,500 bushels of oats. Although farmers did not plant as much barley as rye and oats, this crop could be used for malts in the process of making beer. Only two farms in Jefferson County harvested barley in 1849. William Burr’s farm reported a harvest of fifty bushels while John Thomas accounted for the other forty bushels. The number of farmers cultivating barley increased by 1859 to eight. The farms of James S. Markell, John Keplinger, and John B. Hendricks each harvested 150 bushels of barley. In addition to these small grains, a number of Jefferson County farmers also planted Irish potatoes.177

Nearly every Jefferson County grower planted Irish potatoes on their farms as this crop served as an important component within the population’s diet. On average, a person consumed three bushels of potatoes annually. The year 1839 represented a bumper crop for potatoes as growers produced 151,443 bushels of potatoes. Per capita, this yield resulted in a production rate of 10.75 bushels per resident. For example, Willoughby Newton Lemen’s potato harvest exceeded the per capita rate in 1839 as he noted in his agricultural ledger on November 14, 1839, that the “dug potatoes & had 40 bushels.”178 By the next decade, potato harvests had decreased to 13,819 bushels or a per


178 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, November 14, 1839, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA.
capita rate of 0.88 bushels. The decline in potatoes largely can be attributed to the worldwide potato famine that occurred in mid-1840s. Therefore, growers did not produce enough potatoes to meet local consumption rates. Although almost every Jefferson County farm harvested Irish potatoes in 1849, most farms did not report a large yield. Jacob Morgan’s farm had the largest harvest in 1849 with 500 bushels of Irish potatoes. Besides Morgan, only eleven other farmers indicated that their harvest exceeded 200 bushels. Jefferson County farmers continued to experience agricultural issues with their potato harvests during the 1850s. In October 1856, Edward Lucas complained about his potato harvest, telling Robert Rion Lucas that his “potatoes turn[ed] out badly.”

According to the 1860 census, potato yields came closer to satisfying consumption demands as farmers produced 31,876 bushels for a per capita rate of 2.19. While most farms continued to produce less than fifty bushels of Irish potatoes, the largest potato yield nearly doubled that of Jacob Morgan’s 1849 harvest. George W. Eichelberger’s farm harvested 950 bushels of Irish potatoes in 1859. In addition to Eichelberger, thirteen other farms produced a yield of more than 300 bushels of potatoes. Besides planting corn, potatoes, and other small grains, Jefferson County growers raised livestock and maintained personal orchards during the antebellum period.

Besides planting a diverse amount of crops, Jefferson County farmers also kept a variety of livestock. Jefferson County farmers tended to cows, sheep, poultry, and pigs.

179 Edward Lucas to Robert Rion Lucas, October 16, 1856, Box 2, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Mss79-171, WVSA.

not only for their meat but also for their by-products. Farmers also raised horses, mules, and oxen as these animals provided various forms of agricultural labor. Cultivators raised cows not only for beef, but also milch cows for their milk by-products, including milk, cheese, and butter. While Jefferson County farmers did not produce a large amount of cheese, they did churn butter. Nearly every farm in Jefferson County produced butter in the antebellum period. The predominance of butter producing within Jefferson County mirrored the larger pattern within the Southern United States as many Southerners relied upon Northern farms to import their cheese. In 1850, Jefferson County farmers reported the production of 130,228 pounds of butter. By the following decade, this number increased slightly to 131,684 pounds. Francis Yates was the leading butter producer in 1850 with 1,550 pounds of butter. In total, twelve farmers reported that their 1850 butter production exceeded 1,000 pounds. During the next decade, Yates once again was the leading producer with 1,500 pounds. The number of farmers producing over 1,000 pounds of butter decreased in 1860 to five, including Yates.  

In addition to cows, Jefferson County farmers also raised sheep and pigs. Sheep herds offered families sustenance and wool, which could be used to produce clothing or sold at market. In 1810, residents of Jefferson County produced 13,255 yards of woolen textile and 77,481 yards of mixed and unnamed textile in their households. Of the neighboring counties, only Washington County, Maryland and Frederick County, Conley and Stutler, 293; Atack and Bateman, 148, 153-155; Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 839; United States Census Office, 236-237; Kennedy, Agriculture of the United States, 158-159; DeBow, 320-325; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule.
Virginia produced more woolen or mixed and unnamed textiles. Jefferson County inhabitants continued to produce homemade goods consistently until the 1830s when access to manufactured goods became more prominent. Regional transportation systems established economic connections to external markets, thereby signifying the consumers’ dependence upon consumer goods rather than producing homemade clothing. Although not as numerous, farmers also kept livestock to slaughter and then sell at markets. Before being sent to market, farmers sometimes slaughtered their own swine and processed the meat into bacon or ham. For example, on December 6, 1849, Willoughby Newton Lemen jotted in his ledger that he had “butchered 12 Hogs weighing 1600 [lbs.]”  
James Lawrence Hooff indicated on November 22, 1860, that he and his slaves slaughtered some hogs. The following day, Hooff noted that “hands all day cutting up & salting hogs.”  
Hooff slaughtered a total of twenty-eight hogs during this process, noting that he “only kept 4 hogs out of this lot.” Hooff sent one of his laborers, Charles, to market to sell the remaining hogs.  
Similar to investments in farm machinery, the raising of livestock necessitated farmers to possess expendable capital.

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182 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, December 6, 1849, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA.

183 James Lawrence Hooff diary, November 22, 1860; November 23, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

184 James Lawrence Hooff diary, December 12, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

185 Tryon, 173-175, 268; Tench Coxe, A Statement of the Arts and Manufacturers of the United States of America, for the Year 1810 (Philadelphia: A. Cornman, 1814), 89; Dunaway, 141-143; Koons, “‘The Staple of Our Country,’” 4; Pudup, 81-82; and Schlebecker, “Farmers in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” 468.
Farmers needed to provide their livestock with basic necessities, such as fodder and shelter, as well as copious amounts of acreage for grazing. When writing to offer advice to his brother regarding the proper care of his farm, Rezin D. Shepherd stressed to his brother Abram “like a good farmer look first to the comfort of your horses, cattle & sheep.”

Farmers placed their livestock on various landscapes for grazing purposes. Cultivators sometimes let their animals graze on fallow fields, thus allowing the livestock to deposit their manure on the fields. Other farmers allowed their livestock to graze on exhausted fields in the hopes of revitalizing the soil’s fertility through manure deposits. Conversely, some livestock were placed on fields that had become so depleted that the farm lands could not be used for any other purposes. Finally, planters provided their livestock access to unimproved lands as this property had not been prepared yet by the farmer for cultivating purposes. Instead, the livestock grazed amidst the forests searching for sustenance. The raising of livestock also led to the indirect result of farmers having to fence in their crops.

Rather than fencing in one’s livestock, farmers erected fences to prevent animals from consuming their harvests. The enclosing of crops originated from colonial fence laws which continued to be enforced in Virginia throughout the antebellum period. Jefferson County farmers used Virginia rail fences, also known as zig-zag fences. The zig-zag fences offered several benefits, including the ability to move the fence with

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186 Rezin D. Shepherd to Abram Shepherd, May 26, 1845, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Folder 1, Ms79-171, WVSA.

187 Otto, 2, 5. Otto calculates that farmers needed an average of fifteen acres per cow for grazing purposes.
greater ease than post-and-hole fences. By using Virginia fencing, cultivators did not have to dig post holes as the rails laid on top of each other. In terms of repairing or replacing the rails, farmers were able to easily fix the fences. However, these fences required a significant amount of timber, thus farmers could only use this type of fence where timber was abundant. In addition, the Virginia fence did take-up more space than the post-and-hole fences, which thereby decreased the amount of land that could be cultivated. The need for timber for fences led Jefferson County farmers to maintain a woodlot so they could cut down trees when needed. The Civil War, however, threatened the existence of farmers’ woodlots as both the Union and Confederate armies cut down this timber for military use. In addition to raising livestock, Jefferson County farmers also tended to personal orchards.188

Jefferson County growers became interested in planting orchards during the nineteenth century. These orchards were not for commercial production, but instead for personal consumption. One of the reasons for smaller orchards was that farmers needed to use available labor to harvest other crops; therefore, the limited amount of labor restricted the size of the orchards. According to the 1850 census, ten farmers indicated that they received any value from the sale of orchard products. This number increased in 1860 as thirty-six farmers reported to census takers a value from orchard products. This growth in value of orchard products suggests that a larger number of Jefferson County

188 Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 843; Danhof, 118; Williams, Americans and their Forests, 69-71; and Ted Steinberg, Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 108. One detrimental aspect of Virginia rail fences was that livestock could easily push down the fence rails, thereby gaining access to the planted crops.
farmers were starting to sell some produce from their orchards. The majority of orcharders, however, continued to harvest their orchards for personal use. Alexander R. Boteler experimented with a number of different fruit trees on his Fountain Rock farm, including cherry, peach, plum, pear, apple, and pecan trees. In 1846, Shepherdstown resident Amanda Humrickhouse boasted of the abundant peach and apple harvest that her family experienced. Humrickhouse longed that Margaretta C. White “could be here now for we have the most delightful peaches you ever saw.”

William Prince Craighill mentioned in his diary on several occasions in 1849 that his father, William Nathaniel Craighill, recently had planted an orchard. Although Craighill did not indicate what type of fruit trees his father planted, he expressed concern that cold temperatures in April 1849 could ruin the potential of harvesting any fruit. When purchasing the “Mountain Retreat Farm,” in 1856, Edward Lucas inherited the peach and apple trees that had been planted previously. Among the trees on the Mountain Retreat farm were peach, apricot, and apple trees. On March 25, 1856, Sue Lemen forwarded a request from her mother to Ellen Billmyer of Shepherdstown. Lemen asked Billmyer if David Billmyer could “please cut her some grafts off of his plum & pear trees & bury them until we send for them.” The growth of commercial orchards in Jefferson County and the Lower

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189 Amanda S. Humrickhouse to Margaretta C. White, September 15, 1846, Box 1, Folder 2, Albert Humrickhouse Papers, 1809-1920, OCLC 19851297, DMR.

190 Susan Lemen to Ellen Billmyer, March 25, 1856, Box 1, Folder 2, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR.
Shenandoah Valley did not emerge until after the Civil War. Although Jefferson County farmers participated in mixed agriculture, wheat served as the principal market crop for area cultivators.\textsuperscript{191}

Wheat, as well as other small grains, did not emerge as a viable export until the nineteenth century for several reasons. In comparison to corn, these grains required more time to harvest and produced smaller yields. Grain farmers also needed to clear their fields of stumps prior to planting so the grains could be harvested efficiently. Unlike the cash crops of tobacco, rice, or cotton, wheat never developed into a monoculture farming system. Instead, wheat farmers planted other crops, maintained orchards, and raised livestock. As demonstrated by the agriculture schedules, Jefferson County farmers planted more than just wheat, but also harvested corn, Irish potatoes, rye, and oats. Not only did some of these crops provide fodder for livestock, but farmers also harvested vegetables for subsistence. Although Jefferson County farmers harvested other crops, wheat was the principal crop on the majority of area farms. The agricultural dominance of wheat in Jefferson County mirrored the prominence of the crop throughout the entire Shenandoah Valley. Wheat served as an economic catalyst for the development of towns while also establishing financial connections between the Shenandoah Valley and the markets of Baltimore, Alexandria, and Georgetown. The cultivation of wheat reflected

\textsuperscript{191} Schlebecker, “Farmers in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” 475; Adams and Watterson, 48; William P. Craighill diary, March 24, 1849; April 15, 1849; April 16, 1849, William P. Craighill Diary, Mss5:1 C8447, vol. 1: 1849, VHS; Edward Lucas to Texana and M. E. Lucas, September 22, 1856, Box 2, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA; United States Census Office, 236-237; Kennedy, \textit{Agriculture of the United States}, 158-159; DeBow, 320-325; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule.
several larger agricultural trends within the early nineteenth century as markets formed throughout the region so farmers could sell their surplus crops, as well as their processed flour. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jefferson County farmers decided to increase their wheat harvests for several reasons.192

Jefferson County farmers chose to produce more wheat for financial and agrarian motives. In comparison to staple crops, such as tobacco, the planting of wheat required minimal capital. Although staple crops provided better financial returns than wheat, wheat farmers did not have to invest as much time and money into their crop. Wheat harvests also allowed growers a quick return on their investment as cultivators would receive money from their yield once the wheat had been ground into flour or when they sold their wheat to other merchants. Even if wheat farmers could not sell their wheat at market or to a local mill, planters still could use their harvests for other uses, including as feed for their livestock or distilling into alcohol. In terms of cultivation, wheat was an easier crop to maintain, specifically in comparison to the time needed to tend to one’s tobacco crop. While tobacco planters needed to allow their tobacco leaves to dry before they could process their harvest, farmers needed to be expedient with their wheat harvest so the quality of the product would not deteriorate or mold. Wheat also held a fundamental food value as most Jefferson County families incorporated flour into their diets. Jefferson County’s climate, as well as throughout the Shenandoah Valley, also proved conducive to the growing of wheat.193


193 Koons and Hofstra, xxi; Danhof, 150; Cecil-Fronsman. 102; and Dondlinger, 8.
Although more adaptable to a wider range of climates than some crops, wheat still required several ecological factors to grow properly. More susceptible to heat than cold, the ideal area to cultivate wheat fell within the latitudinal lines of 33° and 43° parallel. Wheat also required an appropriate amount of moisture. Wheat plants could contract jaundice if the crops received too much rain. If infected with jaundice, the wheat stalk turned yellow and likely died. Wheat also suffered from rust, another condition caused by excessive rain, which was then followed by the plant receiving a “very hot sun.” In terms of soil, wheat grew best in soils rich in phosphates and limestone. In addition, wheat required soils that have a pH balance between 6.0 and 6.5, or a soil considered to be moderately acidic to slightly acidic. The presence of natural limestone within Jefferson County’s soil indicated a low acidity, thus offering a soil conducive to the planting of wheat. Finally, wheat plants required a loose soil which allowed oxygen to pass through easily so the plant could receive the proper flow of air. On average, the root systems of the wheat plant reached four feet below the ground, however, these roots sometimes extended even longer to five or six feet deep. Since the majority of Jefferson County’s soil did not contain large concentrations of clay, the roots of the wheat plants could grow to the needed length. While there existed several varieties of wheat, most Jefferson County farmers planted winter wheat.

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194 Klippart, 582.

195 Ibid., 127, 179, 306; Vanderford, 199; Dondlinger, 13, 16; Todd, 284; and Theriault, 2. A high concentration of red clay only could be found in the Bakerton and Engle region of Jefferson County.
Also referred to as soft wheat, Jefferson County farmers primarily cultivated winter wheat rather than spring wheats. When using the term soft in relation to wheat, this characterization referred to the grain’s firmness. Whereas hard wheat was used in the making of bread, soft wheat contained less gluten and was used as a cake or pastry flour. Jefferson County farmers planted their winter wheat seeds typically between late September and early November with the harvest maturing between May and July. James Lawrence Hooff detailed in his agricultural journal the various steps required to prepare his fields for the planting of winter wheat. On September 24, 1860, Hooff noted that his slave, Jim, and George Webster were “harrowing No. 2.”\textsuperscript{196} By harrowing the field, Jim and Webster broke up the soil and then smoothed the earth to prepare it for planting. Five days after harrowing the field, Hooff scribbled on September 29, 1860 that Jim “started the [seed] drill this morning on No. 2.”\textsuperscript{197} Although farmers used several different planting methods when planting wheat, including sowing wheat by hand, by the 1840s, wheat farmers began to incorporate mechanized wheat drills into their planting process. As indicated by Hooff, his slaves used a wheat drill to plant the winter wheat. When sowing his wheat crop in 1841, Willoughby Newton Lemen did not mention using any machinery to assist in the process. On October 2, 1841, Lemen scribbled in his journal that he “commenced field beside C. L. Lee and sowed 35 bushels and finished on

\textsuperscript{196} James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 24, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

\textsuperscript{197} James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 27, 1860; September 28, 1860; September 29, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
the 11 of October.” Although Lemen did not specifically reference the use of any machinery later in his journal, the 1850 agriculture schedule indicates that Lemen owned $300 worth of farming implements and machinery. Whereas it took him nine days to sow thirty-five bushels of wheat in 1841, Lemen jotted in his ledger on October 11, 1859 that he had commenced planting wheat and “finished [on the] 13th sowed 30 Bushels.” The shorter amount of time it required Lemen to plant his winter wheat crop in October 1859 suggests that he may have invested in some agricultural machinery to assist him in the process. After planting their wheat, farmers needed to maintain their fields, but this maintenance work did not equal the amount of time devoted to the harvesting of wheat.

The harvesting of wheat created several stretches of intense labor periods. Ideally, farmers needed to harvest their wheat once the grain passed “from a milky state to that of complete hardness; or, in other words, when it is in the ‘dough,’ and when the kernels without being ‘sticky,’ are yet not sufficiently hard to resist the pressure of the thumb and finger.” Another method used by farmers to determine the appropriate

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198 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, October 2, 1841, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA.

199 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, October 11, 1859, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA.

200 Klippart, 78, 130, 460-461, 496; Todd, 63, 75, 271, 277; Gill, 385-386; Schlebecker, “Farmers in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” 472; Dondlinger, 9, 10, 14, 22, 65-66; Danhof, 206, 221; Schlebecker, Whereby We Thrive, 106-107; Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac,” 28; and Gregg L. Michel, “From Slavery to Freedom: Hickory Hill, 1850-1880,” in The Edge of the South: Life in Nineteenth-Century Virginia, eds. Edward L. Ayers and John C. Willis (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 112. New York and Pennsylvania farmers were among the first to use wheat drills, but by the 1850s, this tool was commonly used by the majority of farmers living within the Mid-Atlantic region. Typically, planters sowed two and a half bushels of wheat seed per acre with the returned expectation being between ten to fifteen bushels.

201 Klippart, 476; and Todd, 334-335.
harvesting time occurred through the monitoring of the color of the wheat stalk. Once the straw beneath the grain changed “from a greenish to an orange hue, for four or five inches in length, it is time to cut the grain.” Farmers needed to ensure that the grain had not become fully ripe prior to harvesting as ripe grain was more prone to being lost during the harvesting process. Typically farmers began the harvesting process between May and July. In 1860, James Lawrence Hooff began harvesting his wheat crop in late June. After having spent the previous days mowing hay and ploughing fields for corn, Hooff’s slaves proceeded to begin cutting the wheat on June 29, 1860. Except for periods of rain or heavy dew on the plants, Hooff’s slaves primarily focused on harvesting wheat throughout the entire month of July. Hooff’s men performed several different harvesting steps during this period, including cutting, raking, and then stacking the sheaves of wheat. During the harvesting processes, wheat farmers oftentimes employed supplementary white farmhands and slaves to provide additional assistance, especially if a farmer’s hay reached maturity at the same time. Typically, wheat farmers had approximately ten days to cut the wheat and then gather the crop. After allowing the cut wheat to lay in the fields for one to two days, cultivators quickly gathered the wheat to prevent their harvest from molding. Prior to any technological advancements, farmers cut their wheat using either sickles or cradle scythes. By the antebellum period, farmers began implementing mechanical reapers, self-raking reapers, reaper-harvesters, or threshers into the harvesting process. These mechanized inventions allowed for increased productivity while reducing labor; however, since these machines were

202 Todd, 341.
expensive only farmers who planted a significant amount of wheat purchased this new technology. Even with the implementation of mechanical reapers, workers still had to rake the wheat by hand and then bind the sheaves of wheat before transporting the wheat to the barn for the threshing process.203

Following the cutting and gathering of wheat, the crop then underwent a process known as threshing. Threshing consisted of the actual physical separation of the chaff, the protective casing of the wheat seed, from the edible portion of the plant. Depending upon the size of one’s wheat crop typically dictated the threshing method used by the farmer. For cultivators that only planted a small wheat crop, these planters used a flail, which comprised of a long-handled stick with a beater on the end. For farmers with larger wheat harvests, treading floors, trampling on the hardened ground, or a groundhog thresher served as the best threshing method. The objective of the first two techniques was to use the feet of animals, such as oxen or horses, to separate the grain from the chaff of the wheat. Developed by Scottish millwright Andrew Meickel in the eighteenth century, the groundhog thresher was operated by two men hand cranking the machine. The groundhog thresher contained a toothed cylinder that separated the grain. The groundhog thresher represented an improvement over the flailing or treading methods as

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203 Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac,” 22; Gill, 387-388; Gates, 250-251, 275; James Lawrence Hooff diary, June 29, 1860; July 2, 1860; July 11, 1860; July 14, 1860; July 20, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS; Dondlinger, 73, 79, 86; Klippart, 476, 478; Danbom, 110; Todd, 325-326, 344-345; Danhof, 223; Attack and Bateman, 194-195; Schlebecker, Whereby We Thrive, 114; Bruegel, 109-110; and Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 799. Danbom estimates that an average worker could cut one acre of wheat per day when using a sickle. This production rate increased to an average of two to three acres per day when using a cradle scythe. After the development of the mechanical reapers in the 1840s, the harvesting of wheat multiplied to between twelve and fifteen acres of grain per day.
the machine could thresh 150 bushels per day. In the 1830s, a more complex threshing machine was developed that separated the grain from the stalk, but humans still needed to divide the grain from the pile of chaff and stalk that accumulated on the floor. These threshing machines became widely used by large-scale wheat farmers in the 1840s, but the cost of the machines proved to be cost prohibitive for smaller size planters. Nearly two months after Hooff’s slaves finished stacking his wheat, they began the threshing process. Hooff recorded on September 7, 1860, that most of his men were “threshing wheat.” Hooff and his slaves continued threshing wheat intermittently for an entire week. Following the threshing of the wheat, farmers cleaned the grain so the product could be sent to the mill. One week after completing the threshing process, Hooff entered in his journal that the slaves were “cleaning wheat.” Shortly thereafter, Hooff and his slaves began the process of planting a new crop of wheat over again. Hooff’s farm represented only one of many Jefferson County farms that harvested wheat during the nineteenth century.

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204 James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 7, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

205 James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 28, 1860, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

Jefferson County represented one of Virginia’s leading wheat producers in the antebellum period. Similar to potatoes, nearly every farm in Jefferson County participated in wheat cultivation. Both in 1840 and 1860, Jefferson County ranked first in the state in terms of wheat production. Although not ranked first in 1850, Jefferson County farmers still produced the third most wheat in the state. Jefferson County growers produced 516,969 bushels of wheat in 1840. Although wheat production declined between 1840 and 1860, Jefferson County farmers still produced the largest amount of wheat in the state with 422,154 bushels. The decline in Jefferson County’s wheat production signified a decrease of eighteen percent. Jefferson County’s wheat production paralleled that of the entire Shenandoah Valley as this region constituted nearly nineteen percent of the state’s entire wheat crop in 1860. Per capita, Jefferson County farmers produced more wheat than residents consumed. Using the accepted standard of per capita consumption rate of five to six barrels of wheat, Jefferson County growers harvested a per capita rate of thirty-six bushels of wheat in 1840. Although the area’s per capita rate decline in 1850 and 1860, Jefferson County farmers still exceeded the accepted per capita rate in both decades. In 1850, the area’s wheat per capita rate was thirty bushels and only slightly decreased to twenty-nine bushels by the following decade. Overall, Jefferson County’s wheat per capita rate outpaced other counties within the Shenandoah Valley and the entire state. As recorded in the 1850 agriculture schedule, William Lucas and Thomas H. Willis produced the largest amount of wheat in Jefferson County with 6,000 bushels. Including Lucas and Willis, fifteen Jefferson County farmers produced more than 3,000 bushels of wheat in 1849. Lucas increased his wheat
production rate by the following decade, reporting a yield of 7,360 bushels. Besides Lucas, ten other farmers also recorded a wheat harvest that exceeded 3,000 bushels. Similar to the production of weapons, wheat cultivation spurred the growth of agricultural-related businesses within Jefferson County.\footnote{Jonathan M. Berkey, “In the Very Midst of the War Track: The Valley’s Civilians and the Shenandoah Campaign,” in The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 87; Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac,” 26; Gray, History of Agriculture, vol. 2, 818; Gates, 160-161; Schlebecker, “Farmers in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” 464, 466, 473; United States Census Office, 236-237; Kennedy, Agriculture of the United States, 158-159; DeBow, 320-325; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule. Schlebecker cites Virginia’s wheat per capita as being 7.88 bushels. The decrease in wheat production in 1850 may have been related to farmers experiencing increased levels of rust in their wheat crops.}

During the nineteenth century, Jefferson County’s wheat production facilitated the establishment of other supporting businesses, such as flour mills and cooperages. As wheat production rates increased, the number of flour mills also grew as farmers no longer were able to ground their wheat on their own farms at a low cost. The formation of flour mills placed millers within an essential agricultural role as they processed the wheat into a consumable product. Flour mills were established in central locations so farmers could easily transport their wheat to the business. Furthermore, millers located their mills near waterways as they depended upon water as their energy source. Towns, such as Harper’s Ferry and Shepherdstown, served an important role within Jefferson County’s milling activities as farmers from throughout the region brought their wheat to these mills. In addition to their grinding responsibilities, some millers also served as an intermediary between the local farmer and distant markets. These millers purchased the wheat directly from the farmer and then sold the flour after it had been ground. By
serving as an intermediary, the miller excluded the farmer from having to participate or negotiate within the market process. Prior to the milling process, millers also tried to remove impurities, such as dirt, from the wheat in the attempt to improve a grain’s grading. Flour inspectors graded the grain according to several factors, including plumpness, color, and weight per bushel. The higher grade a barrel of wheat received, the more profit achieved for the seller. While Jefferson County residents operated flour mills prior to the nineteenth century, an increase in wheat production led to the formation of additional mills. \(^\text{208}\)

Although settlers established smaller flour mills during the eighteenth century, the number of mills in Jefferson County began to increase during the early nineteenth century. Early flour mills often restricted their production capabilities to producing flour for one specific farm. For example, Benjamin Davenport operated a flour mill near Harper’s Ferry that belonged to the estate of John Clark. This mill processed wheat planted on the Clark estate. There existed other smaller mills throughout Jefferson County. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Daniel Kable purchased a parcel of land, which later became the town of Kabletown. Kable’s new land acquisition already contained a grist mill. Prior to Kable, Samuel McPherson had built a grist mill on the property in 1806. Kable continued to operate the mill, known as Gaunt’s Mill, and a sawmill along Bullskin Creek. Although Tench Coxe did not record the number of flour

\(^{208}\)Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 7; Majewski, 145; Kuhlmann, 94-5; Danhof, 31; Dunaway, 145; Dondlinger, 215, 221; and Bruegel, 42, 66, 96, 146-147. The establishment of a market economy in the nineteenth century led farmers to have a less personal relationships with their sellers as those who used intermediary grain agents were not able to negotiate or meet the buyer of their grain.
mills in Jefferson County in 1810, he estimated that area mills produced 47,750 barrels of flour, which ranked fifth in Virginia. Coxe estimated the value of these barrels at $382,000. As the nineteenth century progressed, the number of flour mills in Jefferson County continued to grow.\textsuperscript{209}

Since Jefferson County was a leading wheat producer, this agricultural production translated into the region also ranking high in Virginia for the number of barrels of flour produced. Flour shipped from the region tended to go either to the Georgetown and Alexandria markets or to the Baltimore markets. The flour transported to Baltimore generally was then shipped to French and Spanish colonies, as well as Peru, Chile, and Brazil. In addition to these South American destinations, flour from Baltimore also reached European markets and the southern United States located along the Gulf Coast and southern Atlantic states as these regions did not cultivate wheat. In 1850, there existed thirteen flour mills in Jefferson County whose annual production value exceeded five hundred dollars. Abraham Herr’s mill was the top producing mill in 1850 as the flour mill manufactured 20,136 barrels of flour. This production rate widely surpassed the next largest mill of John W. McCurdy. McCurdy’s mill produced 4,222 barrels of flour in 1850. Herr’s mill also employed the largest number of workers as five men labored at the mill. In 1850, flour mills in Jefferson County averaged 3,593 barrels of flour and employed an average of two male workers. The number of flour mills in Jefferson County increased to twenty in 1860. Herr’s mill was once again the leading

\textsuperscript{209} Opequon Factory Journal, 1813-1829, Mss. MsV AmiG14, WMSC; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 78; Smallwood, 1, 5; and Coxe, 87, 112-113. On average, millers needed four bushels of wheat to produce one barrel of flour.
producer of flour with 32,000 barrels. Herr also doubled the number of workers to ten employees. John G. Cockrell’s flour mill was the next largest flour producer with 6,222 barrels. The average flour mill employed two workers in 1860 and produced 4,006 barrels of flour. While Herr’s mill served as the leading mill for producing flour, other smaller mills also serviced the needs of local farmers. For example, Edward Lucas sent his wheat to John B. Lowman’s mill in February 1843 and then again in February 1843. John and Robert A. Lucas also hired Lowman in December 1846 to provide them with flour. James Lawrence Hooff indicated in his agricultural journal on January 10, 1861, that he send one of his slaves with “6 Bus wheat” to “Ropers Mill.”

Along with millers providing their services to resident farmers, other local artisans also contributed to the local economy by offering their skills.

A number of smaller businesses in Jefferson County also supported the packaging and transportation of wheat. Local craftsmen utilized natural resources to assist in the packaging of wheat and flour as flax was used to make sacks, hemp created coarser sacks and twine to bind the sheaves of wheat, and coopers utilized wood to build wooden

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210 James Lawrence Hooff diary, January 10, 1861, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

211 Keller, “The Wheat Trade on the Upper Potomac,” 25; Kuhlmann, 40, 41-42, 46-47; Gilbert, Waterpower, 100; Edward Lucas receipt from John B. Lowman, February 22, 1842, Box 2, Folder 3, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA; Edward Lucas receipt from John B. Lowman, February 10, 1843, Box 2, Folder 3, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA; John and Robert A. Lucas receipt from John B. Lowman, December 12, 1846, Box 2, Folder 3, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA; 1850 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; and 1860 United States Census, Jefferson County, Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule. The Baltimore markets received an estimated 1 million barrels of flour annually; half of these barrels came from nearby city mills while the rest derived from tributary mills from the surrounding region. Gilbert estimated that Herr’s mill produced “nearly 18 times the average annual value of flour produced by other mills in Jefferson County, and about 13 times the national average.”
barrels. Furthermore, the harvesting of wheat led to other pre-harvesting businesses, such as farriers to shod horses, wainwrights to build wagons, and leather workers to create harnesses and saddles for draft animals. In addition, teamsters or carters were employed in the transportation of the wheat to the mills and flour to warehouses. Following the development of Jefferson County’s three transportation networks, area businessmen established warehouse companies to store the flour until the product could be shipped to Atlantic markets. The proximity to the B&O and W&P Railroads, as well as the C&O Canal, led to the establishment of flour warehouses in Harper’s Ferry and Shepherdstown. Shepherdstown businessmen, Conrad and David Billmeyer, opened a flour warehouse in 1838 that not only stored flour, but also kept groceries which had been shipped to local customers from the Baltimore and Alexandria markets. In addition to providing storage space, other residents offered to transport wheat to flour mills. William H. Conklyn provided this type of service to area farmers. In March 1845, Conklyn charged James Roper five cents per bushel for hauling 73 ½ bushels of wheat to Harper’s Ferry. After being converted into flour, Conklyn also transported barrels of flour for farmers. In December 1844, Conklyn charged John W. McCurdy $7.20 for hauling forty-eight barrels of flour to Charlestown. To support this agricultural production, many Jefferson County farmers relied upon slave labor.²¹²

While Jefferson County planters did not rely as heavily upon slave labor as did Tidewater Virginia and other parts of the Deep South, the institution of slavery was still essential to agricultural production. Although Virginia ranked first among slave states in terms of slave population between 1800 and 1860, slavery was distributed unevenly within the state. The Tidewater and Piedmont regions of Virginia held the largest number of slaves, whereas western Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley possessed smaller slave populations. Despite having the largest slave population, the average Virginian slaveholder owned less than ten slaves in 1850. This trend continued the next decade as the average Virginian slaveholder owned nine slaves. Slavery within Jefferson County represented the diverse experiences of slavery within the South as enslaved African Americans not only worked in the industrial setting of the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, but they also labored as artisans, domestic servants, and agricultural workers. Therefore, these different slave experiences reemphasizes the argument that the institution of slavery should not be considered to be monolithic, but instead a diverse institution.\(^{213}\)

In comparison to the Tidewater and Piedmont regions, the Shenandoah Valley did not contain as many slaves. Although a smaller number of slaves resided within the region, this did not mean that residents within the Shenandoah Valley did not support of the institution of slavery. Since slavery was integrated within the livelihood of farmers and other businesspeople, non-slaveholders became staunch supporters of the institution.

as the Civil War approached. In Jefferson County, over twenty-percent of the population owned slaves. Using Lewis Cecil Gray’s definition of “middle class planters” as being those who owned between ten and fifty slaves, seventeen percent of Jefferson County slaveholders were considered to be in this category. Therefore, the majority of slaveholders within Jefferson County fell into Gray’s categorization of “small planters” as eighty-three percent owned less than ten slaves. The majority of Jefferson County’s slaveholders used their slaves to perform agricultural duties. According to the 1860 slave schedule, 634 Jefferson County residents owned. Adam Stephen Dandridge II was one of the area’s largest slaveholders as he owned sixty-six slaves. The largest category of slaveholders in Jefferson County owned only one slave with 149 residents indicating this classification. In 1860, the average slaveholder in Jefferson County owned six slaves, which was less than the state average. Jefferson County slaveholders, however, owned on average a larger number of slaves than most of its neighboring counties. Only Clarke County and Loudoun Counties had higher averages with Clarke County slaveholders owning an average of 9.81 slaves and Loudoun County slaveholders averaging 8.21 slaves.214

Although Jefferson County cultivators did not plant traditional cash crops, slaveholders still assigned their slaves multiple tasks. Instead, mixed crop farmers engaged African American slaves in a variety of agricultural tasks and hired slaves out to other cultivators. On farms that primarily cultivated wheat, slaves performed a number

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of different tasks when not completing work related to the cultivation of wheat. Slaves were assigned various chores including hauling manure, clearing fields, harvesting foodstuffs, mending fences, digging ditches, and cutting hay. Alexander R. Boteler, who owned six African American slaves, also hired temporary laborers to complete seasonal work on his farm. Boteler divided tasks for his slaves according to the season. In the winter, Boteler’s six slaves cut timber, cured meat, hauled corn, and built outbuildings. Beginning in the spring, Boteler’s slaves began preparing the fields by laying fertilizers on the land and then ploughing the fertilizer into the soil. After completing these tasks, the slaves recommenced the planting process.²¹⁵

Jefferson County slaveholders also engaged in the practice of hiring their slaves to other farmers. After informing Reverend William Thomas Leavell of his difficulty in hiring a plowman as “all appear to be shy of the down country overseers,” George B. Beall suggested that Leavell continue looking for available hands. Beall warned Leavell, however, that the situation may warrant that “you have to make two contracts generally one with the owner and one with the servant. Each has his terms.”²¹⁶ While Edward Lucas kept several slaves on his farm to assist in the agricultural and domestic chores, he contracted out some of his slaves. Noting that several of his slaves had returned home for

²¹⁵ Adams and Watterson, 9, 47-48; Koons and Hofstra, xxvi; Philip N. Racine, ed., *Piedmont Farmer: The Journals of David Golightly Harris, 1855-1870* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 120; and Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890*, 2d. ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 56. Although Harris was a farmer from Spartanburg County, South Carolina, his journal provides an example of the different agricultural tasks performed by slaves on a wheat-dominated farm.

²¹⁶ George B. Beall to Reverend William Thomas Leavell, November 25, 1850, Collection no. 41171, LV. Beall warned Leavell in the letter that other residents sometimes encountered difficulty in obtaining African American slave labor as General Cockerell “had to hire a white man to drive his horses.”
Christmas, Lucas informed his daughters that he hired out several of his slaves for the following year. Among the hired slaves included Lydia who would “live with Lake, the miller, about 2 miles over the Shenandoah River Loudon side.” Lucas also noted that “Wm. Snook gets Sally.” Lucas experienced some problems outsourcing his slaves in 1858 as he wrote to one of his daughters, “I have not found places for Harriett & Georgiana. Am very much worried by the number of Blacks about me. Wish I had none—but can’t help myself now.” Slave owners entered into contracts that indicated the different provisions that were to be provided to the slaves, including clothing, and the expected term of the contract. These contracts typically ran from the first day of January until Christmas Day of that year. Slaves would be granted time off from their contract during the last six days of the year. In 1854, Dr. Nicholas Marmion agreed to a one-year contract with John Jamison, Sr., for Jamison’s slave, Ann. Marmion agreed to provide Ann with “sufficient food and lodging during the said term, together with the usual quantity of winter and summer clothing of good materials…” Similar to other slaves, Jefferson County slaves attempted to resist the institution of slavery by various methods.

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217 Edward Lucas to Texana and M. E. Lucas, December 27, 1856, Box 2, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA.

218 Edward Lucas to “Daughter,” January 11, 1858, Box 2, Folder 2, Box 2, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA.

219 Contract Agreement between Nicholas Marmion and John Jamison, Sr., January 1854, Marmion Family Papers, Mss1 M3455 a 25-39 (Section 3), VHS.

220 Contract Agreement between Nicholas Marmion and John Jamison, Sr., January 1854, Marmion Family Papers, Mss1 M3455 a 25-39 (Section 3), VHS.
Slave experiences within Jefferson County resembled the brutal encounters experienced by other enslaved African Americans throughout the South. George Johnson, an enslaved African American raised in Harpers Ferry, remembered his time in Jefferson County as being “used as well as the people about there are used.” Johnson described his work regimen as “we went to work at sunrise, and quit work between sundown and dark.” Johnson’s owner, whom Johnson did not identify, did not punish their slaves by whipping, but instead Johnson remembered that “some were sold from my master’s farm, and many from the neighborhood.” As a result, “the slaves were always afraid of being sold South.”

William Grose and his two brothers were sold by a slaveholder in Harper’s Ferry to a new master in New Orleans. Grose attributed his selling to the fact “that I had a free wife in Virginia, and they were afraid we would get away through her means.” Slaveholders also attempted to restrict the movement of their slaves by enacting curfews that only applied to slaves. In August 1855, Shepherdstown’s officials decreed that slaves were not permitted to travel past nine o’clock without a pass. Jefferson County slaveholders also complained about their slaves’ behavior and the loss of runaway slaves. Writing to his children on April 26, 1855, Edward Lucas recounted how their uncle Robert Rion Lucas was “vexed by the running off of Jerry, his black man, on Saturday or Sunday last.”

Local newspapers

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222 Ibid., 82-84.

223 Edward Lucas to “Children,” April 26, 1855, Box 2, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA.
often contained advertisements from slaveholders looking for the return of their fugitive slaves. The abolishment of slavery during the Civil War represented one of the largest agricultural and political changes for Jefferson County in the post-war period.²²⁴

Throughout the nineteenth century Jefferson County farmers increasingly became connected to markets located on the Atlantic seaboard. Whether selling their livestock to merchants or having flour mills ground their wheat into flour, area cultivators participated in a regional economy. The presence of transportation networks allowed farmers to choose profitable crops to grow, as well as to increase the size of their harvests, as they recognized that they were not isolated from distant markets. Most producers did not directly deal with the exporting of their goods, rather they relied upon millers, merchants, or transportation companies to perform this task. The local transportation networks of the C&O Canal, B&O Railroad, and W&P Railroad provided needed services to transport agricultural productions, particularly wheat, flour, and corn, to larger markets, including Baltimore, Georgetown, and Alexandria.²²⁵

Though economically and climatology unsuitable for plantations with slave labor, Tidewater estate holders purchased large tracts of land within Jefferson County that


²²⁵ Dunaway, 220-221, 233-235; Majewski, 60; Henry V. Poor, History of the Railroads and Canals of the United States of America, Exhibiting Their Progress, Cost, Revenues, Expenditures & Present Condition, Vol. 1 (New York: John H. Schultz & Co., 1860), 604; and Schlebecker, Whereby We Thrive, 83. Ronald E. Shaw argues that even if canal companies did not achieve financial success, these transportation networks provided an essential economic function by transporting agricultural commodities to markets and thereby helping to spur the growth of communities which bordered the canals. See Shaw, 230.
resembled the size of their former Tidewater plantations. These Tidewater aristocrats created their own homogenous communities that did not relate to the other settlers of the county. These wealthy elite wanted to own large amounts of land and accumulate wealth similar to other Southern plantation owners, therefore they cultivated crops, such as wheat, that did not require a continual labor force, but yet could provide substantial profits. Overall, Thomas Jefferson agreed with the Virginia planter’s decision to cultivate wheat rather than continuing to grow tobacco as he stated:

> Besides clothing the earth with herbage, and preserving its fertility, it feeds the laborers plentifully, requires from them only moderate toil, except in the season of harvest, raises great numbers of animals for food and service, and diffuses plenty and happiness among the whole. We find it easier to make a hundred bushels of wheat than a thousand weight of tobacco, and they are worth more when made.226

The planting of wheat became Jefferson County’s agricultural staple with the region leading Virginia in production. Responding to a European request for wheat after the American Revolution, farmers increased their production to meet the market demands. Local artisans established businesses around the production of wheat, including flour mills, cooperages, and wheelwrights. The staple crop’s inexpensiveness allowed county residents regardless of economic status to incorporate the product into their daily consumption.227

Farmers transformed the soil and forest composition of Jefferson County through the development of mixed crop farms. The cultivation of wheat required less labor, but provided large landowners with a sufficient standard of living. During the antebellum

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226 Quoted in Gutheim, 107.

227 Rasmussen, 11; and Gutheim, 135-37.
period, Willoughby Newton Lemen, a Shepherdstown cultivator, engaged in numerous agricultural activities in the attempt to diversify his family farm. Although Lemen harvested 1,331 bushels of wheat in 1839, he also planted other crops. On June 29, 1840, Lemen noted in his diary that he had “commenced harvesting cut rye.” During the next month, Lemen mowed his hay, resulting in “4 ricks of hay 44 feet long” and “finished hauling oats.” In addition to harvesting crops, Lemen also raised livestock as on November 4, 1840, he “started to Georgetown with hogs.” Finally, Lemen indicated a business transaction on November 20, 1840, in which he purchased “40 trees apple Rambo for $4.00 from Samuel Cook and William Wrights’ nursery. Lemen’s farm serves as an example of the mixed crop agriculture that existed in Jefferson County in the pre-war period. Rather than focusing on harvesting one crop, Jefferson County cultivators diversified their agrarian efforts by raising numerous crops, tending to livestock, and maintaining orchards.228

The fertility of the soils in not only Jefferson County, but throughout the entire Shenandoah Valley lured settlers to migrate to the region. The harvesting of wheat led farmers to incorporate various agrarian methods to maintain the soil’s fertility level so that growers could continue to produce their primary market crop. Combined with the rich limestone soils of the region, geographical accessibility to the important markets of Georgetown, Alexandria, and Baltimore stimulated economic and agricultural growth during the nineteenth century. Although journalist David Hunter Strother visited

228 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, June 29, 1840; July 10, 1840; July 13, 1840; July 22, 1840; November 4, 1840; November 20, 1840, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA. A rick of hay refers to a stack of hay.
Jefferson County in December 1859 for other purposes, he paused to comment of the region’s agricultural richness. Before witnessing the execution of John Brown on December 2, 1859, Strother depicted the countryside surrounding the execution site. “From the scaffold which I ascended the view was of surpassing beauty,” Strother wrote. “On every side stretching away into the blue distance was broad & fertile fields dotted with corn shocks and white farm houses glimmering through the leafless trees—emblems of prosperity and peace.”

Enjoying the “emblems of prosperity and peace” that currently surrounded him, Strother could not have predicted the tumult that would result from Brown’s Raid in October 1859.

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CHAPTER V

“WAR AT HARPERS FERRY”: POLITICAL CONFLICTS IN VIRGINIA AND JOHN
BROWN’S INSURRECTION AT HARPER’S FERRY

As Jefferson County residents started their day on October 17, 1859, news began
to spread of the preceding night’s activities when John Brown and twenty-one of his
followers launched an insurrection at Harper’s Ferry. “I was at my home near
Shepherdstown (ten miles west of Harper’s Ferry), and had hardly finished breakfast
when a carriage came to the door with one of my daughters who told me that a messenger
had arrived at Shepherdstown, a few minutes before, with the startling intelligence of a
negro insurrection at Harper’s Ferry,” recalled Alexander Boteler, a local politician and
owner of the Shepherdstown cement mill. Sheperdstown farmer Willoughby Newton
Lemen entered in his agricultural ledger on October 17, 1859, that he spent the day
“sowing Rye 5 Bushels in Hill F[ield],” as well as “sowing wheat.” Following this initial
notation, Lemen made a separate entry which stated, “War at Harpers ferry A[rmory] &
Virginia.” Prior to Brown’s insurrection, Boteler and Lemen performed their daily

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the Fight,” The Century Magazine XXVI, no. 3 (July 1883): 400.

231 Willoughby Lemen Ledger and Diary, October 17, 1859, Ledger and Diary, Willoughby
Lemen, Shepherdstown, 1822-1876, Ms 79-47, WVSA.
activities uninterrupted; however, this event completely disrupted the political landscape of this once unassuming region. Brown’s Raid plunged Jefferson County resident directly into the contentious crossroads of the national slave debate and the growing political divergence within Virginia. Furthermore, the insurrection led county inhabitants to reaffirm their commitment to the institution of slavery, despite the small number of slaveholders who actually lived in the area.

As a result of Brown’s insurrection, Jefferson County residents believed that the war against slavery had come to their doorsteps two years prior to the beginning of Southern secession and the first fired shots at Fort Sumter. From the conclusion of the Raid to the hanging of John Brown and his men, local and state militias occupied Jefferson County in order to provide security against any additional abolitionist invasions or slave insurrections. Despite the presence of these armed forces, heightened anxieties prevailed among the white population, especially after the outbreak of a series of unexplainable fires during Brown’s imprisonment. After Brown’s hanging, Jefferson County residents hoped for a return to normalcy; however, the 1860 presidential election and the ensuing vote for succession only caused further sectional apprehensions for white inhabitants. Ultimately, Brown’s Raid served as the impetus that launched Jefferson County and its’ residents into the throngs of the American Civil War. Jefferson County citizens witnessed firsthand the prophecy stated by Brown in the famous note that he passed to a prison guard on his way to the gallows on the morning of December 2, 1859,
in which he wrote, “I, John Brown, am now quite *certain* that the crimes of this *guilty, land*: will never be purged *away*; but with Blood.”232

Brown’s Raid served as the culmination of his life’s work toward the abolishment of slavery. Beginning in his teenage years, Brown dedicated himself to the abolitionist cause. Initially, Brown opposed the institution of slavery through non-resistant methods, including providing supplies and shelter to fugitive slaves as they traveled the Underground Railroad. He also proposed to provide educational opportunities for African American children. Many abolitionists were not willing to provide African Americans their own church pew, live amongst blacks in North Elba, New York, or establish bi-racial alliances as exhibited through Brown’s actions. Events such as the murder of Elijah P. Lovejoy, the Second Great Awakening, and the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act converted Brown into a religious zealot who believed that only violent means could eradicate the enslavement of African Americans. The Pottawatomie Massacre in May 1856 served as Brown’s first foray of using violence against pro-slavery supporters. From his infamous activities in Bleeding Kansas, Brown publicly demonstrated his

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232 David S. Reynolds, *John Brown Abolitionist: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Rights* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 395; and Tony Horwitz, *Midnight Rising: John Brown and the Raid that Sparked the Civil War* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011), 256, 332n. While this quote is one of the most famous statements attributed to Brown, the note that he handed the prison guard, Hiram O’Bannon, also contained a second line. The note continued, “I had as I now think: vainly flattered myself that without *very* [sic] much bloodshed; it might be done.” In this second line, Brown admitted that while he initially believed that his invasion would not result in a significant amount of bloodshed, he now realized that the only possible way to eradicate the institution of slavery was through the substantial loss of life.
commitment to the abolitionist cause, gained valuable military experience, and formed military and financial relationships which later benefitted his cause.  

Despite sending his son, John Brown, Jr., on multiple reconnaissance missions, Brown always intended to launch his slave insurrection at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. Although some historians have argued that Brown chose Harper’s Ferry so he could obtain weapons from the Federal Armory and Arsenal, Brown’s actions refute this assertion as he brought a cache of weapons with him to Harper’s Ferry. Instead, Brown selected this region for geographic and psychological reasons. Geographically, the positioning of Harper’s Ferry along the borderland region allowed Brown and his men to either retreat northward if the revolt failed or continue southward along the mountainous region if successful. Furthermore, the natural passageway of the Lower Shenandoah Valley already served as an important conduit for free and enslaved African Americans migrating northward. The town’s surrounding landscape, however, did not lend to a

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strong defensive position for Brown and his men, since Harper’s Ferry easily could be defeated if military forces gained control of Maryland, Bolivar, and Loudon Heights. Visiting Harper’s Ferry in 1861, William Howard Russell asserted that Brown obviously did not factor the geographic vulnerability of the town into his decision-making process. Instead, Russell surmised that Brown “probably thought a valley was as high as a hill” and “assuredly he saw as little of the actual heights and depths around him when he ran across the Potomac to revolutionize Virginia.” Brown also recognized the psychological impact that another slave revolt would have upon Virginia’s slave owners. The state’s General Assembly previously had debated whether to abolish the institution of slavery following Nat Turner’s rebellion. Furthermore, the Virginia General Assembly previously enacted laws that restricted the movements and communication of both free and enslaved African Americans, an indication that white Virginians feared the growing black population. In addition to these factors, the predominant reason why Brown choose Harper’s Ferry for his intended revolt related to his desire to attack the institution of slavery at its core. Containing a significant enslaved population, Brown sought to make an emphatic stand against the institution of slavery within the slaveholding state of Virginia.

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Accompanied by his two sons, Owen and Oliver, and Jeremiah Anderson, Brown arrived in the vicinity of Harper’s Ferry on July 3, 1859, in search of a potential headquarters. Brown presented himself to local residents as several different characters including a prospector looking for minerals, a New York farmer searching for prospective farmlands, or a cattle buyer from New York. Each of these personas contained an aspect of truth as Brown previously worked each of these professions during his lifetime. For example, Brown portrayed himself as a New York farmer when he stopped at the Washington House in Hagerstown, Maryland. Brown informed the Washington House’s landlord, Mr. Singling, that he and his sons desired to relocate from Western New York as “the frosts had taken their crops for two or three years; that they were going to Virginia to look out a location for raising sheep and growing wool…”

Brown used several of his personas when encountering local resident, John C. Unseld. Initially informing Unseld that he wanted to acquire available farmlands, Brown later changed his story and told Unseld that he and his men were interested in surveying and mining. After examining the countryside, Brown chose a secluded farmhouse owned by the heirs of Dr. Booth Kennedy for his Maryland headquarters. Located approximately familiar with the area around Jefferson County as African American folklore recalled the stories of African American slaves who had fled northward along the Great Black Way.

five miles from Harper’s Ferry, Brown assembled his men at the Kennedy farmhouse and remained there until the group departed for their mission on the evening of October 16, 1859. Brown recruited a diverse group of supporters to join him at the Kennedy farmhouse, including five African American men. Former slave, Dangerfield Newby, joined Brown as his wife, Harriet, remained enslaved and wished for her husband to come and “buy me as soon as possible, for if you do not get me some body else will…” The other African American men who enlisted with Brown included Lewis Leary, John Copeland, Osborne Anderson, and Shields Green. Brown also attempted to recruit local African Americans and non-slaveholding whites to join his insurrection. Brown specifically wanted Frederick Douglass to perform this duty. Meeting with Douglass at a quarry near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, on August 20, 1859, Brown urged Douglass to join him. Despite Brown’s pleas, Douglass believed that the plan

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237 Oates, To Purge this Land, 275; Jules Abels, Man on Fire: John Brown and the Cause of Liberty (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), 242; Allan Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln, vol. II, Prologue to Civil War 1859-1861 (New York and London: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1950), 72; DuBois, John Brown, 309; F. B. Sanborn, ed., The Life and Letters of John Brown, Liberator of Kansas, and Martyr of Virginia (Boston: Robert Brothers, 1885; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 527 (page citations are to the reprint edition); and John E. P. Daingerfield, “John Brown at Harper’s Ferry. The Fight at the Engine-House, as Seen by One of His Prisoners,” The Century 30, no. 2 (June 1885): 265. Daingerfield, who served as the Acting Paymaster at the Federal Armory and Arsenal, remembered that prior to the insurrection, “there had been seen by the neighbors small squads of men with picks and spades moving about the mountain-sides, making small excavations here and there, pretending to be looking for gold, of which they declared the mountains were full. They went repeatedly to the small property-owners, trying to buy land, until all the neighborhood was much excited, and they had succeeded in diverting the minds of the people from their real object.”

238 Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, The Life & Death of Dangerfield Newby: One of the Black Raiders that came with John Brown (Ranson: Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, 2005), 3-4. Harriet wrote the letter to her husband on August 16, 1859, two months prior to the raid. Harriet Newby and her six children were owned by Dr. Lewis Augustine Jennings and resided in Brentsville, Virginia. Philip J. Schwarz, Migrants Against Slavery: Virginians and the Nation (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 159, 161.
would fail and that Harper’s Ferry represented “a perfect steel trap, and that once in he
would never get out alive.” Brown responded by telling his friend, “I will defend you
with my life. I want you for a special purpose. When I strike, the bees will begin to
swarm, and I shall want you to help hive them.” Although Brown implored his friend,
Douglass refused to participate. In addition to the five African American supporters,
sixteen whites joined Brown’s party including several family members.

After assembling his group at the Kennedy farmhouse, Brown launched his
invasion on Harper’s Ferry on the night of October 16, 1859. Before embarking on their
mission, Brown read from sections of the Provisional Constitution that had been
formulated previously at the Chatham Conference in May 1858. The Provisional
Constitution served as the governing philosophy for the new government which Brown
sought to create after newly liberated African Americans answered his call. Around 8:00
p.m., Brown informed his party, “Men get on your arms; we will proceed to the Ferry.”
The men departed from the Kennedy farmhouse marching two-by-two under the cover of

239 Oates, *To Purge this Land*, 283.

240 Carton, 288-290; and Stauffer, 249.


darkness while Brown drove a wagon that contained additional weapons and the pikes crafted by Charles Blair of Collinsville, Connecticut. Arriving at Harper’s Ferry at approximately 10:00 p.m., several of Brown’s men began by cutting the telegraph lines to prevent town residents from establishing a line of communication. Brown’s men then marched across the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad bridge and captured the night watchman, William Williams. The party then continued on to the Federal Armory and Arsenal and seized the industrial complex. By grabbing the B&O bridge and arms manufacturer, Brown successfully gained control of Harper’s Ferry as the townspeople remained asleep.\textsuperscript{243}

After achieving this initial success, Brown instructed several of his men, including Osborne Anderson, Lewis Leary, and Shields Green, to leave the Federal Armory and Arsenal and gather African American slaves to join their cause. At the time of the insurrection, approximately two hundred African Americans, free and enslaved, lived in the towns of Harper’s Ferry and Bolivar. The majority of Jefferson County’s African American slaves, however, resided on area farms. Prior to the invasion, John E. Cook conducted reconnaissance regarding the number of slaves living at Lewis Washington’s Beall Air estate, as well as the residences of other slave owners. As Anderson, Leary, and Green made their way to Washington’s house, the raiders supposedly encountered a group of “colored men.” Anderson and his cohorts preceded to tell these men of their intentions and “they immediately agreed to join us. They said they

\textsuperscript{243} Everhart and Sullivan, 25, 27; Oates, \textit{To Purge this Land}, 243-245, 290; Horwitz, 129; DuBois, \textit{John Brown}, 309; Sanborn, 377, 378; and Villard, 429.
had been long waiting for an opportunity of the kind. [Aaron] Stevens then asked them to go around among the colored people and circulate the news, when each started off in a different direction. The result was that many colored men gathered to the scene of action.”

After this alleged encounter, the invaders continued onward to Washington’s home, where they barged into the residence. Washington later testified in a sworn affidavit that the men “demanded his money and watch, and with force seized and carried off from his premises, beside his own person, a number of negro slaves, horses, and wagons, and other property…” The raiding party took Washington’s male slaves, leaving behind any female slaves who may have been at the residence. Upon leaving Beall Air, the party continued on to the house of another slaveholder, John Allstadt.

Similar to their excursion at Beall Air, the raiding party intended to capture Allstadt’s slaves for their insurrection. Using a fence rail, the men broke down Allstadt’s

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245 Henry W. Flournoy, ed., Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts from January 1, 1836, to April 15, 1869; Preserved in the Capitol at Richmond, vol. 11 (Richmond: R. F. Walker, 1875-1893; reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1968), 74 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

246 Steven Lubet, John Brown’s Spy: The Adventurous Life and Tragic Confession of John E. Cook (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), 55-56; Everhart and Sullivan, 15; Geffert and Libby, 166, 174; Villard, 428; Carton, 299; Barry, 79; Horwitz, 136; Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, The Capture, Trial and Execution of John A. Copeland and Shields Green (Two of the Five African-American Raiders that Participated in John Brown’s Raid on Harpers Ferry) (Ranson: Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, 2003), 13; Millard K. Bushong, General Turner Ashby and Stonewall’s Valley Campaign 2d. ed. (Waynesboro: The McClung Companies, 1992), 18; and DuBois, John Brown, 312. Cook claimed that he also visited the Jefferson County clerk’s office to determine how many free blacks lived in the region. While Washington depicted the confrontation as being an intense exchange between the two parties, DuBois suggests that Washington attempted to negotiate with his captors to take his slaves and let him remain at his home. Several of Washington’s slaves were not home at the time of the Raid as they were visiting family members at other plantations. Geffert and Libby identify four slaves taken from the Washington household as being Jim, Sam, Mason, and Catesby.
door, thereby waking everyone inside the home. John Thomas Allstadt, who was eighteen-years-old at the time of the Raid, recalled that “they led my father and me outside. There we saw Colonel Washington, sitting in his own team. They put us, my father and me, on the seat of Colonel Washington’s four-horse wagon. In the body, behind us, our six negroes and Colonel Washington’s quota stood close packed.” Counting the number of slaves taken from both the Washington and Allstadt residences, Brown’s men “liberated” a total of ten to eleven African American male slaves. Brown instructed his men to not only free these slaves, but to also capture their masters as prisoners of war so that the slaveholders could personally witness the liberating of their slaves. While some of Brown’s men traveled through the countryside grabbing African American slaves, other members of the group delayed a B&O passenger train from passing through Harper’s Ferry.

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247 Villard, 432.

248 Robert Penn Warren, *John Brown: The Making of a Martyr* (New York: Payson and Clarke, 1929; reprint, St. Clair Shores: Scholarly Press, 1970), 355 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Geffert and Libby, 174; Geffert, *Annotated Narrative*, 60-61; John H. Zittle, *A Correct History of the John Brown Invasion at Harper’s Ferry, West VA., Oct. 17, 1859*, ed. H. Minnie Zittle (Hagerstown: Mail Publishing Company, 1905), 43; Oates, *To Purge this Land*, 291; Robert E. McGlone, *John Brown’s War Against Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 266, 268; Everhart and Sullivan, 31; Horwitz, 136; Renehan, Jr., 198; DuBois, *John Brown*, 314; and John W. Blassingame and John R. McKivigan, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series One: Speeches, Debates, and Interviews, vol. 5 1881-1895 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 8. DuBois claims that Brown captured and armed between twenty-five and fifty slaves, but only references the taking of Washington and Allstadt’s slaves. In a speech given at Harper’s Ferry in 1881, Frederick Douglass reiterated that Brown gathered fifty slaves during the revolt. Horwitz claims that Brown’s men took seven slaves from the Allstadt household while Everhart and Sullivan only cite four. Geffert and Libby identify the slaves originating from the Allstadt household as being Henry; Levi; Ben; Jerry; Phil; George; and Bill. The elder Allstadt later testified that Brown’s men took seven of his slaves rather than six. Allstadt requested compensation for his losses incurred from the insurrection. His claim stated that he should be compensated “on the grounds that his property has been sacrificed and destroyed by a Civil War and Commotions within the territory [sic] of the State where in he had just reason to suppose his property would be entirely and efficiently protected.”

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Brown’s decision to delay the train on the morning of October 17, 1859, ultimately proved detrimental to his plan and also took the life of an African American railroad porter. Traveling from Wheeling to Baltimore, Brown’s men halted the train to prevent word from spreading about the Raid. The lateness of the train, however, led Heyward Shepherd to leave his post and investigate why the train had not passed through town. As he approached the B&O bridge, two of Brown’s raiders, Oliver Brown and William Thompson, confronted Shepherd. The presence of these men led Shepherd to turn around and start walking back to the train station. One of the raiders fired at the retreating Shepherd, hitting him in the lower back. A passenger on the halted train, Franklin Simeon Seely, wrote to his wife, Adelaide Maria Curtis Seely, in which he described the confrontation between Shepherd and the raiders. Seely told his wife that Shepherd was shot in the “Back pretty low down and came in front just at the lower parts of the Ribs.” After being shot, Shepherd attempted to make his way back to the train station, “crying he was shot.”²⁴⁹ Ironically, a free African American represented the first victim of Brown’s Raid. Following Shepherd’s death, Brown finally permitted the train to continue onward at daybreak. The train’s conductor, A. J. Phelps, stopped at the Monocacy station and telegraphed his supervisor the news of the insurrection. At 7:05 a.m., Phelps informed his superiors, “My train eastbound was stopped at Harper’s Ferry this morning about 1:30 by armed abolitionists. They say they have come to free the slaves and intend to do it at all hazards. It has been suggested you had better notify the

²⁴⁹ Franklin Simeon Seely to Adelaide Maria Curtis Seely, October 17, 1859, Franklin Simeon Seely Letter, A&M 1457, WVRHC.
Sec. of War at once.” Phelps also notified B&O officials that “the telegraph lines are cut East and West of Harper’s Ferry and this is the first station that I could send a dispatch from.” Brown’s permitting the train to proceed allowed railroad officials to alert the United States Marines of the ongoing insurrection, thereby leading to a national response in assisting to quell the revolt.

By the morning of October 17, 1859, news regarding Brown’s Raid began to spread throughout Jefferson County, thereby leading to sheer panic among the white populace. Jennie Chambers, who attended the Young Ladies’ Seminary in Harper’s Ferry, was on her way to class when she encountered a group of armed men. Fearful of their presence, Chambers started running back to her house in Bolivar. “I didn’t know what minute an Abolitionist might jump out at me from behind a tree—and eat me,” she recounted. From Chambers’ perspective, “they were cannibals, for all I knew, from some far-off country…” Another county resident, A. R. H. Ranson later recalled how he learned of the invasion as he oversaw his slaves working out in the fields cutting corn.

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251 Truman Nelson, The Old Man: John Brown at Harper’s Ferry (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 8, 109; Hearn, Companions in Conspiracy, 61; Barry, 84; The Life, Trial and Execution of Capt. John Brown: Being a Full Account of the Attempted Insurrection at Harper’s Ferry, Va. (New York: Robert M. De Witt, 1859; reprint, Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing Co., 1969), 31 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Daingerfield, 265; and Warren, 357. Barry identifies the porter as Heywood Shepherd. Although Shepherd was a free African American, he still considered Fontaine Beckham as his owner. Among the supposed reasons that Brown’s men shot Shepherd was that he refused to join their cause. John S. Wise, son of Virginia governor Henry Wise, later wrote that Brown was likely to encounter problems as “it was an ill omen for his venture that the first person killed by his band in the early morning was an inoffensive colored man.” John S. Wise, The End of an Era (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1901), 129.

Ranson recounted that “the men often turned their eyes on me as I followed behind them in their work, --a thing I had never observed in them before.”\textsuperscript{253} The slaves’ suspicious behavior led Ranson to travel to his local post office whereupon he learned of Brown’s invasion. Ranson returned home, gathered his rifle, and headed to Harper’s Ferry to view firsthand the growing excitement.\textsuperscript{254}

Upon hearing the news of the revolt, white community members began alerting their fellow inhabitants of the crisis. The sexton of the Lutheran church in Harper’s Ferry notified the town’s residents by ringing the church bells. Allegedly one Harper’s Ferry merchant sent two of his boys to Frederick, Maryland, hoping that they could alert outsiders of the Raid. Several residents of Harper’s Ferry also rode through the countryside sounding the alarm, yelling, “Insurrection at Harper Ferry! Slaves raping and butchering in the streets!”\textsuperscript{255} One of the townspeople who also disseminated news of the revolt was a local doctor, John D. Starry. As he rode toward the neighboring community of Charlestown, Starry informed anyone whom he encountered. After arriving in Charlestown, he quickly alerted citizens so they could gather their arms and assemble local militia units.\textsuperscript{256}

\textsuperscript{253} A. R. H. Ranson, “Reminiscences of the Civil War by a Confederate Staff Officer, Plantation Life in Virginia before the War,” \textit{The Sewanee Review} 21, no. 4 (October 1913): 439. Writing about his memories approximately fifty years after the event, Ranson mistakenly identifies October 20, 1859 as being when he heard about Brown’s Raid.

\textsuperscript{254} Ibid., 440-441.

\textsuperscript{255} Oates, \textit{To Purge this Land}, 293.

\textsuperscript{256} Smith, \textit{Harpers Ferry Armory}, 305; Zittle, 50-51; Villard, 434-436; and Nevins, \textit{Emergence of Lincoln}, vol. II, 80. Villard compares John D. Starry as being Jefferson County’s equivalent to Paul Revere whereas Allan Nevins perceived Starry as being “slow-witted,” and a “tardy Paul Revere.”
As news traveled of Brown’s Raid, feelings of panic escalated among white residents in surrounding communities. Elijah Avey, an apprentice for Charlestown’s watchmaker W. W. Burton, remembered that some “people living in the country fled from their homes and gathered in town for the feeling of security that numbers gave.” Included within this chaotic migration “were the wealthy and aristocratic slave owners of the section and for that day, at least, the negroes on the plantations were masters of all they surveyed.”

John G. Rosengarten, whose train had been delayed due to the Raid, was arrested as he walked toward Harper’s Ferry. Local militia officers decided to send Rosengarten to the Charlestown jail as a precaution since he was viewed suspiciously for being a Northerner. As he preceded with his guard to the prison, Rosengarten found all “the houses on the road were utterly deserted; on the first news of an outbreak by the slaves, the women and children were hurried off to the larger towns…and the negroes keeping themselves hid out of sight on all sides.”

Avey and Rosengarten’s observations that the slaves were left unattended invokes an intriguing supposition that if Brown had been able to gain control of Harper’s Ferry, then slaves on the surrounding farms might have freely joined his cause as their enslavers were not present to interfere with their leaving. As the morning rose on Harper’s Ferry, a significant number of rumors spread regarding the chaotic nature of the Raid, including a grossly exaggerated number of participants. These unverifiable accounts increased panic among whites and

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created an initial memory of the event as being a much larger attack on Southerners’ livelihoods and the institution of slavery than existed in reality. Luther Simpson, a baggage-master who was taken prisoner by Brown, contributed to the inflated numbers by recalling that he “saw from five to six hundred negroes, having arms: there were two to three hundred white men with them….”

Charlestown resident Cleon Moore suggested that early reports circulating around his community indicated “the number of Raiders variously estimated from 300 to 1,000.” James B. Craighill, who served with a responding local militia, recounted that, “It must be remembered that we were in utter ignorance as regards [to] the number and the location of the enemy. The wildest rumours [sic] were afloat, and were industriously circulated, by the sensationalists of the party. Some said there were 500; some a thousand; some more.” In addition to reports that exaggerated the number of insurrectionists, some rumors also made connections between the uprising and disgruntled armory workers. David Hunter Strother, who lived in Martinsburg, initially received news which potentially associated the insurrection to “the labourers on the government dam who had been defrauded of their pay by an absconding contractor.”

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Brown’s Raid, Armory superintendent Alfred M. Barbour fired one hundred employees and reduced the wages of the remaining labor force by ten percent. Understandably, some whites therefore assumed that perhaps these discontented workers intended to strike to restore their previous wages. Regardless of the number of insurrections or who initiated the uprising, local militias hurriedly formed to respond to the revolt.263

In addition to the assembling of several Jefferson County militia units, local white residents also gathered to help suppress the rebellion. Under the leadership of Captains Henry Medler, Hezekiah Roderick, and William H. Moore, Harper’s Ferry inhabitants and armory workers comprised the initial militia companies. Harper’s Ferry dweller George Mauzy was among those who first responded to protect their town. Mauzy’s wife, Mary, wrote to her daughter Eugenia Burton of her father’s escapades, “My dear husband shouldered his rifle and went to join our men. May god protect him.”264 Other Jefferson County militia groups, including the Jefferson Guards (Charlestown), Hamtramck Guards (Shepherdstown), Botts Grays (Charlestown), “Captain Rowens Company,” and the Jefferson Volunteers, also quickly volunteered to quell the revolt. To assist in the local response, William H. Richardson, Adjutant General of Virginia, telegraphed Colonel John T. Gibson of the 55th Virginia Militia on October 17, requesting “a sufficient force from your Regiment to put down the Rioters at Harper’s Ferry. The

263 McGlone, 258; Regis De Trobriand, Four Years with the Army of the Potomac, translated by George K. Dauchy (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1889), 25; and Avey, 72. Regarding the potential labor uprising, the corresponding rumor hypothesized that “it was supposed by many that some collision respecting wages or hours of labor had occurred between the officers and the workmen, which had provoked a popular tumult.”

264 Gilbert, Waterpower, 120.
Commander in Chief is informed that the Arsenal & Government property at that place are in possession of a Band of Rioters.” County residents also took it upon themselves to assist their neighbors in their time of need by rushing to Harper’s Ferry. Charlestown residents boarded a W&P train, along with the Botts Gray and Captain Rowens Company, and proceeded to Harper’s Ferry.

Despite the presence of the Federal Armory and Arsenal in Harper’s Ferry, many of the initial responders did not bring any weapons or ammunition with them. The lack of firearms led townspeople to only have “one or two squirrel rifles and a few shot guns” at their disposal. Eyewitness Edward White ironically noted that “strange as it may seem, --with two large establishments for the manufacture of arms and with an arsenal stored with weapons of every kind, new and old, Harper’s Ferry was an unarmed town.” Therefore, local residents and militiamen began searching for accessible weapons so they could launch an attack upon Brown and his men. By the time that Dr. John D. Starry returned from his warning ride to Charles town, he discovered that the

265 Quoted in Cohen, 42.

266 Barry, 56; Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 309; Julia Davis, Shenandoah, 142-143; Cecil D. Eby, ed., “George Schoppert of Harper’s Ferry: Assassin or Patriot?,” The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society 65 (December 1999): 29; Avey, 12-13, 15; and Abels, 278. Rather than traveling to Harper’s Ferry, Elijah Avey responded to the call to arms by serving as a patrolmen on the Charlestown home front.

267 Villard, 435-436.

268 Edward White, “Eyewitness at Harpers Ferry,” American Heritage XXVI, no. 2 (February 1975): 59. White added that “I was told afterwards and I believe it was true, that except those in the Armory and Arsenal there were not six guns of any kind in the place.” White’s brother, Charles, claimed that “not a single available gun or other weapon of defense” was available. Rayburn S. Moore, ed., “John Brown’s Raid at Harpers Ferry: An Eyewitness Account by Charles White,” The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 67, no. 4 (October 1959): 389.
townspeople had broken into the armory shops and located the needed weapons. The shortage of ammunition forced militiamen to quickly make their own. Alexander Boteler claimed that “pewter plates and spoons had to be melted and molded into bullets for the occasion.”

Desperate for ammunition, George Schoppert’s militia “moulded [sic] bullets on cook stoves on Camp Hill until we had two bullets to each man.” Edmund Hillary Chambers, a member of the Harper’s Ferry Guards, enlisted his wife, Mary, and daughter, Jennie, to assist the militiamen in melting and molding the lead into bullets with each member receiving four bullets apiece. The acquisition of needed arms and ammunition allowed the growing military response to focus their attention on suppressing Brown’s Raid.

As the local militia groups and individuals prepared to launch an assault against the Raiders, Brown continued to accumulate additional prisoners on the Federal Armory grounds. Brown captured several armory officials and workers who arrived for duty on the morning of October 17, 1859, including Jesse W. Graham; Archibald M. Kitzmiller; Benjamin J. Mills; and Armstead M. Ball. In addition to Lewis W. Washington, John M. Allstadt, and John T. Allstadt, Brown and his men also took hostage several prominent county residents, including John E. P. Dangerfield, John Donoho, and Isaac Russell.

269 Boteler, 405; and DuBois, John Brown, 321.


271 Villard, 435-436; Boteler, 405; Horwitz, 149; Barry, 56; Daingerfield, 266; and Chambers, “What a School-Girl Saw,” 313. Starry noted that the reason why the weapons had been stored in some of the armory shops rather than in the Arsenal “to keep them out of the high water” that had recently threatened the town. This weapons relocation allowed townspeople to access the guns without Brown or his men knowing of their actions.
While traveling alongside the Maryland portion of the Potomac River, John E. Cook and several other Raiders apprehended Terrence Burns, his brother James, and their slaves. After taking them captive, Cook and the Raiders brought their prisoners over the river to Harper’s Ferry. Altogether, Brown accumulated between forty and fifty prisoners. Brown informed his hostages that “they could be liberated on condition of writing to their friends to send a negro apiece as ransom.”272 As the number of militiamen continued to escalate in Harper’s Ferry, Brown started to feel pressure from this military presence. Therefore, Brown decided to relocate some of the high-profile prisoners from the armory grounds to the Arsenal’s engine house. Following Brown’s withdrawal, Captain E. G. Alburtis and a Martinsburg militia company of railroad workers freed the remaining prisoners.273

The Arsenal engine house served as Brown’s last stand, particularly after the arrival of ninety United States Marines, led by Colonel Robert E. Lee, on the evening of October 17, 1859. With a large drunken crowd gathering around the engine house, Lee instructed J.E.B. Stuart to approach the building on the morning of October 18, 1859, and demand that Brown surrender. After Brown refused this offer, Lee ordered the Marines to storm the engine house. Led by Lieutenant Israel Green, the Marine detachment used a ladder as a battering ram to force open the engine house’s strong wooden doors. The

272 Avey, 122.

The capture of Brown signified the conclusion of the slave insurrection. Four Jefferson County residents lost their lives as a result of the Raid. In addition to Haywood Shepherd’s death, the mayor of Harper’s Ferry, Fontaine Beckham, also lost his life during the insurrection. Despite being warned not to expose himself to the aim of the insurrectionists’ rifles, Beckham attempted to peek into the engine house where Brown held his captives. After peering out from behind a water tower several times, one of Brown’s men took aim and shot the mayor. Ironically, the only slaves who received their freedom from Brown’s Raid came as a result of Beckham’s death. Beckham included a clause in his will which freed Isaac Gilbert and his family upon Beckham’s death.

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Besides Shepherd and Beckham, two other townspeople lost their lives during the Raid. Wanting to investigate the reason for the uprising, wealthy farmer and slaveholder George W. Turner was shot as he rode into Harper’s Ferry. Grocery store owner, Thomas Boerly, represented the final local casualty. The responding military units experienced only one fatality as Private Luke Quinn was shot during the assault upon the engine house. Brown’s group endured the largest amount of loss as ten Raiders died during the insurrection. The memory of the Raid immediately began after the conclusion of the insurrection, particularly the role of African American slaves in the revolt.275

One of the most controversial aspects of the Raid centered on Brown’s attempts to persuade local African American slaves to participate in his insurrection. Brown previously failed to convince Frederick Douglass to help recruit African American slaves to his cause. Left without his intended recruiter, Brown still hoped that slaves would hear of the Raid and decide to join him. Preliminary rumors surrounding the Raid suggested that a significant number of slaves responded to Brown’s call. Before arriving at Harper’s Ferry, James B. Craighill recalled that he initially heard that, “the force opposing us was said to consist chiefly of Negroes, officered by white men, and that the slaves from Va and Md were flocking to the standard of Brown...”276 Although the initials reports later proved to be unfounded, some African American slaves did participate in Brown’s Raid, including several slaves belonging to Lewis Washington,

275 Williams, West Virginia, 3; Oates, To Purge this Land, 296; Greene, 81, 171; Jones, Harpers Ferry, 131; Villard, 440-441, 442, 454; Blassingame and McKivigan, 9; Avey, 123; McGlone, 289; Leech, 8; and Boteler, 406.

Terrence Burns, and John Allstadt. These slaves assisted Brown by helping to load, distribute, and even discharge weapons. Burns’ slaves briefly assisted by transporting needed weapons closer to Harper’s Ferry. Lewis Washington’s hired coachman, Jim, allegedly accepted an Ames revolver and cartridges from Brown. Twenty-year-old Phil Lucker, who was owned by John Allstadt’s wife, cooperated by creating holes in the brick walls of the engine house for Brown’s men to use as firing portals. Several of Brown’s cohorts later attested to the slaves’ participation. Osborne Anderson recalled that Brown ordered him “to take the pikes out of the wagon…and place them in the hands of the colored men” so they could serve as guard duty. While being questioned by authorities, John E. Cook also testified that several African Americans willingly participated in the insurrection. However, several of the slaves taken by Brown’s men expressed a reluctance to assist in the insurrection. Some of the hesitation demonstrated by the slaves likely resulted from the physical presence of their owners being confined in the engine house with them. If the slaves joined the insurrection and the revolt failed, they feared that they would experience swift and brutal punishment for their actions. For example, extreme forms of retribution occurred previously after Nat Turner’s Revolt in 1831 as some white Virginians began to kill African Americans indiscriminately even if they had not been involved in Turner’s insurrection. Regardless of the level of

277 Anderson, 74.
involvement by African American slaves in Brown’s Raid, Jefferson County residents, along with the majority of white Virginians, attempted to depict the revolt as a failed slave insurrection.\textsuperscript{278}

Rather than acknowledging that African American slaves played a role in Brown’s Raid, white Virginians reinforced the belief that slaves remained content in their enslaved condition. Nearly twenty-five years after the Raid, Alexander R. Boteler fondly remembered a previous encounter with an older African American male on the morning of October 17, 1859. After inquiring whether or not any African American slaves had joined Brown’s insurrection, the gentleman answered Boteler with a profound “No-sah-ree,” followed by an emphatic “striking the ground with his stick.”\textsuperscript{279} Reverend Charles White of the Presbyterian Church in Harper’s Ferry also maintained that no African American slaves willingly joined Brown. Instead, White claimed that “during the affair the negroes about H F were terribly alarmed and clung as closely as they could to master & mistress.”\textsuperscript{280} Local white citizens tried to quell their anxieties by telling themselves


\textsuperscript{279} Boteler, 400-401.

that even when provided the opportunity to revolt, their slaves refused to participate. Charlestown lawyer Andrew Hunter stated “it may here be remarked that, so far as I knew or learned from any quarter, not a single one of the slaves in the county of Jefferson or in Maryland adjacent ever did join him in his raid, except by coercion, and then they escaped as soon as they could and went back to their homes.”281 County resident James B. Craighill expressed relief that “none of the Negroes from the neighbourhood [sic] did join Brown.” Despite this reprieve, Craighill admitted that it was “somewhat remarkable” that local African Americans did not enlist since “efforts to excite them had certainly been made and many of them were dissatisfied with their conditions.”282 Even for the slaves who joined Brown, their enlistment supposedly did not always indicate that they actively contributed to the revolt. John E. P. Dangerfield, who was held captive by Brown, later testified that “about a dozen black men were there [engine house], armed with pikes, which they carried most awkwardly and unwillingly. During the firing they were lying about asleep, some of them having crawled under the engines.”283 The memory formed by these individuals did not mirror the reality that some slaves

281 Andrew Hunter, “John Brown’s Raid,” Southern History Association 1, no. 3 (July 1897): 189-190.


283 Richard D. Webb, The Life and Letters of Captain John Brown who was Executed at Charlestown, Virginia, Dec. 2, 1859, for an Armed Attack upon American Slavery; with Notices of some of his Confederates (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1861), 210; and Redpath, Public Life of Capt. John Brown, 318. John Allstadt provided a similar testimonial during the court proceedings regarding the slaves’ refusal to participate in the revolt.
participated in the Raid. While only a small group of slaves partook in the insurrection, other local slaves took advantage of the surrounding chaotic situation to escape from enslavement.

Although Brown failed to rally a large amount of support from the local African American population, some slaves allegedly used the insurrection to resist their enslavers by fleeing. Wager House clerk W.W. Throckmorton suspected that another Wager House employee, Charles Williams, knew of Brown’s plans prior to the revolt as Williams seemed eager to serve Brown and his men their breakfast on the second day of the Raid. After Brown had been captured, Throckmorton claimed that Williams disappeared from Harper’s Ferry, never to be seen again. Reginald Ross, who lived in Charlestown during the twentieth century, told the story that his father also left Harper’s Ferry during the insurrection and later returned to Jefferson County after the conclusion of the Civil War. The Virginia Free Press included references to slaves who may have absconded from the area, including one fugitive slave “direct from the Harper’s Ferry—passed through Syracuse on the Underground Railroad.”284 Less than two weeks later, the Shepherdstown Register mentioned the possibility of another fugitive slave who left the area during Brown’s Raid. On his way to Canada, an African American stopped in Auburn, New York, where he claimed to be “the slave who guided John Brown into the

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284 Virginia Free Press, January 19, 1860; Geffert, “They Heard his Call,” 33; and Jean Libby, Black Voices from Harpers Ferry: Osborne Anderson and the John Brown Raid (Palo Alto: Libby, 1979), 141.
arsenal at Harper’s Ferry.” Although the United States Marines suppressed Brown’s Raid, tensions remained heightened throughout Jefferson County.

Several steps were enacted in the attempt to alleviate residents’ fears. The Shepherdstown Register included an announcement on November 12, 1859, stating that “A meeting of the citizens of Shepherdstown and vicinity, will be held at the Town Hall, on Saturday the 26th inst., for the purpose of adopting such measures as may be deemed best, for the removal of the free Negro from among us.” County inhabitants expressed a desire to not only remove free African Americans from the area, but county slaveholders also voiced concerns that their slaves might try to launch another insurrection or attempt to escape their servitude. These fears led Jefferson County officials to enact statutes that prohibited African American slaves from gathering in any numbers and established a curfew for slaves. This elevated sense of suspicion related not only to slaves, but also to strangers traveling throughout the region. Writing to lawyer Andrew Hunter, Judge Richard Parker, who presided over Brown’s trial, articulated a feeling of uneasiness regarding “all strangers who come amongst us.” The Virginia Free Press noted on November 10, 1859, that “Our town is filled daily with strangers,

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285 Shepherdstown Register, January 28, 1860, reprinted from Auburn (NY) Advance, January 18, 1860.

286 Geffert, “They Heard his Call,” 33; Libby, Black Voices, 141; and Geffert and Libby, 175.

287 Quoted in Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, Capture, Trial and Execution of John A. Copeland and Shields Green, 23.

288 Richard Parker to Andrew Hunter, November 25, 1859, Box 1, Folder 10, John Brown Collection, Ms. N-1952, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts, hereinafter cited as MHS.
anxious to get a look at the notorious miscreants.” Charlestown mayor Thomas C. Green attempted to decrease the heightened anxiety within the town by issuing a decree that stated that all strangers needed to vacate the area. The surrounding communities of Middleway, Bolivar, Harper’s Ferry, and Shepherdstown followed suit and announced similar declarations. Suspicions surrounding these strangers partly could be attributed to the unknown intentions of outsiders and a fear that abolitionists were planning an escape attempt for Brown and his men.

Rumors continually circulated throughout Jefferson County of an impending rescue attempt. Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell, whose parents lived in Charlestown, noted in his diary on October 30, 1859, that “Every body [sic] was armed in Charlestown and expecting an attack” as “they were expecting, or rather there was a report, that a thousand Abolitionists were coming from the north to rescue the prisoners.” After reading prison letters written by Brown, prosecutor Andrew Hunter expressed a suspicion that “Brown’s emissaries were swarming in the county, mingling with our people in Charlestown, and sometimes having intercourse with Brown through the windows of the jail.” William Lyne Wilson tried to assuage the fears of his mother, Mary Whiting Wilson, writing in early November 1859 that, “I hardly see that you have just cause for trepidation, as no

289 *Virginia Free Press*, November 10, 1859.


291 Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell diary, October 30, 1859, Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell Papers, 1836-1913, OCLC 32452413, DMR.

292 Hunter, 176, 179.
expedition of sufficient strength and numbers can be mustered from the north to wrest the criminals from the strong arm of the law supported and upheld by the forces now in Charles Town and the citizens who to a man would I presume turn out and fight with the utmost desperation.” Wilson continued by telling his mother that in all likelihood if the abolitionists launched an invasion “that they will descend suddenly and take one or two of the most influential and prominent citizens and hold them as hostages as you suggest. Yet as I said above this is extremely improbable. Yes more than 1000 chances to one against it and moreover were they to do it, they certainly would aim for the most prominent and respected citizen and never for one moment think of disturbing and molesting ladies.”

On the night immediately following Brown’s capture, rumors spread that a group of abolitionists were descending upon Jefferson County to rescue Brown and his men. Although this proved to be a false alarm, Jennie Chambers remembered that “people gathered all their families and put them in the cellars. The church was full of them, mostly women and children.”

In addition to the swirling rumors, a series of unexplainable fires also contributed to a heightened level of distress.

Although there existed no evidence to connect Brown and his men to the fires, local white residents began to associate the abolitionists with these conflagrations. A correspondent from the Baltimore American described the local concerns regarding the fires as “the panic among the women and children is however, most intense, especially in

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the rural portions of the country. The burning of so many stock yards and farm buildings has caused a feeling of insecurity and alarm that is quite natural, and people retire to their beds in doubt and uncertainty whether they will not be aroused before the morning by the torch of the incendiary." Writing to his wife, Mary, from his jail cell, Brown expressed consternation over the fires, as “while I well know that no one of them is the work of our friends, I know at the same time that by more or less of the inhabitants we shall be charged with them…” Although imprisoned, county residents blamed Brown and his men for the fires. J. W. Ware sent a letter to Governor Henry Wise in November 13, 1859, regarding the recent fires. After noting the loss of his own stockyard, Ware informed Wise that, “we can only account for it on the grounds that it is [John E.] Cook’s instructions to our Negroes.” The outbreak of the fires led Andrew Hunter and a group of magistrates to appoint a mounted patrol to monitor “the different parts of the county, with instructions to arrest every man that they found in the county who could not give a sponsor or one of our citizens to indorse him and account for his presence.” From these patrols, Hunter noted that “in a few days all the spare rooms in the jail were full of parties of this description.” The fires not only increased anxiety among white residents, but several farmers also experienced property damage from the conflagrations.

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295 Stone, 154.

296 Sanborn, 595.


298 Hunter, 179-180. While other county residents blamed local African American slaves for the fires, Hunter did not associate the fires as being started by the slaves.
In addition to setting fire to agricultural-related structures, several individuals associated with Brown’s Raid and the subsequent trial became the targets of these infernos. The alleged “work of a Negro boy” resulted in George Fole losing a barn and stable during these incendiary escapades. George Turner, who lost his life during the Raid, along with three jurors, John Burns, Walter Shirley, and George H. Tate, suffered losses as a result of arson. In addition to the fires that occurred within Jefferson County, the *Virginia Free Press* reported the outbreak of two fires in neighboring Clarke County. According to the November 10, 1859, edition of the *Virginia Free Press*, “three large straw ricks belonging to Mr. John D. Larue” and “the granery and carriage-house of Dr. Stephenson” were set ablaze. Dr. Stephenson lost approximately “300 bushels” of wheat from this fire. The following day, Amanda Virginia Edmonds Chappelear of Fauquier County, Virginia recorded in her journal that, “the Negroes have threatened what they intended doing and indeed have put some of their vile threats into execution by burning wheat stacks near Charlestown.”

On December 1, 1859, the *Virginia Free Press* bemoaned the loss of Thomas Wills’ barn from arson. The newspaper estimated that “Mr. W’s loss is about $2,000 apart from the insurance of some $2,000 on the barn. Hay, corn & c., was consumed.” Fearing the loss of their crops, some Jefferson County

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299 Geffert and Libby, 175.

300 *Virginia Free Press*, November 10, 1859.


302 *Virginia Free Press*, December 1, 1859.
farmers attempted to thresh their wheat earlier than planned to prevent potential damage to their harvest. The outbreak of these fires led the commanding officer in Charlestown to telegraph Governor Wise, “There is a guerilla war here; the property of five of the best citizens has been burnt.” Concerns over possible escape attempts and incendiary episodes led Jefferson County inhabitants to seek additional military protection from the state.

Although a contingency of state militiamen remained in Jefferson County after the conclusion of the Raid, the swirling rumors of abolitionists trying to rescue Brown and his men and the outbreak of fires led to a stronger military presence within the region. Governor Henry Wise ordered that additional state militia groups, as well as men recruited from Jefferson County, be stationed throughout the county during the trials and subsequent punishment for Brown and his men. Several Virginia militia companies remained in the county until after the final execution of Stevens and Hazlett in March 1860. John Thompson Brown, who served with the Richmond Howitzer Company,

303 Horwitz, 225.

304 Geffert, “They Heard his Call,” 34; Geffert and Libby, 175, 176; Geffert, Annotated Narrative, 66; Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society, Capture, Trial and Execution of John A. Copeland and Shields Green, 24; Villard, 520; DuBois, John Brown, 354; DeCaro, Jr., “Fire from the Midst,” 275; Jean Libby, ed., From Slavery to Salvation: The Autobiography of Rev. Thomas W. Henry of the A.M.E. Church, with a foreword by Edward C. Papenfuse (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994), 113; Avey, 31-32; and Geffert, “John Brown and his Black Allies,” 605. Geffert characterizes the participation of local African Americans in these fires as being acts of “guerrilla warfare” while DeCaro depicts these actions as being a “movement of self-liberation.” Jefferson County residents petitioned the state government on January 12, 1860 to compensate Walter Shirley for his losses. The petition stated “there is not the shadow of a doubt but that the fire grew out of his connection with the trials.” George Turner’s brother, William F. Turner, also lost several horses and sheep, supposedly from being poisoned. Besides these attempted poisonings and fires, another farmer lost a cow after a soldier on picket duty fired several shots at the bovine. The soldier claimed that he thought that he heard a group of Northerners approaching his post, but the noise actually emanated from the cow traveling through Mr. Ranson’s corn field.
estimated that after the addition of “300 men and two howitzers” forces in the area totaled “about 1200 men under arms.” While traveling through the region, Indiana native Josiah C. Williams stopped at Harper’s Ferry, describing the town as “the seat of war.” Williams wrote to his sister, Edistina, telling her of the military presence within the county with “there being soldiers stationed at every crossing of the Potomac…” Furthermore, Williams’ train “was visited by couple of individuals (with muskets in hand) to see if there were any suspicious individuals aboard.” This strong military presence created an atmosphere of martial law, yet county residents found comfort in their company. Elijah Avey, who lived in Charlestown, estimated that nearly 3,000 troops were stationed in the town. The presence of these militiamen led Avey to describe his hometown as being “like a city besieged. No stranger was allowed to enter the town or depart without giving a strict account of him or herself.” A. R. H. Ranson, who also resided near Charlestown, believed that the increased number of troops and patrols introduced the town “to the sights and sounds of war.” Charlestown lawyer Andrew Hunter supported Governor Wise’s decision to place militiamen within his hometown. Fearful that “armed parties” might descend upon Charlestown at any point, Hunter formulated a plan which stipulated that the rail lines running from Harper’s Ferry to

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305 John Thompson Brown to Mary Brown, November 27, 1859, John Thompson Brown Papers, 1835-1864, Mss2 B81375 b3-5, Section 2, VHS.

306 Josiah C. Williams to Julia Edistina Williams, January 16, 1860, Box 1, Folder 9, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302, OM 0407, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana, hereinafter cited as IHS.

307 Avey, 30, 37.

308 Ranson, 444.
Charlestown should be destroyed if news spread of an imminent attack. While desiring military protection, the presence of these militiamen and local volunteers also placed a burden upon Charlestown as the combatants required adequate shelter and provisions. To accommodate the soldiers’ needs, Charlestown’s churches, schools, and court house provided lodging while community graveyards served as places for washing and cooking. The logistical demands of the military during this period served as a microcosm of what Jefferson County inhabitants would experience throughout the Civil War.  

Even with this increased military presence, white residents felt that they would continue to be the target of potential rescue attempts and slave insurrections until Brown’s execution. On November 25, 1859, William Booth Taliaferro wrote Governor Wise to try to reassure him that the region remained secure. “I have the honor to report that not withstanding the exaggerated rumors and reports of immediate attack, which were currently circulated here on yesterday, everything is quiet,” stated Taliaferro. William Lyne Wilson hoped that Brown’s execution would return a sense of normalcy to the region and his family. Writing to his mother, Mary, on November 3, 1859, Wilson yearned “for your and Aunt Lucy’s sake especially, and also for the welfare and quiet of the people of Jefferson” that “full justice may be meted out to the prisoners and that they without exception may expiate on the gallows the terrible crimes of which they stand.

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310 William Booth Taliaferro to Henry A. Wise, November 25, 1859, Box 3, Folder 2, William Booth Taliaferro Papers, 1811-1954, Mss. 65 T15, WMSC.
Prosecutor Andrew Hunter wanted to expedite Brown’s trial, justifying his intentions by arguing that “there can be no woman in the whole county who, with or without reason, does not tremble with anxiety and fear.”

Charlestown remained a heavily patrolled community in the days leading up to Brown’s trial and later his execution.

To prevent any disruptions from occurring during Brown’s execution, the Virginia military and local government officials restricted the movements of Jefferson County residents and visitors. Local officials and military commanders issued a summons on November 28, 1859, notifying local residents to remain in their homes “from now until after Friday next, the 2nd of December.” The proclamation continued, “STRANGERS found within the county of Jefferson and counties adjacent, having no known and proper business here, and who cannot give a satisfactory account of themselves will be at once arrested.”

Despite this proclamation, some people still attempted to travel to Charlestown, but “every man of them found himself in the guardhouse, where they were kept until the executions were over; they were then sent down under an escort of cavalry to Harper’s Ferry and put over the river.”

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311 Summers, *Borderland Confederate*, 3-4. From William Wilson’s response, one can suggest that Mary Whiting Wilson and his aunt Lucy, whom he also refers to in his letter, had conveyed to him their concerns in previous correspondence.

312 Herman Von Holst, *John Brown*, ed. Frank Preston Stearns (Boston Cupples and Hurd, 1889), 146; and *Life, Trial and Execution of Capt. John Brown*, 85. During Brown’s trial, Hunter also played upon the fears of the local women by imploring the jury to find Brown guilty so female residents could find solace.

313 “Proclamation Concerning Brown’s Execution,” Thorton Tayloe Perry Papers, Mss1 P4299 d 11-32, Section 2, VHS.

314 Hunter, 188.
of these restrictions, *Cincinnati Commercial* correspondent Murat Halstead noted that on the day of Brown’s execution “there were no visitors trailing along the roads, to be witnesses of the solemn function.”\(^{315}\) When traveling along the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, only those known to ticket agents were permitted to make the trip between Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown. Colonel J.T.L. Preston recounted that on the night prior to Brown’s hanging, “It was told that last night there were not in Charlestown ten persons besides citizens and military.”\(^{316}\) Military and government administrators also wanted to ensure that the local African American population, both free and enslaved, did not cause problems. Allegedly, to control the enslaved African American population, local slaves were whipped and confined on the day of Brown’s execution. In addition to these civilian restrictions, stores in Charlestown were closed for business on the day of the execution. Even prior to the hanging, the *Baltimore American* reported on November 26, 1859, that “everything in the shape of business is suspended, and the inhabitants seem to do nothing but make efforts to provide for the military.”\(^{317}\) These governmental and military restrictions essentially established marshal law throughout Jefferson County during late November and early December 1859. Besides government officials and

\(^{315}\) Murat Halstead, “The Execution of John Brown,” *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications* 30, no. 3 (July 1921): 294; and Connelley, 276.


\(^{317}\) Horwitz, 226.
medical doctors, the only people who witnessed Brown’s execution included a military force that Colonel Preston estimated being about fifteen hundred.318

Although Brown’s execution brought some relief to Jefferson County residents, Virginia militiamen remained present as several of Brown’s men remained imprisoned. George Mauzy wrote to his daughter, Eugenia Burton, and son-in-law, James H. Burton, in Enfield, England, “Well the great agony is over. ‘Old Osawatomie Brown’ was executed yesterday at noon….We are keeping nightly watch, all are vigilant, partys [sic] of 10 men out every night, quite a number of incendiary fires have taken place in this vicinity & County, such as grain stacks, barns & other out-buildings.”319 Amanda Virginia Edmonds Chappelear of Fauquier County, Virginia celebrated Brown’s hanging by inscribing in her diary, “This day will long, long be remembered, as the one that witnessed Old Osswattamie the villain – murder, robber, and destroyer of our Virginia peace, swinging from the gallows.”320 Writing the day after Brown’s hanging, Shepherdstown resident Caroline Bedinger hoped that “things will now fall back into the usual state of quiet and that unnatural excitement will subside.” Despite her optimism, Bedinger’s letter indicated that “two fires have been visible on the mountains one last

318 DeCaro, Jr., “Fire from the Midst”, 278; Villard, 525; Thomas Drew, ed., The John Brown Invasion, an Authentic History of the Harper’s Ferry Tragedy with Full Details of the Capture, Trial, and Execution of the Invaders, and of All the Incidents Connected Therewith (Boston: James Campbell, 1860; reprint, Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), 66 (page citations are to the reprint edition); Preston, 187; and Allan, 111. While DeCaro’s argument of slaves being whipped and confined to prevent a slave insurrection seems plausible, no actual evidence support his assertions.

319 Gilbert, Waterpower, 120.

320 Amanda Virginia Edmonds Chappelear diary, December 2, 1859, Chappelear Diary, June 8, 1857-September 12, 1862, Section 2, Amanda Virginia Edmonds Chappelear Papers, 1839-1921, Mss1 C3684 a 2, VHS.
night and another to day but what they were we are yet ignorant.” The outbreak of these two fires led to “patrols all through the country” in the attempt to apprehend those responsible for the conflagrations.\textsuperscript{321} County residents also continued to observe the activities and movements of both free and enslaved African Americans to prevent any additional slave insurrections. The Virginia militiamen, as well as the 55\textsuperscript{th} Regiment from Jefferson County, received instructions to remain alert and “hold themselves in readiness for service at a moment’s warning upon the occurrence of any emergency.”\textsuperscript{322} Military forces also monitored the Charlestown jail to prevent any attempts to rescue the remaining members of Brown’s party. Although Robert E. Lee felt that there would be “less interest” in the rest of Brown’s men, Lee predicted even prior to Brown’s hanging that “the troops will not be withdrawn till they are similarly disposed of.”\textsuperscript{323} While the last of Brown’s men were hung in March 1860, Jefferson County residents did not experience a significant amount of reprieve as the 1860 presidential election and debates over secession remained at the forefront of the political discussion.

The 1860 presidential election reinforced the unlikelihood that the North and South would agree on any political matters. Virginia electors narrowly voted for the Constitutional Union nominee, John Bell, over Southern Democrat candidate, John C. Breckinridge. Jefferson County voters demonstrated their willingness to remain in the

\textsuperscript{321} Caroline Bedinger to John W. Lawrence, December 3, 1859, Caroline Bedinger Letterbook, 1849-1862, Box 46, Bedinger-Dandridge Family Papers, 1752-2000, OCLC 19491161, DMR.

\textsuperscript{322} “Special Order Issued January 26, 1860 from Adjutant General’s Office in Richmond, Virginia,” Box 1, Folder 1, Washington Dearmont Papers, 1787-1944, OCLC 19491403, DMR.

Union by voting largely for Bell. Local politician Alexander Boteler placed his support behind the Constitutional Union Party as he believed that Bell and the party represented the best opportunity to preserve the Union. Bell also received support in Jefferson County from former Whigs who now supported the Constitutional Union Party. Breckinridge and the Northern Democratic nominee Stephen Douglas received almost the same number of votes in Jefferson County. Although Bell won the entire county, Douglas garnered the most votes in the strongly Democratic and industrialized community of Harper’s Ferry. Electoral results in neighboring Berkeley County mirrored that of Jefferson County with Bell receiving the majority of the votes. Voters in both Jefferson and Berkeley counties did not cast a single ballot for Republican nominee Abraham Lincoln. Ultimately, Lincoln’s electoral victory led to increased calls for secession within the South.324

Despite growing secessionist tendencies, Jefferson County residents expressed hesitation in leaving the Union. On December 15, 1860, Bolivar inhabitants held a Union meeting during which a series of resolutions were passed denouncing secession. Despite previously being “the target of wild northern fanaticism,” those gathered at the meeting determined that “‘secession’ can be no possible remedy for any evil which we have

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324 Jones, Harpers Ferry, 134; Cometti and Summers, 285; W. Dean Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), 227, 856-857; Adams and Watterson, 23; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 100-101; Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 313; and Edward Hamilton Phillips, “The Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties from Virginia to West Virginia” (M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1949), 11-12. The 1860 presidential election results for Jefferson County were as follows: Bell, 959; Breckinridge, 458; Douglas, 440; and Lincoln, 0. The Berkeley County results were as follows: Bell, 913; Breckinridge, 830; Douglas, 106; and Lincoln, 0.
endured.”

Two days later, the Charlestown courthouse hosted a bipartisan gathering to discuss the current political situation. Dr. William F. Alexander presented a preamble and series of resolutions which expressed a desire to remain in the Union. Alexander noted that “we here declare that our first and most earnest desire is to preserve and to perpetuate that Union which was formed by our Fathers.” Although Jefferson County was “utterly opposed to a dissolution of the existing government,” the group provided a caveat that they would agree to secession if “all honorable and constitutional means of redress have been attempted within the Union.” Although Jefferson County desired to preserve the Union, residents felt that “our rights have been disregarded, and our domestic institutions threatened with destruction” from the Republican Party and abolitionists by assisting slaves in escaping and not returning fugitive slaves. Alexander also hearkened back to the traumatic experiences that the community underwent during Brown’s Raid, stating “we have felt, and we have endured the worst that has occurred.” The bipartisan group also agreed that the Virginia General Assembly should decide whether or not to call for a secession convention, but any “action of that Convention shall be submitted to a vote of the people for their sanction or rejecting.”

Despite Governor John Letcher’s initial reluctance to reconvene the Virginia General Assembly, the legislative branch eventually met in January 1861 and agreed to hold a secession convention. On February 4, 1861, Virginia’s General Assembly called

\[325\] Virginia Free Press, January 3, 1861; and Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 12-13. Phillips suggests that the presence of Northern armory workers living in Bolivar led to the formation of the Union meeting.

\[326\] Virginia Free Press, December 20, 1860.
for the election of delegates to serve at Virginia’s secession convention. Representatives were chosen based on the white population, thereby equaling the number of legislative representatives within the House of Delegates. One hundred fifty-two delegates reported to Richmond’s Mechanic Hall on February 13, 1861. Jefferson County voters selected Conservative Unionists Alfred M. Barbour, the superintendent of the Federal Armory and Arsenal, and Logan Osburn as their delegates. The county electorate chose Barbour and Osburn over the States’ Rights candidates of Andrew Hunter and William Lucas, both prominent lawyers within the region. The majority of delegates sent to the convention, including representatives from the Shenandoah Valley, were considered to be moderates as they viewed secession only as a final option. Along with these moderates, a smaller minority of delegates either adamantly opposed secession, thus known as Unionists, or strongly advocated for immediate secession. During initial discussions, moderates and Unionists joined together to oppose secession while the immediatists refused to compromise. In addition to the obvious political effects of secession, Unionists argued that the decision to secede would have an economic impact upon Virginia as there existed strong commercial relationships between many Virginia merchants and farmers and Northern markets, such as Baltimore and Philadelphia. Since secessionists initially represented the minority at the convention, a preliminary secession vote overwhelmingly failed.\textsuperscript{327}

Throughout the secession convention, both Barbour and Osburn labored to preserve the Union. Barbour believed, however, that Virginia could only remain in the Union, “if she can do so upon terms of honor.” Barbour further explained that, “I want to stay in the Union upon terms that are satisfactory to all our people, and when we cannot stay in upon such terms, to go out…” While Barbour dictated the conditions upon which he believed that Virginia could remain in the Union, Osburn adamantly believed the act of secession to be unconstitutional. During the convention, Osburn presented a resolution that declared that secession “is not only unauthorized by the letter of the Constitution, but is contrary to, and subversive of the fundamental principles upon which it is formed…” Furthermore, Osburn argued that secession “can only be justified as a revolutionary means of obtaining redress, when every peaceable, honorable and constitutional expedient has been exhausted and failed.” On March 20, 1861, Osburn read to the convention a resolution sent to him by the citizens of Harper’s Ferry and


Although not chosen to serve as Jefferson County’s representatives to the secession convention, Lucas and Hunter received a significant amount of votes in Charlestown since both held their legal practices within that community. Barbour and Osburn received the largest amount of votes for secession delegate. Barbour garnered the most votes with 1,433 while Osburn placed second with 1,350 votes. Hunter and Lucas placed a distant third and fourth as they only received 467 and 430 votes respectively. Emory Thomas identifies the initial secession delegates as constituting “thirty secessionists, seventy moderates, and fifty unionists.” The opening secession vote failed by a margin of 120 to 32.


329 Ibid., 408.
Bolivar. This resolution, which expressed opposition to secession, validated the position previously expressed by Barbour and Osburn. The resolutions also reputed the actions taken by Virginia’s Senators in Congress and the state legislature, arguing that their actions do “not reflect the true sentiments of their constituency.” Those who attended the Jefferson County meeting concluded that they regarded the conduct of those elected officials who supported secession “as being in open rebellion to our interests as a people and at war with the Constitution of our beloved country.”

Although Barbour, Osburn, and some Jefferson County residents wanted to maintain the Union, secessionist sentiments started to gain momentum in April 1861.

Several events in April 1861 facilitated Virginia’s eventual decision to secede from the Union. Although a vote on secession failed to pass on April 4, 1861, secessionists received increasing support in comparison to the preliminary vote. While Barbour and Osburn maintained their vote against secession, the measure failed to pass by a margin of ninety to forty-five. News of the defeat led Union supporters in Harper’s Ferry to fire “a thunderous salute in honor of the vote.”

Despite opposition from western Virginian delegates, five days after this secession vote, Virginia’s secession convention formally recognized the Confederacy. Shortly thereafter, Lincoln’s call for 75,000 troops on April 15, 1861, and not the actual firing on Fort Sumter, served as Virginia’s impetus to approve secession. On the morning of April 17, 1861, Robert Eden Scott of Fauquier County attempted a last-ditch effort to dissuade Virginia from seceding.

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331 Lankford, 59.
by calling for a meeting of the border slave states. Scott hoped that delegates from North Carolina, Tennessee, Maryland, Kentucky, and Virginia could meet in Frankfort Kentucky in May 1861 to discuss what actions these states should take in regards to secession. Secession delegates rejected Scott’s proposal, sixty-four to seventy-seven. Osburn voted for Scott’s proposal as he viewed it as a “plan of co-operation.” The failure of Scott’s measure indicated to Unionists that they were no longer the majority opinion at the secession convention. Following Scott’s proposal, the Virginia secession convention agreed to the Ordinance of Secession by a vote of eighty-eight to fifty-five.

Secessionist delegates voted along sectional divides. Whereas the Tidewater and Piedmont regions widely favored secession, the vote among Shenandoah Valley and Trans-Allegheny delegates was much closer. Seventeen delegates from the Shenandoah Valley favored the secession ordinance while ten opposed the measure, including both representatives from Berkeley County. Jefferson County delegates split in their vote with Barbour now favoring secession while Osburn remained opposed. Barbour returned to

332 Reese, vol. 4, 134.

Harper’s Ferry on April 18, 1861, the day after the secession vote, where he met with a group of armory workers. Asking those who gathered to support Virginia’s decision to secede, Barbour supposedly encountered vocal resistance from Unionists within the crowd. Osburn, who maintained his Unionist support throughout the convention, noted the swing in political fervor after Lincoln’s demand. Prior Lincoln’s call for volunteers, “I regarded it [secession] as mischievous in its tendency and destructive in its consequences, to all our best interests, socially, politically, and commercially,” stated Osburn. “But my opinions have been overruled by a large majority of the freemen of my state. I therefore bow (from a sense of patriotic and public duty) in humble submission to their will, and acquiesce in their decision. I am a son of Virginia, and her destiny shall be mine.”

As stipulated prior to the secession convention, the Secession Ordinance still needed to be ratified by popular vote. The entire state voted on the Secession Ordinance on May 23, 1861, with 129,950 approving secession and 20,373 opposing the measure. In Jefferson County, 813 people favored secession while 365 voters dissented. There existed wide margins in favor of secession in both Shepherdstown and Harper’s Ferry. While only one person opposed secession at the Shepherdstown polling station, 196 people favored the ordinance. Voters in Harper’s Ferry also supported secession by a margin of fifty-two to one. Although the majority of Jefferson County favored secession, one observer believed that local inhabitants supported abolition. Stationed with the 10th Virginia Infantry at Harper’s Ferry, Reuben A. Scott wrote to his wife, Mollie, on May, 24, 1861, telling her that “the citizens of Harper’s Ferry are all abolitionists. There are

334 Virginia Free Press, June 13, 1861.
but 22-four voters in the place and twenty three of them voted for the Union.”335
Charlestown voters also approved the Secession Ordinance, thereby reflecting the
presence of slaveholders and relatives of the Tidewater aristocrats who originally settled
the community during the eighteenth century. Even as county residents decided to
support Virginia’s secession, actual fighting already had started with the torching of the
Federal Armory and Arsenal by Federal troops.336

Jefferson County residents perceived Brown’s Raid as being the prelude to the
Civil War. Andrew Hunter, who prosecuted Brown, wrote after the war that Brown’s
insurrection “really and truly was the incipient movement of the great conflict between
the North and South” that “evidently resulted in the war.”337 Recognizing the significance
of the event, Alexander Boteler believed that future generations would look back and
acknowledge that the insurrection “was indeed the beginning of actual hostilities in the
Southern States.” Boteler also emphasized “that then and there the first shot was fired
and the first blood was shed—the blood of an unoffending free negro, foully murdered
while in the faithful discharge of his duty!”338 A. R. H. Ranson, who later served in the

335 Reuben A. Scott to Mollie C. S. Scott, May 24, 1861, Box 1, Folder 1, Margaret Burruss
Collection, 1786-1912, SC no. 2097, James Madison University Special Collections, Carrier Library,
Harrisonburg, Virginia, hereinafter cited as JMUSC.

336 McGregor, 180; Jenkins, 55, 57; Sheehan-Dean, 62; Cometti and Summers, 289; Wellman, 20;
Greene, 234; Writers’ Program, 200-201; Barry, 96-97; Shanks, 149-150, 207; Phillips, “Transfer of
Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 16-17; and Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 102. Wellman
postulates that Barbour changed his vote as he possibly viewed the outbreak of war as being an economic
benefit to the Federal Armory and Arsenal, as well as Harper’s Ferry’s economy. Barry suggests that
familial pressure convinced Barbour to modify his vote since “Mr. Barbour’s family is one of the oldest
and most aristocratic in Virginia.” In Berkeley County, 389 voted for the Secession Ordinance with only
twenty registered votes against the measure.

337 Hunter, 178.

338 Boteler, 399-400.
Confederate army, alleged that after the hanging of Brown and his men, Jefferson County residents “went back to their farms and their merchandise and their apparently quiet life, but underneath there was an uncertainty and dread of the future which thinking people could not rid themselves of, and which was to be more than realized in one short year.”

Charlestown native Elijah Avey argued that initially county inhabitants did not comprehend the full effect that Brown’s Raid would have not only upon their lives, but also that of the nation. The residents did not realize “that a stupendous tragedy was soon to be enacted at their thresholds, none of them dreamed that the fields of Antietam, the slopes of South Mountain or the embattled crags of Maryland Heights were soon to be strewn with mangled corpses—that the limpid waters of the beautiful Shenandoah would be dyed with human blood, that the peaceful homes along the Valley of the Potomac would soon be consumed by fire brands of civil war.”

Avey’s depiction of future episodes that would occur within Jefferson County and the surrounding region highlighted the devastating effects that the Civil War would have upon not only the area’s residents but also the natural environment.

Besides recognizing the political and social impact of Brown’s Raid, county residents also attributed the beginning of the region’s economic decline to the failed insurrection. Thomas Boerly’s son lamented upon the effects caused to his hometown by Brown’s Raid as “there were as many as five thousand people here. Nearly fifteen hundred were employed by the government, and this was a busy prosperous place, but

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339 Ranson, 445.
John Brown put a curse on it. The town went down from the time of his raid, and the war followed soon afterward and just tore up everything.” Alexander Boteler concluded that Brown’s Raid should be viewed as the time “from which the people of the unfortunate town selected for his midnight raid may date the beginning of the end of their former prosperity.” Boteler’s understanding of the magnitude of this event demonstrates how Jefferson County residents perceived the effects of the insurrection and the ensuing Civil War.

Ultimately, Brown’s Raid forced the political debate over slavery from an attempted compromise to a physical confrontation. While Jefferson County initially expressed a desire to preserve the Union, particularly with the election of two Unionist candidates to the Virginia Secession Convention, Lincoln’s call for volunteers changed the political tone within the region. Following Lincoln’s call for volunteers, Alexander H. Boteler renounced his support for the Union and instead resigned himself to the fact that “the only alternative now left us is either base submission or revolutionary resistance.” Boteler concluded, “I, therefore, recognize no other rallying point for my patriotism than the unfurled flag of our good old Commonwealth, and no true Virginian will hesitate to follow its fortune or to fight beneath its fold.”

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341 Clifton Johnson, *Battleground Adventures: The Stories of Dwellers on the Scenes of Conflict in Some of the Most Notable Battles of the Civil War* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), 2. Boerly’s son was eight years old at the time of the insurrection. He remembered that Brown stopped in his father’s store several times and that his father loaned Brown “a team to haul some of his supplies over to his log house.”

342 Boteler, 400.

343 *Virginia Free Press*, May 9, 1861.
decision to join the Confederacy became magnified after Lt. Roger Jones and a group of United States Marines set the primary industrial producer ablaze.
CHAPTER VI

“WAR HAS DONE FEARFUL WORK HERE”: THE ECONOMIC CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE CIVIL WAR

The psychological fear and increased military presence that Jefferson County residents felt both during and after Brown’s Raid illuminated the potential effects of warfare that county inhabitants would experience during the Civil War. Although county residents experienced fatalities, heightened suspicions, and economic and social constraints placed upon county residents from the stationing of militiamen within the region, nothing prepared the inhabitants of Jefferson County for the impending impact of the Civil War. As the Virginia Secession Convention debated the possibility of Virginia seceding from the Union, former governor Henry A. Wise secretly negotiated to seize the highly coveted Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry. Although his plan failed, Wise’s attempt directly led to the first significant economic loss for Jefferson County. Besides the Federal Armory and Arsenal, other area businesses also quickly felt the repercussions of the conflict as some companies experienced limited production rates. The region’s three transportation networks also endured direct attacks upon their infrastructure throughout the four years of fighting. Jefferson County’s economic landscape encountered different levels of hardship during the Civil War through strategic
partisan attacks and outright destruction of some of the region’s important economic cogs
Jefferson County’s economic issues during the Civil War derived from the attempt of
both the Union and Confederacy to control the contested borderland of Jefferson County.
Not only were businesses and transportation networks viewed for their economic
benefits, but also for their strategic value. Each side recognized that these businesses,
railroads, and canal could provide them, as well as their opponents, with needed supplies
or mobility. Therefore, both groups wanted to preserve these opportunities for
themselves and if they could not maintain access to these vital resources then they wanted
to make sure that their enemies did not receive similar advantages. The Confederates
quickly recognized the strategic importance of the transportation systems to the Union’s
cause and thus sought to render them unusable for their opponent. On several occasions,
the Union army also inflicted damage upon the railroads to prevent the Confederates
from using the transportation networks. Similarly, both groups attempted to gain
unilateral access to businesses, such as Herr’s mill, while limiting their enemy’s
accessibility to needed provisions. The competition for supplies led to some businesses
enduring different levels of destruction and ultimately the restructuring of Jefferson
County’s economic landscape. The attacking of economic resources represented one
aspect of a military strategy implemented during the Civil War in which the Union
directly targeted the economic and agricultural foundations of the Confederacy, as well as
the Confederacy’s ability to finance their war effort.344

344 Lisa M. Brady, “The Wilderness of War: Nature and Strategy in the American Civil War,” in
Environmental History and the American South: A Reader, ed. Paul S. Sutter and Christopher J.
Manganiello (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 175, 184.
Competing economic interests led the Union and Confederate armies to fight repeatedly for control of Jefferson County and its economic resources. While one historian suggests that prior to Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan’s Valley Campaign in 1864, Confederate forces protected the Shenandoah Valley from damage, the lower Shenandoah Valley endured varying levels of destruction from the continual back-and-forth struggle for control of resources and geographic space. Beginning with Lt. Roger Jones setting the Federal Armory and Arsenal on fire in April 1861, the ravages of war eliminated the production capability of the largest manufacturer within the region. Partisan attacks on transportation systems led to the disruption of services that trains and canal boats provided in the pre-war period. Despite the ongoing targeting of the B&O Railroad, W&P Railroad, and C&O Canal infrastructure, these networks still attempted to maintain consistent operations during the war by transporting goods and soldiers. Jefferson County’s smaller entrepreneurs also felt the impact of the conflict as continual occupation by either Union or Confederate armies made it difficult for businesses to maintain their practices or clientele. Depending upon one’s perspective, attacks on Jefferson County’s commercial enterprises sometimes signified strategic or economic value or perhaps even both. For example, upon withdrawing from Harper’s Ferry in June 1861, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston ordered Confederate troops to destroy anything that held potential strategic value to the Union Army. Following Johnston’s directive, Confederate soldiers damaged both railroads and the C&O Canal. The immediate destruction done to these transportation networks not only affected the Union’s ability to transport soldiers and provisions, but it also hindered local companies from accessing regional markets.
Johnston realized that the machinery at the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal held both military and economic value to the Confederates. Therefore, Johnston oversaw the relocation of this machinery to other Southern armories. More importantly, the destruction of the Armory and the removal of its machinery represented a greater economic value to Armory workers and Jefferson County’s economy. Ultimately, the Civil War halted the economic progress that had been achieved in Jefferson County during the antebellum period and led to a completely different economic landscape for the post-war period.345

As the Virginia secession convention deliberated, the Federal government became apprehensive over the lack of protection for the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry. The institution represented a significant economic and strategic value to the Federal government as a survey conducted in June 1860 estimated the value of the Armory to be $1.47 million. This appraisal included the property, buildings, machines, weapons parts, and over twenty thousand finished arms. Superintendent Alfred M. Barbour wrote to Capt. William Maynadier of the Ordinance Department on January 2, 1861, expressing concern over his defenselessness. Fearful of attacks by secessionists, Barbour ordered that armory workers form “into volunteer companies,” with “arms and ammunition furnished them.” While the workers could provide part-time protection to the industry, Barbour ultimately dreaded that “the armory might be taken and destroyed;

345 Ibid., 179; Lisa M. Brady, “War upon the Land: Nature and Warfare in the American Civil War,” (Ph. D. diss., University of Kansas, 2003), 18; and Wellman, 37. Both Mark E. Neely, Jr. and Mark Grimsley assert that the Civil War did not result in a significant amount of destruction. Instead, Neely, Jr., argues that Civil War soldiers demonstrated restraint, particularly in comparison to twentieth century warfare. For an extended discussion of Neely, Jr., and Grimsley’s arguments, see Neely, Jr., The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction; and Grimsley, The Hard Hand of War.

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the arms might be abstracted and removed or destroyed; vast amount of damage might be
done to the Government property before the companies could be notified or rallied.”
Barbour’s concerns led the federal government to send Gen. Henry J. Hunt to evaluate
how to defend the institution. Besides sending Hunt to Harper’s Ferry, Lt. Roger Jones
and sixty men from the Carlisle, Pennsylvania barracks were dispatched for protection.
As fervor over secession escalated, Jones requested that he receive additional support
from local militias. Despite his appeal, the majority of Jefferson County militiamen
refused to offer their protection services to Jones. As tensions continued to grow,
Armory and government officials debated what to do next. New York lawyer and famed
diarist, George Templeton Strong, noted on April 21, 1861, that Armory officials had
begun withdrawing arms from the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal in March 1861,
and transferring them to the Carlisle barracks in Pennsylvania.

Virginia also recognized the importance of the Federal Armory and Arsenal and
its content for its state’s militia. Reverend Robert L. Dabney wrote that “as soon as war
became imminent, the minds of the people were turned to the value of the arms stored at

346 The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate
as O.R.; John D. Imboden, “Jackson at Harper’s Ferry in 1861,” in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War;
Being for the Most Part Contributions by Union and Confederate Officers, vol. 1, ed. Robert Underwood
Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel (New York: The Century Co., 1884-1887), 125; and Donald B.
Webster incorrectly identifies Barbour’s letter as being written on January 21, 1861.

347 Wellman, 16; Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 318; Webster, 31-32; Edward G. Longacre, The
Man Behind the Guns: A Military Biography of General Henry J. Hunt, Chief of Artillery, Army of the
Potomac (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2003), 76, 78; and Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, ed.,
Company, 1952), 129.
Harper’s Ferry, because they were precisely what Virginia lacked.” Dabney was not the only Virginian to recognize the importance of the military complex. While the Virginia secession convention debated on the morning of April 17, 1861, former Virginia Governor Henry A. Wise instructed Virginia troops to march to Harper’s Ferry and seize the Armory. Wise previously met with the superintendent of the Federal Armory and Arsenal, Alfred M. Barbour, as well as Turner Ashby, John A. Harman, and John D. Imboden on April 16, 1861, to discuss Wise’s plan. Desiring to take control of not only the Armory and Arsenal, but also Norfolk’s Gosport Navy Yard, Wise wanted to guarantee Virginia’s access to these important military institutions. Wise stressed that the Armory and Arsenal needed to be snatched in a quick manner and under complete secrecy. Prominent Virginian lawyer George Wythe Randolph supported Wise’s plan, even advocating that the Virginia militiamen sent to Harper’s Ferry should also destroy the B&O lines “to prevent the removal of those [arms]” by Federal soldiers. Wise apprised current Virginia Governor John Letcher of his plan; however, Letcher objected to the proposal, arguing that he did not want to capture the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal until the state of Virginia had legally seceded from the Union. Wise decided to proceed with his plan even without Letcher’s approval. Wise instructed several militia groups, including those led by Col. Turner Ashby and Gen. Kenton Harper, to start marching to Harper’s Ferry. In addition to those groups, the Staunton Artillery under the

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349 Freehling and Simpson, 170.
command of Capt. John Imboden, as well as the West Augusta Guard, Albemarle Rifles, Monticello Guard, and two student groups from Charlottesville, Virginia, referred to as the Southern Guard and Sons of Liberty, proceeded to march to Harper’s Ferry. Closer to Harper’s Ferry, militia groups from Jefferson and Clarke counties also embarked toward the town. Opposing the approaching Confederate troops remained a small group of Federal soldiers under the command of Lt. Jones. Jones’ forces consisted of fifty regular soldiers and fifteen volunteers; therefore, clearly outnumbered by the responding Confederates.350

As Jones’ men prepared to defend their position, a chaotic scene broke out within Harper’s Ferry. Rumors of the impending attack spread throughout town, leading Unionists and secessionists to come into conflict with each other within the town’s streets and bars. Amidst this bedlam, Armory Superintendent Alfred Barbour addressed his workforce, making them aware of the impending confiscation of the military complex. Barbour informed his employees “that the place would be captured within twenty-four hours by Virginia troops.” Facing imminent takeover, Barbour urged his workers “to protect the property, and join the Southern cause, promising, if war ensued, that the place

would be held by the South, and that they would be continued at work on high wages.”

Besides attempting to recruit volunteers to take control of the Armory, Barbour recognized that the Confederacy would need skilled workers to produce arms for the Confederate Army. Therefore, Barbour hoped that his pleas would help to save the industry and secure an essential labor force. Barbour’s appeal demonstrated the shift within his political position as he previously had requested the federal government in January 1861 to provide protection for the institution. Despite Barbour petitioning the workers, only a few expressed a willingness to support him as Union supporters amongst the workforce did not believe that the Confederates should be able to seize the Armory. As the conflict between Unionists and secessionists continued throughout Harper’s Ferry, Jefferson County militiamen started to descend toward the town.

Recognizing his precarious position, Lt. Jones established several protocols that would allow him and his men to vacate the Armory if needed. Jones placed sentinels several miles outside of Harper’s Ferry so he could receive advanced warning of the oncoming enemy. Jones sent a telegraph to the Assistant Adjutant-General, informing his superiors of his defensive preparations. “I have taken steps to insure my receiving early intelligence of the advance of any forces, and my determination is to destroy what I cannot defend, and if the forces sent against me are clearly overwhelming, my present intention is to retreat into Pennsylvania,” stated Jones. Jones concluded his report by

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351 Imboden, 113, 117. Reports suggested that Barbour discussed Virginia’s plan to seize the Federal Armory and Arsenal while traveling on a train car. A Northern passenger supposedly overheard Barbour’s conversation and attempted to alert President Lincoln of the plan, but this notification did not result in any presidential response.

352 Bushong, General Turner Ashby, 32; and Webster, 36-37.
declaring, “The steps I have taken to destroy the arsenal, which contains nearly 15,000 stand of arms, are so complete that I can conceive of nothing that will prevent their entire destruction.”

Anticipating the lack of reinforcements, Jones ordered his men to “go for their bed-sacks, into each of which I put a keg of twenty-five pounds of powder.” Jones continued, “I then directed them to proceed to the two arsenal buildings, containing about fifteen thousand arms, and in a few minutes my arrangements were completed for firing the buildings simultaneously in half a dozen places or more.” Besides the two Arsenal buildings, Jones and his men also spread powder throughout several other Armory structures. Upon encountering the militiamen from Jefferson County on the evening of April 18, 1861, Jones’ sentinels rushed back to the Armory to report the enemy’s advance. Receiving the news, Jones instructed his men to set the powder trails on fire and vacate the Armory. After setting the fire, Jones and his men retreated across the Potomac River and headed north to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Although hopeful that his men had succeeded in their mission, Jones later wrote in his official report that, “The arsenal buildings I have since learned were completely destroyed with their contents, but the fire in the work-shops was arrested.” By setting fire to the Federal Armory and Arsenal, Jones’ actions represented the first physical assault upon Jefferson County’s economic landscape.

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354 Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc., Vol. 1 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1865), 754; Imboden, 117-118; and Webster, 41. Supposedly, Armory workers who supported the Confederacy attempted to thwart Jones’ efforts by dampening the gunpowder.

355 Moore, Rebellion Record, 754.
Although Lt. Jones abandoned his position, the Confederate forces who advanced toward Harper’s Ferry expected to engage the Federal soldiers defending the Armory. Lt. Richard Bayly Buck of the Warren Rifles anticipated that his group would find “ten thousand Federal forces” guarding the industry. Instead, they came upon a different scene as they disembarked from the W&P train. Buck and the Warren Rifles discovered the Armory “with 18,000 stand of arms was enveloped in flames, having been set on fire by the workmen in the armory by order of Old Abe.”

Although Buck incorrectly blamed the Armory workers for setting the fire, he emphasized the significance of losing these valuable arms. Frank Robertson, who served on Jeb Stuart’s staff, later recalled the initial sight as he and a group of his fellow students entered the town on April 19, 1861. Similar to Buck, Robertson agonized that “the great arsenals were burning, and we could see thousands of red hot muskets going out of commission.”

Cleon Moore, a member of a Jefferson County militia group, stated that as his group traveled from Shepherdstown to Harper’s Ferry, they saw “the flames from the Armory building lighting up the Heavens….”

Reuben A. Scott, a private in the 10th Virginia Infantry, felt that the amount of destruction caused to the Armory and Arsenal was “enough to make ones heart

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356 Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 146; Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 10; and Webster, 38-39.


359 Cleon Moore, “War Incidents,” Box 3, Civil War Collection, Secondary Source Manuscripts, Ms79-18, WVSA.
sink within them.” These reactions to the blaze not only indicated the importance of the Armory’s loss to the Confederate war efforts, but also its economic potential.

Despite Jones’ best efforts to destroy the Armory, the quick actions taken by several townspeople helped save the industry from complete destruction. Armory workers and townspeople, such as George Mauzy, joined forces to extinguish the fire as the burning buildings represented their economic livelihood. Besides helping to douse the fire, town residents also attempted to rescue some of the arms from the conflagration. While reports varied as to the number of weapons lost in the blaze, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston estimated the loss to be nearly 17,000 stand of arms. The fire also caused a significant amount of damage to the machinery, however, the townspeople successfully saved some of the hand tools, parts for weapons, and more than three hundred machines. The rescuing of these weapons and machinery led to the debate of what to do with these supplies. On April 19, 1861, Gen. Kenton Harper submitted a report to Brig. Gen. W. H. Richardson informing Richardson of the intent to ship some of the salvaged weapons to Confederate troops assembled in Winchester. The question remained, however, regarding how the Confederates could best utilize the recovered machinery.

360 Reuben A. Scott to Mollie (Mary Catherine Saufley), April 26, 1861, Box 1, Folder 1, Margaret B. Burruss Collection, 1786-1912, SC no. 2097, JMSC.


Confederate officials began formulating plans to ship the machinery to other arsenals and industries not only in Richmond, but also throughout the South. Samuel J. C. Moore of the 2nd Virginia Infantry approximated that the salvaged machinery was “estimated to be worth 2 or 3 millions of dollars.”363 Appointed Master of Transportation, Michael E. Price was given the responsibility of arranging for the transportation of these supplies. Alongside town residents, Confederate soldiers worked to pack and transport the rescued weapons, parts, tools, and machinery. Writing to his father, Jacob, on April 22, 1861, Peter B. Stickely discussed the ongoing transferal process. “The hands of the armory and the soldiers are busily taking down the machinery and packing them up. They have five large teams halloing [sic] them to the cars and sending them up the valley to Richmond,” noted Stickely.364 In the effort to ship the recovered machines southward, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston ordered the 1st Maryland Infantry to load all the supplies on a train destined for Winchester, Virginia. Besides using the W&P Railroad, Confederate soldiers procured an additional two hundred wagons from local farmers to transport the recovered machines. The state armory in Richmond received some of the machines from

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363 Samuel J. C. Moore to Ellen Moore, April 21, 1861, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2 (January-June 1861), Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847-1939, Collection no. 4618, The Southern Historical Collection at the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as SHC. According to the inventory conducted of the machinery taken from Harper’s Ferry, Moore overestimated the value of the machinery.

364 Peter B. Stickley to Jacob H. Stickley, April 22, 1861, Accession 42341, Personal Papers Collection, LV.
Harper’s Ferry, which allowed the state armory to increase their production capability to one thousand muskets per month. In total, Richmond’s armory and other industries received an estimated $85,557.93 worth of machinery including engine lathes, cutting machines, smooth boring machine, and drilling machines. Confederate President Jefferson Davis and North Carolina Governor John W. Ellis believed that machinery from Harper’s Ferry should be sent to other Southern armories as well, including Fayetteville, North Carolina and Columbia, South Carolina. In comparison to Richmond, the Fayetteville armory received a smaller amount of machinery. The Fayetteville industry only obtained $38,514.41 worth of machinery, including a cutting machine, planer, drill press, and tapping machine. The machinery sent to the Southern armories proved to be essential to the Confederate war effort, particularly as prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, only forty-one of the 239 weapons manufacturers within the United States were located in Southern states.\textsuperscript{365}

Besides acquiring machinery, Confederate troops also recovered approximately 5,000 completed muskets and 3,000 unfinished small arms from the Armory. Frank Robertson also related that, “search parties soon found plenty of arms, generally hidden by the citizens between their mattresses. Whether this was done for the good of the

North or for the good of the South, I do not know.”\textsuperscript{366} Reverend Robert L. Dabney also alleged that Confederate soldiers hunted for weapons as “it was indeed ascertained that the larger part of the muskets were not consumed with the buildings, but were stolen and secreted by the inhabitants of the place. Of these, a few thousands were discovered, hidden in every conceivable place of concealment…”\textsuperscript{367} Before returning home to Charlottesville, James M. Garnett of the Southern Guard, recalled that his company experienced “some fun in searching the houses of Harper’s Ferry for secreted arms, a great many of which we found.”\textsuperscript{368} Whereas Robertson, Dabney, and Garnett asserted that the Confederates forcibly confiscated weapons from the townspeople, Samuel J. C. Moore of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Virginia Infantry indicated that the soldiers recovered the arms from the residents “by making application to them.”\textsuperscript{369} Through either method, the Confederates successfully procured the arms needed for their war effort.\textsuperscript{370}

In addition to these confiscated weapons, soldiers obtained weapons parts, materials and hand tools from the Armory. Confederates gained arms components, including stocks, barrels, ramrods, and bayonets. Both the Fayetteville and Richmond armories received parts for several different models of weapons. Richmond acquired nearly sixty thousand dollars’ worth of parts for the Model 1855 and Model 1842. In

\textsuperscript{366} Reade, 9.

\textsuperscript{367} Wayland, Stonewall Jackson’s Way, 21.

\textsuperscript{368} Garnett, 61.

\textsuperscript{369} Samuel J. C. Moore to Ellen Moore, April 21, 1861, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2 (January–June 1861), Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847–1939, Collection no. 4618, SHC.

\textsuperscript{370} Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 146.
addition to gun parts, the Richmond and Fayetteville armories received various production materials, including copper, steel, glue, and wire. The Richmond armory received a disproportional amount of stock, an estimated $26,604.05 worth of materials, while Fayetteville’s armory only acquired $265.05 in stock. Finally, in terms of hand tools, both armories secured different hand tools, including dies, augers, gauges, vice benches, calipers, and oil stones. Again, the Richmond armory outdistanced Fayetteville as Richmond acquired $37,307.29 worth of hand tools while Fayetteville obtained $23,715.69 worth of hand tools.371

The former industrial site of Hall’s Rifle Works also attracted the Confederates’ attention. Although Lt. Jones set fire to the Federal Armory and Arsenal, he neglected to inflict any damage upon Hall’s Rifle Works. Jones’ inaction allowed the industry to continue operating for an additional two months while the Confederates occupied Harper’s Ferry. Displaced Armory workers who supported the Confederacy secured employment at the Rifle Works and proceeded to continue making arms for the Confederacy. Besides the invaluable assets seized at the Federal Armory and Arsenal, the Confederacy also procured other valuable weapons and machinery from Hall’s Rifle Works. Tennessee Governor Isham G. Harris sent a letter to Virginia Governor John Letcher requesting that some of the machinery from the Rifle Works be sent to his state. After determining Virginia’s military needs, Harris asked that any unwanted machinery

371 Harpers Ferry Armory, “Harpers Ferry Inventories, 1861, Sept. 1,” Accession 23476ad, 23476ae, LV; and Gilbert, Waterpower, 122. Gilbert estimates that “57,000 assorted tools” were taken from the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal.
be shipped to Tennessee to furnish “a manufactory at Nashville.” Letcher partially fulfilled Harris’ appeal as the Nashville armory used these machines to produce Morse breech loading rifles. In addition to Harris’ petition, Virginia received additional requests from other armories and politicians for any surplus machinery. The Confederates’ departure from Harper’s Ferry in June 1861 signified the conclusion of nearly sixty years of arms manufacturing in Jefferson County.

After removing anything of value from the Federal Armory and Arsenal and Hall’s Rifle Works, Confederate officials decided to set fire to the industrial buildings upon vacating their position. In addition to destroying the two weapons manufacturers, Confederate officers also determined to set fire to other strategically important structures, including the B&O bridge and the telegraph office. Robert Henry Campbell of the Rockbridge Rifles advocated for the burning of “every house in the Ferry” since “there is nothing here now to protect, as the Machinery has all been removed…” Despite their attempts to remove all of the arms-producing machinery, the Confederates failed to accomplish this task. When Maj. John Mead Gould walked through the remaining industrial ruins in March 1862, he discovered that “quite a lot of machinery that had been marked ‘Richmond Armory,’” remained left behind. Two weeks after setting fire to the

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372 Flournoy, 151.
373 Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 319-320; Webster, 42; Shackel, “Four Years of Hell,” 218; and Tate, 170, 175-176.
374 Robert Henry Campbell to “Dear Mother,” June 3, 1861, Campbell and Varner Family Papers, 1845-1928, MS #0282, Virginia Military Institute, Preston Library, Lexington, Virginia, hereinafter cited as VMI.
Federal Armory and Arsenal, a group of Confederates returned and destroyed Hall’s Rifle Works. Col. William C. Falkner and the 2nd Mississippi Infantry Regiment, along with other Confederate soldiers, set fire to Hall’s Rifle Works on June 28, 1861, and then proceeded to push a train engine and several cars onto the weakened B&O bridge. The additional weight on the bridge eventually led the structure, along with the cars, to collapse into the Potomac River. The United States Ordnance Department estimated that the damage caused by the Confederates resulted in the loss of over $1 million for the federal government. In addition to the tools, supplies, weapons, and machinery seized by the Confederates, the Ordnance Department included improvements made to the waterways through the construction of canals and dams, as well as 1,666.5 acres valued at $37,457, on their list. The Union army also contributed to the initial devastation of Harper’s Ferry. Taking control of the town in July 1861, Company I of the 13th Massachusetts received instructions to seize “everything of value to the government and remove it across the river where it was to be shipped direct to the War Department.” Company I confiscated items from both the Federal Armory and Hall’s Rifle Works, including “a large quantity of minerals, also fifteen thousand stands of arms, and various other things of less importance.”

The annihilation of the federal economic landscape within Jefferson County represented the first major setback for the post-war economy.  

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Besides the financial void left by the closing of these industries, Armory workers faced severely limited employment options if they remained in Jefferson County. Therefore, some laborers looked for other job opportunities by leaving the region. Since these workers possessed an invaluable skill set that other weapon manufacturers desired, many of them successfully located employment. Those who supported the Union sought to relocate to their sister Federal armory in Springfield, Massachusetts while employees who favored the Confederacy found job opportunities working at weapons industries in Richmond, Virginia; Macon, Georgia; and Fayetteville, North Carolina. Laborers who found opportunities at the Fayetteville Armory and Arsenal included Archibald Kitzmiller, William Copeland, William Martin, and Adam Brown. Armistead M. Ball, who previously served as Master Armorer at Harper’s Ferry, also moved to the Fayetteville Armory and Arsenal, and became the Superintendent there. Besides these individuals, several groups of families also transferred to Fayetteville, including the Herringtons, Claspy, Prices, and Fusses. When the first set of machinery arrived in Fayetteville on June 24, 1861, approximately one hundred armomers from Harper’s Ferry, along with their families, accompanied these machines. In addition to the devastation caused to Jefferson County’s federal economy at the onset of the war, the regional economic landscape also became the target of strategic attacks and guerrilla warfare.\textsuperscript{378}

\textit{Jefferson County Historical Society} 2 (December 1936): 17-18; Barry, 105; Wellman, 40-41; Conway, \textit{Harpers Ferry}, 72; and Whisker, 72.

\textsuperscript{378} Smith, \textit{Harpers Ferry Armory}, 320; Shackel, \textit{Culture Change}, 85; Norman, 3-4; Gilbert, \textit{Waterpower}, 127; Belton, 34, 43-44; Eugene K. Wilson, “James H. Burton and the Development of the Confederate Small Arms Industry” (M.A. thesis, Old Dominion University, 1976), 23; and Raymond W. Watkins, “Confederate Civilians Sent from the Armory at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia to Work at the Fayetteville, North Carolina Arsenal and Armory in 1861,” Accession 31793, LV.
Jefferson County’s regional transportation networks served as a conduit for economic prosperity in the antebellum period. The outbreak of the Civil War, however, presented many challenges for the B&O, W&P, and C&O. Recognizing the strategic value that these transportation systems held to the Union war effort, specifically the shipping of vital provisions and soldiers to different theaters of war, the Confederates sought to make the railroads and canal inoperable or at least unreliable. John W. Munson, who served with Mosby’s Rangers, admitted that “one of our modes of annoyance was to tear up part of the railroad track and stop a train.” Confederate soldiers inflicted damage not only upon rail lines, but also bridges as this infrastructure took longer to repair and served as a strategic crossing point over natural obstacles. The federal government also realized the military importance of the transportation networks and thus sought to protect them from Confederate attacks. The preventative measures employed by the Union army did not always prove successful, which led the transportation systems and Union soldiers to make continual repairs to the infrastructure. The amount of needed repairs sometimes could appear to be overwhelming. For example, after the Antietam campaign, Union troops made repairs to all three transportation systems as the Union wanted to reestablish Harper’s Ferry as its headquarters within the lower Shenandoah Valley. In addition to the impact felt by the Union, the disruption of the railroads and canal affected Jefferson County’s regional economy. Without guaranteed access to these transportation systems, businesses and

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farmers who relied upon these networks to ship their goods to and from markets experienced financial losses. The inability to reach eastern markets prevented local farmers from sending their flour to Baltimore merchants and general stores from restocking their shelves with consumer products. Combined with the military attacks upon these transportation systems, natural element also presented challenges to these networks. Rising flood waters continued to plague all three systems throughout the war. Of the three transportation networks, the B&O experienced the largest amount of physical damage during the war since the Union army relied upon this rail line the most.380

Although B&O president John W. Garrett attempted to remain politically neutral prior to the conflict, he quickly found his company embroiled within the ravages of war. Garrett initially expressed optimism that his business could continue operating during the war without enduring any structural damage. Garrett viewed the war as being an opportunity for the railroad to earn profits from transporting soldiers and supplies. Despite his attempt to placate both the Union and Confederacy while maximizing profits, Garrett soon discovered that he would be forced to choose a side. Garrett received a message from Charlestown’s mayor on April 18, 1861, requesting that the B&O not provide transportation to Federal troops traveling through Virginia. Furthermore, the mayor also asked that the railroad company not participate in the removal of any arms or

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munitions from the Federal Armory and Arsenal. If Garrett did not adhere to these demands then the mayor threatened to blow up the railroad’s vital bridge at Harper’s Ferry. Garrett disregarded this warning, instead allowing the transportation of Union soldiers on his line. Despite the threat never being carried out, perhaps it served as a cautionary tale of what the B&O would experience throughout the four years of fighting. By the time that Gen. Jubal Early marched toward Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1864, Garrett had become so exasperated with the amount of destruction caused to his infrastructure that he pleaded with Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel to “preserve the remainder of the Bridge” at Harper’s Ferry. After informing Sigel that “it is reported the rebels are destroying & burning the track west of Harpers Ferry,” Garrett begged, “Can you not prevent this?”

Rather than protecting Garrett’s property, Union forces destroyed the bridge in the attempt to prevent Early from pursuing Federal soldiers as they escaped into Maryland.

The B&O, particularly the bridge at Harper’s Ferry, became the center of attention for the Confederate army during the early months of the war. Attacks on the B&O and the bridge began when Confederate forces vacated the town in June 1861. Wanting to ensure that the Union army could not utilize any of the town’s resources, including the rail systems, Gen. Johnston ordered his troops to lay waste to the area. Confederate troops attempted to accomplish Johnson’s directive by not only damaging

\[\text{\footnotesize 381 J. W. Garrett to Franz Sigel, July 5, 1864, Container 7, Folder 3, Franz Sigel Papers, 1861-1902, MS 3123, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio, hereinafter cited as WRHS.}\]

the B&O rail lines near Harper’s Ferry, but also the bridge that crossed over the Potomac River. By destroying the bridge, the Confederates particularly hoped to strike a devastating blow to the Union’s supply line. The bridge served as a connecting point between the B&O and W&P, as well as an important point of entry between the contested state of Maryland and pro-Confederate Virginia. As the Confederates prepared to leave Harper’s Ferry in early June 1861, they prepped the bridge for destruction. Writing to a family member, Thomas Wragg, a private in the Oglethorpe Light Infantry, indicated that “the bridge across the Potomac is undermined with a great deal of powder, as soon as the Yankees attempt to cross it will be blown up…” Because of its strategic value, the Harper’s Ferry bridge encountered an extraordinary amount of attention from the Confederates not only in June 1861, but throughout the war. Altogether, multiple Confederate attacks on this infrastructure led to the bridge being rebuilt on nine separate occasions. When traveling through the United States during the first year of the Civil War, journalist William Howard Russell stopped in Jefferson County in mid-August 1861. He observed the devastation previously caused to the B&O bridge as “the arches had been broken—the rails which ran along the top torn up, and there is now a deep gulf fixed between the shores of Maryland and Virginia.” Successful in their attempts to destroy the bridge, the Confederates’ handiwork left the B&O inoperable for nearly ten months.


384 Russell, My Diary, 496.

385 Hale, 28-29; Horton, 84; Ezra D. Simons, A Regimental History: the One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth New York State Volunteers (New York: The Judson Printing Co., 1888), 27; Barry, 138; Conway,
Even after the destruction of the B&O bridge in 1861, control and access to this overpass remained heavily contested throughout the conflict. Although the Confederates damaged the bridge in 1861, Union engineers, including Company A of the United States Engineers, did not start making repairs to the bridge until the following year. Once the construction process began, the engineers sought to reopen the bridge as quickly as possible, thus they hastily built a wooden span across the Potomac River. Beginning work in February 1862, the engineers reopened the bridge the following month. This wooden structure did not remain intact for long, however, as Jedediah Hotchkiss received the task of supervising the demolition of the bridge during the Antietam campaign. As the captured members of the 126th New York Volunteers marched out of Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, the Rebels were “drilling into the railroad bridge” to prepare the structure for an explosion. In addition to this action, the Confederates set forth to cause damage to “the pontoon bridges, cars, and government buildings,” essentially destroying “almost everything of a public nature.”

The damage done to the viaduct in the fall of 1862 was minimal in comparison to the previous destruction that occurred in June 1861. On September 29, 1862, Cpl. Almon M. Graham of the 28th Regiment, New York Infantry noted in his diary that “there is a large force at work on the R.R. bridge at the Ferry.” Graham expected that it would only take the workers “a few days” to complete

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their job. Graham’s estimation proved to be accurate as the B&O reopened the bridge in October 1862, less than one month after the Confederate attack.

Besides being an object of Confederate aggression, Union soldiers stationed near Harper’s Ferry also targeted the B&O bridge on several occasions. Maj. Henry A. Cole ordered members of the United States cavalry to destroy the infrastructure on July 5, 1863, in the attempt to hinder Gen. Robert E. Lee’s retreat from Gettysburg. Once Lee reentered Virginia, Union engineers immediately began to rebuild the trestlework that had been destroyed under Cole’s directive. Union soldiers once again made the bridge inoperable in July 1864 as Gen. Jubal Early threatened Harper’s Ferry. Gen. Max Weber instructed his men to demolish the bridge’s trestlework to prevent Early from pursuing the retreating Union forces. Early’s men only compounded the problem by causing more damage to the structure by tearing up the track and burning the wooden components of the bridge. Besides the military attacks enacted upon the B&O bridge, the structure also endured damage from natural causes on several occasions.

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387 Almon M. Graham Civil War Diaries, September 29, 1862, Mss A65-38, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, New York, hereinafter cited as BECHS.


The unpredictability and propensity for flooding of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers threatened the continued presence of the B&O bridge throughout the war. In several instances, flood waters frustrated engineers as the rising waters negated their progress and further delayed the opening of the rail line. For example, when Union engineers started rebuilding the B&O bridge in August 1861, torrential rains the following month eliminated the previously completed trestlework. The September floodwaters left only two sections of the bridge still standing. The bridge remained in this state throughout the winter of 1861 and into the spring of 1862. A heavy rainstorm on April 22, 1862, wiped out the bridge again. Prior to the storm, railroad officials had placed fourteen loaded cars on the bridge in the attempt to stabilize the structure with additional weight, but the floodwaters proved to be too strong. The region received so much rain that it caused the C&O to overrun its banks. The rushing waters carried a boat from the canal down the Potomac River where it struck the bridge and led to additional structural damage. After suffering further damage from high water levels in early June 1862, engineers sought to strengthen the bridge’s temporary trestlework in 1863 by replacing the wooden components with iron Bollman spans. Despite this structural change and the placement of loaded rail cars on the bridge, floodwaters again swept away some of the trestlework in May 1864. Upon arriving at Sandy Hook, Maryland in May 1864, George K. Campbell of the 116th Ohio Volunteer Infantry “found that the RR bridge at Harpers Ferry [was] partially destroyed by the freshet.”

The continuous decline

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attacks upon the B&O bridge by both armies and the natural elements prevented Union engineers from making complete repairs to the structure. When describing the town of Harper’s Ferry to his wife, Oscar Lumas Russell French of the 26th Ohio Infantry Regiment noted that “it has never been rebuilt but by putting in Trestling.”\textsuperscript{391} While the bridge at Harper’s Ferry received a significant amount of attention from the Confederate army, the destruction of rail lines occurred at a more frequent rate.\textsuperscript{392}

The tearing up of rail lines represented one of the primary ways in which both armies sought to disrupt the flow of railroad traffic and the general operations of the company. William H. Beach of the 1st New York Cavalry described the methodical process in which the armies inflicted damage upon the tracks. Beach considered both armies to be “expert[s] in destroying railroads.” Soldiers oftentimes began the process by piling up the railroad ties and setting them on fire. Next, “the rails would be placed across the burning piles, and when made red hot in the middle, a few men at each end would wrap and twist these rails around a telegraph pole, rendering them useless until they had been passed through a rolling mill.”\textsuperscript{393} Virginia’s 7th Cavalry utilized this approach in the fall of 1861 when destroying the B&O line near Charlestown. Under the direction of Gen. Thomas “Stonewall Jackson, Confederate forces represented the main perpetrators to cause damage to the B&O lines during the first year of the war. Although

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\textsuperscript{391} Oscar Lumas Russell French to Cidney Ellen Keech, May 19, 1864, Oscar Lumas Russell French Papers, 1861-1877, MSS 1261, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio, hereinafter cited as OHS.
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\textsuperscript{392} Stover, 107; Harewood, 75, 76, 78, 85, 87; Caplinger, 49, 50; Johnston, \textit{Virginia Railroads}, 54; and Wellman, 145.
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\textsuperscript{393} Beach, 413.
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Union forces began replacing torn-up track after establishing control of the Lower Shenandoah Valley in the spring of 1862, railroad executives invited additional Confederate attacks upon their infrastructure after openly acknowledging their support for the Union. Confederate officials viewed the railroad’s recognition of the Union as being an opportunity to exact revenge upon the company for their poor decision. Confederate forces took advantage of the Antietam campaign to tear up lines along the B&O and the W&P. Confederate soldiers rendered both railroads inoperable by piling up the railroad ties and burning them. The combatants also used the fire to heat the iron rails until they became bendable, shaping them around nearby trees so the railroad companies could not easily replace the rails. These Confederate actions rendered the B&O “useless from Harper’s Ferry to Cumberland.”

After the Maryland campaign, Confederate troops continued to threaten the viability of the B&O lines. Bvt. 2nd Lt. Robert H. Ward of the 13th North Carolina Infantry made several notations in his journal in late October 1862 that his forces tore up some rail lines. Every attempt by the Union to repair the rail lines led Confederate raiders to return and make the track once again inoperable. John O. Casler’s Company A of the 33rd Virginia Infantry and Carpenter’s Battery conducted several raids on the B&O lines during the post-Antietam period, including destroying portions of track near Kearneysville. Confederate forces continued to remove lines along the B&O during the Gettysburg campaign and again when Gen. Jubal Early threatened

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Washington, D. C. in the summer of 1864. Early’s assault on the track and buildings associated with the railroad company represented the last significant military attack on the B&O and its lines.395

Besides causing devastation to the railroads, the Confederate army sometimes confiscated railroad parts and rolling stock to outfit Southern railroad companies. Before leaving Jefferson County in June 1861, Gen. Stonewall Jackson instructed his men to tear up a nine-mile stretch of line. The Confederates attempted to transport the rail lines with them when they left, but quickly discovered that they had seized too many supplies. Therefore, the Confederates deposited some of the rails along the Valley turnpike and within Winchester. Again under the direction of Gen. Jackson, Confederate troops removed the double track between Harper’s Ferry and Martinsburg in the late summer and fall of 1861. The troops burned the crossties and took the rails with them, with some of the rails being used on the Manassas-Centerville line and to make repairs on the W&P. The Confederates also valued the rolling stock of the B&O. Gen. Jackson enacted a plan in May 1861 in which he positioned John D. Imboden and Kenton Harper on opposite ends of Harper’s Ferry. After allowing a number of engines to enter the confined area,

Jackson’s men prevented the trains from exiting. Altogether, Jackson’s plan allowed the Confederates to acquire fifty-six locomotives and over three hundred rail cars. The Confederates transported their captured rolling stock from Harper’s Ferry to the Upper Shenandoah Valley via the W&P. Confederate officers also commandeered wagons and horses from local farmers to assist in relocating the seized locomotives, and cars.

Perhaps the most well-known raid on the B&O encapsulated all of the different elements of destruction used by the Confederate army.\textsuperscript{396}

Infamously known as the “Greenback Raid,” John S. Mosby and his Mosby’s Rangers launched an attack on the B&O near Duffield’s Station in October 1864. Mosby and his raiders began their raid by tearing up the B&O track that lay near Duffield’s Station on the morning of October 14, 1864. Mosby Ranger John H. Alexander described the process by which the Confederates raised up the track from the railroad bed. “Here we went to work on the track, and soon had one side of it so elevated on fence rails and old ties as to insure the upsetting of the engine when it should come to that point,” explained Alexander.\textsuperscript{397} The raising of the track prevented an oncoming train from proceeding. Mosby’s men halted the train and discovered among the train’s passengers two federal paymasters holding $176,000 worth of greenbacks. Mosby’s men seized the

\textsuperscript{396} Summers, \textit{Baltimore and Ohio}, 66, 67, 100, 109; Johnston, \textit{Virginia Railroads in the Civil War}, 23, 36; Phillips, \textit{Lower Shenandoah Valley}, 45, 56; Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 57; Stover, 106; and Imboden, 123. James Robertson, Jr., challenges the assertion that Jackson formulated and implemented the plan of seizing the B&O trains. Robertson argues that the Confederates would not have wanted to anger Maryland since the state had not committed their support to either side. See Robertson, \textit{Stonewall Jackson}, 229.

money from the federal paymasters and proceeded to distribute editions of the *New York Herald* throughout eight passenger cars. Mosby’s men then “applied matches” to the newspapers which resulted in “a grand illumination.” Following Mosby’s Greenback Raid, Gen. John D. Stevenson informed Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton that “trains have been sent to the point of attack to repair damages” as the track was “partially destroyed.” Furthermore, Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan issued an ultimatum in which he promised the residents of Jefferson County that “if the railroad is interfered with” again then Sheridan would exact revenge upon them. Sheridan promised Chief of Staff Gen. Henry W. Halleck that “I will let them know that there is a God in Israel.” Although Mosby’s Rangers did not inflict permanent damage to the rail line, their actions still led to a temporary disruption for the railroad company and an economic loss for the federal government. Surprisingly, despite being the continual target of Confederate raids throughout the war and having to make continual repairs to their lines, the B&O Railroad experienced increased profits during the Civil War.


400 Davis, *Shenandoah*, 265.

401 Munson, 221, 224, 227; Williamson, 261; John Scott, *Partisan Life with Col. John S. Mosby* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1867), 335, 337; Bushong, *Old Jube*, 268, 269; and Summers, *Baltimore and Ohio*, 142-143. Mosby attempted to derail a train on the previous night of October 13, 1864, but the raiders only torn up one side of the track. Fortunately for Mosby, the federal paymasters missed this first train and instead caught the next train. Bushong and Scott indicate that Mosby captured only $168,000 from the strong boxes of Generals David C. Ruggles and Edwin L. Moore. Infuriated over the Greenback Raid, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant ordered Major General Philip Sheridan to launch a retaliatory raid in Loudoun County. Grant informed Sheridan “to destroy and carry off the crops, animals, negroes, and all men under fifty years of age capable of bearing arms. In this way you will get many of Mosby’s men.” O.R., Ser. 1, vol. XLIII, part 1, 811.
The B&O’s financial success partly can be attributed to the Union army’s reliance upon the rail system to transport soldiers and supplies to different theaters of war. The B&O charged the federal government 3.75¢ per mile for the transportation of soldiers while freight charges ranged between five and eight cents per mile. When comparing the wartime passenger receipts and the pre-war receipts, the B&O posted a twenty-seven percent increase during the first year of the conflict. By the following year, passenger receipts nearly doubled to $1,769,497. The B&O passenger receipts once again doubled in the last year of the war as the railroad posted $3,997,642 in passenger fees. While the B&O experienced an increase in passenger receipts, the rail system initially encountered a decrease in freight receipts. In 1861, the B&O recorded nearly a million dollar loss in freight receipts in comparison to the previous year. Only after the Union army regained control of the Lower Shenandoah Valley in 1863 did the rail company post gains in freight receipts. The Union’s military success directly correlated to an increase in the B&O’s profits as 1863 marked the first time during the war that the railroad company posted freight receipts higher than their pre-war levels. In the succeeding years, the company continued to record increasing freight revenues. By 1865, the B&O nearly doubled the pre-war freight receipts with $6,099,064 in freight earnings. While profiting from the federal government, the B&O continued to garner revenues from the transportation of regular passengers and the shipping of freight and agricultural products. Whereas the B&O proved essential to the Union war effort, Jefferson County’s other railroad lacked the infrastructure to provide the Union army with adequate support.\textsuperscript{402}

\textsuperscript{402} Stover, 42, 60, 89, 116, 117.
Throughout the Civil War, the W&P served as a secondary line that offered only the intermittent transportation of freight and passengers. The freight ledger for the Halltown station demonstrates the limited usage of the railroad as the last entry within the book was dated July 11, 1861. Whether railroad officials started another ledger remains unknown, but the frequency of transactions included within the book prior to the war indicates that the station experienced a sharp decline in shipping during the war. While both the Union and Confederate armies relied upon the W&P at different points during the war, the superintendent of the B&O described the W&P as being “perhaps the worst in the Union.”

One of the reasons that W. P. Smith made this comment potentially related to the W&P’s limited carrying capacities since the railroad “could not accommodate engines over 12 tons or allow any engines to travel safely at more than ten miles an hour.” Despite these restrictions, the United States government recognized the importance of the line as federal officials deemed the W&P a military railroad in March 1862. This military designation resulted in B&O employees making repairs to the line. In October 1862, Gen. George B. McClellan requested Gen. Herman Haupt to reinforce the W&P’s lines with “T” rails so the track could bear the weight of the heavier B&O engines. After W. P. Smith informed Haupt that this improvement would require additional time to complete the project was abandoned. Similar to the fate of the B&O, the W&P also bended to the will of natural elements and military attacks.

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403 Duncan, Beleaguered Winchester, x.

404 Ibid.

405 Freight Ledger of Winchester & Potomac for Halltown Station, 1831-1861, Box 1, Winchester and Potomac Railroad Records, 1833-1861, 1473 WFCHS, HRL; and Johnston, Virginia Railroads, 51, 104-105.
While the Confederates relied upon the W&P to transport their captured rolling stock and railroad supplies in 1861, the railroad also experienced damage from Confederate forces during the Shenandoah Valley and Antietam campaigns of 1862. Chasing Gen. Nathaniel Banks and his troops back down the Shenandoah Valley in May 1862, Stonewall Jackson’s men destroyed parts of the W&P. Company B of the 12th Virginia Cavalry inflicted further damage to the track in August 1862 when the cavalrmen halted a Union train traveling along the W&P. After stopping the train, the Confederate cavalrmen set fire to the train and destroyed some of the adjacent rail lines. Confederate forces continued to launch attacks on the W&P in the fall of 1862. After Stonewall Jackson and a group of his men tore up lines near Charlestown in October 1862, another band of Confederate raiders assailed the W&P the following month. Recalling the role his regiment played in this assault, Maj. Gen. Bryan Grimes of the 4th North Carolina Infantry remembered that his men started to tear up rail lines from Charlestown up to “within two miles of Harper’s Ferry.” The 4th North Carolina Infantry accomplished their task by “tearing up the cross-ties and putting them in large piles of twenty to thirty, and then crossing the iron rails over them and piling a few ties on top of each end of the rails.” After creating a large pile of ties and rails, the men set “fire to them—the whole at once—the fire so warping the rails as to unfit them for use.”  

Besides enduring military attacks, natural forces also made the W&P inoperable. In

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406 Pulaski Cowper, ed., *Extracts of Letters of Major-General Bryan Grimes to his Wife, Written while in Active Service in the Army of Northern Virginia, together with Some Personal Recollections of the War, Written by Him After its Close, etc.* (Raleigh: Alfred Williams & Co., 1884), 22. Grimes mistakenly identified the target of the raid as being the B&O.
April and May 1862, high waters swept away some of the rail lines and a bridge near Harper’s Ferry. The latter flood caused the W&P to remain idle until late June 1862. The combination of natural forces and military assaults forced the Union army to rely upon other transportation methods. Josephus Drummond of the 9th West Virginia Infantry indicated in a letter to his friend, Jeremiah Conley, on January 30, 1863, that his regiment used the railroad that ran between Martinsburg and Winchester rather than the W&P as “the Rebels tore it up & thus it remains.” In another letter to Conley in April 1863, Drummond again mentioned the W&P not being in service and “our troops are not fitting up the Rail Road.” The damage inflicted upon the W&P by the Confederates and natural forces led the federal government to abandon using the transportation network until 1864.

After Maj. Gen. Phillip Sheridan assumed control of the Shenandoah Valley in the fall of 1864, the Union army placed a strong emphasis on using the W&P. Sheridan wanted to use the W&P to transport provisions and men from his supply depot at Harper’s Ferry to Winchester, as well as wounded soldiers back to the hospitals at Harper’s Ferry. Sheridan’s reliance on the railroad also invited Confederate raiders to

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407 Josephus Drummond to Jeremiah Conley, January 30, 1863, Josephus Drummond Letters, 1863, Ms79-147, WVSA.

408 Josephus Drummond to Jeremiah Conley, April 8, 1863, Josephus Drummond Letters, 1863, Ms79-147, WVSA.

once again target the W&P. Confederate officials believed that if they made the W&P inoperable, Sheridan would then be forced to transport his supplies via wagons, which would prove to be more susceptible to guerrilla attacks. The continual Confederate assaults on the W&P proved successful as Winchester resident Robert T. Barton noted in his diary in late 1864 that “the railroad from Winchester to Harpers Ferry had been torn up.”\footnote{Margaretta Barton Colt, \textit{Defend the Valley: A Shenandoah Family in the Civil War} (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 345.} The W&P remained closed for repairs until December 1864. To assist with the repairs, Sheridan ordered that workers remove rails from the Manassas Gap Railroad and be used to rebuild the W&P lines. After repairing these rail lines, Sheridan sought to acquire additional military protection for the W&P. Brig. Gen. John D. Stevenson replied to Sheridan’s request, informing him that an additional 3,000 soldiers would be required to provide adequate protection for the railroad; a number that currently could not be justified. Despite the inability to provide military protection, Stevenson issued General Order Twenty-Three on November 17, 1864, in the hope of deterring additional attacks upon the W&P. Stevenson’s directive instructed federal soldiers “to arrest all male secessionists in the towns of Shepherdstown, Charlestown, Smithfield and Berryville, and in the adjacent country, sending them to Fort McHenry, Md., there to be confined during the war,” if guerrilla forces or disloyal citizens attacked the W&P. Stevenson also ordered the soldiers “to burn all grain, destroy all subsistence, and drive off all stock belonging to such individuals, turning over the stock so seized to the
Treasury agent for the benefit of the Government of the United States.” Therefore, Stevenson’s retaliatory order threatened to destroy the crops of Jefferson County’s farmers for any actions taken against the W&P.

As guerrilla attacks attempted to make the railroad inoperable, Union engineers and soldiers diligently worked to make repairs to the W&P. In early November 1864, Mason Whiting Tyler of the 37th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers wrote to his parents, William and Amelia Tyler, informing them that Federal forces were “making preparations apparently to rebuild the railroad to Harper’s Ferry.” Later in the month, Rutherford B. Hayes wrote about the progress made to the W&P, telling his wife, Lucy Webb Hayes, on November 17, 1864, that “a telegraph line is put up and the railroad from Winchester to Harpers Ferry is nearly rebuilt.” Tyler updated his father on the progress of the W&P in late November, as he expected work to be completed “within a few days now” and that the “principal depot is not to be at Winchester, but at Summit Point, some ten miles from here.” Despite these repairs, the strategic value of the

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411 “General Orders No. 23, Headquarters Military District of Harper’s Ferry, (West) Virginia, 17, November 1864, Civil War Collection, Series 2, Examples of Official Papers and Miscellaneous Papers, Ms79-18, WVSA; Williamson, 298; and Duncan, Beleaguered Winchester, 237.

412 Farrar, 434, 439; Bonnell, 13; James E. Taylor, With Sheridan Up the Shenandoah Valley in 1864: Leaves from a Special Artists’ Sketch Book and Diary (Dayton: Morningside House, 1989), 580; Stephen D. Engle, Yankee Dutchman: The Life of Franz Sigel (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1993), 205; Johnston, Virginia Railroads, 253; Duncan, Beleaguered Winchester, 227; and Williamson, 298.

413 Mason Whiting Tyler, Recollections of the Civil War. With Many Original Diary Entries and Letters Written from the Seat of War, and with Annotated References, edited by William S. Tyler (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1912), 305.


415 Tyler, 311.
system waned as the military attention of the Union army became focused on the Richmond and Petersburg regions. The B&O and the W&P, however, were not the only transportation systems within Jefferson County that endured structural and economic problems during the conflict.

Similar to the railroad companies, the C&O also experienced difficulties during the war. At the beginning of the conflict, the encampment of Confederate troops near the canal deterred business as boat captains feared the potential of being assaulted or fired upon by pickets. The Confederates shifted their tactics from psychological intimidation to physical assaults before vacating Harper’s Ferry in June 1861. In the attempt to disrupt canal traffic, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston ordered troops to blow up Dams Number 4 and 5 near Williamsport, Maryland and destroy locks along the C&O, as well as push large boulders into the canal. If successful in these missions, Johnston principally hoped to prohibit the Union from utilizing the C&O to transport supplies. Although the Confederates failed to blow up the dams, they interrupted canal traffic by obstructing the canal bed. Furthermore, some soldiers set fire to “five canal boats” which made “a large fire,” thus decreasing the number of available vessels. Following these Confederate attacks, Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson informed Col. E. D. Townsend on July 18, 1861 that Lt. Orville E. Babcock was working “to get the canal in operation.” The damage caused by these assaults prevented the canal from reopening until late August 1861.

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Canal officials hoped that since the B&O was not in operation during this period that they could capitalize on the railroad’s misfortunes. Despite these desires, the company endured several obstacles during the latter part of the year. In September 1861, Asst. Adjt. Gen. R. H. Chilton wrote to Lt. Col. Turner Ashby requesting that Ashby inflict damage upon the C&O Canal. Chilton informed Ashby that “the destruction of the canal and the railroad have been cherished objects…” 419 Ashby responded to Chilton’s correspondence by telling Adjt. Gen. Samuel Cooper that “I am confident, if not inconsistent with the present policy of the Government, that I can move over at some convenient point and break the canal…” 420 Ashby attempted to strike at Dam Number 4 near Williamsport in September 1861 and then at the aqueduct over Antietam Creek in early October 1861, but Ashby’s men failed at both endeavors. Despite Confederate’s attempts to terminate canal operations, Alexander Boteler complained to Confederate Secretary of State R. M. T. Hunter on October 24, 1861, that “coal continues to be sent down the canal.” 421 The canal continued to experience operational difficulties, but rather than from military attacks, flood waters in early November 1861 caused several breaks to the canal’s walls. Overall, the first year of the war presented many obstacles for the C&O as expenses outdistanced revenues. The tonnage for the canal’s top three


419 O.R. Ser. 1, vol. 5, 858.


commodities, coal, wheat, and flour, all decreased in 1861. As a result of this decline, the C&O did not eclipse its pre-war income, but instead company’s profits fell below $100,000.422

The C&O continued to encounter problems during the following year as floodwaters and military attacks diminished canal operations. Damage caused by floodwaters in February and April 1862 delayed the opening of the canal as officials needed to make repairs to dams and culverts. After completing the needed fixes, the C&O once again offered their services, but a flood in June again disrupted operations. The Antietam campaign in September 1862 led to significant damage to the canal as the Confederates cut into the canal’s embankments, thereby letting the water drain from the man-made waterway. Frederick W. Fout of the 15th Indiana Battery noted that once “the canal was cut and the water run out,” the Confederates moved their artillery across the canal with ease and placed their guns overlooking Union-occupied Harper’s Ferry.423 Confederate forces inflicted additional damage to the canal before leaving Harper’s Ferry as they obstructed the canal by running six rail cars into the canal bed. As a result of these actions, the C&O remained closed until “a number of RR cars and other rubbish” could be removed.424 Following these exploits, Gen. George McClellan issued General

422 Snyder, Trembling in the Balance, 61, 68-69, 89; and Sanderlin, 212, 218, 221. The C&O posted an income of $191,890.20 in 1860. The following year, the company only recorded $75,741.90 in income.

423 Frederick W. Fout, The Dark Days of the Civil War, 1861 to 1865: The West Virginia Campaign of 1861. The Antietam and Harper’s Ferry Campaign of 1862, the East Tennessee Campaign of 1863, the Atlanta Campaign of 1864 (St. Louis: F. A. Wagenfuehr, 1904), 101.

Order 44 that sought to provide Federal protection for the canal. McClellan’s order stated that “all the lock-houses, boats, scows, and other property belonging to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, on the line of said canal, now held, used or occupied by the United States officers or troops, will be forthwith given up and restored to the President of the said Company.” Besides returning this property, McClellan declared that Federal soldiers “are directed to give such aid and assistance as is consistent with the good of the service, in keeping it in repair, and removing all restrictions which have been imposed upon the boats navigating the said canal.” McClellan pressed for the quick repair of the canal so he could transport needed provisions between Washington, D. C. and Harper’s Ferry. Although the C&O endured financial problems in 1862, particularly since the amount of shipped coal remained below pre-war levels, McClellan’s directive allowed the C&O to increase their trade by the following year.

Less interruptions in 1863 led to more prosperous times for the C&O. Void of any military attacks or floodwaters, the C&O experienced an increase in revenue during the same period in which the B&O also encountered an upturn in freight receipts. Despite this growth, the canal’s profits still remained below pre-war levels. The C&O shipped larger amounts of wheat and flour. The canal also transported an increased tonnage of coal from the Cumberland coalfields to Washington, D. C. The only

425 “General Order No. 44, Headquarters, Army of the Potomac, 24 October 1862,” Civil War Collection, Series 2, Examples of Official Papers and Miscellaneous Papers, Ms79-18, WVSA.

426 Snyder, Trembling in the Balance, 118, 121, 132, 138, 141-142, 150-151; David A. Norris, “Bloody Day at Boteler’s Ford,” America's Civil War 18, no. 4 (September 2005): 40; and Sanderlin, 212, 218, 221. While coal tonnage decreased in 1862, the amount of wheat and flour transported by the C&O increased slightly. The company recorded an income of $72,624.95 in 1862.
significant damage that the canal suffered in 1863 occurred during the Gettysburg campaign. Crossing the Potomac River at Boteler’s Ford, Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson’s troops caused some destruction to the canal infrastructure and several canal boats. The damage caused by Johnson’s men was minimal as the canal resumed operations shortly thereafter. The canal’s fortunes intensified the following year.\textsuperscript{427}

Although the Confederate army launched several attacks upon the C&O in 1864, these assaults did not cause any significant disruptions for the canal. In July 1864, Gen. Jubal Early made a demonstration toward Harper’s Ferry before continuing on to Washington, D. C. After Union forces vacated the town, Gen. John B. Gordon sent “working parties” to the C&O Canal. Gordon’s men destroyed “the aqueduct of the canal over the Antietam, and the locks and canal-boats.”\textsuperscript{428} Furthermore, Gen. John C. Breckinridge’s men burned several canal boats in the attempt to disable canal travel. Crossing the Potomac River near Boteler’s Ford in July 1864, William T. Patterson of the 116\textsuperscript{th} Ohio Infantry detailed the damage done by the Confederates. Patterson penned in his diary, “Rebels had made great destruction of property all along having burnt canal boats, bridges, and even private houses.”\textsuperscript{429} Despite Early’s attempts, the canal maintained operations, especially after Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan located his headquarters at Harper’s Ferry in the fall of 1864. Besides relying upon the B&O and W&P to transport provisions to his supply depot, Sheridan also utilized the C&O for a similar

\textsuperscript{427} Sanderlin, 218, 221; and Synder, \textit{Trembling in the Balance}, 156, 160, 182.

\textsuperscript{428} Early, \textit{Autobiographical Sketch}, 384-385.

\textsuperscript{429} William T. Patterson diary, July 19, 1864, Vol. 502, June 21-November 6, 1864, OHS.
purpose. Since Sheridan relied upon the three transportation networks, he needed to provide them with needed protection. By offering security to the transportation networks, businesses and farmers started to use the canal more frequently than during the first two years of the conflict. The increased usage of the canal translated to economic growth for the company as 1864 represented the first time in which the C&O exceeded pre-war income levels. The C&O continued to experience commercial success during the last year of the conflict as financial reports indicated that the company nearly doubled its pre-war levels. The financial inconsistencies felt by all three transportation networks during the war mirrored the experiences of many local businesses in this same period.430

Similar to the Federal Armory and Arsenal and the regional transportation networks, many local businesses endured varying levels of economic challenges during the conflict. A number of community companies, including specialty shops, grist mills, and market houses, sustained moderate to severe physical damage from both armies. Furthermore, local businesses lacked access to larger markets, which restricted their inventory needs. Furthermore, the continual contestation for Jefferson County contributed to a decreasing consumer base for entrepreneurs. The inability to provide goods or services to customers led some establishments to close their doors; sometimes temporarily while other times permanently. While many Jefferson County companies did encounter financial difficulties during the war, several businesses capitalized from the presence of both armies within the area. Armed forces also transformed the economic

430 Bushong, *Old Jube*, 196; Sanderlin, 218, 221; and Snyder, *Trembling in the Balance*, 196, 212, 225. In 1864, the C&O recorded $234,699.30 in income. This number increased the following year to $359,734.56.
landscape by modifying local businesses for militarized purposes, such as officers’ headquarters, hospitals, or shelter for troops. Each of the smaller businesses within Jefferson County endured these economic changes differently.

The transient nature of the Union and Confederate armies within Jefferson County produced economic instability for many local companies. The cyclical nature of Union and Confederate occupation prevented enterprises from maintaining consistent business schedules. For example, the exchanging of Harper’s Ferry on eight separate occasions prohibited companies from keeping their doors open. While the town offered a variety of specialty shops prior to the war, some business owners found it difficult to remain open during the first year of the conflict. Several stores ceased operations in 1861, including John G. Ridenour’s dry goods store, George W. Taylor’s dry good store, David Whip’s tailor shop, Alexander Kelley’s blacksmith shop, and John Legg’s shoemaker shop. The closure of these shops presumably related to the out-migration of former Armory workers who relocated in search of new employment. Meanwhile, the town’s periodic market house, which sold meat, poultry, and vegetables twice weekly, remained functional throughout the war. Some businesses continued advertising their goods within the local newspaper. John Strauss’s clothing store advertised the availability to purchase new fashions in the June 5, 1861, edition of the Virginia Free Press. Customers could purchase “dress, frock, sack and Dorsey coats, made of the best French, English, and American Cloths,” from Strauss.431 The following week, Rohr & Brother Manufacturers advertised that their business possessed “an assortment of carriages, rockaways, and

431 Virginia Free Press, June 5, 1861.
buggies” available for sale. Businesses within Harper’s Ferry struggled to survive as the war persisted. Although George Koonce purchased nearly $15,000 worth of goods from a Baltimore merchant to sell in his general store, Koonce experienced financial concerns. Koonce wrote to his wife, Bettie Ellen Brittain, on July 30, 1864, that “We have not closed our business entirely yet.” However, Koonce noted that ‘we are through taking stock.” Businesses in other Jefferson County communities experienced economic fates similar to those of Harper’s Ferry.

The military occupation of Charlestown influenced the ability of companies to maintain consistent schedules. As the number of Confederate soldiers stationed at Harper’s Ferry grew during the early months of the conflict, Martha Clay Davenport of Charlestown found it challenging to purchase items when she frequented local stores. Describing her hometown as being “as busy as a city,” Davenport tried to purchase foodstuffs, but found the store “perfectly bare, everything having been sent to the Ferry to cook for the soldiers.” In June 1861, Davenport again mentioned that Charlestown stores lacked provisions as the purveyors “sold to the army.” Davenport discovered that the limited amount of goods for sale were priced “very high.” Despite the dearth of

432 *Virginia Free Press*, June 13, 1861.

433 George W. Koonce business receipts, Box 1, Folder 5, George W. Koonce Family Papers, 1835-1920, A&M 407, WVRHC; and George W. Koonce to Bettie Ellen Brittain, July 30, 1864, Box 1, Folder 1, George W. Koonce Family Papers, 1835-1920, A&M 407, WVRHC.


435 Martha Clay Davenport to Ann Thornton, May 1861, Box 13, Folder 87, Clay Family Papers, 1780-1959, Collection no., 1M82M7, Special Collections, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, hereafter cited as UKSC.
supplies, Davenport indicated that the “merchants say they do not know if they can get any more.” Although Davenport encountered problems in acquiring any goods, she informed her aunt, Ann Thornton, that she was able to purchase “Rio coffee” at “25 cts. Per pound.” As the war progressed, the economic situation within Charlestown did not change drastically. When the 23rd Ohio Infantry encamped near Charlestown in August 1864, Dr. J. T. Webb found “not a store in the place.” County resident, Charles Aglionby, echoed Webb’s commercial evaluation. Making a trip to Charlestown in November 1864, Aglionby encountered some Federal soldiers making repairs to the railroad, but “the town looked dull and only shoemakers and tailors were doing business.” Daniel Coalman’s account book for his grist mill demonstrates the lack of business opportunities within Charlestown. The Union Mills’ ledger detailed several smaller sales in 1861 and 1862, but did not include any transactions for the following year. Coalman reported several transactions in 1864, including the selling of rye, corn meal, and wheat. Whereas Coalman charged three cents per pound for ‘family flour,” at the beginning of the conflict, the price for the all-purpose flour rose to six cents per pound by 1864. Shepherdstown’s businesses mirrored the economic unpredictability that occurred within Charlestown.

436 Martha Clay Davenport to Ann Thornton, June 8, 1861, Box 13, Folder 87, Clay Family Papers, 1780-1959, Collection no., 1M82M7, UKSC.

437 Williams, Diary and Letters, 500.


439 Daniel Coalman Account Book, 1854-1917, Daniel Coalman Papers, 1848-1917, Mss1 C6315 a, VHS.
Similar to Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown, Shepherdstown included a number of specialty stores and small industries in the pre-war period. However, with the outbreak of the war, the economic landscape within Shepherdstown changed. Town resident, Mary Bedinger Mitchell, noted that although the town’s primary energy source, Town Run, continued to flow, many of the mills and factories that previously depended upon this waterway as an energy source were now closed. Furthermore, Mitchell indicated that Shepherdstown possessed “three or four stone warehouses, huge empty structures, testifying mutely that the town had once had a business.”440 A wartime diary written by an unidentified Shepherdstown resident included several references to the interruption of business activities. On February 10, 1864, the diarist entered that “all the stores were ordered to be closed and not to be opened until allowed by military orders.”441 Even if stores remained opened, several businesses experienced the loss of their workforce as Union soldiers detained those suspected of being Confederate supporters. On January 14, 1864, the Union army arrested several clerks for not being “loyal,” including “from Baker’s store Jim Lane Towner and C. Huffman; from Cronise’s store, Daniel Hill; [and] from Kearneysville M. Stanley and G. Hinkle.”442 Thus, some Shepherdstown stores found it difficult to maintain business operations without a sufficient labor force. Similar


441 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, February 10, 1864, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.

442 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, January 14, 1864, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC. Towner found himself arrested on two more occasions during the month of January, specifically January 19 and January 27, 1864.
to Daniel Coalman’s ledger, an unidentified blacksmith from Shepherdstown posted limited entries within an account book during the war years. Although the blacksmith account book contained several work-related entries, including the repairing of agricultural tools and wagons, the ledger entries became more infrequent as the war progressed. The irregularity of commercial transactions made it difficult for business owners to maintain a consistent profit. As demonstrated by the ledgers of Coalman and the Shepherdstown blacksmith, some enterprises maintained intermittent business operations, but other companies were forced to terminate operations as the result of military actions.\footnote{Jefferson County Blacksmith Account Book, 1826-1868, Ms79-63, WVSA.}

Several Jefferson County companies found themselves to be the target of military demonstrations. Identified as being strategically important, the Shepherdstown cement mill and Herr’s flour mill endured significant damage during the war. Owned by Alexander Boteler, Union soldiers intentionally sought to disable the operational capabilities of the Shepherdstown cement mill. After openly stating his support for the Confederacy, Federal troops arrested Boteler in August 1861. Shortly after being released from Union custody, Federal soldiers set part of his mill ablaze. Union officials intended to make the mill operable to prevent Confederate troops from using the company for any milling purpose. Heros Von Borcke, who served as Jeb Stuart’s chief of staff, described the mill as being in “ruins” while encamped near Shepherdstown before the Battle of Antietam. Von Borcke recalled that the mill “had been burned by the enemy” early on in the war, but now “a Mississippi regiment had taken up its
quarters…” The Shepherdstown cement mill also endured minimal external damage during a skirmish at Boteler’s Ford on September 19-20, 1862. Attempting to bombard a Confederate position near the mill, Union artillery shots fell short and instead exploded near the mill’s limekilns. Rather than making repairs to the mill and kilns during the conflict, Boteler’s company remained idle until after the war. Confederate soldiers also utilized fire as a vehicle of destruction when targeting Abraham Herr’s flour mill.

Herr’s mill, which served as an important flour mill for regional farmers, experienced damage at the hands of both Confederate and Union troops during the first year of the war. Similar to Boteler’s cement mill, Federal forces inflicted damage upon Herr’s business to prevent the Confederates from grinding grain. During the early months of the conflict, Lt. Col. George Leonard Andrews of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry instructed his men to damage the mill’s machinery to disable production capabilities. Union soldiers also pilfered provisions from Herr’s mill as Company I of the 13th Massachusetts Volunteers seized “two thousand five hundred bushels of wheat which was also sent to the War Department” in August 1861. Following these actions, Herr decided not to make repairs to his business. In October 1861, Col. John W. Geary and six hundred soldiers trekked to Herr’s mill to acquire grain. Under Geary’s directive, Union soldiers, along with impressed citizens and former African American slaves, spent

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445 Adams and Watterson, 28; Hahn, *The C&O Canal*, 44; Hahn and Kemp, 31; and Norris, “Bloody Day at Boteler’s Ford,” 44.

446 Parker, 12.
the following week transporting grain from the mill across the Potomac River to the Union encampment in Maryland. Herr’s mill endured additional damage later in the month after Col. Turner Ashby skirmished Federal forces near Bolivar Heights. Following this engagement, Ashby ordered his men on October 18, 1861, to set fire to the mill in retaliation for Herr allowing Geary’s men to procure grain from his mill. The Confederates forced Herr’s business partner, James Welch, to torch the business. The burning of the structure permanently made the mill inoperable. Union soldiers also inflicted significant damage to several businesses within Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown in 1862 by utilizing fire.447

The lower business district of Harper’s Ferry experienced damage in February 1862 after Col. John White Geary set fire to several buildings. Geary ordered his men to ignite these structures for several reasons. Geary believed that town residents were aiding the enemy and that Union troops had been fired upon from the vicinity of the town. Geary and his men marched into Harper’s Ferry, setting fire to the Wager Hotel, the Potomac Restaurant, and the Gault House Saloon, as well as the B&O’s “ticket office and water station.”448 In addition to these enterprises, several specialty shops also became


448 Harewood, 77; and Everhart and Sullivan, 63.
lost in the conflagration including John and William Walsh’s tailor shop; Dr. Clagett’s
drug store; William J. Stephens’ clothing store; S. V. Yantis’ tobacco shop; Wagner’s
jewelry store; and John Strauss’ clothing store. Riding through town in late February
1862, David Hunter Strother expressed sorrow over the state of the town’s businesses
district. Strother remarked that, “The appearance of ruin by war and fire was awful.
Charred ruins were all that remain of the splendid public works, arsenals, workshops and
railroads, stores, hotels, and dwelling houses all mingled in one common destruction.”
When Nathaniel Hawthorne visited Harper’s Ferry one month later, he observed only
“one small shop” in operation, but noted that the store “appeared to have nothing for
sale.” The loss of these businesses drastically decreased the amount of open businesses
within Harper’s Ferry.

Charlestown’s market house experienced a fate similar to Harper’s Ferry’s lower
business district one month later. The tug of war between Union and Confederate armies
for control of the town subsequently led to the devastation of Charlestown’s market
house. Entering Charlestown on May 26, 1862, the Baylor Light Horse Cavalry found “a
considerable amount of abandoned stores.” After locating some supplies, the

449 David Hunter Strother, A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter
Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Miscellaneous Prose and Verse, vol. XXIII (Columbus: Ohio State
451 Thomas A. Ashby, The Valley Campaigns: Being the Reminiscences of a Non-combatant While
Between the Lines in the Shenandoah Valley during the War of the States (New York: The Neale
Publishing Company, 1914), 304-305; James P. Noffsinger, “Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, Contributions
towards a Physical History,” [1957], A&M 3712, typescript manuscript, p. 47, WVRHC; Barry, 120;
Shackel, Culture Change, 44; Snell, Business Enterprises, 38, 41, 43, 59, 62, 64, 66; Wellman, 56; and
Harewood, 77. Noffsinger attributes the order to burn Harper’s Ferry to Maj. Hector Tyndale as a result of
a Union scout being shot by a sniper supposedly located within the town.
Confederate cavalrymen began requisitioning these provisions, but approaching Union forces compelled the Confederates to vacate their position. Once gaining control of the town, the Union army set fire to “the market-house and railroad station.” David Hunter Strother opposed this burning as he feared that the fire would threaten the entire existence of the town. Strother begged other soldiers to help him extinguish the flames, but few Union compatriots answered his pleas. “The soldiers did nothing and the citizens who showed willingness to act were deterred through fear of the soldiers,” complained Strother. Eventually with the assistance of the 8th New York Cavalry and some community members, Strother successfully doused the fire and prevented any adjacent buildings from being lost. The market house, unfortunately, proved to be a complete loss. Passing through Charlestown after the conflagration, town resident William Lyne Wilson bemoaned the loss of the market house. Wilson described the former structure as being a “spacious & valuable building,” but the act of “vandalism” committed by the Union soldiers left Charlestown without an important enterprise. The town did not rebuild the market house until nearly ten years after the conclusion of the war. In addition to the economic instability and physical destruction caused by soldiers, both

452 Baylor, 40, 42.


armies also transformed the economic landscape of Jefferson County by repurposing some businesses into a militarized landscape.\footnote{Charles Town Bicentennial, 1786-1986, 19. The market house had been built in 1806.}

The transformation process of modifying former commercial sites into a militarized landscape commenced at the beginning of the conflict. Confederate soldiers first utilized the skeletal remains of the Federal Armory and Arsenal to house soldiers. Among the first to arrive in Harper’s Ferry, a Jefferson County militia group received “quarters in the Government Armory Building which had been saved from the fire and flames.”\footnote{Cleon Moore, “War Incidents,” Box 3, Civil War Collection, Secondary Source Manuscripts, Ms79-18, WVSA.} After reaching Harper’s Ferry, a member of the Barboursville Guards proceeded to search for his company. “I found the company quartered in one of the work shops of the army, anything but comfortable or desirable as quarters, for the room was filled with machinery,” recalled Reuben C. Macon. Macon also found the housing conditions to be unaccommodating as “there was not an inch of space on the floor or benches but what was saturated with oil, so in spite of all the caution we could exercise, our new uniforms and blankets soon became very much defaced.”\footnote{Emma Cassandra Riely Macon and Reuben Conway Macon, Reminiscences of the Civil War (Cedar Rapids: Torch Press, 1911), 140.} As additional companies assembled in Harper’s Ferry, an increasing number of regiments filled the burned out structure. Writing to his wife, Sallie, on May 10, 1861, Capt. John Q. Winfield of the Brock’s Gap Riflemen stated that his regiment “along with three other companies” were quartered “in one of the large armory buildings near the rail road
bridge.” After taking control of the region in 1861, the Union army followed suit and designated the former armory for military encampments.

The Union used the former Armory and Arsenal for several military purposes, including housing and storage, during the conflict. Col. Robert Gould Shaw described the housing arrangements to his sister, Susanna, informing her that his regiment used the “remaining building of the Arsenal and Armory” for housing with “the men on the ground-floor, and the officers just above them.” Similar to Reuben C. Macon, some Union soldiers also complained about their accommodations. On December 4, 1862, J. M. Nulty of the 12th Army Corps protested to Maj. George A. Flagg that “the government buildings at this Post are either entirely destroyed, or in such a dilapidated condition that they are wholly unfit for officers’ quarters.” Besides transforming the former industrial site for housing purposes, the Union also established a hospital within the Armory buildings. Surgeon William Vosburgh of the 111th New York supervised the care of three hundred patients at the facility. Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan later used Armory structures for a supply depot during his 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Sheridan ordered his men to place a roofs on some buildings as the structures lost their roofs after being set ablaze in 1861. Union officers repurposed other former Armory buildings,

458 John Q. Winfield to Sallie Winfield, May 10, 1861, John Q. Winfield Letters, 1861-1862, Collection no. 01293-z, SHC.


460 J. M. Nulty to George A. Flagg, December 4, 1862, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, Mss1 P4299 I 74 (section 5), VHS. Nulty informed Flagg that rather than staying in the former Armory buildings, he decided to take a room at the “Medical District Office” for his quarters.
including the residences of the armory superintendent and paymaster, for hospital space and officers’ quarters. While the former Armory provided larger accommodations for the Union army, soldiers also transformed other commercial structures into militarized landscapes.\footnote{461 Robertson, Stonewall Jackson, 224; Willson, 49-50; Shackel, Culture Change, 46; Moyer and Shackel, 11; Secrist, 91, 101; and E. W. Fairbairn, “Lockwood House (Paymaster’s Quarters),” The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society 27 (December 1961): 11.}

The Union army also modified empty stores and other industrial ventures for military purposes. Offering storefront property on the lower level and housing options for Armory workers on the second floor during the pre-war period, the John G. Wilson building in Harper’s Ferry’s business district became a military warehouse and lodging for Union soldiers during the conflict. Frederick A. Roeder’s confectionary shop in Harper’s Ferry also served as a housing unit for Union troops. After being captured by Union forces in October 1864, George M. Neese of Chew’s Battery and other Confederate soldiers were “quartered in an old factory building that stands just right on the bank of the Shenandoah, in the suburb of Harper’s Ferry.”\footnote{462 George M. Neese, Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery (New York and Washington: The Neale Publishing Company, 1911), 331.} The Union army also used one of the cotton mills on Virginius Island for several different military purposes, including quarters for soldiers and a hospital. “Island Hospital” opened in the latter months of 1862 and continued to care for sick and wounded patients throughout the remaining years of the conflict. The Union army also repurposed other smaller companies on Virginius Island for temporary hospitals, officers’ quarters, and stables.
Although a number of Jefferson County businesses experienced financial difficulties, closed their doors, or were transformed to serve a military purpose, other enterprises endeavored to make a profit during the war.\textsuperscript{463}

The continual presence of soldiers within Jefferson County during the early months of the conflict provided area businesses with additional economic opportunities. After seizing control of Harper’s Ferry in April 1861, Confederate soldiers remained in the town for nearly two months. This escalating number of soldiers provided businesses within Harper’s Ferry potential customers as many men arrived in town unprepared for the beginning of war. To obtain these needed supplies, soldiers purchased goods from local businesses. Townspeople also took advantage of the Confederates’ presence to sell them foodstuffs and spirits, including pie, cakes, and whiskey. Residents also used the opportunity to peddle commemorative items, including pieces of wood and strands of rope, that supposedly were part of John Brown’s gallows. By encouraging family members to visit them while encamped at Harper’s Ferry, Confederate soldiers also promoted the local economy. Originally from neighboring Clarke County, Samuel J. C. Moore requested that his wife, Ellen, come visit him in Harper’s Ferry. Moore instructed his wife that she should go to the Wager house and “take a room,” whereupon Moore would come visit her.\textsuperscript{464} Whereas the Confederates’ presence in 1861 spurred business


\textsuperscript{464} Samuel J. C. Moore to Ellen Moore, May 8, 1861, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2 (January-June 1861), Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847-1939, Collection no. 4618, SHC.
transactions, the ability of the Union army to regain control of the Lower Shenandoah Valley in 1863 led to a similar economic effect.\textsuperscript{465}

After July 1863, the continued presence of the Union army within the Lower Shenandoah Valley helped to partly reinvigorate Jefferson County’s economy. Since the Union army once again controlled the area, some pro-Union residents began to return to their homesteads, particularly within Harper’s Ferry. The repopulating of the town kindled economic development as several businesses reopened. Restaurants and boarding houses viewed both residents and soldiers as potential customers that required goods and services. Mrs. Cornelia Stipes, who operated a boarding house and “shanty kitchens” along the W&P Railroad, took advantage of Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan’s presence to reopen her doors for business. Archaeological evidence from Stipes’ shanty kitchens offers an interesting perspective into the number of foods which were being served in the autumn of 1864. Archaeological digs discovered animal bones in the backyard of Stipes’ house, including chicken, goat, pig, turtle, and oyster shells. This evidence, particularly the remnants of oyster shells, suggests that Stipes had access to eastern markets far from Jefferson County.\textsuperscript{466}

Although experiencing varying levels of success, account ledgers also demonstrate that some Jefferson County businesses attempted to maintain their business practices during the wartime. The firm of Powell & Lee of Shepherdstown and Franklin Osburn’s general store in Kabletown serve as examples of enterprises that benefitted

\textsuperscript{465} Phillips, \textit{Lower Shenandoah Valley}, 134; and Wellman, 29.

\textsuperscript{466} Moyer and Shackel, 11; Paul A. Shackel, “Four Years of Hell,” 222-224; Shackel, “Memorializing Landscapes,” 264; and Sutherland, \textit{Seasons of War}, 75.
from selling goods to a wide range of customers. Powell & Lee sold a number of items during the war, including tobacco, tanners oil, paper, sugar, and molasses. The firm did not limit itself to selling their wares locally, as their ledger indicated transactions throughout Virginia. For example, on February 22, 1864, the business shipped sixteen boxes of tobacco to Lynchburg, Virginia. The company experienced some commercial success in 1864 as it posted a net profit of $7,579.50. Franklin Osburn’s store offered customers a wide assortment of goods, including shoes, bacon, candles, brandy, eggs, and straw. While Osburn maintained a consistent level of business at the beginning of the conflict, his account ledger suggests that as the war continued, his profits started to wane. Osburn’s account book included only a limited number of entries in 1863 and no notations in 1864. Finally, in December 1864, Osburn began recording transactions once again. Business activity increased for Osburn in the early months of 1865, thereby suggesting that a customer base started to frequent the general store. Powell & Lee and Osburn’s ability to conduct some form of business during this period demonstrates that the war did not bring complete financial devastation to Jefferson County’s economy, but rather that some companies experienced fluctuating levels of revenue.467

Four years of fighting profoundly changed Jefferson County’s economic landscape. The building of Jefferson County’s industrial base began during the nineteenth century with the construction of the Federal Armory and Arsenal. Although the Armory and Arsenal struggled during its early years, the presence of this industry

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467 Powell & Lee Account Book, January 7, 1864; February 22, 1864, Powell Family Papers, 1862-1936, Mss1 P8718 b 4 (Section 2), VHS; Franklin Osburn Account Book, 1850-1874, Franklin Osburn Papers, 1849-1875, Mss1 Os15 a, VHS; and Franklin Osburn Cashbook, Thornton Tayloe Perry Collection, Mss1 P4299 k, VHS.
stimulated the growth of other arms-related businesses. By the 1820s, increased industrial and agricultural production led to the need for transportation networks to provide connections between the internal regions of Virginia and coastal markets. The construction of the B&O, C&O, and W&P allowed a diverse business community to expand their production and reach new markets. This economic landscape was disrupted, however, with the outbreak of the war. The annihilation of the Federal Armory and Arsenal represented a significant economic blow to Jefferson County as the industry employed the largest number of workers in the area. The continued attacks on the region’s three transportation networks made travel unpredictable and sometimes even dangerous. While the W&P and C&O encountered inconsistent freight and passenger revenues, continual assaults on the B&O’s bridges and lines forced the railroad company to make repairs to their infrastructure. The military contestation for the Lower Shenandoah Valley also affected smaller business owners. While companies, such as the Shepherdstown cement mill and Herr’s flour mill, endured physical damage and closed their doors, other businesses, such as George Koonce’s general store, struggled to provide goods and services to their clientele. Only after the Union army regained control of the region in July 1863 did some business activity slowly begin to increase, but still with limited profitability.

Soldiers who traveled throughout Jefferson County astutely observed the adverse financial effects of the war. Many of these observations expressed the soldiers’ remorse of how the war transformed the local economy more than conveying empathy toward those county residents who lost their jobs. Writing to his brother Andrew Wragg on June
15, 1861, Thomas Wragg of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry did not express any regret for the actions taken by the Confederates as they vacated Harper’s Ferry. Wragg recounted that “the bridge across the Potomac was blown up and burnt and up to the time of our leaving they were setting fire to all of the public property it was a beautiful sight to see the town in flames…”

In August 1862, Edwin E. Marvin of the 5th Connecticut Volunteers described Harper’s Ferry as being a “deserted village.” Marvin acknowledged the former industrial legacy of the town as “a compactly built manufacturing village,” but the current state of town was “now half destroyed by fire and in ruins.”

Visiting the town one month later, Lt. Col. Newton T. Colby depicted Harper’s Ferry as “a mere skeleton of what it was—it having been ‘destroyed’ twice…”

Traveling through the region in the summer of 1865, journalist J. T. Trowbridge noted the visible effects of war. Trowbridge portrayed Harper’s Ferry as being the “reverse of agreeable.” After recalling that the town once was “said to have been a pleasant and picturesque place,” Trowbridge indicated that the community now “lies half in ruins….And all about the town are rubbish, filth and stench.”

One might contemplate the economic potential of Jefferson County if the war had not led to such misfortune. Historian John Alexander Williams postulates that

468 Hain, 29.


471 Everhart and Sullivan, 61.
“Harpers Ferry was an industrial town cut down in its prime, first by the Civil War, then by the devastating floods that followed soon after.”

David Williams concurs, arguing that if not for this devastation, Harper’s Ferry could have capitalized on the economic opportunities presented by the Civil War. Williams asserted that the outbreak of the war would have provided the Federal Armory and Arsenal the opportunity to manufacture weapons and other wartime items, such as gun carriages and swords. Ultimately, these arguments can only be speculative as the ravages of war stunted the trajectory of Jefferson County’s economy.

The destruction of the Federal Armory and Arsenal left a significant void in Jefferson County’s post-war economy. The absence of industrial jobs forced former Armory workers to relocate in search of new employment. A declining population in Harper’s Ferry also led to a decreased need for stores to provide for the smaller customer base. While some businesses rebounded in the post-war period, Jefferson County’s economy never replaced the economic loss left by the Armory. Instead, several debates emerged over the future plans of the former Armory grounds. Several entrepreneurs attempted to form new business ventures in the post-war period, but not all of these companies experienced financial success. Van R. Willard of the 3rd Wisconsin Badgers encapsulated the economic devastation wrought by the Civil War in Jefferson County. Writing in his journal in February 1862, Willard noted the “shattered and blackened

[472] Williams, West Virginia, 48. Despite not providing any statistical analysis to support his claim, Ray Jones contends that if the war had not destroyed the economic base of Harper’s Ferry then the town possessed the potential to develop into an industrial center such as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. See Jones, Harpers Ferry, 18.

piers” of the B&O bridge, as well as the “long mass of charred and blackened ruins” of the former armory buildings. After describing this devastation, Willard concluded, “War has done fearful work here.”

The economic transformations caused by the war represented long-term effects in comparison to the changes made to Jefferson County’s natural landscape and agriculture.

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474 Van R. Willard, With the 3rd Wisconsin Badgers: The Living Experience of the Civil War Through the Journals of Van R. Willard, ed. Steven S. Raab (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 1999), 44.
CHAPTER VII

“ALL DESOLATED WITH WAR”: THE CHANGES TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES WROUGHT BY THE CIVIL WAR

Strolling atop the heights surrounding Harper’s Ferry and Bolivar on April 6, 1862, Lt. John Mead Gould remarked that the natural scenery was “charming.” After having encountered the “smell of dead mules and hogs” within Harper’s Ferry, Gould juxtaposed these unpleasant odors with the agreeable sight of “green fields of grass and grain.” Gould also noted during his walk the environmental changes that had been caused by the war as “the woods have been all cut away, the fences ripped up and a house lays sprawled out.”

Gould’s observations include several different methods in which the Civil War contributed to the environmental and agricultural changes within Jefferson County. The presence of animal carcasses and human remains caused an emittance of disagreeable odors. Soldiers chopping wood served multiple purposes, including to gain a military strategy, to use for firewood, or for the building of shelters or fortifications. The taking down of fences presented challenges to farmers, both financially and agriculturally, as fences protected crops from being trampled on or eaten by livestock.

\[475\text{ Jordan, 113.}\]
The loss of fences also meant that farmers needed to cut down timber to replace these structures. Although no large-scale battles occurred within Jefferson County, the four years of fighting, marching, encamping, and foraging altered the environmental and agricultural landscape in a myriad of ways. The modifications that occurred within Jefferson County differed from those changes that occurred near other battlefields, such as Gettysburg, Antietam, or Manassas. Whereas the environmental impact on these larger battlefields occurred over a shorter period of time, the soldiers’ daily activities performed in Jefferson County transformed the natural landscape throughout the conflict.

In addition to these modifications, Union and Confederate soldiers competed for access to and the requisitioning of natural resources, crops, and livestock. The contestation for these provisions and resources derived from the need for subsistence, as well as the attempt to prevent one’s opponent from capitalizing upon these supplies. While competing for these resources, the Union military strategy also sought to destroy the South’s agricultural resources. All of these different types of military actions led to the transformation of the natural environment and agricultural practices within Jefferson County as the militarized landscape melded and negotiated with the environmental landscape.476

Although the environmental history of the Civil War remains an emerging field within the historiography, soldiers frequently discussed how warfare modified the

environment and agricultural practices. Correspondents included environmental themes within their diaries and letters, such as the admiration of the natural landscape. Soldiers marveled at Jefferson County’s beautiful scenery, occasionally making references and comparisons between this newly encountered terrain and the familiar landscape of their hometown or state. Other authors attempted to describe the environmental changes that occurred as a result of war. Notations about the absence of trees, the tearing down of fences, the construction of temporary shelters, or foraging missions in which soldiers took supplies from local farmers often found their way into wartime correspondence. Although these depictions often did not include a quantitative analysis of the amount of damage done to the environment or area farms, these writers obviously found their observations to be intriguing and important. County inhabitants also included references to environmental and agricultural transformations within their correspondence. While the soldiers provided an outsider’s perspective, Jefferson County residents included more emotion within their letters and diaries as these changes directly affected their lifestyles and livelihoods. The confiscation of crops or livestock affected the farmer as their family directly felt this agricultural loss. Scholars must remain cautious, however, when reading the letters and diaries of soldiers and citizens as they sometimes overstated the amount of devastation surrounding them. Both parties sometimes included exaggerated or emotional wording within their correspondence as the writers expressed remorse or angst for the devastation caused to the natural or agricultural landscape. While the wartime modifications to the environmental and agricultural landscapes did not cause long-term
transformations, these changes had a temporary imprint upon the natural landscape and led Jefferson County farmers to make important agricultural decisions in the post-war period.477

Soldiers’ letters home and private diaries often contained varying references to the natural landscape. Envisioning the potential damage that would result from the conflict, combatants sometimes lamented about the impending natural devastation. Col. John White Geary described the scenery around Harper’s Ferry in August 1861 as being “majestically grand,” but he mourned how the natural beauty has been “destroyed by ruthless hands.”478 Soldiers also included references to the appearance of the natural landscape with their writings ranging from a discussion of the natural beauty of the region to the destruction caused by fighting. Topics, such as weather and farming, also commanded the attention of nineteenth-century Americans, particularly since many were farmers who depended upon the environment for their livelihoods. This professional background led soldiers to be attentive to their surroundings as they traversed through newly encountered regions. David Hunter Strother feared that the impending conflict would affect area farms, predicting that “these fair and fertile fields will be laid waste.”479

477 For examples of studies that discuss the Civil War and environmental history, see Kirby, “American Civil War;” Brady, “Wilderness of War;” Nelson, Ruin Nation; Brady, War Upon the Land: Military Strategy; Drake, Blue, the Gray, and the Green; Bell, Mosquito Soldiers; and Meier, Nature’s Civil War.


Furthermore, soldiers sometimes alluded to their ideas of how nature should appear. When the scenery around them did not coincide with their preconceived notions, writers noted these ecological differences within their correspondence. For example, when traveling around Maryland Heights after the 1862 Maryland campaign, Alonzo Quint noticed the lack of trees on the hillside. This ecological void led Quint to remark that “the place did not look natural.”\textsuperscript{480} Quint’s comment regarding the natural state of Maryland Heights indicates that he held a preconceived notion regarding the normal appearance of nature. Quint’s visualization obviously included trees within his ecological composition. Thus, these soldiers’ observations demonstrate the different ways in which warfare affected Jefferson County’s natural and agricultural landscape.

While wartime activities altered the environmental and agricultural landscape of Jefferson County, soldiers did not perform these acts independent from nature itself. Rather, the relationship between humans and the environment represented a negotiated one in which both sides responded to the actions of the other. While humans attempted to control the environment and its resources, soldiers often found their attempts to be unsuccessful. Quint’s comments regarding the unnatural state of the hillsides suggests that he also feared how the conflict could affect nature. The barrenness and uncivilized state of an area caused by warfare led soldiers to lament these changes to the natural landscape. While humans attempted to control the environment for military purposes, these actions did not mean that nature did not react. Rather than viewing nature as a victim of human activities, the historical agency of nature suggests that nature responds

\textsuperscript{480} Quint, \textit{Record of the Second}, 143.
to man. For example, even if humans attempted to control the outbreak of various diseases, soldiers encamped in Jefferson County suffered from different ailments. Some combatants blamed their surrounding environment for their afflictions. Nature also responded to man through its regenerative powers as plants and trees started to regrow even during the conflict.\(^{481}\)

The Civil War transformed the natural and agricultural landscape through a myriad of ways. Through the establishment of encampments, both the Union and Confederate armies altered Jefferson County’s environment. When marching or campaigning, soldiers often established temporary encampments at whatever location that they stopped at, including farmer’s fields. Soldiers built temporary or permanent structures, oftentimes using any available resources that surrounded their encampment, including trees, fence rails, or cornstalks. By cutting down timber for their shelters, the soldiers altered the ecological composition of the woodlands as the trees provided habitats for animals, birds, and insects. Furthermore, the trees lessened the possibility of soil erosion in an area. Without this presence of trees, the ecology of the area changed as the regrowth of timber would not occur immediately. Rather, the lack of mature trees left an area void of quality timber for at least one generation. Although farmers could replace

\(^{481}\) Myllyntaus and Saikku, 7-9; Kirby, *Posquosin*, 1-2; Brady, “War Upon the Land: Nature and Warfare,” ii, 58; Steinberg, ix; Pearson, 3, 5; and Aaron Sachs, *Arcadian America: The Death and Live of an Environmental Tradition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 152. For a discussion of the historical agency of nature in the Civil War, see Bell, *Mosquito Soldiers*; Brady, *War upon the Land: Military Strategy*, 3; and Meier, *Nature’s Civil War*. While not focusing on the Civil War, both Steinberg and Pearson acknowledge that nature possesses agency in their respective works. Although focusing on warfare in the twentieth century, Edmund Russell asserts that war and nature interact with both aspects influencing each other. Russell writes, “The control of nature expanded the scale of war, and the war expanded the scale on which people controlled nature.” See Russell, *War and Nature*, 2.
their rails, this meant that the agriculturists likely needed to cut timber from their woodlots to create new fences. Soldiers also utilized the timber for fueling their cooking fires and heating purposes.\footnote{Hugh Clout, \textit{After the Ruins: Restoring the Countryside of Northern France after the Great War} (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 31; and Martin C. Perdue, “Hiding behind Trees and Building Shelter without Walls: Stick and Foliate Structures in the Civil War Landscape,” \textit{Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture}, 9 (2003): 101-102.}

The growing number of Confederate soldiers in Harper’s Ferry during the early months of the conflict led Confederate officers to establish larger encampments. Numbering nearly 15,000 troops by mid-May 1861, available housing became in short supply, thereby creating logistical problems. This large presence of soldiers also contributed to a shortage of food and an increased susceptibility to contracting diseases. Already quartered in private homes, stores, and the burned out Armory buildings, Gen. Stonewall Jackson instructed several Confederate regiments to build temporary housing on Maryland Heights. Green Berry Samuels described the building of temporary shelter as “carpenters [were] putting up houses or rather huts for the forces to be employed in the mountains.”\footnote{Spencer, Samuels, and Samuels, 92.} Despite the construction of more additional lodging, when a Georgian regiment arrived in Harper’s Ferry in early June 1861, the regiment “pitched their tents by order in a wheat field adjacent.”\footnote{Francis B. Jones to Susan Jones, June 10, 1861, Box 3, Folder 7, Francis B. Jones Family Collection, 1037 WFCHS, HRL.} The large presence of encampments around the town led 2\textsuperscript{nd} Lt. William Bowen Gallaher to write, “At night I can look out of my
window & can see the camp fires all over the hills." The Union army also experienced housing shortages as when Col. Robert Gould Shaw and the 2nd Massachusetts initially moved into Jefferson County in July 1861, the regiment pitched their tents in a field “which is far from being so pleasant.” By the following month, Shaw told his mother, Sarah Blake Sturgis Shaw, that “now we are under huts made of branches, which are a complete protection from dew and night-air, but don’t keep out the rain much.” The demand for adequate quarters remained a significant issue throughout the following year.

Following the 1862 Maryland campaign, Union troops began resettling Jefferson County. Union soldiers found it difficult to procure suitable accommodations within Harper’s Ferry as Col. John White Geary previously had burnt several buildings within the town in February 1862. The lack of housing forced soldiers to encamp atop the heights surrounding Harper’s Ferry. Unsure if Gen. George McClellan would establish winter quarters within the Lower Shenandoah Valley, Union soldiers initially built temporary shelters near Harper’s Ferry. By mid-November 1862, Allen L. Peck of the 20th Connecticut Volunteers wrote home, telling his wife, “I think from what I can learn that we are in winter quarters now.” The decision to encamp within the region led Peck

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485 William Bowen Gallaher to Elizabeth Catherine Bowen Gallaher, May 23, 1861, Civil War Letters from the Collection of Waynesboro Public Library, 1861-1864, Accession 35739, Personal Papers Collection, LV.

486 Duncan, Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune, 118, 124.

487 Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 12; and Robertson, Stonewall Jackson, 228.
and his comrades to construct “log huts” for their permanent quarters. Edward King Wightman of the 9th New York indicated that a large number of Union soldiers took residence near Bolivar Heights as “the flat surface of the table land was covered with the white tents of the army.”

Cpl. Almon M. Graham estimated from the number of tents on Bolivar Heights that “thousands of soldiers” were encamped along the mountaintop. The large presence of encampments led John Chipman Gray to describe Bolivar Heights as looking “as if they were a great city illuminated.”

Soldiers who encamped along the heights used several types of tents, including shelter, circular Sibley, wedge, and wall tents. To provide a platform for their tents, soldiers used stone for the tent’s foundation. In addition to log huts and tents, Civil War soldiers also created makeshift shelters.

The transient nature of warfare led soldiers to create temporary lodging wherever armies bivouacked. They sometimes camped in farmers’ fields which prevented the planters from maintaining their crops. While encamped in Jefferson County in late August 1864, Francis Henry Buffum described his makeshift lodging. “The camp or

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488 Allen L. Peck to “Wife,” November 15, 1862, Allen L. Peck Correspondence, 1862-1863, OCLC 16390559, DMR.


490 Almon M. Graham diary, September 25, 1862, Almon M. Graham Diaries, Mss A65-38, BECHS.


492 Susan E. Winter, “Civil War Fortifications and Campgrounds on Maryland Heights, the Citadel of Harpers Ferry,” in Look to the Earth: Historical Archaeology and the American Civil War, ed. Clarence R. Geier, Jr., and Susan E. Winter (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 116-117, 123.
bivouacs—these terms are not used with distinctive accuracy—of the Fourteenth at
Charlestown was delightfully located in an undulating field covered by a fine piece of
timber,” wrote Buffum.493 James Porter Stewart of Knap’s Independent Battery hoped to
build a hut on Loudoun Heights would be “warm and comfortable” and protect him from
the elements.494 Dave Nichol, also of Knap’s Independent Battery, described the shelters
on Bolivar Heights as being “board shanties & stoves or fire places in them, and was,
what we call, comfortable.”495 Soldiers also sometimes requisitioned private property for
shelter when weather conditions became unbearable. John Q. Winfield of Brock’s Gap
Riflemen complained to his wife that while encamped near Charlestown, a strong storm
forced the regiment to seek alternative lodging. As a result of the storm, Winfield
indicated that “the men are leaving the tents like rats [on] a sinking ship and seeking
shelter in barns and neighboring houses.”496 During a reconnaissance mission near
Charlestown, the 111th Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers created temporary cover from
what “the trees and a few cornstalks afforded.”497 Similarly, Col. Robert Gould Shaw’s

493 Francis Henry Buffum, A Memorial of the Great Rebellion: Being a History of the Fourteenth
Regiment New-Hampshire Volunteers, Covering its Three Years of Service, with Original Sketches of Army
Life, 1862-1865 (Boston: Rand, Avery & Company, 1882), 199.

494 James P. Brady, ed., Hurrah for the Artillery! Knap’s Independent Battery “E,” Pennsylvania

495 Ibid., 183.

496 John Q. Winfield to Sallie Winfield, November 2, 1861, John Q. Winfield Letters, 1861-1862,
Collection no. 01293-z, SHC.

497 John Richards Boyle, Soldiers True: The Story of the One Hundred and Eleventh Regiment
Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers, and of its Campaigns in the War for the Union, 1861-1865 (New York:
Eaton & Mains, 1903), 70.
company hastily built accommodations comprised of “ten huts of rails and cornstalks” while conducting reconnaissance.\textsuperscript{498} The establishment of encampments also facilitated an increased presence of diseases.\textsuperscript{499}

Military encampments led to soldiers congregating in large numbers. When Confederate forces reported to Harper’s Ferry in the spring of 1861, the number of responding soldiers totaled nearly 15,000 combatants. Many of these men originated from rural areas, thus had limited interaction with other people. The large presence of people within encampments led to increased interactions which also translated to becoming introduced to more diseases. Coupled with this increased human interaction were other environmental factors within Jefferson County, including the presence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Soldiers attributed the existence of these bodies of water to the increased rates of disease. Furthermore, soldiers blamed the dirty conditions of towns and the presence of corpses and carcasses to the outbreak of ailments. Similar to other environmental observations, soldiers often discussed the prevalence of disease and their being affected by these sicknesses.\textsuperscript{500}

Throughout the Civil War, soldiers complained of being afflicted by different sicknesses. The large concentration of Confederates in Harper’s Ferry during the early months of the war increased soldiers’ susceptibility to contract a disease. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston estimated that nearly forty percent of the soldiers encamped at Harper’s Ferry

\textsuperscript{498} Duncan, \textit{Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune}, 178.

\textsuperscript{499} Clout, 34.

\textsuperscript{500} Kirby, “American Civil War;” G. Terry Sharrer, \textit{A Kind of Fate: Agricultural Change in Virginia, 1861-1920} (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 2000), 6; and Bell, 3.
suffered from various ailments, including mumps and measles. Correspondence from Confederate soldiers reinforced Johnston’s assertion as the men discussed the presence of disease within their camps. Thomas A. Nicholson of the 2nd Virginia Infantry indicated in a letter to his mother on May 25, 1861 that “we have no more cases of small pox.”501 Within three days of Nicholson’s declaration, another Confederate soldier affirmed the presence of another disease at their encampment. Writing to a relative on May 28, 1861, Armpie Otey conveyed that “I have been sick for two weeks with the measles and I tell you I have had a hard time of it.”502 One day later, Pvt. Reuben A. Scott of the 10th Virginia Infantry referenced the outbreak of a measles epidemic in Harper’s Ferry. While helping attend to the sick, Scott indicated that “the soldiers are getting the measles pretty fast…” Although “no one had died of that disease yet,” Scott was not optimistic of the trend continuing as “I fear we have some bad cases now.”503 Capt. Samuel J. C. Moore also reported a case of the measles in the Confederate encampment in early June 1861, telling his wife that one of the men had been “drooping for several days” before discovering him “red as a beet with the measles.”504 Soldiers continued to indicate

501 Thomas A. Nicholson to “Mother,” May 25, 1861, Thomas A. Nicholson Letters, 1861, Collection no. 05006-z, SHC.

502 Armpie Otey to Matt Otey, May 28, 1861, Series 1.3, Folder 15-16, Wyche and Otey Family Papers, 1824-1900, Collection no. 1608, SHC.

503 Reuben A. Scott to Mollie (Mary Catherine Saufley), May 29, 1861, Box 1, Folder 1, Margaret B. Burruss Collection, 1786-1912, SC no. 2097, JMUSC.

504 Samuel J. C. Moore to Ellen Moore, June 10, 1861, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2, Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847-1939, Collection no. 4618, SHC.
throughout the conflict that they endured various illnesses while encamped in Jefferson County. Besides encampments, soldier also identified other environmental sources as contributing to their illnesses.505

Soldiers not only within Jefferson County, but throughout other Southern areas, blamed their surrounding environment for their susceptibility for disease. Capt. Samuel J. C. Moore, who originated from neighboring Clarke County, complained to his wife, Ellen, about the water quality within Harper’s Ferry. Moore proclaimed “the water here is different from that at home, and does not agree with me.” Moore hoped that his regiment, the 2nd Virginia Infantry, would “not be here very long” so he could recover from his ailment.506 Lt. Josiah C. Williams of the 27th Indiana Infantry also blamed the local water for his sickness. After noting that he was residing in “a very nice and clean camp,” Williams suggested that “the water is not good giving many a diahrea [sic].” Williams included himself among the afflicted, as he suffered from “dysentary [sic] for a week or more.”507 In a letter to his father, Newton T. Colby blamed the physical landscape of the county for the bad health of his regiment. “The health of the regiment is not good --- there being a larger number of sick --- I think that this location is an unhealthy one --- being on the side of a mountain where the sun does not reach us till 9 or

505 Bell, 26; Meier, Nature’s Civil War, 2; and Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, 16. For other soldiers discussing their bouts with illness, see Allen L. Peck to “Wife,” December 8, 1862, Allen L. Peck Correspondence, 1862-1863, OCLC 16390559, DMR; and Nadiah P. Johnson to “Uncle and Aunt,” December 23, 1863, Nadiah P. Johnson Correspondence, 1862-1864, OCLC 19851689, DMR.

506 Samuel J. C. Moore to Ellen Moore, April 21, 1861, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 2, Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847-1939, Collection no. 4618, SHC.

507 Josiah C. Williams to Worthington B. Williams and Lydia A. L. Reed Williams, October 13, 1862, Box 1, Folder 11, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302 OM 0407, IHS.
10 o'clock --- then comes down very hot all of a sudden,” Colby wrote.\textsuperscript{508} Writing in March 1862, Lt. John Mead Gould predicted a future epidemic within Harper’s Ferry, noting that “filth of every shape” was “scattered broadcast around the town.” Gould expected that by “next summer it will be impossible for troops to be healthy near the river.”\textsuperscript{509} Soldiers also attributed the presence of dead bodies to their illnesses.\textsuperscript{510}

Cadavers increased not only the potential for diseases, but also served as a beckoning call for rats, buzzards, and crows to feast upon the corpses. Lt. Russell M. Tuttle of the 107\textsuperscript{th} New York recalled that as his regiment entered Harper’s Ferry following their march from Sharpsburg, Maryland that, “There were many graves of Confederates and others, but alas, the Union Soldiers who had fallen afterwards were unburied. Swarms of buzzards were holding riot over their remains.”\textsuperscript{511} Newton T. Colby also indicated that the presence of dead bodies on the heights around Harper’s Ferry in September 1862 increased the rate of sickness amongst the 107\textsuperscript{th} New York Infantry. Colby wrote, “On the mountain top—the dead lie on the ground still unburied.” Although Union soldiers attempted to dispose of the corpses, the area “being so rocky” subverted these efforts. Instead, the soldiers “tried to burn” the bodies, but this attempt ended up being “only partially successful.”\textsuperscript{512} Upon discovering the bodies of fallen

\textsuperscript{508} Hughes, 177.
\textsuperscript{509} Jordan, 110.
\textsuperscript{510} Meier, Nature’s Civil War, 18-21.
\textsuperscript{512} Hughes, 177.
soldiers “in a fearful state of decomposition,” members of the 125th Pennsylvania Infantry determined that “burial was out of the question,” and instead “gathered logs and burned the bodies of friend and foe.”\textsuperscript{513} As Gen. Alpheus S. Williams passed over the recent battleground, he noted “that many bodies were still unburied,” which contributed to a “stench” that “proved abundantly.”\textsuperscript{514} Besides the engagement near Harper’s Ferry, another skirmish during the Antietam campaign led to corpses being deposited in the Potomac River.

During the Battle of Shepherdstown, Union soldiers crossed the Potomac River to chase the retreating Confederate forces. By the morning of September 20, 1862, Confederate soldiers counterattacked, forcing the Federals to retreat back across the waterway. While attempting to navigate the Potomac River, some Union soldiers were killed in the firefight. Writing in his official report of the conflict, Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill considered it to be “the most terrible slaughter that this war has yet witnessed. The broad surface of the Potomac was blue with the floating bodies of our foe.”\textsuperscript{515} Suggesting that many of the dead Union soldiers had “drowned in the river,” Confederate cavalryman John N. Opie echoed Hill’s observation as he described the waterway “blue with floating corpses.”\textsuperscript{516} Writing home after the engagement, James Thompson of the 11th Georgia

\textsuperscript{513} Miles C. Huyette, \textit{Reminiscences of a Soldier in the American Civil War} (Buffalo: Vosburgh & Whiting Co., 1908), 24-25.


\textsuperscript{515} O.R., Series 1, vol. 19, part 1, 982.

\textsuperscript{516} John N. Opie, \textit{A Rebel Cavalryman with Lee, Stuart, and Jackson} (Chicago: W. B. Conkey Company, 1899), 89.
suggested that the Potomac River was “completely damned [sic] up and so thick with blood that the river looked like blood for miles below.”\textsuperscript{517} One year after this skirmish, Harrison Wells of Company A, 13\textsuperscript{th} Georgia encamped near the former battlefield. Wells took note of the environmental imprint left from the previous conflict. Wells discovered that “the trees are considerably lacerated by the shot and shells.” Furthermore, he observed that the former area “where the river was almost damned [sic] with their dead,” Wells saw “some of their bones” laying at the bottom of the riverbed.\textsuperscript{518} Whereas the number of dead bodies within Jefferson County did not present as significant of a problem as at Gettysburg and Antietam, both armies still needed to dispose of the remains of their fallen comrades to prevent a significant epidemic. Both the Union and Confederate armies also modified Jefferson County’s natural landscape through the removal of trees for fuel and protective measures.\textsuperscript{519}

The large presence of soldiers encamped around Harper’s Ferry contributed to the dwindling timber along all of the mountaintops that surrounded the town. Soldiers used this timber, as well as farmers’ fence rails, as a source of fuel. Similar to the felling of trees for quarters, the use of wood for fires also contributed to the loss of mature timber within Jefferson County’s forests. The cutting of wood for fires served as a daily activity within encampments. Bivouacked near Harper’s Ferry in December 1862, Allen L. Peck

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\textsuperscript{517} Robertson, \textit{Stonewall Jackson}, 622.
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\textsuperscript{518} Harrison Wells to Mollie Long, June 20, 1863, Harrison Wells Papers, 1857-1869, 1905, Collection no. 05422, SHC.
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wrote to his wife telling her, “I have just come in from chopping wood for to burn tonight.”⁵²⁰ Knap’s Independent Battery received orders to stand guard daily while Union soldiers engaged in “cutting wood” for the army’s encampment.⁵²¹ In addition to the cutting down of timber, soldiers also relied upon other wooden components to fuel their fires, including private property. Civil War soldiers also utilized standing timber for protective measures.⁵²²

Soldiers used trees to construct breastworks, abattis, and blockhouses to provide protection from enemy soldiers, artillery, and cavalrymen. Therefore, besides being used for fuel, forests also represented a natural ally for soldiers. Soldiers built breastworks along ridgetops, such as those surrounding Harper’s Ferry, to provide a stronger defensible position. Breastworks also could be constructed hastily when forces suddenly encountered enemy forces. After engaging with Confederate troops unexpectedly near Charlestown, the 12th Connecticut hurriedly erected a temporary breastwork. The regiment spent the night of August 31, 1864 creating this fortification and by daylight the regiment “had a strong breastwork hedged in by an abatis made of a whole grove.”⁵²³ Soldiers also used fence rails to construct these breastworks. Capt. John William De

⁵²⁰ Allen L. Peck to “Wife,” December 8, 1862, Allen L. Peck Correspondence, 1862-1863, OCLC 16390559, DMR.

⁵²¹ Brady, Hurrah for the Artillery, 180.


Forest provided his wife a lengthy description of how soldiers erected fieldworks. De Forest’s instructions included stealing “all the rails that you can find,” and then after standing the rails vertically, “fill in with stones, earth, and green timber, and bank up the front with earth laid at an angle of forty-five degrees.” After completing all of this work, De Forest concluded that soldiers could “then look across it and wish the enemy would come.” A soldier with the 12th West Virginia considered the building of breastworks as common practice. “Whenever we stop now a days, the first work is to throw up breast works and it is wonderful the amount of work a large army can do in a short space of time in the way of throwing up works and building abbattis [sic], and as I write, the sound of the axe, pick, and shovel click in all directions, strengthening our center,” stated Alexander Neil The mountainous terrain surrounding Harper’s Ferry served as a primary site for a number of defensive fortifications.

524 Ibid.


The erection of fortifications in Jefferson County began in April 1861 after the Confederates took control of Harper’s Ferry. Recognizing the strategic importance of the heights surrounding the town, Gen. Stonewall Jackson argued that Confederate forces needed to fortify this position. Jackson believed that if the Confederates could maintain control of Harper’s Ferry, and by extension the Lower Shenandoah Valley, then the region could serve as a launching point for future incursions northward. Therefore, Jackson instructed his men to erect wooden stockades and blockhouses on Maryland and Loudoun Heights to support their defensive lives. Work on these structures quickly began as Wilson Scott Newman of the 13th Virginia informed his wife, Mary Louisa White Newman, on May 8, 1861, that “we are busy fortifying this place.”\(^{527}\) In a letter to his spouse, James K. Edmondson described how “about 100 men” currently were working on Loudoun Heights “cleaning out & building block houses for the purpose of stationing batterys [sic] up here.”\(^{528}\) Besides these Confederate forces, Green Berry Samuels indicated that “a large force of negroes [were] throwing up fortifications on the Maryland heights.”\(^{529}\) In addition to the breastworks built by the Confederates, the Union army also fortified these positions during the late summer of 1862.\(^{530}\)


\(^{528}\) James K. Edmondson to Emma Edmondson, May 9, 1861, James K. Edmondson Letters, 1856-1912, Collection 251, James G. Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia, hereinafter cited as WLU.

\(^{529}\) Spencer, Samuels, and Samuels, 92.

\(^{530}\) O.R., Ser. 1, vol. 2, 814; Winter, “Civil War Fortifications,” 104; Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson*, 232; Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall Jackson)* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 190-191; Wellman, 33; and Francis B. Jones to Susan Jones, June 10, 1861, Box 3, Folder 7, Francis B. Jones Family Collection, 1037 WFCHS, HRL.
During the 1862 Maryland campaign, Union forces occupied Maryland, Bolivar, and Loudon Heights in the attempt to defend Harper’s Ferry. Similar to the Confederate strategy in 1861, Union forces sought to buttress their position by building breastworks on these mountaintops. When the 15th Indiana Battery arrived in Harper’s Ferry in late August 1862, there already existed “a line of breastwork” along Bolivar Heights.  

Col. Dixon Miles ordered his men to construct additional earthworks, rifle pits, and emplacements for cannons along Bolivar Heights. Union forces also built fortifications along Maryland Heights including “a rude breastwork of logs” and “a slashing or rude abattis.” Furthermore, the 32nd Ohio Infantry under the guidance of Col. Thomas H. Ford cut down trees on Maryland Heights for breastworks. As Jubal Early’s men approached Harper’s Ferry from the direction of Bolivar Heights, his men came upon a “formidable abattis” that had been created by the cutting of “thick brush.” In the attempt to maintain control of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, the Union army continued to fortify the heights surrounding Harper’s Ferry for the rest of the conflict.

Following the Maryland campaign, General George McClellan ordered Union forces to reinforce the heights around Harper’s Ferry. Edward R. Geary informed his mother on October 4, 1862 that “fortifications are being thrown up on all sides of Harper’s Ferry.” The Union maintained these defensive structures as Van Willard of

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531 Fout, 97.
532 Willson, 54.
533 Early, Autobiographical Sketch, 137.
534 Wellman, 73.
535 Brady, Hurrah for the Artillery, 169, 180.
the 3rd Wisconsin Badgers mentioned the presence of Union fortifications on Maryland Heights when his regiment traveled to Harper’s Ferry in the summer of 1863. After noting that “all the timber had been cut down,” Willard described a complex defensive network that consisted of “a large strong fortress built on the summit, while other forts crowned the all the smaller hills, and rifle pits and earth works linked them together like a chain.” The Union fortifications along Maryland Heights provided soldiers with effective protection during Gen. Jubal Early’s assault on Harper’s Ferry in July 1864. Early attributed his inability to siege the enemy as they “had taken refuge” in the “strongly fortified works” along Maryland Heights. Union commanders refortified the defensive works on Bolivar Heights in August 1864 to prevent Early from attempting another attack on Harper’s Ferry. John S. Cooke of the 26th Massachusetts Volunteers indicated in his journal on August 21, 1864, that his regiment remained busy “throwing up breastworks” on Bolivar Heights. In addition to using wood to construct breastworks, soldiers also utilized other natural resources when building defensive fortifications, particularly around Harper’s Ferry.

Soldiers also incorporated other natural resources into the creation of defensive works including stone, earth, and sand. When Kershaw’s Brigade attempted to overcome

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536 Willard, 211.

537 Early, Autobiographical Sketch, 385.

538 John S. Cooke journal, August 21, 1864, John S. Cooke Journal May 6, 1861-June 30, 1865, Box 2, John S. Cooke Papers, 1861-1906, OCLC 32452428, DMR.

Union forces on Maryland Heights in September 1862, the Confederates found Union soldiers positioned behind breastworks “built of great stones and logs, in front of which was an abattis of felled timber and brushwood.” Following the 1862 Maryland campaign, the Union army needed to rebuild some of their fortifications on Maryland Heights. Allen L. Peck, who served with the 20th Connecticut Volunteers, helped replace breastworks along this mountain top. Peck described the structure as being “five ft. high & as much as ten ft. wide on the bottom. It is built of logs stone & dirt.” Peck estimated that “some four hundred men” assisted in this construction project with “over one hundred men” coming from the 20th Connecticut. Arthur L. Van Vleck indicated that his regiment, the 126th Ohio Infantry, joined the 106th New York Infantry atop Maryland Heights to strengthen the defensive fortifications. The two regiments received instructions to “throw up more works & rifle pits. The works were 8 ft. high with trees & sandsacks at the sides.” Union soldiers also built stone forts atop the heights in the fall of 1862. Bestowing the names Stone Fort and Fort Duncan to these fortifications, Union soldiers began this construction project in October 1862. Combatants also built stone breastworks near the forts that measured “from four to five feet in width and two to three

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541 Allen L. Peck to “Wife,” November 15, 1862, Allen L. Peck Correspondence, 1862-1863, OCLC 16390559, DMR.

542 Arthur L. Van Vleck diary, summer 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck Diary, 1862-1863, Collection no. 00738-z, SHC.
feet in height.”\textsuperscript{543} Besides using natural resources for protective measures, soldiers sometimes viewed the natural landscape as either being a hindrance or providing support to their military strategy.\textsuperscript{544}

In addition to providing materials for shelter and fortifications, soldiers used the forests along Harper’s Ferry’s heights as a natural defense. Prior to the Confederate attack on Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, the 60\textsuperscript{th} Ohio Infantry and 115\textsuperscript{th} New York Infantry spent time chopping down “twenty acres of trees to prevent the rebel cavalry from dashing in upon us.”\textsuperscript{545} On June 21, 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck noted in his diary that his company “was employed in felling trees” near Maryland Heights “to prevent cavalry from flanking our men.”\textsuperscript{546} Whereas Union soldiers sometimes relied upon the trees for protection, standing timber also could be viewed as a hindrance, thus soldiers sought to remove this natural obstacle. Anticipating a clash near Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, Union forces began clearing the land of timber. Soldiers from the 126\textsuperscript{th} New York spent two days in early September 1862 completing this task. One officer of the regiment perceived the “slaughter of these noble chestnut trees, the pride of

\textsuperscript{543} Winter, “Civil War Fortifications,” 113.

\textsuperscript{544} Ibid., 106, 112-113, 115.


\textsuperscript{546} Arthur L. Van Vleck diary, June 21, 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck Diary, 1862-1863, Collection no. 00738-z, SHC.
Virginians, as cruel.” Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws also identified the standing timber on the mountaintops surrounding Harper’s Ferry as a natural barrier to the Confederate’s goal of capturing the town. Hence, McLaws ordered his soldiers to make a “clearing on top of the lookout” on Maryland Heights so the Confederate artillery could shell the town. The military actions of felling timber sometimes generated disheartened responses from Civil War participants.

The sight of the tree barren heights around Harper’s Ferry led soldiers and journalists to compose reactions to the transformed natural landscape. John Chipman Gray expressed melancholy over the lack of trees on Bolivar Heights as soldiers had chopped down the timber for multiple uses. On October 19, 1862, Gray wrote to his mother, telling her that his regiment was staying “in a lovely spot.” Despite his admiration for the natural surroundings, he also stated in his letter that “the wood is being sadly cut down, however, both for fuel and to clear the way for the fortifications on top of the mountain.” After returning to the region after Antietam, Alonzo Quint of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry depicted the land around Maryland Heights as having “been stripped of its trees; and the old paths to the spring, and down to the river, were bald and shelterless” from the building of breastworks. When correspondent James E. Taylor trekked over the former battlegrounds above Harper’s Ferry in 1864, he noted the

547 Willson, 50-51.
548 Fout, 110.
549 Gray and Ropes, 8.
550 Quint, Record of the Second, 143.
absence of trees along the ridgetops. Rather than finding standing timber on the heights around the town, Taylor found the landscape “liberally dotted with stumps."\textsuperscript{551} In comparison to other environmental modifications, such as the emergence of disease, the cutting down of these trees transformed the natural landscape for a longer period of time as the forests could not be regenerated as quickly. Warmaking also modified Jefferson County’s agricultural landscape, but these actions generally represented short-term changes.

The Civil War transformed Jefferson County’s agriculture in a variety of ways. The enlistment of white males led to labor shortages on area farms. Jefferson County slaveholders also experienced the loss of their African American slaves who fled to Union controlled regions in order to become free. Cultivators also encountered financial difficulties as the economic situation within the region worsened. Jefferson County farms became a source of contention as soldiers from both sides foraged for supplies, stole livestock, or commandeered horses. Farms situated along roads tended to experience more damage and theft as soldiers encamped or passed by these conveniently located farmlands. As the ravages of war surrounded them, some area farmers attempted to maintain their pre-war agricultural practices, but found their aspirations to be challenging. When traveling through Jefferson County in the latter months of 1864, artist James E. Taylor visited Robert Van Cleve’s farm near Kearneysville. Taylor indicated that the Van Cleve farm remained relatively unscathed by the war as he remained neutral throughout the war. Excluding the Van Cleve farm, Taylor considered much of Jefferson

\textsuperscript{551} Taylor, \textit{With Sheridan}, 247.
County to have been “a region that once teemed with agricultural thrift” but “now a paralyzed industry.” In comparison to Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan’s destructive 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign, Jefferson County’s farms experienced less damage to their farms and crops. Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered Sheridan to make it “desirable that nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage, and stock wanted for the use of your command. Such as cannot be consumed, destroy.”

While Jefferson County farms suffered more from foraging than from the actual destruction of crops, county planters still endured the continual effects of the war upon their farms throughout the entire conflict.

Similar to the environmental changes wrought by the Civil War, the continual occupation of Jefferson County also left an imprint on the agricultural landscape. Despite orders by commanding officers to respect private property, soldiers often violated these instructions by confiscating horses, fence rails, crops and livestock. The loss of crops and livestock led to an economic loss for farmers as they depended upon this food to provide for their own families and to sell surplus foodstuffs at market or even perhaps to

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552 Ibid., 211.


soldiers who marched through the region. Farmers who experienced agricultural losses attempted to replace these lost provisions, but oftentimes found instead that they needed to readjust their dietary and commercial practices as they would not be able to recover their losses. In addition to this financial shortfall, the soldiers’ foraging and pillaging for food also had a psychological effect upon residents. Agrarians feared that the arrival of soldiers within the vicinity of their farms likely meant that they would suffer some type of loss. Although soldiers confiscated supplies from local farmers for their own use, not all members of the armed forces perceived this pilfering as an epidemic. One soldier wrote in July 1864 that, “there is no pillaging, except of apples and fruit.”555 Despite this claim, the frequent recording of foraging incidents by soldiers indicates that these types of actions repeatedly occurred throughout the war.556

Both Union and Confederate soldiers conducted foraging missions on Jefferson County farms looking for sustenance. Turner Ashby wrote to his sister, Dora, in September 1861, telling her that he discovered forage on area farms to be “very abundant.”557 Recognizing the abundance of foodstuffs within the region, Confederate


556 Kenneth W. Noe, “Exterminating Savages: The Union Army and Mountain Guerrillas in Southern West Virginia, 1861-1862,” in The Civil War in Appalachia: Collected Essays, ed. Kenneth W. Noe and Shannon H. Wilson (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 108; Grimsley, Hard Hand of War, 46; and Fiege, 95. Grimsley contends that foraging and pillaging resulted in minimal economic loss for Southern farmers. Furthermore, he argues that these actions largely did not affect the outcome of the Civil War. Grimsley’s study, however, does not acknowledge the psychological effects that foraging and pillaging had upon the local populace. Fiege asserts that the taking of provisions, livestock, and fodder from Southern farms made it difficult for Southern farmers to provide adequate supplies to the Confederate war effort.

557 Turner Ashby to Dora Ashby, September 6, 1861, Box 1, Folder 1, Ashby Family Letters, 1852-1863, SC no. 2087, JMUSC.
forces sought to procure some provisions in the winter of 1861. Capt. David Hunter Strother notified Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks on November 16, 1861, that Confederate “forage trains are out in the counties of Berkeley, Jefferson & collecting forage for Winchester.” Gen. Jubal Early attempted to secure provisions for his troops from the Lower Shenandoah Valley in the summer of 1864. Early ordered Jefferson and Berkeley County cultivators to provide 200,000 bushels of wheat for Confederate forces. Winchester resident John Peyton Clark noted in his journal on July 25, 1864, that Confederate soldiers were harvesting wheat in Jefferson and Berkeley Counties. Writing from Charlestown on August 23, 1864, Addison Lowery of the 53rd North Carolina Infantry assured his mother, “we get plenty of apples and corn to eat over here.” Creed Thomas Davis of the Richmond Howitzers also indicated in his diary that while encamped near Charlestown in August 1864, “there is a fine apple orchard nearby to which we have free access.” James and Ann Amelia Beckham Hooff included multiple references within their agricultural diary of their farm being raided by Union soldiers looking for food. Ann Hooff entered in the diary on March 9, 1862, that after “feeding soldiers all day,” several Union soldiers proceeded to “the hen house, tore the boards off & killed a great many fowls…” The Hooff farm remained the subject of

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558 David Hunter Strother to Nathaniel P. Banks, November 16, 1861, Nathaniel P. Banks Papers, 1850-1880, OCLC 19106172, DMR.

559 Addison Lowery to “Mother,” August 23, 1864, Addison Lowery Letter, 1864, Accession 41452, Personal Papers Collection, LV.

560 Creed Thomas Davis diary, August 23, 1864, Creed Thomas Davis Diary, 1864-1865, vol. 1, May 4, 1864-February 19, 1865, Mss5:1 D2914:1, VHS.

561 James Lawrence Hooff diary, March 9, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
Union pilfering as on December 30, 1863, three Federal soldiers visited the farm and “insisted on having corn—we got off by giving them some to feed while here.”

Soldiers oftentimes foraged on Jefferson County farms as they did not collect adequate provisions from the military. Since Union and Confederate troops did not always receive their daily rations, soldiers oftentimes supplemented their diets by consuming any available food that they could locate nearby their encampment or traveling route. Soldiers often foraged on the bountiful farms within the Lower Shenandoah Valley to prevent starvation, supplement or diversify their rations, or avoid military issued provisions. Although farmers protested these actions, soldiers pilfered crops directly from the fields, such as corn, as well as orchard products. Soldiers also procured various forms of livestock, including chickens, cows, and turkeys, for consumption purposes. George T. Stevens of the 77th New York Infantry commented on the lack of livestock within the Shenandoah Valley in August 1864. “The valley on our course was stripped of cattle horses sheep & every thing else,” wrote Stevens. He continued that “I pity the inhabitants of the valley for they suffer from both armies. Yet they deserve little sympathy for they are all rebels.”

Although Capt. David Hunter Strother attempted to prevent Union soldiers from laying waste to Charlestown on several occasions, he accepted that soldiers took food from local

562 James Lawrence Hooff diary, December 30, 1863, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

563 Berkey, “War in the Borderland,” 100; and Duncan, Beleaguered Winchester, 199.

564 George T. Stevens to Harriet W. Stevens, August 19, 1864, George T. Stevens Letters, 1864, Accession 43004, Personal Papers Collection, LV. Although Stevens indicated that he felt sorry that Shenandoah Valley residents suffered from the conduct of soldiers, he also noted, “yet they deserve little sympathy for they are all rebels.”
residents as “by drawing on the county around us, we may keep the troops from starvation.” When members of the 3rd Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry embarked on a foraging mission in October 1861, the men came back with “mutton, poultry, fresh pork, honey and garden vegetables.” Rather than needing the food because the regiment was short on supplies, the men seized the foodstuffs “to garnish the monotonous ration.” The rations that soldiers received from the army while in Jefferson County were not always of the highest quality and standards. One soldier wrote to his father that, “Just now one of my Corporals brought me some hard bread as a sample of what they had to eat and on breaking it open I found it was alive with bugs and worms!! I have been shown beef which had been issued to my men – that was alive with maggots.” The disruption of a Union encampment between Leetown and Shepherdstown in July 1864 demonstrates the continual cycle of soldiers relying upon any available food source. After breaking up the bivouac of Gen. James A. Mulligan’s brigade, members of the 1st Maryland Cavalry (C.S.A.) found “plenty of food of all descriptions, some sheep and hogs, all dressed and hanging up on the trees, some of the steaks cut off and in frying pans.” After this pleasant discovery, Pvt. Henry Clay Mettan recounted that the cavalymen “all had a little lunch.” Although Union soldiers

565 Strother, *Virginia Yankee*, 23.


567 Hughes, 181. Colby wrote the letter to his father during the early part of October 1862.

originally possessed the meat, the Confederate cavalrymen freely helped themselves to this now unclaimed food. Desperate for provisions, soldiers demonstrated a willingness to devour a wide range of foods.

In addition to foraging for harvested crops and livestock, soldiers consumed produce directly from farmers’ fields, even if the harvest had not reached maturity. When returning from Antietam, William Poague and his regiment encamped near Halltown. Lacking any rations, Poague’s regiment grabbed green corn from a nearby field to feed the men and horses. Marching near Charlestown in August 1864, John James Ingraham of the 121st New York Volunteers described how members of his regiment took crops from fields and orchards as they passed. “Some of us were so hard up for grub as we passed through and along corn fields they would pick and eat green raw corn,” wrote Ingraham. Besides foraging for green corn and apples, “when we stopped near a dwelling house to rest, the boys would sally on it, take everything in the eating line, rob bee hives, milk houses, etc.” Ingraham also wrote to a female acquaintance, telling her of the variety of food that he recently consumed. While identifying beef, coffee, and onions among the items consumed, he also indicated that he had eaten corn. He was quick to point out that “the corn I didn’t steal, I took it from a field nearby.”

Similar to Ingraham, John William De Forest indicated that his regiment, the 12th Connecticut Volunteers, subsisted on “a diet of green corn and green apples,” while

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569 John James Ingraham to Mary Ingraham, August 19, 1864, John James Ingraham Letters, 1862-1865, Accession 43452, Personal Papers Collection, LV.

570 John James Ingraham to Mary L. Green, August 20, 1864, John James Ingraham Letters, 1862-1865, Accession 43452, Personal Papers Collection, LV.
stationed near Charlestown in August 1864. John S. Cooke informed his mother that he survived on “green corn & green apples,” telling her that “as long as I can find” these foodstuffs “I am perfectly content.” Cooke also included an entry in his diary on September 6, 1864, in which he noted that a member of his regiment “went out foraging & returned with some green corn & apples.” The men proceeded to use these apples to make applesauce. Jefferson County farmers not only experienced the loss of crops, but soldiers also captured their livestock.

As demonstrated by the occurrences at the Engle family farm, farmers’ livestock often became the target of soldiers’ foraging desires. James Engle, whose family lived in Bakerton, felt the effects from soldiers’ raiding his farm for livestock. Since the family lived near the Potomac River, soldiers easily crossed the waterway and captured their livestock on several occasions. Engle recalled that during one foraging incident, Union soldiers “took our herd of cattle, eight or ten head, and the neighbors’ and drove them to camp and butchered them, not paying a cent.” Federal soldiers also attempted to abscond with “a fat hog,” but Engle’s father, John, successfully prevent the men from taking the pig. The Engle family also sold some of their livestock to the Confederates. After selling

571 De Forest, 166.

572 John S. Cooke to “Mother,” August 20, 1864, Box 1, Folder 2, John S. Cooke Papers, 1861-1906, OCLC 32452428, DMR.

573 John S. Cooke journal, September 6, 1864, John S. Cooke Journal May 6, 1861-June 30, 1865, Box 2, John S. Cooke Papers, 1861-1906, OCLC 32452428, DMR

a steer to the Confederates, the bull escaped and returned home. According to Engle, Federal soldiers then came to the Engle farm and took the steer, but it escaped from its’ potential captors. After the second escape, the Engle family butchered the steer themselves and ate him. Other Jefferson County farmers experienced fates similar to the Engles with both Union and Confederate soldiers taking their livestock.575

Union soldiers attempted to confiscate a variety of livestock. Capt. David Hunter Strother considered the taking of livestock to be an epidemic. Strother observed that while traveling around Harper’s Ferry he “saw soldiers with slaughtered sheep and hogs, carrying their whole or quarters upon their bayonets.”576 Federal soldiers stationed in Charlestown violated Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks’ orders in March 1862 by confiscating private property. Members of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry claimed that after being attacked “by a large body of pigs, turkeys, chickens & ducks,” the men fought back against their brute aggressors. The foray resulted in the death of “some of those secession animals & fowls,” and thus “it was not sin to eat them.”577 Despite orders from Union officers, soldiers continued to commandeer area livestock. Encamped near Charlestown after the Gettysburg campaign, Cpl. Charles R. Peterson of the 1st New York Cavalry “found some chickens which he had skinned, fried and eaten.” After consuming this poultry, “his face was aglow with chicken grease and contentment.”578 Writing to his

575 Quoted in Theriault, 101.
578 Beach, 286.
parents in August 1864, John James Ingraham of the 121st New York Volunteers recounted how while some members of the regiment decided to wash their clothes in a nearby brook, other soldiers began “shooting the hogs that had been running through camp and mutton & c. all through the country.” On January 30, 1865, a group of Union soldiers crossed the Potomac River near Shepherdstown and entered the meat house of Joseph Staley. The party “took forty chickens” and other meats before absconding back over the waterway. In their hurried attempt to escape without being noticed, the combatants “dropped some of the meat and some of the headless poultry.”

Besides farmers enduring the confiscation of their livestock by Union soldiers, area cultivators also suffered from the actions of Confederate troops.

Similar to the foraging of foodstuffs, Confederate soldiers also became reliant upon local livestock for sustenance. During a reconnaissance trip atop of Maryland Heights in June 1863, 1st Lt. William L. Kenley of the 1st Maryland Infantry (U.S.) witnessed Confederate soldiers “driving off cattle beyond Bolivar Heights.” Upon entering Halltown in August 1864, Adjt. John Worsham, Company F of the 21st Virginia, recalled that this regiment received word of a large number of hogs within the vicinity. Confederate troops hurriedly departed to locate the hogs, and later “that night all had

579 John James Ingraham to Orsemus and Barbara Ingraham, August 26, 1864, John James Ingraham Letters, 1862-1865, Accession 43452, Personal Papers Collection, LV.

580 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, January 30, 1865, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.

581 William L. Kenly diary, June 21, 1863, Civil War Collection, Series 1, no. 12, Ms 79-18, William L. Kenly Diary, 1863, WVSA.
fresh pork for supper,” reported Worsham.\(^ {582}\) Although the men of the Rockbridge Artillery did not take any livestock from area farms when encamped near Harper’s Ferry in the spring of 1862, the soldiers still procured some nutrition from the free-ranging cows who wandered past their bivouac. These cows “would stroll around the camp and stand kindly till a canteen could be filled with rich milk…”\(^ {583}\) Perhaps one of the reasons that the Rockbridge Artillery did not butcher these bovines related to that several men from Jefferson County enlisted in this regiment. John DeHart Ross of the 52\(^ {\text{nd}} \) Virginia Infantry also exploited the presence of cows near his encampment as the bovines provided “cream for [his] coffee.”\(^ {584}\) Whereas the taking of crops and livestock affected the economic and dietary practices of Jefferson County farmers, the confiscation of horses and other draft animals restricted the planter’s ability to perform essential agricultural tasks.

Both armies requisitioned horses from local cultivators throughout the war. The taking of horses, mules, and oxen left farmers without their essential draft animals that pulled plows and other farm machinery. Similar to the loss of crops and livestock, the seizure of draft animals represented a significant financial loss for farmers, particularly


\(^{583}\) Edward A. Moore, *The Story of a Cannoneer under Stonewall Jackson in which is Told the Part Taken by the Rockbridge Artillery in the Army of Northern Virginia*, with an introduction by Robert E. Lee, Jr., and Henry St. George Tucker (Lynchburg: J. P. Bell Company, Inc., 1910), 64.

\(^{584}\) John DeHart Ross to Agnes Reid Ross, May 20, 1861, John DeHart Ross Papers, 1856-1877, Collection 120, WLU.
since horses cost more than other livestock. The loss of draft animals forced planters to replace their livestock or forgo the expense and continue farming by relying upon manual labor. Either of these options, however, equated to additional financial loss for the farmers. Soldiers commandeered the draft animals for several military purposes, including for pulling wagons and incorporation within the cavalry.

Confederate forces commenced the requisitioning of draft animals at the beginning of the war to assist in the relocation of machinery from the Federal Armory and Arsenal. The Confederate army impressed “over 100 teams (wagons &horses)” in early June 1861 to assist in this process “against the will of the owners.” Several citizens, including Andrew Kennedy and Robert English, begged Francis B. Jones to “intercede for them at HdQrs.” Jones speculated that if he lived within the area and had a “g[oo]d horse it w[oul]d be probably impressed” as well.\(^{585}\) Both the Union and Confederate cavalries commandeered horses from Jefferson County into their units. In April 1862, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton instructed Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks to outfit the Union cavalry with horses from the Shenandoah Valley. Stanton’s orders specified that “only horses absolutely needed for agriculture be left in possession of persons believed to be disloyal.”\(^{586}\) Although Stanton wanted Banks to capture at least 1,500 horses, Banks responded that the “number of horses remaining in this country is far less than suggested.”\(^{587}\) Banks also addressed the lack of horses within the region when

\(^{585}\) Francis B. Jones to Cary Randolph Jones, June 3, 1861, Box 3, Folder 7, Francis B. Jones Family Collection, 1037 WFCHS, HRL.


\(^{587}\) Duncan, *Beleaguered Winchester*, 69-70.
corresponding with Gen. Lorenzo Thomas. “I doubt if there are 300 serviceable horses in the whole of this country, from Harper’s Ferry to our outposts,” Banks wrote on April 14, 1862.\textsuperscript{588} Despite these anticipated limitations, Banks still directed his men to seize horses throughout the entire Lower Shenandoah Valley, including Jefferson County farms. Several Union soldiers also expressed frustration over the inability to commandeering horses. After having his own horse stolen, Lt. Colonel Newton T. Colby wrote to his father, Merrill, on October 22, 1862, that he had “tried among the farmers” to replace his stolen mount “but could not succeed.”\textsuperscript{589} John Chipman Gray of the 12\textsuperscript{th} Army Corps also attempted to locate a horse near Harper’s Ferry, but he “found it impossible” and thus decided to go to “Washington to-morrow in search of one.”\textsuperscript{590} Jefferson County cultivators not only experienced the pilfering of crops, livestock, and draft animals, but farmers also suffered agricultural loss through the taking of fences.\textsuperscript{591}

Rail fences served an important facet within local agricultural practices as the fences protected crops from being eaten or damaged by roaming livestock. Throughout the conflict, soldiers disassembled farmers’ fence rails when pursuing the enemy, using them for fuel, or repurposing the rails for building supplies and protective measures. The

\textsuperscript{588} O.R. Ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 3, 76-77.
\textsuperscript{589} Hughes, 187.
\textsuperscript{590} Gray and Ropes, 2.
destruction of these fences compelled cultivators to either repair these structures or replace the rails. The replacement of rails led farmers to cut down timber from their woodlots, which were depleted already from soldiers felling trees for military purposes. The actions taken by soldiers toward fence rails and other farm structures within Jefferson County reflected the larger targeting of agricultural components within the Shenandoah Valley. In a letter to his mother, Sarah Bearss Lindsley, Marvin W. Lindsley of the 1st New York Dragoons described how his regiment participated in the burning of barns within the Shenandoah Valley. Lindsley justified his regiment’s actions as being part of a military strategy to limit Confederate soldiers from gaining access to needed grain. The soldiers’ requisitioning of fence rails represented a significant financial and agricultural loss for Jefferson County farmers.592

Soldiers used fence rails for a number of purposes, including fuel and defensive fortifications. Allen L. Peck credited the lack of fencing around Harper’s Ferry to military actions as “the army burns hundreds of cords of wood a day.”593 As Lt. John Mead Gould marched up the Shenandoah Valley in the spring of 1863, he observed the lack of fencing throughout the countryside. Gould associated the act of taking fences with the interruption of basic agricultural practices. Noting that “Virginia rail fences have furnished fire wood for the thousands of soldiers during the past winter,” Gould described how “cattle and hogs are rooting at their pleasure over ground that might be

592 Baylor, 85; and Marvin W. Lindsley to Sarah Bearrs Lindsley, October 18, 1864, and Marvin W. Lindsley Letters, 1864, Accession 42190, LV.

593 Allen L. Peck to “Wife and Children,” October 29, 1862, Allen L. Peck Correspondence, 1862-1863, OCLC 16390559, DMR.
productive otherwise.” Gould concluded that these actions left Jefferson County’s farmlands “in a sad state of neglect or ruin in many places.”\(^{594}\) Farmers also experienced the loss of fences when soldiers utilized the rails for protective measures. During a skirmish between the Vermont Brigade and Confederate soldiers near Charlestown in late August 1864, the Vermont men “hastily collected rails,” using them “for feeble breastworks.”\(^{595}\) Upon encountering a group of Mosby’s Rangers near Kabletown in August 1864, Richard Blazer’s cavalrmen proceeded to take down a nearby fence and create a defensive position. The continual loss of fences led Charlestown resident Charles Aglionby to remark in January 1863 that is was “hard to keep the fences up whilst the armies were about so much.”\(^{596}\) In the post-war period, farmers would have decisions to make regarding their farms and its components.\(^{597}\)

Jefferson County residents continually protested soldiers taking their crops, livestock, and fences, especially when not offered any monetary compensation or compassion for their losses. While inhabitants sometimes brought their complaints before military commanders through an outward demonstration of displeasure. The growing presence of Union soldiers in the vicinity of Harper’s Ferry in July 1861 contributed to an increased confiscation of chickens. Despite protests to Union officers regarding the action of their soldiers, farmers did not receive any form of compensation.

\(^{594}\) Jordan, 122.


\(^{596}\) Aglionby, 17.

\(^{597}\) Munson, 119.
for these losses. Officers from the 3rd Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry received multiple grievances regarding the actions of their soldiers. Charlestown inhabitants complained to the officers that “their geese, turkeys and chickens [had] disappeared.” Regimental historian, Adjt. Edwin E. Bryant, wrote of these complaints, “but so it was, everywhere that soldiers marched a great mortality prevailed among poultry, pigs and sheep.” Moreover, officers of the 3rd Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry heard protests from “one well-to-do farmer” who objected to soldiers taking his corn and grain “as he had a large number of negroes dependent on him for support.” After losing some fence rails, a Harper’s Ferry planter asked an officer from the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry, “Isn’t it hard for me to lose my fences?” The officer retorted, “Yes; but it would be a good deal harder for my men to be cold.” Although a number of Jefferson County farmers encountered agricultural losses during the war, those who remained in the region attempted to maintain their farms despite these disruptions.

Despite the continual skirmishing, marching, and encamping within Jefferson County and the related damage agricultural landscape that occurred, some planters continued cultivating their farms throughout the war. While touring the countryside surrounding Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, one soldier wrote to his father that, “It is very rocky and mountainous all about here --- but a little back it is very fair country ---

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598 Bryant, History of the Third Regiment, 40-41.

599 Ibid., 41.

600 Quint, Record of the Second, 149.

601 Wellman, 42, 44.
raising splendid crops of wheat and producing the finest varieties of fruit.” Farmers planted the same crops during the conflict as they had in the pre-war period. Agriculturalists experienced difficulties, however, in sustaining their pre-war farming practices and production levels as they sometimes experienced labor shortages and the loss of crops. A smaller number of agricultural laborers prevented farmers from cultivating the same size tracts that they had in the antebellum period. The war also served as a deterrent to maintaining regular planting and harvesting schedules as skirmishes sometimes delayed these tasks. Since the cultivation process for some crops, such as wheat, was temperamental, any interruptions within the planting or harvesting process could lead to the loss of an entire harvest. The lack of agricultural management sometimes led farms to leave their farm lands fallow and thus the ecological composition of the fields transformed to comprise of different vegetation, including weeds. As soldiers traveled through Jefferson County’s countryside, they commented on the beauty and fertility of area farms.

Recognizing the richness of area farms and orchards, Civil War soldiers included within their correspondence descriptions of Jefferson County farms. Marching toward Charlestown in March 1862, Josiah C. Williams pronounced the passing scenery as being “the prettiest country of beautiful farms and such that I have been through since

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602 Hughes, 176.

603 Sutherland, Seasons of War, 123; Mannion, 178; Davis, Colten, Nelson, Allen, and Saikku, 149-150; Lisa M. Brady, “Devouring the Land: Sherman’s 1864-1865 Campaigns,” in War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age, ed. Charles E. Closmann (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 50; and Ashby, 304-305.
leaving.” 604 While encamped in Jefferson County after the 1862 Maryland campaign, Gen. Jeb Stuart’s staff encamped nearby at Col. Braxton Davenport’s plantation. Heros Von Borcke described the farm as consisting of “orchards prodigal of the peach and the apple; a little removed from which were large stables and granaries, and all around an amplitude of rich, cultivated fields, with a background in the distant landscape of dense forests of oak and hickory.” Von Borcke also visited several neighboring plantations, which he depicted as being “almost without exception” farms that were “large, fertile, and beautiful.” 605 C. B. Wells, who served in Company F of the 5th Connecticut Volunteers, designated Jefferson County farms as being “a splendid farming section, producing chiefly most excellent wheat…” 606 Soldiers also referenced the attempts of local planters to maintain their farms.

Despite the ongoing conflict, soldiers realized that Jefferson County farmers attempted to maintain a sense of agricultural normalcy amidst the surrounding chaos. When bivouacking near a Charlestown farm, Jefferson County citizen-soldier William Lyne Wilson noted that “there was plenty of corn” at the farm. 607 In early March 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck witnessed “farmers in long lines hauling ga. [grain] to the [rail] cars.” While some planters attempted to transport their harvests to external markets, Van Vleck also found that “in some places around us corn is still ungathered; crops not for

604 Josiah C. Williams to Julia Edistina Williams, March 2, 1862, Box 1, Folder 11, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302, OM 0407, IHS.

605 Von Borcke, 260-261, 264.

606 Marvin, 69.

607 Summers, Borderland Confederate, 19.
want of reapers.” Encamped near Shepherdstown in July 1864, Jacob Lester of the 1st Veterans New York Cavalry observed that farmers recently completed “haying and are cutting their wheat. Hay, Straw, and Cornstacks all makes good feed for cattle in the winter.” During a skirmish near Charlestown in August 1864, as Confederate forces proceeded toward the Union line they traversed through a field of corn that almost completely hid the advancing soldiers. When traveling near Shepherdstown in the latter months of 1864, James E. Taylor came upon “a region of high rolling farm land partly in cultivation.” Although soldiers indicated that Jefferson County farmers attempted to maintain their farms during the war, these wartime depictions did not detail the ongoing agricultural struggles that planters encountered.

The examination of the agricultural journals of two Jefferson County farmers, Charles Aglionby and James Lawrence Hooff, demonstrates the contrasting experiences that these planters encountered during the war. Located on the outskirts of Charlestown, Hooff kept extensive records regarding his Sunnyside farm. At the beginning of the war, Hoff maintained his normal agricultural regimen. On May 10, 1861, Hoff started “planting corn & ploughing this morning,” but a persistent rainfall prevented Hoff and

608 Arthur L. Van Vleck diary, March 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck Diary, 1862-1863, Collection no. 00738-z, SHC.

609 Jacob Lester to Lucy Lester, July 1, 1864, Jacob Lester Civil War Letters, 1864-1865, A&M 1022, WVRHC.

610 Taylor, With Sheridan, 201.

his workers from completing their work until later in the day. Hooff’s entries often
detailed the daily agricultural chores that he and his slaves accomplished, including the
mowing of hay, thinning of the corn crop, hauling manure, butchering hogs, and cutting
wheat. Even after Hooff enlisted in the Confederate army on July 6, 1861, his wife Anna
continued tending to the farm and maintaining the agricultural diary. Hooff
intermittently returned to his farm during the war, resuming the chore of entering
accounts in the agricultural journal and overseeing his farm. Besides owning several
slaves, the Hooffs also hired temporary workers to help accomplish agricultural tasks,
particularly in early July as they needed extra hands to harvest wheat. After harvesting
the wheat, Hooff sent his harvest to James Roper’s flour mill to be ground into flour.
The Hooffs maintained their farm without any military disturbance until March
1862 when Anna mentioned the initial appearance of Federal soldiers at their homestead.
On March 6, 1862, Ann Hooff noted that while passing by their farm, two Union soldiers
stopped at the barn, “shot a hen & carried it off.” Two days later, the Hooff farm again
provided provisions to the Federal army as Anna indicated that more soldiers visited the
farm, resulting in “one sheep killed & carried off.” On March 10, 1862, Ann Hooff
wrote that Federal soldiers had started causing structural damage to the farm as her
workers were “putting up fences as everything was left open.” Besides the loss of

612 James Lawrence Hooff diary, May 10, 1861, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
613 James Lawrence Hooff diary, July 1, 1862; July 2, 1862; October 27, 1862; James Lawrence
Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
614 James Lawrence Hooff diary, March 6, 1862; March 8, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary,
typescript, JCHS.
615 James Lawrence Hooff diary, March 10, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
livestock and damage to their fences, the Hooff family also encountered the loss of several slaves throughout the war. Anna wrote on August 13, 1862, that “Federal soldiers came & took Jim—intended taking more, but I went down & begged them off.”\textsuperscript{616} Jim returned to the farm on September 16, 1862 after the Confederates took control of Harper’s Ferry. In late March 1863, Union soldiers attempted to convince one of the Hooff’s rented slaves, John, to leave the farm so that he could “go to the Ferry & wait on them.”\textsuperscript{617} In spite of this overture, John remained at the farm. Despite these various wartime interruptions, the Hooff farm endured throughout the conflict.\textsuperscript{618}

Whereas the Hooff farm suffered from the acts of soldiers, Charles Aglionby’s farms did not endure as much physical damage or foraging. Similar to the Hooff farm, Aglionby’s Mount Pleasant and Rockhill farms planted a diverse range of crops, including corn, oats, potatoes, and wheat. Aglionby also sowed clover and timothy in several of his fields, thus demonstrating his commitment to the rotation of crops.

Aglionby only mentioned soldiers damaging his Rockhill farm once within his day book. Located near Shepherdstown, Aglionby’s Rockhill farm incurred some damage during the Antietam campaign. Aglionby included a detailed list of this destruction within his day book, including three thousand fence rails, sheep, hogs, corn, and wheat. Aglionby estimated his losses to total $1,465. Although Aglionby’s farms remained relatively safe

\textsuperscript{616} James Lawrence Hooff diary, August 13, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

\textsuperscript{617} James Lawrence Hooff diary, January 2, 1863; March 31, 1863, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS. Beginning on January 2, 1863, Hooff rented John from a Mr. Lackland for the entire year.

\textsuperscript{618} James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 16, 1862; James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.
from soldiers foraging or destroying farming-related structures, he still encountered difficulties in maintaining a constant labor force. Between July 23, 1861, and April 10, 1862, Aglionby experienced the loss of ten slaves, including Ralf Madison Hall. Aglionby considered Hall to be one of his most reliable slaves at his Mount Pleasant farm, which was located outside of Charlestown. Similar to the Hooffs, several of Aglionby’s slaves returned in September 1862 after the Confederates captured Harper’s Ferry, including Hall. Hall remained at Mount Pleasant until May 24, 1863, when he and seven other slaves left. The wartime experiences and difficulties encountered on the Hooff and Aglionby farms mirrored the encounters of other Jefferson County farmers.\textsuperscript{619}

Similar to Hooff and Aglionby, other Jefferson County cultivators who remained on their farms attempted to continue farming in spite of the ongoing war. While campaigning in the Lower Shenandoah Valley, several area farmers who enlisted in the Confederate army temporarily absconded their military duties and returned home to tend to their farms. After planting or harvesting their crops, the soldier-farmer then returned to the army. Other planters, such as Franklin Osburn, remained at home and continued to farm throughout the war. Besides planting corn and wheat at his own farm, he also assisted his relative, Logan Osburn, with his farm. Both farmers incorporated scientific methods within their agricultural practices by purchasing lime for fertilizer. These cultivators also bought clover and timothy seeds, thereby suggesting that the men rotated their fields and planted timothy and clover for green manure. Shepherdstown farmer

\textsuperscript{619} Charles Aglionby day book, July 23, 1861; July 25, 1861; February 10, 1862; March 10, 1862; March 13, 1862; March 24, 1862; April 10, 1862; September 16, 1862; September 22, 1862; May 24, 1863; August 1, 1863; Charles Aglionby day book, typescript, JCHS.
David Billmyer also maintained his farm during the war. While conducting business at the Georgetown markets in May 1864, David Billmyer wrote home to his wife, Ellen, telling her that he expected to return shortly to their farm. Billmyer hoped that while away that “the boys are planting corn.” The planting of corn on Billmyer’s farm represented a continuation of pre-war agricultural practices as several pieces of correspondence indicate that Billmyer sold his surplus corn harvest at the Georgetown markets during the antebellum period. Although the Osburns and Billmyer farm maintained their pre-war agricultural practices, other Jefferson County farmers sometimes found it difficult to complete required farming chores with a smaller number of field hands.

The enlistment of white males and the absconding of African American slaves oftentimes made it difficult for Jefferson County farmers to maintain a consistent labor source. Henrietta Lee, the wife of Edmund Jennings Lee, received notification from C. T. Butler on July 28, 1862, that “I have paid all your harvest hands except Bramham. I paid him $5. I propose paying him $5 more in a few days.” Butler’s letter also notified Henrietta Lee that Butler had paid Hiram Waters twenty dollars for his services and Mrs.

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620 David Billmyer to Ellen Billmyer, May 6, 1864, Box 1, Folder 4, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR.

621 Theriault, 100; Franklin Osburn Account Book, October 1862; November 1862; Franklin Osburn Account Book, 1850-1874, Franklin Osburn Papers, 1849-1875, Mss1 Os15 a, VHS; Franklin Osburn Cashbook, March 22, 1862; April 18, 1862; Thornton Tayloe Perry Collection, Mss1 P4299 k, VHS; David Billmyer to Ellen Billmyer, June 2, 1853, Box 1, Folder 2, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR; David Billmyer to Ellen Billmyer, April 15, 1859, Box 1, Folder 3, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR; and David Billmyer to Ellen Billmyer, April 13, 1860, Box 1, Folder 4, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR.
Helen Boteler received $23.12 ½ for the hiring of her slaves. Franklin Osburn recorded in his account book that he paid George Newman, an African American laborer, for various agricultural tasks. Osburn typically compensated Newman fifty cents per day for his services. Entries within Osburn’s account book suggest that Osburn relied upon Newman as his primary laborer as his payment totals exceeded those of other workers. For example, Osburn noted on December 31, 1863, that he owed Newman $150 while he paid John and Ed, no last names given, sixty and forty dollars respectively. All three workers remained employed on Osburn’s farm the following year with each laborer receiving the same amount of compensation. Osburn also employed Jackson and Antony Newman during the war with both workers received the same annual wage as George Newman. Osburn also hired Elizabeth Ware’s two sons, Richard and Dicky, for agricultural work. Ware, who rented a house from Osburn, occasionally hired out her two sons to Osburn during harvest times. Both Ware brothers received payment from Osburn in July 1861 and then again in July 1862. Osburn’s records also include entries for several other seasonal workers that he employed throughout the war. Whereas Osburn relied upon a number of workers to perform agricultural tasks, Charles Aglionby primarily used slave labor on his farms. According to the 1860 slave schedule, Aglionby owned twenty-one slaves. However, Aglionby reported that the majority of his slaves ran away to Union-controlled Harper’s Ferry in March and April 1862. Although several of

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Aglionby’s slaves returned to his farm in September 1862, his slaves only remained for eight months before absconding again. The departure of Aglionby’s slaves led his family and other hired workers to tend to the Mount Pleasant farm. Despite the struggles to maintain their farms and labor source, some Jefferson County farmers still attempted to earn a profit from their harvests.623

Throughout the war, Jefferson County planters sought to sell their surplus crops to both armies or at market. Henry St. John Shepherd received a letter on December 9, 1861, in which Shepherd received notification that despite an unidentified retailer’s attempt to sell his pork, the merchant “could not get over eight dollars offered.”624 While Shepherd failed to unload his pork, Samuel Knott successfully sold a substantial amount of his wheat to the Union army in the spring of 1863. While commanding the Union garrison at Harper’s Ferry in 1864, Brig. Gen. Max Weber allowed loyal Jefferson County farmers to travel to town once per week to barter their goods for needed provisions. In November 1864, Virginia H. Engle wrote to her husband, Jacob, informing him that neighboring farmers “are all buisey [sic] selling wheat and corn for fear the vandals will burn it.”625 Loyal to the Confederate cause, James Lawrence Hooff


624 Unknown to H. St. J. Shepherd, December 9, 1861, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA.

625 Quoted in Theriault, 101.
sold his harvest to the Confederate army during the war. On September 26, 1862, Hooff sold sixty bushels of oats to Confederate soldiers. The following day, Hooff wrote that “Jim & Mason drove the cattle to town I sold to the government.” Although Hooff’s entry did not indicate to which government he sold his cattle, the Confederate army controlled Charlestown in late September 1862. Charles Aglionby also made several agricultural transactions during the war, including the selling of 1,541 pounds of meat on September 12, 1862 to Confederate Quartermaster Mangum. On November 12, 1862, Aglionby sold 550 pounds of hay to the 12th Virginia Cavalry. In spite of these financial opportunities, the ability to maintain normal agricultural practices and commercial relations throughout the war proved difficult for many Jefferson County farmers.

Throughout the Civil War, soldiers’ correspondence made specific references to the environmental and agricultural transformations wrought by the conflict. Writing near Martinsburg, Virginia, Brevet Major General Alvin C. Voris described the innumerable effects that war had upon the natural landscape. Voris asserted that “at every place where a camp has been made for any length of time the hand of destruction has fallen, leaving nothing but buildings & the native soil. Fences, hay, grain, crops in the ground, lumber, chickens & pigs have disappeared till the country surrounding the camp presents the appearance of waste. The dwellings & farm buildings are about the only indications left

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626 James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 27, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS.

627 Theriault, 101; Wellman, 130; James Lawrence Hooff diary, September 26, 1862, James Lawrence Hooff diary, typescript, JCHS; and Charles Aglionby day book, September 12, 1862; November 12, 1862, Charles Aglionby day book, typescript, JCHS. Farmers who traveled to Harper’s Ferry to barter their goods were required to take an oath stating the provisions obtained were only for family use.
of civilization.” Voris’ depiction highlights the different methods through which Union and Confederate soldiers transformed Jefferson County’s natural and agricultural landscapes. When accompany Gen. George McClellan at Harper’s Ferry in October 1862, Capt. David Hunter Strother referenced the lack of trees on Bolivar Heights, stating that “the whole hill was denuded of trees and covered with camps.” Voris’ and Strother’s comments demonstrate the transformation of the natural landscape surrounding Harper’s Ferry into a militarized landscape. Both armies sought to utilize the area’s natural resources and control the natural landscape. Through the daily warmaking activities of marching, encamping, and foraging, Civil War soldiers modified their natural surroundings to meet their military needs.

Although these natural changes occurred because of military necessity, soldiers still lamented about how wartime actions transformed the environment. Expressing admiration for the natural scenery before him, Cpl. Almon M. Graham of the 28th New York State Volunteers bemoaned that “yet how quickly this could be transformed from the quiet lovely scene now presented to my view to one of tumult and uproar.” Lt. Henry C. Lyon of the 34th New York believed the area around Charleston to be “splendid country,” but he also recognized the inevitable changes that would occur as a result of the conflict. Lyon despised the effects of war as he proclaimed the Lower Shenandoah

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629 Strother, Virginia Yankee, 122.

630 Almon M. Graham diary, September 25, 1862, Almon M. Graham Diaries, Mss A65-38, BECHS.
Valley “too beautiful to be ravaged by war.” Stationed at Harper’s Ferry at the beginning of the war, Maj. Francis B. Jones of the 2nd Virginia Infantry appreciated “the beauty of the scenes along the Potomac & Shenandoah.” Jones believed that “the high hills just above the Potomac are grand indeed & the view from there surpasses description.” Despite this praise, Jones stated that he and his fellow comrade, Tom Marshall, “mourned over what may be soon a desolate scene.” From the perspective of Chaplain Randolph H. McKim, Jones’ prediction came true. McKim concluded that “the valley of Virginia was for four years a constant battle ground. Up and down, all the way from Staunton to Shepherdstown, the two armies swept, till at the end it was reduced to a scene of desolation.” Jefferson County’s standing timber, which represented one of the most identifiable components and aesthetic values of the natural landscape, suffered a significant amount of damage during the war.

By the end of the Civil War, Jefferson County’s forests significantly dwindled in size. Prior to the conflict, the Federal Armory and Arsenal, as well as several iron works, harvested trees on the heights surrounding Harper’s Ferry for industrial purposes. While the Federal Armory and Arsenal utilized some of this forest, the area still possessed mature timber prior to the war. Once the war began, however, soldiers began clearing the mountaintops for fuel, breastworks, and shelter. Although soldiers modified the natural

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631 Lyon, 75.

632 Francis B. Jones to Cary Randolph Jones, June 3, 1861, Box 3, Folder 7, Francis B. Jones Family Collection, 1037 WFCHS, HRL.

633 Randolph H. McKim, A Soldier’s Recollections: Leaves from the Diary of a Young Confederate with an Oration on the Motives and Aims of the Soldiers of the South (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1910), 103-104.
landscape, the regenerative power of nature continued as a dense undergrowth emerged. Upon the Confederates’ withdrawal from Harper’s Ferry in June 1861, Captain John Newton described Maryland Heights as being “covered with a small growth of timber and brushwood, and is difficult of penetration.” Newton proposed however that “an easy defense could be made by cutting down the timber and brush across the summit…” Landowners who had preserved their woodlots prior to the war in order that they could later use their timber for fences or fuel saw their reserves become depleted through wartime actions. Writing to his fiancée, Mollie Long, Harrison Wells of the 13th Georgia detested the absence of trees along the Potomac River. He believed the area was “impaired by having too much cleared land in view.” The loss of timber represented a long-term impact of the war as it required a generation for the forests to regrow.

Soldiers also wrote about their foraging on Jefferson County farms and the agricultural transformations that occurred as a result of these actions. Soldiers pilfered livestock and crops from area farms often without providing cultivators with any form of compensation. Soldiers persistently foraged Jefferson County farms for sustenance, even taking undeveloped corn from fields that they passed. Farmers also lost livestock, including chickens, sheep, and pigs. Soldiers also procured horses for military purposes, which left planters void of an essential labor source. While there exists numerous


635 Harrison Wells to Mollie Long, October 10, 1862, Harrison Wells Papers, 1857-1869, 1905, Collection no. 05422, SHC.

636 Winter, “Civil War Fortifications,” 105, 127; and Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 48. Winter suggests that much of the timber on Maryland Heights was twenty-years-old as the last clear-cutting of the forest occurred approximately in 1840.
accounts detailing how Union and Confederate soldiers pilfered Jefferson County farms, at least one soldier complained about the lack of foodstuffs. In early September 1862, Capt. Edward H. Ripley of the 9th Vermont Infantry described Jefferson County as being “the poorest country to forage in…it is stripped bare.” Ripley continued that there was “no butter, no milk, no potatoes, nothing but an occasional ear of green corn to be bought, or ginger snaps in town.” Whether Ripley would be considered a picky eater is not known, but his comments regarding the lack of provisions contradicts the accounts of other soldiers who continually documented taking foodstuffs and livestock from county farms. Jefferson County planters not only endured financial losses from foraging, but those who remained on the home front also had to overcome a number of obstacles to continue cultivating their fields.

Jefferson County farmers who continued tending their farms during the war endured a number of difficulties, including a fluctuating labor source, damage to their farms, and the loss of draft animals. Area planters attempted to surmount these challenges even in the midst of war. Fearful of being shot by either side, James W. Engle recalled that he “had to harvest his wheat at night.” Charles Aglionby experienced a similar problem on his farm in July 1864. Planning on hauling in some hay on the morning of July 16, 1864, Aglionby discovered before he could begin this task that a skirmish broke out “all around the farm and some came through it.” Aglionby noted,

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638 Theriault, 102.
however, that he completed his chore later in the evening “after dinner.”

Aglionby also endured the loss of slaves on multiple occasions during the war, which limited his farm’s productivity. Although James Lawrence Hooff enlisted in the Confederate army, he still intermittently tended to his farm when possible. When Hooff was absent, his wife, Ann Hooff, oversaw their farm’s operations. By maintaining their farm, Ann Hooff ensured that her family farm would persevere after the war. Although the Hooffs and Aglionby encountered some difficulties while farming, not all Jefferson County farmers had the same experience.

While the Civil War transformed the agricultural landscape, these modifications represented temporary changes. Referring to the farmlands around Charlestown, Commissary Sgt. William T. Patterson noted in his diary on August 20, 1864, that “nowhere in this widely known valley is the country more beautiful [and] soil more prolific than here. So far as we can see delightful green; even fields are spread out before us, but this country with all [of] its beauty and fertility is all desolated with war.”

After being paroled, Shepherdstown native M. J. Billmyer began to make his way back to his hometown. Embarking from Waynesboro, Virginia, he observed during his travels that, “Although it was the time of year when farmers should have been busy plowing, hauling, or building fences, yet for over a hundred miles there was not one man at work that we saw, no sheep or cattle grazing on the hills. The fencing was destroyed, not a barn or mill was in sight.”

While some fields became fallow during the war and

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639 Aglionby, 19.

640 William T. Patterson diary, August 20, 1864, Vol. 502, June 21-November 6, 1864, OHS.
slowly converted to lands dotted with weeds, Jefferson County farmers were able reverse these ecological changes after the war. Farmers also needed to address the loss of livestock and the physical destruction of their agricultural property in the post-war period.642

The four years of continual skirmishing, encampments, and foraging transformed Jefferson County’s natural and agricultural landscape. The military targeting and repurposing of these ecological components interrupted nature, but it did not lead to the complete devastation of the environment or agriculture. Describing the wartime activities that took place on Maryland Heights, archaeologist Susan E. Winters argues that through the creation of defensive works and encampments, soldiers “molded into the existing landscape, using topography, geology, and cultural features to create, if only temporarily, a new landscape…”643 Furthermore, those who had enlisted, such as James Lawrence Hooff, returned to their farms and began replanting their fields. The regenerative powers of nature facilitated the regrowth of nature as undergrowth began to emerge where tall timber once stood. Many of the ecological modifications caused by the war would prove to be temporary transformations.

641 Hale, 513.

642 Sharrer, 46.

CHAPTER VIII

“THE CONDITION OF OUR BORDER IS BECOMING MORE ALARMING EVERY DAY”: THE SOCIAL CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE CIVIL WAR

Similar to the natural and agricultural landscape, the Civil War temporarily transformed Jefferson County’s social landscape. The melding of the battlefront and home front led soldiers and civilians to interact on a frequent basis. The co-mingling of these two groups began during John Brown’s Raid in 1859 and was bolstered with the outbreak of the conflict in April 1861. When Gen. Joseph E. Johnston decided to relinquish control of the Lower Shenandoah Valley in mid-June 1861, a group of Shepherdstown women crafted a petition requesting that Lt. Col. Turner Ashby be sent to region, along with additional Confederate forces, to protect Confederate supporters from becoming the victims of Union transgression. In their petition, the women expressed concern for “our lives & property,” believing that both were “in great danger from the enemy on the Maryland shore.”644 Women from several prominent families signed the application, including the Botelers, Lees, Billmyers, Andrews, and Robinsons. Each of the women who signed the petition challenged the traditionally accepted gender roles that

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644 “Petition Letter from Ladies of Shepherdstown, 1861” Box 1, Folder 1, Ashby Family Letters, 1852-1863, SC no. 2087, JMSC.
disapproved of women entering the public sphere and becoming involved within political matters. Several months after this request, Alexander Boteler wrote to Confederate Secretary of State, R. M. T. Hunter, also urging for increased military protection. “The condition of our border is becoming more alarming every day. No night passes without some infamous outrage upon our loyal citizens,” wrote Boteler. Boteler attempted to strengthen his argument by telling Hunter that “the river counties of Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan…are infested with traitors.”

While a significant portion of Jefferson County’s population supported the Confederacy, Union supporters still resided in the region. Abraham Stipp of the 3rd Maryland Volunteer wrote to Helen L. Shell of Shepherdstown on April 12, 1863, telling her “I am very sorry that the loyal people of your town have no protection.” In June 1862, John W. Lawrence expressed concern for his daughter, Caroline Bedinger, who lived in Shepherdstown. Having been raised in New York before moving to Shepherdstown, Bedinger supported the Union. Therefore, Lawrence believed that once Union picket lines fell back and Confederate forces regained control of the town, her presence within the town would become “the cause of my anxiety” as long as his daughter remained within this “disputed territory.” The continual presence of Union and Confederate soldiers within Jefferson County throughout the war led to consternation.

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645 O.R. Series 1, vol. 5, 919.

646 Abraham Stipp to Helen L. Shell, April 12, 1863, Helen L. Shell Papers, 1858-1879, OCLC 20314159, DMR.

647 John W. Lawrence to Caroline Bedinger, June 3, 1863, Box 5, Folder 1, Bedinger-Dandridge Family Papers, 1752-1950, OCLC 19491161, DMR.
for many residents. The creation of a militarized landscape within Jefferson County transformed the social landscape as the presence of the military disrupted daily human interactions, restructured traditionally accepted gender roles, and led to contestation over the separation of the public and private spheres.

The daily warmaking of marching, encamping, foraging, and overall military occupation created a contested social landscape within this borderland community. Although citizens attempted to maintain their daily living schedules, soldiers often disrupted these plans as demonstrated by soldiers foraging on Jefferson County farms. The taking of crops and livestock made it difficult for farmers to provide adequate sustenance for their families. Furthermore, the recurring military occupation forced civilians to negotiate with soldiers from both armies. Local lore suggests that the postmaster of Shepherdstown, Elias Baker, sent his daughter, Kate, every day to determine which army was in control so “he might wear the uniform of the day.”

Ironically, although Baker supported the Union, his son, Newton Diehl Baker, enlisted in the Confederate army with the 1st Virginia Cavalry. Rev. Charles W. Andrews of the Trinity Episcopal Church in Shepherdstown, also noted the transitory nature of the region. Andrews remarked that “Federal officers and soldiers might be present at the religious services on one Sunday, and Confederates the Sunday afterward.” During the Civil War, Union forces dubbed Harper’s Ferry as “Harper’s Weekly” since the town

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648 Hartzell, 61.

changed hands on multiple occasions. Every Jefferson County community felt the ravages of the ongoing military occupation, thereby preventing residents from recovering from the effects of the war until after the conclusion of the conflict. The merging of the home front and battlefront contributed to a number of changes upon Jefferson County’s social landscape.

The outbreak of the war led to several demographic changes, including that many Jefferson County residents became transient. The constant back-and-forth struggle between the Union and Confederate armies during the first two years of the conflict, forced inhabitants repeatedly to leave their homes. When the Union army maintained control of the region, Unionists remained in the county and Confederate supporters relocated. Conversely, when the Confederate army took control of the area, Unionists moved and Confederate supporters remained in their homes. The proximity of the Maryland border allowed Unionists to cross the Potomac River easily when Confederate soldiers entered the area and then return when Federal forces once again controlled the region. The ability to migrate between Union and Confederate territory allowed borderland residents greater mobility than Unionist supporters who lived in other sections of the Confederacy. The continual movement of county inhabitants oftentimes significantly decreased a town’s population, especially in Harper’s Ferry. Regardless of one’s loyalties, the continual presence of Union and Confederate soldiers within the area

650 Paul G. Zeller, Second Vermont, 211; George E. Pond, The Shenandoah Valley in 1864 (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1883), 136; and Horton, 85. The Union and Confederate armies exchanged control of Harper’s Ferry on eight separate occasions during the war.

often frustrated county inhabitants. In addition to these demographic changes, Union control of Harper’s Ferry encouraged former African American slaves to flee their masters and relocate to the town. Slaves not only from Jefferson County, but also from surrounding areas descended upon Harper’s Ferry. The Union army used the labor of these freed African Americans to help with the Federal war effort at their Harper’s Ferry supply depot. The interaction of soldiers and citizens during the conflict often led to a contested relationship between the two parties.652

Engaged in a contested relationship, both soldiers and citizens sought to control the public and private spheres. The melding of the battlefront and home front forced residents and soldiers to interact on multiple levels. Relations between combatants and inhabitants varied, often stemming from the political allegiances held by the residents and the interacting military force. Whereas Confederate soldiers oftentimes received warm ovations from Jefferson County citizens, Union forces were less likely to receive a similar response. Soldiers often wrote about their encounters with female inhabitants. Soldiers’ description of these women ranged from flattering depictions to condemning the women for challenging socially accepted gender roles. While some women engaged the soldiers in friendly conversation, others made disparaging remarks toward the men. Whereas, female residents who supported the Confederacy often expressed admiration and respect for Confederate troops, these same women barraged Union soldiers with sharp language. Residents and soldiers also interacted within the public sphere through

ceremonial gatherings. As soldiers encamped or passed through the region, women presented soldiers with homemade flags or other memorabilia as a tribute to their willingness to sacrifice for their specific cause. While the majority of public demonstrations were held in honor of Confederate troops, there were several examples of Union women celebrating the arrival of Federal soldiers. These nationalistic displays were intended to increase the level of patriotism throughout the community, but women also used these events to participate within the public sphere. While these public gatherings occurred in other communities, these wartime experiences occurred more frequently since Jefferson County remained occupied throughout the conflict. Soldiers also attempted to control the private sphere through the implementation of military passes and military imprisonment. Soldiers restricted the movement of Jefferson County residents and forced inhabitants to either concede to their military power or remain confined. Soldiers also transformed the private sphere by repurposing private institutions and homes for military purposes.

Similar to the negotiations over public space, the contested relationship for private space related to one’s political allegiances and the military force that proposed to convert this space. Despite the protests of county residents, some soldiers attempted to repurpose private homes and churches into militarized spaces. Soldiers used these private areas not only for their benefit, but sometimes even for their horses. County inhabitants proved

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more agreeable to allow the conversion of homes and businesses into hospitals as residents did not perceive these actions as a violation of their personal space. Rather, residents willingly opened their doors to take care of the sick and wounded. Soldiers and citizens also sparred over the taking of goods from private residences. Residents protested the invasion of their homes as soldiers conducted searches for illegal goods or provisions that could be utilized by enemy forces. Even when civilians received financial compensation for their confiscated property, soldiers did not always adhere to this conciliatory policy. Interactions between soldiers and residents sometimes could become confrontational, especially when soldiers believed that inhabitants attempted to poison or harm them. Although the number of cases remained limited, there also existed several instances of Union soldiers setting fire to private residences. These conflagrations represented the most extreme violation of private space that occurred within Jefferson County.654

Similar to other counties throughout the Union and Confederacy, the Civil War contributed to a wide-range of population changes within Jefferson County. The enlistment of Jefferson County males within the Confederate army signified one of the principal means through which the war initially altered the county’s demographic

654 Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*, 20-21, 66, 75; Royster, 37; Nelson, *Ruin Nation*, 62; Revels, 110; Reid Mitchell, *The Vacant Chair: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 101; and Massey, 234. Nelson asserts that the destruction of private homes was associated with an attack upon the female body since women controlled the domestic sphere. Henrietta Bedinger Lee’s letter to General David Hunter demonstrates Nelson’s argument of a gendered attack as she questions why he would attack a “helpless woman.” While the Union assaults upon private homes violated the private space of women, the homes set ablaze in Jefferson County were also associated with prominent men within the community. See Henrietta Bedinger Lee to David Hunter, July 20, 1864, Section 1, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, 1861-ca. 1960s, Mss1 P4299 i 1-35, VHS.
composition. Men from every Jefferson County community eagerly joined at the beginning of the war with 394 volunteers enlisting in several Confederate regiments. Despite the military fervor within the county, James B. Craighill, whose family resided in Charlestown, did not immediately enlist. Spending a few days at his father’s house changed this situation, however, as Craighill believed that “I simply could not remain there and retain my self respect [sic]. All of my young associates had enlisted, and the conviction was soon forced upon me that I must do as they had done or my own mother and sisters would despise me.”655 The social and familial pressure felt by Craighill led him to enlist with the Botts Grey, Company G of the 2nd Virginia Infantry. The draft law of April 1862 led to an additional 627 Jefferson County men to join the Confederate army. In total, an estimated 1,600 Jefferson County males served in the Confederate army. Comparing this estimate with the 1860 census, this total represents sixty-six percent of the white male population between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine. Whereas several men from neighboring Berkeley County crossed over the Potomac River into Williamsport, Maryland and enlisted in a Union regiment, Jefferson County did not organize any Union companies or regiments. Although no Union units were mustered in the county, there were several individuals who enlisted in the Union army, such as Samuel L. Merchant and Joseph N. Gonter. Both men originated from Jefferson County, but both enlisted with the 1st West Virginia Infantry. Merchant joined the regiment on

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September 17, 1861, while Gonter waited until later in the war to enlist, joining the regiment on February 23, 1864, at Wheeling, West Virginia. 656

Jefferson County men joined several Confederate infantry and artillery units. The 2nd Virginia Infantry contained the largest contingency of enlisted men from Jefferson County communities. Jefferson County men filled the regimental roles of several companies, including Company A (Jefferson Guards: Charlestown); Company B (Hamtramck Guards: Shepherdstown); Company H (Letcher Riflemen: Duffields); and Company K (Floyd Guards: Harper’s Ferry). In addition, Company G, also referred to as Botts Grey, was under the direction of Jefferson County native, Capt. Lawson Botts. Botts served as John Brown’s defense attorney prior to the war. David Humphreys, who lived in Charlestown before the war and later served with Ashby’s Cavalry, described the men who comprised Botts Grey as “well-to-do and many of them wealthy.” 657 Other Jefferson County residents who enlisted in the Botts Grey included James Lawrence Hooff and John Yates Beall, who was later hanged as a spy. Jefferson County residents also served in the Rockbridge Artillery and Chew’s Battery. Alexander R. Boteler’s son, Alexander Robinson Boteler, along with two cousins, Henry and Charles Boteler of Shepherdstown, joined the Rockbridge artillery unit. Fourteen men from Jefferson


County served under Roger Preston Chew, who originated from Kabletown, in Chew’s Battery. The presence of a genteel horse within Jefferson County also led men to enlist in several Confederate cavalry units.\textsuperscript{658}

Men from prominent Jefferson County families filled the rosters of different Virginia cavalry regiments. The 12\textsuperscript{th} Virginia Cavalry received a number of men from Charlestown, particularly in Company B under Robert W. Baylor. Known as the Baylor Light Horse, Jacob Engle, Bushrod Corbin Washington, and William Lyne Wilson joined Company B. One historian characterized the enlisted men in Company B as generally under the age of twenty-five with some being college graduates. Besides possessing an educational background, “they generally belonged to the upper-crust yeomanry of their respective communities. Each volunteer brought his own horse and many their arms and equipment.”\textsuperscript{659} Enlisted cavalryman, George Baylor, also added about his fellow comrades that many came from farming families, thus suggesting that many already possessed a familiarity with horses. Jefferson County men also joined John L. Knott’s unity, Company D of the 12\textsuperscript{th} Virginia Cavalry. John N. Opie, whose family originated from Jefferson County, described Company D of the 12\textsuperscript{th} Virginia Cavalry as being “sons of wealthy parents, and were well educated.” Opie also considered the men to be “the finest riders I ever saw.”\textsuperscript{660} The 1\textsuperscript{st} Virginia Cavalry also contained a number of men


\textsuperscript{659} Summers, \textit{Borderland Confederate}, 8.

\textsuperscript{660} Opie, 93.
from Jefferson County. Approximately sixty-seven men from Jefferson County served with this cavalry unit, including DeWitt Clinton Gallaher and Robert Rion Lucas from Shepherdstown. Besides these cavalry regiments, Jefferson County men were represented in the 6th Virginia Cavalry with sixteen cavalymen and twelve volunteers enlisted with the 7th Virginia Cavalry, including Edmund Jennings Lee III and John D. Starry. Although Jefferson County men did not represent a large contingency in Mosby’s Rangers, several men did join the group, including Lt. Adolphus E. Richards, John H. Bishop, John W. Locke, and James T. Williams. The enlistment of these Jefferson County men temporarily altered the region’s gender balance, leaving women, children, and the elderly behind to maintain the households and farms. Furthermore, those who remained at home had to deal with the realities of war, including potential threats to their homes. Faced with these fears, some residents decided to temporarily relocate, thereby leaving communities with minimal occupants. Those who remained in Jefferson County were forced to negotiate with occupying forces, even if these soldiers held different allegiances than county inhabitants.661

Jefferson County’s population constantly fluctuated during the war, particularly in Harper’s Ferry. Prior to the conflict, an estimated three thousand people lived in Harper’s Ferry, but the town’s population dramatically declined with the burning of the Federal Armory and Arsenal in April 1861. The loss of their jobs forced former Armory

workers to relocate in search of employment. Writing to his father, Samuel Marsteller, on May 30, 1861, Le Claire A. Marsteller of the 4th Virginia Infantry reported from Harper’s Ferry “there was a family of Marstellers living here (Mechanics) but since this excitement commenced they moved to Sharpsburg Md…” Marsteller’s mentioning the term “mechanics,” suggests that perhaps some members of this family worked at the Federal Armory and Arsenal, but relocated due to loss of employment. In addition to the out-migration of armory workers, some Unionist families packed up and headed northward at the beginning of the war. In June 1861, St. William Harris Clayton of the 7th Georgia Volunteers commented that there were “very few Ladies in the town.” Besides noting the absence of women, a North Carolinian soldier remarked that “most of the respectable families had fled” from the town. When war correspondent William Howard Russell visited Harper’s Ferry in August 1861, he noted that only a “few Union inhabitants” remained in their homes. He also indicated that “many of the Government workmen and most of the inhabitants have gone off South.” Town resident, Joseph Barry, observed that by the winter of 1861-1862, “all the inhabitants had fled, except a few old people, who ventured to remain and protect their homes, or who were unable or unwilling to leave the place and seek new associations.”

662 Le Claire A. Marsteller to Samuel Marsteller, May 30, 1861, Folder 2, Samuel Arell Marsteller Papers, 1783-1865, OCLC 20030125, DMR.
663 William Harris Clayton to “Mother,” June 13, 1861, Section 2, Clayton Family Papers, 1852-1865, Mss1 C5796 a, VHS.
664 Crites, 16.
665 Russell, My Diary, 496.
666 Barry, 121.
remained skeletal even after the Union army increased their presence in the spring of 1862 as residents perceived their arrival as a mere continuation of military occupation.\textsuperscript{667}

The number of residents in Harper’s Ferry, as well as the populations of the neighboring communities of Camp Hill and Bolivar, remained relatively small during the second year of the war. When searching for officer’s quarters in March 1862, Col. John Mead Gould found few inhabitants. “There was scarcely a citizen or nigger in the town, and the few that I saw, were standing around with the most expressionless countenance,” wrote Gould.\textsuperscript{668} When traveling through the area in late February 1862, Lt. Josiah C. Williams recorded that he only saw “12 families.” Williams attributed the small population to abysmal living conditions as “all around is desolation.”\textsuperscript{669} Annie Marmion, whose father Dr. Nicholas Marmion continued his practice by administering to sick and wounded soldiers, described her hometown as having become a “war scarred hamlet.”\textsuperscript{670} Van R. Willard of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Wisconsin Badgers described the settlement of Camp Hill in February 1862 as consisting “of only a few buildings, which were completely deserted.” Willard characterized the town of Bolivar in comparable terms, depicting the settlement as “a neat little town but was at that time nearly deserted, eight families being all that

\begin{footnotes}
\item[667] Ibid., 6, 106.
\item[668] Jordan, 109-110.
\item[669] Josiah C. Williams to Julia Edistina Williams, March 2, 1862, Box 1, Folder 11, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302, OM 0407, IHS. Williams claimed in his correspondence that the town once had a population of “some 6,000” people.
\end{footnotes}
remained.”  Besides the loss of employment and the military struggle to control the region, the ever-present risk of being attacked led those who remained to be prepared for a quick departure.

The threat of physical attacks upon Harper’s Ferry also contributed to the transient nature of the town’s population. In June 1861, Col. Stonewall Jackson suggested that “a great number of families have left their homes” as they feared that Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson’s men would soon occupy the town. After Confederate troops issued a proclamation on October 17, 1861, which instructed “women and children” to vacate the town by the next day “as the place will be burned,” Ward-master Lauramann Howe Russell of the 13th Massachusetts Volunteers reported that “many are coming across with their families and goods.” Russell wrote to his daughter, Serena Ellen Russell, two days later, telling her that although the Confederates had not carried out their threat that “the folks are still moving over to this side and leaving all their property behind.” The Confederates’ assault on Harper’s Ferry in September 1862 and July 1864 further contributed to the town’s decreasing population. As Lt. Gen. Jubal Early’s forces marched toward Washington, D.C. in July 1864, they led an assault on Union-

671 Willard, 45.

672 Marmion, 4.


674 Lauramann Howe Russell to Serena Ellen Russell, October 17, 1861, Lauramann Howe Russell Papers, 1860-1864, OCLC 20273078, DMR.

675 Lauramann Howe Russell to Serena Ellen Russell, October 19, 1861, Lauramann Howe Russell Papers, 1860-1864, OCLC 20273078, DMR.

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controlled Harper’s Ferry. The Federals vacated their position and retreated to the heights surrounding the town. Before bombarding the town, Major General Franz Sigel instructed any remaining townspeople to leave so they would be injured during the bombardment. Similar to Harper’s Ferry, other Jefferson County communities also experienced population losses during the war.676

Like many southern communities, both Charlestown and Shepherdstown endured a population decline during the war. A number of Charlestown males enlisted in the Confederate army, leaving the town largely absent of adult males by the middle of the war. The occupation of Charlestown by Union troops in the spring of 1862 led Cornelia Peake McDonald of Winchester to request that her step-daughter, Mary Naylor McDonald Green, and her children relocate to Winchester with her. In March 1862, Lt. Josiah C. Williams of the 27th Indiana Infantry observed that while Charlestown was “well filled with Union soldiers,” he noticed “few citizens.”677 Charlestown’s population remained minimal as when the 115th New York Volunteers entered the town in early September 1862, “not a person was to be seen in the street, although crowds of women and children swarmed at every window.”678 Writing from “Camp Charlestown” in late August 1864, Dr. J. T. Webb of the 23rd Ohio Infantry noted the absence of any adult

676 Engle, 206.

677 Josiah C. Williams to Julia Edistina Williams, March 2, 1862, Box 1, Folder 11, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302, OM 0407, IHS.

678 Clark, Iron Hearted Regiment, 6.
males in the town. Instead, Webb only found “women and children and a few old men.”

Similar to Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown, Shepherdstown also experienced a transient population.

Located along the Potomac River and Boteler’s Ford, Shepherdstown’s geographic accessibility allowed its residents to cross the waterway easily, especially when armed forces occupied the area. After traversing the river, townspeople could temporarily reside in the surrounding communities of Sharpsburg, Hagerstown, or Frederick, Maryland. For example, an unidentified Shepherdstown resident indicated in their diary on March 26, 1864, that “William Marmaduke last week moved back to Virginia from Maryland.” This accessibility to Maryland proved to be beneficial to town residents on multiple occasions. When Gen. Stonewall Jackson forced Union troops to retreat from Winchester, Virginia, in late May 1862, Unionists living in Shepherdstown followed the Federal forces as they crossed the Potomac River. Townspeople once again left their homes in September 1862 as Union artillery fired shells on retreating Confederate forces. Some of the shelling landed within town, thus forcing people to vacate their homes. Shepherdstown resident Mary Bedinger Mitchell described the chaotic scene that ensued as people “rushed from their houses with their families and household goods to make their way into the country.” Mitchell noted that

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679 Williams, 500.

680 Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration, 200; Cornelia Peake McDonald, A Woman’s Civil War: A Diary with the Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862, ed. Minrose C. Gwin (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 42.

681 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, March 26, 1864, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.
not only whites fled from this carnage, but African Americans “swarmed into the fields, carrying their babies, their clothes, their pots and kettles, fleeing from the wrath behind them.” The fleeing inhabitants encountered roads already filled with the retreating Confederate soldiers, artillery, and ambulances. This confusion led to everyone becoming “all mingled…in one struggling, shouting mass.”682 Although the Union barrage forced residents to leave their homes temporarily, townspeople returned shortly thereafter. The military occupation of Shepherdstown led several residents to contemplate leaving. In February 1862, Ann Hammond urged Sarah Ellen Spong Billmyer to abandon the town as soon as possible. Hammond hoped that Billmyer’s relocation would allow her friend to become “more remote from your enemies” and be “relieved from the frequent and sudden alarms of danger that have been a source of annoyance to you for several months.”683 George Rust Bedinger advised his sister, Virginia Bedinger, in August 1862 to remain in Lexington, Virginia, rather than return to Shepherdstown as rumors suggested that Union forces had threatened “to burn the old village.”684 As both armies struggled to maintain control of the region, this situation forced Jefferson County residents to remain vigilant and prepared to flee at a moment’s


683 Ann Hammond to Sarah Ellen Spong Billmyer, February 17, 1862, Box 1, Folder 4, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR.

684 George Rust Bedinger to Virginia Bedinger, August 28, 1862, Box 4, Folder 7, Bedinger-Dandridge Family Papers, 1752-1950, OCLC 19491161, DMR.
notice. White residents were not the only inhabitants to endure this chaotic situation, as African Americans living in Jefferson County also encountered this transient lifestyle.⁶⁸⁵

Jefferson County’s population also experienced demographic changes due to the fleeing of African American slaves. As noted in chapter six, some county planters struggled to maintain their labor force. Slaveholders expressed concerns regarding the potential uprising of their slaves, as well as their slaves leaving them, during the early months of the war. Susan Lemen of Berkeley County wrote to Ellen Billmyer on May 6, 1861, in regards to Billmyer’s slaves. Although Lemen believed that “we do not fear anything from ours’,” she suggested that “it is different with you in Shepardstown [sic].”⁶⁸⁶ While Lemen does not provide specific information as to why Billmyer should be more fearful of her slaves, these apprehensions could relate to Brown’s attempt to incite a slave insurrection or previous incidents of fugitive slaves leaving their owners.

Jefferson County slaves started absconding once Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson occupied the region in July 1861. Charles Aglionby lost multiple slaves in March and April 1862, but they returned after Gen. Stonewall Jackson captured Harper’s Ferry in September 1862. Aglionby’s slaves did not stay for long, however, as several of the slaves once again fled in May 1863. Richard D. Washington also experienced the loss of twenty-six slaves throughout the war. Washington characterized the loss of his slaves as being “liberated by war.”⁶⁸⁷ A decline in the slave population altered Jefferson County’s social and

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⁶⁸⁵ Berkey, “In the Very Midst of the War,” 97; and Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, May 25, 1862, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.

⁶⁸⁶ Susan Lemen to Ellen Billmyer, May 6, 1861, Box 1, Folder 4, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR.

⁶⁸⁷ Geffert, Annotated Narrative, 44.
agricultural landscape as farmers and owners no longer could rely upon their slaves to cultivate their fields or maintain their homes.\textsuperscript{688}

The legal issues regarding contraband slaves in Jefferson County emerged early in the conflict. Before crossing over the Potomac River and occupying Jefferson County in June 1861, Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson issued an order on June 3, 1861, in which he instructed his men to “at once suppress servile insurrection.”\textsuperscript{689} Despite Patterson’s desire to avoid his troops from becoming involved in the slavery debate, slaves began escaping from their owners and attaching themselves to the Union army. Chaplain Alonzo H. Quint of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Massachusetts Infantry recounted an incident in July 1861 when “thirteen fugitive slaves had accompanied the army to Harper’s Ferry.” When the former slaveholders arrived to claim these fugitive slaves, “General Patterson ordered that the masters have all assistance. The fugitives were sent back to their rebel owners.”\textsuperscript{690} Despite Patterson’s directive, when asked by the Lucas family slaves “if anyone would prevent them from running away,” Col. Robert Gould Shaw informed these slaves that “a secessionist’s slaves could go where they pleased without hindrance from Northern armies.”\textsuperscript{691} Besides fleeing northward, some former African American slaves absconded to Union lines.\textsuperscript{692}

\textsuperscript{688} Wellman, 42; and Charles Aglionby day book, July 23, 1861; July 25, 1861; February 10, 1862; March 10, 1862; March 13, 1862; March 24, 1862; April 10, 1862; September 16, 1862; September 22, 1862; May 24, 1863; Charles Aglionby day book, typescript, JCHS.

\textsuperscript{689} O.R. Series 1, vol. 2, 661-662.

\textsuperscript{690} Quint, Record of the Second, 39.

\textsuperscript{691} Duncan, Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune, 116.

\textsuperscript{692} Berkey, “In the Very Midst of the War,” 91; and Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 110.
The influx of former slaves increased the temporary population of Harper’s Ferry. Arriving daily, Lt. John Mead Gould noted that some refugees traveled a long distance before reaching their destination. Those who made this long-distance trek entered the town “frightened to death and about used up for fatigue.” Besides bringing family members, some of the refugees also brought with them “their massa’s horses and teams,” but Gould noted that “the owners of these horses possessed the right to travel to Harpers Ferry and claim their livestock.” 693 As the number African Americans staying at Harper’s Ferry increased, Capt. David Hunter Strother suggested that their presence posed a logistical problem of “what was to be done with them.” The Union quartermaster in Harper’s Ferry solved the issue by detailing the “men to load and unload army stores.” 694 Many of these refugees traveled to Harper’s Ferry as the town served as a Union supply depot. Former slaves who entered Union lines at Charlestown oftentimes were arrested and sent to Harper’s Ferry as a labor source. Besides providing physical labor, former slaves also were impressed into labor to build fortifications, serve as cooks and laundresses, and work as teamsters for the Union army. Fugitive slaves continually arrived in Harper’s Ferry throughout 1861 and 1862. Ward-master Lauramann Howe Russell of the 13th Massachusetts Volunteers mentioned in October 1861 that “a coloured [sic] man and woman (slaves) ran away from their master and came into camp.” Russell estimated that after adding these two former slaves, “we have now I think eight runaway

693 Jordan, 120.

694 Strother, Virginia Yankee, 10.
slaves with us.”°°\textsuperscript{695} That number increased as by the following March, Col. Robert Gould Shaw noted that “a good many prisoners and contrabands have been brought in.”°°\textsuperscript{696} On March 4, 1862, a report in the Baltimore Sun indicated that “hundreds of contrabands are hourly seeking refuge…”.°°\textsuperscript{697} The presence of the contraband slaves served as a point of contention, especially when owners traveled to Harper’s Ferry and sought to reclaim their human property.°°\textsuperscript{698}

The Confederate capture of Harper’s Ferry in September 1862 presented an issue for fugitive slaves residing within the area. Besides securing important foodstuffs and military supplies, Gen. Stonewall Jackson also captured a number of prisoners of war, including escaped slaves. Accounts from Confederate soldiers could not agree on the actual number of refugees taken. A. J. Dula of the 22\textsuperscript{nd} North Carolina Volunteers Regiment estimated that the Confederates “captured eleven thousand five hundred prisoners with quite a lot of contraband negroes, who had escaped from their master.”°°\textsuperscript{699} While Harrison Wells of the 13\textsuperscript{th} Georgia Infantry set the number at “3,000 contrabands,” John R. Clack of the 14\textsuperscript{th} Virginia Infantry only estimated “2000 negroes.” In

\begin{footnotes}
\item[695] Lauramann Howe Russell to Serena Ellen Russell, October 4, 1861, Lauramann Howe Russell Papers, 1860-1864, OCLC 20273078, DMR.
\item[696] Duncan, Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune, 177.
\item[697] Baltimore Sun, March 4, 1862, quoted in Berkey, “In the Very Midst of the War,” 91.
\item[698] Ibid.; Ira Berlin, Barbara J. Fields, Steven F. Miller, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, Slaves No More: Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 44-45; Horton, 85; and Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 112. It should be noted that the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to Jefferson County slaves since the region of western Virginia was not considered to be in rebellion against the Union. See Taylor, Historical Digest, xxiv.
\item[699] A. J. Dula Reminiscences, pg. 4, typescript, Box 38, A. J. Dula Reminiscences, 1908, OCLC 20736993, DMR.
\end{footnotes}
comparison to Wells and Clack, Henry Lord Page King provided the lowest estimate with only “1400 runaway negroes.” As he surveyed the captured African Americans, Staff Officer Sandie Pendleton claimed that he recognized eight contrabands that used to belong to his uncle, Hugh Nelson Pendleton of Clarke County. Contained within the terms of surrender included the statement that “refugees, of whom there were a considerable number, were not to be treated as prisoners, except such, if any, as were deserters from the Confederate army.” Brig. Gen. Julius White indicated that “there were none” of the latter description. As a result of this agreement, Jackson ordered his men to take the former slaves and return them to the South and into bondage. Former slaveholders from the surrounding region also traveled to Harper’s Ferry in hopes of claiming their property. Capt. Edward Hastings Ripley of the 9th Vermont Infantry recalled that after the Union surrender, “Virginia gentlemen stood in rows on either side of the Bridge & claimed and grabbed out every darkey.” Fugitive slaves began returning to Harper’s Ferry once the Union army regained control of the region.

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700 Harrison Wells to Mollie Long, October 2, 1862, Harrison Wells Papers, 1857-1869, 1905, Collection no. 05422, SHC; John R. Clack to Carrie H. Clack, October 2, 1862, Carrie H. Clack Papers, 1861-1865, Collection no. 01855-z, SHC; and Henry Lord Page King to Hannah Page King Couper, September 16, 1862, Subseries 1.5, Folder 34, William Audley Couper Papers, 1795-1955, Collection no. 3687, SHC.


702 Edward Hastings Ripley Speech, February 1897, typescript, Edward Hastings Ripley Speech, Mss2 R4825 a 1, VHS. Ripley recounted that the Virginians accidentally grabbed “a very dark-complexioned man (Jesse Girard of my Co. B)” when claiming the contraband slaves. This incident resulted in Girard physically assaulting the Virginian.

Following President Lincoln’s issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, the number of refugees traveling to Harper’s Ferry became overwhelming. Besides making the voyage independently, freed African Americans also followed the Union army as it traveled up and down the Shenandoah Valley. When Union soldiers stopped at the house of Alexander Boteler in the summer of 1863, they confiscated the last slave remaining on Boteler’s farm. The surging number of refugees forced Union officials to establish a refugee campsite on the former armory grounds. Designated “Tent City,” African Americans lived in tents and continued providing labor to the Union army. As the free African American population living in Tent City escalated, a school was formed to provide the refugees with an education. The significant presence of African Americans in Harper’s Ferry also facilitated the establishment of another educational institution, Storer College, at the war’s conclusion. The presence of women on the home front led to increased interaction between white females and soldiers from both armies.  

The relationship between Jefferson County women and soldiers oftentimes proved to complex and sometimes contentious depending upon one’s political allegiance and the military affiliation of the soldier. Women who held a loyalty to one particular side oftentimes offered their soldiers provisions, care, and affection while condemning the enemy. The aftermath of the Battle of Antietam blurred these distinctions as Shepherdstown’s residents were forced to care for a large number of sick and wounded.

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soldiers, regardless of their military affiliation. Combatants included descriptions of their interactions with the civilian populace in their correspondence, especially when receiving assistance from civilians or being publicly confronted by these women. Several soldiers also described encounters in which they came into armed conflict with residents, even if they already were engaged with enemy forces. The melding of the home front and battlefront forced combatants and inhabitants to negotiate a complex, and sometimes volatile, relationship within the public sphere.

Strong support for the Confederacy led many Jefferson County residents to form a more favorable relationship with Confederate soldiers. County native Joseph Barry estimated that “ninety-nine in every hundred of the inhabitants of the county had been in active sympathy with the rebellion.” When encamping or traversing through the region, Confederate soldiers wrote of the strong devotion exhibited by county residents. Confederate supporters provided Confederate soldiers with warm receptions, supplies and foodstuffs. When asked by Gen. Stonewall Jackson if anyone from Charlestown had taken an oath of allegiance to the Union in the spring of 1862, Wells J. Hawks, who owned a carriage factory in Charlestown, assured Jackson that “the people of Charlestown are true.” Jackson responded Hawks’ statement by saying, “That is a jewel of a place.” Confederate soldiers received strong support from other Jefferson County communities, including Shepherdstown. Samuel Angus Firebaugh depicted

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705 Barry, 141.

706 Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson*, 414.
Shepherdstown as being “a great secesh place.” Although a number of Harper’s Ferry’s residents supported the Union, Maj. Gen. Bryan Grimes of the 4th North Carolina Infantry characterized the town’s populace as being “loyal to the backbone.” This public demonstration of Confederate loyalty was best exemplified at the house of Adam Stephen Dandridge II.

Known as the Bower, Dandridge’s home served as the site for several Confederate festivities during the war. Heros Von Borcke extensively wrote about his time spent at the Bower in late September 1862. After the Antietam campaign, Maj. Gen. Jeb Stuart established his headquarters at the Bower and remained encamped at the home until late October 1862. Von Borcke’s account of his time at the Bower included dances, the consumption of abundant foodstuffs, and numerous interactions with female residents. Von Borcke recounted that “every night we proceeded with our band to the house, where dancing was kept up till a late hour.” Music for the event was provided by Bob and Joe Sweeney, “two couriers who played the violin,” and Jeb Stuart’s servant, Mulatto Bob. Von Borcke described Bob as a musician “who worked the bones with the most surprising and extraordinary agility.” While encamped at the Bower, Von Borcke partook in hunting as “the wooded hills and rich fields” surrounding the home “abounded in game—partridges, pheasants, wild turkeys, hares, and grey squirrels.”

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707 Samuel Angus Firebaugh diary, June 18, 1863, Samuel Angus Firebaugh Diary, September 25, 1862 to March 3, 1864, Box 9, John Wayland Collection, 26 THL, HRL.

708 Cowper, 60. William Blair incorrectly identifies Charlestown as being “deep within loyalist West Virginia.” See Blair, Virginia’s Private War, 139.

709 Von Borcke, 270-271.

710 Ibid., 289.
boasted of how the soldiers dined at a “long-mess table” which “was loaded with substantials that seemed dainties and luxuries to us, who often for days together had gone without food.” Along with these other benefits, Von Borcke also indicated that the Dandridge family held several balls in October 1862 to honor the Confederate soldiers. The first, held on October 7, 1862, consisted of “families from Martinsburg, Shepherdstown, and Charlestown,” being invited to the grand ball. Eight days later, another ball was held as a tribute for Stuart’s raid on Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in which “the ladies of the neighbourhood [sic] were brought to the festivity in vehicles captured in the enemy’s country, drawn by fat Pennsylvania horses.” While Von Borcke’s time at the Bower did not represent the typical reception that Confederate soldiers experienced when in Jefferson County, his encounters highlight some of the different aspects of the civilian-soldier relationship.

When traveling through Jefferson County, Confederate soldiers recorded in their diaries and letters the warm reception and moral support that they received from residents. After taking control of Harper’s Ferry in April 1861, soldiers “were greeted with the utmost enthusiasm.” Writing from Harper’s Ferry on May 15, 1861, 2nd Lt. William Bowen Gallaher commented on the welcoming response the Confederate

711 Ibid., 269.
712 Ibid., 293.
713 Ibid., 309.
714 Ibid., 268, 321; Bean, 80; and W. W. Blackford, War Years with Jeb Stuart, with an introduction by Douglas Southall Freeman (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1945), 154-156, 162.
715 Barry, 100.
soldiers received from Shepherdstown residents. “Everyone is talking about the way they were treated at Shepherdstown & are anxious to go there again they were so well treated,” wrote Gallaher.\footnote{William Bowen Gallaher to Elizabeth Catherine Bowen Gallaher, May 15, 1861, Civil War Letters from the Collection of Waynesboro Public Library, 1861-1864, Accession 35739, Personal Papers Collection, LV. Gallaher may have been preferential to Shepherdstown as his grandparents lived in the community.} John Q. Winfield echoed Gallaher’s characterization of Shepherdstown, telling his wife, Sallie, “The people here are exceedingly hospitable.”\footnote{John Q. Winfield to Sallie Winfield, September 13, 1861, John Q. Winfield Letters, 1861-1862, Collection no. 01293-z, SHC.} Winfield discussed his fondness for Shepherdstown in another letter, telling Sallie that he hoped to make winter quarters there as “they have the best society in the state.”\footnote{John Q. Winfield to Sallie Winfield, September 16, 1861, John Q. Winfield Letters, 1861-1862, Collection no. 01293-z, SHC.} Like Winfield, native resident and soldier Henry Kyd Douglas also yearned that the Confederacy might take up winter quarters near his hometown in the winter of 1861, as he anticipated that he and other soldiers would “have a pleasant time” if encamped in the region.\footnote{Henry Kyd Douglas to Helen “Tippie” Boteler, November 21, 1861, Henry Kyd Douglas Papers, 1861-1949, OCLC 20736856, DMR.} Although Douglas did not receive his wish, Confederate troops continued to receive support from Jefferson County inhabitants any time they reentered the area.

The enthusiastic reception received by Confederate soldiers from Jefferson County residents persisted throughout subsequent military campaigns. Chasing Gen. Nathaniel Banks’s men down the Shenandoah Valley in May 1862, McHenry Howard of the 53\textsuperscript{rd} Maryland noted the enthusiastic response that Charlestown residents provided. “Our whole line advanced and pursued through the town which was wild with
excitement, the people thronging the streets with demonstrations of joy at our coming, as we had seen at Winchester three days before,” stated Howard. 720  Pvt. Edward A. Moore of the Rockbridge Artillery experienced similar excitement in Charlestown. “The people had been under Northern rule for a long time, and were rejoiced to greet their friends,” Moore recounted. 721  Confederate soldiers received a friendly reception when they passed through Jefferson County during the Gettysburg campaign. As the 6th Virginia Infantry marched through Charlestown, John Simmons Shipp reported that he heard “cheering by the people.” 722  While soldiers appreciated the friendly treatment that they received from all Jefferson County inhabitants, some combatants made special notation of the response given by local women. 723

Publicly demonstrating their strong support for the Confederacy, Jefferson County white women provided soldiers with enthusiastic greetings and moral support. As Confederate forces, including the Rockbridge Artillery, entered Charlestown in the spring of 1862, the town’s white female residents lined the streets. As the troops passed by, Pvt. Edward A. Moore remembered that the women “would reach out to hand us some of the dainties from their baskets.” 724  Confederate soldiers received a similar reaction when

720 McHenry Howard, *Recollections of a Maryland Confederate Soldier and Staff Officer under Johnston, Jackson and Lee*, edited by James I. Robertson, Jr. (Dayton: Morningside Bookshop, 1975), 113. Howard initially enlisted with Company C of the 53rd Maryland, then served as a staff officer for General Charles S. Winder, and finally as an aid-de-camp for the Stonewall Brigade.


722 John Simmons Shipp diary, June 23, 1863, Section 2, John Simmons Shipp Diary, May 10, 1862-March 31, 1864, Shipp Family Papers, 1709-1865, Mss2 Sh646 b 2, VHS.


passing through Shepherdstown in June 1863 as Chaplain Robert H. McKim remarked that “the citizens of the town—especially the ladies—gave us an enthusiastic reception.”725 In addition to receiving a warm welcoming from Shepherdstown residents, the 5th Florida Infantry were the recipients of gifts “as the ladies passed out food, drinks, and bouquets of flowers to the men.”726 After successfully pushing Union lines back from Charlestown in October 1863, Confederate cavalryman Colonel Harry Gilmor rode through town where he encountered a populace “wild with delight” over the Union defeat. After accepting congratulatory handshakes, Gilmor also “received a kiss from more than one pair of ruby lips and gave many a hearty hug and kiss in return.”727 Jefferson County residents also gifted provisions and foodstuffs to Confederate soldiers.

Jefferson County residents demonstrated their support and loyalty to the Confederate cause by providing soldiers with supplies. When visiting his brother, Johnnie Waldrop, at the Richmond Howitzer camp near Charlestown in October 1862, Richard Woolfolk Waldrop recalled that his brother enjoyed the encampment as there was “plenty of everything good to eat & pretty ladies to look at, one of whom gave him a pair of shoes.”728 George Baylor of the Baylor Light Horse, Company B of the Twelfth Virginia Cavalry, reported that as his troops entered Charlestown during the Christmas

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725 McKim, 158.


727 Hale, 306.

728 Richard Woolfolk Waldrop to Charles F. Waldrop, October 12, 1862, Richard Woolfolk Waldrop Papers, 1850-1867, Collection no. 02268-z, SHC.
season in 1862, “the boys were the recipients of many presents at the hands of the fair and patriotic ladies of the town and vicinity, and all enjoyed the best that the county would afford.”

In addition to receiving a warm reception from Shepherdstown residents, Chaplain Randolph H. McKim stated that “the ladies of Shepherdstown” presented General Joseph Johnston’s Third Brigade “a battle flag for our brigade headquarters.”

Residents also provided soldiers with foodstuffs. While on picket duty, Private Edward A. Moore recounted that “ladies, who came by the score in carriages and otherwise, provided with abundant refreshments for the inner man.”

Cleon Moore, who enlisted with Botts Greys, took advantage of being stationed near his hometown of Charlestown. “Being close to home, we were constantly receiving eatables of all kinds and the tables were loaded with all kinds of delicacies,” Moore wrote.

Sandie Pendleton, who served on General Stonewall Jackson’s staff, fondly remembered his time while encamped near Charlestown in November 1862. Pendleton’s partiality to the region partly arose from the actions of the inhabitants as he noted, “the people are all very kind & attentive to our creature comforts.” The Charlestown residents provided Pendleton and other Confederate soldiers with an assortment of goods including sugar, coffee, and candies, as well as a “glorious dinner” when the men returned to their

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729 Baylor, 80.

730 McKim, 159.


encampment.\textsuperscript{733} Besides offering supplies and a hot meal, some county residents also furnished Confederates soldiers with lodging.\textsuperscript{734}

By opening up their homes to Confederate soldiers, some Jefferson County inhabitants merged the public and private spheres. The presence of soldiers within private homes exhibited residents’ trust and devotion to the Confederate cause while also establishing an intimate relationship with the soldiers. John Q. Winfield of the Brock’s Gap Rifleman recalled how he spent a night filled with entertainment at Alexander R. Boteler’s house, Fountain Rock. Boteler entertained seventy-five soldiers at his home in September 1861 with his daughters providing music for the group. In May 1862, General Charles S. Winder and his staff dined at the house of Mrs. Andrew Kennedy. Prior to the Greenback Raid in October 1864, Colonel John S Mosby and his men used a local doctor’s house as a place of rest. The men stayed at Dr. William’s house near Kabletown where, “Colonel Mosby, the officers, and a few men, were very hospitably entertained by the doctor and his accomplished daughters.”\textsuperscript{735} The citizens of Jefferson County not only

\textsuperscript{733} Bean, 83. Pendleton indicated that residents from Clarke County, Virginia also helped provide the meal to the Confederate troops.

\textsuperscript{734} Wilkinson and Woodworth, 36.

provided shelter, food, entertainment, and moral support for Confederate troops, but they also became involved in the conflict by providing the Southern forces with military intelligence.\textsuperscript{736}

Several Jefferson County inhabitants demonstrated their unwavering support for the Confederacy by providing Confederate officers with information regarding the movement and positioning of Union forces. These residents risked the possibility of being charged with treason or arrested for their actions. One Confederate soldier noted that while encamped near Charlestown in May 1862, Confederate supporters entered their camp with information regarding the strength and position of the Federal forces. On one occasion, when Union troops entered Shepherdstown, young women supposedly hid Confederate soldiers by assisting them into a well between the Lutheran and Reformed churches. The women then sat on top of the cover of the well until Union soldiers left town. Sometimes when local women attempted to provide the Confederates with information, the soldiers did not listen to their advice. August Forsberg of the 51\textsuperscript{st} Virginia Infantry recalled that during a skirmish near Middleway in August 1864, he saw a woman “waving her handkerchief from behind a house.” Although Forsberg sent a contingency to see what the woman wanted, these soldiers quickly returned as they “feared it was a snare.” After the conflict ended, Forsberg sent over another group of Confederates to the woman to determine what she had wanted. The woman informed the men that “Gen. [James H.] Wilson with Staff” had been located in the house and could

\textsuperscript{736} John Q. Winfield to Sallie Winfield, September 13, 1861, John Q. Winfield Letters, 1861-1862, Collection no. 01293-z, SHC; and Howard, 113.
have been captured with ease. While residents were inclined to provide assistance, the potential of retribution sometimes factored into their willingness. George Wilson Booth recounted an occasion in which when he and several other Confederate soldiers attempted to obtain information from residents, but they expressed hesitation in talking with the men. “They were completely terrorized by the excesses which had been committed by [General David] Hunter’s forces, and feared every stranger, no matter what uniform he wore.” It should be noted that Booth’s experience did not exemplify the typical Confederate-civilian interaction. Whereas Confederate soldiers were recipients of warm ovations from Jefferson County residents, Union soldiers generally did not receive the same response.

While there exists examples of hospitable interactions between Jefferson County residents and Union combatants, the majority of interactions did not match this depiction. Although representing a smaller number of occupants, Unionists still publicly demonstrated their support for the Union. After deciding not to pursue Gen. Joseph E. Johnston’s retreating forces in June 1861, Federal troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson occupied the recently vacated town of Harper’s Ferry. Upon their arrival, Chaplain Alonzo H. Quint of the 2nd Massachusetts, stated that his regiment “received a flag which the women had privately prepared to present to the first regiment

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737 August Forsberg Memoir, August 21, 1864, typescript, August Forsberg Memoir, Collection 109, WLU.

738 Booth, 121. Booth partly attributes the distrustfulness of county residents to the presence of Jessie Scouts in the area. This reconnaissance mission also occurred after Hunter set fire to the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia.

739 Howard, 114; and Hartzell, 62.
of Union troops which should enter the town.”

When bestowing the flag to the regiment, Annie Marlatt gave a speech in which she stated that the women of Harper’s Ferry were “thankful that you have come here to protect our homes and our firesides.” Upon reentering Harper’s Ferry later in 1861, Quint stated that, “to see tears rolling down many a cheek at the sight of the old flag, was a pleasant sight after the sullen hate of the other places where we had been.”

Lt. Augustus D. Ayling’s experience in Jefferson County also proved to be the exception rather than a normal Union-civilian encounter. Serving with the 29th Massachusetts Volunteers, Ayling recounted that in March 1863, “There was a good deal of patriotism and enthusiasm displayed in the villages through which we passed. The men cheering and the girls waving flags and handkerchiefs.” Pleased with the reception that they received, the soldiers “responded by cheering the men and throwing kisses to the girls and tossing our cards to them, with a regimental address and the request ‘Please write.’”

Writing in July 1864, Lt. John Mead Gould returned to Jefferson County and encountered “a general we-re-glad-to-see-you

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740 Alonzo H. Quint, The Potomac and the Rapidan: Army Notes from the Failure at Winchester to the Reinforcement of Rosecrans, 1861-3 (Boston: Crosby and Nichols, 1864; reprint, New York: O. S. Felt, 1864), 16 (page citations are to the reprint edition); and Wellman, 48.

741 Quint, Record of the Second, 40-41.

742 Quint, Potomac and the Rapidan, 31. Quint may possibly be referring to the reception that the 2nd Massachusetts received when they were encamped at Charlestown earlier in the year.

expression upon every face we see.” Juxtaposed to the warm ovation that many Confederate troops received when entering Jefferson County, Union soldiers encountered a vastly different experience.

The contentious nature of Union and civilian relationships led Federal soldiers to vehemently condemn Confederate supporters while also formulating negative perceptions of the region and its inhabitants. Col. Robert Gould Shaw declared Charlestown in March 1862 as a “wretched hole” and characterized its residents as being “the most avaricious, grasping set of people I ever saw.” To gauge the level of Union support within Jefferson County, Restored Virginia Governor Francis Pierpont sent H. W. Crothers to the area in the spring of 1862. Writing to Pierpont on April 22, 1862, Crothers described Charlestown as “this is the worst Secession hole that I have ever been in. The Clerk of the Court declines serving and although we find a few good union men, the masses—men, women, and children—are rampant rebels. The women spit on the soldiers as they pass headquarters.” After having visited Charlestown in 1862, Lt. John Mead Gould returned in August 1864. Gould believed that there existed a general relief among county residents regarding the presence of Union soldiers, but when in Charlestown, the Federal troops encountered “the same old secesh style of sour looks and downright ugliness” that he had encountered during his previous trip to the town.

744 Gould, 472.
745 Duncan, Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune, 180.
746 Flournoy, 373.
747 Jordan, 384.
Although the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry received a warm ovation when they entered Harper’s Ferry, the regiment did not experience a similar response in Charlestown. A member of the 2nd Massachusetts recalled that when some of the men attempted to acquire a room at a hotel, “we found the landlord somewhat impracticable. He was secession in feeling, and vexed – as all the Charlestown people were – at the entirely unexpected arrival of our army….“ As the regiment proceeded through town, the men found “every shop was closed…save one; and the occupant of that, though displaying a Union flag, proved the meanest rebel of all.”

Whereas Confederate soldiers often were the recipients of friendships or gifts from local women, Union combatants did not receive the same type of treatment.

Union soldiers frequently became the targets of scorn and hostility from Jefferson County women. As Lt. Josiah C. Williams of the 27th Indiana Infantry marched through Charlestown on March 5, 1862, he indicated in his journal, “Saw numerous pretty ladies at the windows but not a smile or word of encouragement.” Continuing onto Middleway, Williams “found plenty of ladies mostly pretty but no joyous greetings although it was some more mild than at Charlestown.”

Writing after the war to Charlestown resident Austin M. Locke, S. N. Hinman recalled the disapproving attitudes held by Charlestown women as the 1st Connecticut Cavalry passed through the town. Hinman remembered that “there was not the kindest feelings among the ladies at home toward us as

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748 Quint, Potomac and the Rapidan, 30, 45.

749 Josiah C. Williams diary, March 5, 1862, Box 2, Folder 7, Josiah C. Williams Diary #1, December 6, 1861-May 6, 1862, Worthington B. Williams Family Papers, 1812-1926, M 0302, OM 0407, IHS.
invaders…” Members of the 115th New York generated hostile responses from several Jefferson County women after they searched the house of an alleged Confederate supporter. The women “turned up their noses and threw back their heads,” and then proceeded to onslaught the soldiers verbally, calling the men “such names as, ‘mean Yankees,’ ‘cut throats,’ ‘mud-sills,’ &c.” Although Virginia Lucas did not verbally assault any Union soldiers directly, Col. Robert Gould Shaw found a letter while searching the Lucas household in which Virginia Lucas referred to the presence of “Goths” which Shaw took to mean “our humble selves.” Thus, from Lucas’s perspective, the actions and behaviors of the Union soldiers resembled the barbaric groups of Medieval Europe. The female disdain for Union soldiers also translated into soldiers’ attempts to acquire food and lodging from county residents.

Whereas residents keenly provided Confederate soldiers with foodstuffs and quarters, Union combatants oftentimes experienced more difficulty in obtaining similar services. When the 115th New York Volunteers attempted to purchase food near Summit Point in September 1862, their efforts were rebuffed. Members of the regiment approached some farmers who “pretended to be Union men, but refused to sell us anything because they said we were d—d Yankees.” Forced to search for other options, the men finally located “some colored people” and contracted them “to bake 100 hoe

750 S. N. Hinman to Austin M. Locke, January 12, 1892, S. N. Hinman Papers, 1891-1894, Mss2 H5935 b, VHS.

751 Clark, Iron Hearted Regiment, 9.

752 Duncan, Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune, 116.
cakes.” Luckily for Col. Robert Gould Shaw, after falling ill in August 1861, he found accommodations at the log home of Mrs. Buckle. Besides providing shelter for Shaw, she also cooked meals for several other members of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry. Stationed in Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, Samuel Kinsey Maguire of the 72nd Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers successfully located “an old Irish couple, who were very kind to me.” This couple insisted that Maguire stay at their home and partake in meals with them. Maguire appreciated the hospitality offered by the couple, but noted that “I have only been to one meal yet.” Charlestown resident Mary Eleanor Ranson Guy, who was eleven at the onset of the war, fondly remembered after the war that her mother “used to send me to the Court House with food for sick soldiers, and there was a Yankee among them with his leg cut off. I was fond of him and he called me his ‘Little Rebel Sweetheart, with holes in her cheeks.’” While some Union soldiers received aid and comfort from local inhabitants, the majority of these interactions proved to be more contentious.

Oftentimes, there existed a degree of distrust between Union soldiers and residents. While most accusations revolved around Union soldiers accusing Confederate

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754 Samuel Kinsey Maguire to Charlesina Anna Smith Maguire, September 25, 1862, Container 1, Folder 3, Samuel Kinsey Maguire Letters, 1857-1862, MS 3883, WRHS. Maguire sought to reassure his wife of his faithfulness to her, telling her that although he thought that the old Irish woman was going to hug him when he came to their house, he told his wife, “now don’t be jealous, for she is about 50, and ugly as sin.”

755 “Mrs. John H. Guy’s War Memories,” typescript, Section 10, Guy Family Papers, 1799-2000, Mss1 G9906 a 755-773, VHS.

supporters of acting suspiciously, Confederate soldier Armpie Otey voiced concern after “several soldiers have been poisoned on whiskey” while stationed in Harpe’s Ferry. Otey assured his uncle, Matt Otey, that he “never drank any of their mean whiskey.”

Other soldiers also made references to residents using food as a purported conduit for poisonings. Arthur L. Van Vleck of the 126th Ohio Infantry mentioned on several occasions his belief that county residents were attempting to kill members of his regiment. While stationed near Charlestown in the spring of 1863, Van Vleck wrote in his diary, “pies with fine pounded glass have been sold (to poison us soldiers) here in camp.” He later again referred to the possibility of a foreign substance in homemade pies, warning that “it is [a] necessity to be very vigilant.” Van Vleck also believed that “there are farmers who would rejoice to see us starve to death.”

Fearing that several barrels of cider may have been poisoned, soldiers within the 115th New York Volunteers asked a “young darkey” if the cider had been poisoned. After the young African American replied “No Sah,” the men made the boy drink from the barrel. After finishing the cup of cider, the soldiers were “satisfied with the experiment,” and proceeded to consume some of the cider. Ironically, nearly one week after this cider episode, Clark fell ill, claiming that he was “suffering from the effects of poison eaten in rebel cake.”

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757 Armpie Otey to Matt Otey, May 28, 1861, Series 1.3, Folder 15-16, Wyche and Otey Family Papers, 1824-1900, Collection no. 1608, SHC. Armpie Otey noted in the letter that several of the men who consumed the whiskey later died.

758 Arthur L. Van Vleck diary, spring 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck Diary, 1862-1863, Collection no. 00738-z, SHC.

759 Clark, Iron Hearted Regiment, 8-9.

760 Ibid., 12.
The mistrust of local residents by Union forces extended to the military policies of restricting travel and the arbitrary arrests of citizens. The presence of Union troops within Jefferson County restricted the geographic mobility of citizens, thus further entrenching the contested space of public and private spheres. With pickets stationed near her house, Mary Eleanor Baldwin Ranson felt that “we have been like prisoners” as they were “not able to hear from town for weeks.”\(^761\) When seeking to travel outside of Jefferson County, Union officers compelled residents to obtain military passes. Shepherdstown resident Henry Shepherd received a military pass on October 4, 1861, that permitted him to travel “on any road around town at pleasure.”\(^762\) Whereas Shepherd received permission to travel uncontested, Charlestown native Ambrose W. Cramer was prohibited from leaving his community. Cramer wrote to Samuel J. C. Moore, an officer in the 2\(^{nd}\) Virginia Infantry, on September 1, 1862, complaining of his travel restrictions. Wanting to come visit Moore, Cramer attempted to procure a pass but found it “impossible to get a pass to go outside of our town.” Cramer quipped, “Our Federal friends are very attentive to us.”\(^763\) Although Harper’s Ferry occupant, Jennie Chambers, applied for a pass to cross the Potomac River in the spring of 1862, Maj. Hector Tyndale of the 28\(^{th}\) Pennsylvania Volunteers ultimately denied her request. After initially promising Chambers that she could receive a pass, Tyndale later

\(^{761}\) Mary Eleanor Baldwin Ranson to Frances Cornelia Baldwin Stuart, April 20, [no year provided], Section 1, Stuart Family Papers, 1842-1955, Mss2 st937 b1-7, VHS.

\(^{762}\) Henry Shepherd Military Pass, Folder 2, Lucas & Shepherd Family Papers, 1780-1900, Ms79-171, WVSA.

\(^{763}\) Ambrose W. Cramer to Samuel J. C. Moore, September 1, 1862, Series 1, Box 1, Folder 8, Samuel J. C. Moore Papers, 1847-1939, Collection no. 4618, SHC.
received instructions “to permit no one to cross.” Tyndale tried to reassure her that “this, however will not remain in force for any length of time, I trust, and so soon as the prohibition is removed word shall be sent to you.”

Jefferson County residents also aroused the suspicions of Union soldiers through their public support of the Confederacy. Citing the public demonstration of support for the Confederacy and suspicious activities by county residents, Union soldiers justified their decisions to arrest county residents. In August 1861, soldiers of the 13th Massachusetts arrested Alexander Boteler, accusing him of “earnest solicitation of men” to enlist in the Confederate army.

Fortunately for Boteler, the soldiers released him after several days of imprisonment and before they received instructions from Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks to detain him. The Federal government also imprisoned several county residents for purportedly providing assistance to the enemy. Mollie Pultz, who lived near Middleway, was accused of being a spy for the Confederates and incarcerated in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C. On multiple occasions, Union soldiers arrested several Shepherdstown residents, including Dan Rentch, Dan Hill, and Jim Lane Towner. In addition, Virginia Brooke was imprisoned for carrying mail through military lines and Reverend Charles W. Andrews for not praying for President Lincoln after his assassination. Guerrilla agitation also spurred the soldiers’ distrust of county inhabitant. Col. John B. Mead of the 8th Vermont Infantry received instructions in the fall of 1864 to conduct searches in the southern

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764 Hector Tyndale to Jennie Chambers, February 3, 1862, Box 1, Folder 1, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.

765 Adams and Watterson, 27.
portion of Jefferson County for signs of guerrilla activity. Under this directive, Mead was authorized to “arrest all citizens found in any way concerting with the enemy.”\textsuperscript{766} Pliny A. Jewett of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Connecticut Cavalry expressed a distrust of county residents as he believed that “this country is full of bushwhackers.” Jewett continued, “In the daytime they work on their farms but after dark they slip out & sneak around behind the fences & in the woods shooting every stray soldier that they meet.”\textsuperscript{767} The constant military occupation and repeated threat of self-preservation also prevented local residents from maintaining basic social establishments.\textsuperscript{768}

The prolonged presence of soldiers in Jefferson County made it difficult for religious institutions to carry out their normal ceremonial functions. The Union Sunday School in Shepherdstown conducted meetings during the war, but records indicate that the Sunday school experienced several disturbances in July 1863, including two by visiting Confederate forces. The transient nature of county residents also prohibited churches from maintaining a steady congregation. When stationed in Jefferson County, Chaplain Alonzo H. Quint observed that one of the war’s effects included that “the churches are mainly shut up.”\textsuperscript{769} Located in the small community of Moler’s Crossroads,\textsuperscript{766}

\textsuperscript{766} Hale, 507.

\textsuperscript{767} Pliny A. Jewett to Steve Jewett, [February] 1863, Section 1, Jewett Family Papers, 1808-1878, Mss2 J5565 b 1-17, VHS.

\textsuperscript{768} Bates and Bates, 153-154; and Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, October 24, 1862; January 19, 1864; April 28, 1864; April 20, 1866; typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC. In addition to Andrews, several other Shepherdstown ministers were arrested for their refusal to pray for Lincoln.

\textsuperscript{769} Quint, \textit{Potomac and the Rapidan}, 45-46.
the Bethesda M. E. Church South held services during the war, but reported a congregation of only twenty members in 1864. In addition to the difficulties of maintaining services, both armies repurposed these religious spaces into a militarized landscape. The armies used churches for hospitals, lodging, or stables. These religious buildings also endured damage from cannonading, musket fire, and vandalism. Therefore, the war contributed to the slow process of structural deterioration for some of Jefferson County’s churches. Parishioners did not look favorably upon the armies using community churches for their own means. A member of the 3rd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry stated in March 1862 that, “Our sojourn in Charlestown was exceedingly disagreeable to the inhabitants. It annoyed them to have their churches occupied by Yankee soldiers.”

The damage caused to multiple religious institutions throughout Jefferson County further contributed to the contentious relationship between soldiers and civilians.

The wartime experiences of Harper’s Ferry’s churches serves as a microcosm of how the armies used these religious institutions for military purposes. Only one church in Harper’s Ferry, St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church, conducted services throughout the war. In addition to holding services, St. Peter’s also served as a hospital during the war. Purportedly, the large number of soldiers cared for at St. Peter’s led to blood running down the natural stone steps leading to the church. Since the blood made the steps

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770 Bryant, History of the Third Regiment, 40.

slippery, they became known as the “Bloody Steps” within local lore. Whereas St. Peter’s remained relatively unscathed from the war, the neighboring church of St. John’s endured extensive damage from bombardments. The Lutheran Church and St. John’s Protestant Episcopal Church served a variety of purposes, including guardhouse, stable, and hospital. Soldiers also used the Presbyterian Church as a horse stable and guard house. The influx of Confederate forces at the beginning of the conflict led some soldiers to seek lodging within churches. Willie Harris Clayton of the 7th Georgia Volunteers noted that his fellow comrades not only sought accommodations in private homes, but that “the churches are crowded with soldiers” as well. Churches in other Jefferson County communities endured similar experiences to Harper’s Ferry’s religious institutions.

Looking for shelter, community churches sometimes provided lodging for Union soldiers. Writing from Charlestown in March 1862, Delevan Arnold of the 1st Michigan Cavalry told his sister, Emilie, that his regiment was “domiciled in a first class Presbyterian Church in the Secession town of Charleston [sic].” In addition to sleeping in the building, Arnold stated that the men “eat our hard bread and pork in the pews that were in times gone by occupied on each Sunday by the Southern Chivalry and F. F. V.’s

772 Secrist, 74.

773 William Harris Clayton to “Mother,” June 13, 1861, Section 2, Clayton Family Papers, 1852-1865, Mss1 C5796 a, VHS.

774 Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 32-33; Trinity Episcopal Church, 16; Secrist, 73; Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration, 232, 233; and James P. Noffsinger, “Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, Contributions towards a Physical History,” [1957], A&M 3712, typescript manuscript, p. 47-48, WVRHC. St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church supposedly avoided any devastation partly because Father Michael A. Costello raised a Union Jack flag over the building.
of this much persecuted land!”

The 3rd Wisconsin Badgers also used Charlestown’s churches for lodging purposes. Van R. Willard recalled that, “At Charlestown our brigade (Gordon’s) were quartered in the churches and other public buildings.”

In addition to using churches for shelter, Union and Confederate armies relied heavily upon churches as makeshift hospitals.

Following the fiercest battle in the immediate region, Jefferson County churches filled the need to house scores of wounded soldiers. Located near the Antietam battlefield, several Shepherdstown churches, as well as other smaller churches, served as hospitals after the conflict. Rather than providing spiritual healing, these religious institutions now were looked upon as a space for physical healing. As he looked across the Potomac River, George Noyes of the U.S. Volunteers commented on the growing number of hospitals in Shepherdstown. Noyes observed “a church, decorated, as were many other buildings, with the red hospital flag…”

Several Shepherdstown churches housed the large number of wounded soldiers, including the Old Episcopal (Trinity) Church, Christ Reformed Church, Old Lutheran Church, New Street United Methodist Church, and Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church. To accommodate the growing number of wounded soldiers, residents removed the pews at the Presbyterian Church, thus making it one of the larger temporary medical facilities. The only church not used in

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776 Willard, 45-46.

Shepherdstown for hospital purposes was the newer Trinity Episcopal Church. Built two years prior to the war, Trinity Episcopal Church served a different function after Antietam as it held services for soldiers who remained within the area after the conflict. Churches in the neighboring communities of Leetown and Unionville also served as hospitals after Antietam. In Leetown, wounded soldiers stayed at St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church, while the Unionville Methodist Church and St. James Lutheran Church offered space in Unionville. Although these churches provided space for the physical healing of soldiers, the sanctity of this property was not always revered.  

Although religion played an important role within many soldiers’ lives, their spiritual reverence did not always translate into respect for church property. While being held captive in 1863 at the Presbyterian Church in Harper’s Ferry, Capt. George Baylor described the church’s conditions as, “our couch was mud and dirt and our associates the vilest of the vile, fiends and devils incarnate.” Baylor’s depiction of the church suggests that soldiers who previously occupied the building had removed the floor from the religious structure. Soldiers also caused damage to other religious institutions, including the Methodist Church in Harper’s Ferry and the Methodist Church in Summit.

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778 Hartzell, 62; Historic Shepherdstown Commission, 70-72, 73-74, 74-75, 79, 82; James C. Price, “A History of Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church,” accessed February 16, 2016, http://www.spcworks.org/Article.asp?article_id=1689; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 54, 60; and Trinity Episcopal Church, 15. The New Street United Methodist Church served two congregations as its religious followers split into two factions during the war. The Union supporters referred to themselves as being the Methodist Episcopalians while the Confederate congregation was called the Methodist Episcopalians, South. These two religious factions remained divided until 1940. Unionville was renamed after the Civil War to Uvilla. Local folklore suggests that the town changed its name so it would not be associated with the Union army.

779 Baylor, 88-89.
Point. An excessive amount of damage to the Summit Point church led to it being rebuilt after the war. After Federal soldiers occupied the Zion Episcopal Church in Charlestown, Reverend Dr. W. H. Meade described the building as being “in a sad condition” when he took charge of the church in 1867.\textsuperscript{780} Other churches within Jefferson County only received minimal damage that easily could be repaired. For example, the lead roof on St. George’s Chapel only sustained several bullet holes. Capt. David Hunter Strother, along with Reverend W. B. Dutton, found that while occupying the Charlestown Presbyterian Church, members of Colonel Thomas H. Ruger’s 3\textsuperscript{rd} Wisconsin engaged in “taking up the carpets.”\textsuperscript{781} Strother argued that the soldiers removed the carpet so they would not destroy church property, but their actions still temporarily altered the church’s interior. In addition to utilizing area churches, both armies also converted private homes into a militarized landscape.\textsuperscript{782}

The continual need to house sick and wounded soldiers led to the transformation of private spaces into hospitals. Besides using churches for hospitals, the overwhelming number of wounded soldiers after Antietam led to the establishment of temporary hospitals within residents’ homes, including Reverend Charles Wesley Andrews’s house.

\textsuperscript{780} George W. Peterkin, \textit{A History and Record of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of West Virginia, and, Before the Formation of the Diocese in 1878, in the Territory now known as the State of West Virginia} (Charleston: The Tribune Company, 1902), 604.

\textsuperscript{781} Strother, \textit{Yankee Virginia}, 5.

Besides churches and homes, wounded soldiers were housed in the Odd Fellows’ Hall, schoolhouses, and warehouses throughout Shepherdstown. George Noyes wrote that from the Maryland side of the Potomac River, “We could see the red flag waving from many a dwelling, the hospital of the wounded rebels, whom the enemy had carried with them in their late escape. In barns, and sheds, and farm-houses; in churches, halls, and residences; in colonies of hospital *marquees*; in yards and gardens crowded with shelter-tents; wherever, in a word, there was space for the narrow hospital bed, there lay a soldier chained to his couch by a wound more or less severe.”

As he passed through town, George M. Neese of Chew’s Battery observed that “Shepherdstown seemed to be full of our wounded…” As indicated in Noyes and Neese’s depictions, the entire community of Shepherdstown transitioned into a large hospital after Antietam.

As the number of soldiers continued to be brought into Shepherdstown, residents scrambled to make room for the wounded. The absence of available space within Shepherdstown led some of the injured soldiers to be tended to in the neighboring communities of Leetown, Middleway, and Unionville. As the battle raged on, Shepherdstown resident Mary Bedinger Mitchell described the chaotic scene as wagons filled with wounded soldiers began entering Shepherdstown. Upon hearing from her African American cook about the approaching wagons, Mitchell went out of her house

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783 Noyes, 238.
784 Neese, 125.
“where we found the streets already crowded, the people all astir, and the foremost
wagons, of what seemed an endless line, discharging their piteous burdens.” Amidst
the pandemonium, “men ran for keys and opened up the shops, long empty, and the
unused rooms; other people got brooms and stirred up the dust of ages; then swarms of
children began to appear with bundles of hay and straw, taken from anybody’s stable.” After the battle ended, the wounded continued to be brought into Shepherdstown as “they
filled every building and overflowed into the country round, into farm-houses, barns,
corn-cribs, cabins,--wherever four walls and a roof were found together.” Unable to
find any available space, residents began placing soldiers in the “unfinished Town Hall.”
Still in the process of being constructed, “somebody threw a few rough boards across the
beams, placed piles of straw over them, laid down single planks to walk upon, and lo, it
was a hospital at once.” The shortage of space forced 2nd Lt. William W. Chamberlaine of the 6th Virginia Infantry to wander around town looking for any type of
lodging. Unable to locate any accommodations, the wounded Chamberlaine “laid down

787 Ibid., 689.
788 Ibid., 691.
789 Ibid.
on the low porch of a dwelling house, and soon fell asleep.”\textsuperscript{790} While these makeshift hospitals formed in response to the battle of Antietam, medical facilities within Harper’s Ferry provided ongoing care.\textsuperscript{791}

Besides serving as a supply depot for the Union army, Harper’s Ferry also contained several Union hospitals. On occasion, local white females served in the hospitals as personnel to care for the sick and wounded. The women who assisted in offering medical care not only attended to wounded soldiers, but also provided them with companionship. Alonzo H. Quint of the 2nd Massachusetts indicated that the first hospital in Harper’s Ferry “was established in the little brick house which stood by the canal-lock under the cliff. It was full,—not of Massachusetts men only, but from the remnants of the three-months’ men.”\textsuperscript{792} Several churches within the town also served as hospitals, including St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church. Besides these churches, the Union army also transformed the former Federal Armory and Arsenal complex and administrator buildings into hospital space. Prior to the Confederate assault of Harper’s Ferry in September 1862, Colonel Dixon Miles ordered for the establishment of a hospital near Bolivar Heights. Surgeon William Vosburgh of the 111th New York and 1st Assistant-Surgeon C. S. Hoyt of the 126th New York supervised the facilities’ operations with over three hundred patients residing in the hospital by late August 1862. During this period,

\textsuperscript{790} William W. Chamberlaine, \textit{Memoirs of the Civil War: Between the Northern and Southern Sections of the United States of America 1861 to 1865}, ed. Robert E. L. Krick (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2010), 25.\textsuperscript{791} Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 54, 60; Bates and Bates, 140; and Trinity Episcopal Church, 15.\textsuperscript{792} Quint, \textit{Record of the Second}, 44.
Hoyt indicates that several Union women helped care for the sick and wounded combatants. Infirmaries continued to operate within Harper’s Ferry during the latter part of the war as Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan sent soldiers wounded in the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign back to these hospitals via the W&P. At the same time that county inhabitants provided space within their churches and homes for the care of sick and wounded soldiers, combatants also invaded these homes and violated the resident’s private sphere.

While soldiers valued the opportunity to receive lodging, medical care, and meals within private homes, their actions did not always display respect toward the homeowners’ private space. Generally, the violators of these private residences tended to be Union soldiers. Lauramann Howe Russell recalled that while stationed in Harper’s Ferry in October 1861 that a soldier from his regiment “went into a poor mans [sic] house and took some little childrens [sic] jewelry.” Russell expressed displeasure at the actions of his fellow soldier, stating that the victim of the incident “was sick and have been a long time and besides he was a Union man.” Russell concluded that “it is nothing but robbery [sic] and that too of the worst kind.”

On several occasions, Union soldiers entered the residences of Shepherdstown citizens and seized personal items. On March 1, 1865, a group of Union soldiers stopped at the homes of two Shepherdstown residents, Mrs. V. M. Butler and Jacob Miller. While at these residences, the soldiers took “many

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793 Secrist, 74, 91; Duncan, Beleaguered Winchester, 227; Fairbairn, “Lockwood House,” 11; Willson, 49-50, 51, 360; Jordan, 457; Gilbert, Waterpower, 126; Joseph, Wheelock, Warshaw, and Kriemelmeyer, 4.8; and Nasby, Harpers Ferry, 53. Following the Confederate assault on Harper’s Ferry, the hospital remained open until October 11, 1862 when the patients were transferred to Annapolis.

794 Lauramann Howe Russell to Serena Ellen Russell, October 4, 1861, Lauramann Howe Russell Papers, 1860-1864, OCLC 20273078, DMR.
valuables such as clothing of all kinds, store goods, tableware, etc.”

The following day, another group of Union soldiers encamped along the Potomac River went to the house of Mrs. Drusie Ray where they proceeded to break “open bureaus and carried most of her clothing and also all of her son’s clothing, away.”

According to Harper’s Ferry occupant Joseph Barry, soldiers were not the only people to vandalize private homes as residents who remained within the area also looted abandoned homes. Barry bemoaned that, “women and children could be encountered at all hours of the day and night loaded with booty or trundling wheelbarrows freighted with all imaginable kinds of portable goods and household furniture.”

In addition to being ransacked, these private residences also were commandeered by the military for lodging purposes.

The transient nature of Harper’s Ferry’s residents allowed soldiers to reside in vacant homes. By occupying these dwellings, soldiers provided themselves, and sometimes their horses, better accommodations than they generally would encounter while serving in the military. In February 1862, Chaplain Alonzo H. Quint noted that members of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry slept in “the emptied houses of Harper’s Ferry, where the regiment was quartered in the abandoned houses on Shenandoah Street…”

Arthur L. Van Vleck of the 126th Ohio Infantry described how one house in

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795 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, March 1, 1865, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.

796 Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, March 2, 1865, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC.

797 Barry, 109.

798 Jones, Harpers Ferry, 148-150.

799 Quint, Record of the Second, 67.
Charlestown became appropriated for military use. “The guard room was the ½ of a log house, the oth. [other] part was occupied by the Prov. Marshal for an office. Here but a few days before a happy family had lived now rough soldiers occupied it to rest by day or sleep by night when off guard.” Union soldiers not only utilized the homes for their own quartering, but also to provide shelter for their animals. Col. John Mead Gould observed members of the 1st Vermont Cavalry “leading their horses upstairs to the second story of a house and there feeding their horses from a bureau which was once worth $100.” The blatant disregard by military forces for the privacy of residents’ homes garnered an enraged response from county inhabitants.

While enduring the hardships of military occupation, Jefferson County inhabitants bemoaned the continual violation of their personal space. Cpl. Almon M. Graham remarked that the inhabitants of Harper’s Ferry complained “of having been molested by soldiers and that they have been robbed of everything that could be carried off.” While several family members resided at the home of Edmund Jennings Lee in April 1862, Caroline Bedinger of Shepherdstown received a letter from one of her children. The letter informed Bedinger that Yankee cavalry had stopped at Lee’s Bedford estate in search of “public arms.” The Yankee cavalrymen “did not hesitate to use the most profane language in our presence, nor did their officer make the least attempt to restrain

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800 Arthur L. Van Vleck diary, March 21, 1863, Arthur L. Van Vleck Diary, 1862-1863, Collection no. 00738-z, SHC.

801 Jordan, 111.

802 Almon M. Graham Civil War Diaries, October 3, 1862, Mss A65-38, BECHS.
them.” After not locating the arms that they were searching for, the soldiers threatened Henrietta Bedinger Lee that “they intended to take up every plank in the house” to look for the weapons. While the plundering of private homes by soldiers troubled county inhabitants, the greatest violation of these homes emanated from the complete devastation of the private abodes.  

In July 1864, Gen. David Hunter instructed Federal soldiers to burn several Jefferson County homes. Hunter specifically identified three Jefferson County homes to be set ablaze: Alexander Boteler, Edmund Jennings Lee, and Andrew Hunter. Gen. Hunter supposedly ordered the burning of these houses in retaliation for the Confederates destroying the homes of Postmaster General Montgomery Blair and Maryland’s governor Augustus W. Bradford. All three men were highly regarded within Jefferson County and strong supporters of the Confederacy. Furthermore, Boteler also served under Gen. Stonewall Jackson and Hunter served as an advisor for Gen. Robert E. Lee. Hunter also directed his men to burn the “Boydville” house of Charles J. Faulkner, Sr., in Martinsburg, Berkeley County. Prior to serving on Gen. Stonewall Jackson’s staff, Faulker represented the region in the U.S. House of Representatives. Ultimately, Faulkner’s previous political tenure saved his home as President Lincoln sent a

\[\text{[Virginia] Bedinger to Caroline Bedinger, April 21, 1862, Box 4, Folder 7, Bedinger-Dandridge Family Papers, 1752-1950, OCLC 19491161, DMR.}\]
memorandum to Hunter informing him that Faulkner’s house was exempt. Whereas Faulkner’s house was saved, the homes of Hunter, Boteler, and Lee were not as fortunate.\textsuperscript{804}

Following Gen. Hunter’s directive, Capt. Franklin G. Martindale and members of the 1\textsuperscript{st} New York Cavalry traveled to Andrew Hunter’s estate, Hunter Hill, on July 17, 1864. Although a first cousin to Gen. Hunter, this familial connection did not save Andrew Hunter’s house. Martindale and his men prohibited Hunter’s family from collecting any of their personal belongings before they lit the house on fire. After lighting the house ablaze, Martindale’s men arrested Hunter and held him prisoner for one month before they released him. After the burning of Hunter Hill, Gen. Hunter and his men encamped on the farm “for several days, allowing men and beasts to despoil the whole place.”\textsuperscript{805} Passing by the ruins, Commissary Sgt. William T. Patterson described the remains of Hunter’s house as being “ragged.”\textsuperscript{806} James E. Taylor provided a more detailed depiction of the damage caused to Hunter’s house, noting that “the torch had well got in its work as nothing but the four white walls of the fire-gutted mansion greeted us.”\textsuperscript{807} Several Union soldiers expressed sorrow over the burning of Hunter’s residence.

\textsuperscript{804} Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, July 19, 1864, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC; Duncan, \textit{Beleaguered Winchester}, 203; Bushong, \textit{General Turner Ashby}, 44; Eby, “\textit{Porte Crayon},” 151-152; and Bushong, \textit{Old Jube}, 216, 218. Although rumors indicated that David Hunter Strother gave the orders to burn these homes, Eby contends that David Hunter clearly was the commanding officer that provided these directives. Bushong does not clarify why Lincoln ordered Faulkner’s house as being exempt from being burned.


\textsuperscript{806} William T. Patterson diary, August 20, 1864, Vol. 502, June 21-November 6, 1864, OHS.

\textsuperscript{807} Taylor, \textit{With Sheridan}, 53.
In a regimental history of the 1st New York Cavalry, William H. Beach suggested that “it might be a legitimate act of war to destroy supplies that would support an enemy. But Hunter’s burnings of residences was condemned in the strongest terms by the men of his command.”\footnote{Beach, 393.} Capt. David Hunter Strother also lamented over the burning of Hunter’s property, writing in his journal on July 18, 1864, that “a war of mutual devastation will depopulate the border counties which contain all my kindred on both sides of the question.”\footnote{Strother, \textit{Virginia Yankee in the Civil War}, 280.} Two days after the burning of Hunter Hill, Martindale received orders to burn the homes of Boteler and Lee.\footnote{“Mrs. John H. Guy’s War Memories,” typescript, Section 10, Guy Family Papers, 1799-2000, Mss1 G9906 a 755-773, VHS; \textit{Charles Town Bicentennial}, 43; Bushong, \textit{History of Jefferson County}, 172-173; Hearn, \textit{Six Years of Hell}, 254; and Matthew Page Andrews, ed., \textit{The Women of the South in War Times} (Baltimore: The Norman, Remington Co., 1920), 197. Bushong incorrectly identifies Captain Franklin G. Martindale as Captain William F. Martindale. Hunter’s family lived with Mary Eleanor Ranson’s family after this fire. They remained with the Ransons for an entire year until their house could be rebuilt.}

When Capt. Martindale and his men approached Boteler’s Fountain Rock home on July 19, 1864, the only people at the residence were Boteler’s two daughters, Helen and Elizabeth, and three of Elizabeth’s children. Before setting the house ablaze, Martindale’s men went through the house plundering the home of silverware and cups. After pilfering the house for goods, Martindale’s men proceeded to disperse straw throughout the house and poured kerosene onto the straw. Despite the pleas of the Boteler women, Martindale’s men prohibited the women from collecting any of their items before setting the house ablaze. When Martindale instructed Helen Boteler to leave the premise, she refused, instead sitting down at her beloved piano and began playing the
song “Thy Will be Done.” Helen continued playing her prized piano until the flames started to creep toward her at which point she closed the lid of the piano and left the house.\textsuperscript{811}

After burning down Boteler’s house, Capt. Martindale and the 1\textsuperscript{st} New York Cavalry proceeded onto Edmund Jennings Lee’s house, Bedford, and set his home on fire. A first cousin to Robert E. Lee, Edmund Jennings Lee was in exile when Martindale came to his house. Lee’s son, Edwin Grey Lee, also was not present as he was serving in the Confederate Secret Service. Although sick in bed, Henrietta Bedinger Lee attempted to convince Martindale not to carry out his orders, telling him that she inherited the house from her father, Revolutionary soldier Lt. Daniel Bedinger, and thus the property did not belong to her husband. Martindale ignored her pleas, instead instructing his men to place straw throughout the house and then douse it with kerosene. After the fire, Henrietta Bedinger Lee wrote a scathing letter to Gen. Hunter on July 20, 1864, condemning Hunter for his directive. Lee characterized Hunter as being “hyena-like” and “demon-like” for ordering the burning of her house. Lee acknowledged that Martindale was successful in his mission as “the dwelling and every outbuilding, seven in number, with their contents,” were lost in the fire. She concluded that Hunter’s legacy would become “the Hunter of weak women and innocent children; the Hunter to destroy defenseless

\textsuperscript{811} Adams and Watterson, 33-34; Bushong, 219; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 173-174; and Hearn, Six Years of Hell, 255-256.

Forced to negotiate with competing military forces during the four years of fighting, Jefferson County inhabitants sought to maintain self-preservation while also protecting their public and private spaces from military violations. Whereas other Southern communities endured similar experiences during the war, Jefferson County remained continually occupied throughout the entire war. This military occupation led some Jefferson County inhabitants to vacate their homes rather than deal with being under military control. Although Col. John Mead Gould conjectured that “any signs of life inside a house will protect it from mutilation,” soldiers inflicted damage upon houses and personal property. While searching for available space for an officer’s headquarters, Col. John Mead Gould discovered that “as we climbed the hill through every species of filth, we found houses in every degree of mutilation.” Gould continued, “Houses that appeared neat and well occupied in the distance, were found on approaching

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812 Henrietta Bedinger Lee to David Hunter, July 20, 1864, Section 1, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, 1861-ca. 1960s, Mss1 P4299 i 1-35, VHS.


814 Jordan, 111.
to be completely guttered, marks of grossest violence in every quarter." Even if people remained in their homes, they still faced potentially dangerous situations. With both Union and Confederate forces located near Harper’s Ferry in the fall of 1861, Joseph Barry described how “the sides of the houses fronting the Maryland Heights were, of necessity, kept in total darkness, else the fire of the Unionists was sure to be attracted. The sides fronting the south stood in equal danger from the Confederates and, families were obliged to manage so that no lights could be seen by either of the contending forces.” After the Union army gained control of the region in the summer of 1863, some Jefferson County residents began returning to their homes. As the result of the war, these residents found that they would need to rebuild their former lives and social institutions. African Americans refugees who fled to Harper’s Ferry during the war would also need to establish new communities, churches, and educational institutions in the post-war period.

The military occupation of Jefferson County also placed residents who remained in the crosshairs of war, thereby forcing them to negotiate relationships with Union and Confederate soldiers. The constant military occupation of Jefferson County prohibited inhabitants from remaining neutral. Depending upon one’s political allegiance, these interactions could be contentious or beneficial. In his diary, Capt. David Hunter Strother compared the civilian perception of Union soldiers to the opinions held by the combatants regarding the local populace. Jefferson County residents believed that “the

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815 Ibid., 109-110.
816 Barry, 116.
army was a horde of Cossacks and vandals, whose mission was to subjugate the land, to burn, pillage, and destroy.” Conversely, Union soldiers “thought they were entering a country so embittered and infuriated that every man they met was a concealed enemy and an assassin, and every woman a spitfire.”

While some Union soldiers received assistance from local inhabitants, this generally was not the scenario. The contentious relationship between residents and Federal troops could be attributed partly to the antagonistic actions of the soldiers. When the 37th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers marched through Charlestown in August 1864, several regimental drum corps “took up the air of ‘John Brown.’”

The Vermont Brigade made similar musical ovations when parading through Charlestown. The brigade’s band wanted to remind “the rebellious citizens that ‘his soul’ was still ‘marching on.’” A chaplain of the 2nd Massachusetts noted that “at Middleway the Stars and Stripes were greeted with the ugliest of expressions, and “The Star-spangled Banner” and “Hail, Columbia,” with which our band endeavored to edify them, met with disgust.”

In comparison to the experience of Union soldiers, Confederate forces often became the beneficiaries of food, lodging, and companionship from Jefferson County residents. By providing assistance to passing soldiers, Jefferson County women became engaged within the public sphere. Pvt. Edward A. Moore never doubted the loyalty of

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818 Tyler, 266.


the Confederate women, concluding that although “outward demonstrations of necessity diminished,” such as picnics and celebrations, “the devotion on the part of the grand women of that war-swept region only increased.”

Jefferson County women played a significant role within the interaction between the home front and the battlefront. While some soldiers viewed women as being the “girls and matrons” who “amused themselves making casual acquaintances with soldiers by distributing hard-tack,” women cared for wounded soldiers and maintained households.

Charlestown native James B. Craighill believed that the patriotism exhibited by women living in borderland areas, such as Jefferson County, exceeded that of other regions. Craighill asserted that “the women immediately along the border…were far more belligerent than their sister in the interior. This was probably because so often, for months at a time, their homes were in possession of the enemy. They hated Yankees with a bitter hatred, because they saw them so often and suffered at their hands.”

Even after the conclusion of the war, Jefferson County women maintained their participation within the public sphere by memorializing the Confederate dead.

In the midst of war, some combatants still tried to find normalcy in their surroundings. Richard Woolfolk Waldrop of the 21st Virginia Infantry recorded in his diary that after his regiment moved to Shepherdstown on August 4, 1864, he decided to travel into town where he experienced “a most delightful time. There were several

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822 Bates and Bates, 139.

serenading parties in town & everything was in a state of felicitous ecstasy [sic].”

Despite the joyous celebrations held at places, such as the Bower, inhabitants who remained in Jefferson County had to deal with the stark realities of war. Middleway native and Confederate soldier William Lyne Wilson expressed optimism in a letter to his mother on March 24, 1864, that the “continuance of the unhappy state of affairs which has so long existed in Jefferson” soon would conclude. Wilson added, “I hope the day of deliverance is not far removed not only for those parts of the Confederacy which now groan under Yankee rule but for the whole land from the desolation of war.”

The post-war period forced Jefferson County residents to encounter a number of different socio-economic, political, and agricultural changes wrought by the Civil War.

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824 Richard Woolfolk Waldrop diary, August 4, 1864, Richard Woolfolk Waldrop Diary, 1863-1865, Richard Woolfolk Waldrop Papers, 1850-1867, Collection no. 02268-z, SHC.

825 Summers, Borderland Confederate, 77.
CHAPTER IX


After the conclusion of the Civil War, novelist J. T. Trowbridge embarked on a tour of the Southern United States. Trowbridge’s trip allowed him to analyze how the war affected the socio-economic and political structures of the former Confederate states. Beginning his trip in the summer of 1865, Trowbridge arrived in Jefferson County by the fall of that year. Taking in the sights at Harper’s Ferry and Charlestown, Trowbridge presented an in-depth description of the various effects of warfare. When Trowbridge reached Charlestown, one of the sights that he wanted to visit where John Brown was hanged. Trowbridge asked a young, African American girl to take him to the location. As the party traversed through “the wilderness of weeds,” he recalled that the scene before them resembled that of “the rolling prairies of the West, except that these fields of ripening and fading weeds had not the summer freshness of the prairie-grass.” In addition to the growing presence of weeds, Trowbridge observed that “the country all
around us lay utterly desolate, without enclosures, and without cultivation.”

Trowbridge’s pro-Northern depiction of the surrounding landscape contained the theme of wilderness. Fearful that the war left the South void of civilization and development, Northerners placed their perceptions of progress upon the Southern landscape. Trowbridge’s observations also noted the socio-economic and environmental changes caused by the outbreak of the Civil War. Jefferson County residents attempted to negotiate the contested political and economic landscapes that they encountered during the post-war period with varying success. The introduction of new African American communities and social institutions presented different experiences for county inhabitants. While some aspects of Jefferson County’s society remained the same, the social, political, and economic changes wrought by the Civil War represented a change from the antebellum period. Residents accepted and adapted to some of these changes while resisting others. Trowbridge held hope that Jefferson County residents would successfully recover from the war as the area was blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Referencing Harper’s Ferry, he believed that “the tremendous waterpower afforded by its two rushing rivers, and the natural advantage it enjoys as the key to the fertile Shenandoah Valley, Harper’s Ferry, redeemed from slavery, and opened to

Northern enterprise, should become a beautiful and busy town.” Ultimately, the Civil War transformed Jefferson County’s environmental, political, and socio-economic landscapes through different means and to varying degrees.

Although Gen. Robert E. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox, Virginia on April 9, 1865, signified the official conclusion of American Civil War, the end of the conflict presented many changes for Jefferson County’s residents. Soldiers returned to a home front that had endured four years of constant military occupation. During this time, women had cared for the household and family members while trying to navigate the contested borderland as both armies struggled to control the region. The beginning of the conflict levied the most significant blow to Jefferson County’s economy with the destruction of the Federal Armory and Arsenal at Harper’s Ferry. During the war, other Jefferson County businesses struggled to maintain consistent operations for their clientele. The post-war period allowed stores and specialty shops to regain access to distant markets and provide their customers with a wider assortment of goods. While the region’s three transportation struggled to offer dependable wartime services, these networks sought to once again provide reliability and consistency. Each of the transportation systems, however, needed to make repairs to their networks before this goal could be achieved. Farmers who remained on the home front during the war maintained their farms, but often labored to prevent foraging by Union and Confederate soldiers. Furthermore, these planters tried to prevent soldiers from completely destroying their agricultural livelihoods. After the conflict, farmers needed to make repairs to their

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827 Ibid., 68.
agricultural infrastructure and begin replanting their fallow fields. The physical act of planting presented an obstacle, however, as farmers who previously relied upon African American slaves to perform agricultural tasks were forced to find another labor source. While some residents attempted to preserve the socio-economic, political, and agricultural landscapes of the antebellum period, many found this a difficult task to fulfill. Rather, the post-war period presented Jefferson County inhabitants with many new challenges that they had to negotiate and overcome.

While a number of changes occurred in the post-war period, such as the formation of Shepherd College, the focus of this chapter will center on the transformations that held the greatest impact on the socio-economic, political, and agricultural landscapes of the region. One of the most important transformations that evolved from the Civil War for county inhabitants was the formation of the new state of West Virginia. Enlisted soldiers left home in April 1861 living in the state of Virginia, but returned to their hometowns in April 1865 as residents of a new state. Not all Jefferson County inhabitants willing accepted this change nor were all people living within the area now considered citizens. This political change resulted not from a decision made by Jefferson County residents, but as a result of West Virginia politicians wanting to maintain access to the vital connection offered by the B&O. With the loss of the county’s largest employer, several industrial attempts were made to replace the Armory and Arsenal, but with limited economic success. Furthermore, one of the area’s most beneficial natural resources, the presence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, stymied attempts to promote industrial redevelopment as floodwaters ravaged Harper’s Ferry and Virginius Island in 1870.
While entrepreneurs opened new, smaller businesses during the post-war period, these ventures never employed as many laborers as the weapons production. Upon returning to their farmlands, planters needed to make repairs to their fences, replace stolen livestock, identify new labor sources, and rebuild the overall foundation of their farms. The last important modification that occurred within the post-war period was the growth of the African American community within Jefferson County. Despite being freed from enslavement, African Americans continued to endure racial discrimination and challenges to their rights to citizenship. In the post-war period, African Americans became involved in community building by establishing schools and churches. Connected to the formation of educational institutions was the opening of Storer College in Harper’s Ferry. Storer College served as an important component within the lives of African Americans living in Jefferson County and became a facilitator for helping to preserve the memory of John Brown and the Civil War.

Even prior to Virginia’s vote of secession, western white Virginians held a number of meetings during which they condemned the idea of secession. From these gatherings, momentum gathered for western Virginians to determine their political fate. Infuriated over the Virginia Secession Ordinance, John S. Carlile proposed that western Virginians meet and discuss the potential of dismemberment. As a result of Carlile’s “Clarksburg Resolutions,” the First Wheeling Convention was held on May 13, 1861. Wheeling was chosen as the site for the convention as the area possessed a strong majority of Unionists and was located along the border region of Ohio and Pennsylvania. Representatives from twenty-five counties attended the event. While Jefferson County
did not send any representatives to the meeting since the area maintained its loyalty to the Confederacy, neighboring Berkeley County sent three delegates. The delegates at the convention decided to not make any hasty resolutions regarding the choice of whether to break away from the state of Virginia. Although John S. Carlile ardently supported the immediate withdrawal of these counties from Virginia, Francis Pierpont argued that the attendees should advocate against southern secession and if needed appeal to the “proper authorities.”

Virginia’s approval of the secession ordinance shifted the opinion of western Virginians from a wait-and-see approach to one of taking immediate action.

Following Virginia’s decision to secede from the Union, western Virginian delegates reconvened in Wheeling on June 11, 1861, to discuss the possibility of creating a new state. Eighty-two delegates from twenty-seven different counties attended the meeting. Although not elected by county voters, George Koonce represented Jefferson County at the Second Wheeling Convention while Berkeley County did not send any representatives. Dennis B. Dorsey of Monongalia County advocated for the creation of a new state, emphasizing the differences between eastern and western Virginia. Reiterating the political differences that had been expressed at prior meetings, Dorsey believed that

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“the interests of Eastern and Western Virginia are entirely antagonistic. There is an
‘unnatural connection’ between them and us. They will of course keep us down, as they
have already done, if it be possible to for the purpose of meeting their little bills.” 830

Rather than being viewed as a haphazard decision, the idea of forming a new state
evolved from the political differences and concerns that had been expressed in Virginia
throughout the antebellum period. Since eastern Virginians previously ignored western
Virginians’ demands for expanded voting rights and more equal legislative
representation, as well as concerns regarding the equitable application of taxes, western
Virginians concluded that they must form a new state to represent their political needs. 831

Although western Virginians wanted to create a new state, they expressed
concerns regarding the constitutionality of establishing a new state. Skeptics pointed to
Article Four, Section Three of the United States Constitution, which stated that “New
States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed
or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the
junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures
of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.” 832 John S. Carlile of Harrison
County questioned that if western Virginia needed to seek approval from the Virginia

830 Lewis, How West Virginia was Made, 105.

831 Curry, 2; Jenkins, 55, 59; Lewis, How West Virginia was Made, 55-57, 77, 79-80; McGregor,
207; Switala, 112; Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 24; and Bushong, History of
Jefferson County, 191. Curry notes that although many western Virginians expressed Unionist sentiments,
there were still people residing in the region who supported the Confederacy. Over thirty counties sent
delegates to the Second Wheeling Convention. Koonce left Jefferson County during the first year of the
conflict and did not return until after the Union army regained control of the region in 1862.

state legislature then “where is the Legislature, recognized as such, that can give its assent?” Since Virginia had declared secession, its state legislature would not be recognized by Congress as being legitimate, thus if western Virginians wanted to establish a new state they needed to devise another plan for establishing statehood. Therefore, western Virginians decided to establish a “loyal” or “restored” Virginian government, replacing the state government that had seceded from the Union. If Congress officially recognized the Restored Virginian government then western Virginians hoped that this could lead to the formation of a new state. This plan worked as the Senate accepted John S. Carlile and Waitman T. Willey as Virginia’s senators while the House of Representatives admitted three representatives, Jacob B. Blair, William G. Brown, and Kellian V. Whaley. The Restored government established its headquarters in Wheeling and appointed Francis H. Pierpont as governor on June 20, 1861.\(^{834}\)

Reconvening on August 6, 1861, the Second Wheeling Convention delegates sought to introduce a series of resolutions that would solidify the process through which a new state could be proposed. The number of counties represented at the reconvened meeting increased to thirty-one. After debating of how to proceed with their plan for over one week, the Second Wheeling Convention delegates finally adopted a dismemberment ordinance on August 20, 1861, thereby representing the first step toward forming a new state. Entitled, “An Ordinance to Provide for the Formation of a New

\(^{833}\) Lewis, *How West Virginia was Made*, 120.

State Out of a Portion of the Territory of this State,” the decree did not include Jefferson and Berkeley counties within the proposal. The ordinance established “the fourth Thursday in October next” as being the date for the election to join the new state of “Kanawha.” Although Jefferson and Berkeley were not included within the original ordinance, these counties were still permitted to join the newly formed state through an additional clause. Included within the ordinance existed a clause that allowed for additional counties to join if they expressed a desire to enter the new state and the majority of voters agreed to this aspiration. Elections for the creation of a new state occurred on October 24, 1861, with western Virginians voting overwhelmingly in favor of the new state proposal. With the acceptance of the proposal, western Virginia now needed to create a state constitution.

In November 1861, the constitutional convention met in Wheeling to formulate a state constitution. Delegates from thirty-one counties attended the convention with no representatives from Jefferson County being present at the meeting. One of the issues discussed during this meeting was the proposed name of “Kanawha.” Delegates eventually agreed to name the new state, West Virginia. Another topic deliberated at the meeting regarded the existence of slavery within the newly formed state. Should the new state allow for the presence of slavery or should the institution of slavery be banned from

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835 Lewis, *How West Virginia was Made*, 284-285.

836 Ibid., 295, 317-318; McGregor, 233, 240-241; and Smith, *Borderland in the Civil War*, 360. McGregor asserts that Jefferson County did not send any representatives to this meeting, but George Koonce attended the convention. The dismemberment ordinance passed by a vote of fifty to twenty-eight. Jefferson County’s delegate George Koonce voted against the ordinance. The electoral outcome for the new state measure passed with 18,408 people voting in favor and 481 opposed.
the new state? Slavery was not a firmly established institution within western Virginia, especially in comparison to eastern Virginia. Delegates decided to place a clause within the new constitution that allowed for gradual emancipation and prohibited free African Americans and slaves from entering into the state. This clause, Article Eleven, Section Seven, specifically stated that “no slave shall be brought, or free person of color be permitted to come into this State for permanent residence.”

During congressional deliberations over the acceptance of the newly proposed state, this clause led to some political issues.

Besides discussing proposed name changes and the existence of slavery within western Virginia, the constitutional convention delegates also contemplated the boundaries of the new state. The Committee on Boundaries debated whether to include certain counties within the new state, particularly the counties of Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, and Hampshire. One of the primary reasons for including these specific counties within the new state related to the presence of the B&O. Western Virginians expressed concern during the antebellum period about the lack of infrastructure connecting this region to the ports along the Atlantic Ocean. Rather than remaining isolated from the Atlantic regional economy, western Virginians wanted to solidify economic connections to these ports. While the B&O extended its lines to the town of Wheeling by 1853, the possibility of the rail line traveling through Virginia concerned western Virginians. Even if the political entity remained unified, western Virginians

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837 Lewis, *How West Virginia was Made*, 330-331.

838 Ibid., 320; and McGregor, 257, 272-273.
expressed trepidation that eastern Virginia could place regulations or taxes upon the railroad and its freight with western Virginians holding no political recourse. Therefore, western Virginians, such as Waitman T. Willey and Chapman J. Stuart, advocated for including the region of what would become known as the Eastern Panhandle into the newly created state of West Virginia. Willey argued that the B&O represented “the great artery that feeds our country.” Failure to maintain access to this rail line would cripple the state’s “future efforts to increase in population, in wealth and in power…” Stuart agreed with Willey’s assessment, even contending that the convention should annex the counties even if the counties did not choose to become part of the new state.

Constitutional delegates eventually decided to include forty-four counties within the new state unconditionally while excluding Jefferson and Berkeley counties. If these counties wanted to become part of the new state later, then county residents would need to ratify the state constitution. The proposed constitution was placed before the voters on April 3, 1862, and passed by a wide margin. Since Jefferson and Berkeley counties had not agreed to join the state at this point, the residents of those regions did not participate in the approval of the state constitution. The following month, the legislature of the Restored Government granted its consent to creating a new state, thereby allowing the issue to come before the United States Senate.\footnote{Cometti and Summers, 344.}

\footnote{Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 63-64, 82; Curry, 88; Bushong, \textit{History of Jefferson County}, 193; Summers, \textit{Baltimore and Ohio}, 188, 189-190, 192; Cometti and Summers, 344; Lewis, \textit{How West Virginia was Made}, 321, 323; and McGregor, 261, 274. Lewis records the constitution vote as being 18,862 in favor and 512 voters opposed to the measure. McGregor provides a slightly different voting total, indicating that 20,662 voted for the constitution while 440 opposed it.}
Introduced to the United States Senate on June 23, 1862, the statehood bill went before the Senate Territorial Committee for debate. One of the most highly contested issues related to the proposed state’s constitution and the discussion of slavery. The Senate Territorial Committee proposed to amend Article Eleven, Section Seven of the proposed state constitution. The new section, referred to as the Willey Amendment, stated that: “The children of slaves born within the limits of this State after the fourth day of July, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, shall be free and that all slaves within the said State who shall, at the time aforesaid, be under the age of ten years, shall be free when they arrived at the age of twenty-one years; and no slave shall be permitted to come into the State for permanent residence therein.”

This clause also stated that “no slave shall be brought, or free person of color be permitted to come into this State for permanent residence.” After a lengthy debate in both houses of Congress, the statehood legislation reached President Lincoln’s desk. Lincoln deliberated over whether he should sign the bill as he was concerned over the constitutionality of creating a new state. Before making his decision, Lincoln asked his Cabinet for their opinions on the matter. Lincoln’s Cabinet split on the matter, but each member provided the president with their thoughts on the issue. Ultimately, Lincoln decided in favor of creating the new state. Lincoln officially signed the bill on December 31, 1862. Since the proposed state constitution had been amended, citizens once again needed to vote on the constitutional changes. On March 26, 1863, the amended constitution passed overwhelmingly.

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841 Lewis, *How West Virginia was Made*, 330-331; and Cometti and Summers, 351.

842 Lewis, *How West Virginia was Made*, 330-331.
than one month after this vote, President Lincoln formally signed the proclamation that allowed the state of West Virginia to be admitted into the Union on June 20, 1863, as the thirty-fifth state. On the same day that West Virginia was admitted into the Union, Arthur I. Boreman was inaugurated as the state’s new governor.\textsuperscript{843}

Wanting to ensure that both Berkeley and Jefferson counties became part of West Virginia, the vote regarding the state constitution did not occur until after West Virginia’s entrance into the Union. Prior to Jefferson County holding the statehood election, Harper’s Ferry resident Daniel J. Young wrote to Restored Governor Francis H. Pierpont on May 14, 1862, asking the governor to hold elections. Young identified “seven freeholders and loyal men who were willing, if appointed by the governor, to serve as commissioners of such an election.”\textsuperscript{844} Despite Young’s appeal, legislators within the Restored Government wanted to delay the vote in these counties until the Federal army completely controlled the area. Both counties conducted their elections on the fourth Thursday in May 1863. Only those who pledged an oath of loyalty were permitted to participate in the elections. Besides being away from their homes, county residents serving in the Confederate army were restricted from voting due to their military service. Voters in both counties approved the measure to join West Virginia by wide margins. In Berkeley County, 665 people favored joining West Virginia and only seven voters

\textsuperscript{843} Ibid., 325-330, 330-331, 333; McGregor, 289-290, 295, 314, 319, 320; Bushong, \textit{History of Jefferson County}, 193; and Cometti and Summers, 358-359, 378. Lewis and McGregor’s works differ on the total votes for the amended constitution. Lewis asserts that the amended constitution was approved 27,749 in favor and only 572 opposed while McGregor provides a smaller voting total. McGregor contends that 18,862 approved of the amended constitution with only 514 voting against the measure.

\textsuperscript{844} Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 114.
opposed the measure. In Jefferson County, only two of the eight polling stations opened for voting purposes: Harper’s Ferry and Shepherdstown. Similar to Berkeley County, the vote in Jefferson County went in favor of joining West Virginia by a wide margin: 248 to 2. At Harper’s Ferry, only one person voted against the measure while 196 people voted for the annexation. Voter turnout at Shepherdstown was much smaller with only fifty-two electorates favoring the measure while one person voted against it. Although the elections were held on the same day, Berkeley became part of the state earlier on August 5, 1863. Nearly three months after Berkeley’s acceptance into the state, Jefferson County followed on November 2, 1863.\textsuperscript{845}

Although the statehood measure passed in both counties, Jefferson County residents complained of fraudulent results. Perhaps the reason that Berkeley County citizens did not contest the election related to a higher percentage of Unionists living in the county. Confederate supporters living in Jefferson County protested the vote, arguing that voting opportunities had been restricted with only two polling stations being open and that no previous announcements had been made regarding voting information. The \textit{Spirit of Jefferson} also speculated that voting improprieties occurred as the newspaper claimed that “not one man in each hundred of those living at and near the county seat Charlestown, Kabletown, and Smithfield, that ever heard of the intended election, until long after the day on which it was held had passed.”\textsuperscript{846} The paper made additional claims


\textsuperscript{846} \textit{Spirit of Jefferson}, January 23, 1866. Although the paper used the town name of Smithfield, the town was also referred to as Middleway.
of fraudulent voting practices observing that the location of the two polls were “both north of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad—a line that was closely and strictly guarded by a chain of military sentinels, through which it was almost impossible to obtain the privilege of passing.”\textsuperscript{847} Furthermore, several citizens pointed to the poll books as a source of contention. Alexander Robinson Boteler claimed that after the polls closed, an additional 170 votes in favor of joining the new state were added to the roster.

Additionally, Boteler asserted that some of the voters who went to the Shepherdstown voting booths were not legally registered to vote and that only nineteen people voted in the election rather than the fifty-three indicated in the electoral results. Unfortunately, the poll book for the Shepherdstown polls could not be located to verify the vote or Boteler’s accusations. The \textit{Spirit of Jefferson} alleged that only “ninety-one names [were] found on the poll-books—some of these were illegal voters, and the major portion of them were men who had but little property stake in the community.”\textsuperscript{848} In addition to complaining about the voting practices, residents held several meetings to protest the electoral results. The first meeting was held on May 19, 1865, in Shepherdstown with additional gatherings being held in Charlestown and Middleway in September 1865.\textsuperscript{849}

\textsuperscript{847} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{848} \textit{Spirit of Jefferson}, January 9, 1866.

\textsuperscript{849} Davis, 290; and Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 36, 115, 118, 146-147. If Boteler’s claims proved to be correct of adding extra votes to the totals, this indicates that less than one hundred people voted in favor of the measure. Phillips suggests that Jefferson County was not the only county to submit suspicious electoral results as he indicates that there also existed questions in Braxton, Boone, Clay, Raleigh, and Tucker counties.
After the conclusion of the Civil War, Virginia argued that the previous dismemberment of the state was unconstitutional and thereby illegal. Virginia reiterated the complaints made by Jefferson County residents, arguing that voters in Berkeley and Jefferson counties had been coerced to vote in favor of creating a new state. The state also cited that only a small minority of eligible voters participated in the vote, thus the results did not reflect the opinion of the majority of the citizens affected by the vote. Finally, Virginia asserted that since the two counties were not included within the initial annexation proposal, but instead added later, that the counties should be returned to Virginia. Virginia concluded that Berkeley and Jefferson counties should not be considered part of West Virginia, but instead returned to their former state. Jefferson County citizens not only complained of their political plight on the local level, but also sought change by appealing to the state and federal government. Andrew Hunter wrote to Virginia Governor Francis H. Pierpont requesting that he take action to repeal the annexation of Jefferson County, but Pierpont did not acquiesce to Hunter’s request. Charlestown residents also demonstrated their strong support for returning to Virginia as they petitioned the United States Congress and Virginia General Assembly in September 1865 to repeal the act that allowed Jefferson County to become part of West Virginia. Unfortunately for Hunter and these Charlestown citizens, their appeals did not come to fruition.850

Tensions over West Virginia’s annexation of Berkeley and Jefferson counties evolved into a discussion within the United States Congress before eventually being heard by the United States Supreme Court. Radical Republicans in Congress opposed any measures that would allow for the transfer of these counties back to Virginia. Instead, West Virginia supporters argued that the “loyal” residents of the county already had decided the matter.851 The West Virginia legislature appealed to Congress on January 25, 1866, urging “the speedy passage of a bill or joint resolution by Congress giving its consent to the Annexation and transfer of said Counties to the State of West Virginia, ratifying and approving the same.”852 On March 10, 1866, Congress passed a resolution acknowledging Jefferson and Berkeley counties as being part of West Virginia. Members of the Virginia General Assembly did not agree with the decision, and thus decided to sue the state of West Virginia over the control of these counties. This legal matter was brought before the United States Supreme Court in Virginia v. West Virginia in 1867. Charlestown resident Andrew Hunter and former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Benjamin R. Curtis argued the case for Virginia. Short one justice, the Supreme Court evenly divided on the matter four-to-four. The case carried over to the 1870 term to wait until the court once again contained nine justices. The Supreme Court justices ruled by a


852 “Resolution Concerning the Annexation of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” January 25, 1866, Section 2, Kellian Van Rensalear Whaley Papers, 1861-1879, Mss1 W5539 a, VHS.
decision of six to three in 1871 that the previously held elections were considered legitimate and therefore Jefferson and Berkeley counties would remain under the jurisdiction of West Virginia.\textsuperscript{853}

Therefore, a county that initially expressed reluctance to support secession, enlisted a significant number of men in the Confederate army, and sent representatives to the Confederate Congress found itself in the post-war period fighting to return to the state of Virginia. County historian Millard Kessler Bushong asserts that Jefferson County residents refused to admit that they lived in West Virginia from the formation of the state in 1863 until the final Supreme Court decision. Middleway residents continued to identify with the Confederacy in the post-war period and refused to acknowledge their existence as West Virginians. In November 1865, Charlestown residents attempted to hold an election during which they would vote for candidates running for office in Virginia. Upon hearing of their plans, West Virginia Governor Arthur I. Boreman requested that President Andrew Johnson send armed forces to Charlestown to ensure that the election was not held. Johnson sent Federal troops to Charlestown, thus leading residents to abandon their plan. Charlestown’s newspaper, Spirit of Jefferson, continued to identify itself as being from Charlestown, Virginia through December 1870. Bushong argues that only after the Supreme Court decision did residents begin to identify with West Virginia rather than Virginia. Besides having to deal with the issues of coming

home to a new state after the war, formers soldiers and Confederate sympathizers also needed to address other political changes that resulted from the war.  

Confederate soldiers and sympathizers discovered in the post-war period that the West Virginia legislature had passed a law that compelled them to take a test oath before being allowed to vote. Therefore, returning Confederate veterans and those who supported their war effort had to make a choice of taking an oath of allegiance to the Union or forfeiting their rights as citizens of the United States. Andrew Hunter, who had prosecuted John Brown, signed the Amnesty Oath on July 22, 1865. By signing the oath and pledging to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America, Hunter became an eligible voter. The oath signed by Hunter included a clause that stated, “I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves…” Not all Jefferson County inhabitants took kindly to the legal constraints placed upon them. Edwin Esten Cooke of Charlestown noted in October 1865 that “to make ourselves good citizens, it is necessary to begin with perjury.” Although some Jefferson County residents refused to pledge their allegiance to the Union, they still

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854 Phillips, “Transfer of Jefferson and Berkeley Counties,” 102-103, 150; Bushong, General Turner Ashby, 145; Bates and Bates, 155; William Lawrence, “Transfer of Counties to West Virginia,” p. 6, Pamphlet, 975.4 U58 Pam, WVSA; Davis, 290; Adams and Watterson, 28; Cometti and Summers, 458; and Spirit of Jefferson, December 20, 1870. Alexander Robinson Boteler first represented Jefferson County in the Provisional Confederate Congress and then later in the First Confederate Congress. Edwin L. Moore served in the Confederate Senate until 1864 when he resigned. Andrew Hunter replaced Moore in January 1864. In 1863, Jacob S. Melvin and William Burnett served as delegates to the Confederate Congress.

855 “Andrew Hunter Amnesty Oath,” Section 1, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, 1861-ca. 1960s, Mss1 P4299 c 63, VHS.

attempted to participate in the voting process. In Middleway, Thomas Watson and Frank Barringer arrived at the polls where election officials explained to them that they could not vote in the election until they took the oath of allegiance. Infuriated with this explanation, Watson and Barringer seized the ballot box and walked outside. The men proceeded to take the ballot box to “a curbstone where it was deliberately smashed and its contents scattered.” Following this event, county officials issued arrest warrants for Watson and Barringer. While Barringer turned himself into authorities, Watson continued to defying capture by heavily arming himself. Eventually, the case was resolved with Watson surrendering himself to authorities and both men agreeing to subscribe to the oath of allegiance. Jefferson County was not the only region within West Virginia to encounter issues regarding voting and taking the oath of allegiance.

The failure to comply with the disenfranchisement law in West Virginia caused consternation for Governor Arthur I. Boreman. Boreman wrote to his brother, Jacob, on May 14, 1866, relating how the West Virginia legislature was attempting to deal with the issue. “We have a most desperate contest in this state, going on just now, over the proposition to amend our constitution so as to disfranchise rebels & rendering them ineligible for office,” wrote Boreman. The governor informed his brother one month later that “our constitutional amendment, disfranchising rebels, is adopted by over 7000

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857 Bates and Bates, 156.

858 Cometti and Summers, 443-444; and Bates and Bates, 156-157.

majority, but the rebels & their friends are still quarrelling & denouncing the Union men.\textsuperscript{860} Despite this amendment, there still existed some Jefferson County residents who balked at these legal constraints.

Whereas Hunter pledged his loyalty to the Union, other Jefferson County residents refused to take similar actions. Alexander Robinson Boteler, who had served in the Confederate Congress and on Stonewall Jackson’s staff, remained disenfranchised until 1872. When amending the state constitution, the West Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1872 repealed the act that prevented former Confederates from voting. Following this appeal, Boteler ran for Congress in 1872 and again in 1874 as an Independent Conservative. After being arrested for refusing to pray for President Lincoln after his assassination, Reverend Charles W. Andrews and several other local ministers were arrested for their actions. Before being released from prison, each of the ministers were compelled to take an oath of loyalty. Although the men initially refused, they eventually took the oath. Upon returning home, James B. Craighill found a Union soldier stationed in the front of his parent’s house. Craighill was brought before a Union officer who presented him a printed form to sign. Rather than signing the document, Craighill claimed that he remained a “paroled prisoner” as he never subscribed to the oath of allegiance.\textsuperscript{861} Another county native, William Lyne Wilson, expressed a desire to return after the war and run for legislative office or practice law. Wilson was unable to do

\textsuperscript{860} Arthur I. Boreman to Jacob Boreman, June 26, 1866, Arthur I. Boreman Papers, 1863-1895, A&M 104, WVRHC.

\textsuperscript{861} James B. Craighill, “Personal Recollections of the John Brown Raid at Harper’s Ferry and of the Civil War,” ed. G. B. Craighill, Jr., p. 50, TBL. Craighill maintained his stance as a “paroled prisoner” even when recounting his recollections of the war in February 1912.
either, however, as West Virginia law prohibited former Confederates from practicing law. When he finally returned home in 1871, Wilson opened his law practice. The following decade, he ran as the Democratic candidate in the Second West Virginia Legislative District. Wilson served in this position for twelve years as a strict interpreter of the Constitution and an advocate for minimal government involvement in the economy. In addition to the political changes that occurred as a result of the conflict, the war also caused some physical damage that led to additional political issues.\(^{862}\)

The destruction caused by the war contributed to additional post-war political changes as the county courthouse in Charlestown endured significant damage during the conflict. Both armies used the courthouse and jail for shelter when stationed in Charlestown, as well as a stable. The legal complex also experienced damage on October 18, 1863 when Gen. John D. Imboden’s shelled the area. Following this skirmish, the buildings became dilapidated. When visiting Charlestown in the fall of 1865, author J. T. Trowbridge described the courthouse as “a ruin abandoned to rats and toads.” Trowbridge justified these comments by depicting the remnants of the courthouse: “Four mossy white brick pillars, still standing, supported a riddled roof, through which God’s blue sky and gracious sunshine smiled. The main portion of the building had been literally torn to pieces. In the floorless hall of justice rank weeds were growing. Names of Union soldiers were scrawled along the walls.”\(^{863}\) Unable to continue governing from

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\(^{862}\) Adams and Watterson, 37; “Alexander R. Boteler’s 1872 Political Announcement for Candidacy,” Section 4, Thornton Tayloe Perry Papers, 1861-ca. 1960s, Mss1 P4299 c 122, VHS; Shepherdstown Civil War Diary, April 20, 1865, typescript, A&M 76, Shepherdstown (W.Va.) Civil War Diary, WVRHC; and Summers, Borderland Confederate, 92, 108, 109.

\(^{863}\) Trowbridge, 71.
Charlestown, the county seat relocated to Shepherdstown in February 1865. Although Trowbridge predicted that the county seat would “forever” remain in Shepherdstown as the “resolute loyal citizens of Jefferson County” would prohibit the county seat from relocating again, Charlestown’s residents thought differently.\textsuperscript{864} Originally intended to be used as a town hall, Rezin D. Shepherd allowed the county government to use the newly built structure as long as the government promised to maintain Shepherdstown as the county seat. Shepherdstown continued serving as the seat for county government until 1871 when Charlestown residents petitioned the West Virginia state legislature in January of that year to return the county seat to Charlestown. The residents’ appeal eventually was heard by the West Virginia Supreme Court who ruled in favor of Charlestown in July 1871. In addition to the political changes brought forth by the conclusion of the conflict, the war also drastically transformed Jefferson County’s economic landscape.\textsuperscript{865}

The most significant economic change that occurred during the war resulted from the complete destruction of the Harper’s Ferry Armory and Arsenal. After Lt. Roger Jones set fire to the industrial complex on April 18, 1861, armory workers were left without any form of employment. The loss of jobs led many armorers to seek employment at other weapons manufacturers, including Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Springfield, Massachusetts. One of the only remaining legacies of this once important

\textsuperscript{864} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{865} Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 202; Phillips, Lower Shenandoah Valley, 75-76; Cohen, 73; Charles Town Bicentennial, 1786-1986, 50; and Sanders, 28, 29. The courthouse in Shepherdstown eventually became McMurran Hall on the Shepherd College campus.
industrial complex was the “burnt-out, empty shells” of the Federal Armory and Arsenal buildings. Even after the war, former armory workers continued searching for employment as gunsmiths. In a letter of recommendation, former armory employee, R. H. Bella, was described as being “desirous of permanent employment at some one of the Western Arsenals.” The letter of recommendation characterized Bella as being a “skilled gunsmith” and “every way qualified for Government work.” The economic void left by the loss of this industry would not be replaced in the post-war period. Although Jefferson County citizens hoped that the Federal government would assist in rebuilding the area’s industry, there existed no interest from the government to help with the economic reconstruction of the town.

Since Congress did not express any interest in rebuilding the Armory and Arsenal, the federal government needed to decide how to proceed with the former industrial grounds. In 1869, Congress elected to divide the lands and sell the lots to individuals. While some Harper’s Ferry residents purchased plots of land, including James C. McGraw, Nicholas Marmion, George Koonce, and Edmund H. Chambers, people from outside the community also bought some parcels. In total, townspeople purchased 240 lots with some longing to receive a lucrative return on their investment. Land speculators were among those who bought land, as they hoped that Harper’s Ferry economy would return to levels of its pre-war prosperity. The federal government also sold timber and

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866 Trowbridge, 66.

867 H.K.C. to unaddressed, April 17, 1866, Box 1, Folder 2, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.

868 Conway, Harpers Ferry, 72; and Everhart and Sullivan, 62.
water rights to individuals. David M. King purchased timber rights along the south side of the Shenandoah River for $3,600 and William C. Bradley acquired the mining rights for the 1,600 acre tract of Friends Ore-bank, which was located north of Harper’s Ferry near Bakerton. Capt. Francis C. Adams and a group of Washington D. C. investors acquired the water power rights on the Shenandoah River for $30,000, as well as the water power rights on the Potomac River for substantially more money, $176,000. Capt. Adams also purchased some of the former armory lots and property near Hall’s Rifle Works with the intention of developing the land. Following the 1870 and 1877 floods, some property buyers filed for abatement, claiming that they had paid inflated land values. The lack of industrial growth by Adams, decreased property values, and the inability of some landowners to pay their debts led the Federal government to repurchase some of the former armory lands at a significantly reduced price. Nearly ten years after the war had ended, minimal economic development had occurred on the former armory lands with only twelve houses present and the majority of the lots remained vacant. Adams’ lands were seized eventually by the federal government as he never paid for his property. While the former armory lands failed to be developed, other investors sought to capitalize on Jefferson County’s natural resources.869

Jefferson County’s economy remained diversified in the post-war period with different businesses forming. Lewis Castle and Frank P. Neville established a partnership

869 James P. Noffsinger, “Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, Contributions towards a Physical History,” [1957], A&M 3712, typescript manuscript, p. 51-52, 136-140, WVRHC; Shackel and Lucas, 2.3; Barry, 145, 172; and Paul A. Shackel, Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape, with a foreword by Dwight T. Pitcaithley (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press,2003), 55. Twenty-nine property owners filed for abatement claiming that the propensity for flooding led to decreased property values. Originally paying $39,775 for these lots, the abated properties were valued at $9,669.35.
in July 1865 and opened a portable sawmill at Harper’s Ferry “for the purpose of cutting, sawing, and transporting timber to market.”\footnote{“Lewis Castle and Frank P. Neville Business Agreement,” July 10, 1865, Box 1, Folder 1, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.} The steam driven sawmill began operations the following July as the business sent completed lumber on the B&O to Charlestown. In March 1871, Castle entered a business agreement with David Delander of Petersville, Maryland, thereby suggesting that Neville no longer owned part of the sawmill. Delander agreed to pay Castle $950 for his share in the business. Castle remained a partner in the business until 1880 when he encountered financial problems. Daniel Castle of Frederick, Maryland wrote to Castle’s son, Lewis D. Castle, regarding the family’s financial difficulties. “A little over three years ago your Father came to me representing that his interest in the mill had been sold & he had nothing to do to support his Family & asked me to endorse two Notes in order to get possession of the Mill again as it was his only means of support,” wrote Daniel Castle. However, Daniel Castle now indicated that he could no longer pay on the notes, “but do not wish to sell it.” Instead, Daniel Castle hoped that Lewis and his brother, Thomas, could support his father’s business so Lewis Castle could “use the mill another year as I believe they have the promise of a large job this spring.”\footnote{Daniel Castle to Lewis D. Castle, January 27, 1880, Box 1, Folder 7, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.} Lewis D. Castle responded the following month telling his uncle that he and his brother could not raise the needed funds. Without the necessary funds, Castle was forced to close his business. After the company closed, Thomas Castle wrote to his brother chastising him “for entering into any law business,”
when their father could maintain his business or pay rent.\footnote{Thomas Castle to Lewis D. Castle, January 5, 1882, Box 2, Folder 1, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.} Whereas Castle’s mill closed due to financial difficulties, other Jefferson County mills encountered different obstacles.\footnote{Gilbert, Waterpower, 14; “Castle and Neville receipt,” July 30, 1866, Box 1, Folder 2, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR; “Lewis Castle and David Delander Business Agreement,” March 16, 1871, Box 1, Folder 3, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR; and Lewis D. Castle to Daniel Castle, February 15, 1880, Box 1, Folder 7, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.}

Initially, Virginius Island maintained a strong industrial presence following the war. Rather than rebuilding his flour mill that had been destroyed in October 1861, Abraham Herr decided to sell his Virginius Island property. In 1867, Jonathan C. Child and John McCreight purchased the buildings, water rights, and property formerly owned by Herr for $75,000. Child and McCreight converted the old cotton mill on Virginius Island into a flour mill and named it Ferry Mills. According to the owners, Ferry Mills possessed a production capacity of 300 barrels of flour per day. By 1870, Ferry Mills employed twenty men and ground 400,000 bushels of wheat, which equaled 80,000 barrels of flour. Ferry Mills’ production rates drastically exceeded Herr’s pre-war production capabilities as Herr had only produced 32,000 barrels of flour in 1860. Child and McCreight also rehabilitated other buildings on Virginius Island. The men leased some of their holdings to other companies, including the Excelsior Planing Mills and Lumber Yard. Similar to Herr’s mill, the presence of Ferry Mills also spurred the opening of a cooper shop on Virginius Island. This cooperage supplied barrels to Ferry Mills. In 1870, the cooperage manufactured 40,000 barrels and employed sixteen men.
In 1884, Thomas Savery of Wilmington, Delaware, also purchased land on Virginius Island and Hall’s Island. In 1887, Savery established the Harper’s Ferry Paper Mill on Virginius Island and a pulp mill on Hall’s Island. Built on the former site of the Federal Armory’s rolling mill, the paper mill received enthusiastic support from the Virginia Free Press. On November 3, 1887, the newspaper rejoiced that “the ruins of the Government Works along the Potomac, are now blown up with dynamite, and soon will be a thing of the past.”\footnote{Virginia Free Press, November 3, 1887.} The paper mill owned many of the dwellings on Virginius Island, thereby renting the houses to company workers. The pulp mill employed fifty-one men and had a production capacity of forty tons per day. The W&P laid secondary tracks to service both of these industries. Although attempts were made to promote industrial development both in the town of Harper’s Ferry and Virginius Island, these economic efforts would be hampered severely in 1870.\footnote{Shackel, Culture Change, 49, 50; Shackel and Lucas, 2.3; Moyer and Shackel, 21, 22, 144; Bushong, History of Jefferson County, 218; Joseph, Wheelock, Warshaw, and Kriemelmeyer, 4.12, 4.23; Hannah, vii, 57, 87; James P. Noffsinger, “Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, Contributions towards a Physical History,” [1957], A&M 3712, typescript manuscript, p. 48-49, WVRHC; Gilbert, Waterpower, 132, 151; and Barry, 172.}

Ever since Robert Harper settled the region in 1740, the area of Harper’s Ferry had been prone to floods. Following a relatively dry summer in 1870, the raging floodwaters of the Shenandoah River tore down the Shenandoah Valley in September 1870, completely wrecking many of the houses and businesses in Harper’s Ferry and on Virginius Island. Child and McCreight’s flour mill endured a significant amount of damage from this flood. Jonathan Child’s wife, Emily, described the damage caused to
her husband’s business. “The valuable property belonging to the firm of which John is a member is a mass of ruins and we have barely escaped with our lives,” she bemoaned. She added that the mill “lost several hundred barrels, some feed and one of their scales but if it were not for the destruction of the race, could go to grinding in a few days, but the race is the greatest calamity of all. The head gates are gone, walls are torn down and the race filled with sand.”

Although Child and McCreight reopened their mill after this devastating flood, they only operated their mill intermittently. According to the 1880 manufacturing census, Child and McCreight’s mill only produced 26,200 barrels of flour. Thus, Child and McCreight’s production rate decreased by nearly seventy percent in comparison the 1870 manufacturing report. Ferry Mills also experienced operational problems in 1887 as Thomas Savery built a dam above the flour mill for his pulp mill. The construction of the Savery’s dam created Lake Quigley, which prevented Ferry Mills from gaining continual access to their needed energy source. Eventually, Child and McCreight sold the mill to a several Philadelphia business owners. The Philadelphia proprietors continued operating the mill as Harper’s Ferry Mill Company until 1889 when another devastating flood finally led the owners to terminate operations. The closure of the mill left Savery’s pulp mill as the only industry left in Harper’s Ferry. Savery also encountered limited production capabilities, however, as inconsistent water levels and the lack of substantial timber curbed the industry’s success. In addition to these industrial attempts, smaller business also emerged in the post-war period.

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876 Quoted in Gilbert, Waterpower, 134-135.

877 Conway, Harpers Ferry, 72; Shackel, Culture Change, 49; Hannah, 3, 86; Gilbert, Waterpower, 135-138, 157; Janssen, 30; Wellman, 158; Shackel and Lucas, 2.3; 1870 United States
As the result of fire and wartime activities, Harper’s Ferry’s lower business
district needed to be rebuilt in the post-war period. Following the 1870 flood, smaller
businesses began replacing the larger industrial ventures within the town. This pattern of
establishing small businesses in the town’s business district continued for the duration
of the nineteenth century. The Gilbert Brothers Wholesale Druggists, operated by William
E. Gilbert and John Jay Gilbert, advertised their location as being “near the old
armory.”

Dr. Nicholas Marmion purchased paper, carpet tacks, lemons, and envelopes
from Gilbert Brothers in January 1877. By 1890, John Jay Gilbert remained the only
operator of the drug store. Marmion continued to frequent the store, purchasing sealing
wax, turpentine, and French mustard from the business. Entrepreneur James McGraw
participated in multiple economic ventures. Besides running a grocery and hardware
store, McGraw expanded his business in the 1870s by selling coal. He increased his
business opportunities the following decade by establishing a small bottling company in
his back yard. The success of the bottling company led McGraw to open a brewery in
1895, but a fire and then bankruptcy eventually led to his financial demise. Similar to the
varying entrepreneurial successes in Harper’s Ferry, the economic landscape within the
rest of Jefferson County experienced various prosperity and failures.

Census, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; and 1880 United States Census,
Jefferson County, West Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule.

878 Gilbert Brothers Wholesale Druggist receipt, January 1877, Section 3, Marmion Family Papers,
1822-1928, Mss1 M3455 a, VHS.

879 Shackel, Culture Change, 50; Gilbert Brothers Wholesale Druggist receipt, January 1877,
Section 3, Marmion Family Papers, 1822-1928, Mss1 M3455 a, VHS; John Jay Gilbert Wholesale
Druggist, receipt, 1890, Section 3, Marmion Family Papers, 1822-1928, Mss1 M3455 a, VHS; Winter,
“Social Dynamics,” 22-23; Deborah A. Hull-Walski and Frank L. Walski, “There’s Trouble-a-Brewin’:
The Brewing and Bottling Industries at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia,” in An Archaeology of Harpers
Initially, the Shepherdstown cement mill remained idle after the war. Before being able to resume production, Maj. Harry Woodward Blunt had to make repairs to the mill and kilns. After taking care of the necessary maintenance, Blunt reopened the business in 1867. One of the important changes that Blunt made to the cement mill in the post-war period was the incorporation of steam power. The unpredictability of the Potomac River, particularly low water levels, often limited the mill’s production capabilities. With the implementation of steam power, the cement mill could rely upon this power source when water levels became too low. The company employed twenty-five men by 1879, a number that remained below pre-war employment levels. The mill struggled to remain competitive, however, as Portland cement, an artificial blend of calcareous and argillaceous materials, became popular and cheaper toward the end of the nineteenth century. The Shepherdstown cement mill also did not update their kilns. Other cement companies began using rotary kilns, which lessened production and labor costs, and thereby allowing other cement companies to produce their product at a lower cost than at the Shepherdstown mill. In 1899, the Shepherdstown cement mill produced 52,727 barrels of cement, which represented less than one percent of the total amount of cement manufactured within the United States. The mill continued to produce cement until 1901 when Blunt passed away. The closure of the cement mill signified the loss of


Small businesses also dominated the economic landscape of other Jefferson County communities. The ability of the region’s transportations networks to maintain service to regional markets allowed general stores to continue providing their customers with a variety of products. Franklin Osburn’s general store in Kabletown stocked their shelves with tobacco, dry goods, apples, beef, and potatoes for its clientele. Although Joseph Entler’s grocery store in Shepherdstown sold a variety of items, including whiskey, apples, and wood, the primary goods sold in the post-war period consisted of beef, veal, and mutton sales. Many of the same Shepherdstown residents who shopped at Entler’s store prior to the war continued to frequent the business afterward, including John H. Zittle, David Billmyer, and S. P. Hamrickhouse. Specialty shops also diversified the economic landscape. An unidentified Shepherdstown butcher maintained an account book in the post-war period detailing business transactions. This particular butcher sold meat to customers on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays with consumers frequenting the shop on a weekly basis. Patrons generally purchased mutton and beef from this Shepherdstown butcher shop. Among the customers who visited the shop were Alexander Robinson Boteler, John Quigley, members of the Billmyer family, and
members of the R. D. Shepherd family. Powell & Lee of Shepherdstown, which sold tobacco during the war, continued selling products in Northern markets and throughout Virginia in the post-war period. Other specialty shops advertised their goods and services to customers in the Shepherdstown Register during the post-war period, including Humrickhouse & Wintemoyer’s Clothing Store, Mrs. S. J. Osbourn’s Confectionary, and Jonathan L. Rickard’s Millinery shop. Flour mills also remained part of Jefferson County’s post-war economic landscape.

Jefferson County’s flour mills encountered varying financial results after the war. While these mills did not equal the production rates of larger enterprises, such as Herr’s mill, the mills continued to service area farmers. In 1870, eighteen flour mills were in operation in Jefferson County. Led by Ferry Mills, these mills produced 115,330 barrels of flour. The average production rate for these mills was 6,407 barrels of flour. Although the number of mills increased by 1880 to twenty, production rates significantly declined. In 1880, these twenty mills only produced 46,240 barrels of flour for an average of 2,312 barrels per mill. The decrease in Ferry Mills’ production largely contributed to the overall decrease in flour production in this period. David Billmyer’s Shepherdstown mill initially maintained operations, but Billmyer indicated in his correspondence that his enterprise was encountering financially difficulties. On January 16, 1867, Billmyer noted that “business is as good as you could expect as with the

881 Franklin Osburn Account Book, 1850-1874, vol. 2, Section 1, Franklin Osburn Papers, 1849-1875, Ms1 Os15 a, VHS; Joseph Entler Ledger, 1866-1875, OCLC 20748796, DMR; Butcher Account Books, Jefferson County, West Virginia, 1866-1871, MsS MsV Ab35-38, WMSC; Powell & Lee Account Book, 1864-1896, Section 2, Powell Family Papers, 1862-1936, Ms1 P8718 b, VHS; and Shepherdstown Register, January 1, 1881.
scarcity of money.” Billmyer also owned a stone warehouse located along Town Run. In 1870, Billmyer sold the warehouse and “eight acres of ground attached” to “a man by the name of Ashton from Philadelphia.” The new owner intended to covert the warehouse into a paper mill “which will give employment to a good many hands.” Solomon Vance Yantis, who served as a tobacco dealer in Charlestown, also was part-owner of Ferry Mills in Harp’s Ferry. In February 1872, Yantis’ son, Arnold, indicated that his father’s business experienced financial difficulties previously. The younger Yantis asked his father, “How are you getting along in mill matters [?] [A]re you making much flour now and is it salable [?] I hope that this is a profitable year for your business.” Yantis’ investment in Ferry Mills proved to be a failure as the mill was sold and then eventually closed. While some mills experienced problems, one entrepreneur sought to utilize a former flour mill for another purpose.

Whereas some mills resumed producing flour and meal for Jefferson County farmers, there also existed an example of a flour mill being repurposed for other means. The Eyster family purchased a flour mill in Halltown after the war and converted it into a paper-making plant. Writing to Jennie Chambers in November 1870, Davis described his

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882 David Billmyer to M. D. Billmyer, January 16, 1867, Box 1, Folder 3, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR. The letter mistakenly is located in folder three of the collection as this folder corresponds to the dates between 1856 and 1859.

883 H. Smith Crowl to Willie Billmyer, February 13, 1870, Box 2, Folder 2, Billmyer Family Papers, 1832-1906, OCLC 19243006, DMR. Crowl hoped that the combination of the paper mill and a proposed rail line near Shepherdstown “will brighten our town considerably.”

884 Arnold S. Yantis to Solomon Vance Yantis, February 2, 1872, Box 144, Solomon Vance Yantis Papers, 1863-1896, OCLC 20272966, DMR.

885 Gilbert, Waterpower, 132; 1870 United States Census, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule; and 1880 United States Census, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule.

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tour of the Virginia Paper Mill. Davis depicted the mill as being “quite interesting. The simplicity & rapidity of the process by which-before your eyes-they change straw into paper is remarkable.”\(^{886}\) Farmers utilized the presence of the paper mill to sell their straw to the industry. In 1880, the Virginia Paper Mill produced 4 million pounds of paper and employed sixty-five workers. The plant continues to operate in the present-day producing cardboard from recycled paper. In addition to the development of various businesses, the three transportation networks continued to service Jefferson County during the post-war period.\(^{887}\)

Despite having endured a number of disruptions and structural damage during the conflict, Jefferson County’s three transportation systems remained in operation after the war. The B&O remained the dominant transportation network within Jefferson County. While the B&O needed to make repairs to its lines after the war, one of the most important issues that needed addressed in the post-war period was replacing the bridge crossed over the Potomac River. By the time that novelist J. T. Trowbridge arrived in Harper’s Ferry in the fall of 1865, the railroad company had finished building a new bridge “near the ruins of the old one destroyed by the Rebels.”\(^{888}\) As the B&O expanded westward in the post-war period, the company’s revenues also increased. The business did not immediately experience economic growth in the first three years after the war,

\(^{886}\) Charles Davis to Jennie Chambers, November 15, 1870, Box 1, Folder 3, Jennie Chambers Papers, 1838-1936, OCLC 19465015, DMR.

\(^{887}\) Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 57; Dolly Nasby, Charles Town (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 49; and 1880 United States Census, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Manufacturing Schedule.

\(^{888}\) Trowbridge, 62.
partly because passenger receipts decreased. Whereas the company recorded nearly four million dollars in passenger receipts in 1865, the following year represented a fifty-nine percent decrease. Passenger freights continued to range between 1.2 million and 1.6 million from 1866 to 1878. The rail company experienced its greatest profits in the post-war period from transporting freight. While the rail company only encountered a minimal increase in freight receipts the first three years after the war, by 1873 the B&O reported an eighty-eight percent growth in freight receipts. This year represented the peak for freight receipts, as for the next five years, the company’s freight revenues ranged from six to eight million dollars. Despite this fluctuation, freight receipts remained above antebellum and wartime levels. In 1893, the B&O filled in the ruins of the armory buildings so the company could lessen the curve of the track as it exited the railroad bridge. The B&O also improved the railroad bridge that crossed the Potomac River, replacing the old bridge with a double track bridge. Whereas the B&O experienced financial success, the C&O Canal endured some economic difficulties.889

The post-war period offered fluctuating results for the C&O Canal. The company experienced the greatest amount of prosperity in 1875 as canal boats transported almost one million tons of freight. Coal represented the largest amount of cargo with over 900,000 tons. The C&O experienced greater profits during the 1870s primarily due to the transportation of coal. Whereas the company shipped over 900,000 tons of freight in 1875, the canal’s tonnage for 1869 had been only 723,938 tons. Although the canal experienced some financial success, area railroads represented a serious economic threat

889 Stover, 116, 130-131; Everhart and Sullivan, 62; and Harewood, 127.
to the canal as the railroads provided faster and cheaper transportation. The devastating floods that impacted Harper’s Ferry also inflicted damage upon the canal. The flood of 1877 caused significant damage to the canal as canal walls and towpaths were washed away. These repairs proved detrimental to the company as the C&O went into debt to make the necessary fixes. The 1889 flood proved to be even more devastating as the damage done to the canal forced the company to close for two years. After investing $430,764 into the structure, the C&O reopened, but the amount of debt incurred by the company completely suffocated the company. Thus, the B&O purchased the canal in 1891 to prevent a competing railroad company from purchasing the transportation system. The B&O made additional repairs to the canal, thereby allowing it to resume full operations the following year. The C&O continued operating, but a flood in 1924 caused considerable damage. One hundred years after receiving its charter, company officials decided to discontinue its services after this flood. The W&P railroad also continued providing service the Shenandoah Valley after the war.  

Similar to the other regional transportation systems, the W&P encountered damage during the war. Having been under the control of the Union military, the W&P sued the Federal government after the war claiming that the railroad company experienced financial losses as the Union army took rails from their lines. The B&O gained control of the W&P in 1867, leasing the rail line for a yearly rental of $27,000.  

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890 Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration, 226; Hahn and Kemp, 26; Hahn, *Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Lock-Houses & Lock-Keepers*, ix; Hahn, *Chesapeake & Ohio Canal*, 7; and Sanderlin, 226-227, 232, 236, 242-243, 267, 276 (page citations are to the reprint edition). Five hundred boats carried freight during the 1875 shipping season. Of the 973,805 tons of goods transported on the C&O Canal, coal accounted for 904,898 tons. The next closest commodity was wheat at 8,894 tons followed by corn with 3,573 tons.
Under the leadership of company president John W. Garrett, the B&O sought to expand the W&P lines further up the Shenandoah Valley. The first part of this extension project reached its intended target of Strasburg, Virginia, by the end of the 1860s. By reaching Strasburg, the W&P lines were connected to the Strasburg and Harrisonburg branch line of the Manassas Gap Railroad. Through these multi-point connections, the B&O started to create an inter-connected network within Virginia. Under the urging of Washington and Lee University president Robert E. Lee, the W&P line expanded further up the Shenandoah Valley, reaching Lexington in 1883. Lee perceived the extension of the rail line as being an economic promoter for not only the town of Lexington, but the entire Shenandoah Valley. As the B&O continued to expand its railroad domination during the late nineteenth century, the company eventually purchased the W&P outright in 1902.

Similar to the other Jefferson County economic landscape, area planters also encountered a rebuilding phase in the post-war period.  

Upon returning home from the war, many Jefferson County planters started making repairs to their farms. Upon his return trip to Shepherdstown in 1865, M. J. Billmyer observed the lack of farming activities occurring as he passed area farms. Whereas Billmyer expected planters to be plowing or building fences, instead he found “here and there a man could be seen gazing upon the ruins of his once happy home…” J. T. Trowbridge also took note of the absence of fences as he rode the train from


892 Hale, 513.
Harper’s Ferry to Charlestown. He observed, “We passed through a region of country stamped all over by the devastating heel of war. For miles not a fence or cultivated field was visible.”

Though Trowbridge suggested that farmers had “scarcely anything raised this season except grass,” returning planters still attempted to cultivate their fields. Trowbridge’s assertion also disregards the agricultural efforts made by planters, such as Anna Hooff, who tended to the farms while their husbands were enlisted in the army.

While crop production continued in the post-war period, farmers made some changes to the agricultural landscape. In comparison to the antebellum period, the average size of farms decreased after the war. The lack of finances and the absence of slave labor forced farmers to cultivate a smaller amount of acreage. A smaller farm size also translated to an increase in the number of farms in Jefferson County as larger farms were condensed and additional lands sold to other farmers. Larger farms also began to rent some of their lands to tenant farmers who would cultivate the fields in exchange for providing the landowner with a percentage of the harvest. Furthermore, the lack of capital contributed to a decreased number of livestock on farms. Unable to replace immediately the livestock stolen by the armies, farmers were forced to replenish their animals at a slower pace. In Virginia, the number of livestock did not reach pre-war levels until 1880 while the value of this livestock did not exceed the pre-war values until 1900. All of these agricultural factors led to decreased farm values in the post-war period.

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893 Trowbridge, 69.

894 Ibid., 69-70.
period. Therefore, farmers in the post-war period struggled to regain the prosperity that they encountered in the antebellum period.\textsuperscript{895}

As a result of agricultural losses incurred during the war, some Jefferson County farmers petitioned the Federal government for compensation. Although living near Fortress Monroe, Virginia, during the Civil War, current Rippon resident F. A. Lewis wrote to Congress on December 21, 1865, requesting that he be repaid for the loss of livestock, slaves, and agricultural crops. Lewis justified his appeal by placing the blame for his losses on being “the consequence of your legislation & the acts of your soldiers.” Lewis’s agricultural-related losses totaled over fifteen thousand dollars. The majority of this total derived from the loss of twenty-three slaves. Lewis estimated the value of each slave to be five hundred dollars. He also claimed to have lost $3,475 worth of livestock, including ten horses, twenty-five sheep, and forty-five hogs. In addition to these damages, Lewis contended that he suffered an additional $4,000 worth of property damage from Confederate forces. Concluding that since the United States successfully overthrew the Confederate government, Lewis believed that “it would be but just & honorable for the United States to pay that debt likewise.”\textsuperscript{896} Lewis’ agricultural losses


\textsuperscript{896} F. A. Lewis to Senate and House of Representatives in Congress Assembled, December 21, 1865, F. A. Lewis Letter Copybook, 1838-1871, Mss. MsV Cp6, WMSC.
while living in Fortress Monroe likely were significant as the 1870 agricultural census does not indicate that he continued farming after moving to Jefferson County following the war.

While farmers attempted to rebuild their farms, they continued harvesting the same crops that they had planted in the antebellum period. William O. Macoughtry, a physician who resided in Middleway, maintained a diary in 1869 in which he detailed the agricultural labors performed on his farm, as well as on those of his neighbors. Farmers in the post-war period maintained an agricultural schedule that resembled the activities of many antebellum farmers. Macoughtry included several entries detailing that area farmers were harvesting their wheat crops in July 1869. Macoughtry’s diary entry for July 3, 1869, noted that “Mr. H. S. Farnsworth finished Harvest at noon today.”

Following the harvesting of wheat, Macoughtry planted corn on July 14, 1869, and gathered oats on July 17, 1869. Macoughtry’s oats harvest resulted in “2-three horse loads, a good sized stack.” The farms surrounding Macoughtry also continued planting many of the same crops that had been cultivated in the antebellum period. As the size of farms decreased in the post-war period, some planters rented out parcels of their farms to other cultivators. William O. Macoughtry indicated in his diary on November 5, 1869 that Mr. Bullhart “brought me over yesterday 2 ½ barrels white corn & 2 barrels of same

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kind today….It is Rent Corn per Harley lots.”⁹⁰⁰ Macoughtry noted that these 4 ½ barrels of corn only represented a portion of his rental fee as he expected to receive one-third of the crop from the lands cultivated by Mr. Harley. In the post-war period, wheat remained the primary export crop for Jefferson County farmers, but planters continued to harvest other important crops, such as corn and potatoes.

Jefferson County farmers maintained many of their pre-war production levels in the years following the conflict. In terms of wheat production, Jefferson County remained a leader within the Shenandoah Valley. Jefferson County wheat farmers also led the entire state of West Virginia in wheat production. Surpassing their 1860 totals, Jefferson County wheat farmers produced 468,836 bushels of wheat in 1870. Thus, Jefferson County farmers harvested nearly fifty thousand additional bushels of wheat in 1870 in comparison to 1860. By 1880, Jefferson County farmers experienced even greater wheat yields, reporting a harvest of 496,705 bushels of wheat. Corn production remained steady in 1870. Farmers harvested 336,287 bushels of corn, a slight decrease in comparison to the 1860 yields. By the next decade, Jefferson County planters had doubled their crop production as they recorded a yield of 673,425 bushels of corn. This bumper crop catapulted Jefferson County to the position of top corn producer in West Virginia. Similar to corn, potato harvests nearly equaled pre-war levels. In 1870, planters dug up 24,305 bushels of corn. Farmers reported an increase in potato harvests the following decade with 31,005 bushels of potatoes. While Jefferson County’s


Following the war, the number of African Americans residing within Jefferson County led to the establishment of black communities. While not completely isolated from white residents, these black communities formed their own social institutions and relationships. Existent prior to the war, the free black settlement of Johnsontown near Charlestown remained a black community after the conflict. The increased presence of African Americans led to the establishment of other black communities, such as Skeetersville, Franklintown, Jamestown, and Egypt. In Middleway, black residents began moving to the town and settled an area known as Slabtown. Some Slabtown inhabitants started to farm while others worked as domestic servants. African Americans also settled near Summit Point in the village of Mount Pleasant. Not all county residents welcomed the larger African American population. John H. Zittle, editor of the \textit{Shepherdstown Register}, wrote in his paper on July 15, 1865 that “the able bodied negroes have all left.” In Zittle’s perspective, the only African Americans who remained in the region “are not able to do any work, and who are a burden on their former owners.”\footnote{\textit{Shepherdstown Register}, July 15, 1865, quoted in Duncan, \textit{Beleaguered Winchester}, 257.} As black communities became solidified, African American residents began to establish black schools and churches to help support their communities.\footnote{903}
The formation of African American churches and schools within Jefferson County provided a sense of community and neighborly networks for African American residents. These black institutions diversified Jefferson County’s religious and educational landscape. African Americans in Charlestown founded the Mount Zion United Methodist Church in 1867. In the 1870s, the Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church (1870) and the Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church (1878) were established in Mount Pleasant to serve the area’s African American community. The first African American school opened in 1865 at the home of Achilles Dixon, an African American who lived in Charlestown. Dixon allowed Anne Dudley from the American Missionary Association to establish the school in his home. Two schoolhouses were also established in Johnsontown after the war. The Johnsontown Community School, built in 1876, served as a meeting spot for African American farmers and Storer College teachers to discuss agricultural issues, including the improvement of farming methods. Other African American schools opened in Shepherdstown, Kearneysville, and Middleway during the late nineteenth century. Several members of the Free Will Baptists, a New England denomination, began operating primary schools in Harper’s Ferry, Charlestown, and Shepherdstown. The Free Will Baptists also would establish an important educational institution in Harper’s Ferry whose legacy lasted for nearly one hundred years.⁹⁰⁴

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One of the most influential social changes that occurred during Reconstruction was the creation of Storer College in Harper’s Ferry. Whereas six years prior to the founding of the college, John Brown had led a failed slave insurrection to provide enslaved African Americans with their freedom, in 1865 an educational institutional was established in the same town. The Free Will Baptist Church and the Freedmen’s Bureau helped to create this educational institution. The Free Will Baptist Church first opened a grammar school in 1865 with Reverend Nathan Cook Brackett supervising the school. Wanting to expand the school, Reverend Brackett contacted philanthropist John Storer to provide funding toward this expansion. Storer agreed to give the Free Will Baptists $10,000 as long as they opened the school to all races and sexes. Storer College used some of the former armory lands owned by the Federal government for their campus and repurposed the Lockwood House, the former quarters of the armory paymaster, for its first classrooms. In addition, college trustees purchased the farm of William Smallwood in 1867 for the college.\footnote{905}

Not all Jefferson County’s white residents welcomed the presence of schools for African Americans or Storer College. Those who opposed the schools also expressed

\footnote{904} Taylor, \textit{History of Black Education in Jefferson County}, 14, 21, 26-27, 31, 36; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 48-49, 83; Geffert, \textit{An Annotated Narrative}, 154; and Burke, 28.

\footnote{905} Burke, 13; Barry, 149; Conway, \textit{Harpers Ferry}, 90; Jefferson County Bicentennial Committee, 101; Jefferson County Sesqui-Centennial Inc., \textit{Official Souvenir Historical Booklet, 150 Years of Progress, The Past Revealed, September 16-22, 1951} (Ranson: Whitney & White, 1951), 40; Mary Ellen McClain, “Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia (1865 to 1897)” (Honors Thesis, Linfield College, 1974), 5, 18, 24, 31, 34. The Freedmen’s Bureau contributed nearly $18,000 to the formation of the institution, including money to help renovate the former armory buildings. The Free Will Baptist Church began their educational work during the war by sending missionaries to establish schools in Virginia and North Carolina.
concerns regarding the placement of John Brown’s Fort on the Storer College campus. Inhabitants feared that the schools and the presence of Brown’s Fort could lead to an influx of African Americans coming to the area. Anne Dudley, who was one of the first Free Will Baptist teachers to arrive in Harper’s Ferry, had to travel under military escort to the Charlestown Mission School as a result of the contentious situation. The Klu Klux Klan also incited threats against the school, teachers, and its student body. Kate Anthony, who helped to bring John Brown’s Fort back to Jefferson County, believed that by the 1880s, the public’s perception of Storer College had begun to change. Anthony wrote, “To-day, the inhabitants of Harper’s Ferry hold a true interest and even a pride in the college. Some of its old opponents are now numbered among its most devoted friends.”906 While not everyone within Jefferson County was a strong supporter of the institution as portrayed by Anthony, the educational institution became an integral component within the lives of the African American students that it served.907

Storer College offered a quality education to the African American students that it served. Enrolled within the first class of Storer College included a number of African Americans from the Jefferson County region. Altogether, nineteen students began at the school on October 2, 1867, with Miss Martha Smith serving as the instructor. Less than five months after opening their doors, Storer College’s student body consisted of seventy-five students. Storer College provided a diversified curriculum for its students with

906 Kate Anthony, Our Work at Harper’s Ferry: Its History and Promise, pg. 3, Pams S890 Anth 1882 F, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, hereinafter cited as AAS.

907 Moyer and Shackel, 18-19; Burke, 31; McClain, 55; and Kate Anthony, Our Work at Harper’s Ferry: Its History and Promise, pg. 3, Pams S890 Anth 1882 F, AAS.
Latin, carpentry, geography, drawing, arithmetic, and political economy being some of the subjects. The primary focus of the institution was to train African American students to become teachers. As the student body increased, attendees originated from a number of states including Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts. In addition to these scholars, local African Americans continued to enroll at the school. In 1872, residents from Charlestown, Kearneysville, Shepherdstown, and Harper’s Ferry were members of the student body. During the late nineteenth century, the enrollment of Storer College continued to grow as 273 students were registered at the college by 1889. When Storer College transitioned from a two-year institution to a four-year college in 1940, over 7,000 students had graduated from the institution. After nearly ninety years in existence, Storer College closed its doors in 1955. The combination of the United States Supreme Court decision in Brown v. The Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas (1954) and the Morrill II Bill, which diverted financial assistance away from the college, contributed to the institution’s closure. With the folding of Storer College, African American college students held the option of attending Shepherd College or another institution of higher education. Today, there exists very few surviving Storer College alumni to help preserve its place within Jefferson County’s history and the legacy of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{908}

Describing Harper’s Ferry in the fall of 1865, J. T. Trowbridge juxtaposed the town prior to the Civil War with the present scene before him. Trowbridge stated that “it is said to have been a pleasant and picturesque place formerly. The streets were well graded, and the hill-sides above were graced with terraces and trees.” From Trowbridge’s perception, this situation had changed as he characterized that town as being “the reverse of agreeable.” Now, “freshets tear down the centre [sic] of the streets, and the dreary hill-sides present only ragged growths of weeds.” Using similar language as he had to describe the town of Charlestown, Trowbridge concluded that “all about the town are rubbish, and filth, and stench.”

Historian Merritt Roe Smith also depicted post-war Harper’s Ferry, remarking that “what had once epitomized Thomas Jefferson’s pastoral ideal had become a garden despoiled, a victim of the powerful technologies it had helped to create.” Smith ironically noted that the economic foundation of the town during the antebellum period contributed to the loss of its largest employer. Although other commercial ventures attempted to replicate the industrial success of the Federal Armory and Arsenal, nothing came close to replacing this enterprise. While the war left Harper’s Ferry in a state of disrepair, residents of the town attempted to rebuild their hometown. These efforts were met with varying success not only in Harper’s Ferry, but throughout Jefferson County. Unfortunately for Jefferson County residents, the region encountered a devastating economic setback with the 1870 flood.

909 Trowbridge, 66.

910 Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, 322.
County resident Joseph Barry attributed much of the devastation caused during the 1870 flood to soldiers cutting down timber during the war. During the conflict, Union and Confederate soldiers used the trees along the surrounding mountainsides for the fortification of the ridgetops and to create encampments. The soldiers also viewed the timber as a natural obstacle that prevented them from gaining a clear line of sight for their artillery. By cutting the forests down, the soldiers altered the natural landscape of Harper’s Ferry. Barry also indicated that the utilization of the forests “for mercantile purposes” also contributed to this flood.911 One historian estimated that at the time of the flood, the forest cover for the surrounding region was forty percent. This timber assessment represented a decrease of forty-five decrease in forest cover from the region in 1750. Travelers to the area acknowledged the lack of trees in the area. Prior to the flood, J. T. Trowbridge traveled around Jefferson County. Of the heights surrounding Harper’s Ferry, he wrote, “The timber which once covered them was cut away when the forts were constructed, in order to afford free range for the guns…”912 By the time of the 1870 flood, another trekker characterized Maryland Heights as “the whole apex was bared of its trees, and the old height lifted its head, a very monk among mountains, with a shaven crown and a narrow belt of timber midway of the summit.”913 Although void of mature timber, both observers indicated that an undergrowth of smaller trees and

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911 Barry, 36.

912 Trowbridge, 65.

shrubbery had started to regenerate and cover the mountaintops. J. C. Carpenter attributed the devastation of Harper’s Ferry not only to this natural disaster, but to the Civil War as well. “Pass where you will, there are evidences of desolation left behind by these two occurrences,” Carpenter noted. He continued, “And the people of the Ferry have very naturally lost heart. They talk about the old days when the Shenandoah ran the mills and the government rifle-works on its banks; when the armory was in busy activity, and a regiment of lusty workmen hammered and rolled and moulded the arms…”

To fill the economic void caused by the 1870 flood, Jefferson County would turn to the exploitation of natural resources at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Whereas coal mining and timbering emerged throughout the state of West Virginia following the Civil War, the exploitative use of natural resources did not occur within Jefferson County until the 1890s and early 1900s. Mining and quarrying efforts near Charlestown, Kearneysville, Millville, and Bakerton emerged during this period. Miners extracting dolomite limestone and clay for agricultural purposes and to manufacture bricks. Therefore, the exploitation of Jefferson County’s natural resources did not follow the same path as the rest of the state. In addition to rebuilding their economic and agricultural landscapes, county residents sought to rebuild its economy, they also had to reconcile the political legacies of the conflict.

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914 Ibid., 321.

915 Gilbert, Waterpower, 15; Trowbridge, 65; Carpenter, 332; and Jones, Harpers Ferry, 189.

After the war, county resident Alexander Robinson Boteler urged all Southerners to “bow to the manifest decree of Providence to do what we can to soften the asperities and heal the wounds of civil war by restoring order and good feeling.” Although Boteler remained disenfranchised immediately after the war, he sought to establish a more accepting version of Reconstruction that would allow the former Confederate states to reenter the Union quicker. However, not all Jefferson County residents wanted to adapt this reconciliatory approach. William O. Macoughtry of Middleway lamented in his diary on July 4, 1869, that “poor Virginia, the mother of states lies bleeding at the foot of a despotic power…” He concluded that “the blood shed by Virginia in the war of the revolution and this recent war has been all in vain.” Regarding the impact and legacy of the Civil War in Harper’s Ferry, town resident Joseph Barry concluded, “Time, however, has happily cured the wounds, though the scars will ever remain, and it is confidently hoped that the historic village…will flourish again some day.”

West Virginia, Jefferson County did not contain a significant amount of coal. Phil Conley, *History of the West Virginia Coal Industry* (Charleston: Education Foundation, Inc., 1960), 175.

917 Adams and Watterson, 35.


919 Barry, 142.
CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION: CONTESTED MEMORIES OF THE CIVIL WAR

Two Civil War monuments sit positioned near the convergence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. The first, the iconic engine house in which John Brown made his final stand in October 1859, represents one of the only Federal Armory and Arsenal buildings that endured the devastation brought by the Civil War. The engine house represents the beginning point for the eradication of the institution of slavery within the United States as John Brown sparked the beginning of the Civil War. Less than one hundred yards away, the Faithful Slave Memorial presents a conflicting interpretation and memory of the conflict. Erected in 1931 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of the Confederacy, this memorial offers a starkly different interpretation of the Civil War. These two memorials encapsulate the competing memories of the Civil War that continue to exist within Jefferson County today.

In the years following the Civil War, some Jefferson County residents expressed hesitancy regarding the continued presence of Brown’s Fort in Harper’s Ferry. In 1891, A. J. Holmes purchased the engine house and relocated the structure to Chicago for the World’s Columbian Exposition. Low attendance led to the closure of the exhibit shortly after it opened. The building remained in obscurity until an actress, Kate Fields,
purchased the fort in 1895. Fields arranged to have the engine house transported and rebuilt on Alexander Murphy’s farm, Buena Vista, located outside of Harper’s Ferry. While located on Murphy’s farm, John Brown’s Fort became a pilgrimage site for several African American groups. The National League of Colored Women first visited the site in 1896 and then the Niagara Movement made a pilgrimage to Brown’s Fort ten years later. The engine house remained at Murphy’s farm until 1909 when Storer College trustees paid Murphy $900 for the fort. Storer College students began raising funds in 1903 to purchase Brown’s engine house. The college dismantled the fort and had it rebuilt on the college’s campus. The engine house remained on Storer campus until 1960 when the National Park Service acquired the building. The National Park Service relocated Brown’s Fort to its present location in 1968. The centrality of the fort within contemporary Harpers Ferry National Historic Park allows for the integration of African American and Civil War history. However, the presence of the Faithful Slave Monument perpetuates a Lost Cause sentiment and thus, contradicts the message of inclusiveness that Brown’s Fort represents.920

During the Faithful Slave Monument dedication ceremony on October 10, 1931, Sons of Confederate Veteran member Matthew Page Andrews reminded the crowd gathered at Harper’s Ferry of a momentous event that had occurred nearly seventy-two years prior in the town. Discussing the impact of John Brown’s Raid, this occasion also served as an opportunity for Andrews to not only erroneously remember the role African

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920 Cohen, 123, 125; Barry, 58; Shackel, Memory in Black and White, 59, 60-61, 62, 65, 69; and Horton, 86. Only eleven people paid fifty cents apiece to tour the fort at the Columbian Exposition. Fields also purchased Brown’s family farm in North Elba, New York, thus preserving two historical sites associated with Brown.
American railroad porter, Heyward Shepherd, had played within the event, but also as a time to reflect upon the contemporary racial tensions that existed within the country. Andrews informed the crowd, “Today we are gathered upon the scene of that event to dedicate a memorial to this American citizen as the representative of the negroes of the neighborhood, who would take no part in an effort to promote an interracial disaster that must have staggered humanity.” Andrews omitted mentioning that at the time of Brown’s Raid, Heyward Shepherd would not have been considered an American citizen despite his status of being a free African American. Although Andrews portrayed Brown’s Raid as “an interracial disaster” at the time of its occurrence, the dedication ceremony now attempted to present contemporary race relations in a paternalistic and reconciliationist tone. Andrews also sought to obscure any thoughts of black participation within the revolt, thereby creating a distinctly Southern interpretation of this momentous event within American history.  

Members of the local chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy dedicated the stone monument to honor slaves who had allegedly remained loyal to the Confederate cause, as well as the first victim of Brown’s raid, Heyward Shepherd. The

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921 Matthew Page Andrews, *Heyward Shepherd, Victim of Violence, Address of Dedication [at the Unveiling of the Heyward Shepherd Monument at Harper’s Ferry, October 10, 1931]* (Harper’s Ferry: Heyward Shepherd Memorial Association, 1931), 3, 5, 7; and Shackel, *Memory in Black and White*, 88. At the beginning of the book, the Heyward Shepherd Memorial Association openly states the intentions of the organization, “which has for its primary and sole purpose the furtherance of the spirit of charity, courtesy, friendliness, and consideration, making for good will and mutually helpful interracial relations.” Believing in the interracial message of the organization and dedication ceremony, Reverend Dr. George F. Bragg, Jr. of St. James Protestant Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland wrote to the president of the Heyward Shepherd Memorial Association, James M. Ranson, stating that “as a missionary effort, in the interest of increasing good will and the very best of feeling between the white and colored races, I ardently wish that the way can be found whereby this able and informing treatise could be published and sent to all the colored leaders of thought throughout the country.”
inscription regarding Shepherd described him as a “respected colored freeman” that
remained loyal to the Confederacy to his death. During the dedication ceremony,
Matthew Page Andrews admirably spoke of what he perceived as being the positive
qualities of Shepherd and other African Americans living in the United States during the
time of Brown’s Raid and the Civil War. Andrews articulated to the crowd that “the life
and death of Heyward Shepherd, together with the lives of many thousands of his race
like him, teach all of us valuable lessons. For one thing, Heyward Shepherd may be used
to exemplify what Africa has done for America; or, again, what America has done for
transplanted Africa. He may be used to exemplify the great service his race has rendered
in the development of this country.”922 The presence of these two different historical
monuments at Harper’s Ferry provide contrasting messages to the visitors who come to
Harper’s Ferry National Park.

Today, tourism serves as one of Jefferson County’s primary economic base. Civil
War sites spurred tourists to start coming to the area in the 1880s and 1890s as the B&O
promoted trips to visit historic Harper’s Ferry. The increasing number of visitors led to
the growth of boardinghouses, hotels, and restaurants that catered to the tourists. Today,
John Brown’s Fort serves as a central talking point of the National Park Service. The
National Park Service conducts educational programs related to Brown’s Raid and the
impending coming of the Civil War. Until recently, the Faithful Slave Monument

922 Horton, 79; and Andrews, Heyward Shepherd, 18. Andrews also expressed a mixed message
by including a racist perception of African Americans by arguing that the improvement of the South
derived from blacks “…powerful physique, accustomed to the tropical heat of his native land” and
therefore blacks were “able easily to undertake a task that was decimating the Caucasians in the lowlands
of the Southern colonies and states.”
remained hidden from public view. Rather than openly discussing the contested memory of this stone monument, the National Park Service placed a large wooden box around the monument so the public could not read its inscription. The National Park Service removed the box, but unless visitors look for the stone, they are likely to miss this important monument. The community of Charlestown also does not fully promote its associated history with John Brown. Within the town, there exists no historical signs pointing to the site of Brown’s hanging. While a historical marker indicates the approximate location of Brown’s execution, the marker remains behind an iron fence and is located on private property. The relative obscurity of the site suggests that the town only begrudgingly accepts the historical legacy connected to this event. While county residents are very knowledgeable about their extensive historical background, the limited discussion and acceptance of Brown’s role within this history perpetuates the notion of a contested memory. Rather than soldiers and citizens competing for private space and needed resources, county residents today seek to interpret the public memory of Jefferson County and its associated historical figures. Similar to Col. John White Geary’s observations in September 1861 of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers “refusing to join their waters and mingle into one grand kindred stream,” the contesting historical legacies of Jefferson County convey competing memories of the Civil War.923

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