THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF DELAWARE
DURING THE CIVIL WAR

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State
University

By
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Approved by:

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Preface

Among the unexplored subjects in Delaware history is the story of politics during the Civil War. With the exception of an honor's thesis at Princeton University and a monograph upon Lincoln's emancipation plan, no special studies of the period have ever been undertaken. The key to the era is politics, or the study of the relationships of the state and federal governments and of the state and citizen. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine closely these political connections.

The most important source of information lies in the newspaper and manuscript collection in the Historical Society of Delaware. Indispensable are the legislative journals, laws, and miscellaneous papers at the State Archives. The Wilmington Public Library, the Longwood Foundation, and Memorial Library at the University of Delaware furnished some material. Some letters and diaries were loaned by Delawareans.

Outside of Delaware, the most rewarding material was found in the manuscript collections of the Library of Congress and National Archives. Through personal visits or by correspondence, letters of importance were located at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, University of North Carolina, Duke University, University of Chicago, Stanford University, University of Rochester, and Friends' Historical Society at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. Contacts with other institutions were disappointing.

The author is indebted to many persons for assistance. Miss Gertrude Brinckle, Mrs. Marie Windell, and Miss Ruthanna Hindes of the
staff of the Historical Society of Delaware graciously extended aid and service beyond the line of duty. Mr. Leon deValinger, Mr. George Dickens, and Miss Virginia Shaw at the State Archives contributed numerous suggestions. Mr. Frank Battan and Mr. Arthur Kenney at the Longwood Foundation arranged for an examination of the papers of S. F. duPont. Mr. William D. Lewis, Dr. John A. Munroe, and Dr. Henry Clay Reed of the University of Delaware made available materials of importance. The staff of the Wilmington Public Library was always courteous and efficient. The editor of the Smyrna Times permitted an examination of the files of that publication in the newspaper office. Some manuscripts were provided through the kindness of Henry P. Cannon, Miss Elizabeth Houston, Spencer Tunnell, Judge Richard S. Rodney, George V. Massay, James B. Jackson, and Edwin Hurley. Without the encouragement of his sister, Miss Elizabeth Hancock, and Miss Martha Whiteraft, he would probably have never attempted the project.

At Otterbein College the author is appreciative of the cooperation of the librarian, Mrs. Mary Crumrine, and of the stimulation furnished by his friends, Professor and Mrs. Marion Chase. He enjoyed the services of a corps of able student assistants in typing, filing, and miscellaneous tasks. They were Duane Hopkins, Robert Richardson, Gary Murray, and Carol Jaynes.

At Ohio State University he is grateful to the staff of the University Library and to Dr. Henry H. Simms, his adviser, who guided him through the writing of the thesis, read the paper critically
several times, and gave the paper the benefit of his broad knowledge in southern history.

Harold Hancock
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Chapter I

DELAWARE IN 1860

The history of the political strife and tension in Delaware during the Civil War has never been written. No military battles were fought in Delaware, the state did not join the Confederacy, the fate of the nation did not hinge upon its statesmen or action, and yet the story of those troubled years in a border state is worth telling. Here Lincoln introduced his plan of compensated emancipation, federal troops interfered in elections, and an infamous prison confined thousands of Confederates. Many persons sympathized with the South and some joined the Confederate army, while others as staunchly backed Lincoln and the Union. Out of the holocaust came a heritage which has influenced Delaware politics to the present.

Briefly, the political history of Delaware in the period is the story of the reaction of a border state with peculiar problems to national events. The Civil War asked whether Delaware belonged to the South or North, and the response was the confused answers of a disturbed people.

The Land and the People

Delaware is usually classed with the Middle Atlantic and border states. Less than 100 miles long and varying in width from nine to thirty-five miles, it is the second smallest state in area and lies
just south of the Mason and Dixon line. On two sides it is bound by Maryland. To the north lies Pennsylvania, the boundary line being the arc of a twelve-mile circle drawn from the town of New Castle, and to the east are Delaware Bay and River. As part of the coastal plain, it is exceedingly flat, with an average elevation of sixty feet. A standard jest of Delawareans is that there are two counties at high tide and three at low. A number of small navigable streams flow eastward, but only the Nanticoke River drains westward into Chesapeake Bay. Mineral resources are lacking, and the inhabitants depend mainly upon agriculture for a living.¹

The population in 1860 numbered 112,216, of which 90,589 were white. Less than ten percent were born outside of the United States, and of these almost all lived in New Castle county. In order of importance, the principal foreign groups were the Irish, English, and German. More than ten percent of the inhabitants had migrated to the state from either Pennsylvania or Maryland and conversely more Delawareans had moved to those two states than anywhere else.²


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<td>Total</td>
<td>90,589</td>
<td>19,829</td>
<td>1,798</td>
<td>112,216</td>
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Principal Foreign Groups
- Irish: 5,832
- English: 1,581
- German: 1,263

Living in Delaware from Maryland: 5,110
Living in Delaware from Pennsylvania: 7,852
Living in Maryland from Delaware: 4,748
Living in Pennsylvania from Delaware: 12,383
The Negro population in 1860 totaled 21,627, of which 19,829 were free and 1,798 slave. Under the law code of 1852 the free Negro faced many restrictions. While he was permitted to own real estate and seek redress in courts for grievances, he was denied permission to attend political meetings or treats, to own or possess firearms, to vote or hold office, to testify in criminal cases if a competent white witness had been present, and to participate in any way in cases involving a charge of bastardy against a white man.\(^3\) Nothing was said about education; in Wilmington for many years the African School Society did yeoman work in providing facilities for a small number.\(^4\) Probably the great majority engaged in agricultural or domestic work.\(^5\)

Every decade for fifty years had seen a decrease in the slave population in Delaware. Quakers and abolitionists escorted some to freedom over the underground railroad, and others were freed by their owners.\(^6\) Only 587 persons were listed as slaveowners, and eight owned over fifteen slaves. No restrictions were placed upon emancipation.\(^7\)

---

\(^3\) Revised Statutes of the State of Delaware, 1852 (Dover, 1852) 143-147.

\(^4\) African School Association, Minutes, et passim (Historical Society of Delaware).

\(^5\) Unfortunately no satisfactory study of either the freed Negro or slave exists. An M. A. thesis with little merit is Charles Shorter, "Slavery in Delaware" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Howard University, 1934).

\(^6\) An interesting study of the underground railroad with special attention to Thomas Garrett, Quaker abolitionist, is Marion Bjornsen Reed, "The Underground Railroad in Delaware" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1928).

\(^7\) Population of the United States in 1860, 48; Statutes, 1852, 250-259.
The only student of slavery in Delaware concludes that "slavery did not appear in Delaware in its most repulsive garb," that "of the fifteen slave states Delaware possessed the most liberal slave-code of all," and that "slavery in Delaware existed in a comparatively mild form." While the institution was of negligible importance from the point of view of numbers, it was significant as a political symbol.

The Three Counties

New Castle county in 1860 was the most progressive and prosperous of the three counties. With the largest population, it contained few slaves and most of the state's foreign born. Towns of some importance were New Castle, the county seat, Newark, Middletown, and Odessa.

All of these were dwarfed by Wilmington with a population of 21,358, about half the population of the county. As a cultural leader, it provided occasional theatrical attractions, lectures, and concerts. It was the home of the best private schools, the only college, and the most active societies. Adjacent to or in the city were the most important manufacturing enterprises in the state.

Agriculturally New Castle county led the way. In 1860 it produced the largest amounts of wheat, oats, fruit, and vegetables. Here agricultural societies were very active, the first experiments with fruit growing, machines, and fertilizers were conducted, and the best

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8 Shorter, "Slavery in Delaware," 444.

9 Anna T. Lincoln, Wilmington: Four Centuries Under Three Flags (Rutland, Vermont, 1937), et passim.
farm land was located. The Delaware and Chesapeake Canal and the first railroads built in the state provided satisfactory transportation.  

Manufacturers and merchants looked for the most part to the North for markets, supplies, and credit; they shared many common economic problems and interests with industrialists in Philadelphia twenty-five miles away. Shoppers frequently visited Philadelphia stores. The South provided a market for gunpowder, carriages, and machinery, but in return sold only cotton to some Delaware factories.  

The two lower counties lagged behind New Castle county in almost every respect in 1860, regardless of whether the yardstick of comparison was agricultural progress, manufacturing, educational facilities, or wealth. The inhabitants of both were engaged primarily in agriculture or in services to a rural population. Steamboats remained an important means of communication, but the railroad completed in 1860 worked to end the isolation of the section, to bind it more firmly to the North, and to prepare the way for agricultural change.

Kent county contained the smallest population of the three. The largest town, county seat, and capital was Dover. Other important towns were Smyrna, Felton, and Camden. Lagging behind New Castle county in progress, it was ahead of Sussex. Truly, it was the "middle" county. With southern Delaware, it shared much the same lack of


11 Lincoln, Wilmington, 224.
interest in manufacturing, agricultural improvement, and education.\textsuperscript{12}

Sussex county was the largest county in area, the most sparsely populated, and the most isolated. Towns of some significance were Georgetown, the county seat, Milford, Lewes, Seaford, Bridgeville, and Selbyville. With the largest slave population and the fewest aliens, it displayed many characteristics of southern communities. Many southerners lived there, many of the inhabitants had migrated to the southern states, especially to nearby Maryland, and the ties of friendship and marriage were strong with the South. Agricultural improvements were slow to be accepted as evidenced by the use of a large number of oxen, the continued raising of cereal crops by time-honored methods on worn-out soil, and the small attention paid to truck crops and fruit. The educational facilities were the poorest in the state, and the incomes the lowest. The events of 1861 brought into prominence its southern sympathies.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Transportation}

Agriculturally New Castle county was prosperous and progressive in 1860, while the lower counties lagged behind. In the two previous decades an agricultural revolution in the northern county introduced machinery, crop rotation, and new methods of farming. Taking advantage

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12} J. Thomas Scharf, \textit{A History of Delaware} (Philadelphia, 1888), II, 43-100.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Joseph A. Conwell, "A Sussex Farmer Boy Sixty-Five Years Ago," in \textit{The Conwell Family} (St. Paul, Minnesota, mimeographed), 110-114; Dorothy Welch White, ed., \textit{Memoirs of Mary Parker Welch} (New York, 1947), \textit{et passim}. These two accounts are suggestive of conditions in Sussex county in 1860.
\end{itemize}
of its location near large cities and good transportation by rail and water, it found profit in peaches, truck crops, and dairying.\textsuperscript{14} Observers regarded the section as a "paradise, the garden spot of the State," compared it favorably "in every respect with the crack counties in the large neighboring states, or indeed with any of the States," and said that it presented "all that is delightful in agriculture."\textsuperscript{15}

Conditions in Kent and Sussex counties were less satisfactory. Even Governor William Burton, a native of Sussex county, in his inaugural address in 1859 admitted the backwardness of lower Delaware,\textsuperscript{16} and a correspondent of a Philadelphia newspaper in the same year could find only "the beginning" of improvement.\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{verbatim}
14Hancock, "Agriculture in Delaware, 1789-1900," in Reed, ed., Delaware, I, 375-376.
15Ibid., I, 376; Agriculture of the United States in 1860 (Washington, 1864), 16, 17.
16Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, 1859 (Dover, 1859), 5.
\end{verbatim}
County Agricultural Society in 1860 thought that three things had contributed to the advancement made thus far: steamboats and railroads, lime and guano, and the Agricultural Society. Following the lead of New Castle county, Kent and Sussex in the next decades gradually turned to dairying, fruit, and vegetables. The transition was slow and a state publication in 1884 noted that the "lower part of Kent county, and much of Sussex was still waiting the magic touch that shall make the desert bloom as the rose." 

In all parts of the state in 1860, the most important crops were corn and wheat, and in southern Delaware they were frequently raised and harvested the same way as a hundred years before. It had been confidently asserted for years that the peninsula was destined to "become the great fruit and vegetable garden for Philadelphia, New York, and Boston," but the prediction was slow in fulfillment.

Manufacturing for other than local use was confined to Wilmington and its immediate neighborhood, which possessed the water power, transportation facilities, capital, and nearby markets lacking elsewhere in

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18 Delawarean, March 14, 1860. The secretary was Manlove Hayes, well-informed farmer and railroad executive.

19 Homes and Lands in Delaware (Dover, 1884), 21.

the state. The city directory for 1845, "there are at least 100 important manufactories, rendering it the largest manufacturing district in the Atlantic States south of Philadelphia." The manufactured products of New Castle county in 1860 were worth ten times those of Kent and Sussex combined.23 The following industries in New Castle county produced goods valued at more than $400,000: car wheels, carriages, cotton goods, flour and meal, gunpowder, morocco leather, and shipbuilding.24 Wilmington was especially proud of the great variety of items and of being called "Queen of the Carriage Builders."25


Selected Manufacturing Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Establishments</th>
<th>Capital Invested</th>
<th>Value of Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kent 94</td>
<td>$289,365</td>
<td>$506,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Castle 380</td>
<td>4,863,172</td>
<td>8,963,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex 111</td>
<td>300,050</td>
<td>1,23,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 615</td>
<td>$5,452,087</td>
<td>$9,892,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Product of Factories in New Castle County

Valued at more than $400,000

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car Wheels</td>
<td>562,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriages</td>
<td>553,250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton goods</td>
<td>941,703</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour and meal</td>
<td>1,537,266</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunpowder</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco Leather</td>
<td>461,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipbuilding</td>
<td>574,650</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22Directory of the City of Wilmington, 1845 (Wilmington, 1845), 4.

23Manufactures of the United States in 1860, 53-54.

24Ibid., 53-54.

The Civil War stimulated activity. The Board of Trade in its first annual report in 1868 claimed that "Wilmington manufactures more iron vessels than all the rest of the United States combined, that we rate first in powder, second in carriages and second in leather, and that the proportion of manufactures to each inhabitant, is much greater than in Philadelphia, and excelled by very few, if any other cities in the Union."26

Much of the prosperity of agriculture and industry was based upon the improved system of transportation that developed before 1860. During the summer months steamboats operated from Philadelphia and New York to carry freight and passengers to Lewes, Dover, Smyrna, and Delaware City. Farmers in lower New Castle county were greatly benefited by the construction of the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal in 1825. A railroad between New Castle on the Delaware River and Frenchtown on the Chesapeake Bay began operations in 1831, using horses at first to pull cars along its sixteen-mile length. The construction of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad in 1837 benefited northern Delaware. The Delaware Railroad reached Dover in 1856, but was not completed the length of the state until 1860. Plans for branches were interrupted by the coming of the war.27

The construction of a railroad to the southern boundary line was revolutionary in its economic effects. A resident of Lewes said about

26Board of Trade, First Annual Report of the Board of Trade Wilmington, 1868), 6.

his town, "It seemed to be finished until the Rail Road was completed; then it awakened from its long sleep and made quite an improvement."\textsuperscript{28} The historian of Seaford observed, "Thirty years before it was built the poverty and forlorn appearance of Sussex county had become a jest. Thirty years afterwards, beauty, thrift, and enterprise meet the traveler everywhere across the peninsula."\textsuperscript{29} A study of the appendixes attached to the annual reports of the Delaware Railroad reveal steady increases in goods shipped up and down that line.\textsuperscript{30} The completion of the railroad in 1860 was a significant factor in bringing together southern and northern Delaware in a critical period.

A significant commentary upon the economic conditions in the three counties was provided by the internal revenue reports of 1864. New Castle county residents paid $221,155 in tax, while Kent and Sussex counties lagged behind with payments of $46,885 and $9,126. Forty persons in New Castle county had incomes of more than $10,000. Topping the list was Henry duPont with $123,000; next were Anthony Reybold, peach king, and two industrialists. Owners of shipyards, textile mills, and foundries with a few peach planters comprised the remainder of the list. In Kent county only four persons possessed incomes above $10,000, while in Sussex county no one was found in this category. Governor William Cannon with $5,000 was the wealthiest person in southern

\textsuperscript{28}D. L. Mustard, Scrap-Book, (MS. in Delaware State Archives), 5.

\textsuperscript{29}R. B. Hazzard, History of Seaford (Seaford, 1890), 51.

\textsuperscript{30}Tenth Annual Report of the Delaware Railroad (Dover, 1865), Appendix. The only complete file of these reports is in the Broad Street Suburban Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Philadelphia.
Delaware, while Ex-Governor William Ross, who supposedly owned the best farm in the section, reported $3,848. The financial rewards of such politicians as Willard Saulsbury, James A. Bayard, Thomas F. Bayard, and Nathaniel B. Smithers were less than $4,000 per year; the era of the corporation lawyer lay in the future.

Education and Religion

Delaware more closely followed the southern than the northern states in its educational pattern. The first public school law in 1829 permitted districts to raise taxes up to $300 and matched the sums obtained with state funds. In many districts all efforts at taxation were defeated. An important change in 1861 provided that a small amount must be secured in each district and increased the maximum to $400. The instruction furnished was of a low level with poorly trained teachers, badly-built schoolhouses, and inadequate supervision. In 1860 $32,359 was raised by local taxation, and $29,020 was contributed by the state. Schools in New Castle county in 1862 were open an average of eight and a half months and teachers received $40 monthly salary, while in Sussex county the term was less than five months and salaries averaged $21.32

Secondary education was controlled by academies, which existed in almost every town. The one college in the state in 1860 was

31Gazette, February 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, April 7, 11, November 3, 1865.

St. Mary's, a Roman Catholic College for men, since Delaware College had closed at the end of the previous year, due to a combination of financial troubles and unfavorable publicity following the death of a student in an accidental shooting. The only organized effort to provide education for Negroes existed in Wilmington, where the African School Society was active. Efforts to improve the standards of schools and to spend more money on them were defeated by economy-minded legislators.\textsuperscript{33}

Religiously Delaware was dominated by the Methodists, who controlled more churches than all other denominations combined, perhaps showing that their doctrines, methods, and teachings were peculiarly fitted to the peninsula. The Episcopalians, Friends, and Presbyterians were especially strong in New Castle county. The Catholics had organized congregations only in northern Delaware, mainly to serve Irish immigrants.\textsuperscript{34}

While no denomination was affiliated with the southern churches, who had split off prior to the War, the Lewes Presbytery whose members

\textsuperscript{33}Powell, The History of Education in Delaware, 160-165.

\textsuperscript{34}Statistics of the United States, including Mortality, Property, &c. in 1860 (Washington, 1866), 362.

Selected Religious Statistics
Churches in Delaware in 1860
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
Baptists & 12 \\
Episcopalian & 27 \\
Friends & 10 \\
German Reformed & 1 \\
Methodist & 131 \\
Presbyterian & 32 \\
Roman Catholic & 6 \\
Swedenborgen & 1 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
came from Kent and Sussex counties as well as Maryland showed decided southern sympathies. In all Protestant denominations there were ministers and laymen who felt a kinship with the South. A group of ministers in Wilmington loudly championed the Union to the disgust of many Democrats, who complained of "political sermons." 35

The Pattern of Life

The pace of life in rural Delaware in 1860 was leisurely and slow-moving. Many customs and traditions had been unchanged for a hundred years. Kent and Sussex counties were peculiarly isolated from many contacts with the outside world by poor means of transportation. In contrast the location of New Castle county, efficient transportation, and numerous industries paved the way for a speedy acceptance of change.

Most Delawareans lived on farms or in small communities. A former resident has written some interesting reminiscences of farm life in Sussex county and has described conditions as they existed on April 11, 1861. He remembered those days as "a slow age--an age of oxen, sandy roads, big farms, and crude machinery." Wheat was still sowed by hand, cut with a sickle, and cradled. The farmer depended upon his own efforts for fruit, berries, vegetables, flour, and meat. Clothing was largely loomed at home, shoes frequently manufactured and repaired on the farm, and customarily a young man before marriage built with his own hands the house which he and his bride would occupy.

Commerce was confined to the shipping of bark, wood, and grain from the nearest town, Millsboro, and there were no industries of more than local importance. Hard times during the war forced almost complete reliance upon homespun flax and wool, sorghum instead of molasses, and roasted grain or dried sweet potato cubes for coffee. Not until after the War ended did such things as cook and parlor stoves, a reaper, and thrasher appear on his father's farm. Similar reminiscences by Mary Parker Welch confirm this picture of life in Sussex county almost one hundred years ago.

Judge Walter A. Powell, Delaware historian, has described with wit and humor his childhood in Farmington in Kent county in the 1860's. "Every farm had its loom, spinning wheel, candle mould, quilting frames, and sausage grinders." On the whole, life was "simple and wholesome." The circus took the place of the theatre and the village store was the club. Recreation was found in visiting the beach on "Big Thursday" (the day the oyster beds opened), in singing schools, corn huskings, spelling bees, and reading. Religious influences were strong, and in many homes the Bible was read aloud to the family by the father at bedtime. Thomas J. Clayton's memoirs present a similar picture of

36 Conwell, "A Sussex Farmer Boy Sixty-Five Years Ago" in The Conwell Family, 110-114. The writer thinks that Conwell exaggerated economic conditions in Sussex county during the War.


38 Walter A. Powell, Annals of a Village in Kent County, Delaware (Dover, n.d.), et passim.
life in rural New Castle county in the fifties.\textsuperscript{39}

While the great majority of Delawareans lived in rural simplicity, a small group had the means to lead a different existence. The letters of the Bayards, duPonts, and Ridgelys reveal that they sent their children to academies and college, had trouble in finding servants, enjoyed trips to Saratoga, Newport, and Europe, entertained visiting statesmen and celebrities, and in general enjoyed a high standard of living. In sharp contrast was the condition of the poor whites who lived in the swamps and forests of lower Delaware or in the slums of Wilmington. The free Negroes and slaves worked mainly upon farms.

Delaware in 1860 was definitely a border state. The people in New Castle county had interests similar to those of the residents of Pennsylvania, and the people in Kent and Sussex counties had much in common with the inhabitants of nearby Maryland and Virginia. Differences in agriculture, manufacturing, income and culture divided the state into two unequal parts. When the Civil War broke out, it is thus understandable that the people of northern and southern Delaware would not view the struggle in the same light.

\textsuperscript{39}Thomas J. Clayton, \textit{Rambles and Reflections at Home and Abroad} (Chester, 1892), 396-\textendash 442.
Chapter II

THE PARTIES AND THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS IN 1860

The confusion in the campaign of 1860 on the national scene was reflected in Delaware. Four parties nominated presidential electors. The Democrats were divided nationally by differences over a candidate and platform, while locally they were harassed by disagreement among the followers of Delaware's two senators and by the attack of some disgruntled office seekers. The Republicans and Constitutional Unionists engaged in a tug of war over a defunct local party. These conflicting elements made the election outcome uncertain.

Political Background

The pattern of election procedure was complicated. Wilmington was divided into wards, but in the remainder of the state the political divisions were called hundreds, a heritage from England. In a presidential year, hundreds meetings elected members of either county or state conventions, which in turn chose delegates to national gatherings. Each party usually allotted Delaware six votes, two for each of its three congressmen. After the presidential nomination, county and state ratification meetings named local candidates. Wilmington resented the fact that New Castle county with its large population did not receive a larger representation in state conventions.¹

ILLUSTRATION III

A MAP OF DELAWARE SHOWING POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF DELAWARE COUNTIES CALLED HUNDREDS
On the whole, the Democrats had dominated politics in Delaware in the 1850's. Democratic candidates received Delaware's three electoral votes in 1852 and 1856. With the disappearance of the Whigs, opponents of the Democrats turned to the Know-Nothing party, which in 1854 swept into office its gubernatorial candidate and legislative ticket. The legislature in 1855 passed a prohibition law, which was extremely unpopular. To the stand of the party on liquor and to the accusation of abolitionism were ascribed its defeat by the Democrats in 1856. The newly-fledged Republican party received only 307 votes.

The remnants of the Whigs and Know-Nothing party and a few Republicans formed the People's Party in 1858, with a platform of protective tariff, immigration restriction, and resubmission of the Kansas constitution to the people of the territory. Its candidate for governor was defeated by 207 votes, and the legislative ticket in New Castle county was elected. The members of the organization in 1860 had to decide whether to continue as a local movement, or to join one of the national parties opposed to the Democrats.²

The Democrats and the National Conventions

The Democrats were in an unhappy position in Delaware in 1860. Reflecting the national division, some of its members favored Douglas for president, while others welcomed anyone else. A number of loosely joined factions composed the party: slaveowners, friends of the South, slaveholders, friends of the South, and abolitionists. The party was divided on the issue of slavery, with some members favoring its expansion and others opposing it. The Democratic convention in 1860 nominated Stephen A. Douglas for president and Horace Greeley for vice president. However, the party was unable to unite behind a single candidate, and the party ultimately split into factions, with some members joining the Republican party and others remaining loyal to the Democratic party.

opponents of temperance, and the Irish of New Castle county. The backbone of the party was the farmers of Kent and Sussex counties, who had some of the same problems and interests as the southern Democrats. Even though many did not own slaves, they were particularly sensitive to the "nigger" question and the status of the free Negro.³

Senators James A. Bayard and Willard Saulsbury did not trust one another, and each was fighting for the sole control of the state organization. Bayard who came from an aristocratic family, several of whose members had already served as Senators, was first elected to the Senate in 1850. Through patronage, respect for his legal talents, and friendships, he had built up a considerable following. His ambitious son, Thomas F. Bayard, was his first lieutenant. With the aid of the "customs house squad" and other federal officeholders, he controlled New Castle county and was strongly backed by influential persons in the lower counties, who were opposed to the Saulsburys. The Delaware Gazette in Wilmington was an outlet for his opinions. He was considered a presidential possibility in 1860.⁴

Willard Saulsbury began a family dynasty in 1859 by being elected to the Senate. Commonly considered the most brilliant member of the Sussex bar, he had previously served a term as attorney-general. After two terms as Senator, his drinking habits had attracted unpleasant notoriety, and his brother-in-law, then Governor of the state,

⁴"James A. Bayard" in McCarter and Jackson, eds., Encyclopedia, 534-535.
ILLUSTRATION V

T. F. BAYARD
appointed him Chancellor in 1873 upon his promise to reform. His record as Delaware's highest judicial officer was outstanding. His brothers Eli or Gove followed in his footsteps in the Senate for the next twenty years. The Saulsbury wing of the Democratic party, the faction called "the party of the three brothers", was commonly said to influence elections by a combination of patronage, lottery money, and corruption. Through the Delawarean, a Dover newspaper, they appealed to prejudice upon racial issues.5

Special mention should be made of the connection of Sam Townsend of New Castle county with the Democratic party. An eccentric and outspoken politician, railroad promoter, founder of the town of Townsend, pioneer peach planter and packer of canned fruit, friend of lotteries, and believer in a white man's party, for forty years he was a cross for the Democrats to bear within or without the party. In 1860 he was a follower of Douglas, and with the editor of the newly established Delaware Inquirer, James A. Montgomery, he was endeavoring to lead the Democratic party to the support of squatter sovereignty.6

Maneuvers began early in January to determine whether delegates friendly or hostile to Douglas should be sent to Charleston. A meeting called by Townsend in Appoquinimink Hundred in New Castle county in February endorsed Douglas, but the Bayardites of the vicinity in resolutions denounced the little Giant and his principal supporter,


6"Samuel Townsend," Ibid., 537-538.
"whose tyrannical dictations . . . justly merit the derision of all sensible men." At the county convention in February, two sets of delegates appeared from the hundred, but the Douglas followers were rejected. Resolutions condemned the late wicked raid in Virginia by murderous abolitionists, praised the Dred Scott decision, and disapproved of Seward's irrepressible conflict notion, higher law teachings, and Helper's volume. James A. Bayard and Representative William G. Whiteley were chosen to represent the county at Charleston. In the other counties resolutions of similar purport were passed, though significantly any mention of Bayard as a presidential possibility was omitted. Senator Saulsbury and Ex-Governor William Ross were chosen from Sussex county, and William Pennington and William Bewley from Kent county.

Townsend wrote his chief an account of political happenings in Delaware on February 20. The New Castle politician thought that the Buchananites had acted "in an outrageous manner" at the county convention, but believed that in Appoquinimink Hundred and in Wilmington they would be beaten in a popular vote. He advised:

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7 Delaware Gazette, February 7, 1860; Delaware Republican, January 5, February 9, 1860; Samuel Townsend to Stephen Douglas (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library), February 2, 1860.

8 Gazette, February 21, 1860; Delawarean, February 25, 1860; John Merritt to Thomas F. Bayard (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress), February 22, 1860.

9 Gazette, March 16, 20, 23, 1860; Delawarean, March 17, 24, 1860.
We talk of and shall form a Popular Sovereignty Douglas Democratic Party in New Castle county. We will not put up any longer with the tyranny of the administration men. We were willing if we could do so, without a sacrifice of Principle to unite with them to fight against the Republicans, but we find we cannot do so. They are mad and worried to think their day of tyranny and Plunder is drawing to a close and would rather, it appears, if they cannot continue at the public till, see the opposition elected than a Popular Sovereignty Democrat.

In a postscript he added that he had decided not to call a county meeting until after the national convention, as Douglas' nomination might abolish the necessity for it. He was willing to bet $1,000 that Bayard would never again be chosen for Senator.10

James A. Montgomery on February 21 gave Townsend a letter of introduction to Douglas. The Wilmington editor observed, "The cause is progressing finely in our little state; we are growing in strength every day." Townsend visited Douglas in Washington, but no record of the conversation exists.11

Townsend tried to influence the delegates from Kent and Sussex counties to support the Illinois senator for the presidency. Willard Saulsbury promised that he would not back any platform suggested by the Democratic senators in caucus, and as Saulsbury controlled two counties and Bayard one, Townsend was encouraged and wrote Douglas on March 28:

10S. Townsend to S. A. Douglas, February 20, 1860 (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library).

If Salisbury [sic] had a little more Nerve, and was not so peculiarly situated, he would proclaim himself openly your friend. The lower portion of this state where he comes from is ultra Slavery, and Bayard panders to that feeling to such an extent that Salisbury [sic] is afraid he will supplant him or weaken him, and it is a fixed determination here in Delaware with your and Salisbury's [sic] friends that James A. Bayard Never Shall go to the Senate after his present term.

Townsend thought of holding a public meeting, at which a request would be made of Saulsbury to support Douglas if the latter secured more votes than any other candidate at Charleston. The plan was abandoned. The New Castle politician described himself as Douglas' "first friend" in the state and took the credit for the founding of the Delaware Inquirer. "We are gaining rapidly here in Delaware and hope sincerely the national convention will have the good sense to nominate you and lay down a good Liberal Democratic platform," he concluded.  

Senator Bayard told his son in March that he was weary of politics. "I am sick of Delaware politics and mean to stand above them," he wrote. "I am perfectly indifferent as to what is done in Kent or Sussex, all I care about is to see that the State does not become abolitionist or squatter sovereignized." In spite of such sentiments, he continued to interest himself in happenings upon both the local and national scene. For president he was utterly opposed to Douglas, preferring Robert M. Hunter of Virginia, but expected that Breckinridge would be nominated. He did not consider that he

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himself possessed "a shadow of a chance." 13

At the Charleston convention in April, Senator Bayard took a prominent part. When a dispute developed over the acceptance of a platform, Bayard and Whiteley withdrew. The elder statesman explained to the convention that he did "not consider it within the scope of my authority to fetter my constituents by the decision of a convention, which is no longer a unit; which is broken by the secession of six, eight, or nine states of the Union." He must first request new instructions from home. 14 Willard Saulsbury announced that the remainder of the Delaware delegation sympathized with the southern democracy and endorsed the majority report, but that concern for a united party compelled them to ask for time to consult. 15 Subsequently the four delegates stayed in the meeting and cast two votes repeatedly for Hunter. 16 After news of the split arrived in Wilmington, Townsend and two other prominent Democratic politicians "immediately telegraphed to Pennington and Saulsbury to hold on in the convention and on no account be the least influenced by Bayard, as Delaware would never countenance a Seceder." 17

13James A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, March 21, 1860 (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress).

14National Democratic Executive Committee, ed., Proceedings of the National Conventions at Charleston and Baltimore (Washington, 1860), 127. Bayard was indefinite about the number of states because of the confusion within the convention hall.

15Ibid., 130.

16Ibid., 141; Gazette, May 8, 11, 1860.

17S. Townsend to S. A. Douglas, May 31, 1860 (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library). The two politicians were William Cannon and William Walker.
Bayard and Whiteley joined the seceders, and Bayard was elected permanent chairman of the southern convention. In an hour-long speech he pleaded for harmony, attacked the spirit of prevailing corruption and bargaining, and accused the New York delegation of being responsible for many difficulties. He thought that the meeting had power to recommend, but not to act. Upon the third day of the session he requested and received permission to retire. Both conventions adjourned to meet later at Baltimore.

The Gazette suspended judgment concerning the New Castle delegates, but the Delawarean excoriated their "secession" for months. To his constituents Bayard explained that he withdrew from the first convention because he wanted the meeting to elect a candidate first and to write the platform second, because he considered that it was no longer a national assembly after seven states departed, and because he was opposed to Douglas and squatter's rights.

At a county meeting at the end of May, Bayard and Whiteley spoke and were sustained in their course at Charleston. When two sets of delegates appeared from Appoquinimink Hundred, the Townsend group was rejected. Resolutions approved the conduct of the New Castle county delegates at Charleston, elected them to the Baltimore convention,
and approved the majority platform.\textsuperscript{22} Douglas men in Wilmington in May opposed the organization of a second convention, claimed that the New Castle delegates had lost their seats, asked the Kent and Sussex delegates to vote for Douglas, and promised to accept the Baltimore nominee as a standard bearer.\textsuperscript{23} At an irregular county meeting in June, Montgomery and Townsend were chosen to represent the county at the convention.\textsuperscript{24}

Conflicting reports reached Douglas about his chances of support in lower Delaware. The president of the Kenton Democratic Club in Kent county in May believed that Douglas could be elected if nominated, but did not think that he had many followers in the area. The Democrats were under the control of older men in Dover, held up their hands in "pious horror" at change, and felt that "the world is going upside

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., May 29; \textit{Republican}, May 31, 1860.

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., May 14, 1860; \textit{Gazette}, May 15, 1860; Bayard Scrapbook (Newspaper clippings, 1860), June 8, 1860. The call for the convention on June 8, which probably came from the Commonwealth, shows well the spirit of the Douglas men: "Let the Democracy who are opposed to the treason of the delegates of New Castle county at the Charleston convention; let every Democrat who is opposed to committing the Democratic party to the slave trade attend this meeting; let every Democrat who abides by nominations and bows to the will of the majority come; let every Democrat who is determined to carry on the organization of the party come; let every Democrat rally to the standard of the Democratic principles and convince the country that we do not follow the lead of political traitors."

\textsuperscript{24}See the leaflet "To the Democratic National Convention which will assemble at Baltimore, June 18th" (Bayard Scrapbook, 1860, Library of Congress).
down" if new ideas were presented. From Dover in May came the encouraging word that "the tone and feeling is changing very much in your favor in our county (Kent), and I am truly hopeful our delegates will be induced to go for your nomination, which I think is the best which can be made." The facts were that Douglas had little support outside of New Castle county, unless he should be benefited by the Bayard-Saulsbury fight.

Townsend was rather optimistic about his chances of being seated by the national convention. He felt that Bayard and Whiteley had misrepresented conditions at the New Castle county meeting and that the representatives from Kent and Sussex counties would befriend him. When Townsend and Whiteley appeared before the committee on credentials, heated words led to an exchange of blows. The next morning Whiteley visited Townsend's hotel, and the fight continued. Townsend "nocked" him down and gave him "a good sound drubbing." A pistol fell from Whiteley's coat as he rose from the floor, and Townsend pocketed it until police arrived. The majority and minority reports of the


26 G. Dickson to S. A. Douglas, May 22, 1860 (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library).


28 Republican, June 25, 1860; S. Townsend to S. A. Douglas, July 2, 1860 (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library).
committee on credentials recommended the seating of Bayard and Whiteley, and the action was approved by the convention.29

When the session became heated, Saulsbury announced that the majority of the delegation of the little state had striven for harmony and union by remaining in the convention, but in future balloting would decline to participate, since they felt it unfair to bind their constituents at home.30 Probably the junior senator was already planning an attack upon Bayard and thinking of a union with the Douglas forces in the state. No votes for Douglas were recorded from Delaware, but some of the state's delegation were present when he was nominated.31 Before the convention adjourned, Sam Townsend was named national committeeman by the friends of Douglas.32

When the roll of states was called at the seceders' meeting at the Maryland Institute, someone answered: "Delaware is here. Pass her for the present."33 Senator Bayard spoke once upon a minor point, but later a Maryland delegate announced that the senior Senator, who had been called to Washington left word "that he is with this convention in

29Republican, June 29, 1860.


31Ibid., 163.

32Ibid., 176.

33Murat Halstead, Caucuses of 1860; A History of the National Political Conventions of the Current Presidential Campaign (Columbus, 1860), 212.
sentiment and heart" and would endorse its nominee.\textsuperscript{34} Delaware was
not counted among the states present, and no votes were cast for
Breckinridge and Lane.\textsuperscript{35} Whether Democrats in Delaware would support
Douglas or Breckinridge remained to be seen.

The People's Party and its "Allies"

The major objective of the People's Party in 1860 as in 1858
was to defeat the Democrats, but exactly how this might be accomplished
was a matter of dispute. Some favored joining the Republican or the
"Union" party, while others wished to remain a local party with no
national affiliations. Shrewd Republicans soon realized that it was
desirable to nominate their own electors, but that chances for victory
on the local level would be greatly increased if they cooperated with
the People's Party. In the confusion that prevailed, the Republican
strategy was successful in preventing the local organization from
joining the Union party and in keeping themselves from being disowned
for abolitionist tendencies.

The leaders of the People's Party were men who had formerly
been affiliated with the Whig and Know-Nothing parties. Their oppo-
nents accused them with some justification of becoming "abolitionized."
Their platform of 1858 with a high tariff provision and in favor of
referring the Kansas constitution to a territorial vote exhibited
Republican leanings. The Congressional nominee had refused to answer

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 2\textsuperscript{nd}.

\textsuperscript{35} Parkhurst, ed., \textit{Official Proceedings}, 163; Halstead, \textit{Caucuses},
209, 221.
whether he would cooperate with the Republicans in Congress if elected. It was also significant that the only victory of the party had come in New Castle county, the home of Delaware manufacturing and later a stronghold of the Republican party.36

The rise of the Republican party since 1856 had been rapid. Only E. G. Bradford of New Castle county had attended the national convention in 1856, and the party was considered to be dominated by fanatics. It received only 307 votes, and not a single vote had come from Kent and Sussex counties. In 1858 the members had cooperated with the People's Party. Propaganda, hard work, and disgust with the Democratic party had done their work. The most important element in the Republican party was the New Castle county manufacturers and their employees, who like their friends in Pennsylvania, favored high tariff and a check upon slavery expansion. Abolitionists, disgruntled Democrats, and former Whigs and Know-Nothings, most of whom were members of the People's Party, were prominent in its councils. The leaders included Judge E. W. Gilpin, Thomas M. Rodney, and Dr. A. H. Grimshaw in New Castle county, Nathaniel B. Smithers in Kent county, and Dr. J. S. Prettyman and Judge Caleb S. Layton in Sussex county. The only Republican newspaper in the state was the Peninsular News and Advertiser published by Prettyman in Milford. The Delaware Journal and Delaware

36Fisher, "Political Parties" in McCarter and Jackson, eds., Encyclopedia, 210; Republican, February 16, 1860.
Republican were opposed to the Democrats and eventually became Republican organs.

The "Union" Party in Delaware was weak and disorganized. In February, Ex-Governor William Temple and Ex-Senator Joseph P. Comegys of Kent county were reported to have been appointed to form a party in Delaware dedicated to preserving the Union and to halting the agitation over slavery. Republicans and Democrats immediately denounced the effort to form a "third" party, which might deflect votes, and each claimed to be a "Union" party anyway. Nothing was done towards organizing, until the founders failed to capture the People's Party convention in June; then it was almost too late to form an effective machine. The opposition claimed that the movement was composed of only elderly, conservative men, who were out of office, and that it made no stand upon the issues of the day. The two organizers came to favor complete separation from the People's Party, but the majority would not follow. At no time did the movement receive widespread support. It named electors, but cooperated with the People's Party in other nominations. Under different leadership a Union party might have provided a real challenge to the Democrats. The polls in November revealed that it was the second strongest party, probably because many Delawareans feared that disunion might result from a Breckinridge or Lincoln victory.


The struggle over the control of the People's Party began in January. A letter from Captain Samuel F. duPont to Henry Winter Davis in Maryland in January reveals the concern of Republican leaders over sending delegates to Chicago:

Henry tells me he has seen Bradford who stated that he would agree to call all the opposition elements in the state into convention, & would agree that the delegates should be instructed to vote first, last, & always for Bates, but after this, he (B) would claim the right to go in for the nomination whoever it might be—Henry thought Bradford very fair—the latter thought also that any attempt to send Republican delegates from this state would be idle—in view perhaps that none would be got from the two lower counties—

The Young Men's Association of the People's Party in January advocated sending representatives to Chicago, but a hundred meeting in New Castle county termed the idea "suicidal" and appealed for backing to the lower counties. The editor of the Democratic Gazette asserted that less than 100 men below the Christiana River wanted representation at the Republican convention, but the editor of the Peninsular News and Advertiser declared that number existed in two hundreds in Sussex county. The Delaware Republican on February 23 placed Bates' name for president at the head of its editorial column.

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40Republican, January 16, 1860.

41Ibid., February 13, 1860.

42Ibid., February 16, 1860. The editor comments upon these opinions.

43Ibid., February 23, 1860.
The Young Men's Association of the People's Party continued to urge cooperation with the Republicans. At a meeting in March, representation in Chicago was supported because the platform would win the approval of all conservative men "upon the subjects of 'Protection to American Industry', and the 'Non-Extension of Slavery into the Free Territories', at the same time securing to our Brethren of the Southern States the observance of every Constitutional guarantee to slavery and the return of fugitive slaves."\(^4\) A week later a special nod of approval was given to home protection, which "is of more importance to the Laborer and Capitalist of the country than any other or all other political principles of the day"\(^5\)

The _Delawarean_ approved an editorial in the _Journal_, which asserted that nine-tenths of the opposition was united around the Republicans.\(^6\) The _Delaware Republican_ in April claimed that nine-tenths of the People's Party favored a delegation at the Republican convention and printed a list of 250 names from New Castle county, 27 from Kent county, and 27 from Sussex county, who favored the proposal.\(^7\) On the other hand, a People's Party meeting in Duck Creek Hundred in Kent county in April disapproved of cooperation with the Republicans and recommended participation in the Union convention in Baltimore.\(^8\)

\(^4\) _Ibid._, March 15, 1860.

\(^5\) _Ibid._, March 26, 1860.

\(^6\) _Delawarean_, February 16, 1860.

\(^7\) _Republican_, April 5, 1860.

\(^8\) _Smyrna Times_, April 5, 1860.
When the state convention of the People's Party assembled in Dover in April, it was largely under the control of the Republicans. A resolution to elect delegates to the Constitutional Union convention was voted down. A motion by George P. Fisher, strongly concurred in by Nathaniel B. Smithers, to be represented nowhere and to remain a local party, carried. It was understood that members who cared to organize meetings to send delegates to national conventions were free to do so without forfeiting membership in the People's Party. After the national convention met, another meeting in June would decide future action. Unfriendly sources blamed the abolitionist element for defeating the effort to be represented at Baltimore.

The Republicans promptly organized a convention which met in Dover on May 1. Nathaniel B. Smithers headed the delegates chosen to attend the Chicago convention. The platform opposed the extension of slavery into territories, denounced squatter sovereignty, and favored high tariffs and a homestead bill. Congressman Thomas Corwin of Ohio addressed the well-attended meeting on national issues. Edward Bates was the favorite for the presidential nomination. The Delaware delegation did not take a prominent part in the proceedings of the national convention. On the first ballot it voted for Bates, but on the second and third ballots it supported Lincoln, whose praises were

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49 Ibid., April 12, 1860; Republican, April 9, 1860.
50 Delawarean, April 21, 1860.
51 Republican, May 8, 1860; Smyrna Times, May 3, 1860; Gazette, May 4, 1860.
soon being sung by the Republican Peninsular News and Advertiser and the People’s Party organs, the Delaware Journal and Delaware Republican.52

Poorly attended county conventions of the Constitutional Union party named nine delegates to the Baltimore conclave.53 A good discussion of the objectives of the group was presented by a Wilmington physician at the New Castle county meeting. Sick of the controversy over slavery, a group of conservatives had formed a party to save the Union, in whose preservation Delaware had always been interested. He predicted that the party would stand "on the simple platform of the Union and the Constitution, with perhaps a plank including Protection to American Industry" and that the nomination of a truly national candidate, such as Bell or Crittenden, would result in a "hurricane" sweeping the land, as in 1840.54 The delegation, headed by Comegys and Temple, took no prominent part in the national convention, and the press poorly reported activities. The nomination of Bell and Everett was satisfactory to the Delaware members of the party.55

52Halstead, Caucuses, 146, 147. The six delegates were N. B. Smithers, J. C. Clark, E. C. Hopkins, Davis Thompson, J. T. Heald, and Alfred Short.


54Republican, May 10, 1860.

55Halstead, Caucuses, 104-119.
After the four conventions adjourned, many unanswered questions remained in Delaware. Would Senator Bayard be successful in securing the backing of the Democratic organization for Breckinridge, or would the Saulsbury faction arrange a compromise, which might insure state victory? Would the Townsendites persist in going their own way, or would they compromise? Would the Constitutional Unionists or Republicans secure control of the People's Party, or would it continue to exist as a state party only? These were some of the questions that plagued politicians in the campaign of 1860.
Chapter III

PARTIES AND THE STATE CONVENTIONS IN 1860

The excitement over conventions had not died down before politicians were speculating over possible winning combinations. The Bayard men were against any compromise with the Douglas followers, but in the lower counties the desire for victory was stronger than principles. Both the Republicans and Constitutional Unionists looked hopefully to the People's Party. The Lincoln and Breckinridge men expected support from the Bell men, of whom they spoke with approbation. Could compromises avoid the appearance of four sets of candidates for local and state office?

The Democrats and the State Conventions

The enthusiasm on every side that greeted the nomination of Breckinridge and Lane, said the Gazette, made victory certain. Within a few days a Breckinridge and Lane Club was formed in Wilmington.\(^1\) A salute from one hundred guns greeted the nomination in New Castle.\(^2\) At a ratification meeting in Wilmington in July, the Harmony Cornet Band played, the city hall was decorated with flags, and a streamer twenty feet in length bore the mottoes, "Equal Rights and Just Protection," and the "Constitution and Union," while back of the speaker's

\(^1\) Delaware Gazette, June 29, 1860.

\(^2\) Ibid., June 26, 1860.
stand an enormous banner proclaimed: "North, South, East and the Union Forever." James A. Bayard pointed out the dangers to the Union of a sectional party such as the Republican, considered the desire for personal aggrandizement as the reason for Douglas' nomination, and urged Delawareans to show Douglas in letters of fire that not a corporal's guard backed him.3

When the Delawarean suggested the nomination of an electoral ticket unpledged to the support of any specific Democrat,4 the Gazette indignantly rejected the notion.5 The Breckinridge and Lane Association in Wilmington sent out a letter to leading Democrats advocating marching "to victory or defeat, as the case may be, preferring the latter under the leaders of our choice, with a bold avowal of principle, to the former, if only to be secured by a combination with men, whose principles, we believe, if practically carried into operation, must result in the destruction of the Union of these states."6 The Kent county ratification meeting in July favored compromise county, state, and electoral tickets.7 A subsequent meeting of Democrats of West Dover Hundred urged compromise.8

3 Ibid., July 10, 1860.
4 Delawarean, June 30, 1860.
5 Gazette, July 4, 1860.
7 Gazette, July 20, 1860.
8 Delawarean, August 4, 1860.
The friends of Bayard made every effort to control the state convention in August, since Bayard was against compromise and Douglas, while the party of the three brothers was for victory at any price. Both in Kent and Sussex counties spirited contests took place in the hundreds. From Saratoga Springs Senator Bayard wrote his son that he was anxious to see whether the Saulsburyys would succeed in dominating the state. "I would rather the split came ten years hence," he added, "and come it will, but the character of the party requires that we should disavow the wretched resolutions in Kent, which attempt to carry on a political contest without principles or candidates." The election of Douglas would be "degrading" to the office. One of Bayard's enemies in Kent county openly proclaimed that the "object was to first down Mr. Bayard and his friends in this county, and the only way it could be done was for Douglas men to agree to a compromise." The supporters of the Bayards in Sussex county were in the very thick of the fight, but were fortunate in having such influential men as William Ross, the Martins, and C. W. Wright on their side. In response to their plea, Thomas F. Bayard spoke in several towns in lower Delaware. The result was that fusion succeeded in part only in Kent county and was completely defeated in New Castle and Sussex counties.

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9James A. Bayard to Thomas F. Bayard (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress), August 5, 1860.

10J. Thorpe to Thomas F. Bayard, July 30, 1860 (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress). Mr. Pennington was the enemy mentioned. Thorpe even mentioned the possibility of the Bayard men leaving the convention if the compromise passed.

A struggle over resolutions in the platform committee at the convention on August 8 brought into focus the differences between the factions. Thomas F. Bayard read some resolutions which he had prepared, and Eli Saulsbury followed with others upholding Douglas and his principles; the latter were rejected by a vote of nine to six. After Bayard agreed to some modifications, including dropping an attack upon squatter sovereignty, his proposals were endorsed by a vote of 13 to 2.\footnote{Delawarean, August 11, 1860; Smyrna Times, August 16, 1860.}

On the convention floor, the fight was renewed. Eli Saulsbury introduced resolutions to have the electors instructed to vote for either Breckinridge or Douglas, depending upon which one won; if neither was the victor, the electors could use their own judgment in voting for a Democratic candidate. After a bitter discussion between Bayard and Saulsbury, the proposal was defeated. The resolutions finally adopted endorsed Breckinridge and Lane, condemned the Republicans as a sectional and abolitionist party, and omitted any reference to Douglas.\footnote{Tbid., August 16, 1860; Delawarean, August 11, 1860.} The Bayards preferred either G. W. Whiteley or D. M. Bates as a congressional nominee, but had to accept Benjamin Biggs, whom young Tom Bayard termed a "sad resort to have refuge in. He would make us ridiculous with his speeches and I lack faith in his sincerity."\footnote{Thomas F. Bayard to James A. Bayard, August 5, 1860 (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress).}
Thomas F. Bayard in two indignant letters complained to his father of his bad treatment at the hands of the Saulsburys. It was his opinion that they had "not a drop of honest manly blood in their veins." The real reasons back of the desire for fusion were two:

Firstly—the Saulsburys wanted a qualified endorsement of the Maryland Institute ticket—so that the presence of Saulsbury Pennington & Co at the Front Street Convention when Douglas was nominated might meet a quasi-approval ....

Secondly] Ross told me plainly that there were about 500 men in Kent & Sussex who expected to make a fee out of the Lottery men at the next Legislature and were each seeking to put some one man on the ticket whose vote thus could be held in their power and for sale.

He continued to fear that compromises might be worked out. 15 From Newport Senator Bayard wrote that he was still concerned about carrying the electoral ticket, and did not wish to break with the Saulsburys. "I see no hope for the preservation of the Union if Lincoln is elected," he mourned. "$2,000,000,000 of property will not be surrendered without a struggle, and yet there seems no alternative between that & a formation of the Confederacy."16

The Douglas men were pleased by the nomination of their idol by one national convention, but displeased by the split in the party, which made his victory improbable. At the New Castle county ratification meeting in June, Dr. William H. White of Wilmington praised Douglas and squatter sovereignty, but denounced Bayard and Whiteley,

15Thomas F. Bayard to James A. Bayard, August 11, 15, 1860 (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress).

16J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, August 17, 1860. (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress).
and termed Breckinridge "a tool in the hands of rebels." Sam Townsend attacked the failure of the Baltimore convention to seat him. Resolutions damned the Charleston secessionists, the treachery at Baltimore, and compromise upon the local scene.\(^{17}\) In a letter to Douglas on July 2, Townsend observed that their opponents had "hoisted the Black Piratical Breckinridge flag & split the party." He described himself as "a slaveholder and popular sovereignty democrat in the fullest sense of the term." He announced that he intended to form an organization in all three counties and that his time and money would be spent in the effort. He would gladly serve upon the national committee.\(^{18}\) The Douglas men published a little newspaper called the **Campaigner** with the motto of "Unity, Equality, Fraternity." The issue of July 4 carried a call for a meeting on July 11 of those who had opposed the secession at Baltimore and who were interested in forming a party in each county.\(^{19}\) The poorly attended meeting at the city hall in Wilmington adjourned from afternoon to evening because of lack of support. Townsend and Dr. William H. White attacked the secessionists, and the usual resolutions praised Douglas and opposed any compromise on a local ticket with the Breckinridge men.\(^{20}\)

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\(^{17}\)Republican, July 2, 1860; Gazette, July 30, 1860; William H. White, *Speech of Dr. William H. White of Delaware, delivered at a meeting in the City-Hall, Wilmington, June 29, 1860.* (Wilmington, 1860), *et passim.*

\(^{18}\)S. Townsend to S. A. Douglas, July 2, 1860 (Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library).

\(^{19}\)The **Campaigner**, July 4, 1860.

\(^{20}\)Gazette, July 17, 1860.
Plans to activate the party in lower Delaware were unsuccessful, no meetings were held, and the organizers assumed a wait-and-see attitude before the Breckinridge convention. A writer to the New York Herald regarded the party as composed of personal enemies of Senator Bayard, disappointed office seekers, and Irish Catholics. He was willing to bet $1,000 that Douglas did not receive the electoral vote of the state, and $100 that it was not given to Bell or Lincoln. Samuel F. duPont predicted that "the Douglas vote will be confined to the Paddies, but this will not draw enough from the regular Democratic ticket to defeat it." Rumors that a compromise was being worked out circulated in many parts of Delaware before the Breckinridge convention. A Bayard lieutenant urged withdrawal from the convention to the acceptance of this alternative. A Douglas man from Kent county in July informed Townsend that he was opposed to any compromise, though he believed that one would be patched up; he hoped that the Bayard men might leave the convention.

If the compromise should be effected by the Kent and Sussex delegates, over the New Castle, Bayard, Whiteley and Custom House faction, and if that faction should secede immediately from the Convention (as many believe will be the case and some hope), and make open war upon that convention, its action and its nominees, than in that case, 

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21 Gazette, July 10, 1860.
22 S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, August 20, 1860 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
23 J. Thorpe to Thomas F. Bayard, July 30, 1860 (Bayard Papers, II, Library of Congress).
repugnant as compromise is to my feelings, I might consent to support at least the action of the Convention so far as to aid in putting down that faction in this State. But to swallow Bayard, custom house faction and all is utterly out of the question! I would sooner not vote at all.24

Since the Bayard supporters rejected compromise, the Douglas men met in convention in Dover on August 28. The majority of the delegates were from New Castle county. Resolutions praised Douglas and squatter sovereignty, while the secession at Charleston and Baltimore and the action of the New Castle county delegates was censured. When George Cummins refused the congressional nomination, Elias S. Reed, a Dover lawyer, accepted the honor. In his acceptance speech he predicted victory over the disunionists and traitors in Delaware under the control of the Wilmington junto, commonly called the Custom house squad.25 A New Castle county convention in September nominated a county ticket, but no local nominations were arranged in Kent and Sussex.26

The Bayardites were successful in preventing fusion with "Sam Townsend and company" in New Castle county, but in lower Delaware the bread-and-butter men had different ideas. In September Reed informed Townsend that their share of the local ticket was more than half of the Kent county nominees—three members of the legislature and five Levy Court members. "More tickets will be polled for Douglas and myself


25Republican, August 30, 1860; Smyrna Times, August 30, 1860; Delawarean, September 1, 1860.

26Republican, October 3, 1860.
under the present arrangement," he added, "than could possibly be polled otherwise now." The congressional nominee personally preferred a "straightout ticket," but such prominent leaders as Saxe-Gotha Laws, Henry Ridgely, and Cummins insisted upon a compromise. In Sussex county James A. Moore, William Cannon, and Willard Saulsbury were struggling for control. The Senator had deposited ten gallons of the best $3 whiskey in a Georgetown store and was ladeling it out freely in an effort to fuse the left and right wings of the party. His tactics were fairly successful, though some results of a secret understanding between some members of the People's Party and some Democrats against the Saulsbury's were visible upon election day.

The Union and Republican Parties Struggle for Control of the People's Party

In Wilmington the firing of one hundred guns greeted the news of the nomination of Lincoln. The Delaware Republican immediately placed his name at the top of the editorial column and printed a short biography. An enthusiastic ratification meeting of the Republicans on June 1 in Wilmington reminded one editor of the glorious days

27E. S. Reed to S. Townsend, September 19, 1860 (Townsend Papers, Delaware State Archives).
29Republican, September 27, 1860.
30Ibid., May 21, 1860.
31Ibid., May 21, 1860.
of 1840 and 1844. Cheers echoed when the national platform was read, and the plank for protection of American industry received a vociferous welcome. Nathaniel B. Smithers, one of the delegates to the national convention, then commented upon the resolutions for the edification of the audience.\(^{32}\) Two Wilmington Republicans wrote the chairman of the national committee that Delaware "will show a bolder front in the coming time" than in 1856.\(^{33}\) A Lincoln and Hamlin Club was organized, and the Germans discussed the formation of a branch.\(^{34}\) Two Wilmington composers published the "Lincoln Quick Step" and "Rail Splitter's Polka."\(^{35}\) The \textit{Gazette} complained bitterly that the \textit{Journal} and \textit{Republican}, which still posed as People's Party organs, had entered the anti-slavery camp, that the People's Party had been handed over to the Republicans, and that having arrived at "Sewardism", the opposition was advancing towards "Garrettsonism."\(^{36}\)

\(^{32}\)\textit{Ibid.}, July 4, 1860.

\(^{33}\)J. R. Latimer and T. M. Rodney to E. D. Morgan, June 7, 1860 (Thomas M. Rodney Collection, Historical Society of Delaware).

\(^{34}\)\textit{Republican}, June 7, 1860.

\(^{35}\)\textit{Ibid.}, July 5, 1860. Professor Grobe wrote the "Lincoln Quick Step", while Harry Tatnall composed the "Rail Splitter's Polka." The opening verse of the former read:

"Honest Old Abe had split many a rail;  
He is up to his work, and he'll surely not fail.  
He has guided his flatboat through many a strait,  
And watchful he'll prove at the Helm of the State."

Copies of this music are in the Lincoln Collection of Brown University.

\(^{36}\)\textit{Gazette}, June 18, 1860. Thomas Garrett was a Quaker abolitionist leader in Wilmington.
ILLUSTRATION VII

AN ILLUSTRATION OF REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN MUSIC
DEDICATED TO THE
HON. ABRAHAM LINCOLN.
About fifty members of the People's Party met in convention in June. Ex-Governor Temple favored disbanding the party, since almost everyone present was either a Republican or a Union man. George P. Fisher disagreed, for he felt that the best way to defeat the Democrats was to permit each man to vote as he wished for President, but that they could unite upon a state and county ticket. Other prominent members concurred, and it was decided to meet in July to name a ticket. The Republicans met in convention in Milford on June 27. Electors were named, but it was left to the People's Party to nominate a candidate for Congress. John R. Latimer of Wilmington, one of the electoral nominees, pointed out that four years ago a despised corporal's guard had met in convention at Dover, and now the Republicans were assembled at the gateway to Sussex county, a slavery stronghold. E. G. Bradford commented upon the two vital issues of the campaign: the non-extension of slavery and home protection of industry. Resolutions in their support were passed.

Throughout July the Republicans worried about the People's Party. Its continuation would enhance their chances of victory, but some leaders of the Union party were seeking its dissolution. The Republicans had close ties with the People's Party in the city of Wilmington. The Young Men's Association of the People's Party in the

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37Ibid., June 8, 1860; Republican, June 11, 1860.

38Republican, June 28, 1860; Gazette, June 29, 1860.
city had endorsed Lincoln shortly after his nomination and welcomed with "especial gratification" the protection plank.\(^{39}\) Nathaniel B. Smithers explained to the Association shortly after the Milford convention that Kent and Sussex counties advocated retaining the state party, while permitting persons to vote for any electors. The editor of the Republican heartily concurred, believing that people who wanted to end the party had "some ulterior and sinister purpose in view."\(^{40}\) The YMPP a week later recommended adherence to the People's Party organization for state and county elections and thought "suicidal" any attempt to mingle with the local canvass national politics. The editor of the Republican felt that the resolution met with the "cordial approval of every sincere opponent of locofocism in our county and state except those with personal objectives."\(^{41}\) Republican leaders were actively interested in the proceedings of the Constitutional Union Party on July 17 and of the People's Party on July 27, since they wanted their cooperation.

So far little had been heard of the Constitutional Union Party. The editor of the Gazette on June 19 asked where it was, since nothing had been done about a ratification meeting or about a state convention. Was it to receive the head of the People's Party, and the Republicans the tail, or were the Republicans to swallow both of its allies? Were

\(^{39}\)Republican, May 21, 1860.

\(^{40}\)Ibid., July 2, 1860.

\(^{41}\)Ibid., July 9, 1860.
the efforts of the Bell men being paralyzed by "the insidious leprosy of abolitionism"? A week before the convention, Comegys wrote John Bell a letter about political conditions. Victory "beyond a doubt" was predicted, though some opponents of the Democrats hesitated "to throw away their votes" on a third party, and many had previously promised to aid the Republicans. He faced this problem:

The grand cause of the retardation of our action has been the disposition on the part of some of our leaders to keep up the People's Party organization. Professing to be for our candidates, they have yet (some of them) been quite active, privately, in trying to reconcile our voters to regard Lincoln with favor—for ends of course personal to themselves.

Some leaders were still working to set up a state ticket, upon which both the Republican and Union men could agree, but Comegys was determined to defeat compromise with the Republicans on any subject, as he considered the party dangerous to the peace of the country. The convention on the seventeenth would result in an independent organization.

Such may have been the inclinations of the chief of the party, but the mass of the members had other ideas. An unenthusiastic and small meeting passed brief resolutions urging a return to the principles of the 1850 settlement, condemning the slavery controversy, and approving the national platform and candidate. No congressional candidate was nominated. Comegys' admonitions to beware of the Black

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42 Gazette, June 19, 1860.

43 J. P. Comegys to John Bell, July 9, 1860 (Polk-Yeatman Collection, University of North Carolina).
Republicans who had infested the meeting place and to sever relations with the People's Party, which was acting as a drag upon a ship, were unheeded. Later Samuel F. duPont described him as "the person who prevented the union of the opposition elements on the electoral ticket" and reported that he was working in close harmony with the Democrats.

The People's Party reassembled in July to name a congressional candidate. A motion to endorse the nominees and platform of the Constitutional Union Party was defeated. The platform of 1858 was reaffirmed, and George P. Fisher, a supporter of Bell, was chosen to run for Congress. Some men protested against the continuation of the organization, but Judge Caleb S. Layton of Georgetown pointed out that only a handful would back a Constitutional Union ticket, while many would back Fisher, whose name alone was a sufficient platform for any man. County conventions later arranged legislative and local tickets.

To the Republicans the nomination of Fisher was pleasing, especially as he soon demonstrated that he was willing to cooperate with them. If it had not been for the opposition of Comegys, Temple, and a few other Constitutional Unionists, the Republicans might have

\[\text{\textsuperscript{14}}\text{Smyrna Times, July 19, 1860; Gazette, July 20, 1860.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{15}}\text{S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, August 28, 1860 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\text{Republican, July 30, 1860.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\text{Republican, September 3, 1860; Delawarean, September 15, 1860.}\]
swallowed their two allies. Captain S. F. duPont commented:

The opposition . . . should & would have united all its elements, but for one newspaper & two or three individuals. The attempt to nominate a member of Congress at the B & E convention to which you alluded was to separate the opposition still more, but failed fortunately, & the regular People's or opposition convention, a very full one, particularly from the slave counties have nominated Mr. Fisher, who will be elected I think without doubt . . . .

Mr. DP thinks the B & E ticket will carry in the State. The Irish, a large section in this county, will go to a man for Douglas—the Custom H., Post Off. & the Bayard & Whiteley men all for Breckinridge—

In a later letter he pointed out that he had erred in saying that Bell would win; his brother had predicted victory for Breckinridge.\(^\text{148}\)

Nominations by state conventions did not clarify the political picture in Delaware. Maneuvers looking towards combinations and understandings continued to the eve of the election. The Democrats fused on the local level in Kent and Sussex counties, but in New Castle county the enmity of Bayard and Townsend resulted in separate tickets. The Douglas Democrats nominated electors and a congressional candidate. The Constitutional Unionists and Republicans named different electors, but cooperated on a congressional and local nominations. The hostility of the Bayards, the Saulsburys and Townsend towards one another and the dislike of Fisher by many Unionists made the results uncertain. The campaign was extremely bitter and hard fought.

\(^{148}\)S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, August 6, 20, 1860 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
Chapter IV

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1860

Torchlight processions, banners, fights, meetings, illuminations, fireworks, and patriotic floats characterized the two months before the polling day. An observer in Sussex county considered that politicians were in a "maze", many being unable to define their position. Only a prophetic seer would predict the outcome.

Politicians looked for guidance to the Wilmington municipal election in September and to the "little election" in October when local inspectors and assessors were chosen. Nine Republicans, four Breckinridge men, and one Douglas follower were elected to the city council. 1 To the Delawarean the returns demonstrated the "suicidal policy" of non-union, while the Gazette considered that the Douglas men had thrown away their votes and pleaded for their support in November. 2 The Republicans were pleased by the returns, but alarmed that the Bell men had not fully cooperated and had sometimes arranged different tickets. 3 The Republican County Executive Committee passed resolutions, which provided for full support of all People's Party candidates and denounced bolting and new arrangements. 4 In the October election the Breckinridge forces won

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1 Delaware Republican, September 6, 1860.
2 Delawarean, September 8, 1860; Gazette, September 6, 1860.
3 Republican, September 6, 1860.
4 Ibid., October 18, 1860.

59
complete victories in Kent and Sussex counties, while they divided the offices with the Lincoln men in New Castle county. Captain duPont wrote to a friend:

Delaware did about as badly as it could at the "Little Election." The elements of the opposition had been coming together when Mr. Comegys came up from Dover & induced the Bell men to nominate straight tickets for assessors &c. I understand they looked silly & blue after the Election.

The Republican wondered if the Bell men would ever learn the value of cooperation. On the basis of the returns, the Delawarean predicted 1,000 majority for Breckinridge.

The Democrats and the Campaign

Clearly the Breckinridge press considered that the principal rival to be faced was the Republican party. Numerous editorials pleaded with the Douglas and Bell men to combine forces against the sectional party and attempted to demonstrate conclusively that the differences in the platforms of the opponents of the Republicans were those of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum. A vote for Douglas or Bell would be wasted and would aid Lincoln.

In the fall the Democrats smeared the Republicans and their principal ally as "nigger lovers." The People's Party was described

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5Gazette, October 5, 1860.
7Delawarean, October 6, 1860.
8Gazette, November 2, 1860.
as a preparatory school leading to the high school of abolitionism; it was accused of being "principally composed of abolitionists or men sympathetic with abolitionism and Republicanism". The Lincoln party not only taught and practiced the doctrines of abolitionists and of equality of the races, but expressed the determination "to break up the institution of slavery, if it must be even by the torch of the incendiary and the knife of the midnight assassin." The presidential candidate himself, who possessed the consistency of a "weathercock", was "a very dark white man—so deeply tinted with soot that probably he has doubts as to which race he really belongs."

A local Democratic orator in Wilmington tarred his opponents in this fashion. The Republicans were a party with the leading principle of Negro equality and would inaugurate a revolution of blood if they won the election, "a revolution which in the accomplishment of its unhallowed purposes of personal ambition and sectional domination is to disband the army and navy, pack the Supreme Court with the pliant instruments of Abolitionism, and institute a crusade of dragonade against institutions and property." An editorial in the Gazette asserted that the doctrine of equality would seat the black man at our tables, marry him to our daughters, place him on juries, and elect him

9Gazette, October 9, 1860; Delawarean, September 1, 1860.
10Ibid., September 29, 1860.
11Ibid., November 3, 1860.
12Gazette, October 9, 1860.
to the legislature. Senator Bayard's speech at Milford was summarized by the Peninsular News and Advertiser as: "Nigger! Nigger! Nigger! Nigger! Abolitionist! Abolitionist! Marry Nigger! Marry Nigger! Nigger Equality! Nigger Equality!" The call for the last round of Democratic meetings in Kent county prior to the election invited, "All who are opposed to the doctrine of the equality of the negro with the white man as proclaimed by Abe Lincoln, William H. Seward, and their coadjutors and followers in the ranks of the Black Republican party."

The most important meeting of the Breckinridge Democrats was addressed by William L. Yancey of Alabama. In his opinion, the most significant issue of the campaign was the integrity and safety of the constitution, which had two sides—slavery and the Union. He denied that he was a disunionist, though his opponents pictured him as being 27 feet high, weighing 3,000 pounds, eating boiled nigger for breakfast, and roasted Union men for dinner. In an enormous parade on the eve of election, almost 2,000 men marched in a procession one and a half miles in length through Wilmington to the accompaniment of illuminations, fireworks, and cheers.

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13 Ibid., October 16, 1860.
14 Republican, October 16, 1860. From the Peninsular News and Advertiser.
15 Delawarean, October 20, 1860.
16 Gazette, September 28, 1860; Republican, October 11, 1860.
17 Ibid., October 29, 1860; Gazette, October 26, 1860.
While this faction of the Democratic party displayed considerable confidence, the Douglas men acted like whipped dogs. Only in New Castle county where the personal enmity of Bayard and Townsend prevented an adjustment of differences was there an organization, meetings, and a county ticket; elsewhere the two Democratic factions fused. An observer in Sussex county thought that Douglas did not have any more chance there than "a bobtail bull in flytime," and the same remark could have been applied to Kent county.\(^{18}\) No ratification meetings were held, and even the Congressional nominee admitted that his chance of election was slim.\(^{19}\) The "party of the three brothers" was happy to make sure of victory on a local scale by dividing equally the county offices.\(^{20}\) The Breckinridge followers repeatedly urged the friends of the Little Giant to join in downing the Black Republicans, while the latter pointed out that the best chance for revenge against the "disunionists" was to vote for Lincoln.

Dr. William White addressed the largest meeting of the Douglas followers in Wilmington in September. He admitted that the hope of victory was slight, but the believers in popular sovereignty should be happy to battle on behalf of righteousness. Douglas was "the best-abused man" in the United States, and if Lincoln won, the seceders must take the blame. With the constitution in one hand and the

\(^{18}\)\textit{Ibid.}, August 3, 1860.

\(^{19}\)\textit{Republican}, September 10, 1860.

\(^{20}\)\textit{Gazette}, September 14, 1860.
principles of free government in the other, the party entered the arena. Only 700 supporters rallied to participate in the pre-election parade.

The "Allies" of the People's Party and the Campaign

The Republicans were aggressively confident and felt that they stood at the threshold of success in the nation and state. While they feared the Breckinridge men, from the Douglas and Bell followers they expected help in downing the supporters of slavery. Their strategy to keep alive the People's Party was succeeding brilliantly. The commonest charges against them were that they were sectional, abolitionist, and "nigger lovers", and that their success would necessarily lead to a break up of the Union.

A large gathering of the friends of Lincoln in Wilmington in September was addressed by E. G. Bradford, who analyzed the differences among the parties. The Unionists were good men, but took no stand on current issues. The Douglas men were for the Union, but cheered for the contradictory principles of the Dred Scott decision and popular sovereignty. The Breckinridge party was composed of disunionists, secessionists, and advocates of territorial expansion in Central America and Cuba. Only the "droppings" from the public treasury kept the organization alive in Delaware. The Republican party was interested in checking the extension of slavery, but had no desire to interfere with the institution where it already existed or to battle

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for Negro equality. Extremists did not dominate the organization any
more than the height of a few waves determined the level of the ocean.
Its members loved the Union, and it was the "only true tariff party."23

Lower Delaware was invaded by a group of local and Maryland
politicians in October. Echoes from the happenings at a Dover meeting
created headlines for several weeks. An egg successfully aimed at a
Republican orator resulted in the expulsion of several Democrats.
Several Wide Awakes retaliated by beating up three Democrats, whom
they believed responsible for the disturbance. The sheriff formed a
posse of 100 men to quell any outbreak. The Republicans were accused
of throwing the splattering missile creating the trouble in an effort
to discredit their opponents. The report of the incident in the
Delawarean was headed: "Abolition Meeting in Dover! ! Disgraceful
Scenes—Attack of the Hireling Abolition Ruffians of Wilmington upon
Unarmed and Unoffending Citizens."24

A Republican demonstration in Wilmington upon October 22 im-
pressed a woman diarist. She was dazzled by the combination of illumi-
inations, fireworks, and transparencies of the great torchlight pro-
cession; hundreds on foot or horseback participated. "The Republicans
introduced this custom," she wrote, "& the other parties had to follow
suit or be distanced in the race, but the other parties are not hopeful
& feel as if they were working against time & tide, & the Republican

23 Ibid., September 6, 1860; Gazette, September 4, 1860.
24 Ibid., November 2, 1860; Republican, November 1, 1860.
demonstrations are far more brilliant & imposing than any others." She had "very little doubt" about the election result, was "very glad for the North once more to hold the sceptre and for the free soil element to gain the ascendancy in the councils of our Nation," but regretted that Seward was not the candidate, for "it takes the zest from the Victory when the Victor does not secure the prize."25

On the eve of the election a parade of over 2,000 men was assembled in Wilmington, which the Republican reported "far exceeded any other demonstration in the state." Wide Awake Clubs, many of whose members owned uniforms of red capes and blue caps, came from nearby places within and without the state to participate. The most attractive feature of the procession was a float with a beautiful Liberty Tree with thirty-three branches, under which stood a representation of Lincoln; a placard read:

Yes, I will protect that tree;  
Harm not a single bough;  
In youth it sheltered me,  
And I'll protect it now.26

The Constitutional Unionists were unhappy about the trend of political events. Their followers were few, and the members of the People's Party, even their own congressional nominee, looked with increasing favor upon the Republicans. Fisher was criticized for his ambiguous stand. A resident of Port Penn asked an editor to tell him:

25Anna Ferris, Diary, October 22, 1860 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.)

26Gazette, November 2, 1860; Republican, November 1, 1860.
"Is George P. Fisher halting between two opinions, or is he 'all things to all men'; in other words, is he anything, everything, nothing by any means he may win some votes." A humorous poem was published entitled "The Landshark Fisher-Man":

I saw a landshark Fisher-man
Who went to try his luck;
His legs were wide astraddle,
Upon two platforms stuck;
One platform was of black-oak,
The great Chicago tree;
The other was a dumb-bell,
That came from Tennessee.

Other stanzas mentioned that when he fished for black fish, he leaned upon the oak and that when he sought seabass, he rang the bell; he would probably fall in the water and be submerged.

A great parade of the Unionists in Wilmington in September with 850 in line included the use of bells in all conceivable ways and fashions, the ship Constitution, thirty-three girls in red, white and blue costumes on a float, and wagons with brickmakers, printers and weavers engaged in their occupations. Disguised as Macbeth, Lincoln appeared on a transparency, saying "Silence that dreadful Bell." A Republican observer received a headache from the continuous ringing, but to a Unionist it was a pleasing sound, as one wrote to his son:

27 *Gazette*, August 14, 1860.


The Union Clubs had a fine Torch light procession. The tinkling and loud notes of Bells of various sizes was heard all over the City. The procession is said to have been the largest we have had, and what with the Music, Banners, Transparencies, shipmounted house, and great blaze of light, with some of the houses along the line of route illuminated, and the cheering and good humor which seemed to prevail, made the pageant an imposing one. Let the Bells ring all over the Union calling together all the Conservatives and good citizens to place at the helm of State those who have the welfare of the "Good Ship", our country at heart.30

In elaborateness and numbers it exceeded the final demonstration of the campaign.31

Afterwards Joseph P. Comegys reviewed the progress of the rival groups. The Douglas men had not "the ghost of a chance," and the Breckinridge men were disunionists, but "the worst and most inveterate enemy" was the Republicans, whose victory would produce disunion and war. George P. Fisher, who had been ill for some weeks, delivered a short speech, in which he described himself as an old-line Whig and Bell man, who was willing to vote to admit any new state with or without slavery, but could not support such a fraud as the Lecompton constitution. Fisher then withdrew, but Comegys still wished to know whether the nominee would oppose all legislation pro or con concerning

30Anna Ferris, Diary, September 17, 1860 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.); J. P. Gillis to son, September 22, 1860 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware); Scharf, History, I, 343. Gillis was in command of the steamer "Pocahontas" at Fort Sumter. He became a Commander in 1862 and saw service at Port Royal and off the coast of Texas. In 1866 he was promoted to Commodore.

31Republican, November 1, 1860.
slavery. Friends of Fisher attempted to reply, and a general row resulted.32

The president of the local Union Club in Smyrna in September asked Fisher in a public letter to answer three questions, including his stand upon the extension of slavery, the candidates and platform, and the tariff.33 The Dover lawyer's brief and evasive reply, which indicated that he favored Bell, the Constitution and the Union, and the People's Party platform of 1858, was deemed unsatisfactory. A disgusted Bell man from Kent county declared that Fisher's attitude "is not, never has been, and never will be acceptable to Unionists."34 The Gazette claimed that the Republicans were pleased by the "adroitness" of the replies of the "mum" candidate.35 Comegys advised the formation of county tickets, and a Kent county meeting sought unsuccessfully for a new congressional nominee.36 While Fisher's shiftiness lost him some votes, frankness would probably have been more disastrous.

Concluding Phases and the Results of the Campaign

Excitement neared a peak in the week before the election. Each party had a major demonstration in Wilmington. A Wilmington resident

32Ibid., September 27, 1860.
33Ibid., October 3, 1860; undated clipping, Bayard Scrapbook, 1860 (Bayard Papers, Library of Congress).
34Gazette, October 11, 1860.
35Republican, October 11, 1860.
36Gazette, October 9, 1860.
wrote her son in the navy:

On Monday of last week we had a Breckinridge procession, which went to the country to join in some demonstration. On Tuesday night the Bell and Everett turned out with Torches & music. Monday the Wide Awakes went to Centreville. Same night the Douglas men had a procession in which they were joined by companies [sic] from Phila. And on Thursday night a grand demonstration, the largest by the Breckinridge party said to be one mile long--Big broom torches, transparencies, flags, wreaths, demijohns, etc., etc. On Friday night the Wide Awakes went to New Castle and on Saturday night Brockinridge's went over.

On Wednesday night next the Republicans are to make their last grand demonstration by as brilliant procession as they can muster. And it is probable that the Saturday evening previous to the day of election which takes place on Tuesday 6 Nov., the Conservatives, the Unionists, the Bell and Everett party, whose generous sympathys [sic] are for the good of the whole country will have a strong turnout and parade. So you see how things are moving politically here.37

Numerous political rumors circulated. The statement of the editor of the Georgetown Messenger that the confused condition of parties made any prediction of the outcome impossible in Sussex county and that the party with the most rum and money would succeed could have been equally applied to the other counties.38 Prominent Republicans outside of the state were said to be anxious to carry one slave state and were supplying funds and speakers to lay a "regular siege" to Kent and Sussex counties to entice Bell and Douglas men.39 The Republican foresaw a Lincoln victory in the state, though the

37Mrs. J. P. Gillis to son, October 29, 1860 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

38Georgetown Messenger, October 11, 1860.

39Gazette, October 19, 1860.
Gazette denied that the freesoil party could win in view of the Democratic majorities in the two southern counties.\(^{40}\) A prediction by a squatter sovereignty advocate that Reed would receive 1,500 votes in Kent and Sussex counties was treated with contempt by a correspondent; wiser men believed that fifty votes in Kent and a dozen in Sussex would be nearer the correct figure.\(^{41}\) Both the Republicans and Breckinridge men were accused of using campaign funds to buy votes. Fisher probably obtained contributions from Thurlow Weed.\(^{42}\) Five leaders of the Democratic party in Sussex county on October 31 sent a note to Thomas F. Bayard, requesting him to obtain $1000, as the Republicans were gaining strength daily.\(^{43}\)

In the pre-election issue, the Gazette in an editorial entitled "To the Polls" advised its readers to vote to keep the most northerly southern state in the Democratic column, to preserve the imperiled government, and to prevent the establishment of Negro suffrage. Small inserts urged Democrats to "Look Out for Fraud," as the opposition had printed some fake tickets. "Vote Early and Then Go to Work to Help Your Neighbors Out," headlined one piece of advice. "Take your horse and carriage, and look after the doubtful voters. Remember you work

\(^{40}\)Gazette, November 2, 1860; Republican, November 1, 1860.

\(^{41}\)Gazette, October 19, 1860.

\(^{42}\)Cf. ante 67.

ILLUSTRATION VIII

REPRESENTATIVE GEORGE P. FISHER
for the Union, and every Democratic vote is so much toward securing its perpetuity.\textsuperscript{44}

The proceedings upon election day were quiet and orderly, and no charges of fraud and violence were made. Politicians waited impatiently for the returns, which it took longer than customary to determine because of the heavy vote and numerous tickets. In Duck Creek Hundred in Kent county thirty more people voted than usual, and it took until nine o'clock Wednesday morning to total the result instead of the usual four o'clock, due to the scratching on the four electoral tickets and two county tickets with several hybrids.\textsuperscript{45}

In every county, even New Castle, the Breckinridge vote exceeded by several hundred that of any opponent, though the combined Bell and Lincoln total surpassed the Breckinridge figure. Douglas trailed a poor fourth. The Republicans were second in New Castle and Kent county, but in Sussex county the substantial Bell vote placed the Unionists as the second strongest party in the state.\textsuperscript{46}

Fisher was elected to Congress because of his great lead in New Castle county, though he had trailed in Kent county and won by

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Gazette}, November 2, 1860.

\textsuperscript{45}\textit{Smyrna Times}, November 8, 1860.

\textsuperscript{46}\textit{Delawarean}, November 10, 1860; \textit{Republican}, November 8, 12, 1860; \textit{Journal}, November 14, 1862.

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seventeen votes in Sussex county. The few hundred votes cast for Reed defeated Biggs. The People's Party legislative ticket won in New Castle county by majorities in excess of 600. In Sussex county an understanding between the People's Party and the enemies of the Saulsbury family had resulted in the election of one state senator, four representatives, and three members of the Levy Court by the People's Party, while the Democrats elected the sheriff, coroner, three representatives, and two members of the Levy Court. The Delawarean reflected the opinions of its owner in criticizing the arrangement.47

The Republicans were jubilant over the election of Lincoln and Fisher, but dismayed that their campaign in the state had not resulted in victory outside of the northern county. They were bitter at the "carving and hacking" of Fisher and the Lincoln electors by the Union men.48 The Delawarean declared that there had been no hope of success since the secession at Baltimore and attributed the triumph of Lincoln to the "folly of his enemies." The state results "vindicated" the Kent county policy of having one electoral ticket; combination would have given electors 1,000 more votes, elected Biggs, and saved Sussex county.49

A few days after the election, Fisher wrote to Thurlow Weed to express his thanks for various services in the campaign. One wonders

47 Ibid., November 8, 12, 1860; Delawarean, November 10, 1860; Smyrna Times, November 8, 1860.
48 Republican, November 12, 1860.
49 Delawarean, November 10, 1860.
if Weed had provided financial contributions. Illness had prevented Fisher's participating more vigorously, but "had I been able to follow up my opponent, I doubt not that I should have more than doubled my majority." Bayard and Saulsbury, he predicted, could easily be defeated two years hence.50

Comegys was completely crushed by the result. In a letter to John Bell on November 12, he congratulated Bell upon his limited success and hoped that he might become a member of Lincoln's cabinet. As he viewed the results in Delaware, they were this:

Delaware had been delivered "bound hand & foot" to the Republicans. Such is the effect; for tho' Breck. had carried the States Presidentially--yet Geo. P. Fisher has been elected to Congress by votes that represent, in fact, Republican sentiment. He, tho', professing to be your friend, is at heart a Republican, and the whole body of the Republicans in Delaware voted for him, & that cheerfully. They have him in their hand. He breathes, politically, at their pleasure. Unless he proves entirely subservient to their purposes, they will "let him down the wind."

The Northern men seem to have determined to try the effect of another strain upon the already chafed cable that holds the Ship of State to her moorings. God grant that she may survive the trial, but things at the South lead us to be uncertain that she will. There is no telling what appears at the time to be a trifling cause may effect momentous results.51

The Democrats won the election by playing upon the fears of Delawareans that the Republicans were the enemies of slavery, believers of Negro equality, and dissolvers of the Union. In spite of Republican

50G. P. Fisher to T. Weed, November 19, 1860 (Weed Papers, University of Rochester).

51J. P. Comegys to John Bell, November 12, 1860 (Polk-Yeatman Collection, University of North Carolina Library).
orators, the tariff question, which appealed mainly to New Castle county manufacturers, was lost sight of in the last months of the campaign and did not influence many votes outside of that locality. The majority of the rural population emphatically sided with the South, and the status of the Negro had more to do with the result than any other single factor. The Democrats had discovered the formula for political success in Delaware and used it repeatedly throughout the remainder of the century.
Chapter V

THE CRISIS

"And now I hope the agitation of the 'slavery question' will forever cease," Anna Ferris wrote in her diary the day after the election.¹ Such hopes were doomed to disappointment. Delawareans did little except wring their hands and participate in peace movements while the Confederacy was formed. Her best-known statesman said, "Our course in Delaware, owing to her feebleness politically, ought to be to watch the progress of events, which we can neither control nor retard in the slightest degree."² Politicians might disagree concerning the causes of the crisis, but they were unanimously for the preservation of the Union and the peaceful adjustment of differences.

The Opinion of the Press

A study of the files of the only four newspapers available shows the universal demand for peace within the state. The independent Smyrna Times thought that the South should wait until some act of aggression had been committed by the Republicans and Lincoln before withdrawing and still had confidence that the Union would be saved.

¹Anna Ferris, Diary, November 6, 1860.

²J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, December 11, 1860 (Bayard Papers, III, Library of Congress).
In the opinion of the editor, both sides were at fault, and amendments or conventions might heal the breach.\(^3\)

The Delaware Republican blamed fireaters, such as the Bayards, Comegys, and Yancey for the difficulty.\(^4\) Its first reaction was that the South Carolina affair was a "tempest in a teapot", which called for a touch of Jacksonism. The Union would survive the loss of a few states, and perhaps was better off without them.\(^5\) One editorial entitled, "Let Us Reason Together", pointed out that the best chance of redress for the South lay within the Union.\(^6\) If the South persisted in its course, the answer as to where the state of Delaware would go would depend upon the action of the border states.\(^7\) The Delaware Journal considered that a secessionist was such a rare animal in the state that Barnum would make a fortune exhibiting it.\(^8\)

The Delawarean sympathized deeply with the South, but did not feel that secession was justified or the solution to the difficulties. In repeated editorials it blamed the Black Republicans for the crisis, pleaded with the South to remain within the Union, and urged a political or constitutional remedy.\(^9\) "Let no hasty, no unwise action

\(^3\) Smyrna Times, November 15, 22, 1860.
\(^4\) Delaware Republican, December 13, 1860.
\(^5\) Ibid., November 22, 1860.
\(^6\) Ibid., January 3, 1861.
\(^7\) Ibid., December 20, 1860.
\(^8\) Smyrna Times, November 23, 1860. From the Delaware Journal.
\(^9\) Delawarean, November 17, December 15, 1860.
destroy the noble work of the constitution," it concluded in an editorial upon "Whither We Are Tending." "Let each be true to itself and to each other. Let the North repeal her obnoxious laws, and the South forget its discontent." An editorial upon "Party versus Country" expressed well its tone:

We condemn secession and disunion as unjustifiable and ruinous and treasonable. It is our honest conviction that the Republican party of the North has given just cause of complaint to the South and aroused by its hostile attitude to Southern rights and Southern interests the apprehensions of abolitionism in the Southern mind, leading naturally if not necessarily to the thought of separation as a remedy for wrongs already committed. Inside the Union and not out is the place to seek redress.

The Republican party has produced the alienation of fraternal feeling between people of two sections and threatens to overthrow the Union. Ultra fanatics control the Republican party rather than conservative members. With them party is over country. 'Tis treason. Better these fanatics had never been born or ended in dungeons or upon gibbets than the Federal government be destroyed by their folly.

The Gazette pleaded with its southern friends to wait and see what Lincoln did. "The real cause of the secession movement" lay in the hatred of the South and Southern institutions created by the Republicans. People lacked confidence in the justice of a party which worshipped the Negro as a "golden calf". To stay the course of "madness", it suggested, "Let the Northern states repeal their

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10 Ibid., November 24, 1860.
11 Ibid., December 20, 1860.
12 Gazette, November 13, 1860.
13 Ibid., November 20, 1860.
nullification laws—let them dare to be just to the South and say to them, thou art my brother—the protection of my house shall be alike the care of our government.  "What should be done is simply this," it added, "the Northern states should declare in unmistakable terms to the South that every fugitive should be returned to his master by their local police, the master simply paying the cost of apprehending, proving property, and expense of carriage." Amendments to the constitution should guarantee to the South equality and protection "beyond peradventure", and the northern states should obey the laws.

As talk of coercion increased, the tone of the Gazette became hysterical. Any attempt to use force would end in war.

It would sacrifice life, character, and money, and neither section could conquer the other. We are for exhausting every argument to preserve the Union. To lead our poor people into swamps and the pestilent climate of the South to hunt down her citizens would be leading them to graves, fill the land with widows and orphans, for while a potato could be grown or a pine knot found to light her liberty-loving sons in following the trail of the invading foe, tyranny would be shorn of its victory and submission could be enforced only by the death of the last of her heroic race.

After many attacks upon its position by the Republican, this Democratic organ summarized its stand in these words: "We deplore her wrongs; would have her rights conceded and maintained, and persuade her back; but in God's name, for our own future comfort, let her go

14 Ibid., November 27, 1860.
15 Ibid., December 28, 1860.
16 Gazette, December 25, 1860.
in peace, rather than bring upon the country the horrors of a civil war.\textsuperscript{17} Without exception the press sought a peaceful solution of the difficulties.

**Individual Views**

Many persons looked to Delaware's senators for political guidance. At the opening of Congress, James A. Bayard wrote his son: "I can yet form no positive opinion, but things look gloomy & I think the Cotton States have determined to leave the Union at all hazards, & they have arrangements to this effect. This will be done by Feby. 11 and with some earlier, & it has been intimated to me that nearly all the members from those States will withdraw from Congress within 20 days." He blamed the crisis upon the anti-slavery fanatics. While he looked with favor upon the Crittenden resolutions, he felt that the only thing that might save the nation was a convention of all the states. In the midst of these events, Delaware could be only a bystander.\textsuperscript{18} In a letter to a friend on December 22, which was published, he reviewed the situation. The cause of the dissension between South and North was slavery. A national convention might succeed in adjusting differences. If the move for separation continued, such a gathering might arrange the terms of peaceful severance. If war came, neither side would be able to defeat the other; exhaustion

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., December 25, 1860.

\textsuperscript{18}J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, Washington, December 4, 1860 (Bayard Papers, IV, Library of Congress).
would eventually create two nationalities. "Thus war will only attain, if severance is inevitable, what could be attained by agreement in convention." He continued to hope for the preservation of unity.  

Delaware's junior senator showed his devotion to the Union in some brief remarks in Congress on December 5, which brought applause from the galleries:

My state having been the first to adopt the Constitution will be the last to do any act or countenance any act calculated to lead to the separation of the States of this glorious Union. She has shared too much of its blessings; her people performed too much service in achieving the glorious liberties which we now enjoy and in establishing the Constitution under which we live, to cause any son of hers to raise his hands against those institutions or against the Union. Sir, when that Union shall be destroyed by the madness and folly of others (if, unfortunately it shall be so destroyed), it will be time enough then for Delaware and her Representatives to say what shall be her course.

Everyone was concerned at the trend of events in South Carolina. "Things strike me in this way," wrote Captain S. F. duPont to a Maryland friend on November 16, "if S. C. is allowed to withdraw, then our Nationality has been a failure, a compact without solid foundation. On the other hand, coercion creates a Southern Confederacy & sooner or later a Civil War. One thing certain, there never was so little cause for secession."  

A Wilmington banker noted in his diary on December 3 that "Congress met today at 12 o'clock, at one of the most critical
day, coercion creates a Southern Confederacy & sooner or later a Civil War. One thing certain, there never was so little cause for secession."

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19 *Gazette*, December 28, 1860.


periods in the history of this country. **Everything** will depend upon
the conservative feeling of the prominent men, both North & South."\(^{22}\)

To Anna Ferris, who was staunchly Republican, the crisis on
December I I appeared in this fashion: "This threat has so long been
held over us that we had almost ceased to think it meant anything, but
now the South is angry & in earnest, & a new Era has arrived in our
politics at the worst possible time, as the President himself seems to
be among the traitors."\(^{23}\) An Army captain visiting relatives at Seaford
in Sussex county at Christmas time informed Lincoln that the postmaster
and Captain Martin, father of the United States consul to Matanzas,
Cuba, were "the only professed disunionists" and that "they are not in
earnest". The completion of the new railroad was transferring trade
and travel from Baltimore to Philadelphia. He found southern feeling
at points having steamboat connection with Baltimore, but guaranteed
"to keep the whole peninsula including the two counties of Virginia
in the present Union with not exceeding five hundred men."\(^{24}\) "Every­
body and his wife and children talk of nothing so much as secession,
and since the stepping out of South Carolina they talk more," a shoe
advertisement in a Wilmington newspaper declared on Christmas day,

\(^{22}\)William Canby, Diary, December 3, 1860 (Historical Society
of Delaware).

\(^{23}\)Anna Ferris, Diary, December 14, 1860 (Friends' Historical
Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

\(^{24}\)David C. Mears, ed., The Lincoln Papers, II (New York,
1948), 352. Captain G. W. Hazzard to A. Lincoln, December 24, 1860.
but such conversation was "only a nine day wonder" and not like the
shoes of Birnie's. 25

Like many other towns, citizens in Wilmington arranged a meet-
ing to consider the crisis. William Cariby was one of thirty citizens
invited to the City Hall on December 12 "to take into consideration
the propriety of a demonstration, having in view the distracted &
perilous state of our country." 26 A formal call was issued, and a
great mass meeting arranged for December 18. The editor of the
Delaware Republican complained that no prominent Republicans were
members of the committee and that no copy of the invitation had been
received for publication. Breckinridge and Bell men were the dominant
elements in attendance. 27

Over the speakers' stand on the day of the meeting was the
motto, "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever,"
while across Market Street a transparency read: "Compromise is
peculiarly appropriate between citizens of a Republic as between
members of a family; for whatever is conceded is conceded to our
brethren." The mayor read an address to the large audience prepared
by the committee which analyzed the situation. Delaware sympathized
with the South, but implored her to put off the day of secession and
wait for concessions. The North should repeal its liberty laws, Con-
gress should pass a new fugitive slave law, and the Supreme Court

25 Gazette, December 25, 1860.
26 William Canby, Diary, December 12, 1860 (Historical Society of Delaware).
27 Republican, December 20, 1860; Gazette, December 11, 18, 1860.
should determine the rights of slave owners in territories. Delaware was ready to consult with other states in conference. Resolutions were unanimously adopted, which declared "that the great purpose before ALL, national and state authorities and individuals should be that of conciliation" and urged congressmen from the state to cooperate in any conciliatory measure.28

Wide divergence of opinion was expressed. J. P. Comegys, a Constitutional Unionist, excoriated the sectional Republican party in "an apology for treason speech", though he blamed the South for acting so hastily. George R. Riddle and Daniel Bates, Breckinridge supporters, thought that great good might come from a national convention. Letters from Senators Bayard and Saulsbury, Representative Whiteley, and George P. Fisher were read. Bayard refused to attend, for he could see "no benefit" from the meeting: he suggested that since Congress was making no progress, a convention of all the states might adjust the difficulties. Saulsbury found both the South and North in error. The North should repeal every statute injuring the South, and banish from the political rostrum or pulpit all persons who inflame. Every effort should be made to preserve the Union as it was, but if Delaware must choose, he advised:

My calm, deliberate and honest conviction is, that in the event contemplated, Delaware should not enter into any confederacy in which either S. C. or New England States are parties, unless all the states shall again be reunited, into one confederacy. In the contingency contemplated, let

28Republican, December 20, 1860.
Delaware preserve her separate and independent position until the conservative central states—slaveholding and non-slaveholding—shall unite in a new republic whatever may be the fate of the extremes, let the great centre be composed and secure.29

Whiteley thought that Congress might succeed in removing the causes of conflict, while Fisher hoped that any plan of adjustment worked out by the meeting would be submitted to a state convention. Perhaps Bayard was right in saying that the meeting would be of "no benefit", though it did serve as a catharsis for the pent-up feelings of the disturbed citizens.

Both Republicans and Democrats admitted that business was disturbed to some degree, though the latter attributed the hard times to the election of Lincoln and the former to the action of South Carolina.30 "The Phila. banks have followed all the Southern Banks and suspended 'specie payments' today at 1 o'clock," noted William Canby in his diary on November 22. "I hope the South will get enough of it before it is over."31 The Wilmington banks soon followed the lead of others. "The Banks Suspended--times hard--the South threatening to withdraw from the Union," wrote a storekeeper of Sussex county in his diary.32 A resident of Lewes on November 30 reported that business was greatly depressed, due to the suspension

29Republican, December 20, 1860.

30Republican, December 17, 1860; Gazette, December 11, 1860.

31William Canby, Diary, November 22, 1860 (Historical Society of Delaware).

32David Hall, Diary, December 4, 1860 (Private Possession).
of the Philadelphia banks and the excitement in the South. Ann Ferris feared that her brother's business in Philadelphia would be ruined. Not a cotton factory in the vicinity of Wilmington was in full operation in December, and one which employed 200 hands closed completely. "A mechanic who is sure of employment through the winter even at reduced rates may consider himself lucky," observed the Gazette. "Cheap John", a Wilmington merchant, distributed 1000 loaves of bread on Christmas morning, "due to secession times." A Wilmington council member who found unemployment and suffering among the poor greater than in any other winter suggested a grant of $500 for relief, and $200 was provided. On the other hand, some businesses and places seemed unaffected. At Newark, mechanics, merchants, hotel keepers, and banks were as busy as usual. Wilmington stores were jammed before Christmas, and plenty was reported the rule among citizens and want the exception. Probably most Delawareans agreed with the writer of a letter to a Wilmington resident, who found

33Republican, January 3, 1860.
34Anna Ferris, Diary, December 12, 1860 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
35Gazette, December 18, 1860.
36Republican, December 17, 1860.
37Ibid., January 15, 1861.
38Gazette, December 7, 1860.
39Republican, December 27, 1860.
Christmas day, "the most gloomy one perhaps our country has seen since the dark days at Valley Forge."\(^4\)

The Legislature Provides No Leadership

Hope that the legislature would furnish guidance in the crisis was doomed to disappointment. Political leadership was confused, echoes from the campaign persisted, and members of parties were shifting allegiance. The Bayards, Saulsburys, Representative Whiteley, and ex-Governor Ross continued to be prominent in the councils of the Democratic party. The Republican leaders of the campaign with the addition of convert George P. Fisher dominated the Republican party. Douglas and Bell men chose sides in the next months.

The Governor of Delaware in 1861 was William Burton of Georgetown, a Democrat, who had been elected for a four-year term in 1858. Many Republicans considered "the old scoundrel" to be incompetent and senile, and under the influence of Judge Alfred Wootten and his son Edward Wootten who had married Burton's daughter. Some Democrats considered that the Saulsburys had made him Governor with the expectation that his early death would pave the way for the presiding officer of the senate, Gove Saulsbury, to assume office.\(^1\)

Five Democrats and four Republicans composed the senate, and eleven members of the People's Party and ten Democrats the house of

\(^{4}\) Isaac Starr to J. P. Gillis, December 28, 1860 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

\(^{1}\) A. H. Grimshaw to E. Stanton, Secretary of War, October 5, 1862 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).
representatives. No member of either house was particularly outstanding, and influences from the outside were important in shaping deliberations. Several members changed sides during the session.

The Governor's message to the General Assembly on January 2 blamed the controversy upon the war that the anti-slavery fanatical sentiment was waging upon two thousand millions of property. Northern states must blot forever from their statute books laws which obstructed the enforcement of the fugitive slave law and must agree to a settlement of the slavery question in the territories upon a constitutional basis. His most fervent prayer was for the restoration of peace.¹²

Governor Thomas Hicks of Maryland on January 2 wrote to Governor Burton suggesting the formation of a central confederacy of border states if the Union broke into pieces. In reply on January 8, Burton indicated that Delaware was so small that it could not exist as an independent sovereignty outside of the Union. He did not know what would happen in the state if the national government was dissolved. While most of the trade was with the North, "a majority of our citizens, if not in all three of our Counties, at least in the two lower ones, sympathize with the South." He did not know whether interest or sympathy would govern the action of the residents if a state convention was called. A central confederacy had never been discussed. No publicity was given to the exchange of letters, and probably most

ILLUSTRATION IX

GOVERNOR WILLIAM BURTON
members of the legislature knew nothing about them. In principle it was much like the suggestion of Senator Saulsbury to the Union meeting in December.  

Governor Burton on January 3 sent a special message to the General Assembly with the information that Judge Henry Dickinson of Mississippi and Representative David Clopton of Alabama had visited him and wished to consult with the members. The commissioner from Mississippi requested an opportunity to address the legislature. The Governor recommended that this courtesy be granted and suggested that a state convention be summoned in the near future to determine Delaware's course of action.  

A joint session heard Judge Dickinson comment upon the fears of the South and the course of events in Mississippi. While he extended no formal invitation to Delaware to join the confederacy, he concluded that he would report to his state "that he had found brothers with brotherly hearts in Delaware, and that a similarity of grievance of feeling, and hope of redress made them so." Without discussion the two houses immediately and unanimously passed a resolution that "we express our unqualified disapproval of the remedy for existing difficulties suggested by the

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43 Walter A. Powell, A History of Delaware (Boston, 1925), 252-253; "Civil War Governor's Answer to Maryland Seccessionist Spiked Central Confederacy", Sunday Star, November 5, 1933 (Vertical File, Wilmington Library).

44 Journal of the Senate of the State of Delaware, 1861 (Dover, 1861), Appendix, Documents 1-4. They include letters of the governors of the two states to Burton, and letters from Dickinson and Clopton to Burton.

45 Delawarean, January 5, 1861; Gazette, January 8, 1861.
resolutions of the Legislature of Mississippi.\textsuperscript{46}

From Washington on January 5, Dickinson sent a significant telegram to the Governor of Mississippi:

The Governor, officers of state, and six-sevenths of the people of Delaware are cordially with Mississippi in the Southern cause. The present Legislature opposed to immediate secession. The people will demand a convention and Delaware will cooperate with Mississippi.

Henry Dickinson
Alex R. Wootten

Mr. Wootten is attorney-general of the State of Delaware.

Dickinson\textsuperscript{47}

No action was taken by the legislature upon papers submitted by Alabama, but the commissioner in Washington on January 8 wrote to the Governor that Alabama had the sympathy of many Delawareans in the emergency; that the legislature, not having been elected to deal with the crisis, did not feel capable of expressing its Southern feeling, and that a convention would probably be called to decide the course of action. "From the best information which I received," he noted, "I have no hesitation in assuring your Excellency that, whilst the people of Delaware are averse to a dissolution of the Union and favor a convention of the Southern States, perhaps of all the States, to adjust and compromise, however, accomplished, a large majority of the people of Delaware will defend the South."\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{46}Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, 1861 (Wilmington, 1861), 102; Laws of the State of Delaware, 1861 (Dover, 1861), 121.

\textsuperscript{47}War of Rebellion, Series IV, I (Washington, 1900), 22.

\textsuperscript{48}War of Rebellion, Series IV, I, 33.
A commissioner from Georgia visited Dover on February 12, and at his request Governor Burton submitted documents and a letter to the legislature, which invited Delaware to join the Confederacy. The Governor again suggested the calling of a state convention. In reply the legislature stated that Georgia should be encouraged to remain within the Union and "that the State of Delaware hereby responds to the invitation of the State of Georgia that her people are now, as they ever have been loyal to the Union, and that as Delaware was the first to adopt, so will she be the last to abandon the Federal Constitution." The commissioner reported to the Governor of Georgia on March 4 that he had talked to numerous political leaders, that the majority of the people sympathized with the South, and that "whenever Virginia and Maryland shall withdraw from the Union, Delaware would follow in their footsteps."50

The General Assembly continued to show interest in a peaceful solution. It passed resolutions on January 16, which were felt to reflect the will of a large majority of their constituents, instructing their congressmen to advocate the Crittenden proposals or any other fair proposition of reconciliation.51 Three Democrats and two Constitutional Unionists were appointed to represent the state at a

49 House Journal, 1861, 36, 391; Senate Journal, 1861, 151, 155-156.
50 War of Rebellion, Series IV, I, 122-123.
51 House Journal, 1861, 140.
conference summoned by Virginia in Washington to consider plans to save the Union. They were instructed to cooperate in every way possible, as "the people of the State of Delaware regard the preservation of the Union as paramount to any political consideration and are fixed in their determination that Delaware, the first to adopt the Federal Constitution, will be the last to do any act tending to destroy the integrity of the Union." At the end of February, the commissioners reported upon the proceedings of the conference and were officially thanked for their services by the legislature.

After it became evident that the Crittenden proposals and congressional plans were making no progress, one member of the senate on March 7, the day before adjournment, suggested that a meeting of fourteen middle states be called in Philadelphia in June to form a central states confederacy, but on the final day of the session the motion to adopt was lost.

Considerable partisan feeling was shown over a resolution praising the conduct of Major Anderson, which passed both houses, was then reconsidered by the senate, and finally indefinitely postponed. A resolution to buy a flag with thirty-four stars for the top of the statehouse passed the house, but was defeated in the Democratic senate.

52 Ibid., 1861, 235.
53 House Journal, 1861, 539.
54 Senate Journal, 1861, 315.
55 Ibid., 1861, 181, 262.
56 Ibid., 1861, 200.
The legislature had followed the inclinations of its constituents in seeking a peaceful solution of the difficulties and in refusing to join the Confederacy. Necessarily it depended upon the action of national conferences and Congress as well as the deliberations of adjacent states. At no time was any strong leadership displayed.

Delawareans Lose Hope

"Secession, Major Anderson, Fort Sumpter, Fort Moultrie--these are in everybody's mouths; even the good things of Christmas scarcely diverted public attention from the 'fuss' at Charleston," reported the Delaware Republican at the beginning of the new year. In spite of the excitement, many Delawareans continued to hope that a plan of adjustment would be found. Anna Ferris recorded in her diary on the first day of January:

The opening year must be the most important of any in the present century. We are in the midst of a revolution that must decide the future of our country, & is most important to the destinies of humanity. The excitement & interest is intense, and each day is eagerly waited for, for the consequences it may bring. The greatest apprehensions so far have been caused by the meekness and vacillation of the government, & the uncertainty whether it would do its duty, indeed whether its whole power & influence were not used on the wrong side--Several members of the cabinet are Secessionists, & the President seems entirely swayed by their Councils & the North is left to fight its battles alone.

So far however the North stood firm, & the dominant party has shown no signs of fear, & no disposition to sacrifice the great interests of freedom & humanity to the

57 Republican, January 3, 1861.
clamor & the insolent demands of the Slavery power. So that we hope the new year may open a new era in our political history, & though confusion & strife now prevail, I trust we shall soon again possess the blessings of prosperity & peace, without sacrifice of the great interests of freedom & humanity.  

The legislature was praised for disapproving the address of the commissioners from Mississippi. The Delawarean thought that the speaker had not proved the right of a state to secede and believed that grievances could best be redressed within the Union. The legislative resolutions expressed the opinion of ninety-nine out of one hundred citizens. The Smyrna Times found that the action had the approval of the entire community with the exception of a few fanatics. While the Gazette thought that the proposal of the commissioner should have been discussed, it was not in favor of joining the Confederacy. Years later John A. Moore, one of the members of the Assembly, revealed that the rejection, which he had presented, had been written by Eli Saulsbury. "No one so far as I know advocated the secession of Delaware," he said, "but there were many people & some members of the Legislature who sympathized with the South and were willing that the seceding States should be the Judges of their own interests & actions."

58Anna Ferris, Diary, January 1, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
59Delawarean, January 5, 1861.
60Smyrna Times, January 10, 1861.
61Gazette, January 11, 1861.
A Union meeting was called in Wilmington on January 4 by "many citizens" to consider the presence of the Southern commissioners. It was controlled by the Republicans and addressed by Dr. A. H. Grimshaw. Rowdies, who blamed the election of Lincoln for the troubles with the South, almost broke up the meeting by shouts and fighting. Resolutions approved the action of the legislature, praised Major Anderson, and lauded Saulsbury for pledging himself and the state to stand by the Union.63

The friends of Lincoln assembled in the Republican Club Rooms on January 4 expressed confidence in the man whom they had elected. The constitution conferred ample power upon the government "to protect and preserve every foot of soil, over which it extends, to guard the Union against dismemberment, to punish treason, and to make itself respected, honored, and obeyed." "The real cause of secession" was found in the South's envy of the increase in population and wealth of the free labor states. The dismissal of the southern commissioners was praised as an act that met the "hearty approval of every true Delawarean."64

The friends of General Jackson in New Castle on January 8 celebrated the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans. Resolutions expressed confidence in Buchanan and Delaware's Congressmen, but thought that "our Legislature, in so hastily disposing of the subject

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63Gazette, January 8, 1861.
64Republican, January 7, 1861.
submitted to them by the Commissioner from the State of Mississippi did not seem to appreciate the importance of the subject before them." A salute of thirty-three salvos was fired on behalf of the Crittenden amendments. 65

Delawareans throughout January and February looked to the Crittenden proposals and the Virginia conference to save the Union. 66 People heartily approved of the action of the legislature in favoring the Crittenden plan, and the only member of the General Assembly who persisted in opposition was hanged in effigy in Middletown and threatened with tar and feathers. 67 Bayard in the Senate introduced a petition from 125 residents of Wilmington, who urged speedy ratification, and it was claimed that only 500 of the 2800 voters in the city would have refused to sign the document. 68 All of Delaware's Congressmen favored acceptance, and Senator Saulsbury said on the floor of the Senate:

Mr. President, if any future Gibbon shall describe the decline and fall of this great Republic, he will date that fall from the rejection of the resolutions offered by the Senator from Kentucky. If rejected, peace will have fled the land, and it will in the future be in vain that we sing hosannas to the Union.69

65 Gazette, January 11, 1861.

66 Delawarean, January 19, February 2, 1861. An editorial in the latter issue was entitled, "Delaware in Favor of the Crittenden Resolutions."

67 Republican, January 21, 1861.

68 Gazette, January 18, 1861.

69 Congressional Globe, I (Second Session, 36th Congress, 1860-1861), 290.
A meeting of workingmen in Wilmington in February found nothing in the election of Lincoln to cause secession. They announced that they were willing to bury party ties, proclaimed themselves Union men, urged the preservation of unity by persuasion or force, and commended the legislature for approving the Crittenden proposals. On the other hand, such a prominent Republican as Nathaniel B. Smithers feared that the proposals might turn out to be a "Pandora's Box," from which nothing would arise except discussion and debate; he advised waiting to see what the new administration would do.

A New Castle county farmer at the beginning of February wrote in his diary that he hoped for an adjustment of vexed questions, but was pessimistic. "It looks now as though nothing but the interposition of Divine Providence can avert from us the evils of a Civil War," he observed, "as the fanatics both North and South appear determined to hold on to their extreme opinions and to plunge the country into a war rather than give way the least."

Senator Bayard and his son were disturbed by the political situation in Delaware and the nation in these critical months. From Washington the solon wrote in January:

I felt anxious and still feel anxious that the people of Delaware should be in a position to determine their own destinies in the crisis which is now upon us. We

70 Gazette, February 19, 1861.

71 Republican, January 31, 1861.

72 Samuel Canby, Diary, February 7, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware).
are now in the midst of a Revolution, and they seem to be blind to it, and such wretched intriguers as Saulsbury are seeking to gain popularity by singing hosannas to a Union, which is gone, I fear, inevitably. But the question of peace or war is still open, and the indecision of most of the Border States is only increasing the chances in favor of War.73

As he saw the situation, Delaware must go as does Maryland. He did not think that the conclave in Washington could save the Union, which was already "hopelessly gone", and he regarded two of the commissioners from Delaware as "dunkerheads," and the other three, as smooth vulgar hypocrites. In his opinion, Buchanan was "utterly unequal to such a crisis."74

Thomas F. Bayard was swayed by similar fears. "The Union of our fathers is gone, I fear, and all hopes of its restoration will fly with the attempt of coercion," he informed a friend in February. In case of conflict he would be in stern opposition to the anti-slavery men, expected Delaware to follow a like course, and predicted that the citizens would prove worthy of their Revolutionary sires.75

He was offered the post of under Secretary of State by the administration in January, but declined for unspecified reasons.76

73J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, January 22, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).

74J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, January 26, 28, February 1, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).

75Thomas F. Bayard to R. Gibbons, February 24, 1861 (Bayard Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

76T. F. Bayard to J. S. Black, January 7, 1861 (J. S. Black Papers, Library of Congress); Gazette, January 25, 1861.
William Canby, a Wilmington banker, expected great things from the conference. "I think their action will give us peace or war--I sincerely trust it will be the former," he wrote in his diary on February 4. After hearing that a seventh state, Texas, had seceded, he added on February 8, "The Peace Commissioners have not accomplished anything so far." On the last day of February, he commented: "Our Citizens have been overjoyed at the news from Washington this morning, flags are going up all over the city. The peace conference submitted propositions to Congress--hope it will be adopted."77 Unfortunately his optimism was misplaced.

Growing Division

While many talked of peace, some prepared for war. Ex-Governor Ross on January 17 asked Thomas Bayard to send some arms to Sussex county, where they would be placed in the "right kind of hands."78 A week later two wagons of equipment were moved from Georgetown to Seaford for the use of a "secessionist company" near Ross' home.79 Young Bayard on January 21 enlisted about sixty men in a company of Delaware Guards, formed mainly from the Breckinridge and Lane Club.80

77William Canby, Diary, February 4, 8, 28, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware).
78W. Ross to T. F. Bayard, January 17, 1861 (Bayard Papers, IV, Library of Congress).
79Smyrna Times, January 24, 1861.
80"Delaware Guards", January 21, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress). This paper contains the signatures of the men who joined it, and a statement of the purpose.
Prominent Democrats in New Castle Hundred organized a militia company about the same time.\textsuperscript{81}

When Governor Burton at Bayard's request asked Theodore Hyatt, superintendent of the Delaware Military Academy in Wilmington, to surrender the federal arms deposited with him, a controversy arose. Hyatt was a Republican, and his friends in the legislature stirred up "the very old devil." A resolution was introduced in the lower house, inquiring about the whereabouts of the weapons, and a bill was prepared giving Hyatt exclusive control of their use. By the end of the month a compromise had been arranged, leaving the seventy rifles, sabres, and accouterments in the possession of the school except when needed for drill by the Delaware Guards.\textsuperscript{82}

Fears circulated that Delaware might be visited by marauding bands, might become the battleground between North and South, or witness civil war between citizens who were sympathetic with the North or the South.\textsuperscript{83} "There seems to be a pervading restlessness and feeling of insecurity," commented the editor of the Smyrna Times on February 7, "and the people are not only arming organized companies, but privately, for the protection of their persons and families." One firm in Wilmington had sold 1,500 pistols in several months. Among the companies already formed were the Haslet Guard in Dover,

\textsuperscript{81}\textit{Gazette}, January 22, 1861.

\textsuperscript{82} A. R. Miller to T. F. Bayard, January 24, 1861; John Dale to T. F. Bayard, January 29, 1861; T. F. Bayard to R. S. Andrews, January 31, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).

\textsuperscript{83}\textit{Delawarean}, January 26, 1861.
Diamond State Guard in Milford, Delaware Guards in Wilmington, Kirkwood Rifle Company in Odessa, and a light infantry company in Newark; all possessed arms and were sympathetic with secession.\(^8^4\)

The only military post of any importance in the state was Fort Delaware on a small island near Delaware City in the Delaware River. It was virtually unmanned and unarmed at the beginning of the year, and rumors circulated that southern sympathizers in Delaware planned to seize it.\(^8^5\) Some big guns from Philadelphia were sent in February, and thirty men were detached from Governor's Island in New York to take possession.\(^8^6\) Representative Whiteley commented to Tom Bayard in February, "Does not the arming & manning of Fort Delaware arise from the formation of our military companies? Some fool wrote to our old fool here (Scott) and told him there was danger."\(^8^7\) The prospect for internal security and peace within the state was not reassuring.

Throughout January and February, the Democratic Gazette and Delawarean, the Delaware Republican, and independent Smyrna Times urged the preservation of the Union at any price, though the tense situation made them also consider the position of the state in time of war. An important editorial in the Gazette upon "Northern and Southern Action" raised important questions concerning dissolution:

\(^8^4\)Smyrna Times, February 7, 1861.

\(^8^5\)Gazette, February 8, 1861.

\(^8^6\)Republican, February 11, 1861; Smyrna Times, February 7, 1861.

\(^8^7\)G. Whiteley to T. F. Bayard, February 13, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).
Is Delaware ready to unite with the tyrannical cry for war, now raised by the fanatical press and politicians of the North? Is she ready to start in this hunt after human gore? Are her people ready to join the forces of those who would drive the white man from his burning house to the swamps, and with the bloody knife fresh reeking from the gaping wounds of the defenseless wife and unoffending children, arm the slave, and bid him use it in acquiring his freedom?

No. The hearts of Delaware's sons throb with kindness for their brethren of all sections. A few may unite in the mad rage which has carried the northern mind into that fearful frenzy which makes it seek the blood of a fellow, but nineteen out of every twenty of our people are wedded to peace; and, we believe, full that proportion of them are ready to yield to the South every right she claims under the constitution; and she claims no right that she is not clearly entitled to.

We are not in favor of secession; we have opposed it. We are in favor of the Union, and have urged compromise and concession, which is the only way in which it can be preserved. But we have no knife for the neck of a brother who only asks for his rights under the Constitution. If the North will not yield these rights, then we say the North should let him go in peace.

Thomas Garrett, Delaware abolitionist, and the Republican party took the same stand on questions, and those views were repugnant to three-fourths of the people in the state. Another editorial accused the Delaware Journal and Republican of rejecting the Crittenden compromise and of advocating war. It warned that in case of conflict northern Delaware might become the camping ground of invaders from the north.

"By way of obstruction to this, every bridge near our city would be cut down, and every high road barricaded with fallen trees by willing

88Gazette, January 3, 1861.
hands." The ensuing struggle would see fields laid waste, fences destroyed, cattle slain, and lives lost.\footnote{ibid., January 25, 1861.}

The Delawarean thought that Delaware was more interested in peace than any other state because it might become a battle ground of opposing forces. The citizens were "almost unanimous" in opposition to secession and to coercion. If a peaceful separation could be arranged, measures of reconciliation might eventually succeed in reuniting the dividing country and in reestablishing the Union on a firmer basis than ever.\footnote{ibid., February 16, 1861.} Lincoln's policy of coercion could only result in war, and it was better that the cotton states secede and that public property, such as forts, revenue cutters, and munitions, be lost than endless conflict ensue. If war did come, Lincoln and his advisers should tremble, for "he that draweth the sword, sometimes perishes by it, and Lincoln might find that truth verified in the end. Let him beware, 'Caesar had his Brutus.'"\footnote{Ibid., January 22, 28, 1861. Editorials entitled "The Position of Delaware" and "Coercion."}

The Delaware Republican blamed the crisis upon southern fire-eaters. The Republican party had no intention of abolishing slavery in the South, Lincoln's inauguration would not destroy the Union, and a policy of coercion was not thought of--unless the South attempted to break up the Union.\footnote{Delawarean, January 12, 1861.} Delaware's position was with the North in
the controversy rather than with the South. "Our highest desire is for the maintenance of the union of the States, the Constitution, and the enforcements of the laws," declared an editorial upon "Stand by the Authorities." The Smyrna Times refused to consider the possibility of dissolution. Eight-tenths of Americans stood for the Union first, and arrangements for its perpetuity afterwards. No peoples in the United States more strongly favored peace than those in Delaware. "Our people are ten to one in favor of compromise, and are nearly, if not quite, to that extent opposed to coercion," summarized the editor of the Smyrna Times on February 7, and the Gazette editor approved the statement, as would have probably most Delawareans.

Delawareans in the four months after the election showed that they emphatically approved of the perpetuation of the Union. Every proposal for peace—the Crittenden resolutions, the Washington conference, and suggestions from individuals—was strongly endorsed by the people and legislature. Suggestions from southern commissioners that Delaware might join the Confederacy or from Republicans that it might be necessary to use force were condemned by the great majority. Some

93 Ibid., January 24, 1861.
94 Ibid., January 24, 1861.
95 Smyrna Times, February 7, 1861.
96 Ibid., February 7, 1861; Gazette, February 8, 1861.
Democrats preferred letting the South go rather than have war, while some Republicans advocated war rather than a dissolution of the Union. Expressing more sympathy for the South than for the North, the majority of the people clung to the Union, approving the words of Senator Saulsbury that Delaware was the first state to join the Union and should be the last to leave it. They stood by helplessly, as the course of events swept the nation into war.

Chapter VI

THE COMING OF THE WAR

Peace proposals by statesmen, legislatures and conventions had made no progress, and people waited for the new President to act. Many Democrats expected his inauguration to be followed by war immediately, while many Republicans hoped that peace might result from strong leadership. Anna Ferris wrote in her diary on March 4:
"President Lincoln was safely inaugurated today. What his influence can do for the country in its present convulsed and stormy state we cannot conjecture, but must wait and hope." 1

A New President

Various responses greeted his inaugural address. William Canby of Wilmington considered the paper "excellent" and hoped that he would turn out to be "a second Jackson." 2 The Delaware Republican found the speech conciliatory and masterful in style; in short, it announced that "a man" was at the head of affairs and that a government existed. 3 The Peninsular News and Advertiser believed that the government could now be depended upon to do its duty and preserve the Union at all

1Anna Ferris, Diary, March 4, 1861. (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

2William Canby, Diary, March 6, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware).

3Republican, March 7, 1861.
costs. On the other hand, the Delawarean could discover "no policy" in the address, and the Gazette offered a reward of $5,000 to anyone who could tell whether the message spoke for peace or war. If the President wanted peace, he should withdraw Anderson and leave the problem to Congress and the people.

A week passed, and the false report circulated that Fort Sumter had been abandoned. Most Delawareans agreed that the humiliating surrender was worth the price of peace. Anna Ferris noted that there existed in Wilmington a feeling of great indignation and humiliation over the loss, but that citizens were willing to reconcile themselves "to the necessity" as a means of averting war. William Cariby thought that "this seems very humiliating to this Gov't., but I am in hopes it will be for the best."

Suspense continued even though the news was found to be untrue.

Delaware's elder statesman in a speech upon the "State of our Country" in the Senate on March 19 found the main cause of the sectional alienation in slavery. He had hoped that some compromise might develop from the convention of all the states, but the rapid course of

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Gazette, March 12, 1861. It quoted the Peninsular News and Advertiser.

Delawarean, April 6, 1861.

Gazette, March 12, 1861.

Anna Ferris, Diary, March 11, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

William Canby, Diary, March 11, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware).
events convinced him that only two alternatives remained: a war of subjugation by the national government or assent to peaceful severance and recognition of independence. He offered resolutions to the effect that since war would not restore the Union or attain any beneficial result, the President should be authorized to negotiate with the seceded states and to conclude a treaty in order to avoid war.9 Judah P. Benjamin wrote Senator Bayard an interesting letter on March 19 describing the new constitution of the Confederacy. "You will be with us in November in spite of everything," he predicted. "God grant your little state a chance to live under it, the Confederacy, & that we may once again sit side by side in a Senate of patriots and statesmen free from your nightmare of Red and mine of Black republicanism."10

The newspapers in March and early April continued to press for a peaceful settlement. The Gazette attacked the "suicidal" policy of Lincoln, Chase and Company, which, it alleged, was leading the country into war. All attempted compromises fell through because of the dictation of this tyrant, who wished to solve the problems "by the bullet, not ballot." In a civil war more Northern soldiers would "bite the dust" than the defenders of the South, and the majority of the Northerners who voted against Lincoln would rebel. Within six months he would be on his way back to Springfield. The editor agreed


with Bayard that the "best and only mode for peace" was through the recognition of the Confederacy. If Lincoln sent ships to South Carolina and Civil War resulted, he would be remembered "in after ages as a monster, who should have been deprived of life before he committed the folly of plunging the two nations into war."

The Delaware Republican viewed the crisis as the work of the politicians and demagogues of the South, though it also blamed the Garrison abolitionists. The Republican party opposed the extension of slavery, but was willing to permit each state to control its own institutions. Among the things the newspaper stood for were the Union as it is, its preservation, and the enforcement of the laws; it was prepared to "support our Country and Country's flag against all foes whether foreign or domestic." To argue as the editor of the Gazette did that the South was acting on the defensive in robbing the treasury, seizing forts, and confiscating public property was "supremely ridiculous" and "treason". The Republican did not advocate war, but wanted forts and property in the South defended from attack.

The Smyrna Times urged the evacuation of Sumter. The seceding states might be persuaded to return to the Union, but they could not be forced back into it. The President should positively assure the South that his policy was for peace. War would not bring the South back into the Union, and the destruction of both sections would result.

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11 Gazette, April 5, 9, March 22, 1861.
12 Republican, April 11, March 21, 1861.
If persuasion failed, let the South go.\textsuperscript{13}

Many Delawareans swarmed to "the Court of St. Abe" after the inauguration. Politicians who had supported Lincoln in Delaware were well rewarded. Thomas M. Rodney failed to see Secretary of State Seward on a visit to Washington in March, but emphasized in a letter that he had been an elector in 1856 and 1860. He wished to see Democratic officeholders removed as rapidly as possible. Rodney was appointed collector of the port of Wilmington; Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, Postmaster of Wilmington; Nathaniel B. Smithers, Provost-Marshal, and Dr. J. S. Prettyman, editor of the \textit{Peninsular News and Advertiser}, was sent to Glasgow, Scotland, as consul. A letter from George P. Fisher to the Secretary of the Interior in March revealed that each county received one major office, but exactly how this scheme was carried out is not known. Among the lesser appointments Fisher's father-in-law became collector of the port of New Castle and a relative of Nathaniel B. Smithers served as a consul in Turkey. Fisher soon became friendly with Lincoln and acted as the official dispenser of patronage in the state. There was a complete change of officials in post offices, customhouses, and lighthouses.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Smyrna Times}, April 4, 1861.

\textsuperscript{14}T. M. Rodney to Secretary Seward, March 25, 1861 and G. P. Fisher to the Secretary of Interior, March 14, 1861 (Appointment Papers, Department of Justice, National Archives); \textit{Delawarean}, March 16, 1863; H. J. Carman and R. H. Luthin, \textit{Lincoln and the Patronage} (New York, 1943), 213-214. Probably the agreement that Fisher referred to was carried out by E. G. Bradford becoming United States District Attorney; N. B. Smithers, Provost-Marshal, and Prettyman a consul in Scotland.
Preparation for War

While the press strongly urged the preservation of the Union, some Democrats and Republicans in the state prepared for internal or external war. Captain duPont, who had been placed in charge of the Philadelphia Navy Yard, received a letter from Robert Milligan of Wilmington on April 8. The letter requested 1,000 ball cartridges for altered muskets, which his men needed for drill. Trouble was expected when Virginia and Maryland should secede. A "secession convention" had been held in the city just before James A. Bayard went south. While the Delaware Guards, of which Thomas F. Bayard was first lieutenant, numbered 170 and possessed the best arms in the state besides two brass field pieces, Milligan's company had only forty altered muskets. "I have no doubt myself," he wrote, "that before this month expires we shall have to try our strength at crossed bayonets, with these Breckinridge traitors. My men, not having the advantage of the drill room, must rely upon cold steel, and their innate pluck in a righteous cause to carry them through successfully."15

How a rabid Republican viewed the situation on April 13 is revealed in a letter by Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, postmaster of Wilmington, to a friend:

Our Governor is a Secessionist, most of our Breckinridge men are the same. All the arms are in the hands of these men, who have formed companies and are drilling under a paid officer from Philad.

15R. J. Milligan to S. F. duPont, April 8, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
In New Castle five miles from Fort Delaware (nearly opposite), Ogle, late Sheriff, has a company and cannon. The Union men have not a single gun. J. M. Barr, editor of the Commonwealth, nominally a Bell & Everett paper, is a dangerous man, most abusive, to this day of the administration. He is Captain of a Company. I joined the "National Guards", an Irish Company; they refused as a company to sign a paper offering service to the Government. We have no arms, we can get no arms. I enrolled sixty odd men & drilled them for some time, but having no arms I disbanded the company.

Is the Administration going to allow Traitors in the rear of the Capitol to arm & equip without any counter-movement?

With encouragement Grimshaw felt that he could form two companies of Bell and Lincoln men in the city. Ogle's brother, who was chief carpenter at Fort Delaware, was "a secessionist and a traitor", and yet he was allowed to remain inside the Fort, which had possessed only a corporal's guard to defend it. Disunionists might come from nearby Maryland twelve miles away, and within fifteen minutes five hundred or more could be landed from boats on Pea Patch Island. Ten of the tiny garrison had already deserted, and he wondered who might have induced them to do so. The Captain of the revenue cutter was "not worth a straw" and would surrender his vessel on demand from such Democrats as James A. Bayard or Jesse Sharpe, while the Captain's son sported a secession cockade upon one occasion in a newspaper office and headed a secession company. If he could get arms, he would organize a force immediately; otherwise, he would serve as a surgeon "anywhere, or in any capacity in which I can be useful". Grimshaw sent a

16A. H. Grimshaw to Colonel W. H. Lemon, April 13, 1861 (Civil War Collection, Huntington Library).
letter of similar import to the Secretary of War. On April 17 he was informed that the carpenter was dismissed, but that requisition for arms would be handled by the Governor.17

In Sussex county preparations were being made by the Democrats for whatever might develop. Ex-Governor Ross on April 15 asked Edward Wootten to use his influence with the Governor in the matter of a county appointment, else the chances of reuniting the Breckinridge party would disappear. Traces of the bitter election fight among the followers of Bayard, Saulsbury, and Douglas still lingered. "We are now in the midst of a civil war," he explained. "We shall have to have a hand to hand encounter with the Republicans, and yet Governor Burton is about to take a step which will divide our party and cause the Democrats on the eastern side of the county to refuse to support the Governor in any of his measures." Would Wootten not intervene to prevent the Governor from committing "political suicide"? He asked the Judge to excuse his imperfect letter, as he had had three drinks during the interview with Burton, and it was also after midnight. Concurring in these views was Curtis W. Wright, another well-known Democrat, who also signed the letter.18

17A. H. Grimshaw to Colonel W. H. Lemon, April 13, 1861 (Civil War Collection, Huntington Library); S. Cameron to A. H. Grimshaw, April 27, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).

18W. H. Ross to Edward Wootten, April 15, 1861 (Burton-Wootten Papers, Delaware State Archives).
Fort Sumter

The public had awaited impatiently the decision of the President and cabinet about Fort Sumter. At last an expedition sailed from New York, but on its arrival found that on April 12 firing had already begun from Charleston harbor. In charge of the relief ships was a Delawarean, John P. Gillis, who penned an interesting description of the event in a letter to his son. It was feared that all might have perished from the shelling and firing, but only a few were wounded, and on the morning of April 11, the entire company of seventy men under Anderson's command evacuated to the tune of Yankee Doodle with the Old Flag flying.19

Lincoln issued a proclamation for 75,000 men on April 15. Writing from Mobile, James A. Bayard thought that it meant war,20 and Charles I. duPont concurred. "I consider the Union gone forever," he moaned. "Eight millions of people whether agreed or not, will not quail for five times 75,000... We have nothing to do in the quarrels of either section and if we had we could affect nothing."21

Even though some of these events had already been anticipated, the actual arrival of war shocked Delawareans. What one Delawarean felt about the coming of war can be read in the diary of Anna Ferris:

19J. P. Gillis to J. P. Gillis, Jr., April 18, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

20James A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, April 17, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).

21C. I. duPont to S. F. duPont, April 17, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
April 12. We are now every hour looking for the tidings that war has actually begun—the most unjustifiable & wicked war ever actually begun & how it will end no one can tell, except that the North has Providence & the Strong battalions both on her side—Still the South is united & determined & has the advantage of previous preparation and the first results may be disastrous to us—It is only five days since Vessels were sent to Fort Sumter to relieve Major Anderson & supply him with provisions—& the whole country is waiting the result with the most intense anxiety & painful suspense—Still there is a feeling of relief & hope that the Government has at last taken a determined position & a rapidly increasing confidence in its ability & firmness—forbearance & patience were exhausted & we must now abide the result—

April 13. If the Telegraph can be depended on, Fort Sumter was attacked yesterday before the war vessels arrived there—this much is probably true, but the reports as to the actual state of things cannot be relied on, as the South has the control of the Telegraph—

April 14. The reports today are that Fort Sumter has surrendered & that the Southern Flag is flying in the place of the old "Stars & Stripes", but that no lives have been lost—This is too improbable to be believed—

April 15. Tidings today, though probably not entirely reliable, are sufficiently so to confirm the disastrous reports of yesterday—Major Anderson surrendered the Fort before the ships came to his relief & the Confederate Flag floats in place of the National Emblem—The President this morning issued a Proclamation calling out the militia of the States to the amount of 75,000, & we are now in the midst of Revolution & Civil War—The feeling of shame, indignation, and dread is indescribable.22

The Response in New Castle County

Delawareans were almost unanimously agreed that the Union must be preserved, but they disagreed as to method. The Republicans preferred compromise and negotiation, but would use force if necessary.

22Anna Ferris, Diary, April 12, 13, 14, 15 (Friends' Historical Society).
The Democrats insisted upon amendments to the constitution, a convention of all the states, or a peaceful separation, and they rejected coercion. Party membership changed markedly under the strains and tensions of the next few months. Union meetings were held in all the counties, members of every party participated without friction, and resolutions were passed in favor of the Union. When speakers went into detail, they found parts of their audience in disagreement. The first reaction to the news of Sumter was to rally around the old flag; later came division over the relations of the national government and the South.

News of the surrender of Fort Sumter arrived in Wilmington on Saturday, April 13, about four o'clock. The Delaware Inquirer issued two fliers in the evening. The first was headed: "War Begun! Fire opened on Fort Sumter", while the second read: "Fort Sumter HAS SURRENDERED! Confederate Flag now floats over its walls!!! None of the Garrison or Confederate Troops Hurt". The President soon issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 men.

Tremendous excitement in Wilmington followed the news that Fort Sumter was occupied by southerners. The newspapers and telegraph office were surrounded by people anxious to know the latest intelligence, and every train was met by crowds eager for news. A group of workmen assisted by noise from a drum and fife paraded through the streets

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23 Delaware Inquirer (Extra), April 13, 1861.
24 Gazette, April 16, 1861.
ILLUSTRATION X

TWO NEWSPAPER EXTRAS WITH NEWS OF FORT SUMTER, APRIL 13, 1861

DELAWARE INQUIRER EX.  
SATURDAY EVENING.  
Latest News by Telegraph.  

War Begun!  
Fire opened on Fort Sumter.  
Brisk Cannonading.  
Vessels coming to the Rescue.  

Charleston, April 13th, 1861.  
3 o'clock and 30 minutes.  
The fire from the different batteries have 
greatly disabled the Fort. The Federal flag 
is at half mast; the Fort is signifying distress, 
probably to the vessels in the distance. 

Three vessels are to be seen in the offing— 
one of the vessels is a large sized steamer 
which has made her way over the bar and is 
preparing to participate. The vessels have 
not yet opened on the forts. An explosion 
has taken place in Fort Sumter. 
It is thought that the officers' quarters are 

The stars and stripes are still flying.  
Captain Anderson has ceased firing.  
Charleston, April 13th, 1861.  
3 o'clock and 45 minutes.  
Two War Steamers are making towards 
Morrison Island; their intention is to land men 
to silence the batteries.  

Charleston, April 13th, 1861.  
4 o'clock and 15 minutes.  
The bombardment has closed. Major An­ 
derson has hauled down the stars and stripes, 
and in its stead has displayed the white flag. 
A boat is on its way from the city to Fort 
Sumter.  
It is as good as a surrender of the fort.  

DELAWARE INQUIRER EX.  
SATURDAY EVENING.  
Latest News by Telegraph.  

FORT SUMTER HAS SURRENDERED!  
Confederate Flag 
now floats over its 
walls!!!  

NONE OF THE GARRISON OR 
Confederated Troops 
HURT.
in the evening, while crowds cheered loudly for the Union. Militia companies were mustered into the service of the city, all bridges were guarded, and the streets were patrolled. Patriotic badges in the form of rosettes, red, white, and blue ribbons, or miniature flags were worn by many people. "There appears to be but one sentiment in this community, now, whatever may have been the difference of opinion heretofore," observed the editor of the Gazette "and that is that the government must be sustained and rebellion put down at all hazards."^26

Union feeling in New Castle county strongly outweighed all other. Henry duPont wrote to his brother on April 16 that "just now there seems to be no necessity for protection here. The Union feeling is intense & the few Secessionists in Wilmington are dumb & powerless." A week later he added that "everything is quiet here now, and I feel sure that the current of public opinion in this state is strong for the Union, so strong that its opponents are silenced & obliged to go with it; and I believe a large portion of the Breckinridge Democrats are determined to stand up for the Union—some from principle & others from Expediency—. . . In this county Union sentiment is all prevailing." The editor of the Republican reported on

25Gazette, April 19, 1861; Republican, April 18, 1861; J. T. Scharf, History of Delaware, I (Philadelphia, 1888), 332.

26Gazette, April 26, 1861.

27Henry duPont to S. F. duPont, April 18, 1861 (Longwood Foundation, S. F. duPont Papers).

28Henry duPont to S. F. duPont, (Tuesday Evening), April [?], 1861. The contents and internal evidence indicate that the date of writing was in April.
April 22, "We are glad to hear that nearly every man in our city professes to be a Union man, and the only difference of opinion is in regard to how it can best be preserved."29

The first public demonstration of feeling was a monstrous Union meeting in Wilmington on April 16. Local orators pointed out that the firing upon Fort Sumter had divided men into two classes, patriots and traitors. Resolutions approved the call for volunteers, urged the obliteration of party ties in favor of support for the Union, recommended that the people in the hundreds express their views, condemned Congressmen who by votes and speeches had prevented the settlement of difficulties, and concluded that the people of the state would sustain the government, Union, constitution, and laws. James A. Montgomery, publisher of the Commonwealth and a Douglas man and enemy of Delaware's senior senator, had carried a grudge against James A. Bayard since the campaign of 1860; he introduced a motion to repudiate Bayard's teachings as unworthy of a patriot and Delawarean. It was passed. The Gazette and Delaware Journal reprimanded Montgomery for stooping to such a low level of revenge. A special committee was appointed to request that the Buchananites at the customhouse and postoffice display flags. The meeting adjourned with cheers for the star-spangled banner and for Major Anderson.30

29Republican, April 22, 1861.

30Republican, April 18, 1861; Gazette, April 19, 1861.
Persons who did not give evidence of patriotism were liable to attack. Flags were displayed from almost every house and business establishment. The editor of the Gazette was visited and requested to hang out a flag. When rain prevented his immediate compliance, he was threatened with violence by numerous persons. A prominent Democrat in New Castle, who supposedly said that he would hang a Palmetto flag if he had one, was threatened by an infuriated mob. When the news reached Wilmington, two hundred men talked of visiting the county seat and tearing down his home.

During the next few weeks the people met in council frequently to discuss the questions of the time. A meeting on April 18 in Wilmington resolved that peace was preferred to war, that it was the duty of every citizen to uphold the Union, that the volunteer companies should be organized under the auspices of the city council, and that abusive language and threats should be avoided. One hundred men enlisted in the local militia. The city council on April 20 provided a room for drill, asked the people of means to contribute to the support of the soldiers, appropriated $8,000 for equipment, and requested the Secretary of War to furnish arms.

Volunteers from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania passed through Wilmington on April 19 over the Wilmington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia

31 Ibid., April 19, 1861.

32 William T. Reed, Diary, April 19, 1861 (Private Possession).

33 Republican, April 22, 1861; Gazette (Extra), April 21, 1861.
Railroad on the way to defend the capital. As they marched from one depot to another in Baltimore, they were attacked and bitter street fighting followed. At the request of Baltimore officials, I. R. Trimble, a former resident of Wilmington, led a group of men who destroyed most of the bridges along the line between Wilmington and Baltimore. Later he became an officer in the Confederate army. Reinforcements for Washington during the summer had to be transported by rail to Perryville, Maryland, and then placed on steamers for Annapolis, where they boarded trains. Armed workmen from the Wilmington shops rebuilt the bridges and local volunteers patrolled the tracks for the remainder of the summer.  

Anna Ferris left a record of the excitement in her diary:

The excitement & suspense are almost intolerable, & the circumstances transpiring around us seem incredible. Yesterday the Massachusetts & Pennsylvania volunteers were attacked by a mob in Baltimore & a number on both sides killed & wounded--& last night the Bridges on our rail-road were burned to prevent any more troops being forwarded for the defense of the National Capital--All at once the flames of Civil War seem raging around us--we hear of our friends & acquaintances enlisting in various places & feel an anxiety & dread that we never dreamed of before--The telegraph wires have been cut, Rail roads torn up, & mails from the South suspended, and we are all the time agitated by alarming & conflicting rumors.

We seem threatened not only with war but anarchy, as the Capital & the Government are in great danger, & the means for their defense very much obstructed & cut off--Baltimore is in possession of the mob, & under martial law, and we feel the greatest anxiety about our friends.

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34 Ibid., (Extra), April 21, 1861; Republican, April 25, 1861.
there, but can hear nothing from them—All other interests are suspended & everybody is absorbed by the anxiety prevailing for the welfare & existence of our country.35

Patriotic supporters fed the retreating volunteers at the Wilmington depot with coffee and food, and a Pennsylvania colonel addressed the crowd. Cheers were given for Major Anderson, and groans for Jeff Davis. Armed volunteers patrolled the streets for several days.36

A Union meeting of New Castle county citizens on April 22 was controlled by the Democrats. Orators pleaded for the preservation of the Union and opposed coercion. The meeting upheld national unity, recommended the discarding of party preferences, disapproved of local disorders, and appointed a committee of fourteen to act with the council in measures of public safety.37 Charles I. duPont was convinced that the loyalty of the state was "undoubted". He was particularly pleased by the speech of young Wootten, the Governor's son-in-law, which was "patriotic & emphatic and showed fully that the proper patriotic spirit pervades the State, and that we will stand well in the record of these eventful times."38 The Governor's daughter was thrilled by the Union feeling displayed at the gathering and wrote her mother:

35Anna Ferris, Diary, April 20, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

36Gazette, (Extra), April 21, 1861; Republican, April 23, 1861.

37Republican, April 25, 1861.

38Charles I. duPont to S. F. duPont, April 22, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
Men here have forgotten whether they formerly called themselves Republicans, Democrats or Unionists—All are banded together in a common brotherhood for the defence of our homes and our lines against the encroachments of either Army. Alfred is all right. He made a glorious speech here yesterday to a tremendous mass of people—to keep the Stars & Stripes waving—. . . . While we love the South and appreciate the gross injustice that she has suffered, we still prefer the Union, even as it is to the Reign of Anarchy and ruin that must follow this bloody contest—39

Apparently there was no question in the minds of Republicans and Democrats after the fall of Sumter that the Union must be continued.

Active in the crisis were the Minute Men of 1860, who eventually enlisted as companies A and B in the First Delaware Regiment. These former Bell and Everett supporters on April 16 organized themselves into a volunteer militia company, signed a pledge to defend the constitution, the Union, and the laws of the United States, and offered their services to the general government. Citizens of all political doctrines were invited to attend a meeting on April 18 to consider the question of national defense. There resolutions were passed and forwarded to the President. The South was accused of causing the war by assaulting the government, insulting the national flag, and bringing about loss of life. "Holding as we do, superior allegiance to the General Government, and discarding at this juncture all party predilections and prejudices," the members of the meeting declared, "we desire to assure the President of the United States that we will stand by, support and defend every patriotic effort of

39Mrs. Rhoda Wootten to Mrs. William Burton, April 23, 1861, (Burton-Wootten Papers, Delaware State Archives).
the Government to maintain the Constitution, the Union, the enforce-
ment of the laws and the flag of our country forever, against any and
all enemies or assailants, at home or abroad." In a final assembly
on April 25, a resolution to defend the national government was again
passed. The organization of militia companies was encouraged, the
city council was requested to appropriate funds for expenses, and the
use of violent and abusive language was deprecated in view of the
necessity for an unbroken front in the period of tension.\footnote{\textit{Gazette (Extra)}, April 21, 26, 1861; \textit{Republican}, April 22,
1861; Scharf, \textit{History}, I, 334-335; \textit{Enlistment Register of 279 Men},
April 18, 1861 (Civil War Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
These men signed this statement: "We the undersigned agree to form
ourselves into a Volunteer Military Company, the objects of which
shall be the preservation of the Constitution, the Union and the
enforcement of the Laws. And we hereby pledge ourselves should
our services be required by the constituted authorities of our
United States to support the general Government, and the flag of our
common country."}

Following a suggestion by the city council, a committee was
formed to solicit funds for the families of volunteers and two weeks
later ward committees were organized. During June two hundred fami-
lies received relief from this source. The President of the Phila-
delphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad announced that employees
who enlisted should be paid during their absence and that work would
be waiting for them upon their return. Druggists and physicians
offered their services free to the families of needy volunteers.
Members of the Odd Fellows, Sons of Temperance and St. Mary's Bene-
ficial Society continued in good standing during military service and
Numerous rumors disturbed the population of Wilmington in April and May. The Republican was troubled by a report that Delaware secessionists had planned to attack Massachusetts and Pennsylvania troops on their way to defend the capital. Such an assault would have brought down forces from Philadelphia immediately; Wilmington would have resembled Baltimore, with streets crimsoned with blood, stores pillaged, and houses burned. The Gazette scoffed at reports that anyone was trying to lead Delaware into the Confederacy, that the Delaware Guard was secessionist, and that southern sympathizers intended to occupy Fort Delaware. At the time of the fall of Sumter, Fort Delaware was manned by thirty soldiers. Within ten days the Secretary of War sent reinforcements of two hundred men. A report that secessionists would drain the water from the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal and breach its walls led to its being patrolled by Pennsylvania troops. The DuPont Company was accused of selling

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1 Republican, April 22, May 16, 1861; Gazette, April 23, 1861; Scharf, History, I, 337.
2 Republican, May 6, 1861.
3 Gazette, April 23, 1861.
4 Smyrna Times, April 25, 1861; Delawarean, April 27, 1861.
5 Thomas Webster to Governor A. Curtin, April 20-21 (copy), 1861 (S. M. Felton Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania). Webster was a Pinkerton detective stationed in Baltimore. Also see the Republican, April 25, 1861.
gunpowder to the South, but on April 16 the company's agent in Virginia was instructed that gunpowder was only prepared for states remaining within the Union. Rumors that Trimble and his men meant to destroy the DuPont mills resulted in the placing of Pennsylvania troops at nearby Brandywine Springs. Two spies disguised in female attire were captured on the company grounds. When news reached the president of the concern that gunpowder from a magazine along the Delaware River would be seized by secessionists, he and four nephews armed themselves with revolvers, and supervised the transportation of the product elsewhere.

Within a few weeks after the fall of Fort Sumter, ministers in Wilmington unanimously endorsed the northern cause. Bishop Alfred Lee, head of the Episcopal Church, preached upon "the Christian Citizen's Duty in the Present Crisis," while the Reverend Samuel Brincke of Christ Episcopal Church in Brandywine Hundred used a prayer for periods

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\[1^6\] Dr. S. C. Brincke to E. Brincke, April 17, 1861 (Typed Brincke Letters, Historical Society of Delaware). In part the letter read, "I do hope the DuPont's have done making powder for Bragg and Blackguard. They have fallen very much in my estimation since I heard of it. Do they know that it is treason to give aid and comfort to the enemy? I thought they were such strong union men. I know it to be a fact that they have sold it to them!"

\[1^7\] William S. Dutton, Dupont: One Hundred and Forty Years, New York, 1950), 92.

\[1^8\] Mrs. Sophie duPont to H. W. Davis, April 29, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

\[1^9\] Republican, May 6, 1861.

\[5^9\] Mrs. Sophie duPont to H. W. Davis, April 29, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
of war and tumult before his congregation, whose every face bore the "impress of the times." The Reverend J. S. Dickerson of the Second Baptist Church delivered a patriotic discourse to a large audience the Sunday after the Baltimore riots. The prayers of the congregation at Scott Methodist Episcopal Church were asked for several young men who were going to enlist in Philadelphia. Father O'Brien at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church exhorted his followers to sustain the general government, and the beneficial society of the church passed resolutions of a similar nature. The Reverend William Aikman at Hanover Street Presbyterian Church preached upon "Reverence for Law is the Only Hope of a State" and advised his listeners that they had two duties: to be obedient to the laws and to stand by their country. In his benediction he blessed those of the congregation who had already joined the armed forces. Reverend George Wiswell of Central Presbyterian Church told his members that this was a holy war, if there was ever a holy war on earth, and advised men to enlist. On July 4, four militia companies stacked their arms beside the church door and entered the flag-trimmed sanctuary to hear the Declaration

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52 Republican, April 25, 1861; Emma R. Dickerson, James Stokes Dickerson, Memories of his Life (New York, 1879), 104.

53 Republican, April 25, 1861.

54 Republican, May 2, 16, 1861.

55 Ibid., May 13, 1861.
of Independence read and a patriotic sermon delivered. The American Presbyterian attributed much of the strength of national sentiment in Wilmington to "the boldness and vigor of this minister." At the end of April, Anna Ferris thought that things looked "more hopeful" than a week ago, for the capital was no longer threatened and the government was acting vigorously. Her friends were rapidly enlisting in the northern army. "Both sides are equally enthusiastic," she believed, "& in terrible earnestness & both appear equally convinced of the righteousness of their cause." In her opinion, the war was like no other in history, though in feeling it might be compared to the days of the Cavaliers and Roundheads in England.

As tension increased, hatred of the South became more pronounced. A resident of Baltimore visited Wilmington on April 26 to attend the wedding of his brother. When the former displayed the Palmetto flag, condoned secession, and cheered for Jeff Davis, a gang of ruffians assaulted him. For his own protection he was jailed overnight. On his way to the station next morning he was waylaid by two hundred men with rifles. At a furious gallop he drove up Market Street to the home of relatives; some of the infuriated mob in pursuit thought that Senator Bayard or Jeff Davis was the object of the chase.

56 Ibid., May 16, 1861; American Presbyterian, July 18, August 1, 1861; George Wiswell, State Sovereignty--Federal Sovereignty--Our Country, July 4, 1861 (Wilmington, 1861), et passim.

57 Anna Ferris, Diary, April 30, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
The waving of a flag from a window calmed the pursuers. A spectator was alarmed by the display of "fiendish" spirit; would life and property soon be safe? 58

It became injudicious to express one's self upon political matters. Captain J. P. Gillis wrote his wife on May 7:

The condition of our country is such that all former political tendencies and prejudices are or should be forgot. Therefore, I hope Edward has good sense enough to see the impropriety of indulging in his former Democratic views. Let politics be dropped entirely. I shall be offended if I hear of his having any political discussions. Therefore, I not only advise, but command that he turn his thoughts to more proper and useful matters. We all are now Unionists or Secessionists, and I do not expect anyone connected with me to disgrace my loyalty to the Government by anything which might be constructed into disaffection to our glorious Union, which must and will be under a kind Providence maintained in its purity. Let selfish politicians and fanaticism be all tied up in bags, like the Kilkenny cats. 59

Senator Bayard made a grave error of judgment by traveling to the South for a month's trip of business and pleasure during the excitement. He left Wilmington on April 8 and visited Montgomery, Mobile, New Orleans, and Louisville. The approach of war caused him to regret his departure from Delaware. From Montgomery on April 16 he wrote that the southern states wished to remain neutral; war would result only if the South were invaded. Hearing of Lincoln's proclamation at Mobile on April 17, he wrote his son that war had

58 Republican, April 29, 1861; Rhoda Wootton to Mrs. William Burton, May 1, 1861 (Burton-Wootton Letters, Delaware State Archives).

59 J. P. Gillis to Mrs. J. P. Gillis, May 7, 1861 (Gillis Collection, Historical Society of Delaware).
The Governor should summon a special session of the legislature, which would call a convention to determine whether Delaware would stand with the North or South. In his opinion, the president's call for troops should be ignored, "for it is nothing more than a call for men to invade the South, and every man who consents to be enrolled will be compelled to march South if the madness of the Administration orders him." Unless Maryland and Virginia joined the Confederacy, Delaware was "tied hand and foot." From New Orleans on April 22, he warned that if Delaware supported the North, she would become "a mere county of Pennsylvania." The South was "right" in the contest and did not want war, but only to be let alone. Invasion from the North would be "a costly experiment and utterly impracticable." From Louisville on April 26 he reported to his son that if the people of Delaware submitted to northern despotism, it was "not the state for you or I to live in." In any contest of arms, the South would emerge triumphant.  

Thomas F. Bayard informed his father on April 29 that war feeling dominated the state and that those who disagreed were cowed into compliance or silence. "The Abolitionists are rampant, waving American flags, subscribing money freely and urging mob spirit whenever they can," he wrote. "We seem to be a mere servile dependency of Pennsylvania, and her word is law to Delaware." The actions of his father in the South had been misrepresented, and the Senator must be

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60 J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, April 16, 17, 22, 26, May 1, 1861 and T. F. Bayard to J. A. Bayard, April 29, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress); Delawarean, May 25, 1861.
careful in his speech and plans. At all times he should carry a revolver. It was advisable that he return home by way of Chestertown, Maryland, and Smyrna, Delaware rather than by the usual railroad route through Baltimore, as a mob might meet him at Wilmington depot. The Senator was "astonished" at the tone of his son's letter; "a reign of terror" must be in effect in Wilmington, but he agreed to follow the travel route suggested. 61

Upon Senator Bayard's arrival in Wilmington on May 1, he was shown a telegram, which accused him of planning to lead the state out of the Union with the help of Confederate support from Montgomery and of being a prince in the Order of the Golden Circle, charges which he denied. A few days later he and his daughters took the cars to Philadelphia. A telegram sent from Wilmington announced the time of his arrival. A mob headed by a man who had been tarred and feathered in Georgia waited for him at the Philadelphia depot. For his own safety police removed him from the train a few blocks from the station and escorted him to the Mayor's office. Thus the mob's attempt to tar and feather him or possibly lynch him was defeated. 62

Upon the very morning of the attempted assault, Captain S. F. duPont wrote from the Philadelphia Navy Yard offering his services in any capacity to insure the Congressman's safety. A few days later Bayard thanked him for the

61T. F. Bayard to J. A. Bayard, April 29, 1861 and J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, May 1, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress); Delawarean, May 25, 1861.

62Gazette, May 10, 1861; Republican, May 25, 1861.
offer and told how shocked he was by the incident. The Philadelphia 
Bulletin believed that only a few lawless men were involved and that 
the act was disapproved by nine-tenths of the community. Both the 
Gazette and Republican disapproved of the attack.

Senator Bayard felt it necessary to write a letter to the 
people of Delaware, explaining that his trip was for business and 
social reasons. He denied that he had consulted with political 
leaders at Montgomery about leading the state into the Confederacy or 
that he was a member of the Golden Circle. He stood by his opinion 
expressed in the Senate that peaceful separation was preferable to 
war; if the people of Delaware felt differently, he would resign. 

There is no evidence to substantiate the theory that Bayard's 
visit to the South was other than for social and business reasons. 
His letters to his son reveal his thoughts and actions during a trying 
month and do not show that he desired to lead the state into the Con­
federacy, realizing the impossibility from a practical point of view. 
A search of the archives and historical societies of Alabama, Georgia, 
North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia does not reveal any 
"treasonable" correspondence. The Republican upon his return pointed 
out in a mild article that the Senator disagreed with the newspaper

63 J. A. Bayard to S. F. duPont, May 11, 1861 (S. F. duPont 
Papers, Longwood Foundation).

64 Gazette, May 10, 1861; Republican, May 13, 1861. The 
editorial from the Philadelphia Bulletin is quoted in the Gazette.

65 Delawarean, May 25, 1861.
in politics, but said nothing about treason.\textsuperscript{66} During the next year the editor printed with an air of triumph a clipping from an obscure Georgia newspaper, which alleged that Bayard was in Montgomery to discuss the entrance of Delaware into the new government, and thereafter the charge was made in every campaign.\textsuperscript{67} It would be naive, indeed, to assume that when Bayard was in Montgomery, he did not discuss politics. From the letters to his son it is clear that while he deeply sympathized with the South, he knew that the action of Delaware depended upon Maryland's decision. He strongly endorsed a state convention as an index of public opinion, but did not expect in this event that it would lead the state out of the Union.

Outside of Wilmington, numerous meetings in towns and hundreds in New Castle county endorsed the Union, but most did not mention coercion. In the Brandywine Hundred on April 19, a flag was raised.\textsuperscript{68} At Newark a band played martial music, two patriotic songs were sung, guns fired, and a flag raised. It was promised that another would soon be displayed with the motto, "By the Eternal, the Union shall be preserved."\textsuperscript{69} At Centreville a patriotic demonstration was arranged.\textsuperscript{70} Citizens of Red Lion and St. George's Hundreds in a meeting favored

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66}\textit{Republican}, May 16, 1861.
\item \textsuperscript{67}\textit{Ibid.}, April 10, 1862. From the Cassville Standard.
\item \textsuperscript{68}\textit{Republican}, April 25, 1861.
\item \textsuperscript{69}\textit{Republican}, April 22, 1861.
\item \textsuperscript{70}\textit{Ibid.}, April 29, 1861.
\end{itemize}
maintaining every constitutional right, enforcing the laws, and remaining a united country. A flag was placed on top of the courthouse in New Castle, and the townspeople were addressed by a local orator in connection with the raising of a flag over a warehouse.

The first meetings after Fort Sumter were mere demonstrations of Union feeling, but soon evidences of cleavage between Democrats and Republicans appeared. An illustration is the rival meetings in Mill Creek Hundred. Bayard Taylor from nearby Kennett Square spoke at the first Union meeting. Resolutions urged the abolition of parties, the support of the government against those who had disturbed the peace, and the avoidance of mob law. Fifty names were enrolled in a Home Guard, and $115 raised to purchase equipment and to assist the families of needy volunteers.

Another Union meeting in the hundred on May 18 admitted with great reluctance "an incipient stage of civil war"; henceforth, the members knew no North, no South, nor parties, unless the latter were interested in preserving the Union intact and the Constitution. "We think it the better policy," the gathering declared, "to waive as much as possible the 'coercive policy', to 'suffer long and bear much', and yet longer hold out 'the olive branch of peace' by applying to negotiation and compromise, and coming together on some common

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71 Ibid., April 29, 1861.
72 Ibid., April 29, 1861; William T. Read, Diary, April 30, 1861 (Private Possession).
73 Gazette, May 3, 1861.
fraternal platform, thus avoiding devastation and slaughter in fratricidal war." While the nation should be ready to defend itself from invasion, a coercive war would load the country with a frightful debt, leave unsolved sectional difficulties, and in case of victory, would raise the dangerous question of how to hold the conquered states as provinces. For purposes of defense, a militia of forty men was organized.\(^7\)

With considerable justification a prominent Wilmington Republican claimed that the example of Wilmington kept New Castle county and Delaware in the right path. "Had not Wilmington started and sustained with its money the first arming of Volunteers," he asserted, "we should not have had out one man of the three months men. Delaware called Lockwood to command her 1st Regiment. Lockwood has restored the peninsula to its allegiance. We all remember the 14th, 15th to 19th of April; the burning of our R. R. bridges kindled the spark in Wilmington, which fired the loyalty of our State which before was at least supine, if not doubtful."\(^7\)

Within six weeks after Fort Sumter, the excitement in New Castle county as demonstrated by meetings, flag raisings, and enlistments began to die down. Many people thought that the first battle would settle the issue, and they waited expectantly for it. The great majority undoubtedly favored the preservation of the Union, and

\(^7\)Republican, May 27, 1861; Gazette, May 24, 1861.

\(^7\)J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, December 5, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
if this aim could not be accomplished by peaceful means, they would agree to go to war. The militia continued to drill, but it was not expected that soldiers from the state would fight outside its borders. With anxiety they heard reports from lower Delaware, which indicated only half-hearted support of the Union.

The Response in Kent County

Most Delawareans in lower Delaware were convinced that the South had been wronged, but few were prepared to fight on the rebel side, to furnish information or supplies, or to advocate the state's joining the Confederacy. In brief, a strong desire for neutrality existed, and there were few secessionists.

An excellent exposition of the ideas of many Delawareans is presented in a letter that the Secretary of State, Edward Ridgely, wrote to Mrs. Charles I. duPont on April 26 from Dover. During the campaign of 1860 he had been a Constitutional Unionist, but in the spring of 1861 he joined the Democrats. He explained:

I am not a secessionist, as has been falsely represented, but at the same time I am opposed to any policy that might tend, either directly or indirectly, to coerce the seceded States. I believe that such a step would forever destroy the possibility of a reunion and a return to that brotherly love and affection that formerly prevailed among the members of this once united Confederacy. I do not think that the states have any right under the constitution to secede. But the right of rebellion, whenever a governor fails to carry out the objects for which governments were instituted: to wit the protection of life, liberty, and property, is undoubted.

The war was caused by the "triumph of a political party, whose only principle (let politicians say what they may) is a war upon an
institution of which they know nothing and in which they have no personal interest. The Republicans had spurned the Crittenden resolutions, peace congress, and everything else, which might have terminated the difficulties. If the government had pursued a mild, prudent course, none but the cotton states would have seceded, and ere many months they would have been applying for re-admission. To some extent the attack upon Fort Sumter was justified "by the vacillating course of that weak timid man who now occupies the chair of state." Lincoln virtually promised to evacuate the Fort and then changed his mind; it would have been of value to the Union only if a coercive policy was intended. "Why not let them depart in peace," he asked, "and save us the horrors of a Civil War?" All who did not hurrah for Lincoln were being branded as traitors and secessionists, as his brother Henry and he were finding out.76

A letter of Henry Ridgely to Mrs. duPont reflected similar opinions. The seceded states should have waited longer to see what Lincoln intended to do. There were only two alternatives at this point: to let them go in peace or to drive them back again at the point of a bayonet. He opposed war because the general government had no constitutional power to coerce the states and because deadly hatred between the two sections would be engendered. What would a northern victory bring? Every man, woman, and child in the South must be

76 Edward Ridgely to Mrs. Charles I. duPont, April 26, 1861 (Ridgely Collection, Delaware State Archives).
exterminated, or a vast standing army must be quartered there to keep the section in subjugation.\textsuperscript{77}

Both newspapers in Kent county were strongly in favor of the preservation of the Union. The \textit{Smyrna Times} in the campaign of 1860 had been independent, but during the summer of 1861 it gradually became Republican. Its editorial page in the first issue after Fort Sumter expressed well the feeling of many people in the area. The beginning of "a civil war, the most horrible of all wars," was deplored, and God alone knew how it would end. It moaned over the spectacle of a divided country, broken political promises, and the prostration of business. From every side now came the cry "To Arms! To Arms!" Although the fall of Sumter had been expected, the news was a shock. Many had hoped that something might be done to avoid the impending rift, but "as it had to come, the feeling seems to have been, let it come—anything but this dread suspense". Though some sympathized with the cotton states, the greater portion clung to the stars and stripes. If the North had acted in a spirit of compromise and the South had moved less hastily, a way out of the difficulty might yet have been found. Throughout the summer the newspaper advocated a peaceful solution.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{77}Henry Ridgely to Mrs. Charles I. duPont, April, 1861 (Ridgely Collection, Delaware State Archives). Internal evidence and the handwriting establish the identity of the writer and the time.

\textsuperscript{78}\textit{Smyrna Times}, April 18, 1861.
The Delawarean in Dover was a staunch defender of the Democratic point of view, reflecting especially the opinions of the Saulsbursys. Every right-thinking citizen deplored the inauguration of a war, which was begun in folly and would end in ruin. While secession was illegal and unjustifiable, the attempt to subjugate the South was "madness in the extreme" and would destroy both sections. "We assume that four-fifths of Delawareans have no taste for or approbation of the fratricidal war into which we were plunged by ambitious demagogues of the North and South," asserted the editor.79

The people in lower Delaware were slower in responding to the course of events in meetings and demonstrations than those in New Castle county. The citizens of Felton on April 18 erected a large pole upon which perched an American eagle, hoisted a flag, and fired a salute of thirty-four guns. A week later they formed a Union Guard.80 In Camden a militia company was organized; thirteen citizens signed notes in bank or contributed $100 each to pay for uniforms, while other gifts helped support the families of impoverished soldiers.81 The residents of Leipsic were said to be strong friends of the Union.82 Smyrna was slow in demonstrating its loyalty, but late in May flags were hung out, and an observer hoped that the example

79Delawarean, April 20, 27, 1861.
80Republican, April 25, 1861.
81Ibid., April 29, 1861; N. B. Smithers to A. H. Grimshaw May 6, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).
82Gazette, July 4, 1861.
might be followed elsewhere in the county.\textsuperscript{83} Willow Grove and Kitts Hammock had the reputation of being secession strongholds.\textsuperscript{84} An investigator in June thought that the entire county, except for Dover and Smyrna, was Unionist in feeling.\textsuperscript{85} A correspondent reported in July that the area manifested "strong Union and PEACE sentiments" and that the existence of secessionists was a "myth".\textsuperscript{86}

A Kent county Union meeting was planned in May. Charles I. duPont of Brandywine Hundred was invited to address the audience, but refused. "My first service is to throw politics to the Dogs," he advised, "& let them devour its carcass; all party ties should be forgotten in the great effort to save our Union. Abolitionism, Native Americanism, Know-Nothings, the prescribing of valued citizens for their religious opinions—all are passed away, and the task is now to save our Nationality." He wanted the country to extend from Maine to Florida and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The rebellion had reached such a stage that only force could subdue it. Delaware's ties were with the North. "I am opposed to war," he wrote, "it is a relic of barbarism, but these Southern politicians are now the aggressors, and let the consequences be as they may, the loss of hundreds of thousands of men, and hundreds of millions of dollars, our Government and Union,

\textsuperscript{83}Republican, May 27, 1861.
\textsuperscript{84}Republican, May 30, 1861.
\textsuperscript{85}Delawarean, June 8, 1861. From the Delaware Journal.
\textsuperscript{86}Gazette, July 30, 1861.
The Kent county Union meeting in Dover on May 18 revealed that considerable differences of opinion existed concerning the course that the national government should take. Fourteen speakers presented their views to the large audience. All breathed ardent attachment to the Union, condemned secession, and reverenced the flag and constitution, but there was disagreement about coercion. Eight orators opposed the civil war and coercion, favoring amicable means to restore the Union, while six wanted the vigorous enforcement of the laws, the recovery of lost government property at all hazards, and the preservation of the Union at any price—by the sword if necessary.  

Two reports came out of the committee on resolutions. The majority report, as presented by Eli Saulsbury, condemned abolitionists and secessionists, blamed the action of the South for beginning the war, praised the legislature for seeking a way out of the difficulties, and looked to Congress or a national convention to settle the crisis peacefully. The minority report, as read by George P. Fisher, denied the right of secession, advocated the use of force to put down the rebellion, requested congressmen from the state to take an oath of allegiance to the central government, and asked the Governor to summon the legislature to consider appropriations for military purposes. The

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A majority report was supported by 434 persons, and the minority by 294, with many not voting.\(^8\)

Depending upon whether they were Republicans or Democrats, writers in newspapers praised or abused the Kent county demonstration. A correspondent of the Republican found the gathering "a perfect party drill for secessionists— the so-called peace party," while a resident of Willow Grove thought that the remarks of Republicans were of the "most ultra-Black-Republican-Abolitionism" stripe and the "most inflammatory and vindicative" possible. Orators on that side were like tigers thirsting for blood.\(^9\) There is no reason to doubt that the meeting was an index of the county's attitude and that the majority sincerely sympathized with the South and continued to cling to the hope of a peaceful solution.

The Response in Sussex County

Sussex county was more pro-southern than any other section of Delaware. On two sides it was adjacent to Maryland, the only waterway of any importance leading into Chesapeake Bay lay within its borders, and by trade, way of life, and institution of slavery it was tied to the South. Few genuine secessionists appeared within its borders. Undoubtedly, the great majority stood for the preservation of the Union by peaceful means and opposed coercion.

\(^8\)Ibid., May 25, 1861; Republican, May 30, 1861.

\(^9\)Ibid., May 30, 1861; Gazette, May 31, 1861.
A strong exponent of the view that Delaware should join the Confederacy was Charles duPont Bird of Dover, a student at Loyola College in Baltimore. His letter to the Governor of Virginia on April 24 was thought important enough to forward to General Robert E. Lee and read in part:

A strong feeling in the two lower counties of Delaware is aroused in favor of Delaware joining the Southern Confederacy. With a man or two from you to give directions and a hint that arms and men would come if necessary, the people of Sussex themselves would destroy the Delaware railroad terminating at Seaford, on the Nanticoke. This railroad, I am confident, the General Government of Lincoln wish to secure, that they may transport troops by the Nanticoke River to the Chesapeake, and thence to Washington by the Potomac River. A vessel or two sunk in the Nanticoke will hinder the design.

There is considerable trestling work on the Delaware railroad near Dover, which would retard that road if it were broken.

The arms that Delaware owns are in the hands of secessionists. The powder mills on the Brandywine (owned by relations of mine) should be secured at all hazards. With a not very large force, if we cannot hold them they should be destroyed. Some of the duPronts are friendly to the South. If it is possible to guard these works for a few weeks, the stock of powder for the Southern Confederacy would be largely increased.91

His views do not fit the facts, and older and wiser men who were better acquainted with the county disagreed.

Sussex county in 1861 possessed two newspapers. Unfortunately the files of the Peninsular News and Advertiser for April and May are not in existence, though it is known that its views were rabidly Republican. The Georgetown Messenger stood for the preservation of

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91 Charles duPont Bird to Governor Wise, April 24, 1861. War of Rebellion, Series I, LI, pt. 2 (Washington, 1897), 46.
the Union and defense from attack by the South. The views of the 
editor were somewhat in advance of his readers. An editorial on April 
17 recommended that every secessionist should be hanged to prevent the 
overthrow of the government and the destruction of free institutions.
A mob threatened to put him out of business, and in the next issue 
he explained that he had no particular person in mind. He was cheered 
by observing that all parties were combining to support the adminis­
tration. The true issue was not the North against the South, or 
abolitionism versus slavery, but the rebels against the government, 
and he did not see how anyone could forsake the glorious Union with 
its star-spangled banner. At the beginning of the controversy he 
estimated that one-fourth of the county was secessionist, but in early 
May he reduced the number to five hundred persons.92

Union demonstrations within the county were few. The news of 
the fall of Fort Sumter fell on Lewes "like a bombshell." A corre­
spondent from the seaport on April 16 reported:

Many men who have heretofore laid quiet, have come out 
in strong terms for the support of the laws, and have laid 
down whatever previous party prejudices they have held, and 
are now without any reservation, ready and willing to give 
their lives and means to the support of the right, the 
perpetuity of our glorious institutions, and the putting 
down and forever quelling treason in high places and low.

Only a few persons welcomed the tidings.93 The President of the Lewes 
Town Commissioners wrote the Secretary of the Treasury a few days

92Georgetown Messenger, April 24, 1861; Republican, May 26, 
1861. From the Georgetown Messenger.

93Republican, April 22, 1861.
later that the harbor was completely exposed and asked for some cannon. "Our citizens are in much excitement," the local official reported, "and we have but few Southern Sympathizers in our midst, most of whom are the Custom House retainers." Within the next few weeks two Union meetings were held, and two new militia companies began to drill. In Seaford guns were fired in honor of the fall of Sumter. A Democratic militia company already existed, but another company was formed in connection with a Union meeting, whose members offered their time, money, and lives to protect the government. Flag raisings and Union meetings occurred during the summer at New Market near Milton, in Cedar Creek hundred, and at Laurel. It was not until September 20 in isolated Indian River Hundred that David Hall noted laconically in his diary, "Mustered at the Schoolhouse--then Marched to the Store, raised flag on pole with eagle in a patriotic demonstration." Republicans worried about the existence of militia companies, which at the beginning of the war were controlled by Democrats and

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94 Henry Fisher Rodney to Secretary of Treasury S. P. Chase, April 27, 1861 (Treasury Department, Letters Received, 1861, National Archives).

95 Republican, May 6, 1861.

96 Ibid., April 22, 1861.

97 Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 2, 1861; Gazette, May 17, June 1, 1861.

98 David Hall Diary, September 20, 1861 (Private Possession). David Hall was a storekeeper and Republican at Ocean View in eastern Sussex county.
possessed all the arms. It almost every locality an opposition company of friends of the Union was formed; several new bands were organized in May. Citizens of Milford without regard to political affiliations formed the Diamond Guard, as they feared that the state might become a battleground, that lawless predatory bands might appear, and that their homes might be attacked. It soon became known as a secessionist group, and the Scott Home Guard of Union supporters was organized. By the end of the summer there were Democratic and Republican militia in every town.

A Sussex county Union meeting was arranged for May 7. In connection with the planning, Caleb S. Layton, one of the most influential Republicans in the county, wrote Dr. Grimshaw about conditions there. "You may rely upon it," he advised. "Sussex is sound to the core . . . We give secession & secessionists no quarter in this county & feel entirely competent to take care of them." The Star-Spangled Banner was waving from several places in Georgetown, and his son was organizing a military company of sixty. Governor Burton had issued an order transferring the arms to a secessionist in Georgetown, Charles R. Paynter, but a "quietus" had been placed upon the effort by the refusal to surrender the equipment. Union companies were appearing at many places in the county. Although he had secured a

99Republican, May 6, 1861.
100Gazette, May 21, 1861.
101Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 2, 1861.
rifle-musket, bayonet, a pair of Colt revolvers, and old trooper's sword for protection, he did not expect to have to use them in the county. 102

The editor of the Peninsular News and Advertiser sent Dr. Grimshaw an alarming report upon May 1. The secessionists were seeking to control the Union meeting, and trouble was expected. He asked for a Colt revolver, bullet moulds, and a "good Bowie knife". Many people believed that "secession is rapidly poisoning the minds of all the Democrats in this State". A conspiracy existed to lead the state into the Confederacy at the first opportunity. 103

The Sussex county Union meeting of 2,000 persons was not marred by any disturbances. The principal address was delivered by Judge Layton, who observed that they met as Union men, who had discarded party ties. Wicked men who levied war against the government would soon be crushed. The interests and trade of Delaware lay with the North, and Delaware must support Lincoln, or troops from Philadelphia might overrun the state. Their lives and money should be pledged to the government. In direct contrast were the comments offered in a letter written by John W. Houston, a Democrat, who could not attend. The answer to the query of where the state was to go was "nowhere".

"Stay at home in the Union until the crack of doom, or until it goes to pieces, if pieces it must, and we are left standing solitary and

102 C. S. Layton to Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, May 1, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).

103 J. S. Prettyman to Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, May 4, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).
alone with our feet planted firmly on the rock of the Constitution
and with dying gasp still hugging to our breast the flag of our
country, as the last survivor of the federation of the American
States."104

Resolutions endorsed the Union, the Crittenden resolutions,
and Saulsbury's conduct as Senator. The existence of civil war was
regretted. All law-abiding citizens should back the government, but
the right to disagree from the present administration on party issues
was reserved.105 On the whole, the action of the meeting was well-
received. The Delawarean believed that the resolutions would receive
the "approbation of five-sixths of the bona fide citizens of the state;
indeed, we may say of all the citizens of the state except the ultra-
abolitionized Republicans and possibly a very few would-be secession-
ists."106 A contrary reaction was discovered by a citizen of Laurel
upon his return from the Union gathering; townspeople paid no attention
to the resolutions or to the flag that he had raised. In his opinion,
four-fifths of the people in the vicinity were southern sympa-
thizers.107

Newspapers in May agreed that Delaware was loyal to the Union.
The Republican asserted that not a man in Wilmington or in New Castle

104Gazette, May 10, 14, 1861; Delawarean, May 11, 1861; Republican, May 16, 1861.
105Ibid., May 11, 1861.
106Ibid., May 11, 1861.
107Gazette, May 14, 1861.
county would acknowledge that he was a secessionist, while in Kent one in ten would admit the charge, and in Sussex one in fifty.\textsuperscript{108} The editor of the \textit{Delaware Journal} purposely conversed about politics with many gentlemen from lower Delaware, who were "unanimous in the opinion that the Union feeling predominates everywhere, except in Smyrna."\textsuperscript{109} Reviewing the county meetings, the editor of the \textit{Gazette} was encouraged, for "in New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, the voice of the people with an unanimity as perfect as at any previous time has acknowledged their devotion to the Union. But they differ as to the policy by which the Union should be maintained." Fears of a few partisans that secession influences existed were incorrect. The secession of Delaware was an "utter impossibility", and not a solitary citizen of the state had entered the Confederate Army.\textsuperscript{110}

Sussex county displayed more signs of southern sympathy than the other counties, but in April and May there was still strong sentiment for clinging to the Union and the peaceful adjustment of difficulties.

\textbf{A House Dividing}

Almost every Delawarean proclaimed himself a Union man in the weeks after Fort Sumter. Hastily organized meetings fervently proclaimed the devotion of residents to the Union, Constitution, and Flag.

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\textsuperscript{108}\textit{Republican}, May 2, 1861.
\textsuperscript{109}\textit{Delawarean}, June 8, 1861. From the \textit{Delaware Journal}.
\textsuperscript{110}\textit{Gazette}, May 28, 1861.
\end{flushright}
As time passed and the breach between the sections remained unhealed, Democrats and Republicans defined more accurately where they stood. It was significant that the New Castle county meeting on April 22 desired the preservation of the Union without much consideration of the means by which the objective was to be obtained. By the time of the Kent and Sussex gatherings, dissensions had developed. The Kent county meeting voted on two different platforms, and the Sussex county meeting permitted the right to disagree with the administration.

While there was a great variety of opinion within each party, the main currents were unmistakable. Most Democrats saw the North as an aggressor, preferred peace to war, and were willing to have the South secede rather than engage in conflict. Time and patience might reunite the country, while the use of force never would. Northern victory would raise more problems than it would solve. Most Republicans blamed the South for the crisis, were determined to maintain the Union at all costs, and were willing to go to war to preserve a united country if necessary. These opinions were clearly expressed at two Union meetings in June.

A Union convention of 2500 assembled in Dover on June 14. Hostile sources said that about 1000 members came from Philadelphia, fifty from Dover, and few from Sussex county. It was described as primarily an effort of the Wilmington Republicans and was organized by James A. Montgomery, editor of the Delaware Inquirer and former
The principal speeches were delivered by S. M. Harrington, Alfred Wootten, and George P. Fisher. Harrington, who presided, hoped that the question of loyalty to the Union, which some erroneously supposed to be in doubt, would be settled by the convention. In his opinion, the number and depth of feeling of Southern sympathizers had been exaggerated. While he could point to some as secessionists, state rights men, anti-coercionists, defenders of the government within state limits, peace men, and Christian loyalists, he still believed that the state was loyal at heart and in sentiment. If a poll were taken, less than 500 persons would be found who believed in the legality and expediency of secession.\textsuperscript{112}

Many people were surprised to see Wootten in attendance at a Union meeting dominated by Republicans. He explained that although he still claimed to be a Democrat, he could not go along with all the decisions of his father-in-law, Governor Burton, such as refusing to call a session of the legislature to equip troops. The government had been assailed, and the President was merely acting on the defensive. The Attorney-General supported the party, which stood for the preservation and sustaining of the government, and if that faction was the Republican party, he should be counted in that group. Did Bayard and Saulsbury intend to see the capital burned? He attacked other Democratic leaders by name. In his opinion, Delawareans in general favored

\textsuperscript{111}\textit{Delawarean}, June 15, 1861.

\textsuperscript{112}\textit{Republican}, June 17, 1861; \textit{Delawarean}, June 22, 1861.
sustaining the government. Perhaps the Gazette was correct in charging that his rambling address was delivered while drunk.\textsuperscript{113}

Representative Fisher denounced the state sovereignty idea held by the South. His oath of allegiance was first to the United States and then to the state. As a Bell man, he endorsed the constitution, flag, and laws. The time had come for the use of force, and the Governor should summon the legislature to deal with the needs of the militia.\textsuperscript{114}

Resolutions denied that states had the right to secede at will, contended that armed rebellion must be met with force, and argued that the people were now summoned to coerce their enemies rather than brothers. Those who had promptly volunteered were commended, and citizens were asked to look after the needs of their families. The Governor was asked to convene the legislature. Congressmen from the state who did not endorse the resolutions were requested to resign, and a special resolution urged Bayard to retire from the Senate.\textsuperscript{115}

The response of the Democrats was a Union meeting later in the same month. A citizen of Dover on June 24 wrote to the Philadelphia Press and asked, "Is there no way of inducing Philadelphia to send down a sufficient force to prevent the holding of the Peace Convention at Dover on the 27th?" The editor considered that the meeting was an

\textsuperscript{113}Gazette, June 21, 1861; Republican, June 17, 1861.
\textsuperscript{114}Ibid., June 17, 1861.
\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., June 17, 1861; Delawarean, June 22, 1861.
"insult to the laws cloaked in the guise of peace," and should be suppressed by force. He was alarmed at the planning of treason within two hours of Philadelphia. He feared that the work of the convention would result in a sanguinary civil war, such as was raging in Missouri.\textsuperscript{116} In spite of his pleas, no Philadelphia troops appeared in Dover.

Twenty-five hundred people attended the meeting. Important speeches were delivered by ex-Representative George Whiteley and Thomas F. Bayard. Whiteley thought that all men who favored war were disunionists. The first gun fired at Fort Sumter was the death knell of the Union, and those since were only nails in its coffin. Since the South could not be conquered, its independence should be recognized at once in order to stop "this unconstitutional, unholy, wicked and fratricidal war of King Abraham". He would be glad to lend his right leg to kick Lincoln for violations of the Constitution.\textsuperscript{117}

Bayard's speech was much milder and more conciliatory. In his opinion, the executive was violating the constitution by exceeding his powers. The war was unconstitutional and unjustifiable, and if its object was subjugation of the South, no man now living would see its end. He advocated a peaceful separation. He proposed that the members of the legislature resign, and then the people by voting for a new General Assembly could determine whether they wanted peace or war.

\textsuperscript{116}Delawarean, July 6, 1861. From the Philadelphia \textit{Press}.

\textsuperscript{117}Republican, July 1, 1861; Gazette, July 4, 1861; Delawarean, June 29, 1861.
If the citizens of the state chose war, his father would resign; if they endorsed peace, his father would continue to fight for the rights of Americans in the Senate. 118

Important resolutions were adopted which indicated the feeling of the majority of the Democrats in the state. The two most significant read:

That whilst we deeply deplore the revolution which has severed eleven states from the Union, we prefer Peace to Civil War, and believe that if a reconciliation by peaceful means shall become impossible, the acknowledgment of the independence of the Confederate States is preferable to an attempt to conquer and hold them as subjugated provinces.

That the reign of terror attempted to be inaugurated by the War Party, by denouncing all men as disunionists, secessionists, and traitors, who are opposed to Civil War and, to the palpable and gross violations of the Constitution, committed by the present administration, will not deter us from the expression of our opinions, both privately and publicly.

Other resolutions condemned the erection of a consolidated government upon the ruins of state governments, thanked Delaware's Senators for supporting peace, and suggested that they advocate recognition of the independence of the Confederate states if peace could be obtained in no other way. The motion of the previous meeting that Bayard resign was rejected with scorn and contempt. The meeting saw no necessity for convening the legislature. 119

118 Delaware Gazette, July 4, 1861.
119 Delawarean, June 29, 1861.
The two Union meetings were the best index of feeling in Delaware. The division between Republicans and Democrats was wide and grew wider as the war progressed.

Henry duPont felt that the proceedings of the peace meeting indicated "a strong disunion sentiment among the participators of that meeting, and admonish the Union men of this State, that it is imperative they should be placed in a position, to repel & put down any mad Schemes of Secession, which under certain contingencies, might be undertaken by reckless men, who no doubt have been, and may yet be, acting in unison with those who have precipitated other States into open Rebellion against the Government."\(^{120}\)

Throughout the summer of 1861 Democrats favored a peaceful solution of difficulties. In the Senate Saulsbury and Bayard acted vigorously for peace. Bayard in a speech upon "Executive Usurpation", attacked the grant of powers to Lincoln, who was given the chance to become a Bonaparte or Cromwell.\(^{121}\) Saulsbury in July introduced a resolution to inquire why arms were sent to Delaware, but it was defeated.\(^{122}\) His attempt to have the Senate vote upon joint resolutions, which would settle the difficulties peacefully by amendment,

\(^{120}\text{Henry duPont to S. F. duPont, June 3, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).}\)

\(^{121}\text{Congressional Globe, I (37th Congress, 1st Session, 1860-1861) (Washington, 1861), 12-18.}\)

\(^{122}\text{Ibid., I, 312.}\)
was defeated.\textsuperscript{123} In the debate upon a bill to give the President extraordinary powers to suppress the insurrection, he claimed that the measure made a "dictator of the President of the United States, and that if it passes, there will not be, in fact, a free citizen in any State of the United States." In his opinion, it was "the most dangerous bill that was ever introduced, not only into this body, but into any legislative body of which I have had any knowledge that has ever existed on the face of the earth. I think it clothes the President of the United States, if possible, with greater power than a dictator was ever clothed in any period of Roman history."\textsuperscript{124} The Delawarean and Gazette contended that Saulsbury correctly represented feeling in Delaware by advocating a peaceful adjustment. Such an opinion was approved by two-thirds of his constituents and four-fifths of the citizens outside of Wilmington.\textsuperscript{125}

Appleton's Annual Cyclopedia for 1861 reported that a "large majority" of the people of the state were prepared to sustain the government and defend the Union. As in other parts of the nation, some people thought that the power of the North was insufficient to bring the southern states back into the Union, and if they did return, they must come back voluntarily. Followers of this point of view were divided between those who favored the Confederate states and those who expected that by peace and conciliation the seceding states would be

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., I, 433.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., I, 373.
\textsuperscript{125} Delawarean, August 3, 1861; Gazette, July 26, 1861.
induced to return. Close examination revealed that "in Delaware there were not only many citizens opposed to war, but there were a few who heartily desired the success of the Confederate States."

Years later a prominent Democrat recalled that Delaware never seceded or attempted to secede. She remained true to the Union and believed in it. Yet as a sovereign and law-abiding people, she emphatically demanded that in the preservation of the Union, the Constitution and laws of the country also be preserved. The majority of the people of Delaware favored a peaceful settlement of the controversy between the States, and if that could not be accomplished (rather than to enter into a long, bloody and devastating war), let the Southern States go and form a government of their own.

A review of events during these critical months indicates that the first reaction of most Delawareans to the news of Fort Sumter was that the Union must be preserved at all costs. Upon second thought some Delawareans were willing to let the South go because they feared a long drawn-out war or because they believed that the section was right, a few openly favored the Confederacy, and others preferred war to disunion. The majority of the people in New Castle county were willing to go to war; the majority of the people in lower Delaware opposed it, though they did not advocate the state's joining the Confederacy. These attitudes were conditioned by differences in occupations, in relations with people in nearby states, and in cultural

126 The American Annual Cyclopædia, 1861, I (New York, 1870), 256-257.

127 Cooper, Memoirs of Myself and My Times, 51-52 (Typed manuscript, Historical Society of Delaware).
background. The result was a tug of war within the state between North and South, involving militia companies, political parties, and personal relations. As a dividing state, Delaware faced unhappy times ahead.
Chapter VII

THE MILITARY PROBLEM

The Democrats at the time of the fall of Fort Sumter controlled most of the arms in the state, while the Republicans possessed practically none. Republicans like Dr. Grimshaw, Henry duPont, and George Fisher soon recognized the fact and requested assistance from Washington and Philadelphia. Each side feared what might happen upon a "judgment day" if it was weaponless. The Democrats were prepared to fight to protect their property and persons; the Republicans were ready to resist invasion or insurrection. The latter organized militia companies to balance those already formed by the Democrats, who met the challenge by expanding in new localities.

Lincoln's initial call for soldiers was filled by 775 volunteers after the Governor decided that he did not possess the authority to fulfill the request. Volunteers also furnished Delaware's quota in response to the call for 2000 men for a three-year enlistment. Many Delawareans were hostile to the federal request.

Rival Militia Companies

The immediate military objective of the Democrats after Fort Sumter was to retain the federal arms that they had obtained from the Governor, while the Republicans were interested in setting up rival militia, who would be armed by the federal government. It was reported that sixteen of the militia groups in the state were
secessionists.¹ The Republican program met with marked success, and in almost every town and hamlet "loyal" companies were established.

The predictions of ex-Governor Ross and Dr. Grimshaw in April that armed conflict in the state between Republicans and Democrats was not far off seemed likely to be fulfilled during the summer in lower Delaware.² In Magnolia in Kent county charges were made that cheers greeted every southern advance, that a storekeeper refused to post the President's call for troops, and that thirty rifles had been stolen by secessionists. In a letter to the press indignant residents repudiated the accusations as "malicious falsehoods". The arms had been taken for use by the Magnolia Home Guard. The members of the new company promised to sustain the chief executive in his efforts to maintain the honor of the flag, to bury all partisan feeling, and to fight to protect the state or general government from attack—within the boundaries of Delaware! Apparently the charges and countercharges grew out of a squabble between two militia companies over the use of federal arms issued by the Governor.³ In Smyrna Democrats and Republicans with their separate militia organizations participated in different Fourth of July celebrations, while in Dover the militia companies refused to cooperate in a joint civic celebration.⁴

²Cf. ante, 113-115.
³Republican, May 9, 1861; Gazette, May 24, 1861.
⁴Smyrna Times, July 4, 11, 1861; Delawarean, July 6, 1861.
In Sussex county some citizens in Milford without regard to political affiliations, formed the Diamond Guard in May, because they feared that the state might become a battleground, that lawless predatory bands might appear, and that their homes might be attacked. It soon became known as a secessionist group, the editor of the Peninsula News and Advertiser demanded a purge of officers, and the Scott Home Guard of Union supporters was organized. The latter group was disturbed in drilling by cheers for Jeff Davis and the South.

In Georgetown the Governor ordered that the "Union" company surrender arms to a Democratic group, but the request was refused. The Republican declared that the "Union" companies in Georgetown, Lewes and Seaford would "stand by the Union until Gabriel blows his last trumpet."

In northern Delaware the duPonts were concerned about the defenses of Wilmington and the protection of the nearby powder mills. Henry duPont on April 16 wrote his brother at the Philadelphia navy yard that 800 sets of arms were needed to equip his workmen and to establish a permanent guard against any plotters. He also wished for a force at either Fort Delaware or Wilmington in case the "CSA" made a demonstration against Wilmington. If Virginia joined the Confederacy,

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5Gazette, May 21, 1861.
6Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 2, 1861.
7C. S. Layton to Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, May 1, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).
8Republican, May 6, 1861.
the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore tracks might make a convenient line of defense, and the mills would still be protected.\(^9\)

Henry duPont, the President of duPont Nemours and Company, asked Secretary of War Cameron on April 19 for equipment for three companies. Several companies in Wilmington had been organized, but all the arms in the state were in the possession of the Governor and his friends. In addition, he desired 300 stands of arms for his own men. Ten days later the Adjutant-General referred him to Philadelphia for assistance.\(^10\)

Some aid had already been obtained. Captain S. Frank duPont met a committee from the Wilmington city council by accident in Philadelphia on April 21 and accompanied the members to see General Patterson. The officer was impressed mainly by the necessity of protecting a source of gunpowder, and for that reason provided 400 muskets, of which 88 would be used for the defense of the Brandywine property. Captain duPont added 100 carbines from the navy yard. The General's son thought that protecting the mills was of more importance than guarding the railroad.\(^11\) Local militia defended the property until the end of April, when Pennsylvania troops were stationed at

\(^{9}\)Henry duPont to S. F. duPont, April 16, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

\(^{10}\)Henry duPont to S. Cameron, Secretary of War, April 19, 1861 (Letters received, War Department, 1861, National Archives); War of Rebellion (Washington, 1888) Series I, LI, Pt. 1, 328-329.

\(^{11}\)S. F. duPont to Henry duPont, April 21, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
nearby Brandywine Springs. Additional arms were obtained on April 28 after President Lincoln at an interview with H. W. Davis signed a special order.

Governor Burton was in an unhappy position. After an interview on April 23 Judge Gilpin thought that the chief executive wanted to do right and was gradually having his eyes opened, but that unfavorable influences around him, such as those of Judge Wooten, ex-Governor Ross, and Thomas F. Bayard prevented him from seeing anything but the Democratic point of view. In a letter to the Secretary of War in April, 1861, the Governor expressed the view of most of the Democrats of the state:

In my judgment a large majority of the citizens of this State are opposed to any policy that tend directly or indirectly to coerce the seceded States, and they would therefore be unwilling to be placed in a position in which they might at any time be compelled to wage war against those, whom they have always regarded as Brethren and thereby destroy the possibility of a reunion and a return to that brotherly love and affection which formerly existed between all the members of this once happy confederacy.

The confusion in his mind is well shown by the conflicting directives he issued as commander-in-chief. On May 11, Order Number 1 placed Henry duPont as head of the militia with the rank of Major-

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12Sophie duPont to H. W. Davis, April 29, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

13H. W. Davis to S. F. duPont, April 28, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

14E. W. Gilpin to H. duPont, April 23, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

15Governor William Burton to S. Cameron, April n. d., 1861 (copy) (Burton-Cannon Papers, Delaware State Archives).
General, and Order Number 2 directed that all arms be surrendered to him unless the users were immediately entering the armed services. Although his sole purpose was for the proper supervision of the arms, much excitement followed the issuing of the command; consequently on May 14 he revoked the order. More disturbances resulted, and he issued an explanation on May 18 and appealed to all law-abiding citizens to refrain from violence. Major-General duPont was ordered to confiscate only arms being improperly used.\textsuperscript{16} The disgusted officer wished to resign, but his friends persuaded him to continue.\textsuperscript{17} William Ross praised the conduct of his friend, the Governor, regarding the countermanding order as "a step in the right direction. I hope you will remain firm and not commit our State further in support of the Black Republican war policy", he counseled. "I will die a thousand deaths rather than make war upon our brethren in Virginia."\textsuperscript{18}

Thomas Bayard was the unofficial major-general of the Democratic party. On April 13 a Democratic leader in Sussex county sent him a young man, William James of Laurel, who as "one of the right stripe" wished to join the Confederate army. By the end of the month he was in Dixie:\textsuperscript{19} John F. Cochran, later Governor of Delaware,

\textsuperscript{16}"Circular", May 18, 1861 (Wootten-Burton Papers, Delaware State Archives).

\textsuperscript{17}S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, May 19, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

\textsuperscript{18}William Ross to Governor William Burton, May 22, 1861 (Wootten-Burton Papers, Delaware State Archives).

\textsuperscript{19}J. A. McFerran to T. F. Bayard, April 13, 1861 (Bayard Papers, V, Library of Congress).
asked Bayard in April for 50 guns from any place, as "we are in a
defenceless condition and liable to attack at any time from the
miserable scoundrels in our neighborhood"; he intended to organize
a military company. A plea for help from Odessa in April explained
that Major-General duPont had furnished the war party there and in
Townsend with eighty muskets, but that the Bell and Douglas men had
no arms to offer recruits. Captain N. B. Knight in Camden in July
asked for arms to curb the arrogance and insolence of the "Lincoln
hirelings", a request which apparently was not fulfilled. The
superintendent of the Delaware Military Academy in September com­
plained that a lieutenant from the Delaware Guard had removed all
guns and two brass cannon in violation of a written agreement.
Bayard did nothing about these requests and complaints.

Some people looked to Delaware's new member of the House of
Representatives for aid. The organizer of the Newark Home Guards on
April 23 asked Fisher for arms. His company consisted of eighty men,
but one hundred could have been as easily obtained. Those whom he
suspected of secessionist proclivities he marked with an "X", and
he had placed four "X"'s after the name of Irving Vallandigham, son

20 J. P. Cochran to T. F. Bayard, April 22, 1861 (Bayard Papers,

21 C. W. Watkins to T. F. Bayard, July 13, 1861 (Bayard Papers,
VI, Library of Congress).

22 N. B. Knight to T. F. Bayard, July 18, 1861 (Bayard Papers,
VI, Library of Congress).

23 T. Hyatt to T. F. Bayard, September 14, 1861 (Bayard Papers,
VI, Library of Congress).
of a Delaware College professor and Presbyterian minister, who was the
nephew of a well-known pro-southern Congressman from Ohio. "We are
formed for home protection," he wrote, "but will see that the flag of
our country is maintained in its integrity."24

The militia situation remained unfavorable for supporters of
the administration. Fisher informed Secretary of War Cameron on April
30 that something must be done to alleviate conditions. In view of an
incident in Georgetown, he cautioned: "Do not trust too confidently
upon the patriotism of our Governor. He has just ordered arms that
had been drawn by a volunteer company in the lower part of the state
under the laws of the state to be delivered up. This company is com­
posed of loyal men, while Captain Martin of Seaford who fired salutes
in honor of the capture of Fort Sumpter is allowed to retain his arms
I should not wonder if the Governor's orders shd., if executed or
attempted, bring about a collision."25

By the end of May Union men were encouraged. Almost every
town and village possessed a Union company. The city of Wilmington
by purchase obtained two hundred muskets, fourteen rifles, and twelve
revolvers; one hundred and thirty-five guns were owned by the city at
the beginning of the war, and Governor Patterson had provided four
hundred muskets. Fort Delaware was manned by one hundred men, and

24Edward W. Porter to G. P. Fisher, April 23, 1861 (Enclosure
in letter of G. P. Fisher to S. Cameron, April 30, 1861) (Letters
Received, Secretary of War, 1861, National Archives).

25G. P. Fisher to S. Cameron, April 30, 1861 (Letters Received,
Secretary of War, 1861, National Archives).
its walls were equipped with five ten-inch guns and nine eight-inch guns. The city council recommended that a special session of the legislature be called to consider arming the militia and federal troops, and petitions to this effect were circulated. With Republican and Democratic militia companies in each locality the possibility of hand-to-hand combat, as in Kentucky and Missouri, seemed probable.

The Secretary of War was slow to heed requests for arms. In a review of the situation upon June 3, Major-General duPont counseled that the best way to suppress the spirit of insubordination in the state was to arm the Union companies. During the presidential election a certain "clique" had enrolled volunteer companies and drawn all the arms controlled by the state of any value, some groups holding two or three times the number needed. Through the militia Breckinridge men controlled some neighborhoods, even though they were in a minority. "In every town or village, where the Union men have succeeded in procuring arms," he observed, "a most healthy reaction has taken place, men quitting the Clique companies, and enrolling themselves in the Union companies, the moment they saw the latter in a position to maintain the Law at all hazards." He was anxious to obtain one thousand sets of arms for distribution among the loyal companies.27

26Gazette, May 31, 1861.

27Henry duPont to S. F. duPont, June 3, 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
Early in July, Representative Fisher, Judge Gilpin, and Dr. Grimshaw visited Captain duPont in Washington, where they were engaged in state business, of which probably the most important part dealt with the arms question. Secretary of War Cameron on July 13 issued an order for one thousand sets of arms to Henry duPont, acknowledging that it was fulfilled primarily at Fisher's request. Four hundred were shipped to Kent county, while the other two counties received three hundred apiece. DuPont gave specific instructions that they were to be used only by Union men. The Gazette was infuriated that they were not distributed as usual through the Governor.

The first order of Major-General duPont was issued on July 12; all commanders of volunteers were requested to report the number of weapons and recruits in each company. In Order No. 2 upon the same day, he organized the First Regiment of Delaware Volunteers in New Castle county and equipped it with 636 guns provided by the Wilmington city council. In the fall Second and Third Regiments were formed in

29 War of Rebellion, Series II, I (Washington, 1899), 328.
30 Ibid., Series II, I, 328.
31 Henry duPont to Captain Marshall, July 31, 1861 (Burton-Cannon Papers, Delaware State Archives).
32 Gazette, August 6, 1861.
33 Scharf, History I, 365; Gazette, August 12, 1861.
lower Delaware. These three regiments were to be used only for the
defense of the state and were not to be employed outside its borders. 34

Throughout the summer and fall of 1861, militia companies
drilled and trained for any contingencies within the state. Many
people thought that armed conflict might develop between the Demo­
cratic and Republican companies. Some of the more ardent Union men
enlisted in the United States army. As the war progressed and some
entire companies joined the Northern army, the militia became less
important and not much was heard of it.

Continued insolence and arrogance on the part of alleged se­
cession companies could not be permitted to continue indefinitely.
Thomas M. Rodney, collector of the port of Wilmington, informed
General McClellan on September 28 that the Virginia counties on the
peninsula were filled with well-armed and defiant traitors. "This
feeling extends itself to the neighboring counties of Maryland and
Delaware," he discovered, "and if these Virginia counties are permitted
to hold an armed defiance towards the government of the United States,
we have no right to expect anything else but trouble in our little
State, seeing that our officers including the Governor and United
States Senators are disloyal traitors as any officers at the head of
the Confederate fiends." He recommended a short visit from some of
"the four thousand peacemakers" from Fortress Monroe. 35


35 T. M. Rodney to General McClellan, September 28, 1861,
(T. M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
General Dix, who was in charge of the Middle Department, informed Colonel Lockwood in Wilmington on October 3 that the customs' inspector in Seaford reported that arms and equipment for a company of cavalry had been assembled by Edward Martin and were soon to be shipped to Virginia. The Colonel on October 9 was advised to disarm the secessionists within the state if he could find legal authority in Delaware to do so, and on October 11 he was instructed to stop the forwarding of supplies to the Confederacy from Salisbury. He was authorized to use the steamer Balloon to carry out his orders.

A company of the Second Delaware Regiment arrived in Seaford on October 20, confiscated most of the arms in the possession of Martin's company, and swore him to allegiance. Then a visit was paid to Georgetown, where most of the weapons belonging to Charles R. Paynter's company were seized, and the captain took an oath of allegiance. At Laurel four men who had concealed a government balloon were arrested and held prisoners in Fort McHenry or Fort Warren for about a month. The secession hotbed of Willow Grove in Kent county was searched, equipment belonging to a pro-southern company appropriated, and Captain Whitley Meredith imprisoned in Salisbury for a few days until he agreed to uphold the federal government. Within six days

36 General Dix to Brigadier-General Lockwood, October 3, 1861, (Letters Sent, 1861, Middle Department, War Department, National Archives).

37 General Dix to Brigadier-General Lockwood, October 9, 11, 1861, (Letters Sent, 1861, Middle Department, War Department, National Archives).
550 muskets, 100 rifles, 100 carbines, 70 sabres, 50 pistols, and two pieces of cannon had been removed from the control of secessionists. A company from a Maryland regiment was sent to Wilmington in November. It confiscated sixty-five rifles from Company "A" of the Delaware Guards and sixty-eight guns and two cannon from Company "B". A search at New Castle uncovered thirty-two rifles and one cannon. Unionists breathed a sigh of relief at the disarming of these groups alleged to be sympathetic with the South.

Delaware Complies with Lincoln’s Requests for Troops

How Governor Burton would reply to Lincoln’s call for troops after Fort Sumter was uncertain. Henry duPont soon heard that the request would be refused, though volunteering would be encouraged. Major-General Patterson in Pennsylvania on April 25 wrote Secretary of War Cameron that the Governor would not honor the requisition and asked for permission to raise one or more regiments of loyal Delawareans. This favor was granted on April 28. Governor Burton on April 25 in a letter to the Secretary of War wrote that the laws of Delaware did not allow him to place the militia under federal control,

38 Journal, October 22, 25, 29, 1861; Gazette, October 25, November 1, 1861.

39 Journal, November 16, 1861.

40 Henry duPont to S. C. Cameron, Secretary of War, April 19, 1861, War of Rebellion, Series I, II, Pt. 1 (Washington, 1899), 328.

41 R. Patterson to S. C. Cameron, Secretary of War, April 25, 1861, Ibid., Series I, II, Pt. 1, 350.
but he would urge that such companies volunteer their services.\textsuperscript{42} Major Charles Ruff on April 29 informed Burton that he was prepared to receive recruits in Wilmington, and on May 1 the Governor issued a proclamation directing those companies who wished to enlist, to report.\textsuperscript{43}

At a meeting of the officers of the seven companies in the city on April 30 in the Wilmington Institute it was discovered that 549 men were enrolled in local groups, while 231 more were needed to comprise a regiment. By May 4, 238 men had been officially recruited.\textsuperscript{44} Companies A and B were formed from members of the Bell and Everett campaign clubs, Company C was organized by Joseph M. Barr, editor of the Commonwealth and former Constitutional Unionist, while Company D came from western Kent county. Several other companies from all parts of the state were eventually added. The men drilled upon the New Castle county fair grounds. The first full-dress parade was held in Wilmington on May 26.\textsuperscript{45}

When the recruits were ordered off to guard the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad line on May 28, an enormous crowd gathered at the depot to witness the departure. Several ladies

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\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Governor William Burton to S. C. Cameron, Secretary of War, April 25, 1861, Ibid., Series III, I, 11h.}

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Republican, May 6, 1861.}

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid., May 6, 1861.}

\textsuperscript{45}\textit{William P. Seville, History of the First Regiment, Delaware Volunteers. (Papers of the Historical Society of Delaware, V, Wilmington, 1884), 11-14.}
\end{flushright}
fainted, and touching scenes were enacted as father and son, husband and wife, and sweethearts parted. The stars and stripes were hung from almost every house along the track. Poorly clothed, provisioned, and drilled, the recruits were in excellent spirits and returned cheer-after cheer for the Union "with a will and determination that showed they were ready to do and dare, should occasion ever require their presence before the enemy." Thus did the First Delaware Volunteer Infantry go off to war.

After three months of service in patrol duty, the first five companies were disbanded in Wilmington in early August. Officers received an average of $60 to $80 in pay, and privates, $52. A total of $19,500 was distributed. Most of the 775 volunteers reenlisted for three years, and by special permission they were permitted to call themselves the First Delaware Regiment, although another group had already started to organize during their absence. In September the remnants of the three-months volunteers with some new recruits reported to Camp Brandywine, and in October departed for Fortress Monroe.

Lincoln issued a call for 400,000 men in May. Delaware's quota was 2,000 and Governor Burton in a proclamation formally encouraged citizens to volunteer their services. To the disgust of Republicans,

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46Gazette, May 31, 1861.
47Journal, August 9, 1861.
48Seville, History of the First Regiment, 24-27.
49Seville, Ibid., 10.
the Governor refused to summon the legislature to consider offering bounties; as a result the Second Delaware Regiment was almost five months in being organized and was eventually filled out with Pennsylvanians. The troops assembled at Camp Andrews near Hare's Corner in New Castle county, and left for Fortress Monroe on October 20.50

At the end of the year, Unionists could view with pride the military record of the state. Lincoln's demands for troops had been met, in spite of the opposition of many Democrats. The Secretary of War in his annual report credited the state with 775 three-month volunteers and 2,000 three-year recruits. In his opinion, the state faced insurrection in July, but "the good sense and patriotism of the people have triumphed over the unholy schemes of traitors." So satisfactory were conditions that he suggested the possibility of Delaware's annexing Virginia and Maryland counties on the peninsula.51

In his message to Congress in December, Lincoln mentioned the state in such a way that Delawareans never forgot his words. Referring to the Mason and Dixon line, he said, "South of the line, noble little Delaware led off right from the first."52

50Scharf, History, I, 367.
51Journal, December 6, 1861; Delawarean, December 14, 1861.
52Ibid., December 7, 1861.
The first reaction of Delawareans to Fort Sumter was that the Union must be preserved at all costs. While virtually everyone preferred a peaceful adjustment through amendments, Congress, or conventions, in time of war some advocated the use of force and others were willing to let the South go. The news of Bull Run made many people realize that a state of war existed—however unwelcome—and the gaps between friends and enemies of the South became wider in each community.

The war affected every phase of life—friendships, religion, business, and the pursuits of day-to-day living. Sympathizers with the South smuggled goods, recruited soldiers, and provided military intelligence for the Confederacy. Friends of the North supervised the filling of Delaware's military quota, disarmed "secession" militia, and reported suspicious activities to Washington. Fears, doubts, and worries assailed the minds of political leaders in the last months of 1861.

Division in Feeling

Ties of friendship were breaking. A young schoolmaster at Camden in Kent county wrote his sweetheart in Maryland on July 1, "Lou, there is a great deal of excitement here at this time. People
are almost forgetting their former relations and are heard to use
threats towards their former friendships, which almost causes one
to think he is not in a civilized but barbarous community.\(^1\)

A prominent Democrat, who spent his youth in Camden, recalled
at a later time that tensions appeared in the village after Fort
Sumter and that they sharpened after Bull Run. As he remembered,

At first we all lived as I have said, peacefully and
happily together. We all deplored the beginning of the
war and the firing of the confederate guns on Fort Sumter,
although our social relations were not much disturbed
thereby. The real question, as we then understood it,
was the integrity and preservation of the union, and we
talked about it and discussed it without personal bitter­
ness of feeling. But, when, in a short time thereafter,
the purposes of Mr. Lincoln and his administration were
disclosed, the lines were tightly drawn, not only in little
Camden, but through the entire country. Their open and
flagrant violations of the constitution and laws of the
United States and the commission of the most arbitrary and
tyrrannous acts in the prosecution of the war with the avowed
purpose of liberating the slaves of the south were more than
any true lover of his country could stand, without emphatic
protest, if nothing more. These acts at the time, coming
so suddenly upon us, caused a marked and almost total dis­
association of Democrats and Republicans--both old and young.

This [Battle of Bull Run] was the last straw upon the
camel's back. The boys, as well as the men, the grown up
women as well as the young girls of my boyhood days, ar­
rayed themselves against each other in bitter hostility,
and it was sometimes said, one half of the town did not
speak or associate with the other half. Our pleasant
little social gatherings were doomed and apparently ended
for all time. Most of the leading boys and young men of
the town were Democrats and in full sympathy with the South,
whose sovereign rights were being destroyed and taken away
from them.\(^2\)

\(^1\)Thomas Reynolds to Louisa J. Seward, July 1, 1861 (Reynolds
Letters, University of Delaware).

\(^2\)A. B. Cooper, Memoirs of Myself and My Times, 24, 27
(Typewritten Manuscript, Historical Society of Delaware).
Many families were divided in sympathy. One resident in Wilmington had two sons in the rebel army and two in the Union army. Another citizen had both his sons in the secession forces. Two Delawareans, who had been serving a term in a Virginia prison, were freed after the outbreak of the war and became captains in a Virginia regiment. The candidate of the People's Party for Governor in 1858, who had moved South after his defeat, was appointed a Confederate postmaster in Virginia. Many prominent families had relatives in the South. The duPonts had distant cousins in South Carolina, the Houston in Sussex county received letters from relatives in Missouri throughout the war, and some members of Bishop Johns family in New Castle had married Virginians. By June, 1861, a resident of New Castle found that political differences among persons at a party could make an evening pass "uncomfortably and tediously." The war pulled at the heartstrings of many Delawareans having friends and relatives in the South.

An example of tension in family relationships is a letter from Alfred Wootten to his father on May 25, 1861. Young Wootten, who had married the daughter of Governor Burton, was Attorney-General, and Judge Edward Wootten was said to have more influence over Burton than

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3 Smyrna Times, December 12, 1861.
4 Gazette, September 3, 1861.
5 Mrs. S. F. duPont to S. F. duPont, April 20, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation); William B. Read, Diary, June 28, 1861. (Private Possession); Houston Letters, et passim (Private Possession).
anyone else. Writing from Wilmington, the young man informed his father that he loved him, but disagreed with his political principles. "It has ever been the proclaimed principles of the Democratic party that the ballot box should be the index of the will of the people," he wrote, "and I believe from the bottom of my soul, that to say the least of it, it would be a repudiation of the old faith—now to refuse to bow, though reluctantly—to the will of the majority." He had this objective in mind:

What I have tried to avoid is this: that the State of Delaware should even have a suspicion resting upon her, knowing the effect that suspicion will have upon her interests and perpetuity. I know what is to become of every man who now falters to defend this Government to the farthest extent, and what has been my only desire is that you should assist to place this State in the foremost position. I think you will admit there is no use pushing against the great tide of public opinion, and it certainly is running (and running rightly too) in favor of the friends of the Country.

At 11 o'clock in the evening he added a long postscript. News had arrived in Wilmington that the Governor had refused to follow a recommendation of Major-General Henry A. duPont that the members of all militia companies should be required to take an oath of allegiance. Judge Wootten was accused of having given Burton this advice and of being responsible for the course that the state was taking. The Saulsburys and Bayards offered no guidance in the crisis. The "totally unprincipled" Saulsburys were "trying to float upon the river of public life, pleasing both of its banks, in the hope that whichever turns out to be the recipient of success, they can reply, 'We coincide with you.'" His father had placed Bayard in the Senate; now the Bayards
courted the Republicans socially and treated "the child of the man who has placed him where he is with silent contempt." The Attorney-General emphasized that his "whole object has been to induce both you and Dr. Burton to take such a position as when the corroding tooth of time witnesses the inevitable doom of the Traitor not even the shadow of suspicion shall fall upon your escutcheons."^6

A glance at a map will show that Delaware was in a position to contribute aid to the Confederacy. Supplies, information, and medicine were shipped to Sussex county and adjacent areas in Maryland, and then smuggled to Virginia by water. The Nanticoke River, which led into Chesapeake Bay from Sussex county, was a center of the traffic. An "underground railroad" transported recruits to the Confederacy. Some persons and places became notorious from their participation in smuggling.

Thomas M. Rodney, collector of the port of Wilmington, appointed agents in many towns to report suspicious activities, but their efforts were futile. "I am satisfied that goods, contrabands, and supplies for the rebellious Virginians pass daily over this road," wrote a resident of Dover in June about the Delaware Railroad. A steady stream of merchandise was forwarded to Seaford and Salisbury, Maryland, then carried down the Nanticoke or Wicomico Rivers, and finally moved to Virginia. When a bag of wheat was opened at Seaford, it contained cartridges and gunpowder.7 The President of

^6Alfred Wootten to Edward Wootten, May 25, 1861 (Burton-Wootten Papers, Delaware State Archives).

7Delawarean, June 29, 1861.
the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad on May 6 complained to the express agent in Philadelphia that "the Virginians smuggled pistols and percussion caps over the Delaware Railroad" and that the Wilmington agent boasted that he could furnish such articles to anyone on the peninsula. The Wilmington employee declared that he carefully checked all shipments and that the charge was untrue.  

After talking to the mail clerk on the Delaware Railroad, Dr. A. H. Grimshaw informed the Secretary of Navy on June 21, "I believe that constant communication is carried on through the navigable waters of Delaware and Maryland, and that I could carry any material I chose from Philadelphia to Virginia at any time." He had telegraphed Baltimore authorities that a lady from Dover was on her way to that city to obtain transportation to Virginia where her husband was in the rebel army; he feared that she possessed valuable information.  

An informant from Tussoky, Maryland, near the Chesapeake wrote the inspector at Seaford on September 15 that during the past six weeks several "clubs" of men from Cambridge, Maryland, had been driven to the Virginia counties in a double carriage by a father and son. He knew that communication with Virginia

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9 A. H. Grimshaw to G. Welles, Secretary of Navy, June 21, 1861, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Series I, V, (Washington, 1897), 746.
was carried on at all times by water. Recently a boat loaded with guns had been captured in the Bay.\textsuperscript{10} The collector of customs in Baltimore forwarded Rodney a letter from two informants in September; it revealed that "the first and most important route" of the traffic was from Baltimore to Wilmington, then via the Delaware Railroad to Seaford, from which port the Chesapeake Bay was easily accessible. Large quantities of quinine had been shipped to Seaford in fruit cans.\textsuperscript{11}

Federal officials had little success in checking the traffic. The inspector at Seaford in July seized two sloops in the Nanticoke River. One hailed from Baltimore and was loaded with hay for Portsmouth, Virginia, while the other had sailed from Philadelphia and was loaded with 500 kegs of nails, pots, and ovens for Petersburg, Virginia.\textsuperscript{12} Five boxes of Indian rubber coats at Seaford and two trunks of marine compasses at Smyrna were confiscated in August.\textsuperscript{13}

The number of Delawareans who enlisted in the rebel army is a matter of dispute. Since they were not numerous enough to form a

\textsuperscript{10}John S. Smith to J. L. Bacon, September 15, 1861 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

\textsuperscript{11}J. Horner and G. Barrett to Captain Nones, September 7, 1861 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

\textsuperscript{12}W. Jones to T. M. Rodney, July 15, 1861 and T. M. Rodney to S. P. Chase, Secretary of Treasury, July 17, 1861 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

\textsuperscript{13}T. M. Rodney to S. P. Chase, Secretary of Treasury, August 19, 1861 (copy) and T. M. Rodney to E. G. Bradford, Attorney-General of Delaware, August 9, 1861 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
separate regiment, it is difficult to establish a satisfactory total. Ex-Governor Ross wrote two friends on May 23 that his son Caleb and three other young men had gone to Baltimore to enlist. "Of course I shall be charged with having sent him and every other young man who may leave the county," he declared. "For that reason I had better leave the country for a while." Within a month he had sailed for Europe. His son died from typhoid fever contracted while serving in the Confederate army in Virginia in September. \(^{14}\) Several youths left Georgetown in July to enlist. \(^{15}\) The rebel government on August 8 set up a recruiting office to encourage enlistments from the border states, including Delaware. \(^{16}\) Two bold secessionists in August entered a tavern in Wilmington and asked for assistance in recruiting; the outraged proprietor threw them out. \(^{17}\) Two rebel officers visited Kent county in September to seek enlistments. \(^{18}\) There is no reason to believe that the number from Delaware who joined the Southern forces in 1861 was large.

\(^{14}\) William Ross to E. Wootten, May 23, 1861 (Burton-Wootten Letters, Delaware State Archives); Peninsular News and Advertiser, November 8, 1861. The four men were William H. James of Laurel, and Charles Rust, Thomas Horsey, and Caleb Ross of Seaford, all of whom were the sons of prominent Democrats.

\(^{15}\) Delaware Journal, July 30, 1861. From the Peninsular News and Advertiser. The only one mentioned by name was Burton C. Barker.


\(^{17}\) Republican, July 25, 1861.

\(^{18}\) J. R. Dickerson to T. M. Rodney, September 18, 1861 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
Delawareans were much more inclined to express their sympathy for the South by talking loudly of southern rights than by enlisting. In New Castle county Newark was said to be a "hotbed of secession," and the Newark Home Guards, in new gray uniforms with black trim, administered an oath of allegiance to several citizens.\(^1\) A mob threatened to destroy the Gazette, but the intervention of the Mayor and United States Marshal saved the editor and office from harm.\(^2\) Thomas Rodney informed the Secretary of the Treasury in September that a "dark secessionist" with the aid of former Representative George Whiteley had established a store upon a government pier in Wilmington; he feared that some dastardly plot was in progress.\(^3\) After Bull Run secessionists in New Castle drank toasts to the enrichment of the soil of Virginia by the flesh and blood of every volunteer and to the liberation of Delaware from Yankee control.\(^4\) A woman school teacher in St. George's encouraged her pupils to cheer for the Confederacy and Jeff Davis. After a resident complained, her father assaulted him, and the case was brought before a justice of the peace.\(^5\)

\(^1\)Republican, May 30, 1861.

\(^2\)Gazette, August 27, 1861.

\(^3\)T. M. Rodney to S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, September 21, 1861 (copy) (T. M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

\(^4\)Republican, July 25, 1861.

\(^5\)Ibid., August 5, 1861.
Reports about secession tendencies in Kent county were alarming and persistent. A Wilmington resident on June 1 rejoiced to hear that at last a few flags had been hung out in Smyrna and hoped that Dover might follow the example.24 The editor of the Peninsular News and Advertiser noted that Kitt's Hammock was "the chief resort of the treason-mongers and secessionists in Kent county" and that "a hotbed of secession" existed in Willow Grove and Hazletville close to the Maryland border.25 Whiteley Meredith drilled a company of sixty men openly sympathetic with the Confederacy in Willow Grove.26 An unsigned letter was sent to the United States Marshal with the information that if he visited Kitt's Hammock, Hazletville, or Whiteleysburg, he should bring his coffin and grave digger with him. It would take half of "Abe's nigger army" to arrest anyone there, and eventually Jeff Davis' army was "bound to shine".27 A secession flag was raised at Whiteleysburg in September.28 Governor Burton nominated Dr. James C. Bird of Dover, a notorious secession sympathizer, as an officer in the Second Delaware Regiment. Representative Fisher asked Dr. Grimshaw of Wilmington to join him in Washington to fight the appointment, since it would elevate the secessionists and dispirit the Unionists. "For

24 Anna Brinckle to Mrs. S. F. duPont, June 1, 1861 (Typed Brinckle Letters, Historical Society of Delaware).
25 Peninsular News and Advertiser, September 13, 20, 1861.
26 Republican, September 16, 1861.
27 Ibid., October 14, 1861.
28 Ibid., September 12, 1861.
Heaven's sake and for Humanities' sake," he begged, "do not permit such a blunder to be made." The Secretary of War refused to grant the commission. In Magnolia "traitors" stole thirty sets of arms and terrorized Negroes in nocturnal visits; in one incident a Negro was wounded and the dog of another killed. Friends of the Union were disturbed by the open displays of southern feeling.

Sussex county also sympathized with the southern states to some extent. The editor of the Georgetown Messenger felt by early August that he had been deceived about the attachment of the majority of the inhabitants to the Union. He now believed that a large proportion of the inhabitants of the county favored the rebels and observed much rejoicing over the defeat of northern troops. The customs inspector in Seaford reported the existence of a substantial number of "traitors", who were "satellites" of Senator Bayard. He hoped that they would dare to raise a Palmetto flag; then "we will 'give 'em fits'." Edward L. Martin of Seaford, captain of the local militia company and the person responsible for firing guns in honor of

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29 Governor W. Burton to S. C. Cameron, Secretary of War, August 2, 1861 (Letters Received, 1861, War Department, National Archives); G. P. Fisher to A. H. Grimshaw, September 7, 1861 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University); Republican, August 12, 1861.

30 Gazette, May 21, 1861; Delawarean, May 25, 1861.

31 Delaware Journal, August 2, 1861; Smyrna Times, August 8, 1861. Both newspapers reprinted an article from the Georgetown Messenger.

the seizure of Fort Sumter, was alleged to be the ringleader of recruiting and smuggling. A large shipment of arms arrived by sloop at Milton for Ex-Governor Ross in June, and it was said that after being moved to his home near Seaford they were to be sent to Virginia. In Laurel the customs inspector was annoyed by demonstrations of southern feeling, especially as his cousin was active in supporting the rebels. When a keg of gunpowder for a man in Laurel arrived by boat in Broad Creek, the inspector confiscated the barrel; Senator Willard Saulsbury protested vigorously against the seizure of property belonging to an American citizen and threatened that the official might be prosecuted. In Milford the drills of a Union company were disturbed by cheers for the South. Thus there was abundant evidence in lower Delaware that the South had many friends.

Political feeling extended even to religion. Bishop Alfred Lee of the Anglican church was a leader in the northern cause, but clergymen and congregations of the denomination were not unanimous in

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33Republican, April 22, 1861.

34Republican, June 6, 1861; Delawarean, June 8, 1861. Republican newspapers insisted that such a shipment had arrived in Milton, while the Democratic press denied the story. Some people thought that Ross left for Europe shortly thereafter because he feared that he might be imprisoned by the federal government.

35J. L. Bacon to T. M. Rodney, September 16, 1861 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).


37Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 2, 1861.
supporting him. After Lincoln's inauguration an Episcopalian minister in Seaford refused to read the prayer for the President unless directed by the vestrymen and Bishop. After his compliance was ordered by the Bishop, he resigned and departed for Canada in May. A fellow cleric met him in the Wilmington depot prattling loudly in favor of the South and rebel victories. 38 John Coleman, who was the brother of a Delaware clergyman and lived in St. Louis, joined the rebel army as a chaplain; an Episcopalian minister in Delaware found the explanation in "intemperance". 39 Special financial assistance was given the rector of the Dover church, "his Union principles having led to the diminution of his salary," and he soon resigned. His Thanksgiving sermon, which was printed in a Republican newspaper, showed why he was unacceptable to many people in his congregation. He rejoiced that the answer to the ordinance of secession was the tramp of armed men and the roar of cannon. In the abstract, war was wrong, but in a good and righteous cause it was a waking up of the wrath of God and a going forth of the people to battle. The defeats thus far had only provided the nation with needed discipline, and soon victories and peace could be expected. The war would weld the thirty-four states into a solid unit. 40 At a meeting of the diocese in Dover in June,


the Bishop preached a patriotic sermon, but the convention took no official notice of the war. A layman, who belonged to the "peace at any rate class", introduced a motion to have a prayer meeting, but it was tabled, partly due to the dislike of argument and partly to fear of having to remain another day in session.11

The Presbyterian church contained many patriotic clergymen. At a meeting of the Wilmington Presbytery in Middletown in September, the Reverend George Wiswell of Wilmington introduced resolutions, which were unanimously adopted. The existence of a civil war, which had originated from the acts of reckless and unprincipled men, was regretted, but since they saw no way to an honorable peace except through war, they declared their most ardent and unswerving attachment to the Union. One resolution read "that we believe every man at this time is either a friend or foe to his country, that there is no such thing as neutrality, and that disloyalty in covertly or openly, directly or indirectly, aiding or abetting the enemies of our government is abhorrent, and in every way to be deprecated."12 The pastor of the Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church preached a patriotic sermon in September, which aroused the hostility of some members of his congregation. He pointed out that the congregation should pray for the success of the Union army, for Lincoln was ordained by God to lead the


12Minutes of the Wilmington Presbytery, September 25, 1861 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pa.).
nation. Since ours was a good government, God was on the northern side in the struggle. To his sermon notes, the minister added this postscript, "This sermon caused great consternation. Southern sympathizers seceded from the church, and there was kept alive a personal antagonism during my pastorate of eleven years in Lower Brandywine, Delaware."\(^3\)

Other denominations also faced the problem of members and ministers, who were southern sympathizers. In Milford several members of the Methodist church withdrew when the pastor preached a patriotic sermon, and some refused to subscribe to his salary.\(^4\) Prior to the war there had been discussion about separating the Methodist churches on the peninsula from the Philadelphia conference, but Union men decided that patriotism would be reinforced by affiliation with northern churches.\(^5\) Lincoln is supposed to have said about the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Wilmington, "That one, little, loyal clear-headed Baptist minister of Wilmington, James S. Dickerson, \(^3\) Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church, Minutes, September 26, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware). Probably one of the members offended was James Delplain, a prominent Democrat. The Session minutes for 1861 reveal that he asked the elders to publish an article refuting charges that his family favored the rebels. The Session refused on the grounds that the charges against Delplain in a newspaper did not mention his name and that further publicity was undesirable.

\(^4\) Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 2, 1861.

\(^5\) Delawarean, February 16, 1861.
saved Delaware to the Union. Anna Ferris could "scarcely listen" to a peace talk delivered in Friends' Quarterly Meeting in April.

A Wilmington resident wrote a navy officer that

I have not much faith in the antifighting proprieties of many of our Quaker friends. It is a very good excuse to avoid paying considerable money towards the war, even towards supporting the wives and children that they have left. But as they have done all they could to hiss on the fight, I have not much faith in their conscientious scruples, & it is now no uncommon sight to see some stiff old Quaker Ladies knitting Mittens for the poor soldiers, which have a place for the forefinger, so they can pull a trigger.

Denominational actions reflected the political feelings of their members. New Castle Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopalians were usually supporters of the Union, while those in lower Delaware sympathized with the South.

The Routine of Life Continues

While there was much excitement in Delaware connected with the war in the last months of 1861, the ordinary activities of life continued. People were interested in such things as earning a living, the Wilmington municipal election, and the fall session of the legislature. So little was everyday life disturbed by the war that some

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46 Historical Discourse and the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Second Baptist Church, Wilmington, Delaware (Wilmington, 1885), 10; Emma R. Dickerson, James Stokes Dickerson, Memories of His Life (New York, 1879), 108.

47 Anna Ferris, Diary, April 30, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

48 J. Tatnall to J. P. Gillis, November 17, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
observers found almost no evidence of its effects. Union men waited impatiently for the northern armies to advance.

Disruptions in business that began after the election of Lincoln continued throughout the spring and summer of 1861. The Gazette placed the blame upon the fear of the Republican administration, while the Republican viewed the secession movement as the cause of the troubles.⁴⁹ Anna Ferris noted in May that "all who are in business at all feel the pressure, & those who have been considered beyond the reach of disasters of this kind, suffer with the rest."⁵⁰ The Gazette regarded business as "completely prostrated" in Wilmington in May and asked if reduced wages, unemployed mechanics, closed factories, and deserted shops were a sample of the "splendid times" promised by Lincoln.⁵¹ Even the Republican admitted that building operations were at a standstill in Wilmington and New Castle; carpenters, bricklayers, painters, and laborers could not find employment. Merchants complained of bad times and lack of customers.⁵² In Odessa merchants and mechanics thought the times "dull" for business.⁵³ A Kent county resident in July reported that business was

⁴⁹ Republican, June 6, 1861; Gazette, June 25, 1861.
⁵⁰ Anna Ferris, Diary, May 18, 1861 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
⁵¹ Gazette, May 2, June 25, 1861.
⁵² Republican, June 6, July 11, 1861.
⁵³ Ibid., August 22, 1861.
"much depressed". In Milford there was much unemployment, and the shipyards were almost idle. The duPont Company "lost by secession" $150,000.

By fall there was a definite upswing, due to the placing of government contracts and to the demand for grain. One carriage manufacturer in Wilmington in June received a contract for seventy-two ambulances; subcontracts were let for watercasks, axles, springs, and lumber; three hundred persons benefited from the order. In July various manufacturers in Wilmington were awarded contracts for one hundred baggage wagons, 1,000 tents, 1,200 sets of harness, and seventy-two additional ambulances. Business boomed to such an extent that the editor of the Republican attacked profiteers who charged exorbitant prices to the government and who sold damaged provisions and "shoddy" clothing to volunteers. One Wilmington industrialist completed 704 wagons for the government in September, and another began the manufacture of 10,000 pairs of shoes. With the assistance of George Fisher, Pusey, Jones, and Company received a contract of $100,000 for

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54 Gazette, July 26, 1861; Peninsular News and Advertiser, August 9, 1861.


56 Gazette, June 21, 1861.

57 Ibid., July 19, 1861; Republican, August 1, 1861.

58 Ibid., July 29, 1861. The editorial was entitled "Selfishness".
equipping the sloop of war Juanita. Another firm launched a government gunboat in October, and had five more under construction. A cloth manufacturer in Newark in July received an order from the government for 80,000 yards of woolens; soon he owned eight small factories, which worked day and night upon government contracts for yard goods and blankets.

Lower Delaware also benefited from the prosperous times. Farmers profited from the high prices for wheat, and reported that there was a scarcity of labor. In the winter of 1860 some grain merchants in Frederica in Kent county had gone into bankruptcy; in the fall of 1861 more grain was sold there than ever before. By September the Milford shipyards were booming, and all mechanics in the vicinity were employed there or at the Philadelphia navy yard. Unquestioningly the war brought prosperity to almost all occupations.

An indication of the type of organization that might be attempted in the next state and congressional election was provided in the Wilmington municipal election in September. Friends of the Union

59Journal, October 1, 1861; Gazette, September 6, 1861.
60Gazette, October 4, 1861.
61Ibid., July 12, November 8, 1861; Richard Edwards, ed., Industries of Wilmington (Wilmington, 1880), 171.
62Delawarean, October 5, 1861.
63Republican, August 19, 1861; Peninsular News and Advertiser, September 6, 1861.
64Ibid., September 24, 1861.
formed a political party from members of all factions in July. The only questions asked about candidates were their capability and attitude towards the Union.\footcite{5} The result was a great victory. Dr. Grimshaw wired Lincoln, "The unconditional Union city ticket is carried by 700 majority. Every ward."\footcite{6} The type of party was a forecast of things to come.

Now that the initial excitement connected with the beginning of the war had died down, Delaware seemed far removed from the battlefields. The editor of the Delawarean observed in September, "So far as our state is concerned, were it not for an unusual stagnation of business, the newspapers, and the occasional appearance of a few U. S. soldiers, we would scarcely be aware that war had laid its devastating hand upon our fair country."\footcite{7} A Wilmington citizen wrote in December:

Here we hold the even tenor of our way. We know nothing of war, but what is beneficial. I hear of no want of employment among the poor. I went along the market carts yesterday morning early. The quantity of poultry exceeded anything I saw last winter .... About 11 o'clock I passed along again—everything sold out. Everyone seemed pleased. Full markets full demand—money plentiful—banks full of specie, prefer paying out gold to notes—Hey! What would be said of this in Dixieland—poor devils down there, shinplasters at 30 percent, discount banknotes cut up in Virginia in halves, quarters, and eights to make change.\footcite{8}

\footcite{5}Delaware Journal, July 19, 1861; Republican, August 29, 1861.
\footcite{6}A. H. Grimshaw to A. Lincoln, President of the United States, September 3, 1861 (Lincoln Collection, Library of Congress).
\footcite{7}Delawarean, September 14, 1861.
\footcite{8}J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, December 5, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
Union men waited impatiently for military victories. A Wilmington Republican wrote Commander Gillis in October,

The whole proceedings at Washington is a mistery [sic] to me. With an overwhelming force, McClellan seems to be satisfied to rest secure in his inactivity, while Kentucky and Missouri are in the agonies of death. How is it that everywhere the rebels out number our men, beating us in activity and numbers, shut out by the blockade from all supplies, without money, without hospital stores, sulphur, saltpetre, coffee, leather, &c.

The amount of troops passing here is incredible. I ascertained this morning at our depot that during the last fourteen days, 24,000 went South and 2,000 North, the latter to New York to embark with the expedition South. The passage of troops and munitions has ceased to excite curiosity and were it not for a few soldiers about our streets, all is as quiet here as if we were in profound peace.

What does it mean: Is it a trial whose bread and pork will fail first? It seems so.69

A month later he became excited over the naval victory off Fort Beaufort, especially as Captain S. F. duPont and Commander Gillis had both taken part in the action. "Hurra for little Delaware," he wrote. "DuPont commanded, and Gillis was there. Hurra, hurra, hurra. For the first time in history has a steam marine encountered batteries." He predicted that Delaware would "burst her breeches if her sons go on at this rate", though it remained a "mistery" why McClellan remained sleeping with 200,000 men upon the banks of the Potomac.70

69J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, October 5, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

70J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, November 18, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
Governor Burton called an extra session of the legislature on November 25 to consider the federal demand for a direct tax. States were given the alternative of permitting the general government to collect it, or of authorizing state officials to perform the duty at a saving of fifteen percent. Some members of the People's Party wished to reprimand Senators Bayard and Saulsbury. A Wilmington Republican believed that the "real" purpose was to revive lotteries. The legislature met for two days and postponed all action until January.71

The year dragged to a close in the midst of gloom. Bull Run had indicated that the struggle would last longer than a few weeks, and communities divided into opposing camps. A few Delawearans were willing to aid the Confederacy by enlisting, smuggling, and furnishing military intelligence, but most southern sympathizers would not go beyond criticizing the Lincoln administration. Union men were encouraged by having thwarted all efforts to lead the state into the Confederacy, by the establishment of loyal militia in each locality, and by the enrollment of many men in the northern armies. Delaware was remote from the fields of battle, but those with friends and relatives in southern or northern armies felt deeply concerned. It had been an unhappy and difficult year, and no prospects of peace were in sight.

71Journal of the House of Representatives, 1861, (Dover, 1861) 11-17; J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, October 27, 1861 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
Chapter IX

LINCOLN'S EMANCIPATION PLAN FOR DELAWARE
AND POLITICAL FEELING IN 1862

Politically much of interest happened in Delaware in 1862. Lincoln proposed a plan of compensated emancipation for the state, but lack of legislative support defeated it. Bitter feeling between friends and enemies of the South and North was displayed in every personal contact. Democrats were indignant at the disarming of "secession" militia and at the demands for the removal of Senators Bayard and Saulsbury. Impatiently the Republicans clamored for victories which were slow in coming.

Lincoln's Proposed Plan

Postmaster-General Blair summoned Representative George Fisher to Washington by telegraph on November 24 upon urgent business. The President in a long interview with Fisher suggested a plan of compensated emancipation for Delaware and urged that the legislature then in session consider it. He recommended that the federal government buy the slaves at $300 apiece. Fisher held out for $500; any difference between the actual and real value of the slaves was to be used for public improvements and education. The President finally agreed and told him to consult the assistant Secretary of War about the terms. He wished to talk with a Delaware slave owner.¹

Fisher arranged for Benjamin Burton, a Republican of Indian River Hundred in Sussex county, to go to Washington. As the owner of twenty-eight slaves, he was the largest slave holder in the state. In the interview Burton asked the President whether he was sure that Congress would support the proposition. Lincoln quickly replied, "Mr. Burton, you tend to your end of the swingle tree, and I'll tend to mine." He explained that Congress had been polled and that he was sure of success. Among other things that Lincoln told him were: "I am satisfied that this is the cheapest and most humane way of ending the war. If I can get this plan started in Delaware I have no fear but that all the other border states will accept it. . . . This is the cheapest and most humane way of ending this war and saving lives." Burton assured the President that Delaware slaveowners would be glad to dispose of their Negroes at a fair valuation, and Lincoln was "delighted." Upon his return Burton presented the plan to some friends, but with the exception of the approval of one slaveowner who feared that the slaves would be freed eventually without compensation, he encountered opposition.2

Fisher and Nathaniel B. Smithers in Dover drew up a bill which emancipated all slaves over 35 years of age. The remainder would be freed by 1872 with the exception of children who were apprenticed

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2Scharf, ibid., I, 345-346; Henry Clay Reed, "Lincoln's Compensated Emancipation Plan and its Relation to Delaware," Delaware Notes (Seventh Series) (Newark, Delaware, 1931), 38-39; Delmarva Star, February 9, 1919. The newspaper article contained an interview with a son of Benjamin Burton. Dr. Reed interviewed the son in 1929.
until they reached the age of maturity. Funds for payment were to come from a federal appropriation of $900,000. After a caucus of friends of the measure at Smithers' house, it was decided to ascertain the attitude of members of the legislature. When a member from Sussex county was shown the bill, he became indignant, for the people knew nothing of it, the legislature had not been elected for the purpose, and enough trouble existed already over "the infernal Negro question." While he regarded "slavery as a curse," he thought freeing the Negro "a greater curse." The poll revealed that with the support of two Democrats, Wilson L. Cannon and Jacob Moore, the proposal would pass in the senate, but that in the house of representatives, Robert A. Cochran, the only member who had been elected as a true Lincoln man, was opposed, and therefore the bill would be defeated by one vote. Under the circumstances the measure was not introduced, though news of the plan leaked out. Later it was charged that friends of

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3Scharf, History, I, 345-346. The age of maturity for male slaves was 18; for females, 21.

4Gazette, June 6, 13, 1862; Reed, "Lincoln's Compensated Emancipation Plan," Delaware Notes, 39-41.

5Republican, February 13, 1862. Cannon and Moore were read out of the Democratic party as "Black Republicans."

6Reed, "Lincoln's Compensated Emancipation Plan," Delaware Notes (Seventh Series), 42-43. Reed had the Fisher papers searched by members of the staff of the Library of Congress for information concerning the plan; none was found. In a memoir entitled "The Trial of John H. Surratt for the Murder of President Lincoln" by George P. Fisher in the Fisher Papers is a brief paragraph dealing with the proposal. Fisher related that he was called to Washington by a telegram from the Postmaster-General, was interviewed by Lincoln, and was assisted in preparing a bill in Dover by Smithers. A majority for its
the bill had distributed among themselves $35,000.\(^7\)

The Republican newspapers devoted considerable space to the Negro question in January, and were probably aware of the Lincoln proposal. A correspondent from Kent county thought that 300 slave-owners ruled Delaware in an undemocratic manner. If the legislature would free the slaves born after July 4, the land would be doubled in value, no one would be injured, and the state would "blossom as a rose." The editor of the Republican considered that the proposal was ahead of the times. Scarcely a man of prominence in any of the counties would dare introduce it, as the Bayards, Comegys, and the Saulsburys had talked so much about marrying niggers and nigger equality that to be known as an "emancipationist is political death."\(^8\) A writer a few days later agreed that none could be found bold enough to bring forth such a bill, and if he were, he would be left at home next session.\(^9\) A correspondent in the Gazette thought less than 300 passage could not be obtained in the legislature because of the "obstinance of the only member who had voted for Lincoln for the presidency." The narrative agrees so perfectly with the account in Scharf's History of Delaware that it is probably that Fisher also furnished this information.

\(^7\)Delawarean, February 8, 1862. From the Georgetown Messenger. The figure of $35,000 was mentioned. Another reference to this sum is found in a letter of Samuel Townsend to G. Forney, March 5, 1863 (Townsend Papers, Memorial Library, University of Delaware). "They sent George Fisher to Delaware one year ago to propose the emancipation scheme. He surrounded himself with old Whigs, Bellites, and two Breckinridgers, and to them alone unfolded the scheme & divided among them $35,000."

\(^8\)Republican, January 2, 1862.

\(^9\)Ibid., January 16, 1862.
abolitionists were attempting by unscrupulous means to upset the peace and security of Delaware.\textsuperscript{10}

The first newspaper to note Lincoln's proposal was the Delawarean. "This is the first step," it reported; "if it shall succeed, others will follow tending to elevate the Negro to an equality with the white man or rather to degrade the white man by obliterating the distinction between the races." The newspaper opposed the bill because of its "iniquity", because of the mystery surrounding it, and because of the interference of the general government in state affairs.\textsuperscript{11} The Republican praised the plan as a "God-send" to many owners, as slaves were depreciating in value and the institution was tottering. Such a "golden opportunity" might never appear again.\textsuperscript{12} The Smyrna Times favored the measure, but feared it would not pass since there was strong opposition in upper Kent county.\textsuperscript{13}

The Democrats in the house of representatives introduced resolutions in opposition, which included the proposal in the preamble. The plan was condemned, as the members were not elected with the view of considering an act of emancipation, as it would be injurious to the quiet and harmony of the state, and as Congress had no right "to appropriate a dollar for the purchase of the slaves." The most significant resolution read:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Gazette, February 21, 1862.}
\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Delawarean, February 1, 1862.}
\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Republican, February 6, 1862.}
\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Smyrna Times, February 6, 1862.}
\end{quote}
When the people of Delaware desire to abolish slavery within her borders, they will do so in their own way, having due regard to strict equity; that any interference from without, and all suggestions of saving expense to the people, or others of like character, are improper to be made to an honorable people such as we represent, and are hereby repelled; that though the State of Delaware is small and her people none of the richest, they are beyond the reach of any who would promote an end by improper inference and solicitations.\(^{14}\)

Attempts were made by members of the People's Party to embarrass the Democrats. One rejected proposal pointed out that since Bayard had volunteered to resign if the people of the state requested his dismissal, he should vacate his office, for the people had spoken by furnishing two regiments and by expressing thanks to Captain duPont for his services in the armed forces. The original measure without amendments passed the house of representatives by a vote of 11 to 10, but was defeated by a vote of 4 to 4 in the senate.\(^{15}\)

The controversy in the legislature spread into the newspapers. Caleb S. Layton, a Republican in Georgetown, waged verbal duels with several critics. While Layton wished to set the Negro free, he did not favor Lincoln's plan. His principal objection was that the proposal was unconstitutional, since it deprived owners of property without due process of law, freed slaves without the owner's consent, and authorized Congress to appropriate money for an unlawful purpose. Other objectionable features were that the slavery agitation would

\(^{14}\)Journal of the House of Representatives, 1862 (Dover, 1862), 230-240.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., 1862, 230-240.
be revived in its most corrupt form and that the state would be bribed into acceptance by receiving double the value of the slaves. Layton's proposal was that after a certain date slaves should be freed upon attaining the age of eighteen or twenty-one, a plan which had the merit of costing the state or federal government nothing.\(^\text{16}\)

A vigorous supporter of Lincoln's plan was "Libertas", who argued that Delaware suffered from all the evils of slavery and received no benefits. Among the evils were bringing the Civil War into the state, retarding the progress of the people fifty years, and encouraging the retention of lotteries.\(^\text{17}\)

The Republican press was thoroughly in favor of emancipation, or emancipation with colonization, while the Democratic newspapers were less convinced of the merits of the plan. The Republican in an editorial entitled "What's the Use?" asked if slavery aided the owner, the state or nation. It kept immigrants out of the state and prevented advancement in agriculture and manufacturing. Its only use was in keeping in office a Senator who "drivels" in Congress and another who "staggers" in nightly drunkenness through the Washington streets.\(^\text{18}\)

\(^{16}\)Delaware Journal, February 14, 1862. This letter contained his basic criticism and proposal, but the controversy was continued in subsequent issues.

\(^{17}\)Ibid., February 4, 1862.

\(^{18}\)Republican, April 28, 1862.
If Delaware was let alone, it would gradually free itself from slavery, as Pennsylvania had done.  

Delaware's three congressmen disagreed about the wisdom of the proposal. Representative Fisher observed that the cost of freeing the Negro in Delaware would be less than the cost of the war for half a day and would provide a substantial sum for colonizing not only the freed slaves but the entire Negro population elsewhere. "In my humble judgment," he concluded, "this plan of gradual emancipation by the states, in which they are themselves to take the full initiative, is the very best that could possibly be suggested or devised." Senator Saulsbury opposed proposals to free the Negro in Delaware, in the District of Columbia, or anywhere else. He told the Senate:

God, nature, everything has made a distinction between the white man and negro, and by your legislation you cannot bring up the filthy negro to the elevation of the white man, if you try to put him upon that platform. I never had an ancestor that was not a slaveholder, as far as they have ever existed in this country; and I never had an ancestor that would hold a negro for life, but always set him free at twenty-one years of age; but I say to you, sir, ... that we mean that the United States of America from the northern lakes to the southern Gulf, from the Atlantic on the one side to the Pacific on the other, shall be the white man's home; and not only the white man's home, but the white man shall govern, and the nigger never shall be his equal.

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19Gazette, March 25, June 6, 1862.

20Congressional Globe, II (2nd Session, 37th Congress, 1861-1862), 1100-1101.

21Ibid., II, 1923-1924.
Senator Bayard opposed making the District of Columbia "a paradise" for the free Negro. In his speech he mentioned Delaware, and the Delaware Journal printed his words for a month as an endorsement of emancipation. He said:

In the State of Delaware I admit that slavery does not exist as a valuable source of prosperity. I admit unhesitatingly that if tomorrow we could substitute for the negro population of Delaware, slave and free, the same number of white men, and get rid of the inferior race, our wealth would be quadrupled.

Until 1850 the situation within the state was unique, as the Negro population was increasing more rapidly than the white race. The freeing of the Negro would create a dangerous condition, since the two races were incapable of amalgamation, and since the inferior must perish or remain a subject race. In a letter to his son, he expressed pleasure that the emancipation bill could not pass, for its defeat would "kill Republicanism in Delaware." 22

How a prominent Republican viewed the proposal was evidenced in a letter written by Charles I. duPont. The government plan to free Negroes in the border states might be "a handle for their general emancipation", though many favored suppressing the rebellion first before considering the question of Negro bondage. "As far as Delaware is concerned," he observed, "it will prove a God send to many a slave owner in Kent & Sussex counties, where they say, that now the hogs eat all the corn, the Negroes the hogs, and the Sheriff the master." Emancipation was "sure to come soon," and all agreed that

22Ibid., II, 1523-1526.
the price of land would rise $20 per acre, though politics and stump speeches might postpone it for several years, in order that Bayard, Saulsbury, a Sheriff, or Levy Court Commissioner might be elected.\textsuperscript{23}

The legislature, which met in a six weeks session in January, did not accomplish much. Lincoln's plan was not introduced, and resolutions in opposition passed the house of representatives, but were rejected by the senate. Since Congress was modifying the tax laws, nothing was done about them. Among the completed matters were a resolution thanking Captain duPont for his services in the Navy, the purchase of a flag pole, and a measure relieving militia captains of the obligation of paying a $1,000 penalty for the loss of equipment to federal troops. It was a brief and unsuccessful session.\textsuperscript{24}

Thus the only serious attempt to emancipate the Negro in Delaware during the Civil War was defeated. Democratic opposition to increasing the number of freed Negroes in Delaware was the principal reason why the measure was defeated. Conclusions from a special study of the plan reveal that it was rejected because of the rooted distrust of abolitionism, the political domination of Senators Bayard and Saulsbury, and a belief in its impracticality. While financing the freeing of the Negro in Delaware cost little, a general application of

\textsuperscript{23} Charles I. duPont to S. F. duPont, April 8, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

\textsuperscript{24} Journal of the House of Representatives, 1862, \textit{et passim}. 
the plan was felt to be impractical because of the expense. From the rational point of view slaveholders in Delaware missed a golden opportunity to dispose of their property, but emotionally the question was too involved with politics to be calmly considered.

Political Problems

In addition to the controversy over the emancipation plan, many other political problems disturbed Delawareans during 1862. Republicans sharply attacked Senators Bayard and Saulsbury as well as other Democrats for expressing sympathy with the South. The Republicans praised the seizure of arms from southern militia companies in the spring while Democrats damned the action. Political friction was evidenced in family circles, among friends, in churches, and in business. It was a year of tension, conflict and unhappiness.

A bitter attack upon Bayard and Saulsbury was launched by the Republican press in the winter. It was touched off by their speeches and votes against the expulsion of Jessie Bright from the Senate. To a Republican like Thomas M. Rodney, such actions were disloyal. "This is good doctrine," he wrote about the expulsion to Senator Wilson, "and should be applied to Mr. Bright as well as Mr. Bayard and with much more force, for Mr. Bayard has used every means on earth to carry this State out of the Union. . . . Cannot the Senator be expelled

25Reed, "Lincoln's Compensated Emancipation Plan," Delaware Notes, 42-43.
and thus relieve us from a world of trouble?" he asked.26

The Delaware Republican urged the expulsion of Senator Bayard, who as a friend of Jefferson Davis, Toombs, and Wigfall must have assured the Democrats in Alabama and Louisiana that Delaware would secede and who had encouraged the appearance of southern commissioners before the legislature. With an air of triumph it printed a year-old clipping from the Cassville Standard in Georgia; Bayard was reported to be in the South "for assistance in ridding the people in his own state from the Black Republican yoke."27 "William Penn" in the Journal attacked Bayard for his pilgrimage to the South and for disloyalties. Congressionally speaking, noble little Delaware would be counted on the side of treason and rebellion, if it were not for the patriotism of her lone Representative.28

Saulsbury was sharply attacked by the Journal for misrepresenting the emancipation feeling in the state. The newspaper advocated ejecting him from the Senate with a pair of sharp-pointed boots and placing him in a straight jacket. For the first time Delaware was

26 Thomas M. Rodney to Senator Henry Wilson, January 23, 1862 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware); Allen Johnson, ed., Dictionary of American Biography, III (New York, 1929), 46. Senator Bright gave a friend a letter of introduction to Jefferson Davis on March 1, 1861. After the bearer was arrested, Davis was expelled from the Senate on February 5, 1862, following a debate lasting 20 days.

27 Republican, February 6, April 10, 1862. The clipping from the Cassville Standard appeared in the latter issue.

28 Journal, February 11, 1862.
represented by a man whose low and vulgar tastes and secessionist sympathies rendered the name of the state a reproach. The journal agreed with a statement in Harper's Magazine that he was an unsatisfactory Senator, and added that he was "universally admitted to be a poor simpleton, totally unfit to occupy a seat in the National Senate." When the offices of the South, a Baltimore newspaper, were raided, the Republican declared that letters from the two Senators were found. From the Second Delaware Regiment in Virginia came word that the Delaware volunteers would be pleased by the expulsion of the "two-faced rascals", who were the "degenerate sons of noble sires."

Republicans were critical of the appointment of Adam King of Delaware as a first Lieutenant in a New York regiment. Thomas Rodney regarded him as a "most violent and vindictive follower of Jeff Davis,"

In a letter to King's commanding officer, Dr. A. H. Grimshaw complained that the young man had been a speaker at the notorious peace meeting in June, that he had openly condemned the war and the administration on several occasions, and that he had cheered for Jeff Davis after Bull Run. The reply of the Brigadier-General was that King had become converted to loyalty since June. In a final letter Grimshaw summed up his charges and reasons for disbelief. The correspondence

29 Ibid., March 28, April 8, 1862.

30 Republican, February 27, 1862. The papers of the South could not be located in the National Archives

31 Republican, March 10, 1862.
A long-awaited chance to let off some steam was provided in February by some Union victories. The news that Fort Donelson had fallen arrived in Wilmington on Tuesday, February 20, and men shot off guns and pistols in the "wildest joy." The Mayor issued a proclamation for an official celebration of the victories at Donelson, Roanoke, and Fort Henry to be held on Washington's Birthday. On Wednesday the merry peals of church and fire bells mingled with the hoarse music of cannon and the shrill voice of steam whistles in a general jubilee. The streets were crowded, as "a spontaneous ovation of joy took captive the entire population." The public meeting at the city hall upon February 22 was well-attended. The cadets of the Delaware Military Academy paraded, the Mayor read "Washington's Farewell Address," and a well-known performer sang the "Star-Spangled Banner." Buildings were illuminated, flags were beautifully festooned, and pictures of patriotic events were displayed in shop windows.\(^\text{33}\)

Scattered reports from other parts of the state indicate reaction to the victories. In New Castle the news of Donelson was welcomed with an immediate illumination of the town hall and the organization of a torchlight procession through the streets to the accompaniment of martial music. A Seaford resident felt "quite lively"


\(^{33}\)Republican, February 20, 1862; Journal, February 21, 25, 1862.
at hearing of the Union success. "It was received with universal joy with the Union people," she observed, "and with sadness by the secessionist." Thirty-four guns were fired upon Washington's birthday.\textsuperscript{31}

Rumors that armed secessionists still existed in Delaware persisted. Two companies of Colonel Wallace's Regiment of Maryland Volunteers appeared in Dover on March 7 and blocked all exits from the capital. The captain of the pro-southern Haslet Guard was asked to surrender the arms of his company; he refused on the grounds that he had given a bond to the state for their return and was arrested. After the janitor would not open the statehouse, entrance was forced, the building used as headquarters for the troops, and the custodian taken prisoner. Several other men were seized for using abusive language. The Haslet Guard decided to surrender its equipment, provided that all prisoners were released. The arms were confiscated, and five prisoners retained. The morning of the departure the adjutant of the Maryland Regiment reported that "the Capital grounds were filled with citizens in anything but a placid mood, who were disposed to resist our presence and activities." Placing the prisoners in the center of his troops, he order his soldiers in a loud voice "to shoot anyone who came within reach of their bayonets." Followed at

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., February 21, 1862; Milman E. Prettyman, The Civil War Period in Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland as Reflected in Letters to my Family (Honors Thesis, University of Delaware, 1950), Appendix, 3. Adie Rogers to Aunt, February 27, 1862.
a distance by a sullen and threatening mob, the soldiers reached the depot and departed in safety.35

Weapons were also collected in Smyrna and New Castle. In Wilmington Captain George R. Riddle and Lieutenant Thomas F. Bayard of the Delaware Guard at first refused to surrender equipment and they were arrested, but later the arms were given up and the two prisoners paroled. When the Regiment left Wilmington, it took along three prisoners: John Lambson, a law student in Bayard's office, who refused to reveal where he had hidden his gun; John H. Moore, a sergeant in the Delaware Guard, who claimed to be as much a secessionist as his Maryland relatives, and John Graves, who used abusive language.36 All prisoners were taken to Camp Wallace near Salisbury, from which young Lambson wrote complaining of lack of bed clothing and of cramped quarters. In a small room nearby were the prisoners from Dover, who suffered from poor ventilation and inadequate bedding.37

Thomas F. Bayard attributed the raid to the "spite of the Republicans," while his father thought that "the hound or whelp Fisher was at the bottom of it, or else Smithers or Harrington." Saulsbury and Bayard complained of the arrest of Thomas Bayard to the Secretary

35Journal, March 18, 1862; Smyrna Times, March 13, 1862; Republican, March 13, 1862; Delawarean, March 15, 22, 1862; Morning News, May 30, 1935. The account of the Maryland adjutant is in the Morning News.

36Republican, March 13, 1862; Journal, March 21, 1862.

37John Lambson to Thomas F. Bayard, March 27, 1862 (Bayard Papers, VII, Library of Congress).
of War, who consulted General Dix. The latter advised Wallace to parole Bayard. Upon his release the enraged Democrat inquired of General Dix upon whose authority the invasion had taken place. Bayard was informed that Major-General Henry duPont had approved the disarmament. In reply to a letter, duPont coldly told Bayard that if the secessionist companies had been loyal to the Union there would have been no reason for the arms seizure and arrests. Mrs. S. P. duPont wrote an interesting account of the incident to her husband.

38James A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, March 20, 1862 (Bayard Papers, VII, Library of Congress).


40Major-General Henry duPont to T. F. Bayard, March 27, 1862 (Bayard Papers, VII, Library of Congress); Mrs. Sophie duPont to S. F. duPont, March 15, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation). Mrs. duPont wrote her husband as follows: "There was some ill feeling at Dover about it & at Wilmington Tom Bayard refused to give up the arms of his company. He said he had recd. them from the Govr. & only to him would he restore them. He requested to be put under arrest & I believe expected to be sent to Fort Warren and made a martyr. But when he found they were only going to take to Genl. Lockwood at Drummondstown in the interesting deserts of Accomac county, Virginia, he relented & gave up. Henry had some worry in connection with this, I expect, as from what Eleu. tells me they wanted to put all the onus of the demanding the arms &c on him, whereas it was Genl. Lockwood who initiated it, no doubt at the instigation of Grimshaw & Co. Tom Bayard telegraphed his father on the subject, who went at once to Secretary Stanton, the latter declined interfering & referred him to Genl. Dix. The latter telegraphed Henry, as I understand, who gave him his private opinion, that it was right to take the arms out of the hands of the disloyal companies, but left the decision to him."
While the Republican press chortled over the discomforture of the Democrats, the pro-southern newspapers were bitter in their complaints. The Gazette viewed the incident as "altogether unnecessary", and the Delawarean thought that "no greater indignity has ever been offered to any portion of the people of Delaware." The Saulsbury organ blamed the attack upon "malicious, unprincipled demagogues in our midst—men, too, who occupy leading positions in the Republican party." These persons gave the erroneous impression that "all Democrats were secessionist and traitors."

Saulsbury in the Senate in May defended the reputation of the men arrested and urged the release of any who were still detained. To the merriment of the House of Representatives, George Fisher attempted to prove that the entire Haslet Guard was composed of traitors. He classified Charles McWhorter as "a disloyal white man and not worthy of as much consideration as a loyal nigger." McWhorter owned a race horse named "Jeff Davis" and after a trotting exhibition called for the Union flag, saying "Take that damned old rag and wipe out the horse's mouth." The secessionist thought that the only atonement for the sins of his life would be the assassination of Lincoln. The nephew of Senator Saulsbury hoped that he would see the American flag trampled in the dust, expressed joy over the result of Bull Run, and wished that every volunteer who went South would fall in similar

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11 Gazette, March 18, 1862; Delawarean, March 15, 1862.
12 Congressional Globe, II (2nd Session, 37th Congress, 1861-1862), 1356.
battles. Another member of the militia company preferred having the
Emperor of France rule the United States to the present administration,
sang to the tune of "Dixie", "The Union, the Union I once loved so
well, For me may now go down to hell." At a drinking party in a Dover
hotel, another man proposed a toast, "Here's to General Beauregard,
whose voice was heard to thunder tones on the plains of Manassas,
when the Yankee hordes, like whipped hounds, were driven howling back
to their kennels." Thus Fisher continued his harangue until he had
examined the records of a majority of the members of the Haslet
Guard.\textsuperscript{143}

Immediate denials came from the indignant soldiers. The cap-
tain of the company flatly rejected all the charges. Charles McWhorter
wrote, "There is not an inmate in the infernal regions that could propa-
gate a lie of greater malignity; and I shall attempt to refute his
declaration against me by saying that there is not a more corrupt
villain within the confines of perdition than the author of the speech
in question." After Fisher refused the challenge of a duel, McWhorter
published a card, in which he accused the Congressman of "wilful mis-
representation and slander," of being "an inconsiderate and contempt-
ible coward," and worthy of less consideration than a loyal Negro.\textsuperscript{144}

Fisher seemed to have assembled all the gossip and rumors of the
neighborhood in his speech. In the eyes of many Republicans and

\textsuperscript{143}\textit{Ibid.}, III, 1934-35.

\textsuperscript{144}\textit{Delawarean}, May 17, 31, 1862; \textit{Gazette}, May 13, 1862.
Democrats, he made himself ridiculous by stooping to the level of relating such trivia.\textsuperscript{45}

To the friends of the Union it seemed in the spring as if the war were at a standstill. John R. Latimer wrote to Captain Gillis in April:

\begin{quote}
We are still kept in the same state of anxious hopes and fears that have possessed us for months. We send for the early morning papers, again in the evening for the late papers. We read the same dull "all quiet on the Potomac," "no news from Fortress Monroe," until patience is exhausted; President and General order an advance, troops remain in camp. We meet in the street and at the corners, discuss (some "cuss") the affairs of the nation and the conduct of Generals, with a large spice of "nigger" mixed up with every topic . . . . I walk the streets of the west side about the neighborhood, see no change, and were it not for the flags displayed, we would see no evidence that our country was engaged in a bloody war, for these and all other blessings, thanks be to God.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

Anna Ferris described the capture of New Orleans in May as "the most signal victory of the war," giving to "the most faithless and unbelieving some hope that the war may have an end," and striking terror into the hearts of the rebels. After the advancement of McClellan towards Richmond and Union armies towards Corinth, she felt that "the two decisive battles in the East & West must be fought in a few days." The retreat of McClellan from the Virginia capital

\textsuperscript{45}Alexander B. Cooper, The Bench and Bar of Delaware, 226, (Typewritten manuscript, Historical Society of Delaware). Cooper observed, "This speech attracted much attention in the state, for its ridiculous, childish, nonsensical, and personal attacks upon some of the most respected citizens of Dover."

\textsuperscript{46}J. R. Latimer to J. P. Gillis, April 5, 1862 (Gillis Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
alarmed Wilmingtonians, but the excitement soon died down. The fourth of July was a time of gloom. "The National Anniversary is celebrated today amidst doubts and fears," she recorded, "such as never clouded it before & the usual feu de joies jar the nerves & are most discordant." The six days of terrible fighting before Richmond had availed nothing, and "at no time since the war began had our future seemed so doubtful and uncertain." The President's call for 300,000 men called forth no enthusiasm. The belief of a few months ago that victory was in sight had disappeared and was replaced by a "greater want of confidence than has ever been felt before." A third of the Union army was involved in the disaster, and the hospitals were full of wounded.

The thousands of wounded streaming through Wilmington depot to hospitals made Delawareans think seriously of aiding the disabled soldiers. As early as November, 1861, Dr. Grimshaw, following a suggestion from the Postmaster-General, had urged the formation of such societies, and there had been a satisfactory response. A more ambitious attempt was the Delaware State Association for the Care of Sick and Wounded Soldiers formed in July, 1862, under the auspices of Bishop Alfred Lee. By November, $6,033 in cash had been received, $500 was contributed to the United States Sanitary Commission, and

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47Anna Ferris, Diary, May 12, 25, June 26, 28, 1862 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

48Anna Ferris, Diary, July 4, 1862 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

49Journal, November 5, 1861.
other sums spent for supplies and the relief of soldiers in hospitals. Throughout the remainder of the war the Association was active in relief work.\textsuperscript{50}

Lincoln's requests for troops in the summer of 1862 were met without enthusiasm. Delaware's quota under the two calls was 3,440 men. A Third Delaware Regiment from the southern part of the state left for the front in August, 1862. The First Delaware Battery of Field Artillery was authorized in August, and George P. Fisher promoted the formation of a company of 1,200 cavalrymen in September. The Fifth and Sixth Regiments of nine-months men were organized in the fall of 1862, but saw little service.\textsuperscript{51}

For a while it looked as if Governor Burton would not cooperate with the Governors of northern states in endorsing the President's demands for troops, but on July 2 he telegraphed Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania that "I cordially join the several Governors of the loyal states to request the President to call out as many men as will be sufficient to crush this rebellion."\textsuperscript{52} In August he informed the War Department that he would comply with all regulations to the best of his ability and that he expected to appoint draft officials during the following week.\textsuperscript{53} On August 18 he was notified that 1,241 men

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50}Journal, November 7, 1862; Minute Book, 1862 Delaware State Association for the Care of Sick and Wounded Soldiers (Historical Society of Delaware).
\item \textsuperscript{51}Scharf, History, I, 367-372.
\item \textsuperscript{52}War of Rebellion, Series III, II (Washington, 1899), 205.
\item \textsuperscript{53}Ibid., Series III, II, 359.
\end{itemize}
were required to complete the quota.\textsuperscript{54}

Friends of the Union at a Wilmington meeting emphatically seconded the President's call for troops. Resolutions expressed the determination of the citizens to support the war until the rebellion was crushed and to see that Delaware fulfilled her quota. The city of Wilmington was requested to appropriate funds to encourage enlistments.\textsuperscript{55} A few days later the city council set aside $25,000, in order to provide $50 bounty money for each soldier in the Fourth Delaware Regiment. Another inducement was a gift of $75 and sixty acres of land from the federal government.\textsuperscript{56} A Union meeting of citizens from New Castle county asked the Levy Court to furnish $50,000 for the same purpose, but the body felt that it lacked the authority.\textsuperscript{57}

Burton was slow to appoint draft officials, and many persons refused to perform these duties. The Delaware Journal observed that in Brandywine and Christiana hundreds in New Castle county nearly every man claimed to be or was classified as "a cripple or an invalid"; at that rate, it predicted, the draft would provide less than one thousand men from the state.\textsuperscript{58} In Duck Creek Hundred in Kent county many men feigned injuries or ill health. "Fishermen who think nothing

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{54}\textit{Tbid.}, Series III, II, l03.
\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Journal}, July 29, 1862.
\textsuperscript{56}\textit{Smyrna Times}, August 7, 1862.
\textsuperscript{57}\textit{Gazette}, August 8, 1862.
\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Journal}, September 19, 1862.
\end{flushleft}
of being in the Bay all day and sleeping upon the beach at night," the Smyrna Times reported; "farmers who can endure any amount of labor and exposure; others who can wade through marshes from morning to night in sporting seasons without suffering the least inconveniences have been furnished exemption papers, in some cases to their own surprise." 59

In Baltimore hundred in Sussex county the Governor was unsuccessful in finding anyone to do the duties. 60 Probably political pressure from Fisher and Cannon forced the Secretary of War to announce on October 10 that the Delaware quota was filled and that the necessity for the draft was over. 61

Business boomed during the summer of 1862, but suffered from a lack of coins. A public meeting in Wilmington in July suggested to the city council that "shinplasters" be issued to the amount of $50,000. Prompt action followed, and by September $100,000 in small notes were in circulation. 62 Many towns and merchants in the state followed the precedent, as the numerous samples still in existence show. 63

Friction between friends and enemies of the Union that had appeared after Sumter continued. The Wilmington Presbytery was proud

59 Ibid., September 23, 1862; From the Smyrna Times.
60 Peninsular News and Advertiser, September 19, 1862.
61 Journal, October 14, 1862.
62 Gazette, July 18, 1862; Journal, September 26, 1862.
63 The Historical Society of Delaware has perhaps fifty specimens of paper money, of which examples are given on the next page.
ILLUSTRATION XI
EXAMPLES OF FRACTIONAL CURRENCY

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS
in Current Bank Notes, when presented in sums of ONE DOLLAR, or more.

JOSHUA C. TOWNSEND
Indian River, Delaware

FIFTEEN CENTS
When presented in sums of One or more Dollars at my Store in Current Bank Notes.
of its patriotism. At its annual meeting in September, it found that with few exceptions "the whole Presbytery is devotedly loyal to the Church and Country in its present trials." The Central Presbyterian Church in Wilmington under Reverend George Wiswell was singled out for special praise; twenty members had enlisted, but they were described as "praying men still, carrying their piety to camps and sending back their 'greenbacks' to Mission and Sabbath schools."

Two ministers had sons in the army, one church conducted weekly prayer meetings on behalf of the armed forces, and every church sent packages to the front.\textsuperscript{64} On the other hand, the Reverend George Foot of Glasgow Presbyterian Church in New Castle county was forced to resign by persons in his congregation who disliked his patriotic sermons.\textsuperscript{65}

In Dover in Kent county the pastor of the Presbyterian Church caused a "stampede of traitors" from his congregation by praying for the recovery of wounded soldiers. Dr. James Bird, a "secessionist" member of the Dover Church, thought that two-thirds of the membership and half of the county prayed for the success of the Confederacy. Before the year was over, the minister resigned.\textsuperscript{66}

In a letter to a New York magazine, the Reverend William Aikman distinguished between the attitude of the New School and Old School

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\item \textsuperscript{64}Minutes of the Wilmington Presbytery, September, 1862 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pa.).
\item \textsuperscript{65}Journal, December 16, 1862.
\item \textsuperscript{66}Smyrna Times, September 18, 1862; Republican, November 3, 1862.
\end{itemize}
Presbyterians. He wrote in part,

It gives me very great satisfaction, however, to be able to say that all of our New School ministers and churches have in all parts of the State been true to liberty and the Union. Indeed, I do not think it too much to say that the noble position of Delaware, standing aloof from secession, and strong in the cause of the Union, is largely due to the influence of the ministers of our denomination.

Our churches have, without exception, throughout the State been known as most devotedly loyal to the Government. They have all sent their members to the war, and two of our pastors (Messrs. Gaylord and Emerson) have their sons in the army and navy. As elsewhere we have maintained our "Aid Societies" in perhaps every church, and always done what we could to support the Government in its struggle with treason. I believe that our New School Church has had a very great—as great perhaps as any other—influence in lifting public sentiment to its present advanced position.

On the other hand, he denounced the other branch of the Presbyterian Church, for "I know of but a single O. S. Church in the state, which anyone pretends is entirely loyal." One prominent church had been called "an ambulance for sick and wounded secessionists," while the pastors of several others were "if not openly secessionists, yet are men of more than questionable loyalty." In one incident a minority of Union members had been expelled, and in Dover the minister was compelled to resign for praying for God's protection for northern soldiers. "I know of scarcely more than a single church of that denomination," wrote the Wilmington clergyman, "where an outspoken word for freedom, or even a clearly expressed prayer for the Union and the success of the cause would be tolerated." He believed that the Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists were loyal and that the Old School Presbyterians stood alone in their treason. The
Presbyterian Quarterly Review in July, 1862 contained a long article by Aikman upon "The Future of the Colored Race in America," which argued that the Negroes were destined to be freed.⁶⁷

Great difficulty was encountered by the Methodists at their annual conference in Philadelphia in adopting a Loyalty Report. A majority of a special committee approved "political preaching" and the expression of Union sentiments, while a minority was less enthusiastic. A compromise resulted in resolutions, which disclaimed connections with any party, but which condemned the rebellion. Thanks for past victories and hope for future ones were given to God. The clergymen indicated their willingness to swear allegiance to the Constitution and government at any time.⁶⁸ One Methodist preacher compiled a Patriot's Hymnbook, of which 400 copies were distributed among the Delaware Cavalry.⁶⁹ Some members of the Methodist church in Milford withdrew after the minister prayed that "moral courage had been given the President to resist a fanatical party on the one hand and treason on the other."⁷⁰ Subsequently, he was replaced by the Reverend William England, who in a patriotic sermon praised three ministers of the


⁶⁸Gazette, April 1, 1862.

⁶⁹Peninsular News and Advertiser, October 31, 1862.

⁷⁰Delaware Journal, September 9, 1862. From Peninsular News and Advertiser.
gospel. Like true watchmen, Bishop Alfred Lee of the Episcopal Church, Reverend George Wiswell of the Presbyterian Church, and Reverend James E. Smith of the Methodist Church had fought to preserve the constitutional heritage of their forefathers. The editor of the *Journal* gallantly added the name of the Milford pastor to the honor roll.  

Evidence that a substantial number of inhabitants sympathized with the South continued to appear in 1862. Hugh Martin in Sussex county was the master of a schooner, which had been purchased with $16,000 borrowed from the Farmer's Bank of Georgetown. The vessel was seized while running the blockade. Ex-Governor Ross returned from Europe in June as abusive as ever and expressed the hope that England or France would intervene on behalf of the Confederacy. Several Delawareans, who had been "impressed" into the rebel forces returned home. Brothers met each on opposite sides at Bull Run. One "impressed" Delawarean escaped from a Virginia regiment and joined the Union army. The sons of the most prominent Democrats in Sussex county were in the Confederate army. Mrs. S. F. duPont wrote her husband in April from New Castle that "I constantly hear of persons, whose wives, or sisters-in-law, or some of their family, are southern sympathizers. Here, in

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71 *Journal*, December 9, 1862.

72 *Republican*, March 31, 1862.


74 *Journal*, April 14, June 13, 1862; *Republican*, September 22, 1862. The sons of A. F. Robinson, John Dale, and Nathaniel Horsey were mentioned.
New Castle, there are abundance of this class." One prominent citizen had given a prayer in his home at the time of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis, and his daughter wrote from Richmond about the South's "'righteous cause' & her perfect confidence that it must ultimately triumph." The niece of another resident was married to a Confederate officer.75

Kent county was notorious as the home of numerous secessionists. Near Willow Grove a Negro meetinghouse was burned by a group of southern sympathizers in August; afterwards they threatened to lynch a Negro upon whose property it stood and who had encouraged members of his race to defend themselves against assault.76 In Smyrna George Fisher was hanged in effigy near the railroad station. A sign around the neck of the figure read, "Ah! George you have for time tride [sic] the reins [sic] of our noble Diamond State, now try the rope and oblige the true harted [sic] citizens of Delaware." On the bottom of the boots were the names of Enoch Spruance and Edwin Wilmer, prominent Republicans in the town. The Journal offered a reward of $20 to anyone who revealed the perpetrators.77 Someone broke into the armory of the McClellan Home Guard in Smyrna and stole 22 new muskets and spiked 13 others; the town commissioners offered a reward of $100

75Mrs. S. F. duPont to S. F. duPont, April 20, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

76Journal, September 9, 1862.

77Smyrna Times, September 11, 1862; Journal, August 19, 1862.
in an effort to find the guilty persons. 78

Coming from Philadelphia on the cars in September, former Representative George Whiteley asserted that the character of Jefferson Davis was as good as Lincoln's, that the northern government was about played out, and "that he hoped to God Stonewall Jackson would be up here in a few days and preach us (meaning the people of the North) a sermon with the booming of his artillery." Upon his arrival in Wilmington he was arrested, but no one appeared to prosecute him and he was released. 79

Half a dozen Democrats were arrested in October, but only Dr. John Laws of Bridgeville and Whitely Meredith of Willow Grove were confined in Fort Delaware. The nature of the charges against them was not revealed. 80

The operation of the southern underground railroad was described in an interesting manner by one of its passengers. Henry Hollyday left Queen Anne's county, Maryland in September, 1862 for Smyrna; then he was driven to Dover where a political convention was in progress and no notice taken of visitors. Although the Dover station was surrounded by "Blue Boys", he boarded the 3 o'clock train for Seaford without difficulty. Upon his arrival he gave the password, was cordially received, and was spirited to a hiding place in Dorchester county,

78 Smyrna Times, September 11, 1862.
79 Journal, September 16, 19, October 7, 1862.
80 Ibid., October 14, 1862.
Maryland before being conveyed in a dugout across the Nanticoke River. A party of two Irishmen, two young farmers from Dorchester county, and six Delawareans was formed to cross the Chesapeake Bay in a thirty-three foot "canoe". Near the Little River in Virginia the boat stuck on some mud flats. A government vessel fired three shots, but the passengers reached the Virginia shore safely. Within ten days after leaving Queen Anne's county, Hollyday was in Richmond.  

In the summer of 1862 Fort Delaware received the largest group of prisoners since the war began. In April 250 prisoners were confined. Captives from the Battle of the Wilderness swelled the figure to 3,500. With assistance from New Castle, 200 escaped in July in one night. Dr. Grimshaw warned the Secretary of War that unless the guards were increased all might flee. A resident of New Castle was soon arrested for participating in their flight. With the exception of 100 officers, who were quartered in barracks outside the walls, all the prisoners were confined in crowded cells. In August

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81 Frederic B. Hollyday, ed., "Running the Blockade: How Henry Hollyday Joined the Confederacy," Maryland Historical Magazine, XLI (March, 1946), 1-10. Probably the meeting in Dover was the Democratic convention on September 6. The "canoe" is a type of boat peculiar to the eastern shore of Maryland. The writer is grateful to Mr. Leon deValinger, State Archivist of Delaware, for pointing out this article.

82 Journal, April 18, 1862.

83 Republican, July 21, 1862.

84 War of Rebellion, Series II, IV, 237. Dr. A. H. Grimshaw to E. Stanton, Secretary of War, July 16, 1862.

85 Republican, August 4, 1862.

86 Journal, July 22, 1862. From the Washington Republican. The article stated that there were 3,181 prisoners and 250 guards.
3,000 prisoners were sent South to be exchanged at a rendezvous along the James River in Virginia; 370 preferred to take the oath of allegiance, and some joined the Fourth Delaware Regiment. Every Union victory and defeat during the remainder of the war was reflected in an increase in the population of Fort Delaware.

Wilmington was uneasy at the time of Lee's invasion of Maryland in September. Henry and Lamont duPont were called to Washington and informed that the enemy planned to attack the gunpowder mills with 3,000 cavalrymen, but that the government would defend the works with 2,500 Pennsylvania militia. Two rebel spies were later arrested on the grounds. The Mayor of Wilmington summoned a public meeting to consider the question of defense, and a National Guard was formed, which drilled two hours each day.

The feeling that the war was close at hand was emphasized by the hundreds of wounded soldiers passing through the Wilmington station by train. William Canby noted in his diary, "Fourteen hundred of the sick & wounded soldiers passed thro' here today, & our citizens went down in large numbers to feed them, taking coffee, bread, meat, peaches, apples, and everything they could spare from their homes."

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87Gazette, August 5, 1862.
88Mrs. S. F. duPont to S. F. duPont, September 17, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
89Journal, September 23, 1862.
90Republican, September 11, 1862.
91William Canby, Diary, September 3, 1862 (Historical Society of Delaware); Journal, September 5, 1862.
Anna Ferris observed,

Our lives except the necessary & daily routine are all absorbed in the war. Its tragedies come to our knowledge all the time, trains of sick & wounded men are constantly passing thro' our city to the Hospitals, & many domestic histories are full of tragic interest. I must see a woman today whose husband was shot on picket duty. . . . These humble sufferers are the real martyrs of the war, and every battle makes thousands of them, but the homes of sick & poor all over the land are "houses of mourning."  

In the midst of gloom at the cost of Antietam, Union men were cheered by the re-election of a Republican Mayor in Wilmington; perhaps it foretold the results in November. Word also arrived that the President had issued an announcement of an Emancipation Proclamation to take effect in the next year. To the editor of the Journal it appeared that "no public document ever bore to the people more important language than this. None fraught with more decided results ever startled the world. It is essentially a proclamation of Peace, as it will prove to be a speedy and certain death blow to the rebellion." Anna Ferris believed that "its effects no one can perhaps foresee. One party hails it as the beginning of the millenium, and the other deprecates it as giving increased bitterness to the present struggle." In her opinion, it had put the nation "right with God."  

92Anna Ferris, Diary, October 1, 1862 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).  
93Journal, September 5, 1862.  
94Ibid., September 16, 1862.  
95Anna Ferris, Diary, September 25, 1862 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
A different reaction was noted by the brother of Samuel Townsend, who was an officer in the Fourth Delaware Regiment at Harper's Ferry. At a party in his tent in which two bottles of whiskey and two of wine were consumed, he found "that their [sic] is a general murmur [sic] among the officers about President Lincoln's [sic] proclamation [sic]." They also concluded that they "were pretty tiered [sic] of army life and if uncle [sic] Sam had bursted [sic] and could not pay us off we would resign and take a due bill for our pay or quit on the square."

The Colonel of the regiment was resigning since he was "down on these damned Yankee abolishenest [sic] Generals."96

In the December session of the Senate, Bayard and Saulsbury "disgraced" the state by expressing disloyal opinions. Saulsbury introduced resolutions to inquire why Dr. John Laws and Whiteley Meredith were imprisoned and who had authorized the formation of the Delaware Home Guards. Both of the resolutions were tabled.97 Bayard strongly supported the action; he declared that "in the state of Delaware there has been neither insurrection, revolt, nor contemplated revolt by any citizen of the State against the General Government or its authority," and he could see no reason for the administration to distrust the people of the state.98 Saulsbury claimed that the

96 Edmund Townsend to Samuel Townsend, November 22, 1862 (Townsend Papers, Delaware State Archives).


98 Ibid., I, 18.
Maryland Home Guard was terrorizing the citizens of Sussex county by unnecessary arrests and confiscations; he could see no justification for such a policy.

Has that State ever attempted the foolish game of secession? Has any son of hers, in public or private life, ever agitated secession? Breathes there a son of hers who has ever advised her to enter upon the work of revolt against the constituted authorities of the country? Is there any political party in that State which by resolution or act has ever justified secession there or elsewhere? There is none, sir.

A feeble State, with a little over a hundred thousand persons in her borders, she was too wise, too prudent, even if she was not too patriotic, to attempt a game of folly of that kind. Sir, from the very formation of this Union she has shown her devotion to it and to the Constitution. She was the first to adopt the Constitution; and there has never been within limits, since she has been a State any attempt to resist a Federal law, either before or since the commencement of this work of secession in the South.99

Senator Lane of Kansas argued that Delaware was disloyal. The legislature in 1861 had received southern commissioners, had refused to display the flag, and had passed disloyal resolutions. Delaware's Representative had given evidence of disloyalty among the Haslet Guard in Dover during the last session.100 Saulsbury countered upon the same day. The legislature was loyal, the invitation to join the Confederacy from the commissioners had been rejected, and Fisher with his lying statements had been defeated at the polls in the November election. Delaware had always stood for compromise. He declared

99Ibid., I, 20.

100Ibid., I, 159.
Had you tried the remedy which she approved, had you adopted the Crittenden compromise resolutions, I ask, would you this day have brother arrayed against brother; would you have the sickening details of the battle at Fredericksburg; would your hospitals be filled with the wounded, the dying, and the dead; would every household be clothed in mourning; would every mother's eyes be dimmed with tears, and every aged father's heart be pained with anguish? No, sir... 101

December was a gloomy month after Burnside's defeat at Fredericksburg. But the Christmas season in Delaware passed off much the same as usual. Anna Ferris reported that "Christmas was never more generally observed, nor never with more apparent festivity & profusion. It surely does not seem like a time to make merry & rejoice, but as yet we have not put on our sackcloth. People are not wrapped up in selfish enjoyment, but share their plenty with those in need." Special dinners were arranged for children of volunteers, members of the armed forces in hospitals, and soldiers in camp. 102

The year of 1862 had been disappointing from the Union point of view. Victories at Fort Donelson, New Orleans, Corinth, and Antietam seemed to avail nothing. The Confederacy continued to hold Richmond and had repulsed the most recent attempt to approach it from the North. Evidence of the sympathy of many Delawareans for the South was clear. Could anyone doubt it after examining the returns of the November election?

101 Ibid., I, 160.

102 Anna Ferris, Diary, December 25, 1862 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).
From the time of the two Union meetings in Delaware in June, 1861, it was safe to predict that the war and its accompanying issues would be the dividing line between the two major parties in the state in the next campaign. The Breckinridge and Lincoln men were the nuclei of the two opposing parties. The People's Party disappeared. The Constitutionalists divided; such leaders as J. P. Comegys, William Temple, and Henry Ridgely turned to the Democrats, while George F. Fisher and Henry duPont, an elector in 1860, became Republicans. Ex-Governor William Ross observed that most of the Douglas men in Sussex county joined the Republicans, and that course was generally followed elsewhere. Erratic Sam Townsend and Elias S. Reed, congressional nominee on the Douglas ticket, were friendly for a time with the Republicans, but on the eve of the election swung to the Democrats. James A. Montgomery, editor of the Delaware Inquirer, supported the Republican party and served as an officer in a Delaware Regiment. A few Breckinridge and Lincoln followers changed sides. State senators Wilson L. Cannon and Jacob Moore, who had been elected by the Democrats, joined the Republicans. Robert Cochran, supposedly the only
true Lincoln supporter in the house of representatives, became a Demo-
crat.¹

The returns of the election of 1862, in which the Republicans gained 4,000 more votes than in 1860 and in which the Democrats gained less than 1,000 votes, suggest that the majority of the Bell and Douglas adherents became Republican. Nevertheless, the Democratic policies of peaceful relations with the South and of non-interference with slavery appealed strongly to Delawareans, and the Democrats won almost every election during the war.²

The Campaign

The campaign of 1862 was the first state-wide demonstration of the strength of the opposing political groups, and each side exerted every effort to win. The Democrats described their opponents as "nigger-levers" and haters of everything southern, while the Republicans stressed that each Democrat was a rebel sympathizer and a potential, if not actual, traitor.

Early in the contest it became evident that Delaware's sole representative would have to fight for his political life. James T. Heald, a real estate operator and prominent Wilmington Republican,

¹W. Ross to S. Townsend, October 23, 1862 (Townsend Papers, Delaware State Archives); George P. Fisher, "Political Parties" in J. M. McCarter and B. F. Jackson, eds., Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of Delaware (Wilmington, 1882), 211-212; John S. Spruance, Delaware in the Civil War (Honors Papers, Princeton University, 1936), et passim.

²Journal, November 14, 1862.
summoned Thomas M. Rodney and Dr. A. H. Grimshaw to a conference in the office of Leonard E. Wales in April. Heald contended that he had actually controlled the last election in the state, that Fisher had been untrue to him, "that he intended to hunt Mr. Fisher down, that he had ridden over the county and written to all parts of the state, that he was determined to kill Mr. Fisher politically, that he had at least 1,000 men pledged to go against Fisher." After much discussion he agreed to vote for Fisher if he were nominated.3

After receiving an account of the meeting, the Congressman wrote Rodney that

Heald cannot hunt me down and shall not. But he'll probably hunt down himself. J. Comegys tried the crushing out process upon me two years ago. Heald may possibly succeed in defeating the success of our party in Delaware at the next election. He cannot prevent my nomination. He may as well know that at first as last. No such unprincipled scoundrel shall track me up and down, and then have it said that he triumphed over me. He may triumph over the party by joining forces with Bayard and Saulsbury, but in no other way can he triumph over me.

Fisher looked to Grimshaw and Rodney for assistance.4

In reply to a correspondent praising his record, Fisher answered in a public letter that he hoped Delaware would sustain his course, but "it may be, however, I will go under at home for a time—it may be forever." His statement received much attention from the press. The editor of the Journal felt sure of his re-election.5

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3A. H. Grimshaw, "Memorandum", April 2, 1862 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).


5Journal, May 2, 1862.
A correspondent in the Republican thought that Fisher and the emancipation bill should both be abandoned as liabilities, though the editor disagreed.6

Fisher feared in June that Gilpin, Rodney, and Grimshaw were deserting him. He complained to the Wilmington postmaster that he had always followed the advice of these three men and had believed that they would be the last to abandon him.7 Reverend George Wiswell assured him of his re-election; it was essential that Delaware have at least "one man" in Washington, as "the other two apologies for men" there were like "tares in a bushel."8 Governor Cannon's son in June found Fisher at his Washington office engaging "foreign help and stump speakers" to aid his campaign.9

The precipitating action for a party of elements opposed to the Democrats came from Wilmington. To name the party Republican might cost thousands of votes; so the label of Union was chosen.10

6Republican, May 8, 1862.
7G. P. Fisher to A. H. Grimshaw, June 7, 1862 (Franklin E. Smith Papers, Duke University).
10Fisher, "Political Parties," in Encyclopedia of Delaware, 211-212. Fisher wrote, "In Delaware, however, the people who sustained the war for the suppression of the rebellion--which included all those who had voted for Lincoln, the great bulk of those who had voted for Bell, as well as of those who had supported Douglas--were apprehensive that if they should assume the name of 'Republican' it would drive away from them many who were not yet ready to fight under the banner of the Republican party, and they, therefore, in 1862 combined all
A Union Party had been formed in July, 1861, in Wilmington to participate in the municipal election. Dr. Grimshaw had thought its victory important enough to send Lincoln a telegram announcing its 700 majority.\(^\text{11}\) A call to assemble in a meeting at New Castle in May was issued to all who favored prosecution of the war.\(^\text{12}\) Mild resolutions urged that all patriots who supported the administration, who were opposed to any truce or compromise with the rebellious states, and who were loyal to the Union, take part in county meetings as a preliminary to a state convention.\(^\text{13}\) Probably violent expressions were deliberately avoided in order to prevent offending persons in the lower counties.

Over one hundred men signed a statement inviting to a Kent county meeting in June all opposed to the unholy war of the South upon the North. Resolutions blamed the war upon southern aggression and praised Fisher's record, while the attitude of Bayard and Saulsbury, who by "all their acts of omission and commission have constantly manifested their sympathy with secession," was deplored. The most significant resolution read

who were favorable to the suppression of the rebellion, by force of arms under the name of 'the Union Party'." In reality, both the Democratic and Republican press continued to use the name "Republican."

\(^\text{11}\)Journal, July 19, August 29, 1861; A. H. Grimshaw to A. Lincoln, September 3, 1861 (telegram) (Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress).

\(^\text{12}\)Gazette, May 30, 1862.

\(^\text{13}\)Republican, May 26, 1862.
that the deceptive cry of "peace" with armed rebels is but another name for Disunion—that there can be no lasting peace or solid security except in the effectual suppression of rebellion, and that without distinction of former party designation, united as patriots, we urge that the only termination of armed coercion shall be the subjection of the rebels to the lawful authority of the United States.14

Three hundred and thirty friends of the Union endorsed the call for a convention in Sussex county in July.15 Resolutions pointed out that the war was forced upon the North by the disunionists of the South, blamed Buchanan for not acting like Jackson, and praised Fisher and Lincoln, the latter being "the right man in the right place." The two most significant resolutions declared that the members of the meeting would uphold the government against all attack and that the only two parties in existence were those of Union and Disunion.16

14 Ibid., June 29, 1862; Smyrna Times, June 26, 1862; Delawarean, June 28, 1862.
15 Journal, July 15, 1862. The call read, "All who are patriotic enough to prefer the Constitution, the Union, and the Enforcement of the Laws, to the slavish behests of party, and who honestly desire, by every means in their power, to aid the Federal Government in their noble efforts to suppress that atrocious rebellion; to maintain the integrity of that Union; and to transmit to our children the priceless inheritance of civil, political, and religious liberty, bequeathed to us by our Revolutionary fathers, are hereby requested to assemble in County meeting."

16 Ibid., July 29, 1862. These two important resolutions read: "That whilst we have no sympathy with the extreme doctrine of Abolitionism, any more than with the extreme and yet more bloody dogmas of Secessionism, we will not, as sensible men, be driven from our propriety, or from the full and patriotic discharge of our Constitutional duties to uphold the hands of the Federal Government in their efforts to crush this wicked rebellion, by the contemptible tricks and insane
At a "monstrous" state convention in August, the Union Party was officially launched. The usual resolutions in support of the Union and a fight to the finish were ratified. The opposition, who were really "traitors" at heart, were attacked for appealing to "popular prejudice upon the absurd and threadbare pretext, Negro equality." "That while we deny that this war is or ought to be prosecuted for the purpose of the extinction of African Slavery," one resolution read, "we see no reason why the slave of the rebel should not be liable to seizure as any other property, nor why the Negro should not be made to throw up entrenchments on the one side to maintain as well as on the other to destroy the Government." The platform was notable for making no other direct statement about emancipation. George Fisher was unanimously nominated for Congress, and William Cannon was chosen as a candidate for the gubernatorial office.17

cries of 'Abolitionism,' Black Republicanism, and 'Negro Equality', urged falsely by corrupt, profligate, party hacks, for mean and contemptible party purposes, against all who are honest, and fearless, and patriotic enough to oppose the present Breckinridge Sham Democratic-Disunion party, which we hold to be justly responsible before God and the world for the present rebellion, and for most of the evils which now afflict our unhappy but beloved country.

"That there are now but two great parties in the country--the Union Party and the Disunion Party--which last party, calling itself Democratic, or whatever party name it may assume, encourages, sympathizes with, aids, and abets the Rebellion. . . ."

17Ibid., August 22, 1862.
Up to this time Cannon had been a key figure in the Democratic party in Sussex county. He was a self-made man, who had become wealthy through a combination of merchandising, farming, and banking. With an income of $5,000, he was the richest man in Sussex county in 1864. Twice he had been elected to the house of representatives and once state treasurer. Samuel Townsend in 1860 predicted that Cannon would surely be the next candidate for governor. The exact reasons why he became a Republican will probably never be known. A biographical article in 1882 and a recent study of the Cannon family stress his genuine devotion to the Union; a letter by a politician forty years after the nomination mentions that Cannon "became sore" after having been rejected three times as a gubernatorial candidate and turned to the opposition. His influence in Sussex county might be of assistance to the Republican party.\(^8\)

The Democrats held similar conventions during the summer. The New Castle county meeting concerned itself almost exclusively with the Negro problem.\(^9\) The Kent county convention expressed opposition to the "unwarranted arrests" of Delawareans by military authorities upon "false, cowardly, and secret misrepresentations". The "calumny" of the Secretary of War in declaring that Delaware was at one time on the eve

\(^8\)G. V. Massey, The Cannons of Nanticoke (Courtesy of the author); John A. Moore to J. B. Moore, July 3, 1902 (Civil War Papers, Historical Society of Delaware); "William Cannon," in McCarter and Jackson, eds., Encyclopedia of Delaware, 500.

\(^9\)Gazette, June 21, 1862.
of insurrection, and the "equally false aspersion" upon the loyalty of the people of the state by George Fisher in the House of Representatives were denounced. Several resolutions were devoted to attacking the "insane project of negro emancipation" and equally "wild schemes of the sectional party" in reference to the Negro.20

The Sussex county meeting included in its platform many of the same resolutions ratified by the Kent county convention. Most of the planks dealt with the Negro. The failure of the "Black Republican Abolition Disunion party," to take a stand upon the emancipation proposal of Lincoln for Delaware at its recent county meeting was attacked. The gathering declared its hostility to emancipation, "the whole system of the legislation of the present Congress in reference to slavery," and any interference in the relation of slave and master.21

The Democratic state convention in September also emphasized the racial question. The people of Delaware "alone" should be permitted to determine whether they wanted to abolish slavery, and therefore the Democratic party was "unalterably opposed to the scheme advocated by the Black-Republican-Abolition-Disunion party for the abolition of slavery in this state." It was the opinion of the convention

20Delawarean, June 21, 1862.
21Ibid., August 16, 1862.
that the evident intent of the Republican party is to
place the negro on a footing of equality with the white
man, and that the constant intermeddling of Congress
during its last session with the question of slavery,
(although the Last Abolitionized Republican Convention
in this State affected to slur over the question as
"threadbare") affords ample evidence that such intent
exists, and that they are prepared to degrade the white
race to a level with the negroes at the bidding of false
philanthropy and fanatical madness.

Ex-Governor William Temple, who had been a leader of the Constitutional
Union party in 1860, was chosen for Congress, and Samuel Jefferson, a
prominent Democrat in New Castle county, was selected for Governor.22

In a criticism of the state convention of the "Breckinridge-
Locofoco-Disunion-Peace Party," the Smyrna Times found "Mr. Negro"
at the center of the resolutions, and "Negro Equality" the argument
par excellence presented by every speaker. Where were planks express­
ing thanks to the volunteers, sympathy for soldiers, and the desire
that the rebellion be crushed? A Philadelphia newspaper viewed the
proceedings as "worthy of a convention of South Carolina in the early
days of secession."23

By the end of the summer leading Republicans were concerned
about the election outcome. Thomas M. Rodney wrote Secretary of War
Stanton in August that the removal of the Fourth Delaware Regiment,
which included 600 Union men, would surely hand the state over in

22 Ibid., September 6, 1862.

23 Smyrna Times, September 11, 1862. The Philadelphia Bulletin
was quoted.
November "to the tender mercies of the traitor Bayard and the drunkard Saulsbury." 24

Several troubled Republicans in August discussed their problems with President Lincoln, who asked them to put their requests in writing. George Fisher summarized the demands under eight headings. He asked that the inauguration of the draft be postponed until September 15, that the Third Delaware Regiment in the field and a company of cavalry and artillery in process of formation be counted in the quota, and that Colonel Grimshaw be granted additional time to find recruits for the Fourth Delaware Regiment. He requested that no troops be taken from the state until after the election, that the draft be placed under a marshal, and that the war department appoint officers of the volunteer home guard instead of the Governor. "I deem it my duty," the Congressman concluded, "to say that with the present programme we do but waste our strength in Delaware by offering opposition to the disunionists in Delaware at the approaching election." Of the 11,000 voters in the state, 2,000 were already in the field, and the draft would reduce the number by 500 to 1,000. With such a handicap he must refuse to run. 25

Lincoln answered two days later that he was "painfully surprised," since the Secretary of War had assured him that the Delaware

24 Thomas M. Rodney to E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, August 9, 1862 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

delegation was "fully satisfied" with existing arrangements. After reviewing the eight points, he accepted all but the postponement of the draft and placing its control under a marshal, since the Governor was "apparently doing right." "I do hope you will be able to get along upon this," he added. "The Secretary feels very sure that Judge Gilpin thinks you can . . . . I do hope you will not indulge a thought which will admit of your saying the administration turns you over to the fury of your enemies. You certainly know I wish your success as much as you can wish it yourself."^26

Fisher continued to be concerned about the plight of the party in the state and in September asked Secretary of State Seward for assistance. Rebel sympathizers were growing bolder every day and claimed 1,000 majority. The Union men were so despondent that it was almost impossible to hold a meeting in the lower part of the state. "Without help from abroad we shall be, I fear, completely demolished," he added. "Can you not put us right on the track?" Fisher informed Thurlow Weed that he and Cannon would soon visit Washington on "business of great political importance to our state" and that he would appreciate any assistance. "We are in imminent danger of losing everything here except our legislative ticket in New Castle county--the antislavery portion of the State," he lamented. "Your aid is indispensible." He did not make it clear whether he expected

^26 Ibid., V, 314. A. Lincoln to G. P. Fisher, August 16, 1862.
financial or military aid. 27

The Republicans won the municipal election in Wilmington in September, but in the little election in October Democratic inspectors and assessors were returned in the two lower counties. 28 More violence than usual occurred at some polling places in Kent and Sussex county. Fisher and Cannon asked the Secretary of War several times during October for troops to be used in November to insure a "fair election and to keep the peace." 29 Captain S. F. duPont was alarmed by the trend of events in the state. He thought that the Democrats were more to be feared than the rebels. Lies were being circulated that this was Lincoln's war and that the freed slaves would displace white labor in the North. 30

The largest Republican meeting of the campaign was held in Middletown in New Castle county in October. Resolutions endorsed the administration, all possible means to suppress the insurrection, and the Union nominations. Grave accusations were made against the opposition:

27 G. P. Fisher to Secretary of State Seward, September 24, 1862 (Seward Papers, University of Rochester); G. P. Fisher to T. Weed, September 25, 1862 (Weed Papers, University of Rochester).

28 Journal, October 5, 1862; Delawarean, October 11, 1862.

29 Report of the Committee of the General Assembly of the State of Delaware . . . in Regard to the Interference by United States Troops with the General Election (Dover, 1863), xiv.

30 S. F. duPont to W. Whidden, October 8, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
That the mis-called Democratic party of this State is in earnest sympathy with this rebellion; that it has abandoned all the principles of true Democracy; that it seeks, under the specious cry of peace, to recognize the so-called Southern Confederacy, and thereby to destroy the Union; and that its success in this State would be hailed with joy by the wicked leaders of rebellion, and would give them encouragement to prolong this war upon the Union, and to transfer it to Delaware with the hope of obtaining active sympathy and assistance.

Provost Marshal Edwin Wilmer charged that the Democratic gubernatorial candidate recruited a militia company so disloyal that it was refused arms and had disbanded. After a flag was raised in Smyrna by local citizens at the time of Sumter, George Fisher claimed that Temple remarked that it was not worth the cost of the muslin. The Ex-Governor had refused to close his store upon such patriotic occasions as Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July; he had expressed the wish that the streets of Smyrna would run with blood rather than young men be drafted to fight their brothers in the Confederacy.31

Letter writers in the Republican press made other charges. Jefferson was supposed to have said that there were not enough men in New Castle county to make him display the American flag in Port Penn. His daughter had left the room during family prayers when a visiting pastor prayed for the success of the North, and his wife had refused to buy feed for her chickens from a loyal miller. In Bayard's offices in Washington in the winter of 1860, Temple had attended a

31Journal, October 21, 1862; Republican, October 27, 1862; Gazette, October 31, 1862.
meeting, which discussed fixing the boundary line of North and South at Chesapeake Bay.\textsuperscript{32}

The Democrats monotonously emphasized the Negro issue. The call for the Kent county ratification convention in September invited all who opposed "the sectional Republican-Abolition and Disunion party," legislation in behalf of the Negro, and the abolition of slavery.\textsuperscript{33} Nine legislative candidates in Sussex county issued "An Address to the Free Voters," in which they denied being secessionists and attempting to lead the state out of the Union; they were subject to such attacks simply because they were running "upon the Democratic ticket--the ticket of the only true Union party--the only organized party in opposition to abolitionism and the equality of the negro with the white man."\textsuperscript{34} After some hesitation Samuel Townsend appealed to the Douglas men to return to the Democratic fold. The emancipation of the Negro in the state would add 2,000 to the 20,000 free Negroes already there. "In a short time, they might equal the white population and cause a massacre," he feared, "and if such an occurrence happens in Delaware, white people need not expect any aid or assistance from the Sumnerites; therefore, I say Douglas men, honest Union men, for God's sake unite with any party that will ward off this abolition blow."\textsuperscript{35} The call issued for the last Democratic meeting in Wilmington

\begin{footnotes}
\item[32]\textit{Republican}, October 27, 30, 1862.
\item[33]\textit{Delawarean}, September 27, 1862.
\item[34]\textit{Delawarean}, November 1, 1862.
\item[35]\textit{Ibid.}, October 20, 1862.
\end{footnotes}
before the election, as might have been expected, emphasized the racial issue.\textsuperscript{36}

Late in October William Ross and two friends wrote Judge Edward Wootten that they had learned that the Black Republican Abolition party in the state had obtained ample funds from Washington and that they were sending Dr. McFerran and E. L. Martin to Wilmington and Philadelphia to collect money. They asked the Judge to join them in furnishing credentials; "so as to satisfy our friends abroad that they are fully authorized by their party at home to solicit donations to be used in a just and righteous cause.\textsuperscript{37}

The Democratic and Republican press viewed the issues involved in the state campaign differently. The Republican considered the "real question" to be, "Shall the National Administration be sustained in its effort to suppress the rebellion; or shall we resort to parley, truce, and finally the destruction of the Union and the establishment of the Secession Confederacy?" The Peninsular News and Advertiser in

\textsuperscript{36}Gazette, October 31, 1862. The call read: "Come all who are in favor of the Constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the Laws; all who are opposed to Abolition as proclaimed in President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation; all who are opposed to the increase of the heavy taxes now imposed upon us by the present Abolition Administration, by the Compensation scheme advocated by the Republican-Abolition Party of Delaware, and voted for by George P. Fisher; all who are opposed to taxing poor white men to colonize and support negroes; all who are opposed to negro labor being brought into competition with white labor; all who are in favor of the Union as it was and the Constitution as it is, come and let us reason together, and hear the words of the great Statesman of Delaware. [Bayard]."

\textsuperscript{37}W. H. Ross, Charles Wright, and J. O. Shipley to Edward Wootten, October 25, 1862 (Burton-Wootten Letters, Delaware State Archives).
Milford thought that the election asked, "Shall Delaware at the ballot box give her voice and thereby her influence to the treason of Southern Rebels, or will she decide to stand by the flag of our country and the integrity of the Constitution and Union framed by the wisdom and cemented by the blood of our forefathers?" The Delawarean thought that the campaign asked, "Shall Constitutional Liberty survive or perish?" It expected that the state in November would proclaim "the attachment of her people to the Union as it was, and the Constitution as it is."\(^3\)

"Vote Early! Help to get Others to the Polls! Examine Every Ticket! Watch for Forged Receipts! Be on Your Guard!" were the headlines of short articles in the Gazette at election time. Patriotic young men were advised to spend the day bringing voters to the polls by carriage. Voters should examine ballots carefully, for some contained the name of not a single Democrat. There was no truth in a circular that Temple had evicted a poor widow.\(^3\)

Thus the campaign ended. It had been bitterly fought with attacks and counterattacks. The Republicans had spent most of their time in demonstrating that the Democrats were disloyal, and the Democrats charged that the opposition wished to abolish slavery. Each side claimed victory; what would the voters decide?

\(^3\)Republican, October 30, 1862; Peninsular News and Advertiser, October 31, 1862; Delawarean, October 18, 1862.

\(^3\)Gazette, November 4, 1862.
The Election

The Delawarean listed the election results in this manner:

VICTORY! VICTORY!
The Little Diamond State Stands by
the Union and the Constitution.
In spite of Bayonets,
In spite of Government Money Lavishly Expended,
In spite of Baseness, Treachery, and Fraud.
Old Brown's Body Laid low.
The President's Emancipation scheme laid lower.
And the man who voted for it laid lower still.
Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!
Glorious Democratic Triumph!
George P. Fisher Defeated.
William Temple
The Democratic Union Conservative
Candidate Elected.
The Democratic County Tickets
in Kent and Sussex Elected.
The Legislature two-thirds Democrats.40

The Republican emphasized that Cannon had been elected Governor and
that one-third of the legislature was Republican.41

Cannon's majority was 111, while Temple became Representative
by a narrow margin of 37 votes. New Castle county voted overwhelmingly
Republican, but the lower counties were Democratic. Cannon ran ahead
of Fisher in each county and thus won by a few votes, while the Lincoln
favorite trailed behind so badly in lower Delaware that his majority
in New Castle county was not able to save him. The senate consisted
of four Union men and five Democrats, and the house was comprised of

40Delawarean, November 8, 1862.
41Republican, November 8, 1862.
seven Union members and fourteen Democrats.\textsuperscript{42}

The Gazette viewed the returns as "a significant condemnation of the course of Mr. Fisher in Congress. His votes on the slavery question had caused him to 'go under.'" In spite of the expenditure of thousands of dollars and the use of soldiers, the "pet of the emancipationists" and of the administration had been defeated. "That the Democratic party of Delaware has been enabled to defeat such a combination of the purse and sword, is one of the most remarkable events of the day; nothing, it seems to us, but the interposition of the hand of Providence could have saved us from utter defeat," the editor concluded.\textsuperscript{43} The Smyrna Times regarded the election as "one of the most warmly contested efforts that ever perhaps took place in Delaware." Everything possible had been used to influence votes—"whiskey, money, lying, and the basest deception."\textsuperscript{44} In general, the Democrats were much happier about the returns than the Republicans; the one disappointment was the election of Cannon.

The election was noteworthy for three things: the defeat of George P. Fisher, charges of bribery and corruption and the use of

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lllll}
  & Cannon & Jefferson & Fisher & Temple \\
New Castle & 3,860 & 3,300 & 3,826 & 3,291 \\
Kent & 1,880 & 2,323 & 1,868 & 2,323 \\
Sussex & 2,415 & 2,421 & 2,320 & 2,437 \\
Total & 8,155 & 8,014 & 8,014 & 8,051 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Delawarean}, November 8, 1862; \textit{Journal}, November 11, 1862.

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Gazette}, November 11, 1862.

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Smyrna Times}, November 6, 1862.
troops. The main reason for the rejection of Fisher was his connection with the emancipation bill for Delaware and his anti-slavery record in Congress. In a speech delivered a few years later he reviewed why he had been rejected by the voters. In 1862 "bitter and unscrupulous partisans among the democracy vastly magnified my humble position and importance by ascribing to my feeble instrumentality every calamity public or private which happened in our native state from the beginning of the rebellion." He had been accused of being a drunkard and of causing arrests for disloyalty. The electorate was told that his defeat would restore peace with the South, while his victory would mean a continuation of war. He was characterized as a "blackhearted abolitionist who desired not only to steal all the negro slaves in Delaware from their masters, but to elevate them above the white race, their former masters, and to compel by law the intermarriage of whites and blacks." He was charged with trying to make a "contract" with Lincoln to free the slaves within the state. If his audience reviewed the events of the years since 1862, it must concede that he was "right" and that the state would have benefited enormously.45 In an article upon political parties in Delaware in 1882, he expressed the belief that his defeat was due to the absence of 3,000 men from Delaware, who were fighting the enemy; at least 1,000 of them were old enough to vote and would have supported

45George P. Fisher, (Untitled Speech, 1866), (George P. Fisher Papers, Library of Congress). Internal evidence established that it was given by Fisher during the campaign of 1866.
him. The antipathy of many Constitutional Unionists to Fisher, a general dislike of a strong central government, and the disgust of Delawareans at the military invasion and arrests in the spring also contributed to his failure to win a majority. The Journal blamed his rejection upon Democratic "lies" in circulation.

A certain amount of bribery and corruption was usual in Delaware elections, but in 1862 larger sums were available in both parties than ever before. The Delawarean charged that the Republicans had a campaign fund of $40,000. A brother of Samuel Townsend swore to an affidavit that he had heard Edwin Wilmer, Provost Marshal, declare that the abolitionists in the state had received $40,000 and that Cannon was promised a majority of 500. Letters written by Fisher suggest that he and Cannon approached politicians in Washington for campaign contributions. The Democrats were probably successful in their mission to Wilmington and Philadelphia in collecting donations.

James A. Montgomery, editor of the Delaware Inquirer, was indicted in

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47 Journal, November 7, 1862. The Democrats were accused of spreading these lies about Fisher: 1. If people voted the Democratic ticket, Lincoln would withdraw the proclamation and end the war. 2. If the proclamation remained in force, slaves from the South would replace northern workers. 3. If the Republicans won, heavy taxes would continue. 4. Miscellaneous reasons included the results of the little election and the fact that three regiments were out of the state.

48 Cf. ante., 247.

49 Cf. ante., 251.
court for forging tax receipts, which were needed for voting by some Republicans. Many minor cases of corruption were revealed.\textsuperscript{50}

A "novelty" appeared in the election when General John E. Wool, accompanied by Maryland and New York troops, landed at Seaford two days before the voting and dispatched soldiers to most of the polling places in Kent and Sussex counties. Colonel A. H. Grimshaw stationed soldiers from the Fourth Delaware Regiment at several localities in New Castle county.\textsuperscript{51} The Democratic and Republican press quarreled over whether troops were needed. The \textit{Gazette} considered that they were "certainly unnecessary, unconstitutional, and as a precedent unwise", and the \textit{Delawarean} mentioned incidents of soldiers charging with fixed bayonets "peaceful citizens without the least provocation."

The \textit{Smyrna Times} resented the yelping and whining from "every popgun politician and stump screamer" over the issue; the secessionists were just reaping what they had sown by their actions during the little election and at other times. The \textit{Republican} and \textit{Journal} felt that the troops assured a fair and peaceful election for everyone.\textsuperscript{52} In the December session of the Senate, Bayard and Saulsbury protested against the use of the regiments. The Senator from Sussex county had seen assaults upon peaceable citizens in Georgetown and had walked

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Gazette}, November 7, 1862; \textit{Delawarean}, November 8, 1862; \textit{Republican}, November 10, 1862.
\item \textit{Gazette}, November 25, 1862.
\item \textit{Delawarean}, November 8, 1862; \textit{Gazette}, November 7, 1862; \textit{Journal}, November 11, 1862; \textit{Republican}, November 13, 1862.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
between rows of drawn sabres to cast his ballot.53

There was a possibility that Fisher and Jefferson might insist upon a recount. Captain S. F. duPont wrote a friend, "Alas for Delaware! I had sooner lost the Gov. than the Legislature. Fisher will contest & probably succeed."54 Senator Bayard wrote his son that Jefferson should insist upon an investigation, especially if the Republicans reviewed the closely contested seats for the legislature in Sussex county.55 There was much discussion in the press, but nothing happened.56 Probably there was fear that too much skull-duggery on the part of both sides would be revealed.

The election of 1862 revolved mainly around the issues that the Republicans were a party of "nigger-lovers" and that the Democrats were secessionist sympathizers. The sensitiveness of Delawareans upon the racial question primarily defeated George Fisher and returned a Democratic majority to the house and senate. The use of troops established a pattern, which was used in other elections. The Democrats made the most of their opportunity by appointing a legislative committee to investigate the "Military Invasion of Delaware." The


54S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, November 20, 1862 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

55J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, December 8, 15, 1862 (Bayard Papers, VI, Library of Congress).

56Gazette, December 25, 1862.
process of turning the state into a part of the Democratic "solid South" was in full swing.
Chapter XI

THE CLASH OF CANNON AND THE LEGISLATURE

The legislature and Cannon clashed bitterly during the session of 1863. On such things as the military invasion of Delaware, the arrest of citizens and the confiscation of arms, they disagreed. In every way possible they showed their opposition. The Democrats threatened impeachment, and Cannon discussed with Washington officials the possibility of the arrest of the members of the General Assembly.

The Legislative Session of 1863

Following the advice of his friends, Governor Burton delivered a strongly-worded farewell address to the General Assembly, in which he attacked federal violations of states' rights. He attributed the war to "the fanatical madness of the North and the folly of the South." He criticized the emancipation scheme, under which white men would be taxed to pay for freeing slaves and later for supporting them in jails and almshouses; colonization of the free Negro was "a scheme as wild and visionary as Abolitionism." He urged that the legislature pass

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1 J. P. Comegys to Edward Wootten, December 17, 1862 (Burton-Wootten Papers, Delaware State Archives). Comegys suggested a number of topics that should be included in the Governor's message. "I hope no mincing phrases will be used by the Governor in speaking of the election outrage," he added. "Do, pray, urge him to speak strongly. If the people of Delaware rest easy under the violation of their soil, and their State dignity and position, they are not fit to be an independent society and ought to be annexed to another Commonwealth."
judgment upon the seizure of arms from militia companies, "the un-
warrantable and unconstitutional arrests of our peaceful and loyal
citizens" and use of federal troops in the last election.²

Several thousand people assembled upon Dover Green to see Cannon
take the oath of office. It was rumored that he would be forcibly
prevented from assuming office. Dr. John Laws, who had just been freed
from Fort Delaware, was "lionized" by the Democrats as he strutted
around the town in the dress of a young "Southern Blood." After the
ceremony an old-line Whig said with feeling, "He's--safe--now." The
house of representatives first granted the Republicans the use of its
meeting place for the inaugural reception, but reconsidered the motion,
and the festivities were held in the courthouse.³

In his address to the legislature Cannon made it clear that he
felt that the South began the war. In view of the division within the
state, he thought that Delaware had provided an unusually large number
of troops for the Union armies. "Comparatively feeble in her resources,
embarassed by her border location and thwarted by the presence of an
existing sympathy with the people of the revolting states that hindered
the progress of enlistment," he declared, "the State of Delaware ex-
hibits a proportion of troops alike creditable to herself and useful
to the Republic." ³ Antietam and Fredericksburg attested to the courage

²Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware,
1863 (Dover, 1863), 9-21.
³Smyrna Times, January 21, 1863; Republican, January 15, 1863;
Journal, January 20, 1863; Gazette, January 20, 1863.
of her soldiers. He pointed out that arrests by federal officials had been for only brief periods and that in his opinion the safety of the government was worth more than the liberty or life of any individual. He asserted "that there has existed in this State from the beginning an element of disloyalty which is unquestionable." Expressions of disloyalty by men of slight consideration was an index of the feelings of those in higher social positions. The use of troops in the last election was "eminently prudent," and similar circumstances would require their use again. "In no case did they interfere with the exercise of the right of suffrage by any voter," he declared, "and in all respects their presence was salutary in securing good order and preventing probable collision among our own people." Slavery forced Delaware to lag behind Pennsylvania in progress and prevented immigration; the census returns indicated that the outmoded system was doomed in the state. In his opinion there was no probability of the Negro obtaining social and political equality; "the Negro is, and so long as he is among us, ought to remain an inferior being under tutelage." If Congress formulated a graduated compensation plan for Delaware, he advised its acceptance, though personally he preferred for the state to develop its own scheme without compensation.4

When Cannon's message was referred to a joint committee, the committee charged that its spirit and language were "not only imperti-

4House Journal, 1863, 89-98.
Executive," especially one elected by "fraud and violence and against
the known wish of a majority of the citizens of Delaware." The arrest
of citizens in the past eighteen months was based upon "malicious
misrepresentations." The sufferer was always a Democrat and the
accuser, a Republican; it was part of a plan to intimidate the Demo­
cratic Party. Cannon had been elected by federal bayonets, not by the
will of the people.5

The spirit of the Democratic majority was shown in joint reso­
lutions upon federal relations. This document claimed that the war
should never have begun, that it could have been avoided if the
Crittenden Compromise had been accepted and that its prosecution
for two years had accomplished nothing except immense loss of life.
Either the emancipation of the slaves or the subjugation of the south­
er states would "involve the whole country in irretrievable ruin and
prevent forever a restoration of the Union." In the name of and on
behalf of the people of Delaware, the Democratic members "most em­
phatically" condemned the Emancipation Proclamation. They protested
the arbitrary arrests of peaceable citizens and the military invasion
of the state in November.6

The legislature made harsher the laws pertaining to the free
Negro. No such person from out of the state could gain legal residence,
and any free Negro who left for five days was deemed a non-resident.

5Laws of the State of Delaware, 1863 (Dover, 1864), 387.
6House Journal, 1863, 128-132.
Free Negroes were forbidden to assemble in camp meeting or other outside gatherings, attend political rallies or treats, and own guns, pistols, swords or warlike instruments. Meetings for any purpose other than religious services or burials were prohibited. They could not vote, be elected to office, or testify in court against a white person unless no other witness was available; their only specified rights included holding property and seeking redress in law for injury. They could not be absent from home after ten o'clock at night unless seeking a physician or staying overnight with relatives. Violations of this code were punishable by heavy fines or sale of the services of the individual for seven years.7

Cannon and the legislature disagreed upon several measures. The Governor recommended that several hundred acres of land near Lewes be granted the federal government for military purposes. The legislature set aside only forty acres and included a restriction that non-resident Negroes could not be employed upon the project. The Governor's recommendation that $25,000 be provided for the relief of soldiers' families was rejected.8 The chief executive in his inaugural address had justified the use of troops in November. The legislature passed a measure which stated that anyone causing soldiers to be sent to a polling place on an election day was liable to imprisonment and a heavy fine; an inspector or election judge who administered an oath

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8Ibid., 1863, 348-349.
of allegiance could be fined from $500 to $1,000. "An Act to Prevent Illegal Arrests" made it unlawful to arrest a white person without a legal warrant issued by federal or state officials and prohibited the removal of prisoners from the state without the approval of the Governor. Though the Governor did not have the right to veto bills, he issued a scorching denunciation of the measure and indicated that he did not intend to carry out its provisions. In his opinion, the disloyalty of many Delawareans justified the infrequent arrests. "That there has been from the beginning of the rebellion a considerable number of our people ready to participate in armed resistance to the lawful authorities whenever a fair opportunity should occur, I have no doubt," he declared. His predecessor had claimed that a majority of the citizens of the lower counties were sympathetic with the South. "Without admitting the correctness of estimate of numbers, I do not doubt of the existence of wide-spread disaffection," he said. The joint committee to which had been referred Cannon's inaugural address also considered his special message to the legislature upon the bill for illegal arrests. It cited the message as "the first example in the history of this State of an attempted unwarranted interference with the exercise of legislative power by the General Assembly, and made him liable to impeachment and removal from office."

9Tbid., 1863, 361-362. The fine was $1,000 to $10,000 and arrest from one to five years.


11Laws, 1863, 387.
With the legislative and executive branches of the state government in complete disagreement, most of the session had been devoted to wrangling over political issues and no constructive legislation had been passed. Shortly before adjournment in March, another cause for ill feeling between Republicans and Democrats arose in connection with a report of a joint committee of eight Democrats upon military interference in the November election. In spite of the protests of the Republican minority, 1,000 copies of the document and the testimony of witnesses were ordered to be printed.12 The Democratic members of the General Assembly retired to their homes, feeling that they had effectively hampered the efforts of the Governor and the few Republican members to aid the federal government.

The Report of the Investigating Committee into the Election of 1862

A joint resolution passed on January 8 provided for a committee of three Democratic senators and five Democratic representatives. The hearings involving 124 witnesses lasted for two months and were published along with the report of the committee in a book with the binder's title, "The Military Invasion of Delaware." Much light was shed upon what happened during the election.13

12 Joint Report of the Committee of the General Assembly of the State of Delaware ... in Regard to the Interference by United States Troops with the General Election (Dover, 1863), 1-iii.

13 Ibid., iii.
Several incidents at the little election in October and the subsequent trend of events convinced a number of Republicans that it was desirable to have troops present in November to insure a fair election. Southern sympathizers in October had freely expressed themselves, had crowded around some polling places to prevent Union men from voting, and had hinted that aid from Maryland would appear in November to help dominate the proceedings. Cannon and Fisher became alarmed, and upon at least two occasions separately applied to the Secretary of War for assistance.\(^{14}\) When Cannon received no response, on November 1 he wrote to Colonel James Wallace, who was in charge of the Maryland Home Guard at Salisbury, and requested that troops be sent to four polling places in Sussex county.\(^{15}\)

\(^{14}\)Ibid., 58-69, 155. Testimony of William Cannon and William H. Betts. Cannon told the committee that he had advised Stanton of conditions along these lines: "I gave him the information that persons in various parts of the State, Democrats and Secessionists, had threatened to take the polls in various Hundreds in said State and prevent the Union men from voting that day; that I was informed by Mr. N. B. Smithers, at the Union meeting at Laurel, that a number of persons hurrahed for Jeff Davis, Stonewall Jackson, and Beau-regard, and there were several fights by the parties present during his speech there; that I believed there could not be a fair vote of the people without protection at the polls, and that all I desired was a fair, honorable election, and that every man should vote who had a right to vote, and that nobody should prevent them; and that I was aware that several Democrats and Secessionists at Bridge-ville were armed and had practised shooting with revolvers; one told me that he could hit a dollar; and that I had reason to believe they were armed in other parts of the State, and that without a police force there would be very likely a collision between the excited parties."

\(^{15}\)Ibid., 60, 66.
A week before the election not even George Fisher was certain that troops would be in the state upon election day. In desperation prominent Republicans met in a conference in Wilmington on Friday, October 31, and selected Colonel Henry S. McCoombs and Daniel J. Layton to visit Washington to see what help might be obtained. Probably the Secretary of War had already decided what assistance to furnish, for on Saturday afternoon General John E. Wool sailed from Baltimore with 400 soldiers and 200 horses in three boats for Seaford. Layton accompanied him, while McCoombs returned to Wilmington.\(^1\)

Details remained to be worked out. About two o'clock on Sunday morning a prominent Sussex county politician was consulting such leaders in Milford as James R. Lofland, George P. Fisher, and Nathaniel B. Smithers about election plans. No trains were operated over the Delaware Railroad on Sunday, but a special train was chartered, and these three men visited Wilmington, saw McCoombs from whom they received blank commissions signed by Stanton, and summoned Mayor Gilpin from church to ask what troops he desired in Wilmington. He insisted that the local police were sufficient to keep order. Another special train carried the men back to Milford in the afternoon. Fisher and Lofland filled in the names of the provost marshals on the commissions en route; part were distributed by the conductor and part by special messenger. Lofland included a note in each envelope, requesting the appointee to come to Seaford on Monday afternoon for instructions.\(^1\)

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 86-90. Testimony of Daniel J. Layton.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 55-58. Testimony of John D. Rodney.
Troops numbering 750 under the command of Colonel James Wallace arrived in Seaford on Monday morning, November 3 by train, and at two o'clock three steamers docked with General Wool's forces. A young New Englander gave a welcoming address, Republican dignitaries were presented, and a conference with the provosts marshals followed. Ex-Governor Ross and some Democrats waited hours to see General Wool, who finally informed them after consulting the marshals that the soldiers were present to ascertain that an orderly election took place. Provost Marshals with forty or fifty soldiers were stationed at all the polling places in Kent and Sussex counties except two. In New Castle county a portion of the Fourth Regiment under Colonel Grimshaw was posted at three polls.\(^{18}\)

In some towns the appointees exceeded their orders. In Sussex county two young men were arrested in Georgetown for having pulled a flag from a wagon three days before. Fear of arrest caused ten Democrats to flee to the woods and set up "Camp Martin". Soldiers in two lines with drawn swords were stationed at the voting window in the county seat, and some voters hesitated to pass between them. Several men were confined for the day because they were Democrats.\(^{19}\) The election judge at Laurel reported that the captain of the military company commanded the inspector to accept a ballot, even though the voter had not paid his tax. When an Englishman appeared without

\(^{18}\textit{Ibid.}, 90-93. \text{ Testimony of William Ross.}\)

\(^{19}\textit{Ibid.}, 128-130, 137, 141.\)
naturalization papers, the captain said, "Take the vote, or I will smash the ballot boxes and the whole damned concern!", and the trembling inspector cast it. In Broad Creek Hundred the election window was guarded by three soldiers, who frequently repelled Democratic voters. About a dozen Union supporters with blue ribbons in their button holes were permitted to escort any number of voters to the window, while Democrats were denied the privilege. On several occasions the Provost Marshal substituted Republican for Democrat ballots in the hands of timid or intoxicated voters.20

In Kent county several citizens were assaulted in the streets of the state capital. One old man was knocked to the ground, struck at, and stamped upon by several soldiers, who said, "Kill the damned secessionist."21 At Hazlettville the Provost Marshal ordered the window cleared by soldiers with fixed bayonets in a dispute over the vote of an intoxicated man. "Stick the bayonets in them!" was the cry uttered as they advanced, and the lives of several citizens were endangered.22

The testimony of the Union witnesses revealed why they considered the presence of troops desirable. Cannon told the committee that without soldiers a fair election was impossible. Near Bridgeville secessionists were assembling arms, one man had carried three

20Ibid., 122-125, 126-128, 145-162.
21Ibid., 227-240.
22Ibid., 240-253.
carriage loads to the southern army, and several had sons in the Confederate army.\textsuperscript{23} The Provost Marshal of South Murderkill Hundred considered that soldiers were needed because at previous elections there had been numerous disturbances. Democrats had deliberately crowded around the polling places to prevent Union men from voting.\textsuperscript{24} The Provost Marshal at Camden testified that large numbers of rifles had been accumulated and that one merchant at Willow Grove had received two bags of buckshot and about fifty pounds of bar lead.\textsuperscript{25}

Provost Marshal Betts of Broad Creek Hundred in Sussex county justified the administering of an oath of allegiance to certain men because of their disloyal actions before or during the election. One man had said, "He would fight for Stonewall Jackson; he would vote for him; he would send him a beef if he could; he would render him and his cause any assistance he could if he had the chance." Another man gloried in the Confederate victories, declaring "that United States troops who were killed in battle were dead and in hell." Another voter hoped

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Ibid.}, 60, 68-69. Cannon testified in part that "from facts and reasonable grounds of which I knew from responsible men in Baltimore and other hundreds, that the secessionists in Maryland and Democrats in Delaware had threatened to take the polls in Baltimore and other Hundreds of Sussex County and from the threatening of a man with an unlawful weapon at the little election in Broad Creek Hundred, that the Union men should not vote, induced me to write to Colonel Wallace, requesting him if compatible with his official duty, to see that there was a fair election in Little Creek, Broad Creek, Dagsborough and Baltimore Hundreds, for I feared that there would be a conflict between the Union men and those who intended to prevent them from voting."

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Ibid.}, 307-310.

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Ibid.}, 271-273.
that the rebels would capture Washington. When the questioning of Betts was concluded, he insisted upon making a statement:

The troops were at the election, which everybody knows; and, in my opinion,—as well as a great many others—we could not have voted that day, nor had an election, without the presence of those troops; and that there would have been bloodshed and murder in general on the election ground.

The troops had simply seen that the Republicans controlled the proceedings rather than the Democrats.

The committee presented a prejudiced summary of the testimony of the legislature. The principal questions considered were: what federal troops did in the state in the fall of 1861 and in 1862, whether Governor Burton had requested troops, whether anyone else had desired their presence, whether the soldiers acted in a partisan manner, whether their presence was necessary, and what were the character and conduct of the deputy Provost Marshals.

Troops had appeared in the state on three occasions. In the fall of 1861 they disarmed Democratic companies in all three counties, in October of 1862 a company of 120 cavalry intimidated citizens and attended Republican rallies, and in November of 1862, 1,200 troops appeared at almost all voting places in the three counties and remained for eight days under Provost Marshals.

Governor Burton had not applied for soldiers at election time and knew nothing of their coming. Cannon's testimony established the

26 Ibid., 155-156.
27 Ibid., 158.
28 Ibid., vi-ix.
fact "beyond cavil or controversy," that he and George Fisher were the persons responsible. 29

The committee denounced the conduct of the soldiers at the polling places, since they were present only to assure that Republican candidates were elected. 30 Over 100 witnesses testified that the whole power of the military was "used to promote the success of the Republican ticket, and to trample upon the rights of Democrats by requiring the taking of unconstitutional test-oaths; the preventing of them from going to the polls to vote, except at such time and such way as the Republican partisan Provost Marshals might determine; by the arrest and incarceration of some, the frightening and driving from the polls of others, and the general effort to intimidate and humiliate all who did not avow themselves the willing slaves of despotic or irresponsible power." 31

While eight witnesses who were candidates upon the Republican ticket or deputy Provost Marshals thought the presence of troops

29 Ibid., ix-x.

30 Ibid., xvii. The committee reported "that an examination of the whole current of testimony cannot fail to convince any fair or honest man, however prejudiced in his partisan views, that the whole object of bringing troops into this State on the day of election was to coerce, by military power, a concurrence of public sentiment with the views and wishes of the Administration of the Federal Government, and to insure by force, what the guilty agents of despotic power knew could not be effected through the peaceful and constitutional agency of the ballot-box, the election of the Republican ticket in this state, and especially the election of George P. Fisher as Representative in Congress, and William Cannon as Governor of the State."

31 Ibid., xviii.
essential, eighty or more proved "conclusively that troops were not necessary on the day of the election, either to preserve the public peace or insure a fair election. ..." The Democrats argued that they had been confident of huge majorities in Kent and Sussex counties, and for that reason were interested in keeping the peace.\textsuperscript{32}

The character and conduct of the Provost Marshals was alleged to be of a low order.\textsuperscript{33} The committee thought that a precedent for such outrages existed in no other state in the Union. The committee could only express "in conclusion their unqualified condemnation, both of the action of the Federal administration and the traitorous

\textsuperscript{32}ibid., xix.

\textsuperscript{33}ibid., xxiii-xxiv. The charges against the Provost Marshals were as follows: "Troops ... were placed under and made subject to the absolute control of partisan Provost Marshals, many of them entirely destitute of character and capable of being influenced by designing partisans to the commission of any act of outrage or violence which might become necessary to the accomplishment of their object—the carrying of the election in favor of the Republican ticket. That the Provost Marshals did, in violation of the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens of the State, use the military force under their command, to intimidate and deter Democratic voters from the expression of their opinions and the fair exercise of the elective franchise; that in some hundreds they arrested unoffending citizens and kept them in confinement for hours, and in others they frightened the voters from the polls, and caused them to flee to the woods to avoid arrest; in Baltimore and Broad Creek Hundreds they required most respectable citizens and large propertyholders to take test-oaths as a condition of voting; and in Dover and some other hundreds, they caused the troops to charge bayonets upon quiet and peaceable citizens, knocking down and trampling under foot old and feeble men, crippling some, piercing the garments and in some instances the persons of others, and in every hundred in the State, where troops were present, their effort seemed to be to intimidate and alarm Democrats and encourage Republicans."
conspirators among our own citizens, who, for partisan purposes alone, sought to defeat the fair expression of the popular will at the polls by the potent influence of Federal bayonets." The act branded the national administration "with infamy and everlasting disgrace," whose criminality found "a parallel in the disgraceful, wicked, damning treachery of the ingrate conspirators in our own midst, who, with malign hearts and lying lips, assured the administration of the necessity for its interference with the domestic concerns of Delaware.... No language could betray their baseness. No time can efface their guilt, or remove the stigma from their memory. Your committee will therefore turn from objects so loathing, and leave them to the judgment of their fellow men, objects of contempt and scorn."  

Were the Republicans justified in bringing in troops, or were they used purely to insure the election of Cannon and Fisher? The proceedings at the little election and reports in the press convinced some Republicans that riots would occur in November unless something was done. The coming of soldiers made certain that all Republicans could vote. At most polling places Democrats were permitted to vote without undue interference, as the election returns reveal. The facts suggest that more violence would have occurred without the troops than took place with them. In the opinion of the author, the military invasion was justified.

34 Ibid., xxv-xxx.
Chapter XII

POLITICAL FEELING IN 1863

Political tension remained high in Delaware in 1863. Republicans expressed approval of Cannon's stand in the legislative session, while Democrats lauded the activities of the members of their party. Invasion was feared when Lee's army entered Pennsylvania in June, but fortunately no Confederates appeared. Numerous persons during the year were arrested for expressions of southern sympathy, and the draft was the occasion for some disorder. Fort Delaware contained more prisoners than ever before, including some Delawareans. The gap between Republicans and Democrats widened during the year.

Union Men Demonstrate their Loyalty

Delaware Republicans in 1863 strongly supported the policy of the administration and considered all critics secessionists. Regardless of whether the issue concerned emancipation, Cannon's record, the formation of a Union League, or the organization of a society to encourage immigration from northern states, Republicans saw only one side as right.

Republicans welcomed the inauguration of emancipation on January 1, 1863. Anna Ferris recorded in her diary, "Today the final Proclamation of Emancipation was issued by the President! Will it be merely a decree of the Government, that may fall to the ground, or is it a decree of the Almighty that will live through all the future?"
It is impossible to say, we can only pray that events may confirm it.¹

Democrats viewed the freeing of thousands of Negroes with misgivings. In disgust a poorly-educated soldier in the First Delaware Regiment wrote Sam Townsend that "it was for to perfect our union that I volnteered and would be willing to die for it but not for the nigers." He also complained that he did not receive his pay regularly. "We got payd up to the first of last November," he observed, "which leaves Fore months behind and god nos when we will be payd agane for I dont. I thought when I volnteered it was to fight for the union. I see defferent now. My opinuen of the war is that it is a speculation and niger war. The offers want to keep the war a going as long as the greenbacks is good."² Since the Proclamation applied only to states in rebellion, and not to all of them in their entirety, the slaves in Delaware remained in bondage.

In the opinion of Republicans, the attacks by Saulsbury and Bayard in the Senate upon the administration disgraced the state. Saulsbury created a sensation in January when he referred to Lincoln as "a weak and imbecile man, the weakest that I ever knew in a high place," and claimed that he "never did see or converse with so weak and imbecile a man as Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States."

¹Anna Ferris, Diary, January 1, 1863 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

²Corporal Hendrix to S. Townsend, February 12, 1863 (Townsend Papers, University of Delaware). The spelling and punctuation of this letter are exceedingly bad.
Considerable disorder followed. A few minutes later he said that if he were to describe "a tyrant" or "a despot, a man perfectly regardless of every Constitutional right of the people, whose sworn servant, not ruler, he is, I would paint the hideous form of Abraham Lincoln." He added, "If that be treason--", but cries from the floor prevented his continuing. The Vice-President ruled him out of order, and the drunken Senator was removed from the floor with some difficulty. In a cloakroom he threatened the sergeant-at-arms with a pistol. A resolution of expulsion was introduced, but was withdrawn after Saulsbury apologized for his conduct. The editor of the Gazette at first refused to believe that the Senator was intoxicated or had displayed a weapon, maintaining "that politically Saulsbury 'drunk' is worth in honesty and intellect a host of his revilers sober"; later even he conceded that the Senator's drinking habits required reform. The Journal launched a series of attacks upon "Delaware's drunkard and rebel buffoon", whose antics amused the nation.

In the opinion of Republicans, Senator Bayard's record was no better. He bitterly attacked the powers granted to the President by the majority. He wrote his son in February that the Republicans

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3Congressional Globe, I (37th Congress, 3rd Session, 1862-1863), 545, 550, 558, 584.

4Gazette, January 30, 1863; Journal, January 30, 1863.

were attempting to establish "a despotism." To a friend in April he explained that there was little difference between the War Democrats and Republicans. The former acted under the "hallucination" that war would restore the Union, but the Republicans openly "intend to conquer and exterminate the White Race at the South, if in their power, but their more immediate object is to subvert the institutions of the country & establish a centralized despotism by arms to perpetuate their power." In his opinion, recent congressional legislation gave Lincoln the opportunity to usurp absolute power as readily as Louis Napoleon had. He viewed the future despondently, "with more of fear than of hope."

After the turbulent session of the legislature, Union men felt it desirable to express publicly their confidence in Governor Cannon. Thousands in March attended a demonstration in Wilmington to hear the ex-Democrat praised by orators. Resolutions approved his record and any steps that he might take in the future against secessionists, while the actions of the "disloyal and traitorous" majority were denounced.

6J. A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, February 9, 1863 (Bayard Papers, VIII, Library of Congress).

7J. A. Bayard to T. A. Cheney, April 17, 1863 (Delaware State Archives).

8Journal, March 13, 1863: The most significant resolution read: "Resolved, That we most unequivocally condemn the majority of the present Legislature as disloyal and traitorous; as sympathizers with the southern States in insurrection, and therefore in sympathy with the overthrow of the National Government; as unpatriotic and designing men, desirous of placing our State in an attitude of hostility to the
Two regiments passed resolutions of a similar nature. The First Delaware Regiment counseled the people in its home state that the war should be continued until the rebellion was completely crushed, that the course of the "so-called peace men" was "wicked and traitorous", and that after bruising the heads of the rattlesnakes in the south its members would not be averse to removing the "stings of the copperheads" in Delaware. It also endorsed emancipation, since slavery was "the primary cause" of the past and present national difficulties. The Third Delaware Regiment expressed itself in a like fashion.

In contrast was the attitude of the Constitutional Democratic Association in Wilmington. In a January meeting it condemned the war policy of the administration, congratulated Bayard upon his reelection, and praised the congressional record of Delaware's two Senators. In General Government: that they have manifested a disloyalty that has justly provoked the rebuke of our sister States; that they have counseled an armistice with rebels in arms, for no other purpose than to effect a separation; that they have endorsed the most dangerous doctrine of State rights; that they have refused to make any appropriations to relieve our brave men in the field, or their families; that they have defended and sustained dangerous and disloyal men, whom the Government wisely arrested; that they have involved the State in enormous expense for the sole purpose of advancing their party and sustaining their newspaper organs; and that their entire course has been such as to give 'aid and comfort' to our enemies, and to tend to destroy the confidence of the people in the Government and their loyalty and allegiance thereto."

9Ibid., March 13, 1863; Smyrna Times, March 12, 1863.
10Smyrna Times, April 30, 1863.
11Gazette, January 23, 1863.
May a meeting condemned the arrest of C. L. Vallandigham, well-known Ohio congressman, who had strongly opposed violations of constitutional liberties by the administration.12

Union men organized a great meeting in Dover in June. The Journal described the proceedings in this manner: "Great Outpouring of the People. 4,000 Freemen in Council. The People for the Union. Grand Demonstration. Delaware Declares in Tones of Thunder for Emancipation and Liberty." Governor Cannon led from the depot a parade, which included 100 wounded soldiers from Tilton Hospital with the bullet-pierced colors of the First Delaware Regiment, 600 members of the Union League of Wilmington, two brass bands, and numerous citizens on foot. Major-General Schenck, Commander of the Middle Department, Representative Henry Winter Davis, and other out-of-state speakers delivered Union speeches; two orators urged the abolition of slavery within the state as quickly as possible. The only resolution urged the Lincoln administration to suppress the rebellion speedily, regardless of the cost in terms of men and money.13

In Wilmington supporters of the administration formed a Union League, whose headquarters in the Savelle Building became the focal point of Republican activities in the state. The rooms were decorated with flags and pictures of famous Americans; patriotic literature was

12Tbid., May 22, 1863. Vallandigham was the brother of James Vallandigham, Presbyterian clergyman and professor at Delaware College.

13Journal, June 12, 1863; Gazette, June 12, 1863; Delawarean, June 13, 1863.
available for reading and distribution. Several local orators addressed a large crowd at the official opening. The Delawarean attacked the club, for in it the masses blindly followed leaders without question; thus was inaugurated "a species of slavery ten times more degrading than Know-Nothingism, more hateful than Jacobinism, and more to be dreaded than the Thuggery of India." Union Leagues were formed in several other towns. Their leadership was evident in subsequent elections.\(^1\)

Union men in the summer of 1863 organized the Delaware Improvement Association, which was also known as the Society for Promoting Northern Immigration into Delaware. According to its constitution, the principal purpose was "the improvement of the State by the introduction of agriculturists, artisans, manufacturers, and tradesmen from other States." Northerners were told that fortunes awaited those who engaged in truck farming, the raising of peaches, or lumbering. After Delawareans got over "sulking", they would benefit from copying the farming practices of the Yankees. Anyone who supported the Union could join upon payment of $5 dues, regardless of political affiliations. The president of the society was Governor Cannon, its officers were well-known Republicans, and its principal agent was the Reverend L. C. Lockwood, who had been locked out of a Felton church for preaching Union sermons. Within two months after its organization 2,000 circulars had been distributed, a dozen farms had been sold, and the

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\(^{1}\)Republican, March 23, 1863; Delawarean, March 21, August 29, 1863; Journal, March 17, April 14, June 19, 1863.
northern press had commented favorably upon the enterprise. Throughout the remainder of the war the Society was active, but it met with only moderate success in attracting settlers.\textsuperscript{15}

In miscellaneous matters, Union men showed that they were on the alert. Lame-duck George P. Fisher was immediately taken care of by being appointed to the supreme court of the District of Columbia in March.\textsuperscript{16} Reverend George Wiswell was triumphantly elected to the Wilmington schoolboard in spite of strenuous efforts by Copperheads. Probably he was among the instigators of the move to have teachers in Wilmington schools take an oath of allegiance.\textsuperscript{17} After several attempts Republicans persuaded the federal government to establish a center for wounded soldiers in Wilmington. Tilton Hospital, with facilities for 300 men, was built within 25 days at a cost of $22,500.\textsuperscript{18} The Wilmington municipal election returned a Republican mayor and council as usual.\textsuperscript{19} The Association for the Relief of Delaware Volunteers in October announced that during the previous twelve months $111,380 had been distributed.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{15}Journal, August 1, October 16, 1863; Delawarean, August 29, 1863; Georgetown Union, September 25, October 16, 23, 1863.

\textsuperscript{16}Journal, March 13, 1863.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., April 7, 1863; Gazette, July 24, 1863.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., March 10, 1863.

\textsuperscript{19}Republican, September 3, 1863.

\textsuperscript{20}Journal, October 16, 1863.
ILLUSTRATION XIII

LOTTERY WHEEL USED IN THE DRAFT
Union men during 1863 had persisted in their efforts to free Delaware of secessionist influences. They had not been completely successful, but many "disloyalists" and "traitors" had felt their wrath.

The Draft, Political Arrests, and Economic Problems

At the beginning of 1863 Delaware had four regiments in the field, in addition to a company of artillery and a company of cavalry. In the fall of 1863, the Fifth and Sixth Delaware Volunteer Regiments of nine-months men had been organized, but the soldiers were permitted to remain in civil life until called to active duty.21

Delaware's quota under Lincoln's call for troops in May was 2,454, and enrolling headquarters were established in Smyrna. Colonel Edwin Wilmer, who was also commanding officer of the Sixth Regiment, was appointed Provost Marshal to direct the proceedings. Trouble was expected at the first drawing of numbers for the draft on August 12, and the Provost Marshal warned the crowd that the soldiers at the scene had been ordered to shoot with bullets, not blanks, in case of disorder. A young blind man drew the tickets from a glass lottery wheel, which is still preserved in the museum of the Historical Society of Delaware. Fortunately, no disturbances occurred. The first men from New Castle county reported to Smyrna on August 24.

for examination. By the end of September, the draftees from all counties had received medical examinations.\(^2^2\)

Democrats soon complained that an unusually large proportion of the drafted men came from their party. The Republican pointed out that this was explained by the large number of Union men already in the field.\(^2^3\) The Georgetown Messenger reported that men were using their life's savings and selling property to acquire $300 to buy their way out.\(^2^4\) Some Democrats joined clubs, which collected funds to pay the commutation money for members who might be drafted. An alarmed subordinate of Colonel Wilmer's predicted that there "would not be 200 men raised in the whole state by the draft, and nearly all of them from New Castle county, as anti-draft beneficial societies had been formed in the two lower counties, and the copperheads had subscribed heavily to buy off all their men, in consequence of which everyone would be bought off."\(^2^5\)

Reports soon reached the Provost Marshal that some people were encouraging resistance. An employee of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, 

\(^{2^2}\)Gazette, August 9, 25, 1863; Journal, August 14, 1863.

\begin{tabular}{ccc}
New Castle & 1,105 \\
Kent & 606 \\
Sussex & 743 \\
Total & 2,454 \\
\end{tabular}

\(^{2^3}\)Delawarean, August 22, 1863; Republican, September 21, 1863.

\(^{2^4}\)Journal, August 28, 1863. From the Georgetown Messenger.

\(^{2^5}\)D. H. Houston to John Houston, August 29, 1863 (Private Possession). Captain Wenie was the official mentioned.
and Baltimore Railroad was arrested for forming a club to oppose the draft. A schoolmaster in western Kent county in July advised all men to arm themselves; "when the enrolling master came around to shoot him dead & when asked who dun [sic] it, not to say." He expected that thousands would refuse to submit to the draft; in any case, Confederate troops would soon appear from the Virginia counties upon the peninsula to hand Delaware over "to the bosom of President Davis." In Smyrna the enrolling officer was threatened with bodily harm, and in lower Kent county it was reported that combinations were being organized against conscription. Near Milford the enrolling officer was ordered off of one farm, while at the same time the farmer's wife bombarded him with eggs. At Sandtown in western Kent county the home of enrolling officer John Green was surrounded by a dozen men, who fired twenty bullets into it. A note, which was stuck in a split stick in the yard, read:

Mr. John Green
This is to notify that you must resigne [sic] within two days and if you donte [sic] we will kill you at the risk of our Live. you must knot [sic] inrole [sic] another man from tonight your grave is dug now


[27]Captain John Downham to E. Wilmer, July 12, 1863 (Provost Marshal Papers, Letters Received, 1863, War Department, National Archives).


and we will put you in it in the shortest notis [sic] the next notis [sic] will be given by Powder and ball.

Kill Devil

Believing that a majority of the inhabitants in the vicinity were secessionists, Green applied to Wilmer for protection. Thirty cavalry-men visited the area and arrested eight men, who were shortly released after taking an oath of allegiance.30

The draft proceeded slowly, and all possibilities of recruiting were explored. A free Negro who attempted to enlist members of his own race in New Castle was arrested as a non-resident, fined $50, and ordered to deposit a $50 bond to make certain that he would leave the state within five days.31 The Assistant Adjutant General in October notified Governor Cannon that the Union army welcomed either free Negroes or slaves. The latter must have the written consent of their owners, who received up to $300 compensation from the federal government. Cannon officially endorsed the order in December.32

The draft in Delaware had not produced as many men as Republicans had hoped. By November 1, 2,454 men had been accounted for, but only 298 had thus far been forwarded to a general rendezvous; 686 had

30 John Green to E. Wilmer, June 12, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters), 1863, War Department, National Archives).

31 Journal, June 16, 23, 1863; Republican, June 18, June 29, 1863; Journal, September 8, 1863.

32 E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General to Governor W. Cannon, October 26, 1863 (Burton-Cannon Papers, Delaware State Archives) and Governor William Cannon, "Circular", December 11, 1863.
been exempted for physical disability, 420 had paid commutation money, and 219 substitutes had been accepted. Enrollments continued throughout the year.33

The office of the Provost-Marshal was also concerned with disloyalty and secession activities. An official book of arrests was kept; from June 8, 1863 to January 1, 1864, 52 arrests were made. Sometimes a general charge of disloyalty was made, and at other times the indictment was more specific. Many persons were released upon taking an oath of allegiance, some were sent to Fort Delaware, and the fate of others is not indicated. An Irishman in Smyrna was temporarily confined for saying that "his heart beat for the C. S. A. and he wished all the men that went down to fight for the U. S. A. would be killed and thrown into ditches." Another resident in Smyrna was arrested for exclaiming, "I wish all the Union men were in hell.

33Journal, November 6, 1863. The results of the draft were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical disability</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only son of dependent widow</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only son of dependent parents</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only brother of children not 12 having either mother or father</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father of motherless children under 12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two brothers in service</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convicted of felony</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In service March 31, 1863</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliens</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 35 and married</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residents</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid commutation money</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitutes accepted</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitutes accepted (deserted before delivery at rendezvous)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafted men delivered at rendezvous</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed to report</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While old Abe is in office, we are sure to go to Hell." He was soon released, but was rearrested within two weeks for abusive language. Another resident of Smyrna was confined for these words, "Damn such a Government, it is not worth enough powder to blow it to Hell." A Smyrna dentist was ordered to Fort Delaware for drinking to the health of Jefferson Davis, denouncing the government as "a damned despotism," and boasting of having forwarded to the Confederacy twenty-five recruits.\footnote{Arrest Book", 1863 (Provost Marshal Papers, 1863, War Department, National Archives).}

The letters to the Provost Marshal in 1863 are filled with complaints of disloyalty. The custom inspector at Laurel reported in August that many copperheads were visiting a rebel soldier at the home of William Cooper, a Methodist minister. Investigation revealed that the Confederate was Cooper's son; he was arrested just as he was driving away in a borrowed dearburn with merchandise for the South. Three prominent residents of Laurel were subsequently sent to Fort Delaware.\footnote{Joseph L. Bacon to E. Wilmer, August 21, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives); (N. B. Smithers?) to Brigadier-General Tyler, September 4, 1863 (Burton-Cannon Papers, Delaware State Archives); \textit{Journal}, October 13, 1863; Georgetown Union, September 8, 1863. The unsigned letter is in the handwriting of N. B. Smithers, Secretary of State. The men arrested included Joseph S. Bacon, Henry Hearn, state senator William Hitch, William Bradley, William Rust, and Thomas Cannon. The first three mentioned were sent to Fort Delaware.} A Union man in Gumboro in Sussex county reported that a neighbor made "a practice of huraing [sic] for Jeff when he gets tight
and that is frequently."36 Another resident of Gumboro was accused of organizing a band of 200 men near Millsboro to kill the black Republicans; in the few days before federal troops arrived, he expected to accomplish a great deal. A resident of Broad Creek Hundred said that he "would be damned if he would ever let any of his children fight in war, that he had right smart of money and about 2,000 bushels of corn and 1,000 lbs. of pork and wished the southern men had it to support them to fight the damned Yankees." He believed that everyone should resist the draft.37 A citizen of Baltimore Hundred wished that Lincoln and his cabinet would "burn up".38

Evidence that illicit trade was carried on with the enemy disturbed Union men. Thomas M. Rodney, collector of the port of Wilmington, was the principal agent of the treasury department in trying to prevent smuggling. Secretary of the Treasury Chase advised Rodney in January "that most of the contraband goods reaching the Maryland

36E. Adkins to E. Wilmer, October 7, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives).

37John Radish to Francis Burton, August 21, 1863 (Provost-Marshall Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives); Deposition of Thomas Nelson and Benjamin Bowden, August 18, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives).

38Deposition of John Carey, July 30, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives). The deposition accused a resident of saying that "he did wish Abe Lincoln and his hole [sic] Cabinet was burn up and he did not no [sic] why sum [sic] Person did not burne [sic] it up and if he was there or Could get there he would put a slow match to it and burne [sic] it up for he liked Jeff Davis' government the best . . . he wanted this government destroyed."
Peninsula passes on the Delaware Railroad via Bridgeville, Seaford, Laurel, and Salisbury.39 A large shipment of quinine and other drugs for a physician in Vienna, Maryland was confiscated in January; after his loyalty had been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the treasury department, he was released in spite of Rodney's protests.40 In March $5,000 worth of drugs and surgical instruments addressed to persons in Seaford and Bridgeville were confiscated at the express office in Philadelphia.41 Two rebels were arrested in Smyrna with trunks containing silk, pipes, and violin strings destined for the South.42 In April the inspector at Seaford seized in the Nanticoke River a schooner on which were $5,000 worth of medical supplies.43 Another small vessel was also captured in the same month on the Nanticoke with a miscellaneous cargo.44 The federal government imposed a regulation that shippers

39S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury to T. M. Rodney, January 17, 1863 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

40Dr. L. W. Houston to T. M. Rodney, January 5, 1863; Acting Secretary of the Treasury Harrington to T. M. Rodney, January 15, 1863, and S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury to T. M. Rodney, January 17, 1863 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

41Republican, March 12, 1863; Journal, March 10, 1863.

42Republican, March 26, 1863.

43Thomas M. Rodney to S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury April 13, 1863 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

44Thomas M. Rodney to E. G. Bradford, District Attorney, April 15, 1863 (copy) (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
of goods below New Castle were required to file papers that the items were not intended for the Confederacy.\textsuperscript{45}

Democrats must have chuckled when the detested inspector at Seaford himself was arrested for interfering with the arrest of a deserter.\textsuperscript{46} In May six prominent men in Seaford were arrested for engaging in smuggling, and four were sent to the Confederacy.\textsuperscript{47} After the United States District Court in Baltimore condemned two small vessels seized at Seaford in June, "Union Men" in a public letter complained that the press unjustly named the town as the center of the contraband trade of the entire peninsula. The two vessels confiscated were actually captured near Vienna, Maryland. A short time before the Peninsular News and Advertiser had erroneously reported that six vessels had been seized to the astonishment of the citizens of Seaford.\textsuperscript{48} In spite of this protest, there is abundant evidence that Seaford remained the focal point of the traffic until the end of the war.

Political questions disturbed many congregations. In New Castle county churches generally favored a vigorous prosecution of the war, 

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Journal}, April 14, 1863.
  \item \textit{Journal}, March 31, 1863; \textit{Gazette}, March 31, 1863.
  \item \textit{Republican}, May 14, 18, 1863; \textit{Journal}, May 19, 1863; \textit{Gazette}, May 22, 1863; The six men arrested were Dr. Hugh Martin, William B. Horsey, Dr. Joseph Shipley, C. F. Rust, Theodore Price, and John Martin. The first two were shortly released.
  \item \textit{Republican}, September 17, 24, 1863.
\end{itemize}
while in the lower counties they sympathized with the South. A Wilmington newspaper pointed out that every minister in the city endorsed the policy of the Lincoln administration. During the year patriotic sermons by Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian clergymen in the city were praised by the Republican press. The congregation of Central Presbyterian Church passed resolutions approving the "political sermons" of Reverend George Wiswell and increased his salary to $1700. In contrast was the attitude of Reverend James Vallandigham, who was pastor of White Clay Creek Presbyterian Church near Newark and a brother of an Ohio copperhead Congressman; his pro-southern preachings led to his arrest, though he was shortly released after taking an oath of allegiance. The Republican was annoyed when he received a gift of $182 at a church party. A defender of the clergyman declared that his political sentiments matched those of three-fourths, or perhaps nine-tenths, of the people in the neighborhood.

In Kent county the elders of the Presbyterian church in Felton locked Reverend L. C. Lockwood out of the church for supporting the

49 Journal, November 6, 1863.

50 Gazette, February 13, May 8, 1863; Journal, August 4, 11, October 9, 1863; Republican, March 5, 1863. The sermons of these men were praised: Bishop Alfred Lee (Episcopalian), Reverends Kellogg, Aikman, and Wiswell (Presbyterian), Reverend J. S. Dickerson (Baptist) and Daniel George (Methodist).

51 Gazette, February 13, 1863.

52 Ibid., March 20, 1863; Republican, March 12, 1863; Journal, July 21, 1863.
Union party. The Delawarean claimed that his credentials were not in order. The Wilmington Presbytery appointed an investigating committee. Later in the year his preaching in a Methodist church in nearby Canterbury caused a dozen pro-Southerners to "skedaddle"; with another Republican, he was reported to be organizing a loyal church in the community. Finally he became an agent for the Delaware Improvement Company.53

In Sussex county, William Cooper, who had been serving in the Confederate army, was arrested at the home of his father, a Methodist minister in Laurel.54 John Bell Robinson, a native of Delaware and Methodist preacher, wrote a book in 1863 entitled Pictures of Slavery and Anti-Slavery, which argued that the scriptures demonstrated that the natural condition of the Negro was slavery. He was a popular speaker at Democratic meetings.55 The Reverend Isaac Handy, an Old School Presbyterian clergyman, was arrested at the home of his wife's relatives in Bridgeville. He was the pastor of a church in Portsmouth, Virginia and had received special permission from the head of the

53Journal, September 15, 18, 1863; Minutes, Wilmington Presbytery, September 25, 1863 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pa.); Republican, December 17, 1863; John Collins, Special Agent to E. Wilmer, October 17, 1863 (Provost Marshal Letters, 1863, War Department, National Archives). The committee of the Wilmington Presbytery never reported on the matter.

54Republican, March 5, 1863.

55John Bell Robinson, Pictures of Slavery and Anti-Slavery (Philadelphia, 1863), 111. He was born in Prime-Hook Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware. At the time he wrote the book he was living in Philadelphia.
Middle Department to come to Delaware. In a visit to a former charge at Fort Penn in New Castle county, he asserted "that he did not regard the flag as any more than a rag, for it belonged to a government of tyranny and oppression," and he refused to shake hands with the Republican pastor of the church. Rumors circulated that he had once been a chaplain in the Confederate army. For the remainder of the war he was imprisoned in Fort Delaware, where he penned a full description of his experiences under the title of United States Bonds, or Duress by Federal Authority.56

Economically the laboring man suffered from the advancing prices of basic commodities in 1863. Increases in wages lagged behind the rise in the cost of living, and employees, in petitions, frequently called attention to their plight. Coopers along the Brandywine insisted that rates for barrel-making be increased.57 Journeymen

56 Journal, July 28, 1863; Gazette, July 28, August 4, 1863; Republican, July 2, 1863; I. K. Handy, United States Bonds, or Duress by Federal Authority (Baltimore, 1874), 6. According to Handy, he made the following statement about the flag: "I venerated that flag too, Sir, when it represented the Constitution, and proclaimed equal rights—protecting alike, the North and the South. But that, Sir, is no longer the flag of the Union! It is not the old flag! The symbols are the same—but the principles are changed! What is a flag—irrespective of principles? It is simply a painted rag. That flag once represented high, and noble principles. I venerated those principles; and I loved the old ensign because of the principles. But what mean those stars and stripes, today? Not, certainly, what they once meant. Now, when I look upon a United States flag, I think I see written upon its broad folds: ABOLITION; COERCION; DOWNTRODDEN CONSTITUTION; OPPRESSION; TYRANNY!!! Those are not my principles; and I must say to you Colonel, that I have no respect for any flag representing such enormities!"

57 Gazette, February 6, 1863.
ILLUSTRATION XIV

FORT DELAWARE
COMPOSED FOR THE
PIANO
AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO
MAJOR H.S. BURTON
39th U.S. ARTILLERY
BY
T.M. TODD.
Philadelphia LEE & WALKER 7 Market St.
painters began to charge $1.75 for ten hours of work, and master painters, $2.25.58 The wages of carpenters rose to $2 per day, though the editor of the Gazette doubted that this figure would equal the advance in the necessities of life in the past eighteen months.59 Blacksmiths charged more for shoeing horses.60 Wilmington barbers now received eight cents for shaves and fifteen cents for haircuts or shampoos.61 Even the cost of the usual Christmas candy rose twenty-five cents per pound, and the Wilmington police and night watchmen asked the city council for donations of $50 per man.62 Farmers benefited from the high prices of agricultural products, though they faced a labor shortage. Near Odessa in New Castle county twenty-one vessels carried 100,000 baskets of peaches to market at good prices during the summer. A factory in Smyrna employed thirty persons in canning 10,000 tins of fruit.63 The business of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad boomed to such an extent that a second track was laid, and it became possible to travel from Washington to Jersey City without changing cars.64

58Gazette, March 3, 1863.  
59Ibid., March 31, 1863.  
60Journal, January 13, 1863.  
61Gazette, March 16, 1863.  
62Ibid., December 29, 1863.  
63Ibid., September 22, October 26, 1863.  
64Journal, September 22, 1863.
Constant evidences of disaffection in Delaware during 1863 were disturbing to Union men. The efforts of Colonel Wilmer, Thomas M. Rodney, and federal authorities did not seem successful in curbing the secessionists. Opposition only drove secession activities underground. If the Confederate army invaded Delaware or a nearby state, what would happen?

Gettysburg and its Effect upon Delaware

News that Lee's army was advancing towards the border of Pennsylvania in June alarmed Delawareans. Raiding parties might invade Delaware, destroy the DuPont mills, and do other damage. Whether federal troops would be successful in curbing the Confederate forces remained to be seen.

Five companies of the Fifth Delaware Regiment of nine-months men were called out on June 20 for service at Fort Delaware. As they marched through the streets of Wilmington towards the Delaware River, cheers rang from the dense crowds assembled. At the wharf mothers wept for sons, wives for husbands, children for fathers, and maidens for the "objects of their regard." Two companies were sent to guard the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad. Colonel Wilmer in Smyrna received a telegram on Saturday, June 28, asking him to summon the members of the Sixth Delaware Regiment. The next day the

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65 *Journal*, June 23, 1863.

66 *ibid.*, June 23, 1863.
first members of the Regiment arrived in Wilmington, where they were equipped with canteens, knapsacks, and blankets, served a collation, and dispatched to patrol the railroad line. A special train on Sunday picked up the other members of the Regiment in lower Delaware, and they performed similar duties. Within a week most companies of the Sixth Regiment were sent to Fort Delaware to act as guards.67

The ringing of bells in churches and the city hall called the citizens of Wilmington to an emergency meeting on June 29 to discuss the question of defense. A committee of one hundred men was formed, which pledged itself to be responsible for the pay of 500 men for thirty days; 269 men were soon recruited and sent off to guard the railroad line. The city council allotted $1,000 to provide $10 bounties for the first hundred enlisted.68 The Mayor of Wilmington on June 30 appealed to citizens to volunteer for service in some military capacity.69 The Delaware Journal on the same day printed an

67Ibid., June 30, 1863. The headlines of the Journal reflect the excitement of the times; they read, "The Federal Union—It Must be Preserved. Another Delaware Regiment in the Field. The Plowshare Turned into the Sword, and the Pruning Hook into the Spear. The Farmers Leave their Ripening Harvest for the Tented Field of War. Come weal, Come woe, Delaware is for 'Liberty and Union, Now and Forever, One and Inseparable.' The Sixth Delaware Regiment is in Line."

68Gazette, July 3, 1863.

69Ibid., July 3, 1863. "Citizens of Wilmington: The enemy is on the borders. From the latest advices it is evident that he intends to push his forces to Philadelphia, our neighboring city. It is more than probable that when he crosses the Susquehanna in force your homes will be in danger. Every impulse of patriotism and duty calls aloud to you to organize and drill in companies
excited summons for residents to arm themselves.\textsuperscript{70} Governor Cannon on July 1 issued a stirring statement to Delawareans to look after the families of volunteers.\textsuperscript{71} In view of the possible invasion of the immediately. If not possible to defend our city against an overwhelming force, such organization will, at least, give a patriotic sense of security and enable us to co-operate with others who may assist us.

"I earnestly call upon every one capable of bearing arms to enroll himself in some military company and upon all those who have any experience or skill in the profession of arms to take the lead, organizing and drilling such volunteers as may be willing to serve in this emergency."

\textsuperscript{70}Journal, June 30, 1863. The following appeal in heavy print appeared in the newspaper:

"To Arms! To Arms! People of Wilmington, Arouse! The enemy is upon us. No time is to be lost. Let us close our shops, our stores, our places of business and organize for the defense of our State and Country. Old men and young, come forward now. The glorious old flag is about to be trailed in the dust forever, by traitors and rebels; we ask you to stand by that flag and save it from the nation. Delawareans, show your patriotism and rally for the Union, ere it be too late.

"Today, Today. Tomorrow may find the Republic buried in everlasting night. To Arms, then to Arms, and save your homes from desolation, and your free institutions from irretrievable ruin.

"Duty to yourselves calls you; Duty to your country calls you; Duty to God calls you, to forget all else and strike a decisive blow for Liberty and Union."

\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., July 7, 1863. Governor Cannon's proclamation read as follows: "A desperate enemy has invaded the neighboring States of Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, the main reliance of the Government for the transportation from the North of men and munitions of war, is menaced, not only by open, but by marauding Confederates, who, under cover of darkness, threaten to destroy us.

"The defence of your soil lies in keeping open the door of communication, through which reinforcements can be forwarded. The
Delaware state, Major-General Schenck of the Middle Department placed the state under martial law on July 3 with Brigadier-General Tyler in charge. 72

true military line of this State is the bank of the Susquehanna. The most effective way to prevent the spoliation of your house is to keep the enemy outside of it.

"In this emergency an appeal was made to the loyal men of Delaware. They have responded with a readiness that challenges encomium, and a self-sacrificing spirit that extorts admiration. They have left their work-shops, their stores and their fields. The plough stands in the furrow, and the reaper in the grain already white for the harvest. They have abandoned their homes and committed their wives and children to your protection.

"I appeal to you, citizens of Delaware, not to permit their devotion to be unacknowledged or their sacrifices unrewarded. Save their crops, till their fields, succor their families.

"May God have them in his holy keep and incline your hearts to acts of charity and duty."

72Scharf, History of Delaware, I, 352; Gazette, July 7, 1863. General Schenck's proclamation read as follows:

"By virtue of my authority as the General commanding this Department, and in view of the present existing necessity for providing with special care against armed rebellion, threatening invasion from without and secret traitors, plotting against the public safety, within, I do hereby declare and establish Martial Law throughout the State of Delaware.

"The suspension of Civil Government is not, however, intended to extend beyond what seems absolutely necessary for the objects in view. All the Courts, Tribunals, and political functionaries of State, county and city authority will continue in the discharge of their duties as in time of peace; only in no way interfering with the exercises of the predominant power assumed and asserted by the military authorities. All peaceful citizens are required to remain quietly at their homes and in pursuit of their ordinary avocations, except as they may be possibly subject to call for personal service, or other necessary requisitions for military purposes or uses hereafter.

"Seditious language, or mischievous practices, tending to the encouragement of rebellion are especially prohibited and will be
Business was completely prostrated. Many stores were closed, and the staff of factories depleted. Several banks lost employees, a leather manufacturer sent off 42 men, half the workers in the shipyards marched away, the DuPont mills had their working force reduced by 200 men, and the Central Presbyterian Church suffered from the want of Sunday School teachers.73

The Fourth of July on Saturday began quietly in Wilmington. In view of the threat to the safety of the city, there were few firecrackers exploded, little firing of pistols, and less ringing of the bells than usual. Only a handful of people attended the services at the city hall and heard the annual reading of the Declaration of Independence. In the evening arrived the news that Meade had repulsed Lee. The Journal issued an extra, jubilant crowds thronged the streets, and a great display of fireworks followed. Fifty guns were fired in honor of the Union victory.74

promptly made the subject of observation and treatment. Traitorous and dangerous persons must expect to be dealt with as the public safety may require. 'To save the country is paramount to all other considerations.'

"When the occasion for this proclamation passes by, no one will be more rejoiced than the undersigned to have the entire supremacy of the civil power restored and to return to the normal condition of a country at peace and a government sustained by a united people.

Robert C. Schenck
Major-General Commanding."

73Journal, June 23, 1863.
74Journal, July 7, 1863; Republican, July 9, 1863.
Sunday was another day of excitement. Crowds hovered around the depot all day, seeking details of the battle and inquiring about friends. The bellman announced that a train load of wounded soldiers would pass through the station at eleven o'clock in the morning, and five thousand citizens appeared with all kinds of food. The churches were almost deserted. Men of all classes, including clergymen, visited the headquarters of the Union League to find out the latest news.75

During the next few days hundreds of citizens met every train; as one resident wrote, "the whole City resolves itself into a Volunteer Refreshment Saloon!! and send food & refreshment to them while they stop." The Delaware Association for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Soldiers sent several representatives to Gettysburg with medical supplies; they also compiled a list of Delawareans wounded and killed in battle.76

Two days later on July 7, news arrived in Wilmington in the afternoon that Vicksburg had surrendered. Anna Ferris penned an interesting description of the reaction of Wilmingtonians to the event. She wrote:

About two o'clock this day, just as we were taking our afternoon naps, we were awakened by the clamor of the bells all over town, evidently sending abroad some intimation of

75Republican, July 9, 1863; Journal, July 7, 1863; Anna Ferris, Diary, July 10, 1863 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pa.).

76Clement B. Smith to Bishop Alfred Lee, July 7, 1863 (Civil War Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
good tidings. As the recent victories were quite enough
reason for their joyous peal, I did not at first think of
anything else, but looking out the window soon perceived
there was some new excitement. The Stars & Stripes floated
from every pole, people stopped to congratulate each other
in the streets, & the sound of cannon soon began to fill
the air, & the joyful tidings "Vicksburg has surrendered"
was heard on all sides. The Dispatches from Admiral Porter
announcing its surrender on the 4th were printed & distrib­
uted.

Tonight the League Rooms were illuminated & Rockets &
Fireworks still flash across the sky, although it is now
midnight.

It is 18 months since the bells rang for any victories.
Now we feel that our National Anniversary is consecrated
again & sing Te Deum with thankful heart.77

The Journal issued an extra; bells pealed from churches, engine
houses, and workshops; and the firing of pistols, firecrackers, and
cannon welcomed the announcement. In the evening a brass band headed
an impromptu procession through the streets, and at intervals cheers
were given for Grant, Meade, the President, and the Union.78

Delawareans became excited at the proximity of Confederate
forces. Mrs. Alfred DuPont feared that invaders might burn the powder
mills and the homes near them; if rebels appeared, she planned to drop
"bottles of wine into the pond less the marauders should increase their
appetite for destruction by drinking it."

77Anna Ferris, Diary, July 7, 1863 (Friends' Historical Society,
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

78Journal, July 10, 1863; Republican, July 9, 1863.

79Anna Brinckle to S. C. Brinckle, July 8, 1863. (Typed
Brinckle Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
NEWSPAPER EXTRA ANNUCING THAT LEE'S RETREAT HAD BEEN CUT OFF

Delaware Journal, July 7, 1863

**EXTRA**

Journal and Statesman

Tuesday Morning, July 7, 1863
10 o'clock, A. M.

**Latest from the Army.**

**LEE'S RETREAT CUT OFF.**

North Carolina proposes to return to her allegiance.

A private letter has just been received by a gentleman of high standing in this city, from a distinguished source in Washington, and is entitled to the highest credit. We extract the following:

1st. We have at least 25,000 prisoners from the Gettysburg battles.
2d. Couch has joined Meade with 40,000 fresh men.
3d. A pontoon train has just gone up to Edward's Ferry to bring across 35,000 of Long men who have come up from near Richmond to join in the effort to utterly annihilate the retreating army.
4th. French has destroyed all the pontoon bridges left by Lee at Williamsport, Md.
5th. We sent up in that region on Friday and Saturday 10,000 cavalry and 8,200 artillery to fall upon Lee in his retreat.
6th and last. Gov. Vance has proposed to General Foster that a Union army of sufficient strength to protect the people be placed in North Carolina, and that State will resume her position in the Union.

**Beulah surrenders on the 27th July**
our mills are stopped, crops cut & laying in the fields—our gardners & coachmen gone—our young nephews feed their mother's cows & water the horses &c. Two hundred men stepped out of the Powder Mills on the receipt of a telegraphic message & two nephews, partners in that great concern, went off as Captains of companies—this Regt., the 5th, it was understood was to be a home guard—Surely the tables have turned on us.80

Rumors persisted that persons in New Castle had extended Lee's army an invitation to visit the town, that a real estate agent named Bright had tried to betray Wilmington to the Confederates, and that Thomas F. Bayard and his friends had formed a branch of the Knights of the Golden Circle.81 William Bright, a Democratic candidate for the state house

80Admiral S. F. duPont to W. Whedden, July 3, 1863 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

81Anna Brinckle to John Brinckle, July 15, 1863 and Anna Brinckle to Sam Brinckle, July 16, 1863 (Typed Brinckle Letters, Historical Society of Delaware). The first letter included information that Bright planned to betray Wilmington and was imprisoned in Fort Delaware with a 32 pound shot attached to his leg, which Anna Brinckle called "a mild punishment." She added that "it is known that Bayard and a number of the others, held frequent meetings in the Friendship Engine house—no doubt hatching treason. It wd. make me happy to see old Bayard and son chained with balls suited to their calibre."

The second letter noted that "there was actually a conspiracy in Wilmington to put everything into their hands, and a real estate agent named Bright with some others are now in Fort Delaware. The correspondence was intercepted and plans and full directions captured. Bright wrote that shipyards, machine shops, and powder works were wholly unprotected, and advised the Rebels to come as soon as possible. Was it not diabolical? Bayard and his clan hold meetings in the Friendship Engine House, and it is believed they are organized as Knights of the Golden Circle. I should be delighted to convict that old reprobate."

The Republican press frequently accused James A. Bayard and his son of being members of Knights of the Golden Circle, but the charges cannot be substantiated by evidence. Cf. ante, 133.
of representatives in 1862, was soon arrested and sent to Fort Delaware. The indictment said nothing about correspondence with rebels, but charges were made that he had said that Confederate bank notes were as good as United States paper money, that the war was cruel and unnecessary, and that the South had the right to secede. Brigadier-General Tyler informed the Middle Department that the arrest was "good for the community. Another victory will make Delaware a loyal state." During these exciting days one man was arrested for cheering for Jeff Davis, and the editor of the Gazette was threatened by a mob for displaying a flag at half mast.

The Second Delaware Regiment had given an excellent account of itself at Gettysburg, but some Delawareans fought on the other side. Four prisoners at Fort Delaware, including a relative of Willard Saulsbury, were natives of the state. A former New Castle resident had lost a foot at Gettysburg, while fighting for the Confederacy. Two other men, the sons of prominent Sussex county Democrats, were also

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82 Journal, July 10, 1863.
83 Brigadier-General Tyler to Colonel Piatt, July 11, 1863 (Letters Received, Middle Department, 1863, War Department, National Archives).
84 Journal, July 10, 1863.
85 Ibid., July 28, 1863; Gazette, July 31, 1863. The prisoners included Gilley Smith, son of Nicholas O. Smith of Marshy Hope Bridge, Ezekiel Saulsbury, "a relative of our worthy senator," James Cooper, son of Ezekiel Cooper of Laurel, and Daniel Satterfield of Milford.
ILLUSTRATION XVI

PRISONERS ARRIVING AT FORT DELAWARE AFTER VICKSBURG

THE ARRIVAL OF TWO THOUSAND VICKSBURG PRISONERS AT FORT DELAWARE.
glimpsed upon the battlefield. Hiram Ross Messick of Seaford was
confined in Fort McHenry after being captured at Gettysburg.\footnote{Journal, July 10, 1863; Gazette, July 10, 1863. John R.
Lambson lost a foot and the sons of Saulsbury, Dean of Dover, and a
Mr. Horsey of Horsey's Crossroads in Sussex County were recognized.}
Samuel
Boyer Davis, the grandson of a hero of the war of 1812, was being
treated at a hospital in Chester, Pennsylvania for wounds, when he
escaped. After walking to New Castle, he took a train to Dover, drove
a carriage to Easton, Maryland, and eventually reached the southern
lines.\footnote{Samuel Boyer Davis, Escape of a Confederate Officer from
Prison. (Norfolk, 1892), 9-12.}

Fort Delaware became crowded with prisoners. On March 1, there
were 1,000 prisoners; by July 1, 1863 there were 3,576 men confined;
by the end of August the total was 12,787. The Reverend Isaac Handy's
book presents an interesting description of conditions there. Harper's
Magazine printed a picture of prisoners entering Fort Delaware. After
taking an oath of allegiance, two hundred were used as guards, and
five hundred were declared ready for any service. The Second Delaware
Battery, which was being organized during the summer, was composed
almost entirely of southern Union men, who had been former prisoners.
A popular song was published for the piano entitled "Sounds from Fort
Delaware."\footnote{Gazette, August 28, 1863; Republican, February 28, 1863; T. M.
Todd, "Sounds from Fort Delaware", (Philadelphia, 1863). The song was
"respectfully dedicated to Major H. S. Burton, 3rd U. S. Artillery";
a copy is found at the Wilmington Library. Rev. Isaac W. K. Handy
wrote an account of his prison experiences in United States Bonds, or
Duress by Federal Authority, (Baltimore, 1871), \emph{et passim}.}
Delawareans had been seriously alarmed by the threat of invasion by Lee's forces. Union men had cooperated to organize defense units. General Schenck declared that it was due to Colonel Wilmer more than anyone else that the line of communication between Washington and Philadelphia remained intact. It was disgusting to Republicans that some persons would have welcomed the invaders and that some Delawareans were found fighting upon the Confederate side at Gettysburg. Union men felt encouraged by Lee's defeat, and their political morale became high. With some justification they charged that the Democrats in lower Delaware did little to defend the state from threatened invasion. The facts were that industrial Wilmington seemed most seriously threatened and therefore took the most active part in the defense measure; men regardless of political affiliation had joined defense corps in the city. Men in lower Delaware organized more slowly, but some forces did come from Kent and Sussex counties. Undoubtedly some extremists would have welcomed Lee's army, but they were few. Throughout the summer and in the fall campaign, Republicans claimed that another "proof" of the disloyalty of all Democrats had been demonstrated. Vicksburg and Gettysburg had been glorious Union victories; could the Republicans attain similar success upon the political battlefield in November?

89Edwin Wilmer to Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, September 21, 1865 (Court Martial Papers of Edwin Wilmer, War Department, National Archives).
Chapter XIII

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1863

The death of Representative William Temple in May necessitated another election. The Republicans nominated a strong candidate and campaigned vigorously; the Democrats selected a weak nominee and did little to further his chances. Were the Democrats overconfident, or did they expect at the last moment that federal troops would appear to pluck victory from their hands and that for this reason strenuous efforts were useless?

The Campaign

The Republicans met in Dover in October to make a nomination. The Journal headlined the proceedings in this manner: "Unconditional Union State Convention. Patriotic Resolutions. The Entire War Policy of the Government Endorsed. Emancipation War Policy of the Government Endorsed. Emancipation Declared a Necessity Founded upon Justice and Right. The Enlistment of Colored Troops Approved. The First and Second Delaware Regiments to have New Battle Flags. Nomination of Nathaniel B. Smithers. Cheers for the Union--The President--The Army--The War--Governor Cannon and the Nominee, &c, &c." The Republicans in the state no longer concealed that they wished to free the Negroes in Delaware as quickly as possible; even Negro enlistments were encouraged. The war policy of the administration was approved; new colors for the
First and Second Delaware Regiments were provided. Nathaniel B. Smithers, a well-known Dover lawyer and staunch Republican, was nominated for Congress.¹

The Democratic convention in October reaffirmed the platform drawn up in 1862. The New Castle county delegates nominated for Congress Alexander Johnson, a prominent politician, but those from Kent and Sussex counties favored Charles H. Brown of Dover, who thus received the nomination. Brown was an elderly man, who had retired to the state capital after a long political career in Pennsylvania. In his acceptance speech he advised negotiations with the South to end the war and denounced "the usurpations, despotism, and tyranny of the Lincoln administration."² Apparently he was the choice of the Saulsburys. Henry Ridgely had written to Thomas F. Bayard in May that his brother, Edward, was uninterested in the nomination, that Brown was an unsuitable candidate in view of his recent arrival in Delaware, and that John A. Nicholson was a better choice. But the advice of the Bayards was not asked.³

In the month before the election, the Republicans waged a vigorous campaign. Sixteen political rallies were arranged for New Castle county, seventeen for Kent, and fifteen for Sussex.⁴

¹Journal, October 9, 1863; Republican, October 13, 1863.
²Delawarean, October 10, 1863.
³Henry Ridgely to T. F. Bayard, May 29, 1863 (Bayard Papers, VIII, Library of Congress).
⁴Journal, October 30, 1863.
ratification meeting in Wilmington was claimed to be the largest political gathering in the state since 1840. 5 Speakers from nearby states swarmed to Delaware to take part in the off-year campaign. Again and again, orators declared that all Democrats were traitors, whose disloyalty was demonstrated by the actions of their representatives in the last session of the legislature. 6 Brown was attacked as a "Delaware Vallandigham" and an outworn political hack. From his political experiences in Pennsylvania came the nickname of "Tinder Box", and much was made of his inability to explain satisfactorily the query, "Where was them $190?" The statement of Delaware's illustrious son, John M. Clayton, about Brown in the campaign of 1864 was often cited, "To set about the business of detecting and exposing errors and falsehoods, when uttered by such a man as your Charles Brown, would be like fishing with a pin hook. I have neither time nor taste for such sport as that." 7 The Georgetown Union believed that "every vote cast for Brown is in the endorsement of treason and will gladden the heart of Jefferson Davis; every vote cast for Smithers is for Delaware and the Union and will gladden

5 Ibid., October 20, 1863; Republican, October 19, 1863.
6 Ibid., November 16, 1863.
7 Gazette, November 3, 1863; Journal, November 6, 1863. Newspapers explained that as a state legislator in Pennsylvania he had once requested the members of the legislature privately to reject a bill, though he had to vote for it because his district was a "tinder box". Supposedly he had never explained satisfactorily the use of $190 given him for political purposes.
the heart of the President!" The Journal asserted that the election of Brown would cause as much rejoicing in Richmond as a Confederate military victory.8

The Democrats were peculiarly apathetic about the campaign and nominee. Few political meetings were held, and Brown's name was infrequently mentioned in the Gazette and Delawarean. The usual charges were made that the Black Republicans were emancipationists, friends of the Negro, and responsible for numerous violations of civil liberties.9

The "indefatigable" Governor made arrangements for the election. Admiral duPont informed a friend on November 1 that Cannon had just returned from Washington where he had been promised the use of troops and that the announcement of the day for the election was shortly expected. Brigadier-General Tyler wrote the Middle Department on October 27 that Cannon had indicated "his personal interest" in the returns by arranging for the return of some Delaware Regiments to vote.10 Whether Cannon wanted soldiers because the Democrats would cause election disturbances or because Smithers could not be elected without their help is difficult to decide.

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8Georgetown Union, November 13, 1863; Journal, November 17, 1863.

9Gazette, November 13, 1863.

10Admiral S. F. duPont to Mr. Gerhard, November 1, 1863 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation) and Brigadier General Tyler to Colonel Piatt, October 27, 1863 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1863, War Department, National Archives).
The election date was finally fixed for November 19. Major-General Schenck on November 13 issued Order No. 59, which declared in a preamble that

it is known that there are many evil disposed persons, now at large in the State of Delaware, who have been engaged in rebellion against the lawful government, or have given aid or comfort or encouragement to others so engaged, or who do not recognize their allegiance to the United States, and who may avail themselves of the indulgence of the authority which tolerates their presence, to attempt to take part in or embarrass the approaching special election in that State.

Therefore, the election officials were to administer oaths of allegiance to voters suspected of disloyalty. Governor Cannon in a proclamation upon the same day urged Delawareans to obey the order. A few days later soldiers from the Third and Fourth Regiments arrived to vote, and Brigadier-General Tyler was given command of Maryland troops, who were to be stationed at each polling place.

The Democrats were outraged by announcement of the oath and of military interference, of which they first heard on November 16. A hastily organized meeting of leading Democrats from New Castle county was held in New Castle on November 17. An appeal was issued to Democratic election officials and voters in the county to boycott the

11 Delawarean, November 21, 1863.
12 Ibid., November 21, 1863.
13 Ibid., November 21, 1863; Journal, November 20, 1863.
polls, with the hope that the House of Representatives would declare the election null and void.\textsuperscript{14} Democrats in lower Delaware followed the same course.\textsuperscript{15}

The Election

The result was that only thirteen Democrats in the entire state cast ballots! The Georgetown Union announced the returns with these

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Gazette}, November 20, 1863. The Address to the Democrats of New Castle County read as follows: "To our astonishment and regret, however, we are informed by a public military and civil order dated November 13th, 1863 and made known to us on the 16th of the same month—that the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens of the State of Delaware to regulate their own Elections, and make and prescribe all qualifications for voters at the ensuing special election on the 19th instant, have been utterly subverted, and new qualifications and tests unauthorized by the Constitution of the United States, and contrary to the Constitution and the laws of the State of Delaware, imposed upon her citizens by Military Power. With the several and collective knowledge and belief of the undersigned, they utterly deny the existence within this State, now or in any past time, of associations of individuals hostile to the welfare of the Government of the United States and of its Constitution and laws—and considering the said military order (to which the unauthorized recognition of the Executive of Delaware gives no sanction) as uncalled for, illegal and unjust, do earnestly protest against the same and against the interference of the Federal government in the election held within our State, and in view of the presence and intimidation of a large military force of the United States in our State, and the indisposition of our people to produce collision with the armed forces of the General Government—do hereby recommend to the Democrats of New Castle County, whether officers or Election voters, to submit to their disfranchisement and take no part in the said Special Election—but rely upon the official oaths and consciences of the next House of Representatives in the Congress of the United States to declare null and void an Election so held and conducted contrary to the laws of the State of Delaware in that behalf, and controlled by a power unknown to the Constitution and Laws of our State." The address was signed by such sterling Democrats as Thomas F. Bayard, William G. Whiteley, John Merritt, and Samuel Jefferson.

\textsuperscript{15}Delawarean, November 21, 1863.
No Compromise with Traitors. Delaware Sustains the Administration.
Peace to be Secured by the Ballot and Bullet. Smithers' Majority in 
Sussex County 2,010. In the State 7,299. Bring out the Big Guns and
let them Rip!"16

The Delawarean complained of the military interference. Condi-
tions in Delaware were similar to those in Poland, with armed bands
being sent to make known the wishes of a despot. Smithers' fear that
he would be defeated in spite of outside speakers and greenbacks was
the real reason for the presence of troops. The refusal of 9,000
free men to vote was a great moral victory.17 The Gazette took a
similar stand.18 The Georgetown Messenger was mystified as to why
Order No. 59 had been issued to the inhabitants of a loyal state.19
The Journal explained why Republicans felt that troops were necessary;
General Schenck had "received intelligence that the Copperheads in-
tended to make a riotous demonstration at the polls, for the purpose
of preventing the loyal men from exercising the elective franchise."20

A report from the Senate Committee on Military Affairs in the
next session of Congress approved the use of troops. Investigation

16Georgetown Union, November 20, 1863. The final figures for
Smithers were 8,220 and 13 for Brown.

17Delawarean, November 24, 1863.

18Gazette, November 24, 1863.

19Delawarean, December 5, 1863. From the Georgetown Messenger.

20Journal, November 20, 1863.
ILLUSTRATION XVII

REPRESENTATIVE NATHANIEL B. SMITHERS

N. B. Smithers
revealed "that a state of affairs existed in Delaware not less deplorable than that which prevailed in Kentucky, and evince the same bitter hostility to the national administration, its principles and policy—a hostility not surpassed in its style of denunciation even by the rebel journals published at Richmond." A Delaware statute providing for the arrest of persons responsible for military interference at elections, "falling little short of a declaration of war against the United States is plainly in violation of the Federal Constitution." Order No. 59 was "justified not only by the state of disaffection notoriously existing in that State, but by the acts of hostile legislation which we have cited." 21

There was less reason for interference in the election of 1863 than in 1862. The campaign was extremely orderly and no evidence that disorder might occur appeared in the press. The author believes that the desire to elect a Republican congressman was the paramount motive, which induced Cannon to ask for troops.

21 Journal, April 5, 15, 1864; Delawarean, April 23, 1864.
Chapter XIV

POLITICAL FEELING IN 1864

Political feeling was less bitter in 1864 than in previous years. Democrats and Republicans appear to have arrived at a modus vivendi. Governor Cannon and the legislature continued to clash, Saulsbury repeatedly attacked the Lincoln administration in the Senate, and political arrests were common, but much of the bitterness and tension common in 1862 and 1863 had disappeared. The Democrats knew that disturbances would lead to arrest and interference by federal troops, and some of their activities went underground. The Republicans at last realized that "unnecessary" arrests and violence persuaded many people to become Democrats, and a milder policy was followed. A subject of great interest to the Governor, legislature, and people was the draft.

The Legislature and the Draft

The unhappy relations between Governor Cannon and the legislature continued throughout 1864. The Governor's brief message in January mainly renewed recommendations that he had made previously. He requested that the legislature appropriate $425 as Delaware's share of establishing a national cemetery at Gettysburg, that land near Lewes be ceded to the federal government without any restrictions for a fort, that a bounty be provided to encourage the enlistment of Negro and
white soldiers, and that provision be made for soldiers' families.\(^1\)

The legislature passed few acts of a public nature. Without exception the measures that Cannon requested were turned down. Even a motion in the house to thank the Delaware soldiers in the field and to express words of consolation to the families of deceased volunteers was defeated by a party vote of 14 to 7. The *Journal*, in a square with black edges, printed the uncapitalized names of the members who had defeated the bill.\(^2\)

The only significant measure to become law was "An Act for the Relief of Persons Subject to Military Duty." It provided that white persons who enlisted for three years prior to March 1, 1864, would receive a bounty of $200. If a white man was drafted and desired to avoid military service, he might deposit $100 with three commissioners appointed for the purpose; $200 would be added from state funds to provide the necessary $300 for commutation. A sum of $500,000 was allotted to set the plan in operation. Since the Governor did not possess the veto power, he could do nothing but express his personal disapproval of the law.\(^3\) The brief session adjourned on February 12.

A great cry rose in the Republican press over the unsatisfactory record of the legislature. A Kent county resident advocated the use of a hemp cord or a journey to Fort Delaware for the Democratic

\(^1\) *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, 1864* (Dover, 1864), 20-23.

\(^2\) *Journal*, February 9, 1864.

\(^3\) *Laws of the State of Delaware, 1864* (Dover, 1864), 450-451.
members. He believed that the annals of legislative bodies throughout the world could be searched in vain for an act comparable to the bounty law, which encouraged men not to fight to defend their country; loyal men were taxed to keep rebel sympathizers out of the army. The refusal to appropriate funds for a Gettysburg memorial was "the last feather that breaks the camel's back." A Dover resident thought that the spirits of Revolutionary martyrs called upon the men of Kent and Sussex counties to elect a different legislature next year; Delaware was the only state that had refused to set aside money for the Gettysburg project. The Democratic legislators should be arrested by federal troops. Governor Cannon asked for dollar contributions to the Gettysburg memorial and Union men oversubscribed the fund.

Lincoln issued calls for troops in February, March, and July, and Delaware lagged in meeting its quotas. Governor Cannon called a special session of the legislature in late July to consider the

4Republican, February 25, March 3, 1864.

5Journal, February 16, 1864. The appeal read in part: "Men of Kent and Sussex, scions of the patriots of the Revolution, the martyr sires who fell at Trenton and Camden, call upon you to be up and doing and elect men to the General Assembly in November next, who will not refuse to vote aid to the starving wives and children of our volunteers; or deny to our gallant sons the need of praise for their heroic deeds, nor yet calmly and deliberately cast the foul blot on the escutcheon of our glorious little Commonwealth of being the only State north of the Mason & Dixon's line, that has interposed obstacles to procuring recruits for the army, by the passage of a measure to pay the commutation fee."

6Ibid., April 1, 1865. By this time $528 had been received.
unsatisfactory bounty law and the draft. Congress earlier in the month had abolished commutation. The Democrats were in bitter opposition to increasing the bounty. Thomas F. Bayard wrote to one of the members of the General Assembly that he had noted Cannon's proclamation asking for an appropriation "to carry on this great John Brown raid--sometimes called in mockery, 'a war for the Union.'" Bayard had been "sickened and pained" by the passage of the act of January, though it had been made palatable by the commutation provision. He asked the legislative member to use his influence to reject Cannon's proposition "in toto." "The insolence of this so-called 'Governor'--" he wrote, "a wretch holding a place obtained by fraud, perjury and military force--for which nature gave him no single qualification--nor to which was he ever called by the vote of our people, now presuming to call upon a Legislative majority of State-Rights Peace Democrats to vote moneys, to be expended under his direction to raise troops, who are first, to be used to reelect Lincoln, and then to spread new fury and devastation among Southern homes." If Lincoln secured half the men that he requested, the entire nation except New England would be placed under martial law. "For God's sake," he advised, "let Delaware men consider that the negro substitutes they may furnish will be their guards at the polls--and their jailers in Bastilles!" If the draft were carried through, all hopes of peace and civil liberty would disappear for a generation.

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8Thomas F. Bayard to James M. Williams, July 26, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).
In a message to the General Assembly on July 28, Cannon reported that the state thus far had provided 8,743 men for the Union armies. Under the bounty act, the state had paid $47,000 to volunteers and $182,110 in commutation fees. On July 1, the state's deficiency was 814 men, and the call of July 18 increased the total to 3,259. He recommended that both white and black men be encouraged to enlist by liberal bounties, in order that the draft might be kept out of the state. The Governor was requested by the General Assembly to provide statistics about Negro enlistments in the state, but he replied that the office of the Provost Marshal was the proper source for such information. Resolutions directed the clerks of the two houses to return to the Governor his communication upon Negro soldiers "as unworthy of their consideration and unfit to remain upon the files of either house."

Towards the end of the brief session, a joint committee reported upon the Governor's message. If Cannon really wished to exempt the state from the draft, he would advocate ending the war by compromise and concession. What was the Governor's reputation?

No one has contributed so much as he has done to the unjust and cruel oppression of the people of the State. By direct appeals to Federal power, he has caused a majority of the legal voters of this State to be deprived by military force of the enjoyment of their constitutional rights as electors, that he and those with whom he politically acts might profit from their injuries. He has caused some of them unjustly and unlawfully to be

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9House Journal, 1864, 186-190.

10Ibid., 1864, 198-200; Laws, 1864, h92.
dragged from their homes and to be incarcerated in military prisons, and to experience sufferings greater than those generally meted out to convicted felons. He has caused fathers and mothers, wives and children, relatives and friends, to shed tears of bitterness on account of the wrongs inflicted through his agency, and from no nobler motive than that he and others, against the will of the people, might obtain and be continued in political power in this State.

His message demonstrated "that his principal, if not sole object, in convening the General Assembly, was that he might have an opportunity to recommend the passage of an act by them providing the ways and means to enable him to recruit negro soldiers." The latter were a class "little elevated above savage tribes" and completely unfitted in every way to become soldiers. Before adjournment on August 12, the General Assembly passed an act, which provided for $200 bounties for white volunteers who enlisted before September 5, 1864. A white person who secured a white substitute was allotted $500. It was known that if Delaware's quota was not filled by September 5, another draft would be necessary.

In proportion to its population, Delaware had already contributed generously to the northern army, and Union men, especially in New Castle county, were determined that the quota should be met. Citizens in five wards in Wilmington offered $100 bounties for volunteers; with the addition of gifts from the state and federal governments a recruit would receive $400. The Wilmington city council set

12Laws, 1864, 481-482.
aside $15,000 to be divided among the wards.\textsuperscript{13} Substitutes were scarce, and their price rose in proportion to the demand. Substitute brokers offered $800 for three-year service, and a Wilmington business man paid $750 for a substitute.\textsuperscript{14} Wilmington by its exertions avoided the draft, but in rural New Castle county and elsewhere deficiencies made necessary another spin of the lottery wheel in the city hall in late September.\textsuperscript{15}

An adjourned session of the legislature in late October passed two laws concerning elections. One act encouraged citizens who were prevented from voting by the action of Delawareans to bring civil suit for trespass. Another provided that if troops appeared, five or more electors might withdraw, elect an inspector, and legally cast their ballots at any place in the hundred.\textsuperscript{16} A joint resolution protested against military interference in elections. It was charged that "evil disposed persons, influenced solely by selfish and partisan considerations, by false and scandalous misrepresentations" had brought a large number of soldiers into the state in November, 1862. \textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{13}Republican, August 22, 1864; Journal, July 8, September 2, 1864.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., July 8, 1864; William Canby, Diary, July 26, 1864.

\textsuperscript{15}Gazette, September 6, 20, 1864; Journal, September 23, 1864.

\textsuperscript{16}Laws, 1864, 510-519.

\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
 & Deficiency on September 6 & Deficiency on September 20 \\
\hline
Rural New Castle & 150 & 241 \\
Kent & 438 & 376 \\
Sussex & 540 & 173 \\
Total & 1428 & 1090 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
same false and scandalous misrepresentations, the same persons actuated by the same dishonorable motives to accomplish the same dishonorable purposes—the obtaining of a political party triumph by the sacrifice of the Constitutional rights of the qualified electors of the state—" obtained military forces in November, 1863. The resolution declared "that there never has been at any time since the commencement of the existing deplorable civil war, and there is not now, any necessity or justification whatever for the presence of any military force at the elections held or to be held in this state, for the preservation of the public peace or for any purpose whatever." The members of the General Assembly hoped that troops would not appear in the coming election.17

The Governor and the legislature continued their tug of war during 1864, though it had not been as violent as in 1863. The principal points at issue involved bounties for enlistments, relief for the families of soldiers, and military interference at elections. The legislature hampered Cannon in every way possible, but he proceeded nonchalantly along his way with the approval of Washington officials and Union men.

Senator Saulsbury Carries on Alone

Saulsbury continued his fight against the tyranny of the Lincoln administration throughout 1864, but Bayard to the surprise of many Delawareans resigned his office in January. The Senate in

17House Journal, 1864, 257-258.
July, 1862 had passed a resolution that newly-elected Senators must take an oath of allegiance; after much debate the requirement was extended to all members of the upper house in January, 1864. Bayard came forward and took the oath, but delivered a speech of protest. He contended that a test oath was repugnant to both "the letter and spirit of the Constitution" and that it established "a precedent, which, in my judgment, is eminently dangerous, if not entirely subversive of a fundamental principle of representative government."

In recent years he had witnessed these things in Delaware:

Standing almost alone in the Senate, he had lost hope that he could any longer be of service to his country or state, and he was ready to retire from the political arena to the repose of private life. He submitted his resignation to the Delaware legislature upon January 29. The General Assembly commended his record and elected George Riddle, a New Castle county manufacturer, to the Senate. Admiral duPont wrote a friend that Bayard's "resignation was not understood even by his friends" and that there was "considerable surprise" at the choice of
Riddle. Probably the principal reason for Bayard's resignation was his weariness at a losing fight in the Senate. At various times he had mentioned retiring, but had continued in office. From the practical point of view since he had taken the required oath, there was no reason why he could not continue as a Senator. Riddle seldom spoke and was absent for long periods from the Senate. Saulsbury became Delaware's only effective representative in the upper house for the next two years.

Senator Howard, a member of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, attacked the disloyal record of the Delaware legislature in a speech in March. A resolution in the General Assembly on January 29, 1863 had emphasized that the federal government was destroying the liberties of the people and that the legislature could "give no aid or countenance to a war for such purposes." The Michigan statesman regarded the resolution "as tantamount to an ordinance of secession; it is a declaration that they will take no part in this war because, in their opinion, it is unconstitutional and unjust." Had the rebels themselves in resolution or journal ever displayed greater hostility to the American government than was evinced in this statement? One law passed by the legislature provided for the arrest of Delawareans bringing troops into the state at election time; if the President of

18 Congressional Globe, I (38th Congress, 1st Session, 1863-1864), 341-342; 418; House Journal, 1864, 95-96. Bayard should have referred to "Order No. 59", rather than "Order No. 55". S. F. duPont's letter to H. W. Davis was dated January 31, 1864 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).
the United States resided in that state, he might be arrested "under this Draconian act of great and mighty Delaware." The use of troops at polling places was abundantly justified under such circumstances.\(^1\)

Willard Saulsbury was highly indignant at the speech of Senator Howard. In his opinion, the legislature was a loyal body, and military interference in elections served the sole purpose of seeing that Republicans were returned to office. In part, he said:

> For myself, I have no idea that this military interference with the elections in the adhering States of the Union has been prompted by any patriotic consideration, or any desire whatever to preserve the Union or to regard the Constitutional rights of the people. I believe that it has resulted and resulted alone from a desire to perpetuate political power in the hands of those who now have it, and to give to them the control in the future over the destinies of this people; and that they are now willing that the people of the adhering states, in which there has been not one particle of attempt to oppose any action of the Federal Government by force since the commencement of the present troubles, shall be trusted with the free exercise of their rights as citizens, lest the judgment of that people should be against the policy of the party in power and against the perpetuation of that party power in the future.

He read voluminous extracts from the report of the committee of the legislature appointed to investigate the election of 1862 to prove that the Democrats were loyal and that the Republicans were needlessly worried about a disturbance at that time. "From the beginning of these troubles," he declared, "there has not been a meeting of even two men in the State, much less a meeting of any political party, much less any combination of any considerable portion of the people,

\(^1\)Congressional Globe, II (38th Congress, 1st Session, 1863-1864), Appendix, 97-98.
to obstruct, by force, intimidation, or otherwise, the execution of
any Federal law, or any attempt to carry that State out of the Union,
or to persuade it to be unfaithful to its obligations to the Consti-
tution." The statement of General Schenck in Order No. 59 that the
presence of many disloyal persons required military interference in
the election of 1863 was a "falsehood." Without the presence of
federal troops the state would have gone Democratic by a majority of
one to two thousand. The Democrats in Delaware felt that soldiers
would prevent many of their supporters from voting, and therefore the
members of that party had stayed away from the polls in protest.
Military interference was "for partisan purposes alone," and Lincoln
was a tyrant following in the footsteps of Caesar. 20

During the session Saulsbury also protested against consider-
ation of the proposed Thirteenth Amendment on the grounds that the
measure was unconstitutional and that the times were "unpropitious"
for such action. 21 In April he introduced a resolution, which reprim-
anced the chaplain of the Senate for praying about political matters,
but the proposal was tabled. 22 In June he thanked God that C. L.

20 Congressional Globe, II (38th Congress, 1st Session, 1863-
1864), 1260-2161, 1274-1282.

21 Ibid., II, 1364-1367.

22 Ibid., II, 11465-11466. The proposed resolution read as
follows: "Resolved, That the Chaplain of the Senate be respectfully
requested hereafter to pray to and supplicate Almighty God in our
behalf, and not to lecture Him what to do, or state to Him under
pretense of prayer, his (the said Chaplain's) opinion in reference
to His duty as the Almighty; and that the said Chaplain be further
requested as aforesaid not, under the form of prayer, to lecture the
Senate in relation to questions before the body."
Vallandigham who was a champion of civil liberties had returned to the United States from his banishment. In Delaware, Saulsbury could point to a single neighborhood where one-third of the inhabitants had been dragged away to prison. Democrats asked only for a fair election in 1864. Lincoln was "the man of all other men on the face of God's earth, most unfit to administer the affairs of this government." 23

Republicans welcomed the disappearance of the one "thorn" from the Senate, but still had to contend with the disgraceful behavior of Saulsbury. Democrats read with approval Saulsbury's speeches defending constitutional rights, as they were reprinted in the press. Little was heard from Senator Riddle or Representative Nathaniel B. Smithers.

The "Great Scare"

The approach of Jubal A. Early's Confederate forces towards Washington in July alarmed Delawareans. 24 At five o'clock on Sunday morning, July 10, word was received in Wilmington that General Lew Wallace's forces were retreating towards Baltimore and that the safety of Delaware was imperiled. In response to a wire from Wallace for

23 Ibid., IV, 3297-3298; James G. Randall, The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York, 1937), 397; James L. Vallandigham, Life of Clement L. Vallandigham (Baltimore, 1872), et passim. C. L. Vallandigham was an Ohio congressman, who was banished to the Confederacy in 1863, but later appeared in Canada. In 1864 he returned to the United States and ran for Governor of Ohio. His brother, James, was a professor at Delaware College and a Presbyterian clergyman at Newark, Delaware. In 1872 James Vallandigham wrote a biography of C. L. Vallandigham.

24 Randall, The Civil War and Reconstruction, 568-569. Wallace was defeated near Frederick on July 9, 1864, but Grant sent forces which saved Washington after fighting occurred in its suburbs.
some thirty-day men to guard the railroad, an Invalid Corps was organized at Tilton Hospital and dispatched at eight o'clock towards the Susquehanna. Announcements of a public meeting were read from the pulpits, and at 12:30 the men of Wilmington met to consider the question of defense. A committee of 100 men was appointed to raise money to pay for the maintenance costs of 500 defenders for thirty days. Secretary of State Samuel M. Harrington and Colonel Edwin Wilmer toured the lower part of Delaware in a special train and returned in the evening with 300 men. Governor Cannon issued a special call for cavalry.25

At bedtime Anna Ferris recorded the events of the tumultuous Sunday in her diary:

The Churches adjourned their services that the congregations might attend a town meeting, & the sounds of drum & fife calling the citizens to arms have been heard instead of the 'church going bells! Great excitement is felt, but not so much alarm as on former occasions of the same kind, for our immediate safety. But hundreds of citizens throng the recruiting offices to offer their services for the crisis. It is now bedtime & the sound of the drum & of marching feet announce the arrival of recruits from the lower part of the State by cars.26

25Gazette, July 12, 15, 1864; Journal, July 12, 1864; Republican, July 11, 1864.

26Anna Ferris, Diary, July 10, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania); Emma R. Dickerson, James Stokes Dickerson: Memories of his Life (New York, 1879), 158-159. Mrs. Dickerson, the wife of a Baptist preacher, wrote a friend on June 25, 1864 that "when we came out from church, the street was so crowded, we could not get to the pavement for sometime. The drums were beating, the fifes playing Yankee Doodle, and it was altogether unlike Sunday". The letter is dated incorrectly and should probably be "July 25".

Another narrative of this stirring day is in William Canby, Diary, July 10, 1864 (Historical Society of Delaware). Canby wrote:
STATE OF DELAWARE,
Executive Department,

July 12, 1864.

CITIZENS:

In addition to the Infantry called into service for the present emergency, the commanding General now desires

CAVALRY!

You will

Report at Wilmington,

Without delay,

Bringing your Horses with you

Equipments and subsistence will be furnished to you upon reporting. You are required immediately to

GUARD THE FORDS AND BRIDGES OF THE SUSQUEHANNA.

The Emergency demands Promptness.

WILLIAM CANNON,

BY THE GOVERNOR,

SAML. M. HARRINGTON, JR.,

Secretary of State.
On Monday rumors circulated that Baltimore and Washington were in the hands of the rebels and that raiders were near the gunpowder works. Hundreds of citizens crowded around the recruiting office, 270 men enlisted, and three companies were sent off to Perryville, Maryland. On Tuesday a public meeting was held, and Samuel Harrington appealed to citizens to fill the Seventh Regiment and to form an Eighth Regiment of men who were too old for regular army duty. Resolutions were passed that all places of business should be closed until the regiments were filled and that those who refused to enlist should be labeled "copperheads." Several suspicious persons were arrested near the shipyards, rebel cavalry captured two morning trains from Baltimore about forty miles from Wilmington, and two more companies were sent off to guard the lines of communication.27

"This Sabbath Day has been one of great excitement. The rebels are reported within 16 miles of Baltimore & the Government have sent for men to defend our Railroad. The 'City Hall Bells' rang at noon, the Churches broke up, and our citizens assembled to devise 'ways and means' for sending off the men. About 300 left up to this evening."

27Journal, July 15, 1861; Republican, July 14, 1861; Gazette, July 15, 1861; William Canby, July 11, 12, 1861 (Historical Society of Delaware). Canby's entries on those two days were:

'July 11th. Another day of great excitement, the communication with Baltimore is once more cut off, the rebels having burnt Magnolia Station and Gunpowder bridge. Men are leaving here all the time to guard the road & bridges. A large force of rebels are said to be near Baltimore.

'July 12th. Another day of excitement (still). Fighting reported in front of Washington, rebels 15 to 20,000 strong. Our Rail Road is clear, the 'raiders' have been driven off by the men sent from here. To make matters worse, the 'pirate Florida' has appeared off our Capes and destroyed six vessels."
On Wednesday the report circulated that rebel forces were likely to appear at any time in the outskirts of Wilmington. The Mayor of Wilmington issued a proclamation, in which he asked all citizens of the city to suspend their ordinary avocations and to organize to defend their homes. Additional men were recruited to guard the railroad line. That evening word arrived that Washington had been successfully defended and that the rebel forces were retreating. On Thursday quiet again reigned, the recruiting station had disappeared, drums were no longer heard, and prospective soldiers who came from the lower counties were sent home. As Anna Ferris recorded on that day, "the 'great scare' is over." By the middle of August the thirty-day men had returned from their railroad duty.\(^8\)

Wilmington had been greatly agitated by the crisis, but lower Delaware was little affected. The fact that the metropolis seemed so close to the actual fighting and in real danger caused the city to assume leadership. Some recruits came from the southern counties, but the disturbance was virtually over before much help began to appear.

\(^8\)Journal, July 18, 1864; Republican, July 18, 1864; Gazette, August 15, 1864; Anna Ferris, Diary, July 13, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania). The Mayor's proclamation on July 13 was as follows: "At the request of the committees appointed at a public meeting of citizens to devise means for the common defence, and believing that the present emergency fully demands it, I hereby most urgently call upon the citizens of Wilmington to suspend their ordinary avocations, close their places of business and organize at once, in the most effective manner, for the defence of their Government and their own homes, now threatened by rebel invaders. J. M. Turner, Mayor."
The Struggle to Keep the State Loyal

Political arrests were fewer in 1864 than in previous years. Perhaps the disloyal were cowed by the arrests and imprisonment of many persons in previous years. Union men still found plenty of scope for activity in connection with spying upon the disloyal, the McCrone's Woods picnic, and the Sanitary Fair in Philadelphia.

The Book of Arrests kept by the Provost Marshal reveals that 63 persons were arrested to August 12 for disaffection, though the charges were usually not specified and the offenders were customarily released after a few hours or days of confinement upon taking an oath of allegiance.29 Three men from Sussex county were arrested on a boat in Chesapeake Bay and accused of spying; they were all members of the First Maryland Rebel Cavalry.30 Four men from Seaford were imprisoned in Baltimore on charges of blockade running.31 Two residents of Middletown were confined for illicit trading.32 An employee of the Delawarean was arrested in a Dover hotel for drinking to the health of Jefferson Davis and to the success of the Confederacy.33 A Union man in Gumsboro complained that the rebels in the town hurrahed continually


30Georgetown Union, May 6, 13, 1864; Journal, May 10, 1864.

31Ibid., April 29, 1864. They were John E. Martin, William B. Horsey, John L. Coulborn, and J. W. Morrell. The first two were soon paroled.

32Ibid., April 15, 1864; Republican, April 18, 1864.

33Journal, April 15, 1864.
for Jeff Davis and asked for authority to deal with the offenders. A doctor in Delaware City was confined for aiding prisoners to escape from nearby Fort Delaware with gifts of money and clothing. Three shares of Farmer's Bank stock that belonged to I. R. Trimble, Confederate officer, were confiscated by court order in June for the benefit of the government; Trimble had been largely responsible for burning the railroad connections between Wilmington and Baltimore at the time of the April riots in 1861.

An interesting case involving recruiting for the Confederacy was tried in the United States District Court in 1864. Edward Martin and William duLaney of Seaford were accused of aiding Hiram Ross Messick to join the Confederate army in October, 1862. Messick had been captured at Gettysburg and had finally been persuaded to reveal the names of those persons who had induced him to enlist; in return he was to be released from Fort Delaware. According to his story, Martin and duLaney had arranged for a small boat to pick up eleven men along the shores of the Nanticoke River. Four of the group had been put ashore at Pontico, Maryland, and the remainder had been released in Virginia. In response to questions, Messick said that at the beginning of the war he had favored the Confederacy, but that his experiences in the South had turned him into a Union man. DuLaney was

34 J. E. Betts to E. Wilmer, July 26, 1864 (Provost-Marshal Papers, Letters Received, 1864, War Department, National Archives).
35 Republican, July 18, 1864
36 Ibid., June 23, 1864; Journal, June 21, 1864.
freed, but Martin was fined $1,000 and sentenced to pay the cost of the prosecution and to free his slaves. It is surprising that the verdict was not more harsh and that other Delawareans involved were not also tried.37

As the Union armies advanced deeper into the South, the number of prisoners at Fort Delaware grew steadily. By the end of February, 8,000 persons were confined; one hundred had taken an oath of allegiance and the remainder were to be sent South to be exchanged. By the end of May the total had increased to 10,500.38 A group of Wilmington Republicans who visited the fortress in May were impressed by the comforts enjoyed by the prisoners. "Alas! could the unfortunate inmates of the Libby Prison at Richmond or the shelterless tenants of Belle Isle have had but half the comforts of Fort Delaware," the editor of the Journal observed, "the heart would not be so harrowed with the ghastly details of suffering and death."39 A Maryland colonel recruited 600 men in July for the Union army, and the Gazette asked if they could not be assigned to the next Delaware quota.40

37Gazette, June 17, 1861; Republican, May 2, June 23, 1861; Journal, May 3, 1861; U. S. vs. Martin and duLaney, U. S. District Court Records, 1861 (U. S. District Court, Wilmington). Besides Messick, the passengers in the boat were Messrs. Collison, Marvel, Pierce, Reed, Charles O'Day, Charles Smith, and Frank Lloyd. Three passengers came from Bridgeville; they were a captain, first lieutenant, and private in Price's army in Missouri. Dr. Morrell and Wingate Cannon stood on the banks of the Nanticoke and watched the vessel depart.


39Ibid., May 20, 1861.

40Gazette, July 5, 1861.
Thomas F. Bayard was in frequent communication with the Confederate soldiers and political prisoners at Fort Delaware and Fort McHenry to whom he sent gifts of food, clothing and money.\textsuperscript{41} Rules published in May forbade the visits of persons from mere curiosity, restricted letter writing by or to inmates to one page, and stopped visits of relatives without special permission.\textsuperscript{42}

The plight of many penniless and ill prisoners led the commander at Fort Delaware to issue an appeal for food and clothing for his charges. Twenty-five young Democrats of New Castle arranged to have a picnic at McCrone's Woods in late July for the benefit of the prisoners. Supposedly permission had been obtained from the office of the Provost-Marshal. The affair had hardly begun when Edwin Wilmer appeared with cavalry, took the names of all male participants, and ordered them to report to his office in Wilmington the next morning. They were temporarily confined to the guardhouse, with the addition of a spectator, who explained that the reason for the arrests was "because Abe Lincoln is President," and then they were all sent off to Fort McHenry.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{41} Major-General Johnson to T. F. Bayard, June 2, 1864; Captain Hentz to T. F. Bayard, February 10, 1864; T. S. Rollens and J. A. Varner, July 26, 1864, and R. Dilworth to T. F. Bayard (Bayard Papers, IX, X, Library of Congress).

\textsuperscript{42} Gazette, May 31, 1864.

\textsuperscript{43} Gazette, August 2, 1864; Journal, August 2, 1864; E. Wilmer to Major Judd, July 29, 1864 (Provost Marshal Papers, 1864, War Department, National Archives); J. Frank Hazel to T. F. Bayard, July 29, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress); Alexander B. Cooper, History of New Castle, 222 (Typewritten manuscript, Historical Society of Delaware).
The "copperheads" did not seem to have suffered much during their confinement. An interesting letter from one prisoner to his sweetheart described conditions. They were imprisoned in a large barracks, which was eighty feet long and forty feet wide. They spent their time in smoking, writing, reading, singing, dancing, eating, and playing cards. Some of the young men pulled each other out of bed in the middle of the night and sang and danced to the annoyance of older prisoners, who responded with a volley of shoes and oaths. Some prominent Democrats visited them during their week's imprisonment.\footnote{Journal, August 9, 16, 1864; Gazette, August 9, 16, 1864; Republican, August 11, 18, 1864.}

Senator George Riddle appealed to the Secretary of War, who ordered their release. Upon their arrival in Wilmington on Saturday evening, cheers were given for the "martyrs", and a brass band led an informal parade through the streets. A well-known politician delivered an address of welcome, and three of the prisoners spoke. The Union men were dismayed by the outrageous gathering. The "Loyal Men" of the city met and passed resolutions that the arrest of the Democrats was approved and that their speedy release was regretted. It was hoped that the rebel sympathizers would not dare have the bare-faced impudence to hold another picnic.\footnote{T. R. Jefferson to Miss L. Ogle and Ladies, August 5, 1864 (Civil War Papers, Historical Society of Delaware). Jefferson was the son of the Democratic candidate for Governor in 1862. The letter was found inserted in a book belonging to a resident of New Castle many years later and presented to the society.} An army officer reported to the war department that the arrests had had a beneficial effect upon the population.
but that the rapid release of the secessionists had encouraged the disloyal. The result might be defeat in the November election, since the rebels were arming, riding through the countryside after midnight, and evidently arranging a conspiracy. Wilmer's conduct in arresting the copperheads was praised by Union men, while his superior, Major Judd, was accused of being unduly sympathetic with the secessionists. Judd was soon removed from office. The picnic affair contributed to the bitter feeling between Republicans and Democrats in the fall campaign.

Economic problems became involved in politics. Manufacturers who benefited from government contracts were strong supporters of the Lincoln administration and at election time tried to influence their employees to vote the Republican ticket. In New Castle county workingmen who received high wages, but suffered from advancing prices, were less enthusiastic Republicans. Farmers welcomed high prices for their crops, but faced problems, such as the cost of feed, scarcity of labor, and high taxes. They were indignant at stories of riotous living and extravagance by government officials and manufacturers. The high taxes and enormous national debt of the Lincoln administration was contrasted unfavorably with the Democratic national record in the 1850's. Economic factors contributed to making Wilmington the

46 Colonel Lynde Catlin to Lt. Colonel S. B. Lawrence, August 15, 1864, War of Rebellion (Washington, 1899), Series I, XLIII, 806-807.

47 William McCally to E. Wilmer, July 29, 1864 (Provost-Marshal Papers, 1864, War Department, National Archives).
Union stronghold, and rural New Castle county and lower Delaware Democratic.

The cost of living remained high in 1864, and the advance in prices lagged behind increases in wages. A correspondent in the Republican pointed out that in 1860 a good mechanic received $9 to $10 per week, a suit of clothing cost $20, muslin 12 cents per yard, and boots $4 a pair; now the price of a suit had risen 100 percent, sugar 200 percent, and fresh meats 100 percent, while the wages of mechanics had advanced only to $12 to $15 and the salaries of clerks 15 to 20 percent. Manufacturers and merchants were prosperous, but the laboring man suffered. A study of the income tax returns for 1864 reveals clearly that Wilmington industrialists were reaping tremendous profits. On the other hand, a letter from the wife of a laboring man in Wilmington indicates some of the hardships that the poorer classes faced. "Everything is uncertain but death and taxes," she wrote, "as the old saying is. For taxes they are so high I don't see how it is possible for us to get along with fuel and everything that we have to use high. Butter is 60¢ per lb., a common broom 50¢ and everything according. We are almost tired looking for the war to end."

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48 Republican, April 14, 1864.
49 cf. ante, 14.
Wilmington druggists raised the prices of medicines, the Journeyman's Tailors Union charged more for making coats, and the fares on the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad advanced. The salaries of Wilmington city officials and school teachers were increased. The Bank of Delaware raised wages 20 percent. Ministers in particular suffered from the high cost of living. In Newark the Episcopalian rector benefited from a donation party, and the Reverend James L. Vallandigham of the Presbyterian church was presented with a complete outfit of clothing. Two Dover ministers received gifts of food and clothing at surprise parties because of "the appreciation in prices of all the necessaries of life." The Wilmington Presbytery urged that salaries be increased to correspond with the cost of living, and the Episcopalians in the annual meeting of the diocese recommended that salaries be advanced 20 percent. From every side came complaints about the high prices.

Churches were less disturbed by political questions than in previous years. Wilmington ministers distinguished themselves in

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51 *Journal*, January 26, May 3, August 13, 1864.
52 Ibid., July 5, 1864; *Gazette*, December 2, 1864.
53 Bank of Delaware, Minutes, November 1, 1864 (Historical Society of Delaware).
54 *Gazette*, February 12, 1864.
55 Ibid., January 26, 1864.
56 *Journal*, June 3, 1864; Wilmington Presbytery, Minutes, September 17, 1864 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).
raising money for the relief of wounded soldiers, by visiting battlefronts, and by rallying the population at times of crisis. Reverend George Wiswell was appointed a member of the West Point examiners.57 The patriotic minister of the Centreville Presbyterian Church was exonerated from charges of slander by a secessionist member at a meeting of the New Castle Presbytery.58 The Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Philadelphia passed resolutions to sustain the government, endorsed the emancipation policy, and praised the conduct of the brave Union soldiers and sailors.59 On the other hand, the Methodist Protestant Church was accused of deliberately remaining out of politics and of not permitting prayers to be said for the Union.60

Delawareans took an active part in the Great Central Fair in Philadelphia held for the benefit of the United States Sanitary Commission. Months before the opening, committees were collecting materials and organizing affairs, which might raise money for the laudable purpose. Anna Ferris noted in April that

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everybody is at work to do what they can for the cause. Human ingenuity is taxed to produce what results it can with the needle, & in the knitting line & in the higher line of art equal efforts are made. Collections of trophies, curiosities, antiquities, relics, works of art, autographs,
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57Journal, May 27, 1864.
58Ibid., April 15, 1864.
59Ibid., March 11, 18, 1864.
60Georgetown Union, May 20, 1864.
etc. are gathered. Concerts, charades, tableaux, readings, private theatricals are given & everybody is baptized to one purpose & spirit & all are working together for one end.

At the opening in June, Governor Cannon spoke. Agricultural produce, fancy work, and art objects were displayed for sale at the Delaware tables. Admission was charged to view the interior of Uncle Tom's cabin. Badges were distributed with the motto, "The Blue Hen will Protect Her Chickens," and a Philadelphia artist drew a picture of a chicken clutching a copperhead, which was lithographed and sold in large quantities. A Wilmington manufacturer won with a $10 chance an elaborate $1,000 dollhouse, which is still displayed at the Historical Society of Delaware. When Lincoln visited the exhibit in July, he was presented with a silver pitcher valued at $750, which was paid for by dollar contributions of Delawareans. Our Daily Fare, a magazine, which was printed on the grounds, had only the highest praise for the effort of the little state, whose endeavors raised $33,745 for the use of soldiers.61

61A History of the Delaware Department of the Great Central Fair Held in Philadelphia, 1864 (Wilmington, 1864), et passim; Charles J. Stille, ed., Memorial of the Great Central Fair for the United States Sanitary Commission (Philadelphia, 1864), 69-72; Our Daily Fare, June 14, 1864. The editor of Our Daily Fare commented concerning Delaware: "This State had done nobly. Small as she is, her contribution to the great cause is varied and interesting. Feeling deeply for the soldiers battling for the country and the perpetuity of its institutions, her citizens have come forward and joined hands in their endeavor to add to the treasury of the Sanitary Commission. Delaware has regiments in the field who have reflected credit upon their State, and her soldiers are among the most trustworthy in the army of the Potomac. While these veterans are at the front, their friends at home have not been unmindful of their interests,
Throughout 1864 Union armies proceeded to bore within the Confederacy. Union men were indignant that the legislature had offered greater inducements to men to find army substitutes than to enlist, approved the arrest of the participators in McCrone's picnic, and welcomed Bayard's resignation. Democrats praised the record of the members of their party in the legislature, read with pleasure Saulsbury's speeches, and were displeased by the disregard of constitutional rights of citizens in various cases of arrests. A feeling of restlessness arose at the end of the year, as the collapse of the Confederacy seemed imminent. How would political parties be affected by the restoration of the Union?

and in addition to the liberal contributions in cash to the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, the collection of articles in the Great Central Fair will net a handsome sum in aid of the holy work. Truly, 'The Blue Hen will Protect Her Chickens.'
Chapter XV

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1864

The campaign and election of 1864 were waged vigorously in Delaware by both parties. Some Republicans and Democrats were not enthusiastic about their respective presidential nominees, but they were eager to win control of local offices. The result was an exciting campaign.

The National Conventions and the Reaction to the Nominations

During the winter of 1864 soldiers indicated that they favored Lincoln's renomination. A member of the Fourth Delaware Regiment wrote home that his company unanimously endorsed "Uncle Abe." "A Veteran" reported that soldiers in the field predicted Lincoln's election regardless of who was nominated against him; he would run like a vessel with a fair breeze in smooth water.¹ Time revealed that Delaware politicians were less enthusiastic, but the state was unrepresented in May at the Cleveland convention, which nominated Fremont.² County conventions in May endorsed the nomination of Lincoln and selected delegates to attend the Baltimore convention in

¹Georgetown Union, January 15, March 18, 1864.

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June. At the harmonious convention the Delaware delegation voted for Lincoln and Johnson. The nominations were welcomed in Wilmington by the firing of 100 guns, and the Republican immediately placed their names at the masthead of its editorial column.

The Democrats in Delaware were unhappy about the possibility of a War Democrat being nominated and of a war platform being accepted at the national convention. James A. Bayard and George Whiteley at the New Castle county convention in June opposed sending delegates to Chicago until there was assurance that a peace platform would prevail. Resolutions "in favor of an armistice and negotiations" to restore the Union were passed, but no delegates were selected. At the Kent county meeting the same resolutions were passed, Eli Saulsbury spoke in favor of a "Peace and Civil Liberty" platform at Chicago, and he and Charles Brown were chosen as delegates. By the time that the Sussex county convention assembled, the national convention had been postponed until August; the same resolutions as in the other counties were ratified, but nothing was done about delegates.

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3Journal, May 21, 31, 1864; Delawarean, May 28, 1864. The delegates were Benjamin Burton and Jacob Moore from Sussex county, Nathaniel B. Smithers and William Cummins from Kent county, and E. G. Bradford and George Z. Tybout from New Castle county.

4Republican, June 16, 1864.

5Republican, June 13, 1864.

6Delawarean, June 25, 1864; Journal, June 24, 1864.

7Gazette, June 24, 1864.

8Ibid., July 1, 1864.
writing an account of the Sussex county proceedings to Thomas F. Bayard, a prominent Democrat declared that

the masses of the people of this County are opposed to the prosecution of this war—and if we cannot start fair and square with a Peace Candidate and a Peace Platform and hold an untrammeled election, the War Democrats and 'self-styled Union men' will be defeated by the largest majority ever given in Sussex county.9

In August the New Castle county Democrats met again and named James A. Bayard and Dr. John Merritt as delegates to the Chicago convention; no instructions about voting for a presidential candidate were given.10 A few days later the Sussex county Democrats chose Willard Saulsbury and Edward L. Martin.11 The delegation did not take a prominent part in the proceedings and voted for Horatio Seymour for president upon the first ballot.12

The Democratic newspapers pretended to be pleased with the nomination of McClellan and Pendleton. The Gazette declared that 'no two gentlemen could have received the votes of the delegates of that convention who would more cheerfully be supported in the Diamond State'; attainment of "Peace and Union" was made certain by their selection.13 The Delawarean foresaw "the triumph in the election of

9 Alf P. Robinson to Thomas F. Bayard, July 1, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).
10 Gazette, August 16, 1864.
11 Ibid., August 26, 1864.
12 Ibid., September 2, 1864.
13 Ibid., September 2, 1864.
Democratic principles and measures, the return of peace, and the ultimate restoration of the Union." The voter was given the choice "between Abraham Lincoln, the ignorant, obscene joker, the tyrant, usurper, and despot, as the candidate of the Abolitionists on the one side, and George McClellan, the patriot soldier, Christian gentleman and able defender of individual and state's rights." Republican Anna Ferris feared that "his name will prove 'a spell to conjure with.'" 15

A ratification meeting in New Castle county was attended by 6,000 people. Senator George Riddle advocated the immediate suspension of hostilities and exhaustion of every peaceable means to stay bloodshed, and resolutions declared that the Democrats were the only party capable of rescuing the country from social and political ruin. 16

The correspondence of Thomas F. Bayard indicates that the Democratic politicians were distressed at the nomination of McClellan and at his interpretation of the "peace plank" in the platform. 17

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11Delawarean, September 2, 1864.
15Anna Ferris, Diary, August 31, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).
16Gazette, September 16, 1864.
17William Frank Zornow, Lincoln and the Party Divided (Norman, Oklahoma, 1951), 132-133, 136. The disputed resolution read: "This convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, . . . justice, humanity, liberty and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate convention of the States, or other peaceable means, to the end that at the earliest practicable
Smyrna Democrat was disappointed at the selection of the General and found only two redeeming planks in the platform, one urging an armistice and another recommending resistance to military interference in elections. Another Democrat feared that McClellan's construction of the Chicago platform would take from him the entire support of the peace faction. A Sussex county leader did not care for McClellan, but did not think that any other nominee would have so fair a chance, especially in the border states. A New Castle county politician told John Merritt that two years ago he had declared that he would not vote for anyone who had taken part in the war or supported a policy of coercion. In his opinion, McClellan had done both of those things, and in addition did not even accept the platform. "You think the salvation of the country depends on his election," he observed. "I think the country will not be saved by a time-serving, equivocal policy; such a policy brought us into trouble, but will never get us out." He expected to support the state and county ticket, but could only promise to advise men to vote neither for nor against McClellan.

moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States." In his letter of acceptance, McClellan declared that southern recognition of the Union must be a preliminary to the cessation of hostilities. His own words were: "The Union is the one condition of peace—we ask no more."

18A. H. Stockley to T. F. Bayard, September 9, 1864 and John Fletcher to T. F. Bayard, September 11, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).

19Dilworth to T. F. Bayard, September 19, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).

20Wath Williams to John Merritt, September 29, 1864. (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).
In view of the general dissatisfaction with McClellan's nomination, James A. Bayard wrote his son on October 12, "I think the jig is up & Lincoln certain of reelection."21

Two interesting commentaries upon Lincoln's chances, as seen by two Republicans, were contained in letters written by Governor Cannon and Admiral S. F. duPont in September. Cannon's observations were written at the request of three New York Republicans; their questions and his answers were as follows:

1. Is the reelection of Mr. Lincoln a probability?  
   It now is.

2. Can this State (Delaware) be carried for Mr. Lincoln?  
   It can be, and I think, will be.

3. Do the interests of the Union Party, and so of the Country require the substitution of another candidate in the place of Mr. Lincoln?  
   They do not now.

   One month ago, Mr. Lincoln's reelection would have been an improbability—perhaps, an impossibility. One month ago, the success of the Union Party required the substitution of another candidate. Even now, the true interests of the Country would be better served by an able and more vigorous administration, guided by the counsels of wiser and better men.

   But the dissatisfaction and despondency that existed all over the Country have been changed into acquiescence and hope by the recent brilliant victories that Providence has vouchsafed to our arms. The utmost harmony now prevails in the Union ranks, and the settled determination seems to be to accept Mr. Lincoln with all his faults, real or supposed.

Cannon believed that the Republicans would win because of the division within the Democratic party. He expected to work hard in

21James A. Bayard to T. F. Bayard, October 12, 1864 (Bayard Papers, X, Library of Congress).
Delaware to contribute to the Union victory.22

Admiral duPont considered that "the nomination of Lincoln had fallen very flat on the country & grew more so every day" until the Democratic convention met with the Peace element in ascendency.

"This alarmed the country & being immediately followed by the victories at Atlanta & Mobile, the Republicans were induced to cling to Lincoln as a pis aller." If the principles contained in McClellan's letter of acceptance had been included in the platform, the General might have had "an easy success to the Presidency"; instead, "Lincoln is setting out with all the probabilities in his favor."23

A Delaware soldier took a realistic view of Lincoln's chances in commenting upon a Union military victory in September. "Sheridan defeating Early will add a little more earth to McClellan's grave," he believed, "the one he has dug for himself to be filled on the 8th of November, and to be covered so securely by the Union party that no signs of a human being will ever be visible again."24


23S. F. duPont to A. Biderman, (n. d.), 1861 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation). The contents of the letter indicate that it was probably written in September. In a letter written to H. W. Davis by duPont on August 23, 1861, he said that "the Republicans believe Mr. Lincoln was sent down from above to meet the Rebellion, and this feeling has been kept alive by the hostility of the two parties."

24Dan Woodall to Sister, September 28, 1861 (Private Possession).
Delaware Democrats were distinctly displeased with McClellan's nomination, and many Republican politicians preferred someone else to Lincoln. The military victories in September made certain that Lincoln would win.

The State Conventions and the Campaign

Not much campaigning was done in Delaware until the state conventions met. A Union convention in Dover in late September approved the nomination of Lincoln and Johnson, considered that a Democratic victory would bring about recognition of the southern Confederacy, and praised the Delaware soldiers in the field. Attention was called to the record of the Democratic legislature, which had refused to provide ample bounties for volunteers, to appropriate money to help establish a cemetery at Gettysburg, and to furnish relief to soldiers' families. Edwin Wilmer was interested in securing the nomination for Congress, but Nathaniel B. Smithers was again selected for the honor.25

Ratification meetings in the three counties nominated local candidates and passed resolutions of a similar nature. Typical of the proceedings of these gatherings was the one in New Castle county, which endorsed the candidacies of Lincoln and Smithers, urged that the legislature provide for emancipation, and argued that an honorable peace could be established only by war.26

26*Journal*, October 4, 1864.
The Democratic state convention met in Dover in October. Resolutions congratulated the Democratic majority in the legislature upon a fine record, advocated immediate suspension of hostilities and exhaustion of every peaceful means to end the war, and contended that the election of McClellan would bring peace. It was hoped that the election in November would be free and fair without military interference. John A. Nicholson of Dover was nominated for Congress.  

Ratification meetings in each county expressed approval of the national platform, McClellan, and Nicholson. In New Castle county resolutions declared that the perpetuity of the Union depended upon the success of the Democratic party, and an invitation to join the party was extended to all men who loved liberty and hated tyranny. George Whiteley frankly stated that he had not been in favor of McClellan's nomination, but backed any good Democrat to replace the present tyrant. Thomas F. Bayard did not believe that republican institutions could continue after next November if Lincoln were elected.

Republicans were cheered by a victory in September in the Wilmington municipal election, which was interpreted to mean that the city would cast 1,000 majority for Lincoln in November. At the

27Gazette, October 7, 1864.

28Gazette, October 4, 1864.

29Journal, September 9, 1864. The headlines in the newspaper announcing the victory were as follows: "ANOTHER VICTORY. The City of Wilmington Captured by the Union Forces. The Peace Democracy Routed. Not a Vestige of the Enemy Left. Every Man Captured. Wilmington Good for 1,000 Majority For Lincoln and Johnson in November Next."
same time came word of military victories at Atlanta and Mobile. Cannon were fired, a grand torchlight procession arranged, and homes were illuminated. In the parade numerous transparencies were displayed, such as "Grant-Sherman-Farragut-Atlanta-Mobile," "In Union there is strength," and "One Hundred Thousand more men will save our country." These and later military triumphs in the fall were to have an important influence upon Lincoln's chances.

The Democrats were encouraged by electing every inspector and assessor in each county at the little election in October. Admiral duPont wrote a friend that this was a sign of bad things to come. He observed:

I presume the Delaware 'little Election' means that the Democrats will swamp the State on any general ticket—Electoral or Representative. I think the Republicans were caught napping, too, but I believe will carry this County, where they have had five or six hundred majority always, but Smithers & the Legislature, & the Electoral ticket are gone, I think.

DuPont noticed that even the Douglas men, who had heretofore voted with the Republicans, had returned to the Democratic fold. In a recent speech George Whiteley had advised his listeners that the slogan was "free vote or free fight" and suggested that they should come to the polls armed with pitchforks. Later in the month, duPont discovered that "I notice everywhere that Lincoln has been swallowed

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30 Journal, September 9, 1864. The following couplet on one transparency elicited great praise:

"General Hood could do no good, When he took command of the Rebs, Old Sherman could, when he said he would, Walk right into Atlanta."
as a choice of evils, not a word of respect for him personally falls from any man's lips."31

Numerous meetings and parades enlivened the campaign. Clashes between members of the opposing parties became so frequent that the Provost-Marshal's office in Wilmington issued orders restricting demonstrations by each party to alternate evenings. The Mayor of the city appealed to politicians to curb the spirit of lawlessness.32

Probably the largest Republican gathering of the campaign was an afternoon rally in Middletown followed by a parade and meeting in Wilmington in the evening. Three thousand people attended the Middletown meeting, and thousands in the evening witnessed the lengthy torchlight procession and later heard speakers from Pennsylvania.33

Five thousand Democrats attended an ox roast in Dover in October, saw a parade two and a half miles long, and heard attacks upon the Lincoln administration; "everyone retired fully convinced that Delaware was sure for McClellan, Pendleton, Nicholson, and PEACE."34 The Gazette contended that the Democratic parade in Wilmington on the eve of the election exceeded anything ever seen in Delaware. Headlines proclaimed: "A Grand Display. Two Thousand Torches. Miles of

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31 S. F. duPont to H. W. Davis, October 8, 23, 1864 (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation).

32 Journal, October 21, 25, 1864.

33 Ibid., October 28, 1864.

34 Delawarean, October 29, 1864.
Glittery Light. Wilmington in a Blaze! 5,000 Democrats in Procession! The Greatest and Grandest Pageant Ever Witnessed in Delaware! The Houses of the Masses Illuminated! Mirth and Humor Triumphant! The Peace Feeling Prevalent and Practically Illustrated! The Lincolnites Try to Provoke a Fight and are Disappointed!" Transparencies declared, "The Union is the one condition of peace, we ask no more! McClellan."

"No More drafts, no more taxes, no negro equality!", and "The White Man's Ticket: McClellan, Pendleton, and Nicholson." Efforts of the Republicans to create disturbances, which would result in the appearance of soldiers, were unsuccessful. 35

No new issues appeared during the campaign. The Democrats in Delaware publicly interpreted the platform and statements of McClellan as endorsing an immediate peace and restoration of the Union, though privately they had doubts. The old charges of heavy taxation, Negro equality, infringement of civil liberty, and military interference in elections were aired. The Republicans made the usual accusations that all Democrats were secessionists and pointed to the record of the Democratic legislators to prove the statement. Peace could only be successfully obtained by military victory, not by negotiation.

Governor Cannon visited Washington about ten days before the election. When he did not find Secretary of War Stanton in his office on October 27, he left the following note:

35Gazette, November 4, 1864.
Dear Sir:

I would respectfully make application for a military force sufficient to guard our polls, to keep the peace and prevent riot and bloodshed.

Cannon

From his hotel he forwarded another message to Stanton, requesting that the men in the First, Third, and Fourth Delaware Infantry be granted a short furlough at the time of the election, as we "cannot carry the state without them."36 On October 28, he informed Major-General Lew Wallace that at the election "a fair and free expression of the popular will may be prevented. In my judgment, every necessary precaution should be taken to overawe and prevent any lawless demonstration, and to secure the exercise of the right of suffrage to all who may be qualified to vote"; therefore, he requested that troops be stationed at polling places.37

November eighth was the day of the election, and the suspense and anxiety a few days before that time were almost unbearable. Anna Ferris wrote on November 7:

As the day of the election draws near, the anxiety & excitement become more intense & pervade all classes. It is impossible to pass anyone in the street and catch a word that is spoken, without finding that the one subject is agitated by all. Even the children are all partisans & echo the party war cry as soon as they are out of school. The question is so vital, so absorbing, so fraught with the issue of life no one can stand aside. Even father who

36 William Cannon to E. Stanton, Secretary of War, October 27, 1864 (2 letters) (Stanton Papers, Library of Congress).

never voted before intends to vote tomorrow for Lincoln. To us the conflict is of light & darkness, good & evil.\textsuperscript{38}

In a pre-election editorial entitled "A Few Last Words," the Republican thought that the issue was as sharp as a mountain peak against an azure sky. On the one side were the friends of good government, law, and human liberty; on the other were the advocates of disunion, anarchy, and slavery. Could the temperance men vote for a party which sent the drunkard Saulsbury to the Senate? People should vote for the pilot who had thus far guided the ship of state safely through storm and tempest.\textsuperscript{39} In an issue upon the day of the election, the Journal printed the names of the Union candidates in heavy print and offered much gratuitous advice: "Vote the Right Ticket—Here it is! Be Sure you are not Cheated in the Names. Give Your Country One Day. Stay at the Polls. Let every man who owns a horse and a vehicle that can carry a Union voter today devote themselves to the country's cause.\textsuperscript{40}

Two days before the election, members of the First, Third, and Fourth Regiments appeared in Wilmington and after being feted at the city hall scattered to their homes to participate in the voting. On November 7, soldiers from a New York regiment were stationed near each polling place to see that no unusual disturbances occurred.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{38}Anna Ferris, Diary, November 7, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

\textsuperscript{39}Republican, November 7, 1864.

\textsuperscript{40}Journal, November 8, 1864.

\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., November 8, 1864.
The Election

A New Castle county farmer wrote in his diary on November 8, "This is election day, and I feel that the fate of our nation depends on it, if Mr. Lincoln is reelected all will go well and I believe this cursed Rebellion will soon be brought to a close." The election passed off peaceably; Anna Ferris thought that "it has been the most quiet election day that we have had for years." A soldier voter at Felton in Kent county found that "there was no fuss their all day. the Blew Jackets was their to tend to the Election. So it all past of Quiet." Unlike the election day in 1862, which had been marked by great violence, or in 1863, which had seen the boycott of the polls by Democrats, the voting passed off with little disturbance. The Democrats avoided agitating the soldiers, and the troops permitted the Democrats to vote without much interference.

The voting followed the customary pattern. The Republicans won in New Castle county by large majorities, but in Kent and Sussex counties the Democratic leads were so tremendous that McClellan and

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\(^2\) Samuel Canby, Diary, November 8, 1864 (Historical Society of Delaware).

\(^3\) Anna Ferris, Diary, November 8, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

\(^4\) Samuel Hitch, Diary, November 8, 1864 (Delaware State Archives). The spelling and grammar of the diarist are noticeably poor. Under an entry of November 4, Hitch predicted that his regiment would not be sent home. A straw ballot in his company indicated that Lincoln was preferred to McClellan 50 to 1.

\(^5\) Journal, November 17, 1864.
Nicholson carried the state. Delaware was one of three states that voted for McClellan. New Castle county elected Republican members to the General Assembly, but the lower counties returned Democrats.\textsuperscript{46}

Republicans rejoiced at the triumph of Lincoln, but regretted that Delaware was not among his supporters. A New Castle county farmer wrote in his diary on November 9, "Good tidings this morning from almost every quarter in regard to the Election, a large majority of the States appear to have cast their votes for Lincoln & Johnson & no serious disturbances took place thanks to the energy of the government in being fully prepared for it."\textsuperscript{47} A Wilmington banker wrote his sister that "all our Exultations for the great result elsewhere cannot quite overcome our Sorrow and Shame for our State, which is thus chained to Slavery & to its disgraceful representation in Congress for another term--the lower counties are hopelessly benighted."\textsuperscript{48} Anna Ferris was distressed to find Delaware in the Democratic column. "She Delaware is chained to Slavery & Democracy for a new term," she complained. "In the midst of the general joy & triumph we feel

\begin{table}[h]
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Republican & Democratic & Smithers & Nicholson \\
\hline
New Castle & 4,272 & 3,811 & 4,280 & 3,815 \\
Kent & 2,228 & 2,402 & 1,684 & 2,398 \\
Sussex & 1,652 & 2,398 & 2,289 & 2,549 \\
Total & 8,152 & 8,611 & 8,253 & 8,762 \\
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\textsuperscript{47}Samuel Canby, Diary, November 9, 1864 (Historical Society of Delaware).

\textsuperscript{48}William Canby to Sister, November 14, 1864 (Ferris Papers, Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).
grieved & humiliated, but not disappointed. It was too much to hope that our benighted lower counties should be so suddenly enlightened.\footnote{Anna Ferris, Diary, November 14, 1864 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).}

The Republican attributed McClellan's victory in the state to rebel sympathies, ignorance, and bribery. It declared that about 2,000 men in Kent and Sussex counties had been bribed to vote for McClellan.\footnote{Republican, November 17, 1864.} The Journal estimated that the Democrats had committed 400 frauds in the election in Wilmington alone and that the Democrats had spent thousands of dollars in buying votes in lower Delaware.\footnote{Journal, November 11, 1864.}

The Delawarean thought that the results in Delaware were especially gratifying to conservative men; they were a protest against the acts of a tyrant and against the attacks upon civil liberty. Only military interference had elected Cannon in 1862 and Smithers in 1863. The election in Wilmington was notorious because of frauds committed by Republicans in connection with ballotbox stuffing, bogus tax receipts, and the use of repeaters. A fair election would have returned Democratic members to the legislature from New Castle county. The Gazette made similar charges against their opponents in Wilmington, but concluded that the election in the city had been extremely orderly.\footnote{Delawarean, November 19, 1864; Gazette, November 11, 1864.}

Smithers' biographer attributed his defeat to the "combined influence of the opposing party, negro equality, and the draft."\footnote{William T. Smithers, "Memoir of Nathaniel B. Smithers," Papers of the Historical Society of Delaware, XXIII (1899), 29.}
Union men could look back over the year of 1864 with satisfaction that the tide in the war had definitely changed. Atlanta had fallen, Lincoln had been triumphantly reelected, and Savannah had been presented to the President as a Christmas gift. As the hearts of Union men were gladdened, sympathizers with the Confederacy became depressed. From London, England, William Ross wrote to a friend at the end of the year:

I quite agree with you that our country is doomed. It is said 'that whom the Gods mean to destroy they first make mad.' The proverb will apply in full force to the American people. I discovered in April and May, 1861 that the people had gone stark mad. They have not yet recovered, and in my opinion never will until they are irretrievably ruined. That ruin is nearer at hand than most people think. My country reminds me of a spendthrift, who has wasted more than half his fortune and is in haste to waste the balance.

The American national debt was much greater per inhabitant than that of England. The advance of the northern forces into the South depressed him. "It [victory] is certainly lost unless they play their last trump card, which I do not believe they will do," he wrote. "I mean arm their slaves under a promise of freedom. Without that they will be conquered, then will begin a change in our form of government that no one will mistake. The North will say that necessity compels them to treat the South as conquered provinces, that to invite the South back to terms of equality would be to invite them to secede again, that they cannot be held and governed but in one way, and that by force." The war had almost ruined him, as he had invested $62,000 in "border-state bonds", which were now completely worthless. In
his exile he had written few letters except to his wife, for he feared
to compromise his friends. "Not that I am guilty of any act against
the government of the U. S.," he added, "but I am considered to enter­
tain opinions which are pronounced by some people as disloyal. For
that reason I remain out of the country, hoping that the American
people may some day return to their reason, when I may return to
safety to spend the remainder of my days in a country ruined by the
madness and fanaticism of its own people."5

Neither Democratic nor Republican politicians were especially
pleased by their presidential nominees in 1864. The campaign was
fought vigorously, mainly because of the interest in the local spoils
of office. In spite of military victories in the fall of 1864 and
the return of some Delaware Regiments at election time, the Republicans
were unsuccessful outside of New Castle county. The election was un-
usually quiet, and both sides took care that the violence of 1862 was
not repeated. Probably the Republicans wished to avoid an investiga-
tion by a congressional committee or by a committee of the General
Assembly, while the Democrats feared that disorder might be followed
by barring them from the polls. In spite of the usual newspaper
stories, there does not seem to have been much corruption. The

5William H. Ross to Isaac Giles, December 29, 1864 (Ross
Papers, Historical Society of Delaware). Ross had apparently
returned to England after March 1, 1863, as a letter of that date
to Henry Adams inquires as to whether the latter could look after
his property during his absence.
election in Delaware was conducted as fairly as any during the Civil War, and the returns clearly indicated that Delawareans, in spite of military interference and the return of Delaware Regiments, preferred Democratic candidates.
Chapter XVI

THE END OF THE WAR

At the beginning of the year, the end of the war still seemed remote. A peace conference in February had ended in complete disagreement. Sherman had left Savannah and was marching northward, but Grant seemed unable to break through the defenses of Petersburg. Governor Cannon and the legislature continued to disagree over political matters. The Democratic majority disregarded his advice that the Thirteenth Amendment be approved. Fort Delaware was crowded with prisoners. Democrats made themselves obnoxious in many ways to Union men, and the latter were extremely unpopular with the "copperheads."

Political Problems

Governor Cannon recommended to the legislature in his annual message in January that slavery be abolished, since Delaware had all of its disadvantages and none of its benefits—if there were any. He urged that bounties be granted to encourage enlistments, that resolutions of appreciation be passed in honor of the volunteers, and that land for a fort near Lewes be granted without restriction to the federal government. Since New Castle county contained a larger population than any other county, he suggested that the area be given a larger share of representation in the General Assembly.¹

¹Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, 1865 (Dover, 1865), 8-17.

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As usual, the Democratic majority treated his recommendations with contempt. No thanks were extended to the volunteers, conditions of granting land to the federal government in Sussex county were unchanged, and nothing was done to upset the equal representation of the three counties in the legislature. The legislature rejected a bill to permit Wilmington to borrow $30,000 to use in payment of bounties. The presence on the Wilmington Board of Education of such Union men, as Bishop Alfred Lee, Reverend J. S. Dickerson, and Reverend George Wiswell, aroused the ire of Democrats, and a bill introduced to bar ministers from that body was barely defeated. The Democratic majority reelected Willard Saulsbury to the Senate.

The most important measure passed during the session dealt with military bounties. By February, 1865, the state had a deficiency of 938 men. The new law gave $200 bounties to white volunteers. Substitutes who served for one year were paid $300; for two years, $400, and for three years, $500. Union men were disgusted that the "copperhead" legislature offered greater inducements to men to obtain substitutes than to serve their country. The Journal suggested that the Democrats in the legislature should be imprisoned in Fort Delaware.

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2Journal, February 17, March 17, 1865.

3House Journal, 1865, 82.

4Laws of the State of Delaware, 1865 (Dover, 1865), 550-555; Journal, March 10, 1865.
Early in February, the Governor submitted the proposed Thirteenth Amendment to the General Assembly and urged its speedy ratification. A joint resolution declared that the suggested constitutional change was "violative of the reserved rights of the several States," "contrary to the principle upon which the government was framed," and "an insuperable barrier to the restoration of the seceded States to the Federal Union"; therefore, the members of the legislature asserted "their unqualified disapproval of said proposed amendment."5

Union men complained bitterly of the unsavory record of the General Assembly. A correspondent in the Journal considered that the body was following the dictates of the "drunken buffoon" from Sussex county in the United States Senate. The writer suggested that the Republican delegation from New Castle county withdraw and that federal troops be called to clear the legislative halls.6 The editor of the Journal complained that the rejection of the Amendment tied the state indefinitely to "rebel rule". What Saulsbury was in the Senate, the majority were in the General Assembly—"the advocates of human bondage, the friends and sympathizers of Jefferson Davis, the aiders and abettors of the Rebellion, ignorant representatives of a constituency debased and demoralized by the damning touch of slavery." The Journal suggested that 5,000 Republican voters from New Castle county should march in a body to Dover and demand a favorable vote upon the

5Laws, 1865, 683-684.
6Journal, February 24, 1865.
Amendment, as the people of Rhode Island had once done with an unsatisfactory legislature at the time of Dorr's insurrection. A writer in the Republican thought that the rejection of the Amendment would damn forever these "immortal few". The record of the legislature in holding on to the "everlasting nigger", in refusing a bounty to Negro soldiers, and in rejecting a proposal to provide a decent burial place for those who had fallen at Gettysburg "would disgrace the Hottentots."

In March, 1865, Union men were grieved to learn of the death of Governor Cannon at his home in Bridgeville. Republicans had looked to him for strong leadership in every crisis, and he had much to do with seeing that the state remained reasonably loyal. Democrats recalled that he had once been a member of their party and that he had been mainly responsible for bringing troops into the state in the elections of 1862, 1863, and 1864. His successor was Dr. Gove Saulsbury, presiding officer of the Senate and a Democrat.

Little was heard from Delaware's congressional delegation during the winter of 1865. Senator George Riddle seldom spoke, and Saulsbury's speeches, which were fewer than usual, were not of much interest to Delawareans. Nathaniel B. Smithers delivered one of his few addresses in the House of Representatives in connection with the

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7Ibid., February 17, 1865.

8Republican, March 2, 1865.

9Journal, March 2, 1865. According to the Delaware constitution at the time, Delaware had no Lieutenant-Governor, and the presiding officer of the Senate assumed the duties.
Thirteenth Amendment. He contended that he was expressing the sentiments of his constituents in hoping that slavery would be speedily abolished in Delaware. His views upon the institution within the state were this:

Slavery has obtained in the State of Delaware by force of the general customary law to which it everywhere owes its existence, and is regulated by statutory provisions without ever having received the sanction of support of constitutional recognition. Though established by immemorial usage, maintained by force of habit and education, and operated as a political machine, it has never been regarded with affection by the people. Founded only in custom, it has obtained no place in the organic law of the Government and may at any time be abolished by an ordinary act of legislation. Nowhere does it exist in so mild a form—the master subject to so many restraints, or the slave guaranteed such substantial protection.¹⁰

Democrats were extremely disappointed that the peace conference between high Confederate and northern officials in February did not produce peace. The Delawarean complained that Lincoln had organized the meeting only to entertain the people and to divert their minds from conscription. What did he care that "great rivers of blood" continued to flow or that the country was "drained of its last man and of its last dollar"? "Mr. Lincoln's course from first to last in the matter has only served to exhibit his little mind, his pettifogging disposition and his inability to rise from the level of the pot-house politician to the position of statesman," declared the editor.¹¹


¹¹Delawarean, February 18, 1865.
Thomas F. Bayard saw nothing in the future but gloom and disaster in the winter of 1865. "Things look dark ahead," he wrote a friend in January," and a foreign war seems to me imminent. The people of the North are so eaten up by love of gain that a great war of suffering might be a pacification. Never was there a more corrupt group than that at Washington."12 In March he still did not believe that the war was nearly over. He observed:

The people seem to think this war is over and the southern armies bound hand and foot. History--Reason--Common sense (as it is called)--should present this delusion. But nothing will dispel it but rude facts.

If this war had a truly military or political result in view, a distinct object to be accomplished, it would be possible to form some opinion of its duration and effects. But as it is a wicked crusade of fanaticism and hatred as blind as it is bitter, it has no object but to gratify hatred and lust. As to immediate military results, I shall be surprised if Johnson does not soon make a deep mark very soon.13

The population of Fort Delaware in January was 10,000, but it was being rapidly reduced by men's taking the oath of allegiance. By March, the prisoners included 2,000 officers and 6,000 privates. Loyal men considered that the quarters and food were better than those enjoyed by the poor in the North. One hundred Confederates had taken the oath in one day and had been released, and every day

12Thomas F. Bayard to John Carroll, January 27, 1865 (Bayard Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).

13Thomas F. Bayard to John Carroll, March 19, 1865 (Bayard Papers, Historical Society of Delaware).
or two freedom was bestowed upon groups of "galvanized" prisoners.\textsuperscript{14}

As usual, the Philadelphia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in March distinguished itself by its expressions of loyalty. It reaffirmed its devotion to the Union, gave thanks to God for the triumph of the northern forces, and supplicated the "Divine influence to incline the hearts of the Rebels in arms to submission to the constitutional authority of the land that the useless struggle may cease." Resolutions approved the Thirteenth Amendment, commended the Freedmen's Bureau and United States Sanitary Commission, and looked forward to the unification of the northern and southern churches of the denomination.\textsuperscript{15}

The Negroes in Wilmington on January 1 celebrated the second anniversary of the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation. They passed resolutions, which endorsed the policies of Lincoln's administration and approved the passage of an act of emancipation in Maryland.\textsuperscript{16} In connection with the opening of a Negro school near Smyrna, difficulties arose. White boys in the neighborhood broke down the door with axes, drove away the teacher and pupils, and burned the building.\textsuperscript{17} On the other hand, in Wilmington Bishop Lee of the

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Journal}, January 2, March 2, 1865. A "galvanized" prisoner was one who had taken the oath of allegiance.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Smyrna Times}, March 30, 1865.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Republican}, January 19, 1865.

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Journal}, February 21, 1865. From the \textit{Smyrna Times}. 
Episcopalian church sponsored a Negro school, which soon had sixty pupils in attendance and encountered no special opposition. Delawareans continued to be disturbed by the rapid ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. The Gazette in March complained that five years ago less than a thousand voters in Delaware favored abolition. Now the entire Republican party supported emancipation and political equality. It would not be long until the marriage of a white man to a Negress would be a condition precedent to holding office under the administration of Father Abraham.

Victory Celebrations

News that Richmond and Petersburg had fallen arrived in Wilmington on Monday, April 3, at 8 o'clock in the morning. As Anna Ferris noted, it was "one of the dates that we feel must be forever memorable in the annals of our country." Citizens were reported "nearly crazy" upon receipt of the news, and the city was said to be "wild with excitement." Places of business were closed, bells were rung,

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18 Republican, January 12, 1865; Journal, January 13, 1865.

19 Gazette, March 17, 1865.

20 Anna Ferris, Diary, April 3, 1865 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

21 William Canby, Diary, April 3, 1865 and Samuel Canby, Diary, April 3, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware). William Canby wrote: "We received the glorious news today that the Union army entered Richmond this morning at eight o'clock--first having captured Petersburg & all its garrisons. Our citizens have been nearly crazy since they got the news. All places of business were closed, bells have been ringing, & thousands of flags thrown to the breeze. An
A GRAND CELEBRATION
IN HONOR OF THE OCCUPATION OF
Petersburg & Richmond
IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON,
ON MONDAY NEXT,
APRIL 17th, 1865.

A MEETING
Will be held in the Hall of the Wilmington Institute, commencing at 2 o'clock, when addresses may be expected from EMINENT SPEAKERS.

IN THE EVENING
A Grand Torch-Light Procession,
Display of Fireworks, General Illumination of Houses.

Every lover of the Union, Freedom and righteous peace, is cordially invited to participate.
An invitation is most heartily extended to the citizens of the County to join in the Great Jubilee. Organizations from the County will report to Col. A. H. GRAMSHAW, Chief Marshal.

By Order of Comm. of Arrangements.
firecrackers were exploded, and flags were displayed. In the evening
the Mayor presided at a public meeting, which was followed by an
elaborate parade of soldiers, firemen, and members of various socie-
ties. In lower Delaware the news was received in much the same way.
In Smyrna the intelligence ran through the town like an electric shock,
and people crowded the stores selling newspapers. "Every Union man
was full of joy," but "gentlemen on the other side" quietly retired
to their homes. When the Philadelphia newspapers arrived in Geor-
town, bells on various buildings were rung so violently that they
could be heard eight miles in the country. A huge pyre of hogsheads,
boxes, and pine wood was burned in the public square. In its next
issue the Georgetown Union welcomed the victory in large headlines.
The editor of the Gazette hoped that the Lincoln administration would
now be induced to offer terms to the Confederacy that would lead the
improptu illumination this evening & a tremendous procession of citi-
zens, soldiers & all the fire companies with their apparatus, the
whole headed by the Mayor & City Council in carriages."

Samuel Canby recorded in his diary: "Accounts received today
of the capture at last of Richmond and Petersburg by the Union army.
Our City is wild with excitement, flags flying in every direction.
Bells ringing and guns firing, the stores and shops generally closed
this afternoon and the streets crowded with people. A public meeting
was held in front of the City Hall this evening, followed by a parade
and partial illumination."

22Journal, April 4, 1865.
23Smyrna Times, April 6, 1865.
24Georgetown Union, April 7, 1865. Headlines in the Union
read: "Capture of Richmond--God has given Grant victory!--Babylon
has Fallen--Glory, Glory Hallelujah--Retribution--Our Colored Troops
the First to Enter the Doomed City."
South to abandon the struggle. What was needed was peace and friend­ship with the South, whose people should not be treated as a conquered race.25

News that Lee had surrendered arrived in Wilmington on Sunday night, April 9, at about 10 o'clock. Anna Ferris wrote in her diary:

Just at the close of this quiet Sabbath, as we were preparing to go to bed, we were startled again into lively excitement by the ringing of the bells, announcing this time truly the surrender of Lee & his army to Gen. Grant! No words can express our glowing gratitude. It is now past midnight & the bells are still ringing & the cannons firing, but at last they speak of peace & good will to men and we trust will

Ring out the thorns and wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.26

Other observers reported that there was much celebrating, in spite of its being Sunday.27

The streets were soon thronged with people; cheers resounded for Grant, Sherman, and the army; Colonel Wilmer read the official telegrams with the news from the steps of City Hall, and the Star­Spangled Banner was sung. A long line of citizens formed a parade led by the Water-Witch fire engine, which blew her whistle to the

25Gazette, April 7, 1865.

26Anna Ferris, Diary, April 10, 1865 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

27Samuel Canby, Diary, April 9, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware). "Glorious news received this evening of the surrender today of Lee's Army to Gen. Grant and the brave Army of the Potomac, with all their guns, ammunition, et cetera, although it is Sunday there has been rejoicing, illuminating, firing of cannon, parading, et cetera. I trust this is the beginning of the end of this awful rebellion."
accompaniment of screams and cheers of ladies along the sidewalk. Houses were illuminated, bells rung, and bonfires burned until the wee hours of the morning.\textsuperscript{28}

On Monday the stores were closed, and the celebration continued. In the afternoon a turbulent mob forced the bounty commissioners to display a flag and visited the homes of several Democrats with demands for the exhibition of some patriotic emblem. Colonel Wilmer was accused of encouraging the riot.\textsuperscript{29} Thomas F. Bayard was extremely indignant at the proceedings and wrote a vivid account to a friend. According to Bayard, Wilmer and his deputies were directly responsible for the affair. "The Mayor was absent, his police half neutral, and the military in direct collusion," while even ministers of the gospel lent the sanctity of their voices to the invasion of private rights. Senator Riddle was forced to wave a flag, and Bayard from a Quaker neighbor borrowed a children's flag, which he placed out the window to appease the excited populace. One Democrat dropped a flagstick with a nail in it, and in the subsequent tumult he fired several times over the head of the crowd. His windows were broken, a flag nailed over his door, and he was marched off to jail by the Provost-Marshal. Another resident at first refused to run up the flag and was beaten until he


\textsuperscript{29}Gazette, April 16, 1865.
complied with the request. The Gazette welcomed "Grant's bloodless victory," which the newspaper regarded as "a harbinger of peace to our afflicted land." It reported that the people of Wilmington never did seem "more thoroughly grateful for any event" and compared Grant and Lee to Scipio Africanus and Hannibal respectively, one deserving praise for offering liberal terms and the other for preventing the spilling of blood by accepting them.

In lower Delaware many celebrations took place. In Smyrna the town was illuminated, fireworks were exploded, and "everybody looked happy." The festivities were mildly marred by the appearance of the McClellan Band, which played Dixie, Ye Sons of the South, and Awake the Glory. The Band was followed by a procession of Copperheads, who in the past had cheered for Jeff Davis and had frequently expressed the hope that Lincoln would be hanged. In Dover similar manifestations of joy took place. In Georgetown the "people generally went crazy over the glorious news" and a great celebration followed.

30 Thomas F. Bayard to John Carroll, April 20, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware).
31 Gazette, April 11, 1865.
32 Smyrna Times, April 20, 1865.
33 Delawarean, April 22, 1865; Georgetown Union, April 14, 1865; In a full page display the newspaper celebrated the victory: "Liberty and Union Victory--Our Cause has Triumphant--The Rebellion a Thing of the Past--The 'Experiment' of Republican Government Proved to be A GLORIOUS SUCCESS--Gen. Lee Surrenders to Gen. Grant--Grant Dictates his own Terms--The War Party of November has carved out through war the shortest road to an honorable, and permanent Peace--Thanks to the Heroes."
There was a great deal of interest in conditions in the fallen city. Many people must have received letters from friends and relatives in the Union army towards the close of the war, such as a young sailor on board the USS Commodore Morris off Norfolk on April 10 penned to his sister describing his reaction to happenings and relating how marvelous it was to participate in such wonderful events. Within a month restrictions on trade with the South were removed, and a group of Wilmington business men visited Richmond to inspect the ruins and to investigate commercial opportunities.\footnote{Tom Higgins to Mary C. Higgins, April 10, 1865 (Higgins-Corbitt Papers, Historical Society of Delaware. In part his letter read:}

"Aren't the news perfectly splendid! One after another Grant strikes his blows like the ocean's waves against a stranded ship. We were electrified by the news of the fall of Richmond and had hardly fully realized that the great Babylon had at last yielded when the Powhatan fires another national salute for the surrender of Lee's army.

"It's a glorious honor to live in such times and I feel it our especial privilege to be a witness of and in some measure a participator in the final struggle. I went to Richmond last week starting on Wednesday, spending Thursday there and returning Friday. Of course I had a delightful time and enjoyed thoroughly the passage up the James River and under the muzzles of the enemies' now silent batteries, since for so long a time we had expected to face them in battle. I wish you could have been with me in Richmond—we would have stayed at the Spottswood House and gone through Jefferson Davis' Mansion and spent a couple of hours in the Capitol reading the Congressmen's letters and visited the Libby Prison and Castle Thunder and all in all passed a day long to be remembered. It's a sad thing, though, to visit a city where all the women are dressed in mourning. Scarcely one in the whole big city that has not a father, brother, or husband to grieve for and how too when they begin to fully realize that this blood has been shed in worse than folly."
Sünter was again in Union hands by the middle of April, and many Republicans were thrilled by the raising of the American flag over it by General Anderson. Anna Ferris wrote in her diary:

Today the old flag was raised over Fort Sumter by Gen. Anderson! & as many of those who could be gathered, men who had witnessed its disgrace, were to accompany him to witness its triumph & Henry Ward Beecher to deliver the oration! What a revolution! I scarcely ever felt so thankful or so happy, indeed the heart seems enlarged with a new kind of joy & gratitude--for not only do the later accounts confirm the completeness of our triumphs, but show a moderation & a magnanimity to the victors, unknown in the annals of war & which crown their successes with a new glory.

Reverend George Wiswell delivered a sermon in honor of the restoration of the flag.

The Death of Lincoln

In the midst of the victory celebrations, word arrived in Wilmington on April 15 at 7:50 A. M. that the President had been assassinated during the previous night and had died that morning. Most Delawareans were horrified at the news. "We laid down last

35Anna Ferris, Diary, April 14, 1865 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania)

36Journal, April 15, 1865.

37S. F. duPont to Henry duPont, April 15, 1865 (telegram) (S. F. duPont Papers, Longwood Foundation). This telegram was marked "Recd. duPonts, April 15, 1865, 7 o'clock 50 a.m." and was probably the first receipt in Delaware of the President's death, if not of the assassination. It read: "The President was shot at about ten (10) o'clock last night when he with his wife and family were at Ford's Theatre. The shot entered his head and the surgeons say it is mortal. About the same time the Secretary of State was stabbed three (3) times whilst in his bed. S. D. We have since heard that the President is dead."
night with a sense of peace and happiness long unknown," Anna Ferris
noted, "we awoke this morning to a consciousness of horror & grief
never known before! It is really dreadful to write the words that
express such a horrible crime--the President has been assassinated!
No words can possibly express the feeling it creates."^38 Samuel
Canby on April 15 thought that the news was "too dreadful to think of
and what be the effect on our country at this time God only knows."
On April 16 he found "that nothing else is thought of or talked of
than the cruel horrible murder of our beloved President, everything
is being draped in mourning and almost everyone looks as though they
had lost a dear friend."^39 A Wilmington woman reported that "the
remark of many on hearing of this murder was 'They have killed their
best friend.'" She added, "I verily believe God will bring to justice
even in this world, the conspirators who planned that crime, but how
it makes me shudder to think of the Devil's awful power on earth."^40
The son-in-law of Governor Cannon noted the death of Lincoln in his
diary and surrounded the entry with black. "His death horrified the
nation," he wrote, "his death made a million tearful mourners, and a
nation overwhelmed with sadness. A greater than Washington has

^38 Anna Ferris, Diary, April 15, 1865 (Friends' Historical
Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).

^39 Samuel Canby, Diary, April 15, 16, 1865 (Historical Society
of Delaware).

^40 Anna Brinckle to Mrs. S. F. duPont, April 16, 1865 (Typed
GENERAL ORDER, No. 5.

In view of the terrible calamity which has befallen our Country by the Assassination of

President LINCOLN

AND

SECRETARY SEWARD,

All lovers of their Government and Republican institutions, are earnestly requested and enjoined to stand firm and obey the laws and the authorities over them. To this end the preservation of the Public Peace is the first duty of a good Citizen, and the protection of life and property, an obligation we all owe to the community in which we live. It is therefore requested, that all the good people of this District abstain from tumultuous or disorderly assemblies, and from conduct or language tending to a breach of the peace; and should any evil disposed person use of language or conduct, show any sympathy for the murderers or the crimes just committed, he or they will be instantly arrested and severely punished by the proper authorities.

The General commanding, confidently relies on the Loyal Citizens of the District to aid the Civil and Military Authorities in preserving the peace.

By Command of

BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN R. KENLY,

WM. B. NORMAN,

Lieut. & A. A. A. Gen.
Thomas F. Bayard wrote a friend that:

I am sickened and disgusted with this foul murder of Mr. Lincoln. It is one of the 'bloody instructions' of Civil War and a government of force.

It is the first assassination of a public servant we have ever known in this country. And it is disgraceful and horrible. The result of such acts or permitting them to be approved is too plain. They establish doubt and terror—and give to timid and vindicative men a pretext for oppression and cruelty which in turn will beget secret violence with revenge.

Assassination is un-American. The Nation had many and great faults, but they were open and bold. This murder seemed insane and has no extenuation if the accounts given be true.42

The press universally condemned the outrage. "The foulest deed that ever sullies the name of humanity," lamented the editor of the Georgetown Union. "Aye! the blackest that ever earth witnessed or hell devised took place on Friday evening last when a fiend incarnate murdered in cold blood our nation's saviour, Abraham Lincoln."43 "His martyrdom at this critical moment," asserted the editor of the Smyrna Times, "has been compared to the removal of Moses on the very eve of the entrance of the hosts of Israel into the Promised Land and to the horrible martyrdom of John the Baptist at the period of the inauguration of our Holy Christianity."44 "No event has ever taken place

41Charles Heydrick, Diary, April 18, 1865 (Delaware State Archives).
42Thomas F. Bayard to John Carroll, April 20, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware).
43Georgetown Union, April 21, 1865.
44Smyrna Times, April 20, 1865.
ILLUSTRATION XXI

A MEMORIAL PICTURE OF LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
BORN FEBRUARY 12, 1809.
ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, NOV. 6, 1860.
INAUGURATED MARCH 4, 1861.
RE-ELECTED, NOVEMBER 8, 1864.
INAUGURATED MARCH 4, 1865.
ASSASSINATED AT WASHINGTON, APRIL 14, 1865.

"How sleep the brave, who sinks to rest
By all their Country's wishes blest!
By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung.
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Fames shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!"
which has created such universal sorrow among our people as the atrocious murder of President Lincoln," declared the Journal. The Delawarean reported that never had the community been so much stirred by a piece of news. While it regarded Lincoln's administration as full of errors and partisanship, the "wise, conservative and merciful policy inaugurated by him within the past few weeks as a means of restoring peace and union had caused the first to be forgotten and the other to slumber." It feared that bright hopes of a speedy peace and of the restoration of good will were dashed to the ground. 

The Wilmington Presbytery in session on April 20 rejoiced that one great object of the war had been "secured for all ages and generations—the extinction of the dreadful system of human bondage that has for two centuries been preying upon our life and disgracing our national honor," but regarded with horror the assassination of Lincoln, "an event unparalleled in the history of the Republic." It resolved:

That in this last infamous and treacherous deed by which a Chief Magistrate, second to Washington only in the affection and reverence of the people, has been smitten down and made a martyr to the great principles of National Unity, Justice, Emancipation, this Presbytery behold fresh proof of the implacable rage and heaven defying violence of this proslavery rebellion and calls upon all its members and congregations to join pledging themselves anew to unsparing, unreserved opposition to its principles, and to a hearty support of the new executive for uprooting in all measures every remnant and fibre of treason from the land.

45Journal, April 18, 1865.
46Delawarean, April 22, 1865.
47Wilmington Presbytery, Minutes, April 20, 1865 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).
While many Delawareans regretted the death of Lincoln, there was some open rejoicing. One man was arrested because he was suspected of being associated with the assassination plot. Two men in New Castle county were confined for expressing pleasure at Lincoln's death. A resident of Wilmington who said that he would befriend Booth if he appeared was arrested. In Middletown a citizen regarded the death as "the best news he had heard in four years, and making use of a hard oath, explained that he should have been assassinated long ago, and he would like to have his body for soap grease." In Smyrna the Episcopalian rector was reprimanded for objecting to the draping of the church in black. In Dover mourning was torn down or bedaubed with filth. At the Methodist church in Camden the Copperhead minister concluded some remarks about Lincoln by saying, "If I were to tell you that I approve of all the measures of the late President, my friends, you would not believe me." Amidst a scene of wild confusion

48Journal, April 21, 1865.
49Ibid., April 28, 1865.
50Gazette, May 9, 1865. The prisoner complained that he was unjustly arrested because the last part of his statement had not been noted. Supposedly his words were: "If Booth would come to my house, I would give him supper and a bed and then would immediately go after a guard and secure him."
51Journal, April 21, 1865.
52Smyrna Times, April 20, 1865.
53Ibid., April 27, 1865.
some left the church and others shouted for him to sit down.* In Sussex county two men were arrested for expressing approval of the assassination.** An ardent Republican in Georgetown reported to military authorities that Willard Saulsbury in December had foretold the death of Lincoln by violence about March 4, and that three weeks before the assassination he had renewed the prediction.***

The war created more problems than it solved. Lee had surrendered, the North had defeated the South on the field of battle, and the Union was restored, but problems concerning the Negro, the South, and the President appeared. To Union men the old struggle against "traitors" persisted in new guise in Congress, in the South, and in Delaware. To Democrats the Union seemed in as much danger as during the Civil War, since Radicals tramped upon the constitution, disregarded state's rights in the South, and tried to enforce a vindictive peace. The conflict between the two factions had just been transferred from the battlefield to the arenas of public opinion, the state legislature, and Congress and continued unabated.

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*Ibid., May 4, 1865; Delawarean, April 22, 1865; Alexander B. Cooper, Memoir of Myself and My Times, 91 (Typed manuscript, Historical Society of Delaware).

**Republican, May 12, 17, 1865; Georgetown Union, May 26, 1865.

***C. S. Layton to Commander of Middle Department, May 9, 1865 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives).
Chapter XVII

THE BEGINNING OF READINGMENT

"So far as actual fighting is concerned," the editor of the Gazette observed at the end of April, "we presume it may be said with a moderate degree of certainty that the war is over." After the surrender of the rebel army and navy in Texas in May, a Wilmington resident wrote in his diary that "thanks to a kind Providence we have peace once more & this horrid rebellion is at an end." A Delaware minister in July composed a song entitled "Now the Cruel War is Over", which was used effectively in a Grand Juvenile Patriotic Concert.

The southern forces had surrendered, a new President was in office, and the Union had been preserved, but many problems remained.

1 Gazette, April 28, 1865; William Canby, Diary, May 29, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware). The editorial was entitled "The War Over."

2 Journal, July 11, 1865. These words were to be sung to the tune of "When this Cruel War is Over," of which Reverend L. C. Lockwood's song was probably a paraphrase. The first verse and chorus read:

"Now the cruel war is over,
Gladsome peace has come,
Now the loved one greets her lover,
Boys are coming home.
Son in the embrace of mother,
Joyful hearts aglow,
Sister grasps the hand of brother,
While the big tears flow.

"No more sad and plaintive
Is the dirgeful strain,
For now the cruel war is over,
And the parted meet again."
During the remainder of the year politicians concerned themselves with the soldiers, the status of the Negro, the attitude of the President, and treatment of the defeated South. Union men regretted Provost-Marshal Wilmer's dismissal from office, raised funds to aid the freed Negro, and rejoiced at the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. Democrats welcomed the President as a "new recruit" to their ranks, attempted to keep the Negro "in his place", and shuddered at demands for the hanging of Jeff Davis and other Confederate leaders. Readjustment to peace times was as difficult as facing problems during the war.

The Returning Soldier

Soldiers from the First Delaware Regiment participated in May in the Grand Review of the Army in Washington, which was witnessed by some Delawareans.\(^3\) The first returning soldiers appeared in Wilmington in June. Companies from the Third, Fourth, and Eighth Delaware Regiments paraded through the streets to the accompaniment of cheers and received their back pay before being mustered out.\(^4\) Demobilization of other groups followed rapidly, and by the middle of July the last soldiers had returned. Anna Ferris observed in her diary on July 11:

Today the last of our Delaware soldiers came "home from the wars" & were welcomed at the Institute & a Collation prepared at which 1000 of them were feasted. They were

\(^3\)Ibid., May 26, 1865; Samuel Canby, Diary, May 28, 1865.

\(^4\)Journal, June 9, 1865.
from the 2 & 3rd Regiment & when they first went out they numbered 1700 men. Of these only 65 of the original number remain in the service. A few did not enlist, & more doubtless staggered away, but the greatest number were killed, or wounded & disabled--Took part in some of the bloodiest battles of war in the 7 days before Richmond and Gettysburg. This is probably the last we shall see of the war & we are thankful to have no more "surrender campaigners." The "Crimson flower of battle" blooms no longer, & instead we have the "White Lilies of Peace."  

Soldiers who had been reported deceased returned ill and emaciated from Confederate prisons. The Georgetown Union in July noted that every stage brought back soldiers to beat swords into plowshares and to help redeem the honor of the state by voting the Union ticket.  

"The question of the hour is 'What shall be done for those whom the nation delighteth to honor?'" noted in May the Reverend L. C. Lockwood, agent of the Delaware Improvement Association. He proposed that an agency be organized to encourage northern veterans to settle on farms in lower Delaware.  

A Soldiers' Homestead Commission was formed in June with that purpose as its main objective. Minor aims included assistance in finding employment and in arranging scholarships in colleges. Under northern auspices the new town of Lincoln in Sussex county was laid out, and its founder issued a newspaper, which advocated the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment.  

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5Anna Ferris, Diary, July 14, 1865 (Friends' Historical Society, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania).  
6Georgetown Union, July 7, 1865.  
7Journal, June 1, 1865.  
8Ibid., June 9, 23, 1865.
Within a year the experiment was officially declared a failure.9 In August petitions from Delaware soldiers were forwarded to Congressmen asking for a federal bounty, and committees were formed to correspond with soldiers in other areas with the same objectives.10 A Soldiers' Local Union was formed in Wilmington in October to aid sick and destitute soldiers as well as orphans and widows of veterans.11 Republican candidates for office soon learned the importance of emphasizing an army record. "Many Union Men" in August recommended George Day a "returned volunteer and Union loving citizen" for city assessor.12

With the assistance of veterans, the Republicans rolled up a large majority in September in the municipal election in Wilmington.13

Confederate veterans returned in considerable numbers to Sussex county, and it was noted that some residents were cursing the "Lincoln hirelings" and patting the Johnny Rebs on the back.14 A resident of Laurel thought that rebel soldiers should not be permitted to return to the state.15 A Republican in Georgetown in August reported to military authorities that a Confederate veteran had just returned to

9Ibid., July 7, 1865; Republican, June 15, 22, 1865.
10Gazette, August 16, 1865.
11Ibid., October 17, 1865.
12Journal, August 15, 1865.
13Gazette, September 8, 1865.
14Georgetown Union, July 7, 1865.
15Ibid., May 5, 1865.
town and asked what should be done.\textsuperscript{16} A few such persons were confined for short periods, but in the majority of cases no action was taken. Russell Hobbs of Georgetown was arrested in July, 1864 and taken to Philadelphia. He had been on a vessel which had been captured by the Alabama, and he had been compelled to serve as a member of the crew of the Confederate cruiser until he had broken his leg. Held in prison, he applied in June, 1865, for a presidential pardon, which was granted.\textsuperscript{17} John K. Lambson, arrested in May, 1863 for expressing disloyal sentiments, had been deported to the South. Property belonging to him in Delaware had been sold. In September, 1865, he formally requested a presidential pardon; his application was supported by letters from Governor Gove Saulsbury and Senator George Riddle. The request was granted.\textsuperscript{18}

At Fort Delaware on April 4, 1865, a 100-gun salute was fired in honor of the fall of Richmond, and on April 10, 200 guns hailed the surrender of Lee's army. There were 8,000 prisoners on the island on May 23, but hundreds were taking the oath of allegiance, with the expectation of being speedily released. Several thousand were freed during the next month, and on June 27 General Grant directed

\textsuperscript{16}W. Joseph to Middle Department, August 7, 1865 (Middle Department Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives); Cf. ante, 184. The name of the returned Confederate soldier was J. P. Barker.

\textsuperscript{17}Application for Pardon by Russel Hobbs, June 16, 1865 (Amnesty Papers, War Department, National Archives).

\textsuperscript{18}Application for Pardon by John K. Lambson, September 25, 1865 (Amnesty Papers, War Department, National Archives).
that the remainder, with the exception of four, should be granted freedom. The last two prisoners were released in November, the commander of the prison was mustered out of service in December, and Fort Delaware relapsed into its neglected state of prewar days. 19

The Negro Problem

Slaves remained unfreed in Delaware until the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified by sufficient states to put it into effect in December, 1865. Most Republicans favored the immediate termination of slavery, though they were less enthusiastic about social and political rights. The Democrats emphatically opposed emancipation and Negro equality. The Thirteenth Amendment had been defeated in the legislature, and the Democratic majority had passed strong resolutions against it. Governor Gove Saulsbury in his inaugural address in June reprimanded Congress for interfering with the institution. The true position of the Negro was as a subordinate race excluded from all political and social privileges. History had repeatedly demonstrated that blacks were incapable of the higher order of intellectual and moral development and that the superior group would only be debased by mingling with the inferior. "The finger of the Almighty

19Journal, May 2, 1865; Gazette, May 9, June 13, 1865; Emerson Wilson, Fort Delaware (Historical Society of Delaware), 10-11; Edward R. Rich, "Reminiscences," Fort Delaware Notes, III (March 15, 1952), 5. Newspapers reveal that 998 of 1,000 men took an oath on one occasion in May and that all but 13 of 700 officers had done likewise. The Gazette reported that in June 500 prisoners had been released upon one day and 200 upon another.
has traced in indelible lines the distinction between the Negro and white races, and any attempt to obliterate that distinction is the result of either a blind fanaticism or a wicked and perverse infidelity," he concluded. 20

The Democratic and Republican press took opposite sides upon the issue of emancipation. The Delawarean and Gazette continually stressed the dangers of Negro suffrage and equality. A correspondent in the Delawarean thought that history had established no clearer fact than that the Negroes have demonstrated themselves to be completely incapable of self-government or of elevating themselves to the condition of civilized men. The dangerous experiment of Negro suffrage in the South would end in bloodshed, crime, and the ruin of the American republic. 21 The editor of the Delawarean feared that the abolitionists aimed "at nothing less than the perfect equality, politically and socially, of the white and negro races." The leaders of the movement in the state might sugarcoat the pill, but they would have it. 22 The Smyrna Times regretted that the legislature had not ratified the Thirteenth Amendment, since freeing the slave would make the state "bud and blossom as the rose." 23 The Republican wished for the outmoded institution to be abolished, but refrained from advocating

20 Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, 1865 (Dover, 1865), 450.

21 Gazette, May 30, 1865; Delawarean, July 15, 29, 1865.

22 Ibid., July 15, 1865.

23 Smyrna Times, May 17, 1865.
complete social and political rights. The Georgetown Union thought that the little Commonwealth was rendered "ridiculous in the eyes of the whole country and even of the whole world by silly persistence in upholding an institution so clearly numbered amongst the things that were." Delawareans were trying to breathe life into a decaying carcass. The newspaper saluted the unique position of its inhabitants in relation to the institution in a poem, which charged that Delaware would ever be "Slavery's home."25

Race relations remained in a delicate state of tension throughout 1865. In Sussex county near Centreville a Negro church meeting in May was broken up by a gang of ruffians, and a group of white persons complained to military authorities.26 The slave trade in May was reported to be still carried on in lower Delaware, and the case of a

24Republican, May 25, August 10, 1865.

25Georgetown Union, March 15, May 12, 1865. The poem was entitled an "Anthem" and read:

"To little Delaware in her slaveholding glory,
Vanguard of Tyranny!
Shout over land and sea,
Niggers shall ne'er be free.
Traitor of Liberty!

"Great thy renown shall be,
Evermore greeting thee;
Tyrants shall come,
Kings to thy throne repair,
Bow to its god, and swear;
Hail to thee, Delaware,
Slavery's home!"

26Smyrna Times, May 24, 1865; J. E. Hall and others to Middle Department, May 20, 1865 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives).
Negro girl sold by her Maryland owner to a farmer near Centreville was cited. An army colonel who investigated the incident reported that conditions were unsatisfactory:

I am convinced that the colored people of this District need the strong arm of the Federal Authority for their protection. The civil authorities of the lower part of Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland accord them no rights; their churches are burned, their schools broken up, and their persons and property abused and destroyed by vicious white men with impunity; and their appeals to the civil authorities are utterly disregarded.27

During the war the annual camp meetings of the Methodist Episcopal church near Camden in Kent county had been cancelled, but with the return of peace the custom was renewed in June, 1865. As usual, a Negro minister was permitted to address the members of his own race in the rear of the camp. A drunken and disorderly mob broke up the service. According to Republicans, Indiana soldiers stationed nearby prevented any serious violence. Governor Saulsbury was credited by the Delawarean with calming the ruffians. Later the house in which the Negro preacher was staying was stoned.28

The First Delaware Colored Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church convened in August in Wilmington.29 Several Negro veterans were arrested near Milton in Sussex county for possessing

27Colonel John M. Wilson to Lt.-Colonel Catlin, July 18, 1865 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives); Smyrna Times, May 24, 1865; Journal, May 19, 1865.

28Smyrna Times, August 9, 1865; Delawarean, August 13, 1865.

29Journal, August 15, 1865.
firearms contrary to state law, even though they had been given the weapons at the time of their discharge from the army. In August a Negro was sold into servitude for seven years from the steps of the courthouse in Sussex county for $64 as part of his sentence by a state court, and similar disposal of several cases occurred in Kent county in October. In view of the pending Thirteenth Amendment, the Journal thought that such purchases were "ticklish investments." An army officer in December investigated near Millsboro in Sussex county an incident, in which several white persons had broken the windows of the home of a Negro and driven away his family. In nearby Dagsboro a Negro minister had been forced to leave the county. The same officer reported that at Seaford a mob led by three former Confederate soldiers had attacked a Negro congregation, broken several windows in the building, and searched several members of the audience. Ex-Governor William Ross was considered to be the ringleader in the affair.

30 Gazette, September 22, 1865.

31 Journal, August 15, October 31, 1865; Georgetown Union, August 11, 1865.

32 J. W. Winfield to Second Lieutenant Robert Dame, December 16, 1865 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives). The information concerning the incident was furnished by Ben Burton, who as the largest slaveholder in Delaware had been consulted by Lincoln in 1861 concerning the possibility of an emancipation plan for Delaware. The ringleaders were Stanley Short, Robert Hazaard, and Noah Davidson.

33 J. W. Winfield to R. O. Tyler, December 23, 1865 (Middle Department, Letters Received, 1865, War Department, National Archives). The Confederate soldiers were Theodore Price, Thomas Horsey, and Joshua Morrill. Winfield claimed that Price had been banished to
With the completion of the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 18, the Journal thought that "Delaware today enters upon a new era in her history."34 A Wilmington banker wrote in his diary, "I am glad for one thing, that I have lived to this day."35 On the other hand, the Delawarean believed that the enactment freed few slaves in Delaware, since many had run away or been released during the war. Negroes as slaves were better off than as indentured servants. The real aim of the Amendment was the equality of races.36 In view of the new Amendment, the Negroes in Delaware planned an elaborate third anniversary celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation for January 1, 1866.37 Humanitarians formed a Freedmen's Relief Association in November. Bishop Alfred Lee headed the society, and his wife became president of an auxiliary. By the end of the year $716 had been raised for the laudable purpose.38

The Treatment of the South

Exactly what should be done with the defeated South, now that the war was over was a difficult problem. In general, the Democrats

34Journal, December 22, 1865.
35William Canby, Diary, December 19, 1865 (Historical Society of Delaware).
36Delawarean, December 23, 1865.
37Journal, December 22, 1865.
38Ibid., November 21, December 25, 1865.
favored a forgive-and-forget policy, while the Republicans advocated a harsh policy, which would make at least the leaders suffer. Rather surprisingly, ex-Representative Nathaniel B. Smithers, a Republican, at a Dover victory celebration in April pleaded for leniency. Since no two persons could agree exactly upon who was guilty in the South, he argued that it was best to be magnanimous and forgive the masses. He "almost" hoped that the leaders would escape to another country, in order that the victors would be spared the annoyance of meting out their just deserts.39

Union men in May were delighted at the capture of Jefferson Davis, who they hoped would shortly be hanged. The son-in-law of Governor Cannon wrote in his diary on May 15: "The news reached us today that the arch-traitor Jeff Davis was captured. The blood of a million men is upon his soul. He ought to be hung as the foulest malefactor—as one of the murderers of Lincoln, one of nature's noblemen.40 Justice demanded that "after the authorities shall have divested him of his hoopskirts and other delicate et ceteras belonging to his wife's wardrobe that he will be taken out to some convenient field and hung by the neck until he is dead, without the

39Delawarean, June 23, 1865.

40Charles Heydrick, Diary, May 15, 1865 (Delaware State Archives); Robert McElroy, Jefferson Davis, II (New York, 1937), 508-517. The northern press soon circulated the story that Jefferson Davis had been captured wearing woman's attire. The facts were that in the excitement and dark he put on his wife's coat instead of his own, and his wife threw a shawl over her head and shoulders.
benefit of breeches or clergy," declared the editor of the Journal. The former Confederate President was hanged in effigy in woman's clothing in Wilmington. The Gazette pleaded for his forgiveness and pardon.

The Smyrna Times thought that only the leaders should be punished. The Republican suggested placing Lee and Davis in an eight-foot square pen for a year on southern prison fare and then hanging them. Persons who favored restoring rights and privileges to the ex-rebels should think about conditions in Confederate hospitals and prisons. How could anyone advocate leniency after reviewing the atrocities committed by southerners during the war, asked a writer in the Republican.

From the first battle of Bull Run to the exit of Jeff in petticoats, the most devilish cruelty that humanity could invent has been practiced by them. Carving the bones of our dead soldiers into trinkets to adorn southern beauty. Starving our prisoners by the thousands. Introducing the yellow fever. Burning our cities by the incendiary's torch. Search history in vain for the savage nation that has ever practiced such barbarities.

"Shall They be Punished?" inquired an editorial in the Journal in September. The newspaper feared that rebels everywhere, both secretly and openly, were plotting to seize the reins of government. Union

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Journal, May 16, 1865.
Gazette, August 4, 1865.
Smyrna Times, June 5, 1865; Republican, June 8, 1865.
Ibid., August 17, 1865.
men, who had been maimed for life by rebel bullets or had been starved in southern prisons, demanded the punishment of Lee and Davis as well as many of the rank and file. During the summer the editor of the Georgetown Union declared that he had traveled far and wide, and the universal opinion of all loyal men was that Jefferson Davis should be hanged. The masses of the southern people, who had been the "willing tools" of leaders, should be severely punished. On the other hand, a new editor in September urged the extension of the hand of fellowship and of charity to the conquered brethren of the South. The Gazette and Delawarean pleaded for forgiveness for a defeated people, who had shown themselves truly repentant and humbled. The long debate between the two parties about what should be done with the South had only just begun.

The problem of the unrepentant South plagued Union men at the end of the year. Thomas M. Rodney sent Reverend George Wiswell $50 in December "in aid of the Christian Battery erected on Rodney Street by the Central Army Corps of the Presbyterian Church, and if that Battery will prevent the capture of our ever vigilant enemy (Southern at that) of one poor Soul, it will amply repay all costs and charges."

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45Journal, September 12, 1865.

46Georgetown Union, May 5, July 28, 1865. The editorials were entitled "The Punishment of Treason" and "What Shall be Done with Jeff Davis?".

47Ibid., September 29, 1865.

48Delawarean, May 26, 1865; Gazette, August 17, 1865.
A few days later, Wiswell thanked him for his contribution to the "Spiritual artillery" to be used against the South. "I shall never fail to turn all my guns against the incarnate Devil of Southern rebellion as a sin against God, man, liberty, and religion," he promised. If Thaddeus Stevens died, he would be happy to see such a sterling Union man as Thomas Rodney as chairman of the joint committee of fifteen.\(^9\)

The New President

When Johnson was inaugurated as vice-president in March, to the surprise of many people he was intoxicated. The Gazette in an editorial asked the question, "Is He a Miserable Drunkard?" and thought that political honors should not be conferred upon a man of such low moral character.\(^50\) The editor of the Georgetown Union agreed that "our Vice-President Johnson publicly disgraced himself at the inauguration by a maudlin incoherent speech given when beastly drunk," but contended that the Gazette could say nothing, since it constantly defended the "drunken sot" Willard Saulsbury.\(^51\)

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\(^9\) Thomas M. Rodney to Reverend George Wiswell, December 15, 1865 and Reverend George Wiswell to Thomas M. Rodney, December 18, 1865 (Thomas M. Rodney Papers, Historical Society of Delaware). The Joint Committee of Fifteen was a body appointed by both houses of Congress to consider the question of reconstruction in the South.

\(^50\) Allen Johnson, ed., Dictionary of American Biography, X (New York, 1929), 84; Gazette, March 16, 1865. Historians are agreed that he had taken some spirits upon this occasion because of illness.

\(^51\) Georgetown Union, March 30, 1865.
Within a month after the death of Lincoln, the Gazette regarded Johnson as "a statesman equal in originality to most of the great men of his day, while as an executive officer he has scarcely an equal." At the end of May it commented upon his growing popularity and noted with approval that he did not endorse Negro suffrage. He could be called a Conservative State Rights Democrat. The Delawarean frankly stated that it would give Johnson a fair trial and would uphold him as long as he supported the constitution and the rights of states. By December it acclaimed his message to Congress "as much in advance of anything Mr. Lincoln ever wrote," and on the whole, "satisfactory, more satisfactory than expected, and it is evidence that the President is no radical."

The Republican press was mainly silent during the summer concerning the President's policies. The Georgetown Union in an editorial upon "Dissatisfaction with the Policy of the Government" in September observed that there were many criticisms concerning the administration, which made no distinction of treatment of its friends and foes. The Journal sarcastically asked in October why the Democrats did not adopt Johnson's policies for Delaware if they were so pleased with them nationally. A correspondent in the Republican in June complained bitterly that "Old Andy" whom the Democrats had once

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52Gazette, May 2, 26, 1865.
53Delawarean, July 29, December 9, 1865.
54Georgetown Union, September 7, 1865; Journal, October 20, 1865.
regarded as a drunken vagabond was now considered to be an honest man and a good Democrat. The President steadily lost ground with the Republicans and grew in popularity with the Democrats throughout the year.

The Court-Martial of Colonel Edwin Wilmer

Union men in April were shocked to learn of the arrest of Provost Marshal Edwin Wilmer for irregularities in office. The three commissioners, who had been appointed by the legislature to distribute military bounties, had written to Senator George Riddle about their unsatisfactory relations with the Provost Marshal, and Riddle had referred the letter to Secretary of War Stanton, who had sent an investigator. Upon the latter's recommendation Wilmer had been dismissed, but was subsequently reinstated, in order that he could be tried by a military court.

Loyal men in Delaware felt that their cause had received a terrible blow. On April 27, 1865, 11¼ Republicans petitioned President Johnson to revoke the dismissal; they were sure that all

55 Republican, June 15, 1865.

56 The newspaper coverage of the dismissal and trial is unsatisfactory and scanty. The Democratic press was purposely kept as much in the dark about the case as possible, and the loyal Republican press would not report it. See the Journal, April 15, June 20, 1865; Delawarean, April 29, 1865; Gazette, June 2, June 9, 1865. The best account is Edwin Wilmer, Court-Martial, 1865 (General Courts-Martial, MM 2064, Box No. 665, War Department, National Archives).
complaints could be satisfactorily explained.\textsuperscript{57} The Provost Marshal General on April 30 upheld his dismissal in a statement to the President, since the affidavits of seven of Wilmer's clerks and the statements of many loyal men convincingly demonstrated that the officer was guilty. On May 3, Johnson granted the plea of Wilmer's friends for an investigation.\textsuperscript{58}

At the court-martial proceedings in Washington in May, Wilmer was charged with accepting "kickbacks" from his employees, of receiving gifts from substitute brokers, and of selling for his own gain large quantities of discarded clothing belonging to soldiers. He was also accused of leaving carelessly exposed numerous signed papers in blank, of instigating a riot against the commissioners and some other Democrats at the time of Lee's surrender, and of refusing to accept the enlistment of some men unless they would enter the army as substitutes. The Mayor of Wilmington, the three bounty commissioners, and a number of other Delawareans testified during the trial. Wilmer's defense was conducted by Samuel M. Harrington, a Republican lawyer of Wilmington, and Colonel S. M. Bowman. According to them, Wilmer was the victim of propaganda dispersed by the disloyalists of Delaware. The army investigator had listened only to the reports of "copperheads." The Provost-Marshal had received gifts from his employees

\textsuperscript{57}Ibid., Petition, April 27, 1865. The Republicans included S. M. Harrington, Jr., Reverend George Wiswell, Reverend William Aikman, and Dr. A. H. Grimshaw.

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., Provost Marshal General James Fry to President A. Johnson, April 30, 1865 and penciled note by Andrew Johnson, May 3, 1865.
and draft brokers, but they were voluntary, not compulsory, presents. He was not guilty of causing a riot, which was the result of the righteous wrath of Union men against disloyalists. The two lawyers attempted to show that the three bounty commissioners and some other witnesses were Confederate sympathizers. Any funds that he had received were spent in furthering the Union cause. Largely through his efforts troops had been assembled to defend the state from Confederate attack in July, 1863 and July, 1864. Through his complete attention to Union matters, Wilmer had lost his own business and had been ruined financially. The Provost Marshal was a martyr being gored to death by disunionists. In spite of the efforts of the defense and of his friends, he was found guilty on almost all charges and specifications and sentenced to prison for two years and to pay a fine of $10,000. 59

Wilmer's friends had only begun to fight. The acting Judge-Advocate General reviewed the case and recommended to the Secretary of War on June 12 that the sentence be sustained because of the criminality involved, in spite of Wilmer's previous good character. This report was laid before the President, who found no reason to

exercise clemency. Twenty-one Republicans from Delaware petitioned
the President to grant a pardon on June 24 because Wilmer had labored
day and night to advance the interest of the government, because he
owned no property with which to pay the fine, because his large family
was suffering during his absence, and because he was guilty of mere
errors of judgment. The President on August 17 received a report
from the acting Judge-Advocate General, who adhered to the previous
judgment that the sentence should stand.

On September 21, Wilmer personally applied to the President
for a pardon. He alleged that the prosecution was undertaken at the
insistence of the commissioners and other leading disloyalists in
Delaware, that the charges had not been sustained, and that he had
been a faithful and efficient officer of the government. He had used
all his own funds for the Union cause and had even placed his own son,
a lad of fifteen years, in the army. Any money that he had obtained
through gifts or the sale of clothing had been used for political pur­
poses. At the time of Lee's invasion in July, 1863, and of the great

60 H. H. Winthrop to the Secretary of War, June 12, 1865, and
James B. Fry, Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War, June
15, 1865 (General Courts-Martial, MM 2064, Box No. 665, War Depart­
ment, National Archives). Fry's note read: "This paper was laid
before the President by me at 3:30 P. M., June 15, 1865 and the
subject explained verbally. The Pres. directed me to say to the
Sec. of War that he saw no sufficient reason at this time to
exercise clemency. James B. Fry, Provost Marshal General."

61 Ibid., Petition, June 24, 1865. Among these prominent
Republicans were L. E. Wales, S. M. Harrington, Jr., Dr. A. H.
Grimshaw, and E. G. Bradford.

62 Ibid., A. A. Housmer to President A. Johnson, August 17, 1865.
scare in July, 1864, he had saved the state. It was well known "that he raised more men and more money to pay bounties and performed more labor to sustain the government and the Union cause than any one man in Delaware." He and his friends were astonished at the verdict of the court; "the common sentiment is that a great wrong has been done a faithful and efficient officer—that the Union cause has been damaged in Delaware and the enemies of the government made to rejoice." Therefore, he thought "that in view of all the facts in his case, a revocation of sentence would be an act of simple justice to himself and family and would gratify not only loyal citizens of Delaware, but also his many friends in other states." The President at last heeded his plea and granted him a pardon in October.63 A visitor to the Delaware State Museum in Dover in the summer of 1954 could see on exhibit on loan from a private citizen a large oil painting of Wilmer dressed as a Colonel of the Sixth Regiment; probably most viewers regarded him as a military hero. There is no reason to doubt the guilt of Provost Marshal Wilmer on most of the charges made; purely political pressure succeeded in freeing him.

Economic Problems

High prices were among the most popular topics for discussion of the day. The Journal noted in May that the prices of many commodities in large cities were decreasing and wondered when Wilmington

63 Ibid., Petition, September 21, 1865.
merchants would follow suit.64 A meeting was held in the city hall
in the fall to protest the high prices, especially of coal and butter.
When coal dealers would not reduce their charges, arrangements were
made by the aroused citizens to obtain 150 tons of coal directly from
the mines in Pennsylvania.65 A "workingman" in October complained of
the exorbitant cost of living. Merchants claimed that they could not
afford to lower prices, but their income taxes told a different story.66

The wages of workmen rose steadily, but did not keep up with
the advances in living costs. The Gazette in May reported that it was
difficult to find laborers, and carpenters received $2.50 per day.67
The Tailors' Union agreed upon a charge of $2 for making a coat.68
Morocco-dressers raised their rates for dressing hides and when em­
ployers resisted the advance, the workers took part in a national
strike.69 Wilmington teachers requested larger salaries from the
Board of Education.70 Workmen became interested in an eight-hour
movement. National representatives appeared at a meeting in city hall
in October and discussed the advantages of organizing. Six unions

64Ibid., May 19, 1865.
65Gazette, September 15, 29, 1865.
66Journal, October 17, 1865.
67Gazette, May 19, 1865.
68Journal, October 20, 1865.
69Gazette, November 19, 1865.
70Journal, December 5, 1865.
existed in the city prior to the meeting, several more were in process of formation, and it was hoped that a Trades Assembly of all organized labor in the city could be formed in the near future.71

Farmers suffered from the lower prices for wheat, corn, and oats, while the cost of living and the wages of farm laborers remained high.72 Factory owners orientated themselves rapidly to peace times. For example, a shoe manufacturer who had been busy with government contracts for several years bought new equipment and began to turn out a fine product for civilian consumption. The editor of the Gazette foresaw the day when Wilmington might be the shoe center of the middle states.73

Manufacturers who had benefited from government contracts and who thought that they would be befriended by the government remained staunchly Republican during the next years. Working men, who easily found employment, but whose wages did not keep up with the high prices, criticized the government, and some became Democrats in subsequent elections. Farmers felt that the government policies unduly benefited the industrialists and remained, as did their friends in the South, Democrats.

Union men found that the war left unsolved numerous problems. Veterans' benefits, the rights of Negroes, the President's treachery,  

71Tbid., October 20, 1865; Gazette, October 27, 1865.
72Republican, November 30, 1865.
73Gazette, September 5, 1865.
and above all, the dangers from an unrepentant South demanded their attention. As Reverend George Wiswell had observed, "the incarnate Devil of Southern rebellion" seemed to be rising again, and loyal men must be ever vigilant. Democrats were dismayed that peace times had not changed things. They fought against emancipation and Negro equality, against a vindictive peace, and against violations of state's rights. The struggle between the two factions continued on other battlefields for a generation.
Chapter XVIII

SOME CONCLUSIONS

A study of politics in Delaware during the Civil War period raises a number of interesting questions. How much pro-southern feeling existed in the state prior to the Civil War? How did the Breckenridge Democrats win the election of 1860 in Delaware? What did Delawareans think should be done about the crisis between the time of Lincoln's election and the firing upon Fort Sumter? How did the beginning of war affect public opinion? Were there many people in the state who could be classified as secessionists? Did many Delawareans serve in the southern army? What influence did the Civil War have on existing parties? What heritage did the War leave in politics and elsewhere?

On the eve of the Civil War, Kent and Sussex counties were pro-southern in feeling, while New Castle county was pro-northern. The historian of an earlier period of Delaware history has said:

New Castle County was the Rhode Island of Delaware—the county that was otherwise. Its people were of more heterogeneous backgrounds and cultures than were those of Kent and Sussex. Delaware was agricultural, except New Castle; Delaware had no cities, except in New Castle; Delaware was conservative, except New Castle; Delaware had no ports, except New Castle; Delawareans were of English stock, except in New Castle. To almost any statement that could be made of Delaware, New Castle was thus the exception.¹

¹John A. Munroe, Federalist Delaware, 1775-1815 (New Brunswick, 1954), 261.
This statement could likewise be applied to conditions in 1860. Important differences in culture, education, incomes, and religion existed between the two lower counties and the northern one, and conditioned the attitude of the two sections towards the Civil War. Two Governors from different parties, commissioners from southern states, politicians, and other observers commented upon the southern tendencies of Kent and Sussex counties.

The Breckinridge Democrats won the election of 1860 because Delawareans became convinced that a Republican victory meant the abolition of slavery, a change in the status of the free Negro, and the dissolution of the Union. The Breckinridge men possessed a strong political machine and were led by able politicians, who were closely affiliated with the South. Douglas' ideas were never popular in the state, and his followers were led by an eccentric "sorehead" whom no one trusted. Many conservative men supported the Constitutional Unionists, who received the second largest number of votes in the state. Under more vigorous leadership this total might have been increased. It was soon apparent to most observers that the true contest in the nation was between Republicans and the Breckinridge men. The former emphasized that they favored a high tariff and did not advocate the abolition of slavery, but only opposed its extension. In the last months of the campaign Democrats discovered that the Negro issue had greater appeal than any other. Voters were told repeatedly that the Republicans were the enemies of slavery, believers in Negro equality, and potential dissolvers of the Union. The rural population was
especially influenced by this approach. So successful were the Demo-
crats in using the Negro issue in 1860 that a precedent was establish-
ed for future campaigns.

During the four months after the election of Lincoln, Dela-
wareans demonstrated that they emphatically hoped for the preserva-
tion of the Union. Every peace proposal was eagerly endorsed. The
legislature unanimously rejected invitations to join the Confederacy.
Suggestions by Republicans that the use of force might become neces-
sary were condemned, as were proposals by Democrats to let the South
go. Believing with Senator Saulsbury that Delaware was the first
state to join the Union and should be the last to leave it, the
majority of the inhabitants sympathized with the South and clung to
the Union. Unable to control the tide of events, Delawareans stood
by helplessly as the nation was swept into war.

The firing upon Fort Sumter shocked Delawareans. Emotional
hysteria gripped citizens when they realized that the Union was
dividing, and hastily organized meetings endorsed its preservation
at all costs. Such a gathering was the New Castle county meeting in
April, 1861. Within a month division between those who favored using
force and those who advocated peaceful separation appeared, as evi-
denced in county meetings in Kent and Sussex. The subsequent "Peace"
meetings sponsored independently by the Republicans and Democrats
testified to the same division of opinion. The majority of the
inhabitants in New Castle county were willing to go to war; the
majority of the people in Kent and Sussex counties wished to let the
South go in peace. These opposing attitudes were conditioned by cultural, economic, and occupational differences. The result was a tug of war within the state between North and South, involving militia companies, political parties, and personal relationships. As a dividing state, Delaware faced unhappy times ahead.

While many people in Delaware were pro-southern in feeling, there were few "genuine" secessionists—that is to say, those who wished to see the state in the Confederacy or who were willing to join the rebel army and to face real danger on behalf of the southern cause. Southern sympathizers criticized the Lincoln administration for unconstitutional measures, for political arrests, and for trying to free the Negro, but their support of the Confederacy would not go beyond such actions. Only a few extremists would have welcomed the coming of the Confederate army to the state. An example of a secessionist was Ex-Governor William Ross, whose son died fighting for the South, who lost a fortune in southern bonds, and who went abroad to avoid arrest for incriminating activities. Such persons as Hugh Martin, John Martin, Whiteley Meredith, and John K. Lambson may be placed in the same category. Senators Willard Saulsbury and James A. Bayard, as well as Thomas F. Bayard, are correctly classified as Peace Democrats. Careful investigation does not reveal that any of these three was guilty of treason.

A question which is difficult to answer is how many Delawareans served in the Confederate army. One historian has estimated that the
number was 2,000. Research reveals the names of about fifty. Before a congressional committee in 1867, a Republican leader in Sussex county mentioned that over 20 men from that section joined the southern army, and a Republican officeholder in Wilmington believed that the total was less than 200 for all three counties. Indications are that the figure of 200 is much nearer the correct estimate than 2,000. It should be remembered that Delaware furnished more men to the northern army in proportion to its population than any other state.

The Civil War had a great influence upon political parties. The Democrats in 1860 were divided into two factions. The Breckinridge wing was controlled by the Bayards and Saulsburys, who feuded among themselves. A much smaller group was headed by eccentric Sam Townsend and supported Douglas. As election time neared, the Douglas and Breckinridge men combined in the lower counties upon local candidates. Breckinridge followers were chosen as electors and also secured control of the legislature. While some Douglas and Breckinridge men

2Katherine Pyle, "History of Delaware" (Scrapbook in the Wilmington Public Library from the Delmarva Star, 1924).

3"Investigation of the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives into the question as to whether Delaware had a Republican form of government, 1867." Legislative Division, National Archives.

4War of Rebellion, Series III, IV (Washington, 1899), 1269. The official record shows that 12,284 served in the Union forces and that 1,386 paid commutation.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Negro soldiers</td>
<td>954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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joined the Republican party after Fort Sumter, defections were few, and Democratic state candidates usually received 8,000 votes in subsequent contests. Democratic policies and politics were completely dominated by the Bayards and Saulsbury's. In spite of some feuding, it was usually necessary to receive the approval of both factions before selecting a platform or candidate. The speeches of Senator Willard Saulsbury and Senator James A. Bayard interpreted correctly the feelings of a majority of Delawareans upon the issues of the day. After the Civil War, Thomas F. Bayard and one or another of the three Saulsbury's continued to dominate Democratic politics.

The Civil War almost doubled the size of the Republican party. In 1860 it ran a poor third, but through absorption of many Constitutional Unionists, some Douglas followers, and a few Union-loving Breckinridge men, it offered the Democrats a close contest in every election. The name was changed in 1862 to Union Party, in order that it would have greater appeal. With the exceptions of victories won by George P. Fisher as a joint candidate of the Constitutional Unionists and the Republicans in 1860, by Governor Cannon in 1862 and by N. B. Smithers in the "boycott" election of 1863, Republican state candidates and electors were defeated in every election, in spite of the expenditures of large sums of money and the use of troops at the polls in 1862, 1863, and 1864. New Castle county returned Republican members to the General Assembly in each contest. In the campaign of 1860 Nathaniel B. Smithers was by far the most important Republican leader in the state. George P. Fisher, a Constitutional
Unionist, revealed his true colors as a Republican after his election in 1860 as Representative, and soon became the liaison man between the Lincoln administration and local politicians. An important recruit gained by the Republicans was Governor William Cannon, whose efforts to keep the state loyal aroused the bitter ire of Democrats. Important leaders of the Republican party in New Castle county included E. G. Bradford, Thomas M. Rodney, Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, Reverend George Wiswell, and Henry duPont. Fisher and Smithers controlled Kent county. In Sussex county the principal figures were J. S. Prettyman, C. S. Layton, and Cannon.

The stronghold of the Republican party was in Wilmington, just as the center of Democratic strength was in Kent and Sussex counties. The Democrats won almost every election during the Civil War by stressing the dangers of emancipation and of Negro equality. They accused the opposition on numerous occasions of causing the arrest of peaceable citizens, of calling for the use of troops in elections, and of attacking state's rights. The Republicans repeatedly charged that the Democrats were "traitors," who placed obstacles in the way of encouraging enlistments, who refused to vote appropriations for soldiers' families, bounties or a cemetery at Gettysburg and who refused to consider the status of the negro and slavery realistically. Probably the most important political heritage of these troubled years was that Delaware became a Democratic state and henceforth with the exception of 1872
returned Democratic congressmen and electors for a quarter of a century.5

Denominations, family relationships, and friendships suffered from the impact of the war. Churches in New Castle county, regardless of denomination, supported the Union, while members of congregations in Kent and Sussex counties demonstrated frequently southern sympathies. The Old School Presbyterians, whose churches were mainly in the southern part of the state, were extremely pro-southern, while the Wilmington Presbytery was noted for its loyalty. Staunch friends of the Union were Bishop Alfred E. Lee (Episcopalian), Reverend George Wiswell (Presbyterian), and Reverend J. S. Dickerson (Baptist). Many instances of brothers serving on opposite sides, of friendships terminated, and of neighbors reported for disloyalty could be mentioned. A resident of Dover in 1902 delivered a speech, in which he recalled some of the bitter experiences of Civil War days and pointed out that much of that harsh heritage still lingered. His words are worth quoting at some length:

In no State of the Union was public sentiment more divided, and party feeling more intense and bitter, than in Delaware. The fact that it remained in the Union, was, by no means, evidence that it was a Union State in sentiment. It contributed to the national army, without regard to politics, its quota of brave soldiers. Braver men never fought on any battlefield; but the influential men, those who were recognized as leaders, were nearly all Southern sympathizers. The sentiments expressed at the convention held at Montgomery, Alabama, found a responsive echo in the little State House on the "green." South Carolina's Act of Secession was warmly

applauded here, and Delaware only waited for Maryland to take
the step that she would have followed in [sic]. But she re­
mained, in name, a Union State, torn by the bitterest and most
intense hatred on the part of her Southern sympathizers, and
the most flagrant abuse of power, on the part of her Union
men, who were clothed with a little brief authority.

The old resident, in looking backward, sees bosom friends
who differed, quarreled over their differences, and went to
their graves, hating one another, leaving the old hatred to
their children, in many instances, their only legacy. He sees
families divided, separated in anger, never to get together
again. He sees the best men under suspicion and surveillance,
by one faction, or secretly plotting. He sees friends snatched
from their homes, and robbed of their liberty, on flimsy and
trumped-up charges, and left to languish in dingy forts and
filthy prisons, and he sees a Government officer leaping from
a back window of the Capital Hotel, at night, to escape the
merciless hands of men, whose friends he had arrested for
treasonable utterances. He sees soldiers at the polls, and
U. S. Marshals at men's elbows, as a warning that to have an
opinion was a dangerous thing; and he sees a Union man shot
down on his way home, by an unknown hand, for no other reasons
than because he had an opinion, and expressed it too freely.
He sees a mob of desperate men attack, in the street, a hand­
ful of soldier boys, who were home on a furlough, because they
wore the blue; and he hears a timid woman pleading with a band
of drunken soldiers, that they might not harm her aged father,
whose only crime was that he had a son, whom he loved well, in
the rebel army.6

While this interpretation cannot be agreed with in every detail, it
is excellent in revealing how an aged Republican looked back upon
those days forty years afterwards. It is surprising that even in
1902 he saw that both sides had done unwise things. His words show
that the "Road to Reunion" was practically completed within the state.

6 William T. Smithers, "Dover Green", Sons of Delaware Yearbook,
1902, (Dover, 1902), 98-99.
Delaware's answer as to whether it should be classified as a southern or northern state was that it paid homage to both sections, but gave complete allegiance to neither. In feeling the majority of the people were pro-southern, but few were secessionist. Delaware was a true border state and suffered the penalties of a divided house.
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