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Abstract

“War Upon Our Border”: War and Society in Two Ohio Valley Communities, 1861-1865

By Stephen I. Rockenbach

During the American Civil War, guerrilla raids, military operations, economic hardships, political turmoil, and racial tensions upset the status quo of communities situated along the Ohio River border. This dissertation compares the wartime experiences of two border towns – Frankfort, Kentucky and Corydon, Indiana. These communities shared a legacy of white settlement and a distinct western identity, which fostered unity and emphasized cooperation during the first year of the war. However, the exigencies of war and the eventual demise of slavery in Kentucky divided citizens living on either side of the river border, including the people of Corydon and Frankfort.

The Ohio River border was a cohesive economic and social unit at the beginning of the war, even though the river served as the legal boundary for slavery. Prominent Unionist citizens in both Corydon and Frankfort galvanized political support by strengthening connections with like-minded citizens throughout the river valley. The majority of white Unionists in the two towns believed that they could maintain peace by negating the radical notions of abolition and secession. Although white citizens in both places agreed on the importance of white supremacy to maintaining the stability of their respective communities, the Union government’s evolving policy on slavery, which culminated in the Emancipation Proclamation, ultimately strained the relationship between Unionists in southern Indiana and Kentucky. By the end of the war, Corydon’s residents had suffered devastation from raids and guerrilla violence, all emanating from Kentucky. Frankfort was engulfed in anti-government sentiment, guerrilla violence, and
local resistance to the inevitable end of slavery in the state. The demise of slavery in Kentucky challenged white supremacy, while in southern Indiana most citizens welcomed the end of slavery if it meant an end to the war. Emancipation, violence, and material loss forged separate wartime experiences for the people of Corydon and Frankfort, causing them to, over the course of the war, come to view the Ohio River as a boundary between two societies, one northern and one southern.
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Introduction

The most recent scholarship on the American Civil War demonstrates that military, political, and social issues combined to change irreversibly the lives of citizens throughout the nation. But even with the recent focus on the intersection of military and social history, very little of the extant scholarship indicates how the war affected the fragile border regions. Even the infusion of race, ideology, and politics into areas of Civil War history once dominated by battles and leaders has not illuminated the complex and flexible nature of border society in wartime. In 1990, Maris Vinovskis asked social historians if they had indeed “lost the Civil War.” Vinovskis posited that these scholars had “lost” the war, because “most of the so-called new social historians have ignored the possible influence of the Civil War on the life course of nineteenth-century Americans.” Since then, scholars have rallied to the call for new interpretation of the war. Many historians have recently realized that researchers can achieve a broader understanding of the war only by ascertaining the interconnection of the military, social, and political aspects of the war. This dissertation examines the social and military aspects of the war along the western border, lying ostensibly outside the theaters of combat, specifically by comparing the wartime experiences of two communities in the Ohio River Valley. These two border communities experienced dramatic changes, in part because the war shattered westerners’ sense of regional identity and completely upset the racial and economic status quo in their locale but in larger part as a result of border residents’ often desperate attempts to endure the hardships and consequences of the Civil War. Both outcomes suggest the formative and destructive force of war itself.

Although the war was fought on a grand scale, involving huge troop movements and epic battles, the struggle’s lasting impact was most felt along the border, where the conflict was truly
of a civil nature. The war was fought within communities as citizens chose sides, volunteered, suffered the effects of military campaigns, and occasionally battled one another. This dissertation compares the communities of Corydon, Indiana, and Frankfort, Kentucky, revealing the forces that transformed these two similar towns into such different places over the course of the war. Corydon and Frankfort provide a useful comparison because both communities were early settlements with a link to the development of the region. When Kentucky and Indiana achieved statehood, respectively, these two places were already important political and economic centers, both becoming state capitals. Although Corydon’s political influence at the state level declined in 1825 when legislators voted to move the capital to Indianapolis, the town continued to be an important center for regional politics. These two places shared not only a link to the frontier past and the legacy of white conquest, but also a connection characterized by migration from the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky into southern Indiana. Although one could compare other communities along the river border, including towns in Ohio and Illinois, Corydon and Frankfort offer the best opportunity for investigating regional identity based on frontier cooperation and settlement.

The border was a complex mixture of urban centers, small towns, and countryside, which makes it impossible to do a community study without acknowledging the interactivity between Corydon and Frankfort and the surrounding area. Citizens in both communities did business, visited, had family, and often moved from or to, nearby Cities, such as New Albany in Indiana and Louisville and Lexington in Kentucky. Therefore, this study includes relevant events that occurred in towns and cities that underscore the regional character of the border, and the war’s affect on this identity. Richard C. Wade argues that the cities of the Ohio Valley were a central part of the regions development, not a product of settlement or economic development. Wade
concludes that the “by 1830, the West had produced two types of society – one rural and one urban.” Consistent with Wade’s contention, Corydon and Frankfort were not necessarily in decline, or even in competition with their urban neighbors. Wade demonstrates the cohesion between city and countryside by stating that “the West was large enough to contain both movements comfortably." Corydon and Frankfort were a part of this regional blend of rural and urban. The story of the wartime experiences of these two communities, by necessity, is also the story of the interaction between communities, large and small, throughout the Ohio River border. Therefore, events in nearby Cincinnati, Louisville, and New Albany provide contrast to life in the two rural communities and context for the issues that gripped border society.

This network of Ohio Valley communities, including Corydon and Frankfort formed a cohesive region, separate from the North and the South but affected by the politics and economies of both sections. Although the actual clash of armies in the border region was brief, border citizens experienced the war every day in politics, business, in recreational activities, and in day to day interpersonal interactions with their neighbors. The last was especially difficult for many as the war forced them to reconsider who they were and where their allegiances lay. Historians have reestablished the centrality of slavery to the Civil War, particularly in the way President Abraham Lincoln’s emancipation policy turned the war into a campaign against the peculiar institution. But along the Ohio River, a legal if not absolute boundary between slavery and freedom, white residents prided themselves on their ability to relate to people throughout the Ohio Valley by transcending the dissimilarity of free and slave state society. They did so by emphasizing a shared experience of frontier settlement and white supremacy that allowed them, for a time, to overcome the divisiveness of the slavery issue. Before the war, influential border citizens solved conflicts pertaining to slavery through cooperation and emphasis on mutual
economic interests. Within border communities, elite citizens worked to minimize the effects of the war by maintaining the racial and economic status quo. After 1863, when slavery emerged as the central focus of the Union’s war effort, local attempts to reestablish this continuity created very different wartime experiences, depending on which side of the Ohio River the borderites lived.

Community-level studies of the impact of the American Civil War are gaining importance as historians recognize the diversity of opinions, ideas, and motivations in counties, towns, and cities throughout the Union and Confederacy. The complexity of the conflict requires historians take care in generalizing about any one location as having been Union or Confederate. Local and regional characteristics affected how people chose their allegiance, what they were willing to endure, and how they reacted to the changing nature of the war. Edward Ayers’s prize-winning study of the wartime experience of two counties provided an excellent example of how two locations could share common perspectives in peacetime that would be discarded when war broke out. Ayers, who concentrates on how the war fused local, regional, and national issues into a collective experience for Augusta County, Virginia and Franklin County, Pennsylvania, aptly sums up the centrality of border communities to Civil War history by stating, “the nation redefined itself on the landscape of the border, the heart of the nation where North and South met.” Although these two counties each saw extraordinary events occur both within their boundaries and nearby, Ayers does not indicate how each of the counties he studied constituted a cohesive community, and he claims, without merit, that the region about which he writes constitutes a conceptual border. While Ayers’ subject counties are divided by their respective northern and southern experiences, they fail to share a common regional identity in part because of the mountains that separated them both physically and socially. Communities in
the Ohio River Valley, as opposed to those astride the famed Mason-Dixon line, shared a common border experience that went beyond mere geography. Communities there, caught in the middle of a sectional conflict, suffered from more than divided loyalties. White citizens of the western border struggled to redefine their place in a fluid struggle that threatened the region’s stability and prosperity.

Historians have given much attention to the issue of regional identity, but only recently have studies of the Ohio Valley moved beyond the use of state boundaries as a means for categorization. Because of the sectional nature of the conflict, many Civil War historians have emphasized state-wide experiences, ignoring the war’s impact within regions. Therefore, most historical inquiries into regional characteristics have centered on the differences, rather than the similarities, between western slave and free states. Historians have long recognized that the Ohio River Valley was a meeting place for northern and southern characteristics, but they often depict the Old Northwest as distinctive and monolithic region, separate from the South. Previous studies of the region that extend beyond the frontier era, although aware of the contributions of southerners to midwestern culture, have focused on the creation of political culture on the north side of the Ohio River, without attention to the relationship between communities throughout the Ohio Valley. A recent study by Kim M. Gruenwald on Marietta, Ohio, seeks to correct this oversight, emphasizing the demographic and ideological continuity of the early Ohio Valley and the Ohio River’s formative role in the creation of economic and social connections there. But her study, which argues for the development of regional distinctiveness by the late antebellum years, does not extend past 1861 and thus neglects the Civil War’s transformative effect on the region. Similarly, Christopher Phillips states that the war completed a process that had nearly crystallized during the 1850s by causing Missourians to switch their intrinsic identification from
the West to the South, a process that applies as well to border westerners living in the Ohio River Valley.⁶

Although indications suggest that future researchers will continue studying the connections among communities with specific regions, the available works on the Civil War in the Ohio Valley detail the history of individual states or focus exclusively on military events. Edward C. Smith was one of the few scholars to interpret the border as a unique region, but he published his book, The Borderland in the Civil War, in 1927. Historians who set out to write about Kentucky or Indiana during the Civil War are hampered by the necessity to depict the state as a cohesive unit. Although scholars emphasize the connections between neighboring states, they largely have not studied the border as a unique region unto itself;⁷ thus they fail to convey the interconnectedness of the Ohio Valley as a region before the war and the dissolution of these relationships during the war. This dissertation probes further into this issue by examining the wartime relationship of westerners and the local effects of the events that eventually caused southern Indianans and Bluegrass Kentuckians to sever their regional connections and view the Ohio River collectively as the boundary between North and South. By highlighting the wartime experience of two communities, this study offers an interpretation of how the war affected two communities in these once contiguous, now disparate regions. The war raised many issues in these two communities, including resistance to emancipation, protection of property, and the fluid nature of loyalty, all of which prove instructive when assessing the problems faced by citizens throughout the Ohio River Valley. This dissertation serves as a demonstration of the value of reaching beyond state histories and battle narratives in order to obtain a sense of the war’s impact on the citizens of a complex and dynamic Ohio River Valley.
A comparison of border communities during the Civil War is also by necessity an examination of the impact of military policy on citizens. The Union army threatened slavery through confiscation and the enlistment of black soldiers, but the army’s presence brought additional burden to border citizens by requiring them to furnish troops with provisions, mounts and fodder, all of which the federals often took from disloyal citizens. Military authorities also arrested suspected Confederate sympathizers and often restricted the rights of white citizens. Historian Mark Grimsley describes the development of three phases of military policy towards southern civilians in the western theater, which ultimately led to Union commanders to pursue a “hard war” meant to alienate southerners from the Confederate government. Along the Ohio River border, however, Union commanders had difficulty in constraining the burden of war to disloyal citizens, which ultimately increased resentment for the Union army and the federal government. The military presence brought hardships to border citizens of free states too, but white Kentuckians endured harsher consequences than white Indianans owing to Kentucky’s status as a slave state. The resistance of white Kentucky citizens to the end of slavery in the state prompted a period of guerrilla violence that severely diminished Union support within Kentucky. Military historians have largely neglected the link between the threat to slavery and the onset of irregular warfare within the Ohio River Valley. The scholarship on Missouri’s border war serves as a point of demarcation, but the situation in Kentucky and Indiana was quite different than border regions to the west because Indianans failed to experience to the same degree (and therefore could not fully understand) the hardships of guerrilla warfare that raged on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River.

Political partisanship, military occupation, raids, economic hardship, and the demise of slavery combined to create extreme pressure on border residents. However, the distribution,
timing and result of these occurrences caused people north of the Ohio River to interpret the war’s consequences differently than their neighbors, kinfolk, clients, and patrons living south of the river. This was not an immediate transition, but a succession of events that slowly unraveled the threads that combined to create the fabric of border society. The divergent paths of Ohio Valley residents, in this case the residents of Corydon and Frankfort, was a long and debilitating process. Citizens looked to their community leaders for guidance, and leaders made difficult decisions pertaining to the economic and social stability of their communities. In the end, the war transformed the Ohio Valley into sections wherein people defined themselves based largely on their wartime experiences. The Ohio River, once a symbol of regional unity, became a partition between communities that were forever changed by the exigencies of war.
Prologue

“Excitement at Brandenburg”

During the 1850s, sectional fervor and zealotry gripped the United States and the passionate debate over slavery threatened to wrap its tendrils around every corner of the nation. Citizens throughout the nation watched in horror and astonishment as Kansas Jayhawkers and Missouri Ruffians waged a border war over the slavery question. The violence in Kansas was a harbinger of what could happen elsewhere if the struggle between proslavery and antislavery forces escalated into civil war. The looming specter of border war was not unique to the far western territories. In the Ohio River Valley, the conflict over slavery was occurring on a smaller scale with the Underground Railroad. The Ohio River was the legal boundary of slavery, but the farmland and communities flanking the river formed an area where the lines between slavery and freedom blurred. Former slave and Underground Railroad conductor John P. Parker described this place as “a strip of land between the northern and southern states which I call the Borderland.” The potential for conflict loomed along the river, almost exploding into violence between September 1857 and October 1858 near Corydon, Indiana. Authorities from Brandenburg, Kentucky, crossed the Ohio River and apprehended three men whom constable suspected of aiding a fugitive slave in neighboring Harrison County, south of the town of Corydon. This incident sparked a series of armed confrontations, abductions, and legal proceedings that prominent citizens eventually resolved peacefully. Known as the “Bell-Wright” or “Brandenburg” affair, the episode offers a vivid illustration of the Ohio River Valley’s tenuous status as a borderland, characterized by a range of opinions concerning freedom, abolition, and slavery.
The Ohio River Valley was full of small communities typified by their residents’ diversity in background, politics, and differing opinions on slavery. The town of Corydon, the seat of Harrison County, was the central hub of a rural community of immigrants (predominantly German), upland southerners, northerners, farmers, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and a small number of free African Americans, many of whom were former slaves. Harrison County, like much of the Ohio Valley, attracted migrants in search of opportunity. David Bell, one of these newcomers, lived in the river city of New Albany, Indiana, for nine years. He eventually bought land near the abandoned town of Morvin’s Landing and operated the ferry between the landing and the town of Brandenburg, Kentucky. Julia Wright, Bell’s sister-in-law, followed the family, accompanied by her former slave, Oswell Wright. The people of Corydon welcomed the Bells, who were, according to a local observer, “of good Revolutionary War stock.” Bell’s children attended school in Brandenburg, except for his youngest boy, Charles, who lived with his Aunt Julia in Corydon and acquired her antislavery ideals. The rest of the family occasionally exhibited proslavery sentiment. In 1851, David Bell sold his “indentured” black servant to a relative in Meade County, using the money to allow his son Horace to join his older brother, John, in California. Horace was a member William Walker’s filibustering expedition aimed at annexing Nicaragua as a slave territory, which ended in failure in 1857.

Border residents were familiar with the various arguments concerning slavery, but a series of events surrounding a fugitive slave’s escape sparked a controversy over the jurisdiction of Kentucky authorities and the rights of white citizens. The Bell-Wright Affair originated after a slave escaped from Brandenburg on September 27, 1857. Dr. Charles H. Ditto frequently sent his slave Charles, a blacksmith, across the river to fish and shoe horses. But on that particular day in September Charles did not return to his master. Slave catchers immediately combed the
northern bank of the river, but did not gain any information from locals. A citizen in Jackson County, Indiana, claimed to have seen Oswell Wright with Charles in Brownsville, and later informed Dr. Ditto that Wright had ferried the fugitive slave across the Ohio River, thus implicating the ferry operators, David Bell, and his son, Charles, in the slave’s escape. The Brandenburg constable set a trap for the Bells and Wright by using the runaway slave’s wife as bait. The constable’s men apprehended Charles Bell on the Kentucky side of the river, but they went to the Bell farm and lured David Bell and Wright onto the ferry before arresting them. The constable claimed that he could lawfully arrest the men once they were beyond the low water mark because Kentucky’s boundary extended to the northern edge of the Ohio River. Many Harrison Countians did not agree with this logic. While Indianans recognized the Ohio River as Kentucky territory, the constable’s disregard of the laws concerning extradition enraged a number of locals. William Marsh, a prominent Corydon resident, organized local men for a rescue expedition, but the boats he requested did not arrive on time. Once the boats were in place, the authorities in Brandenburg called out the militia, including the Meade County Rangers, and Marsh disbanded his ad hoc invasion. The Meade County constable had seized only Oswell Wright, Corydon’s citizens probably would not have bothered to attempt a rescue.

The arrest of Oswell Wright, David Bell, and Charles Bell introduced a local element to the ongoing national debate over the fugitive slave law and slavery in general. Simeon K. Wolfe, editor of the Corydon Democrat, was unwilling to judge the accused men without additional evidence and called for further corroboration before any legal decision was made in the case. Although Wolfe did not know of any suspicion against the Bells, he remarked that if they were “guilty we have no sympathy for them unless indeed it is on account of the fact that they were duped by certain base political leaders to feel too lively an interest in the Negro race.”
Wolfe, an outspoken Democratic politician in Corydon, did not neglect the opportunity to criticize the burgeoning Republican Party. He concluded that the crime was not only one of theft but also one that “stirs up sectional strife, which would lead to the most direful consequences.” Wolfe was not only concerned with the threat border conflict posed to slave property, but also that “our citizens are to be kidnapped and carried beyond the protection of our laws and punished upon slight and insufficient evidence.”

A number of leading citizens in Corydon and Brandenburg took an interest in resolving the matter. Judge William A. Porter represented Wright and the Bells, employing Brandenburg lawyers Thomas B. Farleigh and John Coale to officiate the matter in the Meade County Court. While the case was being delayed, David Bell’s two eldest sons, Horace and John, arrived in Corydon from California. Horace asked Corydon lawyer Walter Q. Gresham to help devise a plan to free David and Charles Bell. Well-meaning citizens offered to raise five hundred men for an invasion of Brandenburg, but Horace Bell turned down the offer after conferring with Gresham. While visiting Brandenburg, he informed a crowd that he did not intend to start a border war. Yet after several failed attempts to free his family through legal means, he told the group would simply have to break them out of jail. On July 29, 1858, Horace and John Bell launched a two-man raid on Brandenburg while most of the town was attending a nearby barbecue. The brothers broke into the jail and freed their father and brother, holding the jailer and guards at gunpoint. One of the guards escaped and called out the militia, but the Bells were able to reach the river first. As the militia fired at the raider’s skiff, Horace stood on the back of the boat with a pistol in each hand, blazing away at the Kentuckians on the southern bank. Some accounts mention that the jailer held Oswell Wright at a separate location, thus forcing the men to leave the slave behind. But Horace Bell was acting out of commitment to family, not from
opposition to the principle of the Fugitive Slave Law. He supposedly commented later that he was unsure what he would have done if Wright was in the jail with the Bells because Oswell Wright was not his kin.8

The exciting, but bloodless, jailbreak made Horace Bell a local hero in southern Indiana. But the border dispute was not over. On October 25, five armed men from Louisville seized Horace Bell while he was attending the Floyd County Agricultural and Mechanical Association fair in New Albany. Reputedly, the people of Brandenburg offered to pay a $1,500 bounty for the capture of Bell. Many New Albany citizens were appalled to learn that the five men were all Louisville deputies and therefore had knowledge of the laws regarding interstate arrests that they so flagrantly violated. Additionally, the kidnapping of Horace Bell reminded southern Indianans of a recent election-day fight involving “Louisville Bullies” that took place in the streets of New Albany. In retaliation for the kidnapping of Horace Bell, armed citizens from Corydon crossed the river and camped on a farm near Brandenburg. Men from New Albany also organized an expedition. This group traveled down-river on a steamboat laden with men and two cannons and rendezvoused with the armed camp from Corydon. When they discovered that the constable was holding Horace Bell in Big Springs, ten miles south of the river, they returned to Indiana.

Meanwhile, local lawyers and politicians organized a committee to negotiate Bell’s release. The commissioners, including some New Albany officials and Corydon lawyer Gresham, met with representatives from Brandenburg in order to repair the integrity of the law, now badly eroded by a series of retaliatory raids across the Ohio River. The commissioners informed Kentucky delegates, including the judge and clerk of Meade County, that something had to be done to restore calm, warning that “if it was not done civil war would rage along the borders of the two states, and the good feeling which had so long existed would be broken up.” The representatives
from Brandenburg eagerly responded to this sentiment by holding an examination of the case. Requiring a $750 bail, county authorities then released Bell.\(^9\)

The controversy surrounding the Brandenburg affair and Bell’s subsequent kidnapping dominated public attention, demonstrating the threat that slavery posed to the personal freedoms of white citizens. On the night of October 29, 1858, citizens packed Woodward Hall in New Albany to watch a performance of a drama titled “Horace Bell: Champion of Freedom.” Harry Chapman, the leader of a theater company, Chapman Varieties, was disappointed by the returns from the group’s performances during the evenings following Bell’s capture, and therefore quickly changed his playbill. The hastily prepared performance was punctuated by Bell appearing on stage immediately after arriving in the city from Brandenburg. Actress Susan Denin, who was dressed as the goddess of liberty and sang the Marseilles Hymn, accompanied Horace Bell.\(^{10}\) Perhaps to avoid further kidnapping attempts (and further public spectacle), Horace Bell returned to California soon after the performance, avoiding a November appearance at the Meade County Court. Kentucky authorities did not pursue the case and the court’s two thousand dollar award against David and Charles Bell for helping a slave escape went unpaid.

Amid the celebration of the Bells’ freedom, most white citizens had forgotten, or perhaps did not care, that Oswell Wright remained a prisoner in Brandenburg. In May 1859 the court tried Wright for assisting runaway slaves and sentenced him to five years in the Kentucky State Penitentiary at Frankfort. Wright’s attorney managed to subvert the sentence, although no evidence suggests that upon Wright’s release the goddess of liberty, or any other deity, welcomed him back to Indiana. His plight was largely forgotten during the war, although residents of the Ohio River Valley did not forget that the struggle between proslavery and abolitionist factions had caused their river border to inch towards a small-scale civil war.\(^{11}\)
Indeed, as the Bell-Wright affair suggests, the controversy during the border conflict as elsewhere revolved around the legal rights of free citizens, not necessarily the rights of enslaved people. The Fugitive Slave Law had encroached on the rights of free white men, causing a rift between people in Indiana and Kentucky. The Bell-Wright affair was a catalyst for this widening gulf in border relations, but it was in no way irreversible. The incident did not center on differing perceptions of the morality of slavery or even the extension of slavery into the territories. Brandenburg’s constable was acting to protect the property rights of a white citizen; his biggest mistake was in assuming that he could apprehend the owner of the all-important Ohio River ferry without seeking the cooperation of Harrison County authorities. This breach of cooperation was what ultimately shattered the river community cohesion, if only temporarily. The speed with which people armed themselves and headed across the river also reveals the willingness of border residents to settle matters themselves. Ultimately, the elite members of Corydon and Brandenburg were able to use their status to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the incident. Their ability to emphasize white citizens’ rights to property, freedom, and legal representation, without questioning the moral or legal status of slavery, resulted in a peaceful resolution to the affair. The communities of the borderland, although separated on matters of slavery, were united in a dedication to white supremacy. The Bell-Wright affair proved that communities in Indiana and Kentucky could use their history of cooperation to withstand sectional conflict, as long as local officials were successful in reining the region’s more impulsive residents.
Chapter 1

“Brothers, Relatives, and Friends”

During the Civil War era, residents of Missouri, Kentucky, western Virginia and the southern sections of Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio found themselves living at the confluence of North and South, East and West, free and slave, rural and urban, agricultural and industrial. Historian Edward C. Smith described this area as the “borderland” and noted that “the section was a geographical, social, industrial and political unit.” On a smaller scale, people living in the Ohio River Valley, which included a large portion of the middle border, developed economic and political links that transcended the boundary between freedom and slavery. Many white citizens in southern Indiana could trace their history and ancestry from Kentucky, and Kentuckians often considered these Hoosiers political allies, patrons, clients, and kin. Communities in this region also shared a common history of white expansion and economic development. During the first month of the Civil War members of the Indiana Legislature reinforced this link to Kentuckians by pledging to “aid them as brothers, relatives, and friends in defense of their homes and firesides.” Although this may seem like simple rhetoric, Kentuckians understood this statement to be an affirmation of a regional partnership based on the legacy of the frontier.

Communities in southern Indiana and central Kentucky maintained a sense of regional unity, even after settlement and economic development dissolved the frontier and cleared the way for factory and farm. The subjects of this study, Frankfort, Kentucky, and Corydon, Indiana, typify the development of border community. Citizens in both communities traced their heritage to the frontier experience, which included white settlers’ victories over Native Americans, unified white residents and forged a common memory that endured even as towns, markets, and commercial centers emerged in the region. Frankfort and Corydon were both
burgeoning state capitals during the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the seemingly endless expanse of the Ohio Valley was giving way to increased settlement and economic development. Although Hoosiers moved their capital to Indianapolis, Corydon and Frankfort were beacons of political and social life surrounded by a rural population that still identified with the white settlers who established the two towns.

The two towns also were examples of small communities that retained ties the surrounding countryside, while some citizens embraced the expansion of the market and the opportunities provided by advancements in transportation, namely the steamboat and the railroad. But in Frankfort and Corydon, the structure of local power and influence developed differently, but the process of economic growth and conflict between cosmopolitan and parochial factions were the same. People motivated by political and economic issues outside of their local area or community demonstrated a distinct cosmopolitan point of view. Conversely, parochial describes the mindset of individuals concerned with matters that affect their immediate community or locale. These tendencies span class divisions. Not all of the local elite were interested in transferring their local power into regional economic and political connections.

The towns of Frankfort and Corydon experienced the same type of pressures, although one was in a free state and the other a slave state. These towns stand out as examples of two matured frontier settlements, similar in their legacy of white supremacy and regional development. As opposed to newer communities or large settlements, Frankfort and Corydon were two communities committed to maintaining the cohesion of the Ohio River Valley border.

Historians have embraced county-level studies to flesh out the Civil War’s effects on communities, but a county is a legal and political unit rather than a social or commercial entity. Edward L. Ayers describes the subject of his recent study, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War*
in the Heart of America, 1859-1863, as “two communities, one Northern and one Southern.”
The towns of Frankfort and Corydon do not lend themselves to such a clear-cut geographic or
cultural generalization. Frankfort and Corydon are almost on the same latitude, with the
difference measuring a little over one hundredth of a degree (less than one mile). The distance
between the two towns is approximately seventy-eight miles, making neither Corydon nor
Frankfort geographically distinct as southern or northern by comparison. Further, Ayers’
“communities” are two counties composed of towns, villages, and farmland, but he does not
explore the class and political divisions within these two large areas.3 Although Harrison
County, Indiana, and Franklin County, Kentucky, provide the backdrop for the stories of
Corydon and Frankfort, their respective county seats, the emergence of a town-dwelling elite
created factions within each locality. The war exacerbated some of the divisions within border
society, and created new ones.

Corydon, in Harrison County, and Frankfort, in Franklin County, were communities that
served as centers of business, law, politics, and social life and as conduits for their local areas’
political change and economic progress. These two towns also symbolized the triumphs of
frontier settlement, which citizens of both places claimed as their heritage. John Mack Faragher
offers a useful indication of what comprises a community, noting that “economic relations were,
of necessity, communal relations.”4 In Faragher’s research on the rural community of Sugar
Creek, Illinois, he concludes that “community did not ‘break down’ with the approach of the
modern world; community, in fact, provided a means of making the transition to it.”5 The
residents of each town shared economic interests and symbiotic relationships with their
neighbors, clients, and patrons within the community. Not all of these community members
lived directly within their towns’ boundaries, but their interests lay with the commercial activity and cooperation that typified these important local centers.

Corydon and Frankfort were products of the frontier and carried some of the characteristics of a society rooted in a commitment to opportunity and the pursuit of individual gain. Improvements in transportation, such as the steamboat, expanded the market and offered new opportunities for financial gain. Both communities had an elite group of wealthy and influential families, most of them descended from early settlers, who benefited from this economic growth and held tightly to the reins of local politics and business. The legacy of the frontier, including a strong belief in democratic government, lingered over the region, although faced with these local attempts to consolidate power. Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick have argued that the concept of frontier democracy was born of necessity but could not endure the centralizing effect of economic development. After settlement, a community elite emerged and gravitated to the counties’ rapidly growing towns. Elkins and McKitrick observe that “the town, becoming the natural focus of exchange for goods and services in the Northwest, must thus inexorably be the focus of politics as well; this fact on the very face of it would mean a faster tempo of political life than on the rural countryside.” Corydon and Frankfort both conform to this description, even though Elkins and McKitrick refer specifically to the Old Northwest, excluding Kentucky. Yet in both towns, members of the elite acquired a cosmopolitan outlook that motivated participation in state politics and economic opportunities throughout the region. Along the river border, so many people moved back and forth across the Ohio to do business, live, and seek new opportunities, that their political opinions mixed. There was no reason to see Kentucky as any different than Indiana in the politicization of townspeople in rural counties.
The segment of the community dedicated to progress, self-interest, and internal improvement tied itself fast to local issues and was concerned most with maintaining stability and continuity over their financial and professional interests. Although the elite held a cosmopolitan outlook, they sought to consolidate their power by maintaining the racial and economic status quo in their community. Robert Wiebe, writing about communities later in the century, detects remnants of the town-dwelling elite “who continued to assume that they could harness the forces of the world to the destiny of their community.”

More optimistic than some of their rural neighbors, these civic leaders faced the coming of the Civil War with confidence in their ability to maintain stability and order in their community. Wiebe attributes the demise of these “island communities” (towns that exercised a degree of autonomy and sovereignty) to the rise of a national corporate system, but the crisis of the Civil War also disturbed these communities’ coveted self-reliance. Even before corporate expansion disrupted the independence of rural communities in the late nineteenth century, the American Civil War drew these island communities into a national controversy that soon dissolved local cohesion.

Besides their similarity as rapidly maturing frontier communities, Corydon and Frankfort were part of what historians have recently identified as a region connected by common racial and political ideas. Nicole Etcheson attributes the prevalence of white supremacy on both sides of the river to the migration from the Upper South into Indiana, arguing that “southerners carried racism into the Midwest.” The presence of Indiana’s relatively small African American population allowed white residents to live in a society that was racially homogenous. Although some of the yeoman farmers who migrated from slave states, including Kentucky and Virginia, left their previous homes to get away from the institution of slavery, their main concerns were to avoid competition with slaveowners and to obtain cheap land. Indeed, Andrew Cayton’s
contention that racism was not just a cultural legacy but a “restriction in economic and social terms” that ensured “Indiana was to be a democracy of white males” offers a better explanation for the similarities between racial attitudes on both sides of the Ohio River.\textsuperscript{11}

The term “racism” obscures the complexity of white supremacy, an ideological construct that implies not just racial superiority but also privilege and equality among whites. Excluding non-whites from democratic society did not contradict Hoosiers’ belief in freedom and opportunities for white citizens. Historians commonly note that adherence to racial hierarchy did not necessitate any disregard for democratic ideals. Christopher Phillips identifies this paradox among frontier Kentuckians who “inherited their views of slaveholding as an inheritance of the Revolution, a right that victory actuated and natural law decreed.”\textsuperscript{12} Kentuckians could revel in the economic benefits of slavery their Hoosier neighbors lacked, but both societies held a common belief in democratic institutions and equality for white men. Rather than resulting from southern influence, racism in the Ohio Valley was a mechanism for white affluence. This synergism of racism and individual freedom, which George M. Fredrickson identifies as “Herrenvolk democracy,” justified the existence of slavery even in the minds of the residents of Ohio and Indiana.\textsuperscript{13}

Before the American Civil War, the majority of white residents of the Ohio River Valley could agree on the importance of white dominance and a shared history of settlement and economic development regardless of which side of the river they lived on. The challenge of wresting control away from Native Americans and settling the Ohio River Valley had united settlers by creating a shared memory of conquest, supremacy, and sacrifice. White Hoosiers did not forget Kentuckians’ efforts to secure the north bank of the river for settlers. Before the Civil War, westerners living north of the Ohio exhibited a sense of devotion towards the Kentuckians
who fought at Tippecanoe in 1811 and in various battles during the war of 1812. This regard was especially evident during the secession crisis and at the beginning of the war, when both Kentuckians and Hoosiers used the shared experience of vanquishing the “savage” from the Ohio Valley to explain the cross-river connection. In October 1861, when Confederate troops occupied parts of Kentucky the New Albany Daily Ledger reminded southern Indianans that “fifty years ago in this month of October, the men of Kentucky crossed to the North bank of the Ohio to defend the early pioneers of Indiana on the bloody field of Tippecanoe.” The editors informed their fellow Hoosiers that “the time has come to pay back the debt [even though] fifty years of interest has accumulated.” The shared aims of white settlement obscured the differences between slave and free state, and emphasized Hoosiers’ relationship with their Kentucky neighbors. Frankfort’s citizens did not tout the institution of slavery as their community’s characteristic feature, but they instead identified their town with the progress of white society in the region.

Frankfort began as a scattered settlement of white pioneers and eventually became a symbol of white dominance over the frontier and the Native Americans who had previously occupied the area. Frankfort was located at the convergence of the three original Virginia counties of Jefferson, Fayette, and Lincoln. The story surrounding Frankfort’s origin demonstrates the town’s link to the frontier and white victory over Native Americans in the region. According to tradition, settlers named the area after Stephen Frank, a settler who Indians killed in 1780 during a retaliatory raid on white communities in Kentucky. Locals dubbed the ford in the Kentucky River where Frank died “Frank’s ford,” and eventually gave this name to the town. The tale demonstrates residents’ association with the sacrifices of Kentucky’s pioneers by honoring a martyr to the cause of white settlement. Shortly after Kentucky achieved
statehood in 1792, a special committee accepted Frankfort’s bid for state capital, largely because of a convincing offer made by a local businessman and landowner as well as the town’s central location. Although the town’s name conjured images of bold frontiersmen, the community owed its growth and prominence to entrepreneurs. Two years after Frankfort became the capital, the legislature named the newly created county after Benjamin Franklin, icon of the American Revolution and celebrated self-made man. Frankfort was situated firmly in the center of Franklin County, an oblong stretch of rolling farmland and jagged hills. The names Frankfort and Franklin made a good match phonetically, but they also embodied the legacy of white martyrdom and the legacy of the American Revolution, a testament to the relevance of Herrenvolk democracy.

The importance of Frankfort to the state’s political and social development increased throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, but it did not achieve the commercial importance of Louisville and Lexington. Indeed, Richard C. Wade explains that the division between urban and rural Kentuckians influenced the choice for state capital, that “Kentucky leaders virtually invented Frankfort to keep the Capital away from Louisville or Lexington.” By 1800, Frankfort was a bustling town by regional standards, but the boon of the market revolution failed to transform Frankfort into a major commercial center. By 1860, Frankfort’s population of 628 had grown to only 3,702, a meager increase considering that by this time nearby Louisville’s population was approximately 68,000. Kentuckians, the majority of whom lived in small towns or rural communities, could identify with a state capital associated with agricultural production and small manufacturers. While political debate, social functions, and legislative gossip set the tone of life in Frankfort when the state legislature was in session, most of the time Frankfort embodied the mixture of tradition, progress, production, and subsistence
apparent in many other rural communities in the Ohio River Valley. Thomas L. Crittenden, son of U.S. Senator John J. Crittenden and future major-general in the Union Army, commented in 1860 that “there is nothing of any interest in this little town, now and then a dogfight, or a loose horse, will gather a crowd and produce some excitement, but even these slightly striking things are of rare occurrence.”

Frankfort, although a small town compared to Louisville, enjoyed convenient access to the major commercial centers of the Ohio River Valley, fostering a degree of economic development that eventually created an elite class of townspeople. Frankfort got its first railroad line, connecting the town to Louisville, in the 1830’s. The capital eventually became a central point on the Louisville, Lexington, and Frankfort Railroad. The small town was a link between two large regional cities, as well as a transfer point to the Lexington and Ohio and the Louisville and Nashville rail systems. Frankfort had important commercial, political, and social relationships to the northern and southern states, not to mention those immediately east and west. Franklin County contained a number of agriculturally dependent manufactures (such as blacksmiths and wagon makers), but businesses with regional importance were more common in and around Frankfort. Most notable was Philip and Jacob Swigert’s pork-packing plant, which alone accounted for twenty-one percent of the county’s total production value. Manufacturers of cotton and woolen goods thrived in Frankfort, employing sixty-nine men and ten women. Distilling was also important to Frankfort’s economy, even though Louisville was known for an abundance of these establishments. Frankfort’s four distilleries produced over $50,000 in bourbon and whiskey, evidence of this product’s local importance in spite of competition from Louisville and Lexington. The increased tendency to produce for external markets explains the demand and expenditure for labor in Franklin County. Businessmen in Franklin County clearly
maintained strong ties to both agricultural and industrial opportunities in the region. Occupying the middle ground between Lexington, Louisville, and Cincinnati proved beneficial to Frankfort’s entrepreneurs. The Kentucky River provided Frankfort’s citizens with easy access to the Ohio River and connected the town with other communities throughout the region, both economically and socially. On the eve of the Civil War, the rural capital experienced the steady rise of a class of elite manufacturers and professionals who differed greatly from the farmers and small producers of the surrounding countryside.

Frankfort was distinct from the surrounding county because of the composition of community members, which included a diverse collection of ethnicities, occupations, social status, and backgrounds. Franklin County’s population included 8,272 native-born whites, 588 foreign-born whites, 450 free African Americans, and 3,384 slaves, but the countryside and town had many differences. Residents born in Virginia and other nearby slave states comprised most of Franklin County’s household heads not born in Kentucky. However, the few residents of the county born in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York resided in Frankfort. Frankfort was Franklin County’s most sizeable community and had the largest concentration of artisans, merchants, and skilled laborers. The villages of Forks of Elkhorn and Bridgeport were two of several small villages surrounding prosperous taverns and mills that catered to country folk unwilling or unable to travel into Frankfort. These hamlets were ideal places for the middle class to build country homes, but they did not compete with Frankfort for the county’s economic activity. The distribution of immigrants was fairly even between Frankfort and the surrounding countryside, but Frankfort’s population had the highest concentration of foreign-born residents. The majority of foreign-born heads of households were Irish, over half of whom lived in Frankfort. Most foreign-born adults living in the countryside were laborers or tenant farmers,
and many young Irish and German men lived with Kentucky families, working as laborers. Frankfort residents’ diversity in race, class, and background created a more cosmopolitan atmosphere, which contrasted with the rural areas characterized by white landowners and tenants born in Kentucky or a nearby slave state.

A large majority of Franklin County’s free black community lived in Frankfort, enjoying a degree of cohesion and unity not possible for free or enslaved African Americans in the rural parts of the county. Black families were clustered together in groups of three and four in town, suggesting that African Americans lived in particular neighborhoods, although the census data does not indicate the presence of racially segregated sections of town. Free African Americans were some of the town’s poorest residents. According to the 1860 census, thirty-three of the fifty-one black families in town owned less than $300 in property, with two-thirds of these households claiming no property at all. Frankfort’s black residents were limited to jobs as laborers, painters, plasterers, and washerwomen, although twenty-two household heads listed no occupation at all. These individuals were likely temporarily out of work, or found work as needed depending on the demand for labor among farms and businesses in the Frankfort area. The Colored Baptist Church in Frankfort, founded in 1833, provided spiritual fulfillment and a sense of belonging for black residents. Additionally, there were occasional educational opportunities for free African Americans, although attempts by educators to establish permanent schools for black children were short-lived. This atmosphere allowed only a few black residents to obtain affluence, such as Peter Smith, a barber who owned $3,700 in real estate and $500 in other property. However, the economic status quo in Frankfort reinforced the racial hierarchy. Black Frankforters had little opportunity to occupy positions that allowed upward mobility or affluence.
The farmland and rolling hills of Franklin County offered a starkly different social
dynamic compared to Frankfort. The size and type of farms varied widely throughout the
county, but most farmers produced at least a small amount of their crop for the market. Tobacco
was the main cash crop in Kentucky, and in Franklin County, farmers harvested 175,553 pounds
of tobacco in 1860. Corn and wheat also proved abundant, because these crops were useful for
both subsistence and trade. Most farmers could not rely on only one crop to sustain them
financially, so oats, potatoes, peas, butter, cheese, flax, honey, and molasses were common
pursuits for subsistence agriculture. Those best suited to entrepreneurial agriculture were
members of the middle class, such as Robert W. Scott, who left his legal practice to establish
Locust Hill Plantation on the border of Franklin and Woodford Counties. Scott achieved renown
for breeding quality sheep, hogs, and cattle, but he also rented his pastures out to other livestock
owners. This type of marketable husbandry and agricultural required a lot of labor, and wealthy
farmers usually owned several slaves. As a prosperous landowner, Scott was one of the eleven
Franklin County slaveholders who owned more than twenty slaves in 1860. Franklin County
boasted a number of completely market-oriented farms; these included twenty-one farms of five
hundred acres or larger, which had the potential for market production. These elite farmers
also owned a considerable number of the slaves in Franklin County, allowing them an advantage
over smaller farmers who had to rely on their family, friends, and a few hired laborers. The
main factor in the differing approaches to land use and agriculture hinges on the amount of labor
farmers could utilize. This was one of the major differences between the lives of rural Hoosiers
and Kentuckians. Non-slaveholders in Frankfort could often hire their neighbors’ slaves, but
farmers in Corydon were entirely dependent on their family members and neighbors to improve
land, plant, harvest, and tend to animals.
Even though the Bluegrass Region was known for its exceptionally rich soil, farmers understood the value of raising livestock for both subsistence and trade. It was common for farmers to use worn-out farmland as pastures. Horses, dairy cows, oxen, beef cattle, sheep and swine populated Franklin County’s rolling hills in considerable numbers and offered both subsistence for farmers and valuable commodities for rural entrepreneurs. Kentucky was particularly known for its mules, which some farmers bred and sold to southern farms and plantations. Franklin County is indicative of this market, with farmers claiming 1,574 mules in 1860. Local farmers also took advantage of the market for pork in places like Louisville and Cincinnati, possessing 19,201 swine in 1860. Livestock in general was a lucrative business; the animals slaughtered in Franklin County in 1860 had a total value of $609,623. The lucrative possibilities for cash crops and livestock sales demonstrate that the rural parts of the country were not impoverished or backwards, but life did adhere to the traditional cycle of agricultural production. The farmers, whether entrepreneurs or yeomen, were financially connected to the more cosmopolitan community of Frankfort, but by 1860 these farmers, laborers, and craftsmen did not always share the goals and opinions of their town-dwelling neighbors.

Corydon and Harrison County, too, were part of the story of white conquest and settlement in the Ohio Valley, and a direct result of Kentucky’s growth and prosperity. The famed Kentucky pioneer Daniel Boone visited Indiana on several occasions. In 1806, his brother, Squire Boone, settled in the area that would become Harrison County. Squire Boone left the Painted Stone settlement (also known as Squire Boone’s Station) located between Frankfort and Louisville and moved to Indiana in hopes of starting a mill, a goal his son eventually realized. He settled in Indiana in an attempt to make a new start after enduring the same rash of land disputes that caused Daniel Boone to relocate to Missouri. The early residents of southern
Indiana, like Squire Boone, were opportunists willing to remove the region’s previous inhabitants, Native Americans, by force if necessary. The territorial legislature formed Harrison County in 1809, naming it after William Henry Harrison, a Virginian who became governor of the Indiana territory in 1800. Local legend also credits Harrison with giving the town its name, after the shepherd boy lamented in the song “The Pastoral Elegy.” As territorial governor, Harrison presided over negotiations with local Native American leaders, which eventually culminated in Harrison’s armed confrontation with the Prophet at Tippecanoe in 1811. Militia from Kentucky and the Indiana territory were among the troops that successfully fought off a night attack by Indian warriors. At the beginning of the Civil War some of the men of Harrison County honored their connection to this costly victory when they formed their own militia company, the Spencer Guards. The company bore the name of Spier Spencer, a Kentuckian and the captain of Harrison County’s Yellow Jacket militia, who died at Tippecanoe.

As the seat of Harrison County, Corydon blossomed as the center of politics and society in Indiana during the early nineteenth century, but this prominence was short-lived. Located in the middle of Harrison County, itself cradled by a “U”-shaped bend in the Ohio River, Corydon was not easily accessible from the Ohio River, but its inland location made Corydon convenient for all of Harrison County’s residents. The fact that William Henry Harrison initially owned the land made Corydon a natural choice for the territorial capital. When Indiana became a state in 1816, Corydon became the new state’s capital. The state assembly decided to move the capital from Corydon in January 1825 because settlers had pushed into central and northern Indiana in great numbers, filling the void created by the federal government’s expulsion of Native Americans. As the focus of state government shifted away from the southern part of the state, legislators and businessmen who lived in counties without access to the Ohio River successfully
lobbied for Indianapolis to become the new state capital. Travel to this new capital was still difficult, so businessmen and entrepreneurs built railroads and canals between the Indianapolis and other parts of the state. Corydon’s fate was tied to the Ohio River and the town’s proximity to Kentucky, which unfortunately decreased the community’s influence in the fledgling Indiana state government.  

The loss of political status did not force Corydon into obscurity, but instead compelled residents to look to the Ohio River and Kentucky for opportunity and prosperity. By the 1850s, southern Indiana had developed a strong connection with markets throughout the region, largely because many Hoosier farmers were selling their surplus crops across or down the river, as well as purchasing goods brought downriver from burgeoning industrial centers such as Louisville and Cincinnati. Local river traffic was essential to many Ohio River Valley communities. Farmers in Harrison County could send their surplus crops to the riverside villages of Mauckport or New Amsterdam, where laborers loaded the goods on steamboats. This network did have a negative aspect in that all trade was at the mercy of the seasonal patterns of the river. Trade flourished when the river level was high in the fall and spring, and decreased at other times when only smaller craft were able to navigate the Ohio. But these patterns worked well with the rhythms of rural life, coinciding to a degree with the spring planting and fall harvest.

The fluctuations in weather and the unpredictable nature of river travel did not conform to the year-round pattern of commercial manufacturing, and caused many manufacturers to seek more reliable transportation for their goods. Railroads such as the Louisville and Nashville Railroad compensated for this, making produce and goods from the river valley available to the people of the Upper South. Corydon’s residents had limited access to the railroad, with the Monon line running northwest from New Albany through Salem and the Jeffersonville and
Michigan City Railroad running direct to Indianapolis. Residents could also reach Louisville and the L&N by venturing to nearby Portland, located below the Falls of the Ohio to the west of Louisville. A considerable amount of time and expense was required to ship items by rail, and regional commerce often involved a combination of river, rail, and road. From Corydon, merchants could receive and send goods via the New Albany Turnpike, north to the rail depot at Salem, or south to the river. Corydon did not get a rail connection of its own until 1883, owing to a lack of countywide support, and when the railroad did come, it was mainly a passenger line.36

In spite of the limitations of rail and river transport, the region’s largest antebellum market for foodstuffs was the South. Flour, wheat, pork, and corn from the Ohio Valley fed the slaves and livestock on southern plantations, while southern cotton, sugar, and molasses met the demand of consumers and manufacturers in river cities like Louisville, New Albany, and Cincinnati. The volume of river traffic in the antebellum period speaks to the importance of the river in the lives of Ohio River Valley residents; steamboats passed through the Louisville and Portland Canal at an average rate of one thousand per year, or about three each day.37 The Mississippi River and Ohio River trade forged strong commercial links in the valley, creating economic dependency on the continuation of the southern trade. Governor Oliver H.P. Morton of Indiana warned the state legislature on April 23, 1861, that war with a southern confederacy would obstruct the mouth of the Mississippi, bringing grave economic consequences to the state.38 Kentuckians harbored similar fears, since secession threatened to disturb rail and river arteries flowing south. Moreover, if Kentucky seceded, producers would lose the valuable cross-river trade with Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio.39
Agriculture was a mainstay of southern Indiana’s economy, but manufacturing was vital to Harrison County’s local economy. The difficulties in transportation made localized manufacturing more reliable than distant trade. The more reliable business ventures catered to local farmers. These manufacturers mainly produced items for the county’s residents, making their businesses quite different from more commercial manufacturers, such as the packinghouses and distilleries of Frankfort. Flour, grist, and sawmills were the most numerous types of businesses out of the sixty manufactures in Harrison County in 1860. Mills were also the most profitable manufacturing establishments, with the county’s seventeen mills accounting for $354,040 worth of production out of the county’s total of $436,840. Mills were tied to agricultural production, and provided a service for commercial and subsistence farmers. Lumber was another business that held direct connections to the prosperity of a rural community. There were fewer lumberyards than mills, but these businesses employed more workers, accounting for forty-nine jobs compared to the thirty-seven laborers and mechanics employed at the county’s mills. Most small manufacturers in Harrison County geared towards providing goods to fill local needs. Craftsmen in Harrison County produced boots, shoes, wagons, carriages, and clothing, items in demand in rural areas. These items were predominantly marketed to Harrison County residents who lacked the inclination or ability to travel to New Albany or Louisville, and to citizens in neighboring farming counties like Crawford (on Harrison County’s western border), which had no other manufacturers besides a few mills and lumber yards. Corydon was the largest center of small manufacturers and merchants in Harrison Country, and therefore created a sense of community and cosmopolitanism separate from the smaller villages and surrounding countryside.
The local economy determined how influence and power operated in the area, but it was the people, and their political opinions and cultural backgrounds, that defined the community. The immigration and emigration patterns in the Ohio Valley during the first half of the nineteenth century influenced the tone of politics and relationships in Harrison County. Economic ties were important in determining political allegiance, but this assumption is complicated by the political influences and beliefs that many residents brought with them from their previous homelands. In some ways, the diversity in backgrounds and ideas within Harrison County created a unique local dynamic that differed from other communities and eventually spurred the creation of divergent political ideas before and during the Civil War.

Harrison County exhibited a typical mixture of the various types of migration into the free states of the Ohio River Valley, which created a political and cultural mélange. Migrants from the Upper South settled in southern Indiana during the first half of the nineteenth century, often leaving communities where the institution of slavery made upward mobility difficult for white yeoman farmers. According to the 1860 census, residents born in slave states comprised nine percent of the Indiana’s population. A large portion of these individuals lived in the counties bordering Kentucky, possibly because of the similarities between the knobs of southern Indiana and the rolling hills of the Upper South, including the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. Kentucky-born residents comprised a significant portion of southern Indiana communities, and an even larger number of residents were descended from Kentuckians. In turn, pioneers from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina initially settled in Kentucky, thereby exhibiting a strong linear pattern of migration from the East. In the early nineteenth century, however, Kentucky became an intermediary for settlement of the upper river valley, with settlers often moving through the state, eventually stopping in Indiana, Illinois, or Missouri.
The presence of slave-state migrants, especially Kentuckians, significantly influenced the political development of Corydon and Harrison County. Historians have long pointed to examples of southern influence in Ohio Valley culture, including mannerisms, language, folkways, and politics. The emigrants’ points of origin are as important as their final destination. Upper South influence, and not simply southern influence, played a formative role in the highly democratic, but not overly sectional, political opinions of newly settled Hoosiers. Geographer Gregory S. Rose used the 1850 census and various land office data to pinpoint the regional origin of Upper South migrants. Rose found that people born in Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee comprised 39.2 percent of non-foreign-born Hoosiers, with 17.3 percent from Kentucky alone.43 Harrison County exceeded the average percentage for migrants from all four states, as did its neighboring river counties of Crawford, Floyd, and Clark. Not all river counties shared the same extent of Upper South representation. Harrison, Crawford, Floyd, and Clark owed much of their regional diversity to their proximity to Louisville and the Falls of the Ohio.44

The lion’s share of these “southern” migrants came from hilly regions of the Upper South, where yeoman farmers pursued subsistence farming with no real concern for the perpetuation of slavery.45 Many migrants left areas where non-slaveholders had little opportunity for acquiring land or competing with their slaveholding neighbors. The largest share of 5,555 Indiana settlers who listed Kentucky as their previous state of residence came from counties in the Bluegrass Region, with Franklin and other counties in the north central portion of the Bluegrass providing the majority of migrants. These people were not necessarily born in Kentucky, but included upcountry pioneers who moved to Kentucky before continuing into Indiana.46 The Bluegrass was a logical point of migration for upcountry southerners, before they continued across the river to look for better prospects. The Knobs were an excellent haven for
people who sought land and opportunity and were disinterested in the institution of slavery. The Knobs also offered opportunities for farmers, artisans, and laborers whose positions and prospects were limited in states governed by the slaveholding elite. The absence of large farms or manufacturers provided a pull for migration, in harmony with the push of settlers from the more heavily developed Bluegrass Region.

Harrison County exhibited more diversity in the backgrounds of its white settlers than did Franklin County, although the absence of slavery accounted for a racial homogeneity that was most likely a culture shock for newly arrived Upper South migrants. In 1860, Harrison County contained 16,663 native-born whites, 1,744 foreign-born whites, and ninety-three African Americans. Even among white citizens, there was a degree of difference in background and origin of birth. Although Harrison County’s population was born predominantly in Indiana, the census data is deceptive unless one considers the origin of heads of households. In Harrison County, 52.3 percent of the free population, regardless of birthplace, was nineteen years of age or younger, meaning that that many of the citizens listed as being born in Indiana in the census data were the children of Upper South migrants who had arrived in the state within the last twenty years. These Upper South families had a distinct influence on the political and social composition of the area. A detailed assessment of the census depicts a pattern of adult-headed households born outside of the state who in turn transferred political, cultural, and racial beliefs to their family and neighbors. The percentage of heads of household born in other states or countries demonstrates the diversity of backgrounds among white citizens.47

The number of residents born out of state created a mixture of background and ideas, but also led to political and class division within the county. Men born in Indiana served as heads of half of the households in Harrison County. The statistics are similar for women, but often adults
born in the state had spouses from other states. In Harrison County, the largest number of adults born outside of Indiana came from Kentucky and Virginia. These emigrants lived throughout the county, although the river townships contained a larger percentage of these Kentucky-born individuals, who were mostly laborers and boatmen. In Corydon, there were two small neighborhoods of Virginia- and Kentucky-born residents, as well as a cluster of skilled artisans and tradesmen from Pennsylvania. The other Upper South states of Maryland, Tennessee, and North Carolina were well represented, but a higher percentage of family heads were born in Pennsylvania and, to a lesser extent, Ohio. Very few household heads were born either in New England or the Lower South. All of these migrants shared an interest in acquiring land and pursuing opportunities in the west, regardless of the political beliefs they brought with them.

The mixture of residents’ backgrounds and occupations made southern Indiana communities like Corydon connected to Kentucky culturally. Although Harrison County’s lack of slavery and racial diversity were similar to that of places further north, most southern Indianans were committed to Herrenvolk democracy.

The distribution of Upper South migrants in Harrison County affected Corydon’s role as a community center. Some portions of the county had a less diverse mixture of backgrounds and had a stronger connection to nearby communities such as Brandenburg, Kentucky. In Washington Township, the settlement of New Amsterdam catered to the people who made their living along and on the Ohio River. Almost thirty-six percent of all male heads of households in New Amsterdam were born in Kentucky or Virginia. Thirteen of the thirty-three male adults in this village worked on flatboats, while a carpenter, a grocer, and several shoemakers plied their trades on either side of the river. Mauckport, in Heth Township, was larger and more affluent than New Amsterdam. Situated on the river and across from Brandenburg, most of the town’s
residents were skilled laborers, millers, merchants, traders, shoemakers, and coopers. Some farmers toiled on the hilly knobs and valleys that lined the river and were not ideal for planting crops. Three African American families lived in Heth Township, including the families of Nelson LaForce and Benjamin Carapthell, Kentucky-born farmers who struggled to carve out a subsistence for their family in the shadow of the institution of slavery. Frederick Sly made a meager living as a carpenter, making barely enough to support his six children. Many of the residents of the riverside townships preferred to subscribe to the Louisville and New Albany newspapers, only interested in Corydon when the common pleas court was in session.49 In the northern section of the county, the villages of Barren, Palmyra, New Salisbury, and Sharp’s Mill provided social and economic needs to the farmers living in what was known as the “Barrens,” flat prairie-like land best suited for growing substantial amounts of corn and wheat. Most of Harrison County’s immigrant population lived in this area, usually grouped together in small farming communities.

Foreign immigrants, too, moved to southern Indiana, believing that the region offered more opportunities than the highly populated cities of the North or the slave society of the South. Male and female German immigrants comprised fourteen and twelve percent, respectively, of Harrison County’s household heads. Germans of varying ages lived throughout the county, but the three northeastern townships contained large concentrations of immigrants from Baden, Bavaria, Hessen Nassau, and other southwestern German principalities. Predominantly “Forty-eighters,” refugees from the turbulent and often violent political revolutions of the late 1840s and early 1850s, many of their households often contained teenage children born in Germany alongside younger children who had been born exclusively in Indiana. The prevalence of these dual heritage families suggests that these families left their homeland after the revolutions began.
in 1848, coming directly to Indiana to settle. Often land speculators went to Europe to sell blocks of land to immigrants, although it is also likely that these enclaves resulted from communications from relatives or friends already in southern Indiana. Regardless, one Franklin Township included as much as forty-five percent male heads of households and forty-two percent female heads of households born overseas, indicating a small number of male immigrants who married native-born women. Several townships on the edge of the county had a sizeable population of Forty-eighers, but a number of Germans living near the river arrived before revolution broke out in their homeland.50

Harrison County’s Forty-eighers contributed to the various political ideas and opinions that mixed along the border. While many Forty-eighers were well educated, almost all of them being literate, they were mostly craftsmen and skilled laborers. In the 1856 presidential election, seventy-nine percent of voters in Franklin Township supported James Buchanan, the Democratic candidate, while seven percent cast their votes for John C. Frémont, the Republican candidate. In the other three townships with sizeable immigrant representation, the Democrats won victories while Republican support was poor.51 Matilda Gresham, in describing the Forty-eighers in Franklin County, said “contrary to the usual rule, these Germans were pro-slavery in their views.” She attributed these German immigrants’ slow embrace of the Republican Party to prejudice, rather than to pro-southern sympathies.52 However, German immigrants, like much of the white working class, were drawn to the Democratic Party because they feared emancipation would create competition for jobs between white and black workers.53 When the secession crisis began, most German immigrants and their children sided with the Union, but like many other white citizens of southern Indiana, they did not immediately equate preservation of the Union with emancipation.
On the eve of the Civil War, there was no indication that the people of Corydon and Frankfort were drastically different. Save for the legality of slavery, Frankfort was no more “southern” in character than Corydon. On the contrary, manufacturing and marketable agriculture was actually more prominent in Frankfort. The institution of slavery gave large farmers a decided advantage in Kentucky, compared to their counterparts in Indiana. Immigrants settling in the Ohio Valley avoided places with sizeable slave populations, preferring to live in cities such as Louisville and Cincinnati or in small villages in the free states. Harrison County had a larger and wider distribution of immigrants, whereas in Franklin County, the immigrant population was concentrated in Frankfort. Slavery did not make Frankfort less progressive or economically successful than Corydon; rather, slaves added to the community’s wealth and affluence. The elite in both towns agreed on the importance of commerce, political participation, and regional connections. Moreover, the unity of white supremacy, so important in wresting the region from Native Americans, glossed over the societal differences between free and slave communities. The coming sectional crisis, however, would soon give citizens in both communities an opportunity to test these common values of white supremacy and economic progress.
Chapter 2

The Danger of War

The possibility of a civil war was a stark reality to the people of the Ohio River Valley. The men and women living along the river border were very familiar with the opinions and ideals of northern and southern extremists. Because the Ohio River Valley was the geographical mid-point between the two sections, now defined by opposing political objectives, the region contained a mixture of sentiments and principles. Some Kentucky slaveholders worried that Lincoln would wage war against all slave states once he entered office, but the Frankfort Commonwealth dismissed this notion as a “bug bear which may frighten timid women and little children, but will never be seriously contemplated by men of sense of any section.” Frankfort’s cosmopolitan-minded citizens comforted themselves with the knowledge that if an abolitionist army threatened Kentucky “a larger force could, and would, be raised in the border free states to defend us than could be mustered to invade us.”1 Unionist elites used the common bond between border communities to argue that the region could withstand a sectional crisis. The role of peacemaker conveniently coincided with the self-interest of many prominent border citizens. White residents in Frankfort and Corydon used similar methods to protect the racial and economic status quo of their communities. This including avoiding political extremes, deemphasizing the divisiveness of the slavery issue, and reinforcing the shared history of white river valley residents. However, political maneuvering by local and state officials led to military maneuvering, and by the end of the 1861, political factions divided the region.

Sectional politics, the 1860 election, and the secession crisis affected the Ohio River Valley quite differently than other parts of the United States, because of the complexities of border society. Scholars continue to struggle to define Kentucky’s place in the conflict, because
the state defies the generalizations historians usually apply to northern or southern states. The commonly used term, “border state,” does not adequately describe Kentucky’s role as part of the borderland of the Ohio River Valley. James McPherson, in his influential narrative on the Civil War, attributes Kentucky’s importance in the secession crisis to the Ohio River, which provided “a defensive barrier or an avenue of invasion, depending on which side could control and fortify it.” If this strategic detail made Kentucky a border state, why do the southern portions of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois not merit similar description? Some scholars have answered this question by concluding that Kentucky was a southern state that did not secede. This classification implies that the primary characteristic of a southern state was the institution of slavery. Daniel Croft argues that Kentucky’s Unionists fought off secession “by championing a policy of armed neutrality and by trying to mediate between the federal and Confederate governments.” While certainly true, the urge to mediate or avoid sectional conflict was not exclusive to slave states but rather reflected a common reaction among border citizens.

Attention to the regional connections of a border region, instead of adherence to the concept of border states, reveals the similar goals of border residents regardless of which side of the Ohio River they occupy. Nicole Etcheson observes that “as part of the effort to solidify the Western border, Upland Southerners rejected the extremes of secession and abolition as equally obnoxious and dangerous to the Union.” Hoosiers, particularly those living near the Ohio River border, shared Kentuckians’ eagerness to avoid conflict during the tumultuous events following the 1860 election. Indiana politicians, especially Democrats, believed “that although the extreme North and extreme South were strangers to each other, the borders mingled.” When mediation failed, Unionists in Indiana and Kentucky formed an alliance, solidified by the memory of
frontier victories over Indian tribes. The anxiety of the secession crisis and the beginning of the Civil War tested the link between border citizens, but was not strong enough to break it.

Slaveholding Kentuckians were still residents of the Ohio River Valley, and many of them had economic, social, or familial connections beyond the Ohio River. White citizens of the Bluegrass Region recognized the value of good relations with free state folk. The slavery issue divided the extreme northern and southern states, but was not enough to forge a permanent wedge between white residents of slave and free states along the border. John Allen Boyd’s doctoral dissertation on Kentucky during the secession crisis demonstrates the complexity of regional identity as it related to politics. Boyd describes Kentuckians innovatively but imprecisely as “southerners of the Ohio Valley, looking away from Dixie.”\textsuperscript{5} However, Boyd’s contention that slaveholding equated southern identity is problematic. Kentucky’s strong ties to the communities north of the Ohio River explain why white citizens had such a unique mixture of opinions and ideas concerning the secession crisis and the coming of the Civil War. Owning and hiring slaves was not enough to make white Kentuckians any more southern than their neighbors, friends, political allies, business partners, and kinfolk who lived north of the Ohio River.

Other scholars emphasize the development of a distinct “midwestern” identity that excluded Kentucky because of its status as a slave state, which causes some historians to define Kentuckians as southerners in comparison to Hoosiers and other free state inhabitants. Nicole Etcheson contends that the migration of upland southerners to Indiana caused people there “to identify themselves more as Westerners than as Southerners or Northerners.”\textsuperscript{6} Although she acknowledges the connection between Kentuckians and Hoosiers immediately before the Civil War, Etcheson does not interpret this as evidence of a common bond among westerners but
rather Hoosiers’ loyalty to “the border South from which the state derived its heritage.”

Southern Indianans, however, never fully dissolved their connections to Kentucky, and many Kentuckians continued to acknowledge commonalities with border Hoosiers. Andrew R. L. Cayton and Peter S. Onuf argue that “as much as many people defined the official culture of the Midwest in opposition to what they perceived to be the shared cultural characteristics of Catholics and southerners, they were also committed to the positive fulfillment of a vision of commercial and social development that had originated in the Ordinance of 1787.” These historians contend that the Republican Party played a major role in transforming the Old Northwest into a new region characterized by commercial growth and a middle-class ideal.

Although this interpretation implies that Kentucky’s Democratic majority left the state out of the newly made Midwest, Cayton and Onuf do not recognize heavily Democratic counties of the border regions of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. Unlike Etcheson, Cayton and Onuf do not try to define Kentucky’s status, preferring to refer to a monolithic South of which, in their view, Kentucky was a part. Based on political and cultural characteristics, one could easily argue that southern Indianans were southerners too. The institution of slavery was the only major difference between the northern and southern banks of the Ohio River, and border folk were used to navigating that perilous path together for the sake of peace and prosperity.

While the months preceding the 1860 election might have revealed a rigid political division between North and South, border citizens responded in various ways, including hoping for compromise. The Republican Party advocated free labor, an ideology based on the rights of workers and opposition to the extension of slavery. Republicans might have been antislavery, with a few abolitionists in tow, but their platform did not include the abolition of slavery where it existed. However, John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry the previous year sent southern minds
racing with conspiracy theories. Some slaveholders associated the Republican Party’s antislavery stance with the activities of abolitionists. A Republican president would presumably encourage abolitionist raids and even dismantle slavery in the South. Even before the election, a number of southern politicians entertained secession as a viable response to a Republican victory but most Kentuckians did not condone this drastic measure. Conversely, Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate for president (and a native Kentuckian), previously voiced concern that a slave power conspiracy aimed to extend slavery into the free states and thus destroy the distinction between slave and free states. Still, Lincoln could offer no evidence other than the ruling of U.S. Supreme Court chief justice Roger Taney in the 1857 Dred Scott decision, one that established slaveowners’ right to take his slave into free territory without changing the slave’s status but which most free states refused to accept because its scope reached beyond the determination of the immediate case.

These conspiracy theories did not grip border citizens in the same way as voters in the North and South. The Democratic Party split into northern and southern factions, leaving many border voters without a clear choice for president. Stephen A. Douglas, the northern Democratic candidate, opposed a slave code protecting slavery in the territories, a stance that caused southern Democrats to unite against Douglas and seek their own candidate. The split in the Democratic Party over slavery alienated border voters who wanted to avoid the issue of slavery. The southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckinridge (another Kentuckian and, though a slaveholder, a moderate on the slavery issue) as their candidate and adopted a platform supporting the slave code. The Democratic Party was split along sectional lines, causing conservative Democrats, especially in the border region, to consider the newly formed Constitutional Union Party. The party’s candidate was John Bell, a slaveowner from Tennessee.
who espoused upholding the Constitution and Union. The Constitutional Union platform advocated upholding existing laws, thus remaining neutral on the issue of excluding slavery from the territories. The only party to avoid the pitfalls of the divisive slavery issue, Constitutional Unionists hoped to draw enough support from the Upper South to contest Lincoln’s ability to sweep the electoral college sectionally.12

The outcome of the presidential election in the region demonstrates the political tendencies of border communities regarding the centrality of slavery to national politics. Nationally, Lincoln won the election because he carried the northern states and acquired more electoral votes. The Deep South states went predominantly to Breckinridge, while the Upper South showed largely for Bell. In southern Indiana and north central Kentucky, the majority of voters tended to avoid the extremes. Democrats were the majority in both places, but they divided their sympathies between the two Democratic candidates and John Bell’s Constitutional Union Party. Although state loyalty would dictate that Kentucky voters should choose their fellow Kentuckian, Breckinridge, he was also the choice of southern “fire-eaters” who had already threatened to secede from the Union if Lincoln won the election. Some Kentuckians preferred that others see them as protectors of the Union instead of conspirators for its destruction. For this reason they passed over their fellow Kentuckian in favor of Bell. By avoiding the controversy over slavery’s expansion and therefore appealing to many proslavery Kentuckian, the Constitutional Union candidate appealed to many of Kentucky’s voters. Among them were many former Whigs who could find no benefit in the talk of disunion among southern Democrats. Kentuckians who supported the Constitutional Union Party envisioned themselves as the center between the equally radical aspirations of southern Democrats and northern Republicans. However much Bell appealed to Kentuckians, not all of Kentucky’s white
residents considered it necessary to distance themselves from southern Democrats. The Jackson Purchase, in the far western corner of the state, and the mountain counties in the eastern portion of Kentucky went each to Breckinridge. These areas, along with a stretch of counties along the Ohio River between Louisville and Cincinnati, were dominated by tried and true Democrats who did not link slaveholding rights within the Union with the “right” of secession. Those border residents willing to compromise on the issue of slavery tended to vote for Stephen Douglas. And although the Illinoisan carried the border slave state to the West, Missouri, the candidate won only 17.5 percent of Kentucky votes compared to Breckinridge’s 36.3 percent. Bell was the favorite in Kentucky, receiving 45.2 percent of Kentucky votes. Kentuckians preferred candidates who seemed willing to compromise and were conservative on the issue of slavery. Lincoln, whose party was associated with abolition, did not even receive a full 1 percent of Kentuckians’ votes.

In spite of Abraham Lincoln’s attempts at distancing himself from abolitionism, only a handful of antislavery men in Harrison and Franklin Counties supported the former Kentuckian. Additionally, because some southern Democrats promised disunion if Lincoln became president, many Kentuckians concluded that no peace would come from a Republican victory. Ironically for Bluegrass voters, the two Kentucky-born candidates, Breckinridge and Lincoln, represented parties that were polar opposites in the sectional conflict and thus they proved either wholly or relatively unpopular. While Bell’s platform proved to be a poor strategy in the nation, it enjoyed popularity along the Ohio River border and in the Upper South. Bell won not only the state of Kentucky, but Virginia and his home state of Tennessee as well.

The situation was different north of the Ohio River. The Republican Party achieved victory in Indiana, but this was a hard-fought battle that did not spell the end of the Democratic
Party in the state. The state’s Republican governor, Oliver H. P. Morton, enjoyed an overwhelmingly Republican state legislature, but political dissent continued. Union men, including Democrats, Republicans, and Constitutional Unionists, held meetings to draft requests for conciliatory action and compromise. Few Hoosiers voted for Breckinridge, although Douglas and Bell received notable followings. An enclave of Know-Nothings, a short-lived party defined by its opposition to immigration, in southern Indiana rallied behind Bell’s Constitutional Union Party because it promised continuity and stability. Also known as Nativists, the political debate over slavery had taken the emphasis off the party’s opposition to the Democratic Party’s popularity among Irish and German voters. Nativist hostility toward immigrants was overshadowed by the possibility of disunion, a greater threat to white citizens of the river border. The pleas for cooperation and a peaceful resolution to sectional conflict were loudest in the Ohio River counties. Like many Kentuckians, southern Hoosiers also found themselves caught between two factions bent on collision; they believed the most desirable course of action was to prevent war by avoiding close association with either secession or abolition. Some citizens realized that embracing one extreme or the other would make them the focus of early military campaigns and the brunt of decades of sectional fear and distrust. Moreover, the majority of border men were generally not prone to radicalism regardless of its progressive or reactionary implications. The stakes—military occupation by either friend or foe—were simply too high for border folk to be inflexible. Therefore, during the first year of the conflict border communities made both preparations for war and prayers for peace.

During the “secession winter” of 1860-61, Kentucky’s state government held firm while it watched the Lower South states leave the Union one by one. Beriah Magoffin, Kentucky’s governor and a Democrat with southern sympathies, favored a convention of all fifteen slave
states. This plan never came to fruition, because Lower South states seceded before Magoffin could organize the meeting. Magoffin preferred that the slave states give an ultimatum to the Lincoln administration, which would present a united front for the protection of slavery. Some southern states rejected this cautious course of action and courted Magoffin for the secessionist cause. In late December, 1860, representatives of Mississippi and Alabama visited the governor in hopes of persuading Magoffin to push for Kentucky’s secession. Alabama’s representative, Stephen Fowler Hale, wrote a detailed letter to Magoffin, laying out his argument for immediate secession. Hale, a Kentuckian by birth and slaveholder, made a number of statements depicting Lincoln as a threat to slavery, but also asked “what Southern man” could stand to watch “the white man stripped by the heaven-daring hand of fanaticism of that title to superiority over the black race which God himself has bestowed?” Despite Hale’s advocacy for secession, most white Kentuckians believed that white supremacy was secure as long as their state remained in the Union, which had always protected slavery and the rights of white citizens through compromise. The Kentucky state legislature overwhelmingly favored compromise over secession, or even Magoffin’s plan for a slave state ultimatum. Kentucky was to play the role of mediator and peacemaker, which included scheduling a border state conference aimed at moderating the secession crisis.

Like Kentucky as a whole, the majority of Frankfort’s white elite residents advocated peace and mediation, a sentiment that U.S. Senator John J. Crittenden (a Frankfort resident) expressed at the national level through a set of compromises. Crittenden was a prominent political figure and a native of Woodford County, Kentucky (on the southern border of Franklin County), with a long history of political activity beginning in 1811. The highlights of his career include serving as William Henry Harrison’s attorney general and as Kentucky’s governor, but
he resigned both positions after less than two years. In December 1860, Crittenden, a former Whig turned Constitutional Unionist, proposed a compromise to the Senate that promised to remedy the growing sectional division. After a long career as an indefatigable supporter of the Union, picking up the standard of the now-dead Henry Clay, Crittenden galvanized support for further compromise among white residents of the Ohio Valley and many citizens trusted his opinion on the secession crisis as both a legislator and a Kentuckian. His compromise dictated that the national government would have little control over slavery either in the current slave states or in the western territories south of the old 36° 30′ parallel. Crittenden’s list of proposed constitutional amendments essentially would have secured slavery’s position in the southern states and territories, reaffirmed slaveholders’ rights to property, and forbade any future amendments from superseding them. The Senate’s “Committee of Thirteen,” entrusted to settle the sectional crisis, voted down the compromise in late December 1860. Crittenden submitted his plan to the Senate in early January, which rejected the proposal by a slim margin of two votes. Republicans and representatives of the Lower South alike united to oppose the “Crittenden Compromise, as it came to be known.” Suffering another failed attempt at its adoption in mid-January, the Compromise represented the frustrating position of white border residents. Border free and slave state citizens could do little to influence the secession crisis, but they most certainly would experience the consequences of disunion.20

Kentuckians wanted a peaceful resolution to the crisis and a restoration of the Union, which they hoped Congress could achieve through compromise. One of the letters to the editors of the Frankfort Commonwealth urged Kentuckians in general to “hold on to the Union, and the immortal Crittenden’s views.”21 Still, Lincoln was strongly against this measure, considering it antithetical to everything the Republican Party gained by winning the election. The President
urged Republicans to reject it. Although a “peace convention” held in Washington D.C. in February 1861 resurrected the compromise, Republicans quickly defeated it in Congress. Dead at the national level, the Compromise remained popular among some border citizens as a possible solution to their problems.22

Between January and March 1861, Kentuckians considered the political and social implications of secession and the probability of war. With South Carolina out of the Union and the other cotton states not far behind, the fate of the Ohio River border depended on calmer heads prevailing. The Frankfort Daily Commonwealth, which had supported Bell, dealt with the specter of secession by denying that there was any support for such a movement in Kentucky, especially among the laboring class. The editors articulated their position on secession by publishing letters from correspondents who were more representative of the majority of Franklin County’s residents. A large number of Frankfort’s elite opposed secession, but the newspaper informed its readers that “it is the farmers, the laborers, and producers who would suffer the most by the mad policy of secession.”23 Two letters in particular suggested that the “old sturdy farmers” and the “yeomanry” of the state could settle the matter. In both cases the authors blamed political aspirants, agitators, and partisans for jeopardizing the sovereignty of the Union and Constitution. One writer urged farmers to voice their opinions in the papers, remarking that “if they will take hold and plow and cultivate the political word for one season we will have more peace, prosperity, contentment and happiness than we have had for the last quarter century.”24 Another declared that “the plain, common-sense, working men want peace,” adding “Kentucky is bound in honor and good faith to abide by and in the Union.”25 Breckinridge’s popularity in rural Franklin County may explain this emphasis on common men and farmers.

The Constitutional Union Party fared better among the merchants and skilled professionals of
Frankfort, prompting the newspaper’s editors to attempt to convince both small farmers and craftsmen to embrace Unionism. With this broader motive, the letters were likely the editors’ own, planted to dissuade pro-Breckinridge citizens from considering secession. Regardless of their origin, they emphasize the theme of peace and Union in response to questions posed by secession and possible war.

In Franklin County citizens organized to show state loyalty and their disapproval with secession. Although these gatherings were supposedly non-partisan, they stressed “southern rights in the Union.” In a March 22 letter, “Franklin” called for such a meeting, urging “the calm and sober citizens of all parties in Franklin County” to form a party concerned with southern rights, adding that “this party would have no opponents except those who are undisguisedly for secession, cause or no cause.” The formation of the Southern Rights Party (also known as the States’ Rights Party) quickly gained momentum and plans for creating a statewide organization followed. The party’s founders envisioned an alliance of men who had voted for Bell, Douglas, and Breckinridge. The Party’s leaders held a county meeting at the courthouse on Saturday, March 30, intent upon organizing a state convention for April or May. Southern Rights members declared that Kentucky secessionists were claiming to support the Union while secretly orchestrating a plan to sabotage the state’s relations with the free states. The party’s spokesmen warned that Kentuckians would not in truth be represented in the Confederacy, only robbed of their rights. The argument went that the cotton states dominated the Confederacy, and would use Kentucky as a buffer against northern invasion, sacrificing the border state if necessary. But Southern Rights supporters also opposed Lincoln and wanted the legislature to hold a convention aimed at state sovereignty. This party did not openly support secession, but its members
believed that the state government was responsible for upholding slavery, individual rights, and democracy. If protecting these rights meant leaving the Union, so be it.28

Support for secession in Kentucky was weak at best, and Unionists easily overpowered the few attempts secessionists made to organize politically for disunion. The majority of the Southern Rights Party’s members wanted to maintain the Union, although some secessionists joined the Southern Rights movement in hopes of gathering followers for disunion. Kentuckians committed to the Union organized against the Southern Rights Party, although their support of the Union was conditional. The Unionists wanted the federal government to adopt the Crittenden Compromise, but opposed coercing the seceded states to rejoin the Union. Historian Daniel Crofts describes three waves of secession in Upper South states (Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina), each one stronger than the first. In these states the final push for secession came after Fort Sumter and Lincoln’s call for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion and “immediately engulfed upper South Unionism.”29 Yet John Allen Boyd argues that the third wave never took hold in Kentucky, because Unionists were able to gain popularity in the state before the Confederacy fired on Fort Sumter. These Unionists fought back during the secession crisis, and according to Boyd “were well organized and proactive.”30

Governor Magoffin continued to be sympathetic towards the efforts of the southern states, but he also respected the state legislature’s efforts to avoid hostilities and remain in the Union. Magoffin refused to answer Lincoln’s call for troops. The now dominant Union Democratic Party agreed, as long as the state sent no troops to the Confederacy. On May 16, the state legislature adopted neutrality and forbade its citizens from taking part in the war. The policy of neutrality proved popular among both Southern Righters and Unionists, because it bought both sides enough time to advance their respective agendas. The Southern Rights Party
advocated an “armed neutrality” that allowed the state to prepare to defend itself, while remaining uncommitted. The Union-Democracy, however, wanted to use neutrality as an opportunity to calm their constituents and gather support for Union. Both the Southern Rights Party and the Union Democratic Party used neutrality as an opportunity to compete for the upper hand, without the interference of outsiders. Neutrality was not a permanent solution, but it did allow Unionists to exploit the advantage they gained over their secessionist opponents in the wake of Fort Sumter.  

In Frankfort, the Unionist stance gained further support, allowing members of the Union-Democracy to bring in workers and craftsmen who may have been tempted by the Southern Rights Party. In late April, a group of Franklin County’s farmers and mechanics met at the Frankfort courthouse to elect a committee to draft a set of political resolutions. Although no record remains of how many of Franklin County’s laboring class assembled, the crowd’s size required organizers to move the group outside to Capitol Square. The attendees extolled the virtues of the Union and the wisdom of the founding fathers and held politicians largely responsible for jeopardizing the stability and prosperity of the Union, arguing that disunion would “prostrate the entire mechanical and agricultural interest of the country.” To these small landowners and artisans, upholding the Constitution meant more than just preserving the Union: it also included preservation of the peculiar institution. Although the committee made its preference for peace abundantly clear, it also approved Kentucky’s joining with other slave states in revolution if the free states or the central government threatened the institution of slavery. The committee backed the Union Democratic Party and pledged interest in pursuing further avenues for peace, including the upcoming Border Slave States Convention scheduled to convene in Frankfort on May 27. These Unionists supported Magoffin’s plan for neutrality,
although they were aware of the presence of secessionists among them. The Union Democratic Party also gained the allegiance of some of the charter members of the Southern Rights Party. Slavery was not a central part of the Unionist platform, although the party did not advocate any change in the state’s laws concerning the institution.

Frankfort’s citizens with southern sympathies supported the States’ Rights Party, but they also rejected neutrality. Instead, these individuals cited as reasons for secession the possibility of abolitionist conspiracies, servile insurrection, or invasion from free states north of the Ohio. States’ Rights advocates, who vowed to accept nothing less than the Crittenden Compromise, lost hope when the Upper South states of Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee seceded. Unionists in Franklin County were more flexible, willing to accept both neutrality and any compromise that resembled Crittenden’s plan in spirit. The secessionists chose the most stringent position, in hopes of making Lincoln and the Republican Party seem inflexible and intent on war. Indeed, Samuel Ire Monger Major (known throughout the region as “Sim”), editor of the *Kentucky Yeoman*, was the spokesman of pro-secessionists in Frankfort. While Unionists cited the connection Kentucky enjoyed with its neighbors north of the Ohio, Major and his editors exaggerated any anti-southern sentiment in the free border states. One correspondent, R. K. Woodson, a former resident of Illinois, made the exaggerated claim that after Fort Sumter citizens of the North were “in solid mass for the destruction of the South,” that they forced southern men to leave the state or join military companies, and that “Negro equality is preached every Sunday.” The editor of the *Yeoman* urged that Woodson’s letter “should be read by the people of this place who think the non-seceded slave states have such good friends across the Ohio River.”^33 They showed similar concern for Ohio, where Republicans in Cincinnati criticized neutrality as untenable and shortsighted. Conversey, the *Yeoman* also printed the
neutrality resolutions of the Indiana legislature that pledged to honor laws and institutions of Kentucky, particularly slavery. The legislators assured Kentuckians that “the people of Indiana remember with gratitude the gallant conduct of Kentuckians who poured their blood out at Tippecanoe to aid in protecting the wives and children of Indianans from the tomahawk and scalping knife of savages.” They also promised that Hoosiers would be ready to repay the debt to Kentucky.35

Hoosiers pledging to aid Kentucky and uphold slavery may seem somewhat disingenuous, but protecting Kentuckians’ right to own slaves also protected Indianan’s right to exclude African American migrants from the state. The Indiana State Constitutional Convention of 1850-1851 is an example of this commitment to white supremacy. During the convention the state retained various black laws from its territorial period, most of which prohibited interracial marriages, black voting, and public education for African American children. These measures were clearly meant to support white supremacy, while still allowing for the existence of a small free black community. The Constitution of 1851 included a bolder measure: Article XIII excluded free blacks from entering the state and encouraged the colonization of those already residing in the state. In 1852 the state legislature advanced the cause of colonization by passing a law funding the effort.36 As long as Kentucky remained a slave state, southern Indianans did not have to worry about enforcing Article XIII. As tensions built over the possible intention of Lincoln’s Republican administration, Hoosiers had good reason to seek political allies in Kentucky.

Despite R. K. Woodson’s claims to the contrary, Hoosiers living in the southern portion of the state responded to the secession crisis with a concern for peace and mediation that mirrored their Kentucky counterparts’ sentiments. Indeed, Simeon K. Wolfe, a Corydon lawyer,
editor, and state senator, employed the theme of compromise in his January 17 speech to the Indiana Senate. Wolfe shared his views on the secession crisis with his constituents and neighbors by printing the speech on the first page of his newspaper, *The Corydon Democrat*. Speaking to his colleagues and specifically addressing his Republican adversaries, Wolfe agreed with them on Indiana’s obligation to protect and preserve the Union. Wolfe parted ways with his Republican counterparts by considering compromise a desirable method for maintaining the Union, especially when applied to the “conservative border slave states.” In Wolfe’s opinion these slave states were not inclined to follow the revolutionary path of the cotton states; only resorting to secession when threatened with abolition. Wolfe remained open to compromise and articulated his willingness to make sacrifices in order to “prevent at least the border slave states from being drawn or driven into the vortex of secession.” Thinking of Kentuckians as much as of Indianans, Wolfe reminded readers that his constituency in Harrison, Washington, and Crawford counties occupied a sixty-mile border with the Ohio River and pointed out that “the people of Kentucky are our neighbors, and that beautiful river is an avenue of wealth to our people.” Wolfe emphasized the value of both relationships and remarked that the conservative people of his county, regardless of party, were willing to respect Kentuckians’ wishes to be left out of a conflict over the “barren slavery abstraction.” He described a border region of interconnected business and social relations, which encompassed southern Indiana and Kentucky. His speech informed readers that keeping peace on the border meant preventing the slavery controversy from driving a wedge between its citizens.

In both communities, white citizens held onto the compromise as a desirable solution to the sectional crisis, even after cotton states began leaving the Union. Simeon K. Wolfe’s message to his constituents and colleagues supported Crittenden’s proposal, though he admitted
that he did not approve of its concessions towards the expansion of slavery into the territories. However, he saw this as a small price to pay for the evasion of hostilities.\footnote{38} White residents of the Ohio River Valley embraced the notion that a compromise could postpone or subvert the national debate between free labor and proslavery ideologues.\footnote{39} These borderites’ expectations were not unrealistic, given that compromise had worked before. On February 16, 1861, citizens of Harrison County held a meeting in Corydon in order to elect delegates to attend the state Union convention in Indianapolis. Wolfe spoke for an hour on Union and compromise, again urging acceptance of the Crittenden Compromise, or “any other plan that would give peace to the country.” Benjamin P. Douglass, a merchant and delegate from Corydon’s Harrison Township, motioned that “every citizen of Harrison County who approves the object of the Union meeting at Indianapolis [be] appointed delegates to said state convention.” In order to affirm the non-partisan nature of the meeting the members motioned to submit the proceedings for publication in the local Democrat papers \textit{Corydon Democrat} and \textit{New Albany Daily Ledger}, as well as one of the region’s few (if short-lived) Republican papers, \textit{The Corydon Argus}.\footnote{40}

Attempts to lessen the war’s effect on the border took two basic forms. The first was through state level negotiations, primarily between the governors of Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio. The second consisted of various local and regional meetings aimed at reaffirming the symbiotic relationships existing between communities along the Ohio River. Governor Morton of Indiana was eager to correspond with the border slave states in order to keep them from seceding. A Republican with some radical proclivities, he had no love for the proslavery Democrats who comprised the bulk of the Unionist faction in Kentucky and wanted to protect the southern edge of his state. His negotiation style resembled interference and self-interest, more than concern for peaceful relations with the people of Kentucky.\footnote{41} Governor Beriah
Magoffin of Kentucky wanted Morton and Ohio’s governor, William Dennison, to assist him in creating a council of border state mediators. All three governors agreed upon meeting in Cincinnati at the Spencer House Hotel. Magoffin was unable to attend and sent Col. Thomas L. Crittenden to urge the border free states to agree upon an armistice. At the meeting, both Dennison and Morton voiced opposition to the border states negotiating for the rest of the nation. Ultimately, the conference had little result other than public avowals to keep avenues of communication open between the state leaders.

Simeon Wolfe and his fellow Democrats in Corydon, however, disagreed with their governor. They supported Magoffin’s plan for peace in hopes that it would help the Union men of the border slave states to avert civil war in Kentucky. Wolfe urged Kentuckians to pursue a period of “reflection and negotiation” as a preventative for a war that would “be disastrous to them in every way, and injurious to us.” Morton’s refusal to participate in further discussions with Magoffin on arbitration prompted Wolfe to “guess [that] Morton don’t want peace.” Regardless of the Indiana governor’s wishes, the sentiments prevailing among the people of the river valley often differed from those of their leaders. As Magoffin, a proslavery Democrat, and Morton, an antislavery Republican, engaged in a power struggle rooted in partisanship and sectionalism, common border citizens facing everyday life did not have the luxury of basing actions solely on the basis of national politics. They needed to determine the best way to prevent border war and keep the Ohio River Valley functioning as a viable economic unit. For the time being, at least, civil war was an outcome they wished to delay or, if possible, avoid.

Unlike his southern Indiana neighbors, from his vantage point in Indianapolis, Oliver H. P. Morton saw the river border as a potential seat of war, not a locale of peace. On May 8, Morton wrote George B. McClellan, commander of the federal Department of the Ohio with
headquarters in Cincinnati, asking for artillery to station along Indiana’s southern edge. Morton desired six to twelve good cannon to use along the border where the citizens were supposedly “in a state of intense alarm and fear marauding parties from the other side of the river who have been plundering and burning their property.” Although Morton received letters from border counties expressing concern during April and May, no secessionist activity had yet shown itself along the river. In one such case Indiana’s attorney general, James G. Jones, wanted to remove state arms from citizens in Evansville in order to redistribute them to loyal Republicans. Additionally, the superintendent of the Louisville, New Albany, and Chicago Railroad, wrote a letter to the governor asking for troops to guard bridges in the event Kentucky seceded. The railroad’s owners surmised that raiders would cross the river destroying these bridges, severely hampering the flow of commerce and troops. If not wholly unfounded, these concerns were premature, and less pressing than Morton’s claims of chaos and pandemonium indicate.

Although attempts at a peace convention failed on the state level, individual communities in the valley attempted to prevent a civil war from erupting between free and slave state communities along the border. This spirit of compromise and concession was common among the political elite in both Kentucky and southern Indiana. Residents of the river border were aware that the slightest misunderstanding could touch off violence. White Citizens wanted to arm themselves against invasion and sectional violence while continuing good relationships with their longtime friends on the opposite side of the river. When the men of Jeffersonville and New Albany formed militia companies for protection, the Louisville Democrat reassured its readers that “whatever differences may arise between the two sections, this trio of neighboring cities may preserve harmony between them.” The newspaper article also informed its Hoosier friends that the plan to create military companies in Louisville was not a response to the actions of the
city’s neighbors, but a necessary step to protect the city from outside agitators. The *Louisville Journal* followed with a similar message, promising southern Hoosiers that “the arming of our city has no reference whatever to any expected collision or trouble with them.” In evidence of this fact the editor noted that many residents of southern Indiana were descended from Kentuckians and that Kentucky troops had “poured their blood freely upon Indiana’s battlefields.” The *New Albany Daily Ledger* agreed with these sentiments, noting that some of the city’s older citizens “witnessed the crossing at this point of the gallant Kentuckians who marched through the wilderness to the defense of the pioneers of Indiana at Tippecanoe.”

On April 20 representatives from Louisville, New Albany, and Jeffersonville met at the mayor’s office in Louisville to draft a statement pledging “the continuance of the amicable relations which have always subsisted between them.” Similarly, delegates from Harrison and Meade County met in Mauckport on April 27 in a conference aimed at maintaining an atmosphere of cooperation between the two counties. The elected president, John W. Lopp, who owned a large mill south of Corydon, explained that the committee’s task was “to take into consideration our duty as citizens of the border in this time of peril.” The event was also a Union rally of sorts, with speeches and a large turnout by citizens from both sides of the river. A second meeting held in Brandenburg five days later included Hoosier representatives from Crawford County as well, yielded a set of resolutions solidifying the “ancient relations which have always existed between citizens of the two borders.” The committee pledged that in the event of Kentucky’s secession residents of each county would “control and restrain the lawless and vicious in both states, and confine the warfare strictly to the army,” a statement that clearly envisioned the danger of war to the homes, property, and family members of border citizens.
Those valley residents interested in Kentucky’s continued neutrality did not live exclusively on the southern side of the river. During the first summer of the war, livestock, food, manufactured goods, and raw materials went south via river and rail. The Confederacy passed a tariff act on May 21 assigning duties for various materials crossing its border for sale, but excluded the foodstuffs usually shipped from the upper Ohio Valley. Governor Morton knew that goods from southern Indiana were passing through Kentucky to the Confederacy and sought a solution. In spite of his influence, the state legislature failed to pass any laws restricting trade. In May, Morton attempted to enlist the help of Illinois and Ohio in a scheme to seize Louisville and other river ports in Kentucky in order to stop railroad traffic south. This plan never went beyond a written proposal; doubtless, the people of Harrison, Floyd and other Indiana river counties would not have allowed such a disturbance to business and trade.\textsuperscript{51} Although it was illegal to ship items directly to the South, no law prevented Indianans from doing business with Kentucky. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad was the primary artery for items headed to Tennessee and further south. Southern Hoosiers routinely sent their surplus produce south through Kentucky. After war broke out they could no longer ship items to southern markets, although they could sell to middle-men in neutral Kentucky. Until the Confederacy closed the Tennessee/Kentucky border in June, discrete trade continued. Farmers and produce buyers in southern Indiana believed they had more to lose by Kentucky’s secession. Although Louisville merchants and railroads would lose some income from shipping wheat, corn, and meat south, small producers and family farmers in southern Indiana stood to lose markets for their produce and would thus be unable to pay their debts. In the minds of many Hoosiers, their own potential suffering loomed larger than any decrease of profit among Louisville’s capitalists.\textsuperscript{52}
Although people were occupied by the frightening consequences of a long and bloody war with the Confederacy, the prospect of a border war was much more ominous. Union and Confederate activity threatened Kentucky’s neutrality during that summer, but the conflict came to a boiling point in the middle of September. On September 3, Leonidas Polk, leading Confederate troops from Tennessee to Columbus, Kentucky, after hearing that federal troops were about to occupy the bluffs above the Mississippi River town, violated Kentucky’s neutrality. Union commanders in southern Illinois quickly responded by occupying strategic points along the Ohio River, including Louisville. States’ Righters made a last ditch effort to salvage neutrality by holding a Peace Convention in Frankfort on September 10, but the gathering had little effect on the political and military crisis. The Unionists that dominated the state legislature instructed Magoffin to order the Confederates to leave the state, while allowing federal troops to stay. In Frankfort, citizens either chose sides or tried to avoid direct involvement in the war. Messages issued by three prominent Kentuckians conveyed the severity of the situation to citizens of Frankfort and other Kentucky communities. Simon B. Buckner, former commander of the State Guard and now a Confederate general, issued a proclamation to Kentuckians claiming that his troops were occupying Bowling Green in order to return the state to neutrality. In reply, General Robert Anderson, who had previously arrived in Frankfort to the delight of crowds of townspeople, informed Kentuckians that he was now in charge of driving the Confederates from Kentucky, Buckner’s proclamation notwithstanding. In support of Anderson’s announcement, Brig. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden ordered the State Guard companies under his command to meet at Louisville while encouraging the militia and Home Guard to organize at several central locations, including Frankfort. Kentucky was now encompassed by civil war and the outcome weighed heavily on the minds of the valley’s citizens.
Throughout the political maneuvering of the winter of 1860-61, Unionists in Corydon and Frankfort succeeded in harnessing the political support of their neighbors in their counties while advocating compromise. Neutrality allowed Kentuckians to reposition and prepare for the inevitable beginning of hostilities. Southern Indianans also took advantage of the tenuous peace to forge cross-border alliances, which they hoped would help the keep their communities safe. Border citizens used the summer of 1861 to prepare for the moment when neutrality would end. The citizens of Frankfort and Kentucky reacted to the political conflict that gripped the nation in similar ways. In spite of the differences between free and slave societies, both communities had a vital interest in maintaining peace, order, and prosperity for as long as possible. Leaders in the two communities avoided political extremes and attempted to garner as much support as possible without causing further controversy. However, political maneuvering was only part of the preparations among valley citizens to protect the stability and prosperity of their communities. In Corydon and Frankfort, residents also mobilized community resources for protection and, if necessary, war.
Chapter 3

“To Protect the Community”

In the Ohio River Valley, neutrality was the first casualty of war. Although the Kentucky state government insisted upon maintaining a neutral status, some citizens immediately began to undermine this concept by choosing allegiances. Neutrality was not a long-term strategy, but a delaying tactic that gave Unionist citizens enough time to galvanize support throughout the Ohio River Valley in preparation for the inevitable commencement of hostilities. For people with Unionists sentiment, this involved coordinating with loyal Hoosiers and Buckeyes to protect Kentucky from a possible Confederate invasion. Secessionists tried to confound the efforts of Unionists or in extreme cases some Kentuckians offered their service to the Confederate army. People demonstrated their sympathies throughout 1861. But after Confederate troops under Gen. Leonidas Polk occupied Columbus, Kentucky in early September, Union troops entered the state and Kentucky officially sided with the Union in September. local involvement in enlistment and preparations for war became more pronounced. Neutrality gave way to an upsurge in Unionism made possible by cooperation between Kentucky loyalists and their free state allies. As a result the Unionist elite in Frankfort and Corydon mobilized labor and capital to provide for both local defense and successful prosecution of the war. But this Unionist victory also created wartime divisions within border communities that threatened to upset the pre-war status quo, compounding the threat that military conflict posed to social stability.

Unionists in Corydon and Frankfort mobilized their local resources for the war effort using existing political and social relationships, but at the same time mobilization made these two communities vulnerable. Providing men, money, and material for the Union cause also disrupted the community’s political economy. The term “political economy” describes the class
divisions based on property ownership and control of labor in relation to participation in national and local political issues. This includes the mobilization of capital and resources in the light of the shifting political and military events. People’s decisions concerning demonstrations of allegiance and sympathy revolved around existing economic and social relationships within each community, while at the same time these choices compromised the existing social and economic balance. Local elites in Frankfort and Corydon labored to guarantee that citizens could aid the Union effort without causing an undue financial burden on the community. Although the elite interest in fostering stability seems magnanimous, an upheaval of the political economy could result in elites losing power.1

Along the middle border military and civilian mobilization involved careful contemplation of the war’s meaning and possible outcome. Neutrality postponed commitment for some, while for others the first year of the war offered opportunities to lobby for the cause that appeared to protect best their material and political interests. Throughout the Ohio River Valley, secession proved the most speculative prospect in nature and seemingly the most risky to support. James McPherson has aptly described southern secession as a “pre-emptive counterrevolution,” one aimed at preventing a reorganization of society along the principles espoused by the Republican Party.2 Although many border citizens had economic or ancestral connections to the South, they were not willing to risk everything they had to oppose a revolution that had not yet even occurred. Most residents of the Ohio River Valley considered secessionists to be as brash and as potentially destructive as the abolitionists; they preferred to take the moderate path.3 However McPherson posits that “neutrality was little different from secession,” citing the fact that Lincoln and some Kentucky Unionists considered it an affirmation of state sovereignty.4 David Allen Boyd, in his study of Kentucky politics during the first year
of the war, suggests that neutrality gave Unionists “the breathing space to consolidate themselves that Tennessee and Virginia lacked.”

Boyd makes a valuable observation, but more specifically neutrality gave Kentucky Unionists a window of opportunity to seek aid from their allies north of the river border. These Machiavellian loyalists considered neutrality to be a chance to help preserve the Union by keeping Kentucky from seceding. At the beginning of the war loyalty involved supporting the Union, although not necessarily enlisting in its armies. When war directly affected the valley in late 1861 and throughout 1862, defining loyalty became salient to both Union military authorities and local governments. Although before the war one could define a neighbor as loyal because he or she had not committed sedition or aided enemies, once war came to the valley, the measure of loyalty was clearly in the eye of the beholder. The opinions, sympathies, and ideas that citizens held became more important as both Unionists and secessionists struggled for control of the state through subtle maneuvering.

Kentucky’s neutrality dictated that residents of Frankfort, as well as Franklin County and the state as a whole, would experience military mobilization differently than in Indiana, where the state government pledged total support for the war. Despite neutrality, military organization began quickly in Kentucky largely because the state’s leaders had set it into motion even before the war had begun. Beriah Magoffin, elected governor in 1858, had convinced the Kentucky legislature to create the State Guard in 1859, shortly after John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. Indeed, as the Bell-Wright affair suggests, the specter of a seemingly ubiquitous and indomitable Underground Railroad combined with Brown’s ill-fated raid to spur Kentuckians’ support of a state-funded militia. As such, the majority of the State Guard’s officers and men were proslavery and after Fort Sumter many were sympathetic to the Confederacy. Indeed, some Louisville men were organizing military companies for Confederate service as early as
mid-April 1861. Kentucky’s armed neutrality concerned the state’s Unionists as much as it did observant northerners. Magoffin betrayed his own sentiments by turning a blind eye to Confederate recruiting efforts in his state, in effect a violation of neutrality.

Although no recruiting took place in Frankfort at that time, the Yeoman informed citizens in Franklin County where to meet to enlist. Indeed, by April 20, 1861, Blanton Duncan had organized a regiment at Louisville but sought to gather a total of 1,800 men before he headed south to receive weapons. Concluding that “abolition hordes” would invade Kentucky and the other slave states, Duncan informed Confederate officials that he wished to preempt such an event by joining the Confederate Army, thus securing an adequate supply of weapons. In spite of this claim, Duncan’s recruits headed to Virginia, where they were least able to protect their homes and property. This first wave of Bluegrass Confederates enlisted out of sympathy for Kentucky’s parent state of Virginia instead of acting to protect Kentucky from any supposed invasion.

Franklin County’s Unionists mobilized during neutrality by forming Home Guard companies meant to balance the perceived southern sympathies of the State Guard. Unionists’ gains in the state legislature gave legitimacy to the Home Guard, causing a competition for weapons and recognition between militia organizations. Unionists addressed this problem by receiving “covert” shipments of government-supplied armaments, dubbed “Lincoln Guns.” Unionist agents sent these rifles to their comrades in Kentucky through the river port cities of Cincinnati, Ohio and Jeffersonville, Indiana. Five thousand such rifles bolstered Kentucky loyalist’s efforts to counteract the efforts of secessionists like Duncan. The local press passionately debated this military aid. The Yeoman demanded that Unionists deliver these rifles to the State Arsenal while another newspaper alleged that Lincoln “armed one class of
Some Kentuckians openly opposed neutrality in favor of complete support for the Union,\footnote{The small abolitionist community in Cincinnati made the city an easy target for conspiratorial stories, because the border state loyalists were willing and able to offer material aid, not available from the Confederacy.} perhaps pro-secessionists were more concerned by the fact that similar aid was not arriving from the Confederacy, for Kentucky.\footnote{Perhaps pro-secessionists were more concerned by the fact that similar aid was not arriving from the Confederacy, for Kentucky.} Abolitionists had a noticeable advantage over the Confederates in Cincinnati, as the city was easier to fortify for defensive purposes than Frankfort.\footnote{Kentuckians in order to inaugurate a bloody civil war against another class of Kentuckians.} The pro-secessionist Louisville Courier and the pro-Lincoln Cincinnati Daily Commercial that during the following month bantered invasion threats back and forth between the two cities.

Kentuckians occupied several positions in the Buchanan administration, including serving as secretary of war, military officer. These Kentuckians shared the opinions of Louisville's Joseph Holt, who had escaped grave action in favor of unconditional allegiance to the Union.

Frankfort's citizens, including a number distributed in Franklin County, were apprehensive.\footnote{Secessionists in Frankfort kept abreast of reports of "Lincoln guns" arriving in their neighborhood.} Some Kentuckians openly opposed neutrality in favor of complete support for the Union,\footnote{Some Kentuckians openly opposed neutrality in favor of complete support for the Union,\footnote{Some Kentuckians openly opposed neutrality in favor of complete support for the Union,}}

advantage of the numbers of enemies living north of the river in order to gain political support, while Kentucky Confederates had no such benefactors. Nonetheless, States' Rights took advantage, because free border state Kentuckians were willing and able to offer material aid, not available from the Confederacy, for Kentucky. Abolitionists had a noticeable advantage over the Confederates in Cincinnati, as the city was easier to fortify for defensive purposes than Frankfort.
economic hardship. While in Washington D.C. serving as temporary secretary of war, Holt wrote an “open” letter to his friend and fellow Unionist Louisvillian James F. Speed on May 31, detailing why Kentucky should avoid secession and neutrality. The letter was printed in various regional newspapers and was distributed throughout the river valley, along with one of Holt’s speeches, in a separate publication. In the speech, Holt envisioned safety for his state in the Union, noting that as a member of the Confederacy “she would be a frontier state, and necessarily the victim of those border feuds and conflicts which have become proverbial in history alike for their fierceness and frequency.” Holt’s message resonated in southern Indiana as well, where Unionists in Corydon considered Holt one of Kentucky’s “many powerful and popular champions enlisted in the Union cause.”

Kentucky Unionists who were dissatisfied with neutrality needed only to look north of the river to overcome the limitations neutrality placed on overt acts of allegiance. The Ohio River provided a useful boundary between neutrality and Unionism, allowing Unionists to train, arm, and prepare for the defense of their state on the northern bank. During the summer of 1861, Louisvillian Lovell H. Rousseau established a recruiting and training camp on a stretch of riverside land at the mouth of Silver Creek between New Albany and Jeffersonville. On land belonging, ironically, to Blanton Duncan (who by this time had formed his regiment of Confederate Kentuckians and left for Virginia, an act which the Unionist was no doubt keenly aware), Rousseau named the camp after Joseph Holt. Indeed, Rousseau bypassed Kentucky’s neutrality by registering men for Union service in Louisville and then sending them to Indiana, where he “recruited” and drilled his troops. The U.S. Quartermaster in Jeffersonville supplied money, arms, and accoutrements to Rousseau’s men. Many Hoosiers soon found the camp and its occupants intriguing and worthy of a visit. Local merchants, too, were pleased to have the
Kentuckians among them and many Louisville sailmakers received contracts to manufacture tents for the camp’s recruits.

To Unionists in Frankfort, Camp Joe Holt was an example of how men from either side of the river would cooperate in an effort to protect the border from Confederate invasion without violating the state’s neutrality. Those in Frankfort who vehemently opposed Lincoln as well as all attempts to support war against the Confederacy probably agreed with the Yeoman’s assessment of Rousseau’s effort to avoid violating neutrality as “a most discreditable trick and evasion, which will not elevate its perpetrators or apologists in the estimation of an honest and betrayed people.” The editors reprinted a series of articles from the Louisville Journal that used the term “recruiting” in reference to Rousseau’s headquarters in Louisville. The anti-Lincoln faction criticized Rousseau’s efforts as being blatantly partisan and an act of war, while at once resenting Union claims that Kentuckians were committing treason by leaving the state to join the Confederacy. Unionist and Confederate sympathizers complained about one another’s efforts to contribute troops to the war, but the disagreements never went beyond accusations and empty threats. Kentuckians respected others’ choices to leave the state to serve, as long as their actions did not jeopardize neutrality and peace in their home state.

During Kentucky’s period of neutrality, Frankfort’s citizens also found ways to convey their sentiments without exacerbating political divisions in their community. In early May owners of many residences and businesses, including Straus’s clothing store, Mrs. Shindlebower’s millinery, and the newspaper offices of the Commonwealth, bedecked them with American flags to show open affection for the Union. In June a crowd of men, women, and children gathered at the Frankfort home of merchant Edgar Keenon to see the raising of a
“mammoth flag.” A group of Frankfort women spent the previous week making the flag, which measured ten feet by thirty feet. The festivities included speeches and music provided by a brass band. Franklin County’s elite sponsored several similar events that summer, including a barbecue held at Julian’s Woods. The men who sponsored and spoke at these events sought political power and local prestige, and they often encouraged women to attend, so as to provide a community atmosphere of cohesion and inclusion. But these Unionists refrained from any type of military reviews, even though these types of displays were commonly associated with patriotic rallies in the past. Franklin County’s States’ Righters would interpret such actions as a violation of neutrality, if not outright evidence of an abolitionist conspiracy. Many local Unionists spent the five months following Fort Sumter trying to balance the concepts of neutrality and loyalty to the Union. Frankfort’s merchants had much at stake and did not want to risk demonstrating bias towards one side or the other.

The military campaigns of October and September 1861 ended the covert military preparations and ambiguous signs of allegiance that characterized neutrality. Unionists openly espoused and encouraged enlistment, while Confederate recruits made their way south. But even with Kentucky officially in the Union, the majority of military-age white males chose to follow a policy of individual neutrality, despite official neutrality having failed. Out of 2,013 Franklin County men old enough either to serve or to pass themselves off as eligible, a meager 9.4 percent enlisted in the Confederate Army while just 12.5 percent entered Federal service. This meant that roughly seventy-eight percent of the county’s men chose to avoid committing to either cause, although some may have opted for short terms in state service. Franklin County had a higher percentage than the overall state of age-appropriate men who stayed home. This dearth of military volunteers in Frankfort supports William Freehling’s assessment of Kentucky as being
“last among southern states in percentage of whites who fought for the Confederacy and first in percentage of whites who fought for no one.”20 The majority of military-age men realized that service jeopardized the very material and political interests they wanted to protect, not to mention their lives. These men may have possessed strong convictions for one side or the other, but conviction alone could not provoke them to leave farms, jobs, family, and property. According to Kentucky law, counties had to list all military age men not in government service among their enrolled militia. The enrolled militia elected officers, but they held no obligation to train regularly or to serve other than when called upon by the governor. Staying home did not necessarily mean escaping military duty, although it did guarantee that service would be brief and performed only when invading forces threatened the community.

Men who fought for the Confederacy believed that opposing the Republican-led government would prove worth the risk. Politics influenced men’s opinions about the necessity of war, but this alone did not compel them to risk life and limb for the Confederacy while their state was still in the Union. Kentucky Confederates had a complex range of motives that hinged upon gender and class. James McPherson’s extensive study of soldiers’ letters reveals that many Confederates shared a sense of white entitlement and superiority, otherwise known as “Herrenvolk democracy.”21 According to this view, slavery was not simply a labor system but part of a racial hierarchy that elevated the status of white men, regardless of class. White men considered themselves to be living in an egalitarian society, even though that society was based on racial inequality,22 explaining why southerners of various backgrounds joined the Confederacy but not assessing the unique situation of border society. In southern Indiana and central Kentucky, many men’s opinions survive to indicate the existence of Herrenvolk democracy, but they did not condone secession. Race was an important social dynamic in river
valley communities, but it does not explain why Franklin County men fought for the Confederacy. During the first year of the war, young Kentucky men who were committed to white supremacy had as much reason to believe their privileged status would be protected within the Union as not. White men concerned about the future of their society had to choose between protecting their vision of democracy inside or outside of the Union.

In contrast, men who sympathized with the Confederacy but who stayed home could expect, at least theoretically, protection from reprisal, legal or otherwise. In September 1861, as neutrality came to an end, the Kentucky legislature passed a resolution vowing to protect the rights of Kentuckians regardless of their sympathies. This resolution forbade politically-motivated arrests and explicitly ordered “that no citizen's property shall be taken or confiscated because of such opinions, nor shall any slave be set free by any military commander.”

The legislature was aware of John C. Frémont’s attempt to free the slaves of disloyal Missourians, but Lincoln ordered Frémont to reverse the measure for fear of upsetting Kentucky slaveholders. Regardless, Kentuckians were still concerned that a Union military presence in their state could result in a similar measure. Such protection, of course, did not apply to men who left Kentucky for the Confederacy. Indeed, in November 1861, the Federal District Court in Frankfort indicted thirty-two Kentuckians, mostly elites, who went to the South, including John C. Breckinridge, Humphrey Marshall, and John Hunt Morgan. Lesser-known secessionists had reason to be concerned as well. A month earlier, the legislature approved an act permitting the courts to bring felony charges against any citizen who invaded the state and misdemeanor charges against anyone who enlisted or encouraged enlistment in the Confederate army. Franklin County Confederates could leave the state without much problem. Returning, however, could prove perilous.
Kentucky men willing to go to war to bring their state into the Confederacy were among a minority of residents, often believing that they had too much at stake to lobby for their cause within the context of state law. In the minds of many Confederate Kentuckians, Lincoln was operating outside of the law by sending troops into Kentucky and they believed that they could respond by supporting the Confederacy. These secessionists agreed with George W. Johnson, a prominent Scott County resident who characterized the Lincoln administration as “an organized system of unconstitutional aggression against [Kentuckians’] domestic peace and slave property.” In November, 1861, Johnson was among a number of pro-Confederate Kentuckians who met in Russellville and formed a provisional government of Kentucky, one they declared independent of the United States. The provisional government entered the Confederacy the following month, with Johnson as governor. Johnson’s own interest in the continuance of slavery and southern trade emanated from his ownership of a thousand-acre cotton plantation in Arkansas, a business enterprise he stood to lose if Kentucky did not secede. If he did not act he would soon find his property within Confederate territory and liable to confiscation by the Confederate government. Young men not yet established as property owners or businessmen were preoccupied with what their futures would be like in a free labor society. The historian Amy Murrell’s study of border state youths who fought for the Confederacy indicates that a majority of these young men believed secession was the best way to protect slavery. Although their fathers often disagreed with them, they had grown up in a slave society and saw uncertainty and upheaval in the transition from slavery to free labor. As such, economic ties to slavery, rather than slaveholding alone, motivated Kentucky Confederates like John Hunt Morgan of Lexington. Approximately one-quarter of all Franklin Countians who bore arms for the Confederacy served under John Hunt Morgan until the military authorities reassigned their
regiment, the 9th Kentucky Cavalry. Unlike Blanton Duncan’s recruits who served in Virginia regiments, Franklin County men who rode with Morgan shared his desire to wage war against the Kentucky Unionists who opposed secession.

The circumstances of two of Morgan’s men who grew up in Franklin County suggest the connection between slavery and Confederate enlistment. Dr. John A. Lewis, who grew up on Belleair Farm near Frankfort, wrote in 1910 that his service with Morgan’s cavalry was a transition to manhood. Lewis and his brother William both joined the 9th Kentucky Cavalry, even though their father, Cadwallader Lewis, did not approve. However, John did not mention that his father, a Baptist minister from Virginia, owned eight slaves in 1860. While Lewis’s desire to protect his family’s economic status may have been combined with a desire to prove his manhood, seventeen-year-old Alexander W. Macklin had much more at stake. His father, A.W. Macklin, owned one of Frankfort’s two pork-packing plants, a sizeable amount of property and real estate, and seventy-six slaves, who worked in the packing plants. The elder Macklin was already established in the community and used his slaves to run his farm and pork operation. The switch to wage labor might have lowered his profits, but it would not destroy his business. Alexander, however, faced losing a large portion of his inheritance if the war resulted in emancipation. Notably, that eighteen of the Macklin slaves were children ten years or younger and therefore constituted an investment Alexander likely stood to inherit.

Not everyone with pro-Confederate sympathies retained their opinions throughout the whole war. Some men changed their minds and returned home. Some even reconsidered their allegiances, a dangerous decision given that ex-Confederates faced resentment and scorn from their Unionist neighbors, if not legal repercussions and possible imprisonment. Indeed, the case of Silas Hodges suggests that federal service also carried a sort of de facto pledge of
loyalty that could shield the volunteer and his family from Unionist accusations and retribution. Hodges returned to Frankfort roughly a year after leaving the state with Blanton Duncan’s Confederate recruits. When he attempted to join a Union cavalry company in order to avoid arrest, a Frankfort citizen recognized Hodges and threatened to report him to the local authorities. Desperate to avoid prosecution, Hodges shot and mortally wounded the citizen. A Frankfort deputy soon arrested the hapless Confederate deserter, who faced a murder charge as well as, potentially, another for committing treason to his state.33

As with those who chose Confederate service, Union enlistment reflected a concern for status and future prospects. Indeed, the case of John Marshall Harlan and his father James Harlan, both of Frankfort, offers a glimpse into the process of enlistment and the difficulties for many in deciding their loyalties. At the beginning of the secession crisis, the younger Harlan was twenty-seven years old and practicing law in Louisville. Harlan graduated from Centre College in 1850, going on to earn his law degree at Transylvania University two years later. Dabbling in politics, John Marshall Harlan was a Whig, who supported the Know-Nothings in the 1850s after the Whigs crumbled under the pressure of the debate over slavery. The elder Harlan, a successful lawyer and slaveholder, encouraged his son to support the Union, summoning him home in May to participate in the debates at the Capitol. The Harlans supported John Bell during the 1860 election but favored the ensuing war to preserve the Union, although they vehemently opposed emancipation.34 During the campaign of September 1861, John Marshall Harlan was captain of a company of Louisville Home Guard, the “Crittenden Union Zouaves.” When Harlan returned from his brief militia service, he expressed to his wife, Malvina, a desire to join the army. Malvina, a native of Evansville, Indiana, who married Harlan in 1856, later remembered reluctantly advising him
to act as if he did not have a family. In truth, Harlan’s decision, and Malvina’s reaction, may have been more complex.35 Harlan immediately began recruiting for the 10th Kentucky Infantry, which he commanded until he resigned upon his father’s death in 1863. In his recruiting letter to the Commonwealth, Harlan appealed to the “enlightened self-interest” of his fellow Kentuckians, reminding them that “if our enemies triumph, all our trades, all our professions, all our avocations of whatever character, all our possessions of every description, become valueless.”36

The topmost layer of Frankfort’s social stratum, including those who directed military preparations, also coordinated civilian wartime activities, including women’s. The local Unionist newspaper was quick to point out the need for a ladies’ aid organization. The Commonwealth suggested that “while the fathers and sons rally to defend the state, the mothers and sisters can contribute their aid in a way that will prove highly acceptable.” The article noted that the ladies, once organized, should enlist the aid of a physician to learn how to properly prepare “lint, bandages, and other articles so necessary to the comfort of wounded soldiers.”37 The following day, local women held a meeting in order to carry out the newspaper’s proposition.38 The Union men of Frankfort supported this type of women’s participation, believing it consistent with the feminine role of domesticity. This tenant required that women act within their duties as mothers and wives, providing comfort, aid, and support. Still, some of the young women in Frankfort wanted a more active role in protecting their town and therefore started a militia company. Prominent Unionists felt this effort was more worthy of mockery than praise. While admitting the undertaking was patriotic, the editors of the Commonwealth remarked sarcastically, “dear young feminine warriors ‘you must not go away from here and leave our homes defenseless.’”39
In Frankfort, predominantly upper-class Unionist women participated in organizations like the “ladies society for the benefit of the soldiers.” This particular group made requests for “socks, gloves, yarn and anything in the form of clothing” in order to provide for the comfort of soldiers. Women also took advantage of opportunities to offer hospitality to soldiers nearby, and on one such occasion a group of ladies made a thanksgiving dinner for a few companies of recruits from Lexington on their way to Louisville. The soldiers returned the empty baskets along with a note thanking the women for the dinner and expressing “hop[e] that our valor may prove worthy the kindness shown us.” The Frankfort Ladies Aid Society also sponsored public events such as tableaus (silent depictions of famous scenes from literature and history) and exhibitions. The proceeds from these events benefited sick and wounded soldiers, while local women also used these methods to raise money for Frankfort’s poor during the winter months. On at least one occasion the editors of the Commonwealth requested that the ladies of Frankfort raise additional money for the poor by reminding them “you like to be doing good works, it is your sphere.” Maintaining the status quo was a responsibility that crossed gender lines. Men participated in these fundraisers by appearing in the tableaus, delivering lectures, paying admission to attend, and urging others to attend. Moreover, charity work took on special meaning during the war because the problems common to a small community, such as poverty, sickness, and labor shortages, were increased by the absence of family members, the needs of soldiers in nearby camps or hospitals, and the danger of enemy raids.

The Union war effort was not complete without soldiers, which required that the elite entice the farmers, laborers, and craftsmen of Franklin County to enlist. The son of an influential Frankfort Lawyer, Daniel W. Lindsey, organized the 22nd Kentucky Infantry,
composed primarily of men from Franklin and surrounding counties. Recruiting efforts for Lindsey’s regiment included a public gathering marked by the presentation of a flag that the ladies of Frankfort had made and speeches from local celebrities, such as Leslie Combs, a former U.S. Army general and a veteran of the War of 1812. Combs, now the clerk of the county’s court of appeals, personified Kentucky’s military legacy and past service to the Union. These elite Unionists reaffirmed the structure and stability of their communities even as the absence of the town’s young men threatened them. The Unionist elite stimulated recruiting by emphasizing civic duty and a sense of belonging instead of fomenting internal divisions and possible danger.

The pageantry and hype of recruiting was not enough to sway young men concerned about their financial well-being, which caused some potential recruits to weigh the benefits of serving under local benefactors and employers with providing for loved ones. Many of Frankfort’s volunteers enlisted in nine- or twelve-month service so that they could achieve recognition while returning home fairly quickly. Like their Confederate counterparts, Union volunteers in Franklin County often joined units led by prominent citizens they knew and trusted. As he considered joining Frankfort banker Bob Taylor’s company of nine-month men, Edward Church asked his uncle, William Bodley, for advice on the matter and said of Taylor, “I would rather go under him than anyone else.” Financial issues, however, played a significant role in Church’s plans. He was working for Leslie Combs at the county clerk’s office, but complained that Combs owed him $150 and was not likely to pay it quickly. Bodley directed Church to stay in Frankfort and study for the ministry instead of enlisting. Satisfied with his uncle’s advice, Church eventually concluded that he did not need to enlist in order to help support his mother and younger brother. He informed his uncle “I think we
can manage to get along with the dividend on Ma’s bank stock and what I can get from Genl. Combs and in other ways.”

Church did not enlist, and remained in Frankfort for the entire war.

While Frankfort’s secessionists were not able to use public forums like newspaper announcements and community events to garner support for their cause, they made their allegiances and opinions well known to their neighbors. They expressed their desire for secession and often flew Confederate flags and displayed secessionist badges. Despite these overt signs of sympathy, women with Confederate sympathies secretly contributed their labor to the cause. Because they could not send items outside of Union territory, these women eventually demonstrated their commitment to secession by sending clothing and other goods to Confederate prisoners. This effort involved contacting neighbors or family members in Union prisons and finding out what the men needed. Unionists quickly surmised that those in favor of peace were actually secessionists who were willing to aid the Confederacy at first opportunity, regardless of their claims of loyalty. In true democratic fashion, the majority determined whether a citizen was loyal or not. One individual angrily concluded, “a man may say he is no thief, but the unanimous belief and knowledge of the whole community overcome his declaration.”

Secessionists in Frankfort spent most of the war keeping to themselves and avoiding the ostentatious Unionist displays.

The shift to more outward signs of allegiance was a common reaction to Unionist political victories and the inception of military campaigns within the state. This escalation of political and martial expression was not exclusive to Kentucky communities. Although neutrality dictated that initial mobilization in Kentucky be subtle, preparations for war continued nonetheless. In Indiana, however, the state government’s open support for the
Union war effort allowed citizens to participate equally openly. In Corydon, however, residents recognized a similar need to galvanize support for the war effort as that which existed in Frankfort despite mobilization’s disruption to the stability of the community. Sending men off to war created problems for families, employers, and even local government, but refraining from encouraging volunteers had even worse results. Because Indiana vowed complete support for the Union from the very beginning of the war, any sign of reticence appeared as disloyalty. Republicans in central and northern Indiana, where residents hailed more regularly from the northern states, welcomed the opportunity to brand their southern Indiana opponents and their southern-born constituents as sympathetic to the Confederacy. Hoosiers with southern roots were not entirely sympathetic towards secession, but they tended to emphasize solidarity with Kentucky and sectional compromise more than their statesmen to the north.46

Early preparations for war in Harrison County indicate an awareness of the need to balance both Kentucky’s commitment to neutrality and the recognition of Indiana’s position in the Union. Shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter, Walther Q. Gresham, the county’s representative in the state legislature, introduced a militia bill that passed despite Democrat opposition. Gresham’s desire to reorganize Indiana’s inadequate militia emanated from his concern for the safety of his constituents living along the border.47 The law gave citizens the right to form volunteer military companies as part of the newly organized state militia known as the Indiana Legion. The counties that raised companies were predominantly located in the southern portion of the state, especially along the river border. The act distinguished between the “active” branches of the militia, consisting of enrolled, uniformed, trained, and state-
equipped troops of the Indiana Legion, and the “sedentary” militia, which was simply a list of military-aged males eligible for state service.\textsuperscript{48}

Hoosiers serving in the Indiana Legion did so in the larger context of state and national participation in the war. Members of the existing militia companies in southern Indiana disbanded and reorganized for service with the state organization. Besides receiving state funding, these companies offered men military training and prestige, and thus the sense of manhood and martial pride of volunteering, without robbing them of the economic security of staying home. It did not, however, provide an exemption from the draft. If the county did not meet its enlistment quota, members of the Legion were susceptible to conscription, thus diminishing the border defenses. One of the first companies so raised named itself the “Ellsworth Rifles,” after the Union’s first “martyr,” Colonel Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth of the Eleventh New York Fire Zouaves, killed in Alexandria, Virginia, on May 24 for removing a secession flag from the proprietor’s hotel. The \textit{Democrat} wished the company well, adding “we hope it will not meet the fate of its unfortunate namesake, who fell in his first engagement.”\textsuperscript{49}

Throughout the summer, the men of Harrison County organized themselves under the militia law, and by September the county boasted ten companies that comprised the Sixth Regiment of the Indiana Legion.\textsuperscript{50}

The Legion provided a degree of security for border counties by creating better trained and equipped militia companies to serve in time of emergency, at least theoretically. In truth, the state had problems obtaining adequate weapons in sufficient quantity. Harrison County’s ten Legion companies had an average membership of some twenty-eight men. By January 1862, only the Ellsworth Rifles boasted modern .58-caliber Springfield rifled muskets; the state provided the remainder with either the older .69-caliber, smoothbore
Springfields or nothing at all.\textsuperscript{51} The scarcity of suitable weapons diminished the Legion’s effectiveness in the event of invasion, but it did not necessarily hamper the organization and development of individual companies. The \textit{Ledger} urged neighboring Floyd County’s unarmed Legion companies to “drill with ordinary rifles, shot guns, flintlock muskets, or anything they can get hold of.”\textsuperscript{52} Although Governor Morton was committed to arming the Legion and creating a functioning state military organization, international diplomacy helped to run his efforts aground. In order to remain strictly neutral, the British government banned the exportation of weaponry to the Union and Confederacy, thus barring the shipment of 3,500 Enfield rifles purchased by Indiana that had already been loaded aboard a steamer when British officials detained the vessel in port.\textsuperscript{53} Morton was forced to acquire five thousand less-desirable Austrian rifles for use by the state troops. In light of this setback, Morton’s southern Indiana constituents were nonetheless relieved that their governor was working to “put the border counties on a war footing.”\textsuperscript{54}

Citizens considered volunteering to be an extension of the local community, indicating dedication to the Union as well as demonstrating participation in the larger regional community. That summer’s recruiting fervor soon gripped the county, and local men raised companies and sought enlistment in federal regiments. In June, the Anderson Guards became part of the Seventeenth Indiana Volunteers and by August the regiment was stationed in Virginia. The following month James D. Irvin raised a company of cavalry for the 3rd Indiana Cavalry, leaving his Corydon carpentry business to serve as its captain.\textsuperscript{55} Recruiting did not necessarily go smoothly. An article in the \textit{Corydon Democrat} warned citizens of that there were “gentlemen with red stripes on their breeches and a military cap upon their heads in our country lately for the purpose of recruiting our men.” These
recruiters were allegedly filing fraudulent rosters in order to obtain commissions, thereby preventing anyone else from organizing companies for that regiment. Editor Simeon Wolfe urged those eager to enlist to join only those companies Harrison County men were organizing. The problem was not whether or not enlistments would count towards the county’s quota, but instead revolved around the issue of community reputation. This controversy culminated in a letter to the Indianapolis Journal complaining that the newspaper gave no credit to Harrison County for furnishing men to Indiana Regiments.

In addition to volunteering, various public gatherings and displays provided an outlet for men to show Union sentiment while protecting their families and homes along the border. During the first year of the war, citizens incorporated militia companies into Union meetings like the one near White Cottage in early June that featured speeches by Simeon K. Wolfe and Judge William Porter. On the Fourth of July, the people of Corydon celebrated in the usual fashion, with picnics, speeches, and patriotic songs. The festivities were devoid of military displays, instead favoring general expressions of patriotism. Similar celebrations took place throughout the county, including a barbecue and dance held at Laconia, along the river just east of Mauckport. Because many of the six hundred people in attendance were from the Kentucky side of the river, the editor of the Democrat declared that “both sides of the ‘border’ is on the 4th of July side of the question.” Citizens in search of a more than an ambiguous demonstration of loyalty gathered six miles east of Corydon, at Pfrimmer’s Grove. There the atmosphere adopted a martial tone, as several militia companies drilled for the benefit of spectators. Among them were the “active” companies like the Ellsworth Rifles and the Carter Invincibles, as well as “sedentary” companies such as the Raccoon Rangers.
Local gatherings that routinely spanned the river were important to the men and women of the river border because they emphasized connections between the communities along the river and promised continuation of good relationships. This approach transcended sectional division and concentrated on maintaining peace and stability. The people of Harrison County wanted to protect themselves and their property without disrupting relationships with clients, business owners, relatives, and friends south of the river, just as Kentucky Unionists living nearby appreciated the need to continue good relations with their friends north of the river. In mid-July, some citizens of Meade County invited their Hoosier neighbors to attend a Union meeting at Aydelott’s Landing across the river from New Amsterdam. The *Democrat* urged people to make a good showing, reminding them that “these border meetings are of the utmost importance in order to preserve the unbroken friendship of the people of the two states between whom there is no quarrel.”59 The meeting went well, and the Hoosier attendees left feeling confident that their Kentucky brethren would prevail at the county elections in August.

Hoosiers were eager to reinforce mutually beneficial relationships with their Kentucky neighbors because they were well aware of the potential for violence along the border. While Unionists in Harrison County emphasized their good relationship with Unionists in Meade County, both groups recognized that those among them sympathized with the Confederacy. While secessionists were rare in southern Indiana, they were indeed present; however, far more cases of sympathy with the Confederacy occurred than actual enlistment. At least one former Harrison County resident, Nathan C. Taylor, who had moved to Brandenburg, Kentucky, left his wife in order to join the Confederate Army. She returned to her parents’ home in Harrison County; her husband never returned.60 Moreover, there
were many proslavery citizens who, like some residents of Franklin County, suspected an abolitionist conspiracy. Although the Union meetings were intended to hold these forces in check, their organizers knew that they could not hope to create a political consensus. In order to keep the peace, Hoosiers downplayed any possible divisions, including the line between slavery and freedom. To that end, men from Corydon caught two fugitive slaves in late June and returned them to their owners across the river.61

The uncertainties of war forced border residents to scrutinize everyone around them more vigilantly, triggering unrelated incidents with neighbors to take on sectional overtones. When a party of hunters from New Albany camped near Stewart’s Landing in Harrison County after spending a short time on the Kentucky side of the river, locals concluded that the unwitting sportsmen were secessionist raiders and armed themselves and surrounded the camp during the night.62 In Brandenburg, Kentucky, some people held similar suspicions about their neighbors north of the river. While the Unionists in Meade County were attending meetings with Harrison Countians, others organized a company of cavalry for the purpose of defending against them. A.J. Alexander wrote to Beriah Magoffin to procure the proper authorization needed to muster a cavalry company into state service. Alexander boasted that his company was made up of prominent citizens, including the county’s former representative to the state legislature. He reminded the governor that “our county is immediately on the border and one of the most exposed and has been threatened heretofore with invasion (during the Bell incitements.)” After mentioning that his brother was a good friend of the governor’s, Alexander reiterated his request for firearms by specifying that “we want good arms.”63 Alexander carefully noted the Bell-Wright Affair in parenthesis as a way to emphasize the need for preparation, although the incident ended peacefully. Regardless of
which side of the river one lived on, a common conclusion was that armed men bent on
vengeance had crossed its expanse in the recent past and could easily do so again.

Military mobilization unquestionably took place under a cloud of uncertainty, given that
many Harrison County men did not know whether joining the fight in Virginia or waiting for war
to erupt on their southern border would best serve their interests. The success of Unionists
during the August elections calmed fears that Kentucky would enter the Confederacy. As they
would soon find, some Corydon citizens were grossly optimistic when concluding that the
political victories in Kentucky, as one resident wrote, brought “peace to the great heart of the
nation bordering upon her territory for near seven hundred miles.”

Mobilization in Harrison County entered a second phase of development in
September 1861 when it became obvious that the Unionist and secessionist factions in
Kentucky were aligning for a confrontation. In an article on the subject, Wolfe and his
associates at the Democrat noted the likelihood of civil war engulfing the state of Kentucky.
Furthermore, another article made readers aware of their precarious position on the border,
remarking that “if a civil war shall be inaugurated in Kentucky, it will require the utmost
prudence on the part of the people on both sides of the river to maintain peace and quiet.”
Wolfe feared a series of “border raids” perpetuated by “irresponsible persons who have no
interest in the peace and welfare of the community.” The people of Corydon and Harrison
County were keenly aware that guerrilla warfare could easily extend across the Ohio River.

The rallies and gatherings of the previous summer, emphasizing peace and harmony
along the border, were replaced by uneasiness and conspicuous preparations for war. Clearly,
the Ohio River was essential to the defense of both Kentucky and Indiana. However, the
advantage of moving men, equipment, and supplies across and down the river by steamboat also
created problems. The enemy, especially raiders, could fire on passing boats from strongholds along the river or cross into Indiana by capturing one or more of these craft. In response to this problem, Governor Morton planned to build three gunboats for river defense and a telegraph line running from New Albany to Mt. Vernon. Two of the gunboats would patrol the river below the Falls of the Ohio and the other above. Proponents of the plan believed that defenders could summon the boats by telegraph to where the rebels were crossing. Morton also ordered the Legion to start work on fortifications in the southeast corner of Harrison County at a location at the mouth of the Salt River across from the town of West Point, Kentucky. By late November, the troops had finished and a Legion company from New Albany occupied the works.

The end of neutrality caused tensions to flare along the Ohio River border, as pro-secessionist citizens realized that their Unionist neighbors had a distinct advantage. In late October, citizens of Harrison County learned of a possible secessionist attack on Brandenburg and that Judge Spencer and the local Unionists needed assistance. Col. Lewis Jordan of the Indiana Legion quickly called out the Ellsworth Rifles and the Spencer Guards and marched the group to Mauckport, where Jordan sent two men to Brandenburg to assess the situation. They learned that several days earlier two or three hundred secessionist sympathizers in Meade County had armed themselves. These men assumed that the presence of a Federal recruiting detail in Brandenburg would lead to the arrest of pro-Confederate citizens. A detachment of Col. Stephen Burbridge’s Kentucky Cavalry was in town responding to the secessionist menace when the Legion’s scouts got there. Its commanding officer, Capt. Phelps, assured local secessionists that no arrests would take place and the group agreed to disband. In truth, Jordan and the Legion companies did not have the authority to cross the river without direct orders from Gov. Morton or Gen. William T. Sherman, who had replaced Robert Anderson as the commander of the
Department of Kentucky earlier in the month. The Legion companies decided not to cross the river without official sanction and returned to Corydon the following day.  

The threat of armed secessionists in Meade County was not the only danger confronting citizens of a region with strong ties to Kentucky. Many area farmers and businessmen did business with Kentuckians on a regular basis before and after the war began. They realized their vulnerability when Union authorities arrested Corydon hotel owner Jacob Kintner, who allegedly sold several mules the previous summer from farm near the river to a Kentuckian, who in turn sold them to the Confederate Army. Simeon K. Wolfe wrote a lengthy editorial in the *Democrat* on the topic, noting that Kintner claimed to be both loyal and innocent. Wolfe used the occasion to address the issue of “due process,” noting that the officers most likely took Kintner to Fort Lafayette without giving him the opportunity to face his accusers in court. The editor understood the need for martial law in disloyal areas, but he complained that “in loyal Indiana where there is no question that a man could be fairly tried and convicted if guilty of treason, we must solemnly protest against such proceedings as an insult and an indignity to the state.” Regardless of whether Kintner was innocent or not, Wolfe argued that the seizure was a violation of the man’s constitutional rights. Wolfe used Kintner’s plight as a platform to attack his Republican opponents who were willing to reinterpret the Constitution in time of emergency. The unity of purpose that Democrats and Republicans in southern Indiana had earlier espoused during mobilization was slowly eroding. Democrats scrutinized the Republican Party’s conduct of the war and Wolfe would be the first to point out any “disgrace to our boasted free institutions calculated to bring our government into disrepute.”
Once Corydon’s Unionists realized that others questioned their community’s loyalty, prominent citizens took steps to reaffirm Corydon’s connection to the war effort. Military service was a political issue; it demonstrated whether or not a particular community was showing proper allegiance to the state and national government. Many of Corydon’s prominent Republicans volunteered in order to reinforce their status in the community and further their political aspirations. By pushing the Confederates out of Kentucky and Tennessee, they could ensure that their homes, property, and families were safe, as well as justify the war as well as the Republican Party. Enlistment also offered southern Indianans an opportunity to reunite the Union and solidify commercial connections with the South while proving that this relationship did not make them sympathetic to secession.

Once neutrality had ended in Kentucky, Corydon’s elite renewed efforts to encourage further enlistment and to obtain commissions for their friends and business partners. Governor Morton had shown consistent disregard for Harrison County in awarding commissions, perhaps because he had a number of political rivals from that area. While Walter Q. Gresham was serving in the state legislature, he consistently opposed Morton’s policies, even though both men were Republicans. This was largely due to Gresham’s adherence to the interests of his border constituency who had resisted Morton’s attempts to prohibit trade with Kentucky at the beginning to the war. Continued lobbying on behalf of the Corydon lawyer finally paid off when the Governor reluctantly commissioned Gresham a lieutenant colonel and assigned him to a field command with the 38th Indiana. Gresham’s cosmopolitan benefactors, including lawyer/merchants Benjamin P. Douglass and Thomas C. Slaughter, and Judge William A. Porter (Gresham’s mentor and former law partner), showed their adulation by sending Gresham a finely crafted officer’s sword. The men stated that they had “no hesitation in confiding the honor of
your native county to your keeping.” They knew that as a Republican, Gresham’s service was evidence of Harrison County’s loyalty to the Union, and by publicly acknowledging him, they demonstrated their own “de facto” loyalty.70

Gresham and the other local officers and men in the 38th reflected Harrison County’s commitment to ending the war and reestablishing economic and social harmony to the Ohio Valley. Yet several prominent Harrison Countians were not satisfied with sending their recruits to serve in regiments officered by men from nearby counties and continued to insist that the Governor allow Gresham to raise and command his own regiment. Morton finally acquiesced, but Gresham’s promotion to colonel came at a literal price. Gresham’s resigned from the 38th Indiana only to discover that the organization of his regiment, the 53rd, was postponed and that he would have to pay $2,500 to cover the recruitment and other expenses. Corydon’s Republican elite would not allow Morton to prevent Harrison County from having its own regiment. Corydon merchants Thomas Slaughter, Samuel J. Wright, and a few others helped pay the cost of raising the regiment, which entered service in February 1862. Morton also allowed an officer forming another regiment to recruit in Corydon and New Albany in a vindictive bid to undermine Gresham’s efforts to fill the ranks of the 53rd. When this failed, the governor assigned the regiment to guard duty in Indianapolis until, at Gresham’s insistence, the Fifty-third left for Tennessee in mid-March.71

Recruiting for Federal service continued throughout the second year of the war, although volunteers often required additional incentive. By October 1862, the county had contributed 1,139 volunteers; a little less than a third of white military-age males, including two companies raised for the 81st Indiana Infantry in early August.72 Benjamin P. Douglass and Samuel J. Wright helped encourage enlistment in these two companies at a “war
meeting” in Corydon during the previous month. During the proceedings the two merchants encouraged their neighbors to contribute money to provide for the families of volunteers. By this time all of the young men eager to prove themselves and seek adventure were already in Virginia, Kentucky, or Tennessee. The remaining men would be more likely to enlist if they knew their families would not suffer financially while they were gone. The wealthier members of the community provided for the security of volunteers’ families, while in turn the volunteers were helping keep the community safe by pushing Confederate troops out of Kentucky. The two thousand or so men who remained behind were sedentary militia, although as in the case of enrolled militia in Franklin County this was little more than a formality. These men could be called upon to defend the state, but they were not in the same position as the members of the Legion who the governor routinely called up for training, guard duty, or during times of military necessity.

Just as the Union men of Corydon raised or joined Legion companies, sought service in federal regiments, or congratulated those among them who did, young women in Corydon felt a similar responsibility to contribute to the defense of their community. According to their constitution, the young ladies of the “Scott Gayes” formed their own military company “to protect the community against any depredations or acts which might be committed by such hostile forces or lawless individuals.” The company was open to single women aged fourteen years or older and, like the men’s militia and volunteer companies, it elected its own officers. Besides holding regular meetings, the company drilled and made plans to hold a reception for the Anderson Guards when they returned from Indianapolis. The Scott Gayes seem to have disbanded in May 1861, after existing for about a month. Among the members were the three Porter sisters, daughters of “Judge” William Porter, and Sallie Kintner, whose father was Jacob
Kintner, and merchant Thomas Slaughter’s daughter, Hattie. The company attracted the attention, if condescendingly, of newspapers in both New Albany and Corydon. The *Democrat* poked fun at the ladies, insinuating that their objective was not patriotism but matrimony and lampooning the thought that women could serve their country militarily. “They are supposed to be always ready for engagement and possess the love of all who are in favor of the Union,” its editors joked. The Scott Gayes was in fact a functional organization. Just as the Legion companies served as preliminary training for men bound for federal service, many of the young women who joined the company later participated in the local ladies’ aid society.

While some of the women of Corydon were eager to demonstrate their support for the Union and the men who enlisted to protect it, others were torn by family conflicts over loyalties. Matilda Gresham, for example, was not pleased by her husband’s efforts to enter military service in the federal army. She did not share her husband’s moral and political commitment to the war, stating bluntly that as a native of Kentucky she would remain neutral. The war was particularly difficult for Matilda, who was caught between the conflicting allegiances of her husband and father. Her father, Thomas McGrain, a retired Louisville businessman and an avowed secessionist, harangued his daughter by claiming that southerners were superior to northerners and would easily win the war. McGrain claimed that he did not wish to “become a Union man and make lots of money as an army contractor.” Neither could he keep his son-in-law or his adopted son, Daniel G. Griffin, out of the Union army.

As was the case in Frankfort, civilian participation in the war effort in Corydon began with newspaper announcements and public requests for action. In late 1861 Henry Jordan, Captain of the Anderson Guards, notified citizens that the local men in his company were in need of warm clothing. A group of women responded by raising money to buy warm socks,
shirts, and mittens for men whose mothers or sisters could not provide these items. Simeon K. Wolfe encouraged citizens to make sure the county’s soldiers would receive proper clothing. He reminded them that such work was not charity and stated that providing for soldiers “is a duty which we owe them and which we know will be freely paid.” At least where border communities were concerned, civilian activities and military service were not separate entities. Instead the community participated in the war along established gender lines. Not everyone agreed. Aurelia Porter, a member of the short-lived Scotts Gayes militia, gladly participated in Corydon’s Soldier’s Aid Society even though she “wished a hundred times since the war commenced that I could only be a boy that I might go.” Young women were indeed participating in the war, although not to the extent that Aurelia may have imagined. Such societies cemented the connection between soldier and community, even as the context of national conflict tested this bond.

The contest occurring on the battlefield was only half of the war effort; mobilizing the local economy to compensate for the pressures of war and to provide men and goods comprised the other half. These activities also served the purpose of creating the veneer of community cohesion. Fundraising events offered an outlet for expressing political allegiance and political support for the war as well as providing for the community’s troops. In Corydon citizens paid to attend tableaus and concerts, which raised money for material or finished products to send the soldiers. The Porter sisters took part in these concerts, which featured Corydon’s young men and women. These concerts were a common occurrence during the war, because the society held fundraisers to replenish money spent on goods and materials. Members of the Porter family were dedicated Republicans, with relatives and friends in the Union army. Raising money to help provide for the soldiers was a political
outlet. It allowed young women like the Porter sisters to express their support for the war, as well as demonstrating their disagreement with their Peace Democrat neighbors. Besides providing material goods the Porter sisters, like many young Corydon women, also wrote letters to their family and friends in the army. At one point some of soldiers began trading addresses with their comrades, causing a good deal of surprise when single women in Corydon received letters from men they never met. Although the people of Corydon would have to travel to New Albany to show their appreciation to soldiers in person, sending clothing, supplies, and letters maintained the connection between soldier and civilian.80

The inception of war did not override citizens’ urge to maintain the status quo in their communities. The best method for providing stability was peace, but once war began community leaders worked within the confines of wartime mobilization to prevent social upheavals of all kinds. The citizens of Frankfort and Corydon made decisions about their own participation in the conflict and pondered what consequences their actions held. The slavery issue influenced expressions of sectional sympathy in these places, but only in Frankfort did concerns over emancipation lead to noteworthy, although limited, sympathy for the Confederacy. The institution provided control over labor, and thus some Kentuckians believed secession provided a curative for the abolition threat. For southern Indianans the end of slavery would disrupt the racial and status quo, but not enough to induce significant numbers of men to risk life and property in defense of the institution. Regardless, the community leaders in both places employed the same techniques to preserve relative harmony and prosperity during the first two years of the war. The Unionist elite promoted, encouraged, and funded public demonstrations of allegiance as a curative for the divided nature of border society.
The primary difference in demonstrations of allegiance in these two places occurred during Kentucky’s strained period of neutrality. While Unionists in both towns emphasized common patriotic symbols like the American flag, in Frankfort the Unionist elite were careful to separate political gatherings from military preparations. Kentucky’s loyalists counted on help from north of the Ohio River, so they were able to remain subtle in their own efforts to gain political support and organize militarily. In Corydon military companies participated in some, but not all, Union rallies and political gatherings. Joint meetings between Unionists from opposite sides of the river were conspicuously devoid of military aspects. But the Legion kept a close watch on events in Kentucky and remained ready to come to the rescue of loyalists living south of the river border. Even enlistment, the most visible sign of allegiance, occurred informally in Kentucky, without the community participation that later surrounded this same activity. Kentucky Unionists were able to proceed with caution in their efforts to organize in the state, because southern Indiana was bastion of Unionist military preparation. Once the contest for control of Kentucky shifted from political to military, the centrality of southern Indiana to Unionist strategy in the region became apparent as armed and trained soldiers, both Hoosier and Kentuckian, marched into the state to vanquish the Confederate “invaders.”

The second phase of mobilization in both towns involved a reorganization of the political economy in order to brace for the proximity of military operations and heightened political divisions within each community. Thus civilian involvement in the war was directly linked to the Union and Confederate military activity in the border region. In Frankfort and Corydon the increase in possible danger meant an intensification in outward signs of allegiance to the Union, including enlistment, fundraising, and donations. Civilian participation in the war effort was not necessarily a spontaneous and empowering experience. In both towns, civic leaders dictated
where and when men and women took part in everything from fund raising events to Union
rallies. Once neutrality became untenable, Corydon and Frankfort exhibited many
commonalities in way they prepared for war. More importantly, both communities realized that
t heir fate was tied to the fate of the region. Victory for Unionists would only come through
cooperation and combined effort. However, the professed unity between southern Indianans and
Kentuckians did not guarantee that the burden of war would rest evenly on all border
communities.
Chapter 4

“War for the Confiscation of Property”

The reality of war—death, hardship, and suffering—challenged the widespread belief among border citizens that communities could contribute to the war effort without suffering any negative effects. At the beginning of the war this sentiment held true, because Union commanders pursued a policy of conciliation, which dictated that military forces end the rebellion without adversely affecting civilians, regardless of their loyalties. As the conciliatory phase of the war ended, both Union and Confederate governments used military operations and campaigns to obtain loyalty and support, which exacerbated political division in Frankfort. By January 1863, many Kentucky citizens believed they were caught between two dangerous forces: secession and abolition. Albert G. Hodges, editor of the Frankfort Commonwealth, commented on Kentucky’s position in the middle of the conflict, noting “it is not surprising that the fanatics South and North have a particular spite at Kentucky.” The Second Confiscation Act and Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation raised the stakes for Kentuckians, although only disloyal citizens risked losing their rights to property, including slaves. Theoretically, emancipation would be an issue for Kentucky only if the state seceded before January 1, thus making the Confederate invasion of 1862 all the more important to slaveholding Kentuckians, particularly those with Confederate sympathies. Southern Indianans, however, were free of this predicament. Unionists in Corydon did not suffer the same combination of pressures from North and South. Instead, border Unionists watched as political conflict caused violent conflict within Kentucky communities, beginning the slow unraveling of the border unity that prevailed throughout 1861.
During that first year of the war, border citizens believed they could successfully avoid severe repercussions that might emanate from the war because of the gradual confluence of military and political goals. A long-standing political concern for border residents was the definition of property rights and how these operated on the fringes of free and slave societies. Kentucky Unionists watched carefully as the war affected the definition of property in areas occupied by the both armies. Indeed, white Kentuckians recoiled upon learning of Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler’s fusion of politics and military policy when, in May 1861, he confronted the possibility of emancipating slaves after fugitive slaves entered his lines at Fort Monroe, Virginia. When Butler extended asylum to these freedom-seekers, he appropriated the term “contraband of war,” usually reserved for captured supplies and military equipment, and applied it to slaves fleeing Confederate lines for the protection of Union forces. Because such deprivation of laborers from the Confederate army was not overt abolition, Lincoln supported Butler’s actions. And when Congress passed the First Confiscation Act in August 1861, allowing for Union confiscation of property directly associated with the Confederate war effort, it essentially made Butler’s theory concerning contrabands a legal reality. Still, such actions were limited and measured assaults on slave property; indeed, the act’s requirement of proof of the property’s use in the rebel war effort prior to confiscation deflected any need to judge the owner’s loyalty.

Military authorities in states other than Virginia quickly followed Butler’s lead, using the confiscation of slave property as a weapon against secessionists. Kentuckians did not react adversely to the First Confiscation Act, largely because the measure affected only that property associated with the Confederate war effort. In September 1861, another union commander, Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont, instructed troops under his command in Missouri to confiscate the property and slaves belonging to civilians who aided Confederate guerrillas. This order
essentially freed slaves belonging to individuals that Frémont’s senior officers considered disloyal. Although Frémont declared martial law, he exceeded the authority permitted by the First Confiscation Act by allowing for the confiscation of private property not directly connected to the Confederate military effort. Though it applied only to neighboring Missouri, Frémont’s “emancipation” order sent waves of indignation through Kentucky, whose residents saw it as an omen for their state. Even Unionist Kentuckians, who had little sympathy for their secessionist neighbors, decried all military confiscation of private property, arguing that state governments were capable of taking legal action against disloyal citizens. Frémont’s proclamation of martial law and his subsequent emancipation order seemed to challenge the sanctity of state law. In reaction, wealthy Louisville resident Joshua Speed informed his good friend President Lincoln that any Federal policy concerning emancipation would drive loyal Kentuckians out of the Union and render a larger defeat to the Union than several “Bull Runs.” Indeed, pressure from border state Unionists compelled Lincoln to order Frémont to withdraw the offending pronouncement.

In truth, the Missouri commander’s conception of confiscation and emancipation as punishment for disloyalty was more ill-timed than it was inappropriate. When Frémont issued his order, Kentucky and Missouri were both still contested ground, but by the summer of 1862 each state was firmly in the Union. Although the northern public’s weariness with costly campaigns spurred the passage of the Second Confiscation Act in July 1862, the enactment did not replace the first of its kind, but expanded the government’s ability to confiscate private property. The Second Confiscation Act specifically mentioned slaves as property eligible for confiscation and declared confiscated slaves free. After March 1862, Union army officers were forbidden to return slaves to disloyal masters and therefore interpreted the Confiscation Act as justification for seizing slaves from unfriendly civilians and putting these laborers to work for the
military. Left undefined was the Act’s definition of loyalty and how it applied to citizens of non-seceding states. The Act required a hearing in a federal court, but Union officers often overlooked or misunderstood this part of the process. The Second Confiscation Act required the owner to be guilty of disloyalty before the government could seize his or her property, which needed only to be located in the loyal states or within the lines of the Union Army.\textsuperscript{5} Intended primarily to prevent Confederate citizens who owned property in the North, including businesses and stock, from profiting off their investments, the Act also decreed that the proceeds of the sale of confiscated property would go to pay for the war effort.\textsuperscript{6}

Historians agree that the truest measurement of the Second Confiscation Act is not the revenue it created but rather how it affected the relationship between military authorities and civilians. The dominant interpretation describes the act as a legally confusing document that had little practical impact, but instead, as the historian James McPherson has written, it was “a symbol of what the war was becoming—a war to overturn the Southern social order as a means of reconstructing the Union.”\textsuperscript{7} As such, the Second Confiscation Act was an integral component of a complex series of policies that did not create drastic changes so much as lay the foundation for an intensification of military doctrine that would culminate in a drastic change, namely slavery’s demise. According to historian Mark Grimsley, “Confederates perceived it [the Act], quite rightly, as a repudiation of the conciliatory policy.”\textsuperscript{8} But the legal precedent for the seizure of property and slaves was also a warning to border citizens, especially Democrats. The Confiscation acts symbolized a strengthening of centralized government, and more important, a Republican-controlled one. Conservative white Kentuckians, along with residents of other border slave states, opposed confiscation because it challenged the ability of state courts to punish their own citizens while simultaneously
removing valuable property from the local economy. The consequences of the policy in Kentucky further complicated confiscation. The act promised severe repercussions for Confederate citizens, but the measure also influenced the actions and motivations of ostensibly loyal people caught within the crucible of war.

The Second Confiscation Act was part of an attempt to answer northern citizens’ call for an attack on Confederate property as punishment for secession and war, but most border citizens objected to the act’s effect on the institution of slavery. Historian Silvana R. Siddali contends that border citizens who initially protested Confederate seizures of United States property and funds balked at the implications confiscation posed concerning slave property. Siddali concludes that both Confiscation Acts “pave[d] the way in the northern public mind for President Lincoln to issue his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, and did give that proclamation a force and a power that Americans had hitherto disdained in verbal pronouncements.” Border slaveholders were concerned that their loyalty would not save their property from confiscation by overzealous Union soldiers and spiteful government officials. As part of an evolving debate over emancipation and the future status of slaves, the Second Confiscation Act sent ripples of discontent through border society.

In Frankfort, proslavery Unionists did not welcome confiscation, largely because any loss of property or labor weakened the community’s overall wealth and standing. Even as some secessionists or their family members were living in the Confederacy or serving in the Confederate Army, their property was still essential to the local economy. In 1863, the Kentucky Court of Appeals found the Act to be unconstitutional because it subverted state government and the punishment reached beyond the life of the guilty citizen. Confiscation denied the individual’s family and creditors of any compensation. The court’s ruling pointed
out that, according to the Constitution, a treasonous citizen faced incarceration or death; it further specified that the punishment for treason could not extend beyond the life of the guilty party or affect anyone besides the convicted individual. Confiscating property, especially slaves, did reach beyond the life of an individual by robbing dependents of their inheritance, livelihood, or means of subsistence. Moreover, Kentuckians knew that if they cooperated with Confederate troops or gave them aid, the Confiscation Act could apply. Although no threat of Confederate occupation existed when the Act went into effect, any such safety soon ended.  

A renewed Confederate offensive in the fall of 1862 ensured that the Confiscation Act would be tested alongside the loyalties of Frankfort’s citizens. After Union troops drove the Confederates from central Kentucky at the end of 1861, Frankfort remained well behind the front lines. Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant’s successful campaign into northern Tennessee put the Confederates on the defensive. Grant’s victories at Forts Henry and Donelson in February 1862 reaffirmed Kentucky’s position in the Union and complicated Confederate efforts to benefit from manpower or supplies from that state. Moreover, once its legislature had abandoned neutrality, Lincoln had the benefit of entertaining emancipation policies without worrying about Kentucky’s secession. Although communities in the river valley exhibited a degree of tension and division because of the war, during the winter and spring of 1862 military campaigns remained distant. This situation changed in the summer and fall of 1862 with a series of Confederate triumphs in the Kentucky at Richmond and Munfordville. These accomplishments came too late to counter the growing Unionist support in Kentucky but they did reinvigorate the sympathies of the state’s strongest secessionists.
In July, John Hunt Morgan’s cavalry raided through the Bluegrass and passed through Georgetown, northeast of Frankfort, but did not approach the state’s capital. While in Kentucky, Morgan’s force operated with a number of objectives in mind. Although Morgan sufficiently challenged Union military supremacy in the region by raiding far behind the established front, Morgan also had political motivations. Morgan’s excursion into the Bluegrass, known after the war as the “First Kentucky Raid,” rekindled secessionists’ hopes that Kentucky could become part of the Confederacy. The presence of Confederate troops widened the already visible political divisions in the towns and counties that Morgan passed through. Morgan paid attention to the characteristics of specific communities along his route, because he sought out places with strong Confederate sentiments. Thus Morgan by-passed Frankfort, with its strong Unionist contingent and sizable militia, choosing instead to enter towns with a considerable secessionist presence, like Georgetown and Cynthiana. In spite of Morgan’s efforts to seek out Confederate-friendly areas, he received little assistance and encountered a good deal of resistance. Morgan’s insistence that a strong Confederate military presence in Kentucky would inspire citizens to eschew Unionism influenced plans for a large scale invasion of his native state.

Even more than Morgan’s short incursion into the state, Braxton Bragg’s Confederate invasion of Kentucky challenged Union policy and contributed to intense political polarization within already divided valley communities. The military operations during the first several years of the war employed the common strategies of seizing territory, encirclement, or defeating enemy armies. However, some Confederate military operations during the second year of the war were more akin to the early nineteenth-century phenomenon of filibustering. This strategy involved using a military force to provoke
Confederate president Jefferson Davis encouraged two filibustering campaigns into border slave states during the second summer of the war; he directed one into Maryland and designated Kentucky as the other target. Where Robert E. Lee’s invasion of Maryland in September suffered from a miscalculation of sentiments in the western portion of the state, (Lee found few citizens there receptive to their “liberation”), Edmund Kirby Smith avoided a similar mistake in Kentucky by circumventing the pro-Union eastern mountain counties and spearheading an expedition into the Bluegrass in late August. The lush and rolling farmland of the Bluegrass Region held a large proportion of Kentucky’s slaves and slaveholders, thus constituting a better choice for gathering support than did western Maryland. Additionally Smith occupied Lexington, a city where many residents had pro-southern sentiments. Bragg subsequently entered Kentucky in mid-September, deviating from his original plan to remain in Tennessee to distract Union troops, and brought over fifteen thousand rifles to distribute to Kentuckians and attempted to procure additional weapons en route. Intending to provoke an uprising in the state, it was not enough for Confederate forces to briefly occupy Kentucky. Bragg wanted to bring the state into the Confederacy and in one swift move defeat the Union Army in the area.

The Confederate spearhead into the border region occurred at the same time that Lincoln finalized his emancipation policy. In light of the president’s gradual shift of policy from condoning the seizure of property used by the Confederate military to the confiscation of property and slaves belonging to disloyal citizens, Kentuckians, regardless of allegiance, had reason to fear military conflict. When Confederate troops entered Kentucky in late August, civilians understood that something as simple as providing the invaders with information or supplies could have serious repercussions. That the two Confederate generals,
Bragg and Kirby Smith, public announced that their campaign into the Bluegrass Region was for the purpose of gaining recruits and supplies, only complicated the situation.  

Civilians soon realized that they were targets of both Union and Confederate strategy.

Those Kentuckians whom the Confiscation Act had not deterred from aiding the Confederate campaign in their state had to consider the implications of Lincoln’s preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, issued on September 22 while gray-clad troops occupied a large portion of the Bluegrass Region. Lincoln did not have Kentucky in mind when he proposed the emancipation of slaves in all states still in rebellion on January 1, 1863. He had even delayed announcing the proclamation until after border state representatives had turned down his offer for compensated emancipation in loyal slave states. Lincoln knew that the Proclamation would have repercussions in the border slave states, but his overall goal justified such a risk. His preliminary announcement was a cunning legal tactic that would force Confederates to contemplate either returning to the Union or risk losing their slaves if they lost they war. Kentuckians were quick to grasp the Proclamation’s effect on their slave property if the Confederate filibustering campaign succeeded. Confederate victory and the installation of a Confederate government could still result in emancipation if Union troops were able to recapture the state, slowing the enlistment in Confederate ranks of all but the most ardent of secessionists in Kentucky out of fear for legal reprisals from the national government.  

The relative security that Frankfort enjoyed in the spring and summer of 1862 gave way to the confusion and apprehension during the Confederate invasion. When Morgan’s cavalry threatened Frankfort almost two months earlier, Unionist citizens took comfort in the arrival of a newly recruited, nine-month infantry regiment, the 59th Indiana. Fortunately
for the townspeople, the Union military considered Frankfort an important military and political asset, owing mainly to the presence of the Unionist state government and an essential rail junction linking Louisville and Lexington. The regiment remained in town after the scare, but eventually left Frankfort to join up with other units responding to Smith’s offensive. This regiment was among the force of raw Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio troops that Kirby Smith’s army routed near Richmond, Kentucky, on August 30.\textsuperscript{19} Shortly after news reached Frankfort of the defeat, the state legislature and a number of prominent Unionists rushed to the train depot and departed hastily for Louisville. Those who remained watched as demoralized Union troops, many of them Hoosiers, streamed through the town on their way to the next line of defense, the Ohio River. On September 3, Louisiana cavalry under Col. John Scott entered the town and placed their regimental flag above the Capitol.

The Confederate troops occupying Frankfort caused more shock than hardship for most residents. Although citizens had been providing food and water for the beleaguered Union troops straggling through town on their way to Louisville, the Confederates did not pose an immediate burden to the community. Scott’s command captured 375 wagons loaded with foodstuffs, along with a large number of horses and mules from the defeated federal army, and therefore had little need to obtain provisions or equipment from the locals.\textsuperscript{20} Additionally, Kirby Smith ordered his forces to refrain from confiscating property from civilians or harassing them in any way. Even with these restrictions of behavior the rebel rank and file soon discovered that most of Frankfort’s citizens would not volunteer to cook for their invaders. One Confederate soldier arriving at the hospital in Lexington from Frankfort surmised that the town’s occupants were less than generous and “wouldn’t give them (the rebels) anything to eat if they could possibly avoid it.”\textsuperscript{21} Yet the soldier
misinterpreted the cool response of Frankfort’s residents. Even pro-Confederate Kentuckians feared that kindnesses to rebel troops would soon bring retribution from Union troops or spiteful neighbors. If Union troops drove off the Confederate invaders, Frankfort as the state capital would likely be the first town that the soldiers in blue liberated and garrisoned. Until civilians knew for certain that the Confederate forces could hold the state, few residents, regardless of allegiance, were willing to risk their livelihood by aiding Confederates.

Although capture of the Kentucky capital proved a symbolic Confederate victory, it was not Kirby Smith’s primary objective. Seizing Frankfort was a strategic move intended to seize the arsenal and provide arms for the many recruits he expected. His filibustering plan included obtaining weapons, which he expected Kentucky insurrectionists to shoulder for the Confederate cause. Pleased with the prospect of bringing the state into the Confederacy, Kirby Smith concluded wishfully “that the heart of Kentucky is with the South in this struggle.” He soon sent a force to threaten Cincinnati, thus allowing Kentuckians time to organize. While Kirby Smith might have won the hearts of some Kentuckians, he could not lay claim to their bodies; he recruited only a few thousand men during his stay in the Bluegrass. This fell woefully short of twenty or thirty thousand recruits that Smith and Bragg had counted on to balance the odds in favor of the Confederate invaders. In Frankfort pro-Confederate citizens were pleased by the turn of events, but they also knew that many of their Unionist neighbors remained at home. The acting mayor of Frankfort, Thomas Lindsey, met with the Louisianan to arrange for the Confederate occupation of the town. Scott allowed Lindsey to retain control of his civic duties, even though his son was colonel of a Union regiment, the 22nd Kentucky Infantry. His cooperation with the Confederate occupation forces was not a sign of sympathy as much as it was an extension of his authority and control
as an established and respected member of the community. Many other Unionists also stayed in Frankfort during the occupation to protect their property and keep an eye on their secessionist neighbors.

While Kirby Smith’s army waited in the vicinity of Lexington, Braxton Bragg planned an advance towards Louisville hoping to draw Union Gen. Don Carlos Buell’s army out of Tennessee. After defeating a small Union garrison at Munfordville on September 17, Bragg hoped either to engage Buell’s army in Kentucky or capture Louisville. Bragg understood that capturing and holding Louisville would essentially force Union commanders to reinforce the inadequate defenses in southern Indiana. Commercial and military river traffic along the Ohio River would cease and the military installations in New Albany and Jeffersonville would be within range of Confederate artillery. Once military and civilian authorities in the Ohio Valley learned that Bragg was headed towards Louisville, they rushed newly organized regiments from Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois to the city to defend the river border.

Although Frankfort’s month-long occupation was quiet, it did not bode well for local merchants and businessmen. Confederate military authorities closed businesses, especially the Unionist newspaper, the Commonwealth. With no newspaper in operation, little record of life under Confederate occupation remains. The only commercial activity in town consisted of Confederate troops requisitioning goods and merchandise. Southern Indianans sympathized with Frankfort’s merchants; one lamented that “over six hundred thousand dollars worth of merchandise alone was carried off from Frankfort by the rebel troops.” However exaggerated, the claim conveyed the concern that Confederates would loot border towns if given the chance. The occupying army did not steal goods, but Confederate officials
dictated that all soldiers pay for all merchandise. The Confederate quartermaster promised to pay the owners of the Frankfort Woolen Company, among others, almost $75,000 in Confederate script, a guarantee of payment that was “worthless” if Kentucky did not stay under Confederate control. Although many of the recipients of the Confederate promissory notes appealed for remuneration to Kirby Smith and Bragg’s commands, they received none. Paying in Confederate script, or promising to do so, was a way of forcing merchants to support the Confederate occupation—the only outcome by which merchants could redeem the money was a Confederate victory in the state. When the rebel armies left the Bluegrass in October, the money was worthless to all but those who accompanied the defeated columns back to Confederate territory. Merchants who remained in Frankfort shared in the cost of Confederate defeat.

Some of Frankfort’s citizens feared that the Confederates were desperate to hold the capital and chose to flee in case Frankfort became the focus of a pitched battle. Harry Todd, a resident of Frankfort and former riverboat captain, moved his family to Louisville in order to avoid possible hostilities around his hometown and, if necessary, to escape across the Ohio. Those who remained were susceptible to Confederates’ coercion and trickery, as commanders sought to fill regiments left empty because of the ramifications of the federal policy. Todd noted that the presence of the Confederate army influenced the allegiances of residents in Frankfort. “[A] great many people in my part of the State,” he claimed, “were induced to unite themselves with the rebel army because they were made to believe they would never have to leave the state.” Other lukewarm secessionists joined the Confederates after hearing rumors about the Union army’s supposed mistreatment of “disloyal” Kentuckians.
The most notable event in Frankfort during the invasion was the inauguration of Richard Hawes as the provisional Confederate governor of Kentucky. While Kirby Smith remained in Lexington, Bragg reached Bardstown with his army in late September, disappointed by Kentuckians’ reticence to join him. Indeed, a key part of his plan for success in the Bluegrass was raising approximately twenty thousand recruits, enough manpower to face Buell and hold Kentucky. Bragg hoped that the installation of Kentucky’s Confederate government in Frankfort would end civilians’ reluctance to help secure the state for the Confederacy. If that failed, the frustrated general could use the newly established government to conscript the troops he needed. On October 4, Bragg left his army to preside over Hawes’s inauguration ceremony and the accompanying festivities facing a dilemma.30 He could not launch a successful attack against Don Carlos Buell’s army without additional troops, but until Bragg defeated the bulk of Union forces in the state, confiscation and emancipation were enough to keep most Kentucky men at home.31 His response was a desperate attempt to provoke a general uprising in Kentucky that would at least temporarily challenge Union control of the state.

The speech Bragg gave as part of the inauguration ceremonies in Frankfort effectively captures his frustration at his predicament in Kentucky. Speaking briefly from the front steps of the capital before introducing the new Confederate governor, the general tried to convince the people of Franklin and surrounding counties that Lincoln’s administration was wrong to “demand not only unmanly submission, but that you should join in a war for the confiscation of property, the excitements of servile insurrection, and the desolation of your homes.” Attempting to convince Kentuckians that their interests were best served by rallying to the Confederate cause, Bragg avowed that Lincoln’s proclamation left Kentuckians with “no
alternative but ignominy or resistance.” Even though Bragg pledged support and protection, Kentuckians had no reason to believe that his force, or for that matter the Confederate government, could protect the border any better than the Union army had. Moreover, the reasons Bragg cited that compelled for Kentuckians to resist the federal government were the same confiscation and emancipation policies that would affect only those people aiding or participating in the rebellion. Unfortunately for Bragg, he was unable to convince the men who had previously eschewed service in either army that joining the Confederacy would serve them better than continuing to wait out the conflict.

Where Bragg’s statement left unconcealed his anger at the Kentuckians’ unwillingness to fight, Hawes’s portion of the speech offered a softer message. Hawes reminded Kentuckians of their connections to the South, telling his audience that during Kentucky’s failed bid for neutrality citizens agreed that “our affinities of blood, and our commercial and business interests would and should carry us into the Southern Confederacy.” Despite Hawes’s insistence that an abolitionist dictatorship in Washington was waging a war against slavery, most Kentuckians knew that, since the enactment of the Second Confiscation Act, the quickest way to lose their slaves was to enlist in the Confederate Army. Whether Hawes ever had the chance to explain to listeners how Confederate money was no more worthless than federal currency, or how the provisional government would protect the rights and liberties of all Kentuckians, is unknown. The sharp report of Union cannon firing from the hills surrounding the city interrupted Hawes’s speech, sending the provisional government and their entourage into headlong flight. They never returned.32
While Bragg might have brought the Confederacy to Kentucky, his army’s retreat from Frankfort ended any plans to bring Kentucky into the Confederacy. Three hours after Union guns interrupted the inauguration, the evacuation of Frankfort began. Confederate soldiers set fire to the railroad bridge and dismantled the turnpike bridge in order to slow down the advancing Federals.\textsuperscript{33} The situation was so hectic that the Confederates and their secessionist allies were unable to take much with them. In Lexington, however, some secessionists heard about the Union capture of Frankfort and began preparing to follow the army south to Harrodsburg. Secessionist civilians who openly aided the Confederate troops left with their slaves, fearing that if they stayed Union troops would confiscate their belongings, with the assistance of the Confederate troops. According to Frankfort’s Unionist press, one of the more damaging effects to Kentucky was that Confederate troops “carried beyond her borders large numbers of her slave population.”\textsuperscript{34}

The Kentucky campaign ended badly for Bragg and Kirby Smith. On October 8, 1862, Union and Confederate troops met in battle at Perryville, before Bragg could sufficiently unite his forces in preparation for a battle. Rightly considered to be a pivotal event in Kentucky’s Civil War history, Perryville (after which the Confederate armies withdrew to Tennessee) was not a clear victory for either side.\textsuperscript{35} In the aftermath of the battle, all sides sought to assign blame, whether for the battle, the campaign, or the outcome. President Lincoln blamed Don Carlos Buell for allowing Confederate troops to enter Kentucky at all while Bragg faulted Kentuckians for not coming to his aid. Meanwhile, Unionists and secessionists in Kentucky blamed one another for allowing such a costly campaign to occur on Kentucky soil. Unquestionably, Bragg’s and Kirby Smith’s failed attempt at filibustering met its official end at Perryville.\textsuperscript{36}
The battle’s effect on the townspeople of Perryville was indicative of the entire campaign’s aftermath in Kentucky. The clash of armies resulted in the indiscriminate destruction of buildings, crops, and other property. While minié balls and artillery shells recognized no allegiances, the Union troops who occupied the field after the battle did. The Union garrison singled out known secessionists, like Squire Henry Bottom, in the weeks following the battle. Soldiers took pork, corn, hay, and wood worth some five thousand dollars from the Perryville farmer, in addition to Bottom’s loss of property as a result of the fighting. Bottom had to watch helplessly as feral hogs devoured the Confederate dead scattering his property largely because his neighbors were unwilling to help bury the fallen rebels while Union troops were in town. When Union officers could no longer stand the stench and complaints from citizens, they rounded up local secessionists (including Bottom) and their slaves to serve as a burial detail. After Perryville, partisans of one cause or the other realized that eliminating opposition within their own communities was the only sure path to avoiding military occupation and possible punishment. A realization that the war would be long and bitter descended upon Kentuckians. Even if one wanted to remain uncommitted either to Union or secession, nearby battles and campaigns drew unwilling citizens into the vortex of violence and partisanship.

Although free of the devastation that wracked Perryville and the surrounding area, Frankfort’s brief period of Confederate occupation had a profound effect on its civilians, including further polarization of its community. The realization of the war’s potential for destruction caused a considerable amount of stress among residents. Maria Church was amazed at her ability to adapt to the situation, remarking that “these are terrible times, but it is astonishing how sound one sleeps surrounded by thousand of soldiers who may have a
collision at any moment.” A Unionist, Church stayed home with her family during the crisis and hoped that the war would soon end. Like many civilians, she quickly realized that the separation between her community and the reality of war was melting away. Observers quickly recognized the heightened tensions of post-occupation Frankfort, including renewed attention over the related issues of slavery, race, and politics. A lieutenant in the 93rd Ohio Infantry, Edwin Smith, stationed in Frankfort after the Confederate evacuation, noticed the townspeople’s heightened concern for the war’s outcome. While staying at Merryweather’s Hotel, Smith had long conversations with locals, including an African American employee who had strong opinions about the conflict. The Ohioan reported that although the citizens he spoke with accepted that slavery was ending, many admitted that “the North is something they didn’t understand.” For Frankforters, the invasion impressed on them the futility of any community’s attempt to remain neutral or separate from the war. The Ohio officer was pained by the fact that people, especially families, divided “over the old grinds, ‘nig[g]ers’ ‘Southern Rights,’ etc.,” not recognizing that issues he considered “old” had only recently caused serious division in border towns like Frankfort. Smith summed up the tone of life in Frankfort after the occupation by concluding that “the whole people [are] distracted, disheartened, discouraged, almost despairing.”

Citizens of Franklin County who cast their lot with the Confederacy faced serious legal repercussions, carried out by Frankfort’s Unionists. In the wake of the invasion the Franklin County circuit court charged six men with violations of state security, in keeping with acts passed by the state legislature. At least five individuals enlisted in the Confederate army in early October and left with the Confederate Army. The Act of October 1, 1861, allowed the court to bring felony charges against these citizens for “the offense of unlawfully
invading the State of Kentucky to make war upon said State.” The court also charged all six defendants with encouraging others to enlist; a misdemeanor under the Act of August 28, 1862. Under these acts every Franklin County man serving with John Hunt Morgan was susceptible to felony charges, but the court was more selective about the application of these laws. Frankfort’s legal authorities singled out Keeland Gaines, who enlisted in the Confederate Army on October 4, the same day Hawes delivered his incomplete speech to citizens assembled in Frankfort. Gaines and his comrades openly showed allegiance to the Confederate Government, an act that was far worse than simply slipping away to join Confederate units; it was a direct challenge to the community’s professed loyalty to the Union. All of the men accused of felonies were absent, having left the state with the Confederate Army.

The Unionist retribution against Franklin Countians who overtly joined the Confederate army was essentially a form of banishment, ensuring that the recruits would not return upon risk of imprisonment. The men accused of felonies would only receive punishment if they returned home, which also depended on them surviving the war. The felony convictions had no immediate effects on the men’s family or property. The trials were a symbolic disapproval of local secessionists and an affirmation of Frankfort’s loyalty. More importantly, Unionists used the state law in an attempt to undermine the Second Confiscation Act. Authorities hoped that by prosecuting disloyal citizens, the federal government would not pursue confiscation. While the convicted men faced incarceration, their property remained in the hands of their relatives. As the Union army was shifting towards harsher penalties for disloyal citizens, such as confiscation, Frankfort’s Unionist elite remained in favor of less drastic measures.
After January 1, Frankfort’s white residents felt pressured from both North and South as they reflected on the damage and loss incurred during the Confederate invasion and contemplated the threat to slave property posed by Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. The Proclamation was now in effect and, although the measure did not directly affect Kentucky’s institution, slaveholders realized the implications it held for the continuation of slavery. The cost of war and the possibility of slavery’s demise caused a cloud of isolation to descend upon some Kentuckians. Frankfort’s citizens lamented that they had “suffered from the march of armies, from the destruction of property, and wanton depredations to an extent inconceivable to localities remote from the theatre of war.” The Commonwealth echoed the concerns of many Unionists by pointing out that in addition to the burden of military campaigns, Kentuckians had to contend with “the abolition programme of the war.” Most of the resentment among Frankfort’s Unionists was aimed at secessionists who expected Kentuckians to “run off in search of rights we never lost.” Albert G. Hodges, editor of the Commonwealth, reasoned that if Unionists held strong to their convictions, resisting both emancipation and secession, “Kentucky will be the death of them both.” But secessionists were still the most immediate threat to Kentucky’s loyalty, and in February, while the state legislature was meeting in Frankfort, Kentucky’s Union Party formulated plans for a statewide convention.

While Unionists were organizing, Democrats who were appalled by the Emancipation Proclamation and resentful of federal intervention met on February 18, at Metropolitan Hall in Frankfort. Unionists resented the gathering, and Hodges warned “a convention of men who sympathize with Jeff Davis and desire the success of the Southern Confederacy will assemble at the capital.” The Kentuckians who attended the meeting were mostly Peace
Democrats who opposed the war and advocated leaving the Confederacy alone. White men from various counties attended the meeting in order to organize opposition to the war and Lincoln’s emancipation policy. Col. Samuel Gilbert, a Union officer, interrupted the convention and warned the delegates that, while they had the right to assemble, he believed “rebel spies and emissaries” were in Frankfort and as such he needed to oversee the proceedings and record the names of all who attended. Gilbert was the ranking military authority in Frankfort while his regiment, the 44th Ohio Infantry, garrisoned Frankfort during January and February 1863. The Colonel warned that he would arrest and prosecute any of the delegates who committed sedition, adding that he knew some of the men present “would deluge the fair fields of Kentucky in the blood of her citizens, and make her rich plantations, beautiful villages, and wealthy cities as desolate as are the domains of the Southern traitors with whom they are in league.”

Although Gilbert earned the scorn and contempt of those who opposed the war and the Emancipation Proclamation, the Unionists in Frankfort embraced him as their protector and champion. Naturally, Unionists applauded Gilbert’s treatment of the “rebel” convention and the Commonwealth justified his actions in several articles. Hodges printed the delegates’ names in the Commonwealth and surmised that if the men from Franklin County, including Sim Major (editor of the Kentucky Yeoman), were any indication, most of the Democrats would “at once declare that Kentucky ought to unite destiny with Jeff Davis’ Southern Confederacy.” Supposedly, the chairman of the Democratic gathering had publicly stated that “when the rebel army too[k] possession of Frankfort, that it was the happiest day of his life.” Gibson dispersed a peaceful political gathering, but Unionists insisted that the convention was bent on disunion, even though there was no evidence of this. By
coincidence, Gilbert’s actions successfully quashed the only political organization capable of opposing the Unionist Party in the upcoming state elections that August. This act of retribution set a disturbing precedent, but Unionists believed it was necessary to protect the Kentucky from secessionists.46

Unionists who emerged from Confederate occupation with a taste for vengeance urged their comrades to interpret as disloyalty any hesitation to support their cause. A Franklin County Unionist articulated this growing polarization within border society in a letter to the Commonwealth when he declared “he who is not a patriot—one willing to give his life, his property, and every energy of mind and soul to support and defend his government—is a traitor.”47 This resentment towards citizens who attempted to remain uncommitted to the Union cause (in itself a significant departure from the pleas for peace and compromise of early 1861) emerged under continued military and political pressure. The white citizens of Frankfort became more aware of political opponents and enemy sympathizers within their communities. The Confederate filibustering attempt caused some Frankfort Unionists to conclude that their neighbors’ indecision was somehow responsible for Bragg’s and Kirby Smith’s success in entering Kentucky. Living in a war zone meant that a person’s allegiances made them the target of military or legal measures, even if that choice was to remain unassociated with either cause.

The rebel invasion also affected the people of Corydon, although they did not experience the same hardship and anxiety of Frankfort’s population. Residents of southern Indiana watched the events surrounding the invasion of Kentucky with much trepidation. Clearly, they were concerned that Confederate filibustering would succeed, which would cost free state border Unionists their allies in Kentucky. An excited correspondent told the New
Albany Ledger that “not less than 800 Kentuckians in Frankfort and Franklin County had already enlisted under the Confederate flag, many being men who have always heretofore professed Union sentiments.”48 Though a gross exaggeration, the boast reveals the deepest fears of Unionists living along the river border. In a region fractured by political discord, Kentucky Unionists were essential to the stability and protection of border communities. Unionist citizens in Corydon were relieved at hearing about the liberation of their compatriots in Frankfort.49 They recognized that continued Confederate occupation could demoralize and weaken Unionist political supremacy in Kentucky and that Bragg’s successful occupation of Kentucky would make the Ohio River the northern boundary of the Confederacy. Aware of their vulnerable position, Harrison County’s citizens knew that keeping Kentucky in the Union was in their best interest.

The citizens of Corydon were worried about the security of the river border, but they could not sympathize with Kentuckians’ concern over the confiscation of property and the escalation of Lincoln’s emancipation policy. The hysteria and heightened tension that prevailed in southern Indiana during the invasion crisis did not cause significant division among residents. Hoosiers experienced little besides refugees, and armed civilians crowding the northern shore of the Ohio River. When Union military authorities put Louisville under marshal law and transformed the city into an array of fortifications and armed camps, southern Indiana gained importance as a military staging area and second line of defense. During the height of the invasion scare a large number of civilians fled to southern Indiana, including several families from Frankfort.50 A number of them were secessionists who took refuge in New Albany and proved unable to contain their adulation over Bragg’s advance, which provoked several fistfights with local residents. Unionists in southern Indiana
considered the dissenters among them to be potential enemies, and reacted accordingly. The *New Albany Ledger* spoke to the combination of resentment and desire for vengeance some Hoosiers felt by letting secessionists “make the most of their joy, for it will be short lived, and then a settlement is in store for them.”

On the Indiana border it was becoming evident that Kentucky harbored enemies as well as allies, leaving Unionists with mixed feelings about their southern border.

The combination of Confederate success in Kentucky and Lincoln’s preliminary Emancipation Proclamation caused some pro-Confederate Kentuckians to lash out against their Unionist neighbors. The guerrillas operating in Kentucky after the Confederate invasion were intent on eliminating political opposition, not aiding the Confederate military effort. The historian Michael Fellman has summarized the motives and actions of guerrilla fighters, “terror was both a method and a goal.” However, a simple need to terrorize others does not explain why guerrilla activity increased along the river border during the fall and winter of 1862. Indeed, the historian T.J. Stiles contests Fellman’s interpretation of guerrillas’ motives as solely terroristic, positing that the difference between Union and secessionist Missourians “was ideological rather than cultural or geographic.” Kentucky’s guerrillas were ideological largely because they chose to act only after Lincoln’s Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. B. Franklin Cooling suggests that guerrilla war began in Kentucky and Tennessee after the Union offensives on spring 1862, but along the river border irregular warfare had more to do with the evolution of Lincoln’s emancipation policies. Historian T.J. Styles recognizes that guerrillas were motivated by political and military events, noting that in Missouri “guerrillas had plenty of resentments that cried out for retaliation: the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg.”

Along
the Ohio River border, the combination of the Second Confiscation Act and the preliminary
Emancipation Proclamation motivated some pro-Confederate Kentuckians to retaliate against
their neighbors who helped keep the state in the Union. Some guerrillas may have been
emboldened by Confederate victories, but when rebel troops occupied Kentucky the previous
year guerrilla activity was scarce. In Brandenburg, across the river to the south of Corydon,
citizens who saw the Union cause as a threat to slavery seized the opportunity to oust
Unionists from the community.

Unionists in Corydon did not face property loss at the hands of Confederate troops or
overzealous Union soldiers, but a guerrilla uprising in Brandenburg, Kentucky posed an
immediate threat to the safety and prosperity of the border town. While Bragg’s movement
kept Union troops occupied with Louisville’s defensive preparations, Brandenburg’s
secessionists drove their Unionist neighbors from the community. Local loyalists did not,
however, go without a fight; armed citizens exchanged shots in the town’s houses, streets,
and courtyards. In one instance a secessionist women stood on her porch and fired at a
passing Unionist with her pistol. The man returned fire with a Henry rifle, missing the
woman’s head by a half inch. In the end secessionists captured thirty Union citizens and
seized their property. The remaining loyal citizens fled across the river where friends in
Mauckport gave them refuge. A detachment of the Indiana Legion from Harrison County,
including Capt. William Farquar’s cavalry company from Corydon, took up positions at
Mauckport to “watch the movements of the enemy and keep him on his own side of the
river.” The river proved a convenient defensive line for Hoosiers as well as a useful escape
route for Kentucky Unionists. Union troops regained Brandenburg a few days later and after
a brief skirmish drove off the few rebel cavalry who occupied the town. The uprising proved
that some Meade County secessionists were committed to fighting the war at home, as opposed to joining the Confederate army and settling the matter on a distant battlefield. In early October, although Louisville was no longer in danger, Meade County was overcome with civil conflict. Some of Brandenburg’s Unionists exacted retribution by killing three rebels. In response, Confederate guerrillas killed the postmaster in the nearby village of Big Springs, and “grossly abused” his wife. The local Unionists responded by tracking down and killing three members of the gang, including the leader, Ephraim Wimp.\textsuperscript{58} The all-out civil war in Meade County dismayed Harrison County’s Unionists and undid all that the representatives from both counties had done almost a year and a half earlier to prevent lawlessness and border warfare. Having foreseen correctly that the border was prone to such disturbances, they had overestimated their ability to prevent the coming violence. Unionists in Corydon were now better served by distancing themselves from Kentucky communities, instead of trying to rekindle memories of frontier cooperation.\textsuperscript{59}

The presence of federal troops brought temporary peace to Brandenburg, but the incident punctuated the volatile nature of civil war in Kentucky’s communities as well as the inevitability of Indiana’s border counties becoming involved with the growing violence across the river. In January 1863, the 5th Indiana Cavalry stationed at Mauckport, in southern Harrison County, made frequent forays across the river in order to discourage guerrillas in Meade County. Southern Indianans and Meade County Unionists were relieved to hear that the cavalry was guarding against the “gang of secesch outlaws” threatening Brandenburg.\textsuperscript{60} Later that spring, Union cavalry operations led to the killing of a number of guerrillas and secessionist operatives, including a local man recruiting for Confederate service. One Brandenburg Unionist praised the military’s efforts to clear his home of
guerrillas, but lamented his belief that “we are the headquarters for all the scoundrels from everywhere.” His jocularity reveals a deep concern for the number of guerrillas and vigilantes, local and otherwise, who began operating in Meade County shortly after the Brandenburg uprising. The town had always been divided politically, but Bragg’s invasion gave pro-Confederate citizens a chance to react to Lincoln’s evolving emancipation policy. Corydon’s citizens watched these events with similar concern. It was already becoming apparent that although residents of both sides of the river border shared a common past, their respective situations were quite different.

With partisan violence occurring directly across the river, Corydon’s Unionists feared reprisal for their continued support of their political allies in Kentucky. Unlike Frankfort, Corydon’s residents feared external more than internal forces. Citizens were increasingly concerned about an overflow of violence from Meade County. Corydon had its share of political divisions, but these quarrels never exploded into violence. Aurelia Porter described the political sparring by joking that the “Democrats and Unionists quarrel so much” that she would “not wonder much if we were to have fighting hear [sic] among ourselves sometime.” Corydon’s Unionists were far more concerned with the threat of guerrilla raids from Kentucky. Porter observed that “Father has bought him[self] a splendid gun, and I suppose intends to be ready to fight if there is any occasion.” Hoosiers residing along the river border became increasingly nervous about the unrest in Kentucky that did not seem to go away when Confederate troops withdrew from the state.

During and after the Confederate invasion of Kentucky, the people of Frankfort and Corydon underwent transformations in how they experienced and conceptualized war. The people of Frankfort and Corydon desperately tried to protect and uphold their conceptions of
community and democracy as political and military events intensified in late 1862. The threat of invasion, combined with Lincoln’s emerging emancipation policy, challenged the maintenance of the status quo in Frankfort. The Confederate invasion sparked intense political division in Frankfort. Residents there experienced greater economic hardship because of the month-long occupation, while in Corydon the pro-Confederate uprising across the river caused Unionists to realize that the violence and unrest in Kentucky posed a threat to the community. Union occupation severely curtailed political freedoms in Frankfort, while in Corydon Democrats and Unionists were free to debate the issues and voice their disagreements. By December of 1862 it was apparent that the war would make or break individuals in Kentucky based on their political choices. Borderland Hoosiers had no such experience, but instead began to cast a suspicious eye towards their Kentucky neighbors. The Confederate invasion impressed upon Frankfort’s citizens the fact that confiscation would come at the hands of occupying troops, which made choosing the correct allegiance essential to the community’s stability. However, in Corydon the only potential threat to property came from Kentucky guerrillas who responded to the Emancipation Proclamation by making bold attacks on local Unionists. Kentucky’s Unionists continued to feel caught between the forces of secession and abolition, but Hoosiers had no such experience.
Chapter Five

“The Negro is Improperly in this Contest”

The exigencies of war, including black migration, political division, and black military participation, shook the foundations of slavery and altered the racial status quo of the Ohio River Valley. White citizens on both sides of the Ohio River reacted with both legal and extralegal methods to African Americans’ attempt to secure freedom. Many of the white residents of the valley believed that their rights to freedom and security depended upon strict maintenance of the existing racial hierarchy. As the death knell of slavery echoed throughout the Ohio River Valley, the people of Corydon and Frankfort experienced changes that caused them to lose the common bond they held at the beginning of the conflict. As Corydon’s residents began to associate Kentucky with the consequences and discomforts of war, Frankfort’s white citizens struggled against secessionists on one hand while quarrelling with government troops sent to “protect” the Bluegrass Region on the other. Both communities braced themselves for the possible repercussions of the war’s new focus on emancipation, and freedom in general, as an ultimate goal. However, for border Hoosiers the blow would come from the South in the form of black migrants, while Kentuckians watched the arrival of troops from north of the river border who heartily embraced the war’s new meaning.

Many of these fears played out in conjuring the specter of a flood of black freedpeople moving north of the river, threatening the Hoosiers’ traditional perceptions of the Middle West as a white man’s country. V. Jacque Voegeli has established that midwestern commitment to white superiority stretched across political lines. Even Republicans in the Old Northwest bristled at the idea of racial equality. Voegeli observes that during the summer of 1862 “whether the Republican Party could persuade the people of the Middle West that such action was indeed
necessary and that emancipation and white supremacy were compatible remained to be seen.”
Lincoln’s preliminary Emancipation Proclamation caused a backlash against the Republican Party, allowing the Democratic Party to regain some of the ground it lost north of the Ohio in 1860. In Indiana, Democrats swept the state elections in October 1862, winning control of the legislature and both Senate seats. Public opposition to emancipation strengthened the Democratic Party, but many white border citizens were more interested in practical issues, such as how black migration would change the racial dynamic of their neighborhood. Indeed, Forest Wood contends that fear of black migration was most sensitive in the Old Northwest because of “an agricultural economy, the southern heritage of many Midwesterners, and the lower Midwest’s common border with the slave South.” Anxiety over emancipation’s effect on the racial status quo was rampant among the lower class, which worked to the advantage of Democrats.

The Democratic Party was ascendant in southern Indiana before the war, but opposition to the war and Lincoln’s emancipation policies greatly augmented the party’s ranks by the end of 1862. Southern Indianans went to the polls and demonstrated their dislike of the Republican national agenda, but some white citizens were also upset with Gov. Morton’s performance during the invasion crisis. Morton’s petty squabbling with Kentucky officials during the emergency reflected poorly on the Republican Party, not to mention the deplorable state of Indiana’s border defenses. Nationally, opposition to the Republican resulted in the establishment of the “peace” faction of the Democratic Party, known by their rivals as “Copperheads.” Peace Democrats openly criticized the war, especially as it related to emancipation and the newly adopted strategy of freeing slaves as a path to victory. By contrast, War Democrats supported the war but opposed emancipation as unnecessary for
victory. The Peace Democrat movement was more than simply displeasure with emancipation; Peace Democrats objected to the idea of a small minority of abolitionists and industrialists in the East influencing national politics. Frank Klement attributes Copperhead activity in Indiana and Ohio to a “western Sectionalism” that resented an administration that “sold its soul to New York capitalists and New England manufacturers.” The divergence of political and economic interests between the East and the West only increased after emancipation promised to transform the West even more than eastern investment and industrial development.6

Slavery supplied white Kentuckians’ labor needs, but it also was the legal foundation for a racial hierarchy that ensured that African Americans would occupy the lowest rung of society. Kentucky’s slave code restricted enslaved African Americans’ place in the community, including freedom of movement, business enterprises, property ownership, and participation in the legal system.7 Free African Americans enjoyed more individual freedoms than did slaves, more specifically the rights of property, but they certainly did not possess all of the legal rights of free white men. A web of restraints that derived from both informal discrimination and local ordinances conspired to guarantee that freedpeople could not achieve the same economic successes as white citizens. As long as free blacks remained at the lower end of the social hierarchy, white Kentuckians could easily justify slavery as beneficial to an inferior race.8

In Indiana, laws similarly controlled African Americans’ social status by differentiating between the rights of white and black citizens. The state did not allow freemen to vote, although the legislature did consider legalizing black suffrage on several occasions. Additionally, free African Americans had limited ability to testify in court. As
was the case in Kentucky, Indiana’s state laws limited African American’s rights and opportunities. Article XIII of the 1851 Indiana Constitution prevented free African Americans from entering the state and fined both those in violation and the whites who gave them employment. The Indiana exclusion law coincided with a change in Kentucky law requiring newly emancipated African Americans to leave the state. Black Kentuckians who legally obtained their freedom after 1851 had little recourse because Illinois had similar exclusion laws in place before the war. Ohio was the only adjoining free state with no such exclusionary laws. An in-state alliance between black citizens, abolitionists, and the Free Soil party successfully lobbied to repeal Ohio’s laws in 1849, but discrimination remained widespread in the Buckeye State. Most white residents of the Ohio River Valley believed that free African Americans competed with white laborers, created an economic burden on society, and blurred the established racial hierarchy.

The complexity of politics and race in the Ohio River Valley was most evident in growing commercial and manufacturing centers like New Albany, Indiana. Located a small distance upriver from Corydon, New Albany benefited from its position across from Louisville and directly below the Falls of the Ohio. The city experienced a culmination of industrial expansion and labor unrest of the antebellum period that intensified white hostility towards the small, yet growing, black community. Corydon did not experience this type of growth or diversity, because there were fewer available jobs in the small town. Despite the state’s exclusion law, the black community of New Albany grew by nearly half during the 1850s, from a population of 574 in 1850 to 757 in 1860. More important, the number of black men between the ages of twenty and forty—those most likely to compete for semi-skilled or unskilled laboring positions—almost doubled between 1850 and 1860. During the
presidential campaign of 1860, Democrats in New Albany had accused Republicans of campaigning for racial equality and played on the fears of immigrant workers by predicting that a Republican victory would result in emancipation. The class and racial tension that accompanied the political maneuvering of the presidential election almost had resulted in a riot in August, just before the election. The altercation began as a dispute between two workers, a German and an African American, over the use of a well. A mob soon formed after word spread that the black man had fired a shot at his rival. New Albany authorities blamed the unrest on black residents living in the city, who moved to the city after 1851, in violation of the Indiana State Constitution’s provision forbidding black migration into the state. The city marshal responded by warning free black citizens not to protect or aid any African Americans living in the city illegally.12

The first challenge to white supremacy in southern Indiana came during the summer of 1862, before the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, and was most evident in urban centers like New Albany. African Americans seeking freedom used Union victories in Kentucky and Tennessee as opportunities to head north. Many of these freedom-seekers, including fugitive slaves, “contrabands,” and free blacks fleeing the war zone, crossed the Ohio River at Louisville and sought refuge within New Albany’s black community. In late July 1862, another incident occurred which unleashed the building racial tension within the city. On the evening of July 21, two black men allegedly fatally shot one white citizen and wounded another following an exchange of insults. The following morning, a crowd of white men assembled and indiscriminately attacked the city’s black residents. Numbering as many as two hundred, the mob roamed the city, beat a number of black men, and attacked others by throwing stones. By midday, most of the city’s black citizens sought the safety of their
homes, but the mob continued to attack unwary black individuals who traveled to the city from Louisville. That night, the crowd entered the city’s black neighborhoods, attacking several more black citizens and destroying property. According to the *New Albany Daily Ledger*, the most enthusiastic participants were a large number of young boys who threw stones at black citizens and yelled “we’ll kill the damned niggers.” The soldiers patrolling the streets that night were unable to prevent the mob from gathering and demanding the release of several African Americans who had sought safety in the jail. Unable to obtain cannon with which to batter down the jail’s walls, the rioters renewed their sorties into the black neighborhoods the following morning, but by afternoon military and civil authorities had regained order.  

While at first glance, the riot might appear to have been a reaction to the shootings, obviously working-class whites used the incident as an excuse to lash out at the city’s black community. The mob sought out symbols of black achievement or independence, recognitions that contradicted the precepts of white supremacy. The New Albany crowd made their message especially clear by destroying the vineyards and gardens of G. W. Carter, who was a barber and the wealthiest African American in New Albany. A number of the beating victims worked on the river, where black and immigrant laborers often competed for jobs with whites. Because city authorities tried to conceal the riot’s impact, the number of attacks, the level of physical harm to victims, and amount of property damage are unclear. Indeed, although the *Ledger* initially reported that three of the mob’s victims were fatally wounded, the editors subsequently denied that anyone had died as a result of the riot and refuted reports that the mob assaulted black women and children.
Like other wartime riots, including the infamous 1863 New York Draft riot, white violence was not only a reaction to job competition but also a response to wartime political and economic issues. White workers in cities throughout the Union were most susceptible to conscription, inflation, and economic hardship in general. Two Ohio towns, Toledo and Cincinnati, suffered similar such rioting, both in July 1862. In both cases employers were hiring black workers at lower wages, occasionally to replace striking Irish and German workers. In New Albany the situation was similar; many white workers believed that they were suffering while African Americans appeared to be benefiting from a war initiated and prosecuted by a Republican-led government. The editors of the Ledger fanned the fires of white resentment by suggesting that “if the colored residents of this city, who are lawfully so, were to discourage the immigration of Negroes unlawfully, we believe they would get along peaceably and without trouble.” Many white New Albanians, regardless of class, were quick to attribute their various woes to the black “strangers” in their midst.

The New Albany riot demonstrates that racial tension in southern Indiana derived from fear of black migration and competition for jobs. Corydon did not have the same combination of class conflict and racial animosity as New Albany. But white supremacy was essential to Ohio River Valley communities. Rural communities, such as Corydon, offered few opportunities for former slaves. But many white citizens in Corydon and other small towns supported Indiana’s exclusion laws. The violent events in New Albany were a harbinger of the transition that all communities would undergo if the war ended slavery. Resistance to black migration was a concern for many white Hoosiers, but many Kentuckians feared the opposite. Slaves who took advantage of the wartime confusion and headed north were dismantling slavery in Kentucky and removing labor from the state. Whites in southern
Indiana were worried about how emancipation challenged the ideals and principles of white supremacy. Therefore, some white citizens turned to politics to remedy the issue.

In the aftermath of the riot, Democrats in southern Indiana used the incident to further their political platform. The editors of the *Ledger* blamed the violence on Republicans in Congress who initiated debates over issues that instilled in African Americans an “exalted idea of their own importance.” The newsmen attributed the change in black behavior to the political discussion concerning the conduct and outcome of the war, encouraging African Americans to assert their independence and challenge white dominance. The rioters thus attacked the black community in response to perceived threats to white supremacy. Conversely, Republicans in New Albany accused Democrats of allowing the riot to happen and even encouraging the violence in order to gain political power. Indeed, the riot did reinforce the preexisting racial hierarchy in New Albany, because in the aftermath of the violence at least thirty African American families and a number of single black dock workers left the city in search of better prospects. In no small irony, many of these refugees moved across the river to Louisville, located in a slaveholding state, in order to avoid further violence and abuse.

The temporary success of New Albany rioters did not reverse the war’s effect on slavery and the northern migration of freedom-seekers. Union victories in Tennessee, including the taking of Forts Henry and Donelson, caused a considerable increase in the number of African Americans traveling to Indiana. During this campaign, many regiments had black laborers, in spite of the orders excluding runaway slaves from military camps. Individual soldiers enjoyed having workers around and even contemplated sending “contrabands” home to their families. Many Kentucky slaves, like William Webb of
Paducah, kept close watch on political and military developments. Webb escaped and went to Indiana General Lew Wallace’s camp, where the former slave worked as a cook. Even though Wallace had planned to have his wife take Webb back to Indianapolis as a servant, Webb ended up “going to the free country” by on his own, passing himself off as a Confederate prisoner and traveling to Indianapolis, where he simply walked away from the train depot. Many African Americans who arrived in New Albany may gained their freedom in similar fashion. Webb expected to find work in a free state, and a white prisoner who knew Webb told the former slave “to be industrious and not to claim more than [his] labor came to.” Webb’s story depicts how white officers and soldiers attempted to capitalize on black labor, and in doing so they offered a gateway that slaves could exploit.

White border residents could do little to discourage African Americans’ intentions to seek freedom, but they were appalled to find that their fellow Indianans in the military often aided these migrants. Indeed, some Hoosier officers directed former slaves to go to Indiana cities to seek refuge. Shortly after the Confederate army began to withdraw from Kentucky in October 1862, some twelve slaves entered New Albany. While they might have been slaves who fled from the Confederate army or Confederate masters, and therefore Union officers considered them free under the Confiscation Acts, Indiana law nonetheless not only forbade citizens from encouraging African Americans to remain in the state, but also prohibited businesses from hiring illegal migrants. Local Democrats manipulated many white citizens’ concerns about the economic effects of black migration by imploring law officers to remedy the situation “before the city is overrun with worthless runaway slaves.” The local military authorities placed guards at the Ohio River crossings to prevent slaves from entering Indiana at New Albany, despite the fact that many of these African Americans
carried military passes. White residents of southern Indiana justified turning away black migrants by characterizing them as lazy, shiftless, and greedy. Moreover, some border residents, especially Democrats, blamed Lincoln’s Proclamation and abolitionists in the military for encouraging slaves to leave “good homes, where they had plenty.”

Besides preaching about the evils of black migration, white Hoosiers used legal and extra-legal means to resist the effects of emancipation and reaffirm the pre-war racial hierarchy. In late 1862 and early 1863, Hoosier courts fined several individuals for hiring black migrants and made arrangements to detain and expel African Americans who entered the state. Local magistrates intended these steps to quell population growth in the state’s black communities and to discourage local whites who wanted to take advantage of the increase in potential laborers by hiring African Americans at lower wages than those demanded by white workers. White supremacists did, however, approve of one business opportunity that involved free blacks: namely, kidnapping. A number of entrepreneurial individuals seized African Americans, contraband and free alike, in order to sell them into slavery in Kentucky. Among those abducted were several free black citizens from New Albany. Although in the past, the Bell-Wright affair for example, parties of armed rescuers and self-proclaimed diplomats had pursued kidnappers who had fled to Kentucky with white captives, black wartime victims merited no such response from white Hoosiers. Instead, the “military and civil authorities” attempted to stop this commercial activity by arresting some of the purveyors of “this illegal and inhuman traffic.”

Union soldiers, although not necessarily abolitionist, aided the dissolution of slavery in Kentucky and subsequent black migration into Indiana by protecting and employing freedom seekers from Kentucky and elsewhere. Many of the troops from beyond the border
region, including the upper Midwest, were encountering slavery for the first time and were not overly concerned with protecting the institution. Furthermore, as the war progressed, many soldiers began to view slaveholding and disloyalty as synonymous. Although few midwesterners in blue were abolitionists, most were free labor advocates and as such they considered slavery a backward, stagnant, and even detestable labor system. Many of the Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin regiments passing through or operating in Kentucky harbored fugitive slaves at times, even refusing to surrender them when their owners appeared. At least seventeen Indiana regiments violated Kentucky slave law between August 1861 and March 1863. However it should be noted that all came from the central or northern part of the state, with the majority originating in Indianapolis. While it is true that many northern soldiers considered themselves to be in the South once they crossed the Ohio River, most soldiers from the border region held no such illusions. The southern Indiana regiments contained more than a few antislavery advocates, but these men were well aware of the fragile balance of border society. One southern Indiana regiment guarding the river border in October 1862 prevented several African Americans from crossing into Indiana. Still, border regiments could not stem the tide of runaway slaves and contrabands when so many other soldiers were openly assisting these black migrants.

Black enlistment in the Union army presented the ultimate challenge to paternalism as a justification of slavery, but it did not necessarily disrupt white supremacy throughout the valley. When the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863, it allowed African Americans to serve in the Union Army, a provision that was not in the preliminary announcement of September 1862. Some white residents of the free states, especially in the Middle West, recoiled at the idea of arming former slaves. Democrats and Republicans alike
conceded that the prospect of additional manpower and victory over the Confederacy made black enlistment a viable option, especially if it meant reducing the need for conscription.32

As in the rest of southern Indiana, Democrats in Corydon used the emancipation issue to attack Republicans and gain political support among white workers. Corydon did not have a sizeable black community, and consequently did not experience the racial violence that occurred in New Albany, but the lack of African Americans in their midst did not prevent local Democrats from using the issue to garner political support. Indeed, Simeon K. Wolfe published his anti-emancipation opinions in the Democrat before Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation. Wolfe theorized that Democrats who sacrificed for the war effort had a right to dictate what ends the war would achieve. His argument depicted the conflict as a white man’s war, and recommended that it stay that way.33 The day after Lincoln announced the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Wolfe responded by reprinting a lengthy article, titled “The Black Race,” from the New York Herald, arguing that African societies had “no history of advancing civilization itself.”34 Commenting indirectly on the perceived flaws of emancipation, Wolfe expressed white Democrats’ desire to maintain the racial status quo by stating that “the interest of the white race, as well as the black, demands that the condition and locality of the latter should not be interfered with.”35 Democrats generally in Corydon opposed emancipation because they gained a considerable political support from white voters by emphasizing that Republican policy would lead to black migration into southern Indiana. Yet by implying that former slaves would cross the Ohio River, perhaps even settling in Harrison County, Wolfe reflected the interest some border citizens had in slavery’s continuation. Once the proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, Democrats like Wolfe would no longer feel the need to be subtle about their commitment to white supremacy.
Although the pervasive racial tensions among the citizens of New Albany were not as apparent in Corydon, townspeople there still developed political opinions on emancipation based on their understanding of the war’s objectives. The town’s citizens received several reports on the condition of slaves in the Confederacy during the war, including a letter from Col. William H. Gibson of the 49th Ohio Infantry, published in the Democrat. Writing from Tennessee in May, 1862, Gibson stated, “It is my deliberate opinion that, in their present state of ignorance, the slave rather fears than desires emancipation.” Simeon K. Wolfe pointed out that even though Gibson was a Republican, the Union officer still felt that “statesmen had better let the ‘nigger’ alone at present, and address themselves to suppressing this great rebellion.”

A number of soldiers from Corydon disagreed with the president’s policy, but only a few, like Thomas McGrain, Jr., despised the war’s new course enough to leave the service. After McGrain resigned from the 53rd Indiana in May, 1863, he freely admitted that he quit because he deplored the idea of “fighting to free the niggers.”

Although politics influenced people’s attitude towards emancipation, many Unionists believed that any interference with slavery hampered the Union war effort and conflicted with many white soldiers’ reasons for enlisting. Corydon’s citizens did not have the same concerns about black migration as the citizens of New Albany. However, many rural and urban whites throughout southern Indiana disagreed with emancipation on principle, and therefore embraced the Democratic Party with renewed vigor.

While some people pondered emancipation’s relevance to the war, others used the divisive issue to gain political power. Democrats in general used the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation (released in September 1862) to fuel their tirades against Lincoln. In Indiana, politicians spoke to the fears of their white constituency by claiming that
Lincoln’s policy would cause bloody insurrections by barbarous former slaves. Although not all citizens were liable to believe this propaganda, the Democrats did gain support during the fall of 1862. Lincoln’s emancipation policy drained the lifeblood of the Confederacy, but it also drained Lincoln’s political support in Indiana. The Republican Party in Indiana gained many enemies after the Proclamation took effect, even though many Hoosier Republicans insisted that the measure would have no effect besides hastening the end of the war. The state elections on October 14, 1862, settled the issue. Democrats won a significant victory and gained control of both houses of the General Assembly.

The Democratic victory at the polls did not settle the political debate over emancipation and Indiana’s Republicans held firm to their support of Lincoln’s war aims. Because of the scarcity of Republican newspapers in the vicinity of Corydon, ascertaining the opinions of those in favor of emancipation proves difficult. However, several of Corydon’s Republican citizens were outspoken in their disdain for slavery. Although Walter Q. Gresham, Corydon lawyer and colonel in the Union Army, insisted on several occasions that he was not an abolitionist, he welcomed an assault on an institution he considered unjust and morally wrong. During his military service, Gresham saw first-hand how slavery stratified society in the South and was appalled when he learned that his four-year-old son requested a slave of his own. While stationed in Mississippi in December 1862, Gresham wrote his wife that he had “come to the conclusion that none of us will ever be permitted to enjoy peace as long as slavery lasts.” Many Republicans embraced emancipation as a military necessity, a tool that would help end the war and restore peace and prosperity to their community. Helen Porter commented on this eventuality by deducing that “this war is making a good many abolitionists.” Whether they supported Lincoln’s policy out of

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conscience or to bring the war to a swift conclusion, Republicans in Harrison County saw their Democratic neighbors as threatening to the war effort.

A few Corydon citizens showed their support for emancipation and Lincoln’s attack on the institution of slavery by encouraging black enlistment. Judge William Porter—who certainly knew his action was a violation of Indiana state law—was host to a former slave, most likely a “contraband” liberated by an Indiana officer, for a short time during the winter of 1862-63. The Judge’s daughter, Attia, informed a relative in July 1863 that “our little contraband has gone in the army but he is at home now on a furlough.”44 Attia remarked that the young man was very helpful around the house and that the family would miss him after he left. Although there is little documentation pertaining to the Porters’ houseguest, he most likely enlisted in the infantry company that George Lane recruited under the authority of Gov. John Andrew of Massachusetts. Lane, a twenty-four-year-old painter and Corydon resident, received a commission as captain in return for his efforts to enlist free blacks for the 54th Massachusetts. With the help of his neighbor and town constable, William Heth, Lane recruited some twenty men in southern Indiana and filled out the company by obtaining another sixty recruits in Indianapolis.

Some southern Indiana residents criticized Lane’s efforts to recruit for a black regiment, but overall no formal opposition to Lane’s company materialized. Local Democrats doubted that Lane would have any success and characterized his attempt as misguided and foolish. Once black recruits stepped forward, the chiding stopped, but the editors of the Ledger got off a parting salvo by ungenerously admitting “the ‘bone’ has concluded to do a portion of the fighting for the Massachusetts Yanks.” Democrats and Republicans alike slowly realized that recruiting African Americans lessened the economic burden of war. Clearly, some of the black men enlisting in Lane’s Massachusetts company were former slaves who were living in Indiana in
violation of state law. Military service provided an outlet for black men to seek freedom and decreased the possibility that they would compete with white residents for jobs. Black enlistment was also a solution for those who did not welcome the idea of having African Americans as their neighbors. Because the state authorities had put a stop to selling black captives into Kentucky, black military service provided white Hoosiers with another way to decrease the black population. Indiana’s governor, Oliver H. P. Morton, did not authorize recruiting black soldiers in Indiana until November 1863, which meant that Lane’s recruits did not count towards Indiana’s quota. Once Hoosier politicians realized that black recruitment prevented unemployed African Americans from competing for white jobs, provided affordable substitutes, and reduced white men’s vulnerability to the draft, opposition to black military participation subsided.45

The greatest disruption to slavery and white supremacy in the valley occurred during the invasion crisis of 1862, when military and civil authorities conscripted both black and white laborers to prepare defensive positions along the river border. Many of these people, slaveholders or not, believed the war should be conducted exclusively to reunite the Union and not to abolish slavery. The idea of blacks and whites cooperating in a military capacity disturbed valley residents in general, but especially white Kentuckians. Additionally, Kentuckians who refused to provide military assistance to either side detested the fact that their slaves seemed to have no such reservations. In Louisville black conscription consisted of military commanders emptying the jails of contrabands and impressing the city’s free black residents into service. Although one Louisvillian expressed delight “to see the soldiers dashing around [and] catching up the darkies,”46 most citizens concerned with preserving white supremacy did not welcome the conscription of black labor, regardless of the urgency
of their situation. The *Louisville Democrat* questioned the wisdom of mixing black and white laborers, considering the practice “injurious to order, discipline, and progress.” In Cincinnati, the police went into black neighborhoods and brutally impressed young men for labor details. Union army officers stopped this practice and instead called for black volunteers to serve as laborers under a local abolitionist, Judge William W. Dickson. Cincinnati’s Peace Democrats discounted claims that the “Black Brigade” proved the potential of African Americans in the military by retorting “if the blacks did more than the whites, it was because they were more accustomed to manual labor.” Such counterarguments did little to conceal the fact that black labor, free or otherwise, was an effective weapon to wield against the Confederate army.

The presence of Union regiments in Kentucky and the persistent threat of Confederate invasion made it virtually impossible for white Kentuckians to protect their slave property and assert their position at the top of the racial hierarchy. Midwestern soldiers used the military crisis of 1862 as an opportunity to gather laborers from among the state’s black population, which further exacerbated the situation. The Second Confiscation Act, combined with the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, justified in the minds of soldiers and slaves alike their contravention of the laws protecting slave property. The distinction between contraband, free, and slave had become so blurred by October 1862 that many Union regiments did not bother to differentiate between African Americans at all, just as many began to question the distinction between slaveholders as loyal or disloyal. Any black wanderer who came into Union camp symbolized for soldiers another opportunity to strike against the Confederacy and its sympathizers, and for many the holding of slaves was the most visible measure of that sympathy. An incident in October and November that occurred
in Georgetown, the seat of Scott County, is instructive. Citizens from the town, aided by members of the 10th Kentucky Cavalry, threatened to raid the camp of the 22nd Wisconsin Infantry to retrieve black laborers, many of whom were slaves who had escaped from nearby farms. When the men of the 22nd refused to expel them, Kentucky’s new governor, James F. Robinson, urged Col. William L. Utely of the 22nd Wisconsin to release the slaves. Utely insisted that the slaves’ owners were disloyal and therefore the slaves were free. Other cases like this occurred throughout Kentucky, with individual owners (among them some Kentuckians serving in the Union army) generally complaining of losing slaves to the army but seldom receiving satisfaction on the matter.50

Frankfort’s citizens were disappointed to discover that even troops from across the Ohio River were not sympathetic to the rights of slaveholders in Kentucky. The 103rd Ohio Volunteer Regiment, organized in Cleveland, garrisoned the capital from November 1862, to March 1863. The officers and men of the 103rd were typical of many free state troops. They did not want to spend time returning fugitive slaves. Besides they could employ these men to do work around camp, thus making garrison duty a little more bearable. Also, the regiment’s commanding officer, Col. John S. Casement, adhered to a loose interpretation of the Second Confiscation Act. Under Casement’s command, the officers of the 103rd Ohio often refused to return runaway slaves to disloyal citizens. Of course, Casement and his men judged who was loyal and who was not, completely bypassing the legal procedures involved in both confiscation. While attending a lavish dinner at the governor’s mansion, the regiment’s officers became uncomfortable and conflicted when they realized they were being served and waited on by slaves. Although they were not abolitionists, their enjoyment of luxuries provided by slave labor caused some guilt among the Ohio men, all of whom were advocates
of free labor. The tension between the Buckeye troops and Frankfort’s white citizens reached a crescendo when the regiment’s surgeon, Luther D. Griswold, refused to release a slave, named Ben, to a Frankfort slaveholder. After Frankfort’s constable served Griswold with a summons to appear in court, the Ohio surgeon marched to the courthouse with Ben to contest the summons. A crowd gathered and met Griswold with a barrage of jeers and epitaphs, requiring soldiers of the 103rd Ohio to provide Griswold with an armed escort back to camp. Frankfort’s white residents appreciated the 103rd Ohio’s presence, but they also resented the officers’ flagrant disregard of property rights. The soldiers certainly considered the rabid crowd that pursued Griswold to be proslavery, but the white citizens viewed the surgeon’s actions as theft.

As slaves took advantage of the newfound opportunities to gain freedom, white Kentuckians tried to make sense of the new political situation. War Democrats reacted much like their Hoosier counterparts and expressed confidence in their ability to oppose emancipation politically. After the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863, Kentucky Unionists continued to support the war, although they did not support the president’s actions. George D. Prentice, editor of the *Louisville Journal*, articulated this by suggesting that “patriots North and South” should react to the Proclamation by “promoting the overthrow of the rebel army and of the rebel organization, while promoting lawfully and peacefully the overthrow of the abolition faction.” The Proclamation did not technically affect Kentucky. However, Kentuckians were concerned that unscrupulous individuals would use the Proclamation as an excuse to seize slave property. Moreover, many Kentucky Unionists believed Lincoln would not resort to emancipation of any kind, thus confirming
their fears that their allegiance was misplaced. A sizable number of Union officers resigned, or tried to, after January 1, in order to return home and protect their investments.53

Some Frankfort loyalists did not countenance the acts of those who resigned, considering such behavior an inexcusable sign of disloyalty. Orlando Brown, politician, lawyer and former editor of the Commonwealth, thought that the officers who left the service in reaction to the proclamation were doing the Union cause a great deal of harm. In a letter to his son, Orlando Brown, Jr., an officer and adjutant in the 22nd Kentucky Infantry, Brown explained that “at this crisis to flinch now is to give aid to the Rebels and help the secesh to carry Kentucky into the Southern Confederacy.” The father informed his son that in such an eventuality, the family would have to flee not only Frankfort, but the state as a whole, and therefore lose what little property remained to them after two years of war. The elder Brown also implored his son not to resign, even though the younger Brown was unhappy with his regiment’s inactivity and undesirable quarters, reminding his son pragmatically that any officer who resigned was still subject to conscription or draft.54

Frankfort citizens joined other Kentuckians in resisting the social change that accompanied the war’s effect on the peculiar institution. Those runaway slaves and contrabands who did not reach the Indiana shore faced a white population eager to reassert white supremacy over all African Americans, free and slave alike. In Kentucky’s cities and towns, Frankfort included, a small free black population existed in spite of white citizens’ tendency to equate “black” with “slave.” In legal documents, newspapers, and letters, Kentuckians commonly referred to “Negroes” when in fact they were talking about slaves.55 With so many black migrants entering the area, white citizens could not distinguish between free blacks and fugitive slaves. The growing population of free African Americans, legal or otherwise, posed a threat to
the system of racial order that many Kentuckians believed to be the basis of democracy and stability in their communities.

War Democrats in Frankfort, like Peace Democrats, criticized the racial implications of the Emancipation Proclamation. Much like their allies north of the Ohio River, they continued to ridicule secession while objecting to the possible consequences of emancipation. Although these conservative Unionists agreed that freeing slaves and allowing them to enlist would end the war, they also argued that it would undermine the tenants of white society. African Americans freed from slavery who pursued wage labor disproved the supposed benefits of enslavement and aided in the dismantling of the institution. The *Frankfort Commonwealth* asked its readers, “will the inferior race be master of the superior?” The newspaper’s editors also commended George H. Yeaman, a U.S. representative from Henderson, for his speech to Congress, which he had printed and distributed throughout Kentucky. Frankfort Unionists who read the lengthy lecture found Yeaman’s argument familiar and sensible. The congressman mentioned racial inferiority as a reason to oppose emancipation, but also cited “the estimated value of these persons as property, the enormous value of the products of their labor, the intimate connection of that labor with the agriculture of one-third, and with the commerce two-thirds of our people, its connection with business and with credit of other sections of the country.” Even more powerful than Yeaman’s criticism was Gov. James F. Robinson’s full-page denouncement of the act in the *Commonwealth*. Robinson claimed that the proclamation was unconstitutional and that freeing and arming slaves in the South was dangerous because “the ‘Americans of African descent’ [were] the progeny of a brutal ancestry and a different race from our own.” Yeaman and the governor in fact made the same argument. Racism supported a system of servitude that provided
economic stability for the majority of Kentuckians. Emancipation in general endangered the institution of slavery, and therefore jeopardized the prosperity of communities like Frankfort.

Not all Frankfort residents agreed with the governor about the dangers of emancipation. Some people shared the opinions of James Speed, a wealthy Louisville slaveholder and member of the state legislature. Writing from Frankfort shortly after the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, Speed described slavery as “the greatest national sin,” although he admitted that it was “sustained by arguments so plausible and interests so powerful that it is not only difficult, but sometimes perilous to say or do any thing towards emancipation.” Speed did not oppose the Proclamation, but rather speculated that emancipation “must be difficult and may be slow.” The more ardent supporters of emancipation were not workers and small farmers but instead were men like Speed who owned slaves but did not depend of slave labor for their livelihood. Lincoln also received support in Frankfort from unconditional Unionists, who were in favor of the emancipation policy as long as it promised Confederate defeat. The Proclamation’s advocates brought William G. “Parson” Brownlow, a Tennessee Unionist editor and Methodist preacher, to Frankfort in January 1863 to speak at the Masonic Temple in favor of the act. In spite of this effort, Brownlow admitted that there was little hope of gaining unilateral support for the measure in light of the governor’s vehement objection to it.

Throughout the Ohio Valley, Unionist opponents to emancipation and black participation in the war questioned the relevance of emancipation to what they believed was a war to reunite the Union. A deep apprehension over the social consequences of emancipation was a common theme among conservative Unionists. After the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, many Unionists, most of them Democrats, bemoaned the possible
effects of the measure, questioning the judgment of Republican politicians and depicting
servitude as the proper status of African Americans. The editors of the Commonwealth
lamented the fact that “the Negro is improperly in this contest,” blaming both secessionist
and abolitionist “extremists” for committing great wrongs against “the old Union.”62 One
Kentuckian registered his agreement by denouncing the Proclamation in a letter to the.
Commonwealth; emancipation had to be “a slow, careful process of the civil power.” The
crux of this concerned citizen’s argument revolved around what the writer deemed the proper
role of African Americans in society. The anonymous author declared “fighting is not the
calling of the Negro. He is a worker. Let him work.”63

The most notorious reaction by white Kentuckians to the arrival of newly freed African
Americans was the re-enslavement and sale of a large number of black migrants, many of whom
had been legally free. During the Confederate invasion of Kentucky, Union troops who had
previously occupied Tennessee brought former slaves with them when they rushed north to
defend the Ohio River border. Many of the African Americans traveling with the army could
claim freedom under the Confiscation acts. Because Lincoln’s preliminary Proclamation led
many soldiers and slaves to believe that all slaves from Confederate states would be free (even
though technically the measure only included slaves in areas not occupied by Union troops prior
to January 1, 1863), soldiers did not object to leaving their black laborers in Kentucky when
Union troops received orders to head south once more. Local authorities in the Bluegrass, where
many of these recently freed people congregated, captured a large number of “runaways” and
placed them in jail and increasingly so after the Emancipation Proclamation took effect. As
Union troops gained territory in the Confederacy, slaves freed under the proclamation headed
north to take advantage of their newly-won freedom. Like the insidious entrepreneurs of
southern Indiana, enterprising Kentuckians caught these freed slaves and casually sold them back into slavery. Newspaper advertisements attest to the number of “runaways” from Confederate states that Kentucky sheriffs jailed and offered for sale in the event that the owner did not claim the fugitive.64

The reaction of white Kentuckians to having freed slaves in their midst was quick, resolute, and thoroughly illegal. A large community of freedpeople in a slave society blurred the racial definition of free and slave, and therefore confounded white attempts to enforce slavery. Re-enslavement was a method for strengthening slavery as a system of racial separation. Most of the illegal slave sales occurred in Louisville and surrounding counties; according to military estimates, over a thousand such persons fell prey to unscrupulous individuals.65 In April 1863, the Louisville provost marshal, Col. Orlando H. Moore, intervened in a sale that included legally freed contrabands. On May 1, he also issued Special Order Number Twelve, requiring Kentucky citizens to cease all interference with African Americans passing through Louisville into Indiana. Under pressure from Kentuckians, military authorities replaced Moore and instituted a less controversial plan for dealing with contrabands.66 Gen. Jeremiah T. Boyle, commander of the District of Western Kentucky, appointed a “contraband commission” to deal with all disputes concerning the status of African Americans in Louisville. The commission organized contrabands into military labor gangs, which satisfied many slaveholders. Working for wages was still an avenue for advancement for Kentucky slaves and many passed themselves off as contrabands in order to join these work crews.67

In Frankfort, free black workers accompanying the Union Army damaged the racial status quo, implying that freedom was a normal status for African Americans. Two cases indicate whites Kentuckians’ attempts to buttress the racial order at a time when the
circumstances of war muddled racial assumptions. Some of the officers and men in regiments from the free states had black employees who traveled with the soldiers. In January 1863, the Franklin County court brought theft charges against Lafayette Hamilton, a cook for the 19th Ohio Artillery. Jobless and in need of transportation, Hamilton’s attempt to extricate himself from the turmoil of the war-torn Bluegrass went askew. The court found Hamilton guilty of stealing a sorrel mare from Peter Dudley and sentenced the cook to four to eight years in the state penitentiary. This was a harsh penalty, but Frankfort’s elites could not condone this challenge to the community’s racial order. During the hearing, the court officers were preoccupied with the defendant’s status, particularly the question of whether or not he was a slave. Their obsession with Hamilton’s freedom indicates that they doubted that a free black man would come to Kentucky willingly. Hamilton’s attorney, James Harlan, proved the man’s free status by calling Capt. Joseph C. Shields of the 19th Ohio Artillery to testify that Hamilton accompanied the battery from Cleveland. Capt. Shields reported that he had just fired the cook, who had also stolen the captain’s saddle. Capt. Shields was also involved in a case against William Bradford, another free black cook who Shields dismissed from the military camp. Although the plaintiffs accused Bradford only of the theft of a shirt and a pair of socks, litigation also revolved around Bradford’s legal status. Frankfort’s legal authorities struggled to identify the standing and background of African Americans who appeared in the community. In both cases the accused men had challenged white authority by stealing items, a bad omen for the racial status quo. If black residents simply took what they wanted, then slaves would follow suit and take their freedom when they had the chance.

The ambiguous status of black strangers did not seal the fate of slavery in the Bluegrass; rather, the eventual commencement of black enlistment in Kentucky signaled its final demise.
Although African Americans previously had served in the Union army as volunteer soldiers under the Militia Act of July 1862, the Act made no provision for the drafting of slaves. Only when Congress passed the Conscription Act of February 24, 1864, over the vehement objections from some Kentucky statesmen, did Union provost marshals begin registering black Kentucky men of military age.\textsuperscript{69} The Act offered loyal slaveowners up to three hundred dollars for each slave who enlisted; disloyal owners received no such compensation. Enthusiastic black volunteers eventually outstripped the Union military’s efforts to warm white Kentuckians to the idea of slaves and freemen leaving fields and factories to fight Confederates.\textsuperscript{70} In the face of corruption, violence, and vociferous white opposition, black men rushed to recruitment centers like Camp Nelson, in Jessamine County.

Like all soldiers, Kentucky freedmen faced danger and hardship during their military service while struggling against the region’s prevailing sense of white supremacy. A number of Franklin County’s freedmen and slaves journeyed to Camp Nelson in August and September 1864 to join the 5th U.S. Colored Cavalry. Willis Smith, John Beckley, and Leander Bramlette left their homes and slavery in order to serve in the regiment. Smith and his comrades found expanded freedoms at Camp Nelson, including exposure to education and religious sermons. Indeed, the Rev. John G. Fee, a well-known Kentucky abolitionist and missionary, labored to provide black recruits with as much instruction in reading and writing as possible for black recruits before they left with their respective regiments.\textsuperscript{71}

Military service was not entirely a liberating and uplifting experience for Kentucky freedmen. Just as slaveholders exploited slaves for profit, some recruiting officers did the same thing under the guise of military duty. While recruiting for the 5th U.S. Colored Cavalry (U.S.C.C.), Capt. Thomas Bunch used his position to earn some money by recruiting slaves and
then offering to release them if their owners paid him one hundred dollars. Bunch threatened those owners who would not pay and kept the slaves of those who did. Even African Americans who willingly volunteered experienced disillusionment after joining the army. Black soldiers had difficulty providing for the welfare and safety of their families. The widow of one black cavalryman suffered severe beatings at the hands of her master. Even after the government emancipated the families of black soldiers, corruption in the army hampered soldiers’ ability to care for loved ones. In the 5th U.S.C.C., officers refused to let wives visit their husbands and cheated the enlisted men out of money and rations. Some of the officers took advantage of their regiment’s inactivity by renting out the soldiers’ labor to Kentucky farmers who needed land cleared. One member of the unit complained to the secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, about the abuse and surmised that “its now more than what . . . masters would have done.” Not all officers were intent on profiting from their positions, yet many former slaves were unable to escape exploitation in military service.

Although unscrupulous officers treated black enlisted men like commodities throughout the war, many white soldiers eventually gained a grudging respect for black Kentucky soldiers. While on a cavalry raid in Saltville, Virginia, in early October, the men of the 5th U.S.C.C. were part of a brigade composed of white troops from Ohio and Michigan. Colonel James S. Brisbin, a white officer assigned to Kentucky’s black regiments, reported that during the march into Virginia the black cavalry troopers “were made the subject of much ridicule and many insulting remarks by the white troops, and in some instances petty outrages, such as the pulling off the caps of colored soldiers, [and] stealing their horses.” While returning to camp after the short but intense assault on the Confederate salt-works, the white soldiers who had harassed and insulted the black troops were now silent.
Most white Kentucky citizens did not experience even this reluctant change of heart concerning black military participation. Kentucky’s black soldiers faced all of the same dangers as their white counterparts, without the same degree of respect and recognition. White residents of Frankfort and Franklin County opposed the principle of black Kentuckians serving in the military but were often more concerned about their loss of property and laborers. Many slaveholders took the necessary steps to ensure that they would receive compensation for slaves who enlisted in the military. When wealthy Frankfort businessman Alexander “A. W.” Macklin died in December 1863, he left his family a recently revised will that excluded his son Alexander, who was serving with Morgan’s cavalry (as a Confederate soldier, any property in Alexander’s name was subject to confiscation). Although it may have been a painful decision, the action proved beneficial to Macklin’s estate. When his beneficiaries applied for compensation for enlisted slaves, they swore they had never “joined or [had] been concerned in any insurrection or rebellion, [and] we have never been in arms against the United States.” The Macklin family’s connection to the Confederacy through their prodigal son did not jeopardize claims for slave compensation. The family members also had to swear that they had never given voluntary aid or comfort to anyone who rebelled against the federal government. Unfortunately for Alexander, the will mentioned him only as a beneficiary of Macklin’s widow. The young man’s determination to serve the Confederacy complicated his future rights to his inheritance.

The evaporation of slavery as both a labor system and racial hierarchy caused economic hardship, resentment, and political conflict for slaveholding Kentuckians. Even Unionists who justified the emancipation as a war measure admitted that many Kentuckians resented such a rapid change in the status of black Kentuckians. In Indiana, however, the end of slavery sent shock waves through communities but did not immediately affect the prosperity of white
Hoosiers. Although Hoosiers reacted to emancipation with violence and intimidation, their preemptive strikes against the racial equality only increased black migration that Democrats warned would accompany emancipation. In both Frankfort and Corydon, many citizens demonstrated a concern for the continuance of white supremacy and its accompanying economic benefits. White citizens in Corydon noticed an increase in political conflict because of emancipation, but experienced no immediate material benefits or sacrifices. Enlistment of slaves seemed to solve the problem of black migration. In the case of Frankfort, however, military interference with slavery brought monetary loss. Additionally, black enlistment allowed former slaves openly to challenge the racial hierarchy. Where in Indiana, the practical demise of slavery was met with a pistol shot, in Kentucky, slavery and its accompanying economic and social relationships collapsed with a resounding cannon blast.
Chapter Six

“The Wolf Was Upon Us”

While Frankfort experienced turmoil during the Confederate invasion, the people of Corydon enjoyed relative peace and quiet throughout 1862. Resistance to emancipation intensified the conflict in Kentucky between secessionist citizens and their loyalist neighbors. Harrison Countians paid attention to the situation below the Ohio River, especially in Meade County, but the prospect of guerrilla war in Indiana appeared unlikely. Yet, during the summer of 1863, the people of Corydon experienced a side of war they had hoped to avoid. When John Hunt Morgan led a sizeable force of Confederate raiders into Harrison County in early July 1863, politics divided the community. Subsequently it suffered from the economic effects of the war and volunteerism and conscription left the town virtually undefended. The raid brought further financial loss and political division but, more importantly, it demonstrated the vulnerability of the Indiana border to attack from Confederate cavalrmen including those, regular and irregular, from Kentucky. In the aftermath of Morgan’s raid, many of Corydon’s leading citizens turned away from the bitter fighting in Kentucky and looked to their town’s preservation and prosperity. In so doing, these Hoosiers erected a border barricade that changed relations with their neighbors on the south side of the Ohio River.

Southern Indiana’s introduction to border war was significant because it occurred as the war steadily hardened, becoming a conflict involving civilians and no longer solely between enlisted armies. Especially in the West, Civil War armies began to rely on foraging, taking what they needed from local civilians. Military commanders, including the infamous Gen. William T. Sherman, also began to adopt the strategy of destroying valuable resources, such as railroads, factories, or supplies, to keep them out of enemy hands. Historian Mark Grimsley notes that
soldiers occasionally plundered and pillaged, but that such behavior did not comprise a cohesive strategy. In reference to the war in the West in the spring of 1863, Grimsley states that federal commanders had not “yet harnessed those energies in major operations against Southern infrastructure and society.” Guerrilla war affected the evolution of Union strategy because it distorted the distinctions between combatants and non-combatants. Morgan, though not a guerrilla in the true sense but one of numerous “regularly commissioned Confederate officers who fought in unorthodox but mostly above-board fashion,”1 often operated behind enemy lines in Kentucky. Indeed, in the summer of 1863 Morgan dared to take his force north of the Ohio River. In so doing, Morgan released the very forces that Sherman and others were holding back for fear of receiving criticism from the northern public and fostering resentment among southern civilians. The main difference in the Union and Confederate intensification of warfare was that Morgan’s raid into the Old Northwest was a method of retaliation, with not real strategic value to the Confederate war effort.

Hoosier residents of the river border experienced the whole spectrum of irregular war from 1863-64, including violence between Indiana citizens, a true civil war. Throughout the succession of cavalry raids, guerrilla attacks, and crowd violence, civilians and military officials alike characterized the perpetrators of all of these incidents uniformly as guerrillas. Historians have since been similarly divided in their characterizations of irregular warfare. Robert R. Mackey provides useful categories for the different types of irregular warfare common to the Upper South during the Civil War. Using Civil War era military theory, Mackey posits the distinctiveness of guerrillas compared to organized units that used guerrilla tactics, applying the term “partisans” to “elite conventional forces given an unconventional role.” On the spectrum of irregular war, Morgan’s cavalry occupied the opposite end when compared to guerrillas, who
were not organized or operating in any official capacity. However, Mackey argues that guerrillas “closely resemble the soldiers of insurgent movements of the twentieth century, but, in general, lacked the ideological motivation normally associated with the latter.”

T.J. Stiles, in contrast, has argued that many of Missouri’s guerrillas were “proslavery extremists” who acted out of personal conviction instead of defiance to Union occupation alone. Thus Missouri’s guerrilla war between Unionists and secessionists was “ideological rather than cultural or geographic.”

Both Morgan’s cavalry and the less-organized guerrillas had ideological motivations, which may explain the tendency of contemporaries to conflate the two.

To cloud matters further, the violence and confusion of war resulted in groups of bandits, often Union and Confederate deserters, who took advantage of the situation for personal gain or perverse pleasure. Mackey includes these individuals with the category of “bushwhackers,” a term military authorities applied to men who acted individually against armies, often striking from ambush and withdrawing to safety.

Malevolent behavior was certainly a part of guerrilla identity, but even bushwhackers believed that the employment of terroristic violence achieved a political or ideological objective. Michael Fellman argues that guerrillas acted within a “moral structure” that they constructed to justify the use of violence and terror, an explanation that fails to account for men either who did not subscribe to this code of morality or who abandoned it. Mark Grimsley describes guerrillas as ranging from “politically citizens” to “simple outlaws.” For him, the boundaries between partisans, guerrillas, and criminals were flexible, and “it was not uncommon for individual guerrillas to gravitate from one group to another.”

The categories associated with irregular units are useful, but the pressures of war often caused men to shift from partisan raider to guerrilla, from guerrilla to thief, and back again. Cavalry raiders, unlike guerrillas or bandits, had to be selective about which roles they assumed, and when.
Opportunity, not consistency, was the most important factor in the behavior and tactics of Morgan’s raiders. While they were not guerrillas in the strictest sense, Confederate raiders employed guerrilla methods when it was convenient or advantageous.

The fluidity of irregular warfare explains how southern Indiana, a relatively peaceful border until the spring of 1863, quickly devolved into an embattled borderland of violence and destruction. In the case of Kentucky, James B. Martin sees guerrilla violence as part of border warfare and differentiates between raiders, war rebels (citizens who take up arms), and bandits. Additionally, Martin’s evidence demonstrates a clear connection between John Hunt Morgan’s command and the small bands of guerrillas that terrorized Unionists; most of the “war rebel” or “home rebel” leaders once belonged to Morgan’s cavalry. B. Franklin Cooling’s research supports this fluid definition of guerrilla war, noting that in Tennessee and Kentucky the separate levels of people’s war, “often blurred in defiance of easy interpretation.” The people’s war included guerrilla war, but it could also encompass fighting between militia and volunteer armies. During Morgan’s raid through Indiana and Ohio, Confederate cavalry assumed various rolls. Historians have the luxury of categorizing participants, but bitterness often prevented victims from seeing past their own experience.

Morgan’s raid on Corydon initiated two years of border conflicts in the surrounding area that assumed varying forms, including occasional partisan and guerrilla raids as well as more frequent acts of theft and destruction. These patterns of warfare existed in the southern half of Kentucky early in the war generally and after the Confederate invasion of 1862 they characterized the war in Meade County more particularly. The guerrilla conflict eventually spilled over the border into Indiana. Historians of John Hunt Morgan’s military career have offered several explanations for his raid into Indiana and Ohio, but the most recent interpretation
revolves around Morgan’s overconfidence and his desire to redeem his honor. After Morgan married Martha “Mattie” Ready in December 1862, some Confederate military personnel and civilians claimed that the nuptials dulled the raider’s sense of daring and bravado. Such allegations partially explain Morgan’s elaborate planning for his precarious raid through two free states. Morgan’s bid to defend his honor explains why he sought such a difficult task as crossing the Ohio River, but it does not give reason for Morgan’s change in methods. The Confederate raider adopted the common guerrilla tactic of intimidating and victimizing enemy civilians, whereas he previously avoided such reprisals.

Before Morgan’s raid, a few parties of Confederate raiders crossed the Ohio River to strike at their adversaries, but they achieved little other than to arouse apprehension and suspicion among southern Indianans. The earliest incursion of Kentucky raiders into the Hoosier State was at Newburgh, a small town near Evansville that lay across the river from Henderson. The Confederate raiders seized a considerable amount of weaponry and ammunition from a Union hospital and depot before returning to Kentucky prior to the arrival of Union gunboats. The episode proves notable because witnesses implicated both Kentucky and Indiana citizens as Confederate accomplices and scouts, although they may have been acting out of paranoia or spite. Yet many border citizens easily found the accusations plausible. Additionally the violence and secessionist activity in Meade County made Corydon citizens aware that a similar raid could occur in their neighborhood. In November 1862, Confederate raiders staged another raid in the Evansville area. Once again, this incident shocked Hoosiers because the invasion force consisted of Kentucky border citizens who knew their victims.

The people of Harrison County comprehended the reality of guerrilla war in their vicinity after a small group of rebel scouts spent several days operating in southern Indiana. On June 17,
1863, a party of approximately sixty men under the command of Capt. Thomas Hines crossed the river into Crawford County. Hines’s group was on more of a scouting mission than an outright raid. The Confederate operatives passed themselves off as Union soldiers in search of deserters, but the marauders did stop occasionally to steal horses and other property from the locals. On June 18, elements of Crawford County’s Legion companies discovered the invaders and sent messengers to neighboring Harrison County with news of the guerrilla presence. Corydon’s Legion companies responded quickly to what citizens later deemed an attack by “land-pirates.” A force of almost one hundred Legion members set out for the neighboring county, while a cavalry detachment went to Mauckport to guard the river. Capt. Hines escaped into Kentucky by swimming the Ohio River, but detachments of the Indiana Legion ensnared the rest of the guerrilla band and recovered most of the stolen property. The excitement and violence of war was no longer a distant abstraction to the people of Corydon. Citizens knew that they were likely targets for additional guerrillas searching for plunder.

Hines’s raid further exacerbated political divisions within the community that the debate over emancipation had already complicated. A New Albany resident wrote to Governor Morton on June 17, 1863 (by coincidence the day Hines’s men secretly crossed the Ohio), to voice concern over the possibility of a raid in the vicinity. Alluding to the detrimental effects of political discord, the citizen asked the governor whether “it ever occur[red] to your mind that the next rebel raid in force would be made in southern Indiana with the expectation that the copperheads would join them?” Indeed, some of the captured Confederates reported that they anticipated aid and even recruits from secessionist sympathizers in southern Indiana. Democrats countered this claim with stories of local resistance to the incursion, which to them proved that Hoosiers had no “sympathy whatever for the rebel soldiers or the rebel cause.” Democrats in
southern Indiana opposed the “radical” politics associated with the Republican administration, but they also voiced their disgust for the guerrillas’ “horse-stealing propensities.” These War Democrats asserted their right to fight simultaneously for political control of their communities and the preservation of the Union.

The partisanship also hampered efforts to respond to the threat of further raids and strengthen the border defenses. In the aftermath of Hines’s foray across the river, Republicans in Indianapolis admonished “butternut legislators” for opposing the creation of the Legion. Some Republicans also blamed representatives of the 2nd Congressional District, which included Harrison County, for sending the 5th Indiana Cavalry to Kentucky earlier in the year rather than allow the regiment to remain at Mauckport. The citizens of Corydon wanted the 5th Indiana to clear the guerrillas out of Meade County and protect Unionists there. But supporters of the state’s governor implied that border Democrats conspired to prevent state troops from occupying southern counties out of disdain for the Union cause. Republicans politicized the Hines incident in order to cast doubt on the loyalty of Democrats in general, but these partisan Unionists specifically questioned the allegiance of border residents such as those in Harrison County.

The bitter political struggles emanating from the emancipation controversy hampered citizens’ ability to provide for the safety and economic stability of their community. Border residents, regardless of political affiliation, were increasingly concerned about their planned response to future guerrilla infiltrations. In their opinion, the state government was responsible for providing border defense. At the beginning of the war, Gov. Oliver H. P. Morton promised to build a telegraph line to help the towns and cities along the Ohio River prepare themselves in case of invasion. Yet by summer 1863, the state had not started building even the telegraph
Advocates of the telegraph in New Albany and Corydon believed that this lack of initiative offered proof that the state government in Indianapolis was unreceptive to border citizens’ needs. Some of the governor’s critics in Corydon opined that if they had the telegraph, the Legion could have apprehended Hines’s scouts immediately after the group entered the state. The Unionist elite also valued the telegraph’s potential for commercial activity, including allowing merchants to conduct business by wire.\textsuperscript{16} Border citizens may have overestimated the importance of a telegraph to the defense and economic growth of border communities, but many Democrats believed the lost opportunity symbolized the state government’s growing disdain for the Ohio River counties.

The political discussions that followed the Hines incident did not obscure the fact that larger, more disastrous guerrilla raids on the river border would likely follow. The citizens of Corydon and other border towns had reason to prepare for another Confederate attack. One of Hines’s men boasted to his captors that Hines’s group was the vanguard of a larger invasion force that would enter Indiana during the following two weeks.\textsuperscript{17} On June 21, the excitement of the awaited Confederate main force caused one anxious civilian to report that Confederate cavalry were crossing the Ohio River in the southwest corner of the county. The mounted group was actually a group of Kentucky Home Guard responding to rumors that Hines’s men were still at large. The reported sighting of less than one hundred armed horsemen on the southern bank of the river ballooned into rumors of nine hundred Confederate cavalry, already in the state and attempting to destroy railroad linkage. Upon learning that the news was false, the editors of the New Albany Daily Ledger attributed the exaggeration to poor communication and the lack of the much-anticipated telegraph line.\textsuperscript{18}
The false alarm did not embarrass locals, but instead gave them reason to laud their ability to react in a time of crisis. The people of Corydon celebrated the swift and decisive local reaction of Legion companies and volunteers to the supposed threat. Col. Lewis Jordan, the commander of Harrison County’s Legion regiment, gathered about two hundred men in the courthouse square less than two hours after news of the “invasion” reached him. Corydon’s elite were proud that over the course of the next day, the streets of their town were crowded with some one thousand Legion troops, and another 1,300 Legion members and volunteers—most of them from New Albany and other nearby communities—were garrisoned at strategic points throughout the county. Corydon’s cavalry company swelled to 150 (twice its normal size) and headed to the Blue River to prevent the enemy from escaping while another one hundred mounted volunteers patrolled other crossing points. The community’s collective response deflected Republican claims of widespread disloyalty in southern counties and demonstrated that border citizens could defend themselves without direct support from the rest of the state.

The Hines’s affair and the subsequent phantom invasion renewed citizens’ confidence in their ability to prepare for and rebuff a large enemy force while creating the impression of bipartisan cooperation. Border citizens’ eagerness to protect their homes, property, and families created this temporary bipartisanship. Despite Simeon K. Wolfe’s comment on the local reaction to the false alarm that “the people without regard to party differences rallied manfully, and we don’t believe they will or should submit to be basely slandered in the future,” once the immediate threat passed, infighting and political disagreements resumed. Democrats in southern Indiana soon used the opportunity to dismiss Republican claims that the “butternuts” of the river border were southern sympathizers. The term “butternut,” in this case used in a derogatory fashion, referred to rural occupants (often of southern ancestry) of the lower northwest who used
walnuts or butternuts to die their clothing a light brown color. The editors of the *Ledger* maintained that Hines’s men decided to cross the river to recruit for the Confederate army after reading Republican newspaper articles reporting rampant disloyalty in Indiana. Hines’s detachment likely never seriously considered recruiting. If they did expect southern Indianans to join them, their first mistake was their having taken horses and other property from potential converts.

Military authorities took immediate action after the Hines’s raid and arrested locals suspected of aiding the rebels. The provost guard arrested several individuals in the wake of the raid, including A. J. Montgomery, a resident of New Amsterdam. Montgomery’s arrest and subsequent charge of being a rebel sympathizer surprised Corydon’s citizens. While some knew of Montgomery’s “sentiments,” they believed in his loyalty, largely because his three brothers were Union soldiers. The Louisville provost guard also took into custody three Kentuckians who lived across the river from New Amsterdam and accused them of helping Hines and his men. While all of these men spent time in the military prison at Louisville, not everyone the Union army detained was guilty of such disloyalty. The overzealous provost guard also arrested Dr. Joshua Sonner, a prominent Corydon citizen, whom the soldiers accused of trying to help a prisoner escape after the skirmish at the Blue River. In truth, Sonner was trying to escort his captive to Leavenworth, in neighboring Crawford County. After a brief investigation, the Louisville provost marshal cleared the doctor of all charges. As the danger posed by raids and guerrilla war to the community increased, so did the prospects of danger from within.

After the events of late June, citizens were more aware of the possibility of continued guerrilla sorties across the river border. Yet defensive preparations were contingent on the rhythm of life in an agricultural community. People realized that any future invaders, like
Hines’s group, would be mounted and moving too rapidly for the Legion’s infantry companies to pursue them. Simeon K. Wolfe urged his readers and constituents to organize companies of “mounted minute men” in every town and village in the border region. In referring to Hines’s failed raid, Wolfe proposed that “a few more such defeats will teach these bold and wicked free booters that this is not the place for them to do their devilish work.”

Men from Corydon and the surrounding region answered Wolfe’s call by forming additional Legion companies in the wake of Hines’s raid. These measures were predicated on the ability of men to leave their homes quickly and form up as cohesive units. During the false alarm, Col. Jordan and other Legion officers proved that they could deploy their companies within twenty-four hours under normal conditions. However, in early July, farmers and laborers turned their attention from guerrilla fighting in order to pursue the time-consuming and labor-intensive process of cutting, gathering, and stacking wheat. Most farmers worked together to help bring in the harvest and pooled resources like labor, horses, and farm equipment. Besides, the main force that Hines’s men warned of had not yet arrived and, if it were to come, citizens felt confident and prepared.

Such confidence was soon dashed. On July 7, John Hunt Morgan’s raiding party of almost 2,500 cavalry and four artillery pieces occupied the hills above Brandenburg and vowed to test Corydon’s resolve and readiness. Writers have recorded the narrative of Morgan’s Raid through Indiana and Ohio many times. The Confederate cavalry’s successful river crossing and their short skirmish with Legion elements outside of town soon lent themselves to romanticization and imaginative storytelling. The raid’s significance to Corydon’s wartime experience is more aptly conveyed through an assessment of its impact on a community already buckling under the economic and political pressures of war. Although perhaps only a coincidence, Morgan’s command arrived in Harrison County while citizens tended the wheat
harvest. The Confederate raid forced citizens to choose between sacrificing collectively and selflessly for their community and acting individually to protect their family and property.

Union authorities knew of the Confederate military presence in Kentucky, but army commanders did not anticipate Morgan’s intentions. They thus failed to prevent him from reaching the Ohio River. For a short time, commanders believed Morgan intended to attack Louisville, allowing the Confederates to circle to the west around the city. On July 8, Union officers throughout the river border learned that Morgan took Brandenburg and seized two steamboats. The Union command was under the false impression that Morgan’s force boarded the steamboats and was headed downriver towards Cairo, Illinois, or Columbus, Kentucky.26 While Union officers guessed at Morgan’s whereabouts, the Legion artillery from Crawford County, consisting of but one small cannon, arrived near Mauckport by boat and joined a detachment of the Harrison County Legion. The captain in command of the Legion’s lone gun reported afterwards that he believed only a few hundred Confederates without artillery occupied the opposite bank. The gunners thus refrained from disabling the boats and fired on the enemy troops instead, largely because the Legion officers were reluctant to destroy the two valuable river vessels. The men realized their mistake only after the Confederate four-gun battery opened fire from a hill above Brandenburg. The artillery crew had to abandon the gun, leaving only two Legion companies to oppose the crossing of Morgan’s substantial force.27

Corydon’s defenders and the Confederate raiders spent the afternoon and evening of July 8 preparing for the inevitable raid on the town. Some of the residents of the southern portion of Harrison County fled to Corydon with whatever property they could carry. The rebel cavalry took food, tack, livestock, fodder, and whatever else they wanted from the houses and villages in the area. Those citizens who stayed behind had little success in protecting their belongings,
although a few people were able to hide their horses and livestock. In Corydon, Col. Lewis Jordan sent several dispatches to Maj. Thomas W. Fry in New Albany, warning of the Confederate approach and asking for assistance. Fry received the request that afternoon and sent messengers to notify Jordan that help was coming. Around fifteen of the town’s wealthier citizens, including Judge William Porter (a prominent Republican) and Simeon K. Wolfe (a Democratic politician and editor), bolstered the Legion’s firepower with their newly purchased Henry rifles. The town’s defenders also began building breastworks behind a ridge south of Corydon. If reinforcements from New Albany arrived within twenty-four hours, as they had during the false alarm of late June, the prospects were good for holding off the Confederate raiders.28

Hoosiers were familiar with Morgan and his raids into Kentucky, but the Confederate raiders were usually lenient on civilians, often taking only food or fresh mounts. Once in Indiana, however, Confederate raiders were determined to exact retribution from inhabitants and reap the benefits of raiding a state not yet touched, at least directly, by war.29 On July 9, the Legion cavalry and a number of mounted minute-men spread out along the roads south of town and prepared to ambush the Confederate attackers. The townspeople knew that they could not stop the larger enemy force, but they hoped to slow down the approaching enemy and give the troops from New Albany time to arrive. Capt. William Farquar ordered detachments of cavalry to cover the approaches to town, including a small group that formed a skirmish line along the Corydon-Mauckport Road, approximately four miles south of town. The squad of about twenty-two Legion cavalry prepared to make a stand near Reverend Peter Glenn’s house. Glenn’s son, John, was a member of this unit and likely suggested his father’s farm as a defensible position. The Hoosier cavalrymen charged forty advancing Confederate cavalry and killed one of them,
Private John Dunn of the 5th Kentucky Cavalry. When the remainder of the Confederate regiment arrived, the Hoosier horsemen withdrew towards Corydon. Elsewhere, stubborn citizens distracted the approaching raiders by firing from concealed positions and then withdrawing. The people of Corydon were determined to protect their property and livelihood from the notorious rebel raiders.30

The short skirmish at the Glenn farm offers one of the more infamous aspects of the raid on Corydon, yet one that is representative of how fairly conventional skirmishes often devolved into scenes of violent retribution. Shortly after the cavalry retreated, Confederate troopers shot Peter Glenn and set fire to the house. A number of variations on the incident appeared over time, including a version that suggests a few of the raiders recognized Glenn and murdered him because he was an abolitionist.31 The Confederate attack on the Glenn farm and the intense skirmishing between the Legion and the 5th Kentucky Cavalry exemplify how the distinctions between military and civilian eventually melted away during the raid. Later newspaper reports indicated that Peter Glenn’s wife, Catherine, and his daughter-in-law were in the house when Confederate reinforcements arrived and discovered the body of their comrade. The rebel officers concluded that gunmen inside the house killed Dunn and ordered the house destroyed. The Confederate accounts depict Glenn and his son as “bushwhackers” while Legion reports claimed that the rebels told the minister to surrender and then murdered him in cold blood. Both versions attempt to detach the shooting and burning from the earlier skirmish between Confederate and Legion cavalry. The end result, however, was the same. Peter Glenn bled to death in his front yard; John Glenn received bullet wounds in both thighs that left him crippled; and the women watched their husbands suffer while the house and everything in it went up in flames.32
Morgan’s raid introduced many Hoosiers to the brutality of guerrilla war, and the affair at the Glenn farm mirrored countless similar occurrences in Kentucky, Missouri, and other border regions. Although Morgan’s troops were an organized cavalry unit, at points during the raid these regular soldiers behaved much like guerrillas, exacting personal retribution through violence and terror. The Glenn incident was an example of what B. Franklin Cooling calls the “blurring of distinctions” between organized partisan units and armed civilians. Morgan’s men routinely set fire to buildings occupied by “bushwhackers” in order to discourage further resistance. If the Indianans’ reports of the incident are accurate, the Confederates destroyed the Glens’ home because they sought revenge for their dead compatriot and wanted to punish Peter Glenn for opposing them. Burning homes was a common retributive act among guerrillas who sought to eliminate political and physical resistance to their cause. Perhaps the line between Confederate raiders and guerrillas was blurry, but Morgan’s men had clearly crossed well beyond that boundary on several occasion in southern Indiana and Ohio, including the affair at the Glenn house. Kentucky Confederates harbored much resentment against the Hoosier Unionists who helped keep Kentucky in the Union, and continued to provide men and supplies for the Union army. The men who followed Morgan risked losing their property, slaves, or even their freedom, if they returned home. The Glenns were the victims of border justice at the hands of Kentucky raiders who resented Hoosiers who helped keep Kentucky in the Union and aided in turning back Confederate attempts to occupy the state.33

Writers and local enthusiasts refer to the thirty-minute fight that preceded Morgan’s capture of the town as the “Battle of Corydon,” even though participants and military authorities always referred to the incident as a “fight” or a “raid.” The Confederate troops made one poorly conceived charge against the entrenched Legion companies before encircling the defenders. The
Legion and their volunteers retreated into town, but they surrendered after Morgan’s artillery fired on several buildings occupied by women and children. Perhaps something more akin to a full-fledged battle would have occurred had reinforcements from New Albany arrived. Gen. Jeremiah T. Boyle, who commanded the state and federal troops in the Louisville area, believed that Morgan intended to attack New Albany, and as a result refused to let the Legion companies go to the aid of their comrades in nearby Corydon. William Hisey, the Harrison County treasurer, wrote to Gov. Morton asking for Gen. Boyle’s resignation on the grounds that the Union commander let “rebel cavalry, with artillery, destroy a country town.” Although Hisey spoke with the bitterness of a man who lost $786.87 in cash and property to the raiders, the complaint was not totally unfounded. Boyle’s inactivity in part explains why the Legion mustered less than five hundred defenders to oppose Corydon, when almost three weeks earlier, over one thousand state troops had garrisoned the town. For Corydon’s citizens, the raid exposed the flaws in Indiana’s militia organization. Once the community faced a real threat, former friends who had no vested interest in Corydon’s protection were nowhere to be found.

Although Hisey exaggerated when he claimed that Corydon was destroyed, the effects of the raid were, in truth, substantial. The raiders stole or damaged over eighty thousand dollars in property in Harrison County alone. Horses and tack were the most common items taken, although Morgan’s guerrillas helped themselves to valuables, food, cash, and clothing. The raiders did not abduct the permanent black residents of Corydon, but black citizens suffered the same hardships as their white neighbors. In at least one case, they suffered even more. The Confederates took only one prisoner, a young black man. Attia Porter complained that Morgan’s troops “kidnapped our little negro and kept him three weeks.” The captive was a former slave who had recently joined the 54th Massachusetts and was staying with the Porter family. The
Confederate raiders routinely seized contrabands in order to return them to slavery and Morgan’s men were clearly oblivious to the fact that their captive was Union soldier. If they had known who their prisoner was, they would have doubtlessly executed him. Besides the odd kidnapping, the raiders took horses from farmers, often leaving only the animals unfit for cavalry service. Merchants suffered the highest monetary loss, including Samuel J. Wright who lost approximately $5,524 in merchandise from his store in Corydon.\textsuperscript{38} Wright was so financially burdened by the raid that he put an ad in a local paper asking all of his customers to pay their debt to him because “Morgan’s band of thieves [had] robbed me of at least half my goods.”\textsuperscript{39} At the beginning of the war, Wright accepted the potentially lucrative position of quartermaster for the 6\textsuperscript{th} Legion regiment. In January 1864, Wright resigned as quartermaster, citing the financial burden of the post, supply difficulties, and the raid’s effect on his business. Wright eventually sold his store and fell back on his legal training.\textsuperscript{40} The raiders purposely targeted businessmen, charging a five-hundred-dollar protection fee for three of the community’s mills. The raiders tended to avoid needless destruction, although some of the rebel troopers burned a flour-mill outside of Mauckport because snipers allegedly fired from the building.\textsuperscript{41}

Farmers, laborers, mechanics, and tradesmen who lost far less monetarily than Wright also risked privation, especially those farmers trying to finish the wheat harvest. Many citizens lost horses, essential for many of the jobs related to harvesting and marketing surplus goods. Farmers who could not afford cutting and threshing machinery usually cut by hand, but they still used horses to stomp the wheat away from the stalk (known as “treading”).\textsuperscript{42} Wheat growers who owned, or had access to, a threshing machine needed horses to power the equipment. Some threshers required as many as ten horses, thus requiring neighbors to combine their resources during the harvest. This network of reciprocity allowed farmers to bring in the harvest quickly,
but the raid upset that system by decreasing the number of available horses. The raiders took between three and four hundred horses in Harrison County, while the Union cavalry in pursuit of Morgan took an additional 150 mounts. Farmers who had already cut their wheat lost some of their crop to Confederate and Union horsemen. Both the raiders and their pursuers took fodder from citizens, even resorting to taking wheat out of the shock to feed hungry mounts. The raid not only disrupted the harvest, but it jeopardized the economic stability of this rural community.

In order to maximize their speed, the raiders and their Union pursuers both took horses from local farmers in a frenzied and relentless manner. Horsemen often left at least one worn-out mount when they took a fresh horse. On several occasions, successive groups of raiders took and replaced the mounts left by their comrades, the baffled citizens could do nothing but watch as the Confederates recycled their own spent mounts. A number of male citizens stayed to hide their property instead of joining the Legion companies in town, while others left the job to their wives and children. Ironically, the Glenn family hid their horses during the raid only to have Union troops stop at the smoldering ruins of the farm on July 10 and take one of the mounts from a nearby field. Isaac Pitman returned to his fields the day after the raid to cut wheat with his three horses and one borrowed animal. A group of raiders overlooked the animals when Mary Pitman made them breakfast on July 9, but the following day Union cavalrymen took two horses and left Pitman to finish his work with half a team. The Union pursuit of Morgan’s force provided an additional burden for the farmers who lived in the vicinity of Corydon. Without some kind of government intervention, much of the ripe wheat would rot in the field.

Fortunately for area farmers, state and military authorities took steps to restore order after the raid, although not all of the regulations regarding recovered horses worked in favor of the farmers. Gov. Morton ordered Gen. Henry B. Carrington, commander of the Indiana military
district, to issue a detailed description of the procedure for reporting and recovering stolen or impressed horses. The message detailed the policies and procedures needed to remedy “the exigencies of the harvest and the interruption of the farming interests by the John Morgan raid.” The folklore surrounding the raid claims that many Hoosier farmers were happy to learn that the raiders left them good-quality Kentucky thoroughbreds, which eventually made fine race horses. This often proved untrue, because Carrington ordered all citizens who had replacement horses to give these animals to the provost marshal. Farmers who lost horses were able temporarily to keep such found horses, but only until the end of the harvest. The provost marshal gathered all of the recovered horses in each locality and redistributed them to farms, depending on individual need, a measure that guaranteed citizens could bring in the wheat harvest and transport it to market. However, once done, citizens who did not turn in animals were open to prosecution. Citizens who tried to earn some extra money by gathering stray horses and selling them to the quartermaster faced severe punishment stemming from the fact that the counties in southern Indiana were still under martial law.48

Civilians encountered a number of problems with the procedure for claiming animals and applying for reimbursement. Those citizens who lost horses to Morgan’s men filed descriptions and affidavits, often having to travel as far as Cincinnati to find their animals. The United States Quartermaster Department (U.S.Q.D.) did not attempt to return animals that Union forces had captured, offering them for sale instead. Union regulars and state militia eventually caught every horse by the time Morgan’s command was finally captured near West Point, Ohio. Still, citizens were responsible for finding and identifying their horses with the government keeping the proceeds from the sales. People who lost horses to Union cavalry did not always have an easy time getting reimbursement. The U.S.Q.D. required the claimant to produce a receipt or at least
two sworn witness statements indicating that Union forces took the property. In the confusion and urgency of the pursuit of Morgan many claimants did not get valid receipts and those who did could not always locate them. Henry Richard was standing in his farmyard watching Union cavalrymen when one of the troopers approached, carrying his saddle and bridle. The soldier took Richard’s mule to replace the cavalryman’s recently expired mount, but gave no receipt in turn. Catherine Livingston, Peter Glenn’s widow, encountered a similar problem when she applied for compensation for a horse. In spite of the circumstances surrounding Glenn’s death, the quartermaster refused to pay the one-hundred-dollar claim because the family could not produce the receipt.49

Morgan’s raid united southern Indianans temporarily, but once the gray-clad troops passed into Ohio, politicians seized the opportunity to blame their rivals for the fracas. Besides the monetary loss, the raid alienated southern Indianans from their less sympathetic neighbors in the central part of the state. The problems associated with the river border’s proximity (and thus its vulnerability) to guerrilla war in Kentucky were lost among the two parties’ efforts to politicize the raid. In particular, Republicans gave special attention to a secret Democrat society that allegedly had many members throughout the Midwest. This shadowy organization, the Knights of the Golden Circle (K.G.C.), was supposedly dedicated to forming a northwestern confederacy that would support the southern Confederacy. Originally, the K.G.C. was a small Democratic political organization intent on initiating a filibustering scheme to seize Mexico for the Union in the 1850s. In 1863, the K.G.C. had a very small membership interested mostly in organizing politically and opposing the draft. The commander of the Union army’s Indiana District, Col. Henry B. Carrington, was responsible for spreading rumors and conspiracy theories about the K.G.C., thus emplacing the group’s infamous reputation in Indiana. Carrington also
perpetuated the claim that the K.G.C. helped Morgan’s force escape from Indiana, when Carrington’s own incompetence (he was allegedly drunk and did not execute his orders) prevented state troops from reaching the border in time.\textsuperscript{50} Conjuring up images of a powerful secret society bent on aiding the Confederacy was a useful political strategy. With the state elections a little over two months away, Carrington sought to discredit the Democratic Party by associating its members with the K.G.C. Still, Republicans were not entirely concerned with election results when they dredged up conspiracy theories. Carrington and other Republicans were hoping to expand their control beyond normal legal constraints, including obtaining the ability to arrest or detain suspected conspirators without due process.\textsuperscript{51}

Republican newspaper commentaries supported Carrington’s accusations by accusing citizens in the overwhelmingly Democratic southern counties of giving Morgan information and other forms of aid. In several articles, the \textit{Indianapolis Daily Journal} implied that most Democrats in southern Indiana were members of the K.G.C. (and therefore secessionist sympathizers) who had served as Morgan’s willing accomplices. The Republican press overstated the influence and pervasiveness of disloyal Hoosiers in the weeks following the raid. The \textit{Journal} publicized the case of an outspoken Hoosier Democrat who joined Morgan’s cavalry earlier in the war and eventually surrendered to Indiana troops during the raid. Republicans also conjured images of rebel brutality and destruction, including their insistence that burning buildings and destroyed property lined the road from Mauckport to Corydon. In an effort to denounce both the Confederates and their alleged Indiana accomplices, Republicans depicted the incident at the Glenn farm as an atrocity and reported that “whole fields have been laid waste and every act of vandalism conceivable was performed by this band of land pirates.”\textsuperscript{52} These Republican accounts of the raid implied that Democratic opposition to Lincoln’s war
policies allowed the raid to occur. Republicans hoped that voters would react to the stories of
devastation in southern Indiana and support a vigorous prosecution of the war against the
Confederacy.

Hoosier Democrats answered Republican accusations by charging the governor with
negligence, but they also praised the actions of Democrat defenders. The Indianapolis State
Sentinel, a Democrat newspaper, stated that Gov. Morton was “unnecessarily alarmed for the
safety of the capital,” thus playing into Morgan’s hand by refusing to send central Indiana
volunteers south. Democrats also pointed to the actions of Harrison County’s state senator,
Simeon K. Wolfe, who aided in defending Corydon until the raiders captured him and robbed
him of his valuables. The Sentinel also refuted the Journal’s assertion that Democrats associated
with disloyal organizations, such as the K.G.C., aided Morgan by passing on information.53 The
Democrats were at a distinct disadvantage. As long as Gov. Morton was “virtual dictator” of
Indiana, Democrats could do little else but counter Republican accusations.54

Regardless of political squabbling, Morgan successfully raided through Indiana because
the state was unprepared for anything like it. Indeed, Hoosier officials overestimated their ability
to react to such an incursion. The Legion was poorly armed and military officials were unable to
coordinate a defense that protected citizens, instead Union officers favored guarding urban
centers like New Albany and Indianapolis. Yet no army of “Copperheads” rose to aid the
Confederate cavalry, and Morgan made no real effort to enlist or organize southern
sympathizers.55 This disproved allegations that Morgan’s raid into Indiana was part of a
conspiracy on the part of “Copperheads” and Confederate agents. The raid was devastating for
many of Corydon’s residents and frightening for Hoosiers in general. However, Morgan’s raid
was a military failure that accomplished little, especially considering that southern Indiana’s
infrastructure emerged from the raid virtually untouched. Morgan succeeded in punishing the farmers and small businessmen of the river border, but this did not slow the Union war effort.

Morgan’s raid through Indiana was a campaign of intimidation and retribution which was not so much intended to destroy the enemy’s ability to wage war as to harass the residents of the free border states of Indiana and Ohio. While Morgan, much like Sherman in his later “March to the Sea”, did punish civilians, the Kentuckian did not differentiate between the enemy and its potential allies. In fact, he encouraged his men to deal harshly with professed Confederate sympathizers because these reluctant secessionists refused to prove their allegiance by fighting for or living in the Confederacy. By robbing and intimidating civilians regardless of their political opinions, Morgan caused many previously unaffiliated southern Indianans to volunteer for federal or state service. Where Sherman and his subordinates initially forbade looting and pillaging akin to the Confederates’ behavior in Corydon, Union soldiers in Georgia were encouraged to single out the property of disloyal citizens and weaken the economic infrastructure by destroying crops, factories, and supplies that could aid the Confederate Army. The raids of Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan, Sherman, and others embodied a dedication to destroying economic resources that Morgan did not display. Morgan’s habit of ransoming mills instead of burning them and allowing his troops to take cash and valuables from merchants and private citizens, exhibits a harsher, more personal mode of warfare aimed at individual communities instead of the Union war effort as a whole. Morgan’s raid was devastating for the citizens of southern Indiana and resulted in individual loss, but it did little to curtail the Union’s capability to fight the war.

John Hunt Morgan’s raid, at its essence, was political in motivation and design. Morgan wanted to bolster the hopes of Kentucky secessionists while making Hoosiers pay, quite literally,
for their state’s role in supporting the Union’s military and political efforts to keep secessionists from gaining control of Kentucky. The New Albany Daily Ledger declared that Morgan violated “all the rules of civilized warfare” by robbing citizens, extorting civilian businesses, and stealing horses. The newspaper complained that Morgan did little damage to railroads or other military objectives, instead focusing on the “spoliation of defenseless farmers and villagers.” Contrary to these claims, Confederate raiders did destroy railroad bridges and depots, although they avoided populated areas where most government property was located. In spite of Morgan’s tendency to strike at the occasional military target, his form of warfare was not the type of “hard war” that Union commanders were practicing in Mississippi at the time. Although Morgan’s ride through Indiana and Ohio shares some basic similarities with Union Gen. William T. Sherman’s “march to the sea,” Morgan’s style of raid epitomized guerrilla warfare, albeit on a grand scale.

The July 1863 raid soon encouraged smaller groups of guerrillas to pick up where Morgan left off, launching raids along the river border and forcing border residents to dedicate their energy to protecting their homes and property instead of aiding Kentucky Unionists. Yet the guerrilla presence did not necessarily draw troops away from the front or help the Confederate war effort in any significant way. Many of the guerrillas who operated near the Ohio River had served in Morgan’s cavalry at one point and returned to their homes to terrorize their loyalist neighbors. These small independent bands of raiders, regardless of whether they claimed legitimacy under the Confederacy’s Partisan Ranger Act, applied Morgan’s methods on a local basis. Citizens in southern Indiana feared that Morgan’s success encouraged “men made desperate by the dark clouds now overhanging their sinking cause” to assault and rob Unionists living north of the Ohio River. Citizens armed themselves and organized militia
companies so that they would be prepared to protect their homes and property. Community leaders urged civilians to defend themselves, and bitterly reminded border residents that military authorities had failed to help them in early July when “the wolf was upon us.”61 Morgan’s raid, combined with subsequent guerrilla activity along the river border, brought the war home to Harrison Countians. The raid was not an isolated incident, but a catalyst to the small-scale raids and guerrilla violence that plagued the river border for the remainder of the war.

In 1864, guerrillas in Meade County and other Ohio River counties intensified their attacks against Unionists in Kentucky and Indiana in the months leading up to the local elections that fall. The guerrilla bands wanted to intimidate, kill, or run off local Unionists in order to establish local political control. As a rule, these pro-secessionist fighters resented Southern Indianans who were allies of Kentucky Unionists who lived in southern Indiana.62 Brandenburg was a hotbed of guerrilla activity and between June 1864 and February 1865 partisans perpetrated several raids, robberies, and shootings in the vicinity. Many of these men were from Meade County and they intimidated, murdered, and robbed their Unionist neighbors. Others were simply groups of outlaws or deserters, often dressed in Union uniforms, who were intent only on personal gain and mayhem. Pro-Confederate guerrillas, however, often tried to seize boats, or settled for firing at the vessels from concealed positions.63 In July, seventeen guerrillas crossed the river on skiffs at West Point, Kentucky, and entered the southeast corner of Harrison County. Five of these men took cash and property from a well-known Unionist, but his neighbors learned of the disturbance and helped rout the bandits. The following month, the gang of guerrillas contented themselves with remaining on the Kentucky shore and firing on steamboats passing through the area. These attacks were not random violence, but rather the result of the guerrillas’ “bitter hate” for meddling Unionists living north of the river.64 These
individuals had given up on affecting the outcome of the war and resolved to discourage Unionists in southern Indiana from influencing politics in Kentucky.

One solution to the guerrilla problem was to reaffirm the alliance between Unionists in southern Indiana and Kentucky. Brig. Gen. Henry Jordan, commander of the Indiana Legion and son of Col. Lewis Jordan, wrote Indiana’s Adjutant General, William H.H. Terrell, in November 1864, outlining the issues facing Corydon’s Unionist population and proposing a plan to remedy the violent condition of the border. He described how the guerrillas often fired at Harrison Countians from the Kentucky shore or discouraged citizens from going to Kentucky to conduct business or visit friends and family. Additionally, Jordan referred to the robberies and thefts committed by rebels who crossed the river in small groups. He also noted that if the river froze that winter “we will lose our greatest protection from the operations of these desperadoes.” Jordan suggested that the threat could be neutralized by raising one or two regiments of cavalry for six months’ service on the south side of the river. Men from southern Indiana would join these units, which according to Jordan would compel the soldiers to take their duty seriously and to refrain “from wanton depredations on property.” The 5th Indiana Cavalry had performed this duty two years earlier, but they were temporary troops who eventually returned to their homes. Jordan’s solution was to put weapons and equipment in the hands of southern Indiana residents and give them authority to occupy Kentucky counties along the Ohio River. Jordan was searching for a way to protect the river border, but he also wanted to maintain good relations with loyalist Kentuckians. In fact, the two things were synonymous.

Unionists in southern Indiana were not sufficiently armed and/or organized to wage war, however irregularly, against guerrilla bands in Kentucky and they appealed to the state government for adequate arms and a permanent military organization along the border. But
Indiana’s governor, who was now running the state with government grants and private contributions, could not even supply the existing Legion companies with modern weaponry. After Morgan’s raid, Capt. Farquar complained to Morton that the single-shot pistols and sabers his unit had were badly outmatched compared to the armament of Kentucky guerrillas. He stated that his men needed revolvers and carbines, similar to what Morgan’s men had carried, and added that without such improved arms, he could not guarantee that he could retain the size of his company. This plea netted a dozen or so revolvers, but nothing more. The governor did send a few artillery pieces to Corydon, but Brig. Gen. Jordan commented that they would be of little help if guerrillas surprised the town. Infantry was also not sufficient to counter small groups of mounted guerrillas. The solution was to mobilize citizens once more for war in Kentucky.

The guerrilla threat, combined with political conflict, caused citizens in Harrison County to focus on their local situation rather than national issues. The conspiracy theories concerning Democrats and disloyal Kentuckians made Republicans suspicious of some of their neighbors, in contrast to earlier boasts of bi-partisan cooperation. Brig. Gen. Jordan indicated that a military presence was required on the border because of “the warm sympathy and perfect concert of action known to exist between the guerrillas of Kentucky and disloyal Indianians.” He remarked that disloyal newspapers printed false information in order to downplay the guerrilla menace and mislead the military. At least thirty-five of Corydon’s citizens agreed with Jordan and sent a petition to the governor, requesting permission to raise at least two companies of cavalry to patrol the river border during the summer and fall. The petitioners explained that guerrillas and “rebel sympathizers” from Meade County threatened to invade Harrison County, for whose “citizens they cherish a feeling of hatred which had its origin in difficulties existing prior to the
commencement of the war.”69 The dispute between antislavery and proslavery forces was apparent along the river border in the 1850s, but prolonged war caused political partisanship to evolve into a border war. The men who signed the petition—including Union veterans, merchants, tradesmen, wealthy farmers, and Legion members—were concerned that their political enemies were planning to use this border war to disperse Republican opposition.

Many Republicans in Corydon considered Peace Democrats a real threat to the community’s safety and stability and not simply political opponents. The majority of Peace Democrats lived in the farmland surrounding Corydon, especially along the Ohio River. In reality, most rural Democrats were more concerned with avoiding the draft and dealing with the war’s effect on local politics than plotting against local Republicans.70 Protests against the draft and the war did not pose an immediate threat to the safety of the community, but some Republicans began to consider all Democrats to be “copperheads” and “rebels.” Political conflict divided the people of Corydon and erupted into violence at least once during this tense period. In July 1864, Henry Lohmeyer, a young man who lived in the southern Harrison County, shot and killed John Timberlake, former lieutenant colonel of the 81st Indiana, after an argument between several women, one of whom was Timberlake’s niece, devolved into a frenzied shouting match. The Republican women noticed a woman wearing a “butternut emblem” (a symbol associated with the K.G.C.) in church and tried to take it from her. During the scuffle, Timberlake called Lohmeyer “a damned rebel.” Lohmeyer claimed he fired in self-defense, but many of Timberlake’s friends insisted that the shooting was malicious. To avoid further conflict, Lohmeyer went directly to Corydon and surrendered to the sheriff.71

Although the draft was a national issue, southern Indiana citizens reacted to conscription within the context of local economic and political conflict. Local opposition to the draft
culminated in a riot in southern Indiana during county elections in October. In Crawford County, bordering Harrison County to the west, at least forty residents associated with the K.G.C. and some “strangers” from Kentucky robbed and threatened wealthy citizens. Some of the participants were from Harrison County, and all of the men involved allegedly attended an organizational meeting prior to the riot. Local Democrats denounced the plundering and “oath-bound secret political organizations,” but attributed the crowd’s actions to drunkenness. The Harrison County Legion aided its Crawford County counterparts in arresting members of the crowd and protecting private property. Republicans from Harrison and Crawford counties, some of whom were Legion officers who put down the uprising, blamed the attacks on draft resisters and the K.G.C., but also claimed to uncover a conspiracy meant to allow guerrillas from Kentucky to vote in the local elections. The men from Kentucky were likely not guerrillas but rather friends or kin of the draft resisters. Regardless, Republicans still proclaimed that the riot was evidence of collaboration between disloyal Hoosiers and Kentucky rebels.

Both Timberlake’s shooting and the Crawford County riot reveal the complexities of localized politics and class conflict as well the pressure of continued war and conscription. These incidents were not merely coincidences. Timberlake resigned from the Union army on January 17, 1863, and accepted a position as provost marshal in southern Indiana. He lived in Mauckport and enjoyed the distinction of being one of the more wealthy farmers in that locality. The shooting occurred in July, during the third draft. The first two drafts allowed conscripts to purchase exemptions (known as commutation), but after March the dodge was no longer possible and the price for substitutes rose considerably. Local resistance to the draft in Mauckport (a village of river laborers and tradesmen) contributed to the tension between the pro- and anti-war factions attending church that Sunday. During the very month that the draft went into effect,
Henry Lohmeyer shot the one man charged with enforcing conscription in Harrison County. In Crawford County, resistance to the draft meant lashing out at local authorities and citizens who were wealthy enough to purchase substitutes. The rioters did not attack recruiters, but instead took money and property from prominent citizens and county officials. One witness said that the rioters were angry over the “milk and water policy” of the county clerk and sheriff, indicating that these officials were practicing favoritism concerning draft enrollment. In both cases, the “butternuts” were more concerned with the economic and political situations in their communities than with aiding Kentucky guerrillas. While the crowd openly protested the war effort and resisted the draft, they were not in league with Confederate forces. The draft resisters in Crawford County may have brought in allies from Harrison County and Kentucky in order to help pad the ballot box, but this was the extent of the plot.

Class tension led many Republicans to proclaim that all Democrats were “traitors,” even though the resistance to the war was rooted in citizens’ concern for local political and economic issues. On October 1, the Republican convention in New Albany featured regional and national politicians voicing their opinions about the war and the upcoming national election. The featured speeches by ex-secretary Salmon P. Chase, Henry S. Lane, and Gen. Nathan Kimball depicted a range of political commentary. Chase merely urged the crowd to vote for Lincoln, while the Democratic press labeled Lane’s speech “radical enough to suit the abolitionists of the strictest sect.” Lane was a U.S. senator from Montgomery County, Indiana, and one of the founding members of the Republican Party in Indiana; Kimball, a native of nearby Washington County, who had recently returned from military duty to help break up the conspiratorial plans of the so-called K.G.C., had a vested interest in the state election results. Indeed, the editors of the New Albany Daily Ledger were interested in Kimball’s speech because the general was a
Democrat who supported Gov. Morton and emancipation. The Democratic paper did not look kindly on the political defector, and claimed that Kimball called all Republicans traitors and said that anyone who did not vote for Lincoln was a Confederate sympathizer. Kimball had also mentioned recent events by warning that “there were five hundred men in open rebellion against the government in Crawford County, resisting the draft, every one of whom would vote for McClellan and McDonald.” The *Ledger* claimed that Kimball’s accusation was “untrue in every particular.” Kimball’s exaggerated statement bore one essential kernel of truth; the riot did occur and its supporters were mainly conservative Democrats. The *Ledger* preferred to run the news of the Crawford County commotion on October 5, the day after Corydon’s ratification meeting. Although Republican supporters tried to combine national and local issues, the war on the border complicated their attempts to tar their opponents with a broad brush. Local Democrats purposely enlisted speakers who had established their loyalty to the Union through military service, but had also expressed their opposition to Lincoln and the Republican Party. In the days leading up to the Democratic ratification meeting in Corydon on October 4, Democrats brought in prominent speakers from Kentucky who had served in the Union army but vehemently opposed emancipation. John Marshall Harlan of Frankfort spoke to an appreciative crowd at the McClellan Club in New Albany on October 3. The prosperous attorney and former federal colonel declared a similarity of cause between southern Indianans and Kentuckians. Harlan appealed to his audience’s partisanship by denouncing Lincoln for turning a war to preserve the Union into a war to dissolve slavery. An abstract of Harlan’s speech indicated that the former infantry officer believed abolitionists “would not hesitate to trample upon constitutions and laws with impunity” that subsequently endangered “life, liberty, and property.” Democrats in southern Indiana did not really share the experience of Kentuckians.
like Harlan, but Kentucky Unionists were some of the most fervent critics of the Republican administration. These Kentuckians were angry at the government’s refusal to uphold the laws of slavery and the rights of citizens to own slave property. Hoosiers did not stand to lose rights to property through emancipation, but Democrats sought men who could profess both loyalty to the Union and dissatisfaction with the Republican administration. The key speaker at Corydon’s meeting was far less prominent, but also the most controversial, of the evening’s line-up. Col. Frank Wolford, who also spoke briefly at the McClellan Club in New Albany. Like Harlan, Wolford was a popular figure who had once served in the military yet who now denounced Lincoln.78 Wolford, the former commander of the 1st Kentucky Cavalry, was well-known among Democrats. He had spoken out against Lincoln’s emancipation policy at a banquet in Lexington, immediately after which the U.S. Adjutant General’s office had dismissed him dishonorably in March 1864 for “using disrespectful words against the President of the United States, for disloyalty, and for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.”79 Southern Indiana Democrats considered Wolford a martyr of sorts, an example of how the Republican administration punished loyal men who disagreed with the president. As in the case of Harlan’s lecture, Wolford’s testimony did not apply to the Democrats’ cause as seamlessly as they would have liked. Wolford and Harlan denounced emancipation’s economic and social repercussions, but Democrats in Corydon and New Albany were hoping to use the emancipation issue to win local elections and muster support for McClellan’s presidential campaign.

The 1864 presidential elections ended in defeat for the Democratic Party, but in Harrison County, Democrats still held substantial political power. Nationally, the two Democratic factions were unable to forge a durable alliance in the face of Union military gains. Indiana was particularly important to Lincoln and the president urged Union generals
to send Hoosier soldiers home to vote because the state did not allow absentee voting. Gov. Morton also urged soldiers to return to Indiana (some nine thousand soldiers made it back in time), but the Republicans probably did not need the extra votes. The Republican ticket won by a wide margin, allowing Gov. Morton to retain his office and the Republicans to gain supremacy in the general assembly. In southern Indiana, Democrats did not roll over in the face of Republican success. Although records of the election in Harrison County are scarce, a poll book from the village of New Salisbury gives an indication of the Democratic Party’s strong showing in the area. The poll book indicates that locals gave McClellan 136 votes, while only 71 voters supported Lincoln. Instead, Democrats shifted their attention from emancipation to the issues facing agrarian communities, particularly the economic effects of the war. The last two full years of war isolated Corydon from neighboring communities in Kentucky and weakened the economic ties many citizens hoped to retain by supporting the Union. Morgan’s raid compromised both the safety and economic security of the community. During the winter of 1864-65, guerrilla activity continued to threaten Harrison County and Gen. Jordan’s request for a permanent military presence in neighboring Kentucky counties went unanswered. Union military intervention finally decreased the guerrilla threat in Meade County in March 1865. Additionally, in February 1865, fires ravaged Corydon, compounding the community’s economic loss from Morgan’s raid. The fire was accidental but it burned a substantial portion of the town’s commercial district, destroying six local businesses in all. In the face of these troubles, Corydon’s leading citizens lacked the energy and resources to reestablish their town’s link to Kentucky communities such as Brandenburg. The people of Corydon emerged from the war more concerned with reconstructing their war-torn community and less willing to reconstruct pre-war regional connections.
Chapter 7

“Treason and Rebellions Have Wrought Sorrow and Distress”

Southern Indianans’ brief experience with Confederate raiders and their Union pursuers did not compare to Kentuckians’ exposure to the constant pressure of Union military authorities, Confederate raids, and guerrilla violence during the final two years of the war. In Franklin County war weariness, financial hardship, and the restrictions imposed by military authorities caused citizens to reconsider their allegiances. Frankfort’s Unionist elite experienced a decline in influence as a result, leaving them with only a small contingent of unconditional Unionists, mostly townspeople, willing to uphold the policies of Lincoln’s administration. While public opinion turned against Union military leaders, loyalists had to contend with the return of Confederate veterans who had abandoned the Confederate cause in favor of securing white supremacy in their home state. Albert G. Hodges, editor of the Frankfort Commonwealth, remarked in January 1864, that “returning prodigals” were not welcome in Kentucky because “their treason and rebellion have wrought sorrow and distress at thousands of loyal hearths in this state.”1 Along with being unwelcome among the loyalist elite, these returning Confederates were also a dangerous catalyst for anti-Union sentiment among the laboring and working classes of Franklin County. The guerrilla violence that engulfed the Bluegrass in the summer of 1864 elicited vicious reprisals from the Union military and Frankfort’s Unionists, which caused the once fragile balance of allegiances in Franklin County to devolve into localized civil war.

Previous scholarship indicates that during the Civil War, conflicts within communities during the Civil War were symptomatic of intense competition for control of local government, often resulting in the collapse of the previous social structure. War weakened the existing hierarchy in many communities, severing previous ties and offering new opportunities. Wayne
Durrill’s study of Washington County, North Carolina, reveals that during the war “an alliance between planters and yeoman farmers, which had endured since the first nullification crisis of 1832, suddenly broke apart.” The dissolution of this alliance resulted in a bloody property war featuring guerrilla violence. Stephen V. Ash discovers another important effect of war on southern communities, the disruption of the long-standing tradition of “rural communalism.” Communalism was the culmination of relationships between various citizens, rich and poor, that allowed the community to function as a cohesive political and economic unit. A lengthy presence of Union troops brought privation and limited economic activity, both of which lessened the power of the planter class and resulted in “the bonds of community [being] severely strained by war and occupation.” This was apparent in the loss of cooperation and communication between towns and rural areas, mostly due to the dangers posed by guerrillas, bandits, and occupying armies.

Both class conflict and a decline in rural communalism are apparent in the war’s effect on Frankfort. But it was a border community and not an occupied portion of the Confederacy. As such, the effects of partisan politics, federal military presence, and economic hardship acted inversely to that experienced in the South. Instead of awakening latent Unionism, as they did in the Confederate states, the impositions of war fueled anti-government sentiment. Resistance to Frankfort’s Unionist elite derived not from a revival of Kentucky’s secessionism but rather represented a galvanization of former Unionists, war-weary farmers, Peace Democrats, returning Confederate soldiers, and citizens who had previously attempted to avoid aligning with either side. The destruction of community ties and former alliances had the same result regardless of the locality: violence and destruction. The final year of the war was a decisive one in Kentucky,
largely because many residents came to the conclusion that by remaining in the Union they had supported the wrong side.

In addition to weakening slavery, the Union military presence in Kentucky, which concerned itself with supplying and recruiting troops, strained relationships with civilians by exerting control over economic and political issues. Brig. Gen. Stephen G. Burbridge commanded most of Kentucky during 1864 and his name soon became synonymous with military abuses of authority in the state. Initially, at least, Burbridge appeared to be an excellent choice. A Kentuckian who hailed from Scott County and earned his education at Georgetown College and the Kentucky Military Institute, Burbridge appealed to the Unionist elite in the central Bluegrass Region, including Gov. Thomas E. Bramlette, well known for his unstinting support of the federal government. Bramlette had served in the Union army as a volunteer officer and placed great trust in his former comrade in arms. Yet Burbridge’s tenure in command of the Department of Kentucky from February 1864 until his removal a year later witnessed widespread disillusionment among white Kentuckians with federal authority. The army increasingly demanded supplies, manpower, and support from Kentucky’s loyal residents while at the same time offering little protection from guerrillas and partisans. Burbridge was not responsible for the increasing requirements a vigorous military campaign in the South placed on Kentucky’s population, but many Kentuckians blamed him for their troubles nonetheless.

Public reaction in Kentucky to the Republican Party’s seemingly revolutionary doctrine of emancipation continued to work against loyalists and Union military authorities. Kentucky’s Unionists were optimistic about retaining political supremacy when Bramlette won the governor’s race over Charles A. Wickliffe, a Peace Democrat who actively criticized Lincoln’s prosecution of the war. The state was under martial law during the election, causing many of
Wickliffe’s supporters to accuse Burbridge of using Union troops to coerce voters into favoring Republicans over Democrats, especially Peace Democrats. The army’s purpose for monitoring the state elections was to prevent suspected Confederate agents from voting, but in reality soldiers prevented as many as one-third of white male Kentuckians from voting. Although some of these men may have been former Confederate soldiers, the Union troops made their decision to exclude voters based mainly on loyalty, which was subjective. Once he entered office in late 1863, Bramlette pledged undying support for the war effort and the Lincoln administration. The governor, like many Kentuckians, continued to hold a conservative opinion concerning slavery. Although Bramlette’s strict retaliatory policy against guerrillas conformed to Republican views, he refused to yield on the issues of emancipation and black enlistment. As in southern Indiana, War Democrats, Peace Democrats, and Republicans in Kentucky became increasingly adversarial as the immediacy of military conflict gave way to the question of which faction would achieve political ascendancy. For Kentuckians, however, emancipation was more than simply a convenient topic for debate, as was the case in southern Indiana. Indeed, it was also an economic issue that held profound consequences for the state’s farmers and artisans.

The military’s demand for crops created a market for enterprising farmers at first, but by winter 1863 the Union army was restricting individual use of grain. In order to obtain more food and fodder for the army, Brig. Gen. Jeremiah T. Boyle, a Danvillian and unsuccessful Union Democratic candidate for governor in 1862, regulated Kentuckians’ use of corn in distilling at the end of October 1863. Boyle forbade the Bluegrass region’s businessmen and farmers from purchasing corn for bourbon whiskey production, although they were free to distill their own crops. This measure affected Frankfort’s several distilleries, which depended on local farmers for additional corn. Still, no significant protest erupted in Frankfort until military authorities
enacted a second order in January 1864, prohibiting all distilling in Kentucky.\textsuperscript{6} Citizens opposed the second order because the ban on distilling affected more than simply the profits of farmers and distilleries in Franklin County. Liquor producers commonly purchased livestock, which they fed with corn mash left over from distillation and then sold them to local or military buyers. The mash, or “slop,” fattened up the livestock more than regular corn. The distilling ban thus meant less available meat for residents, as it discouraged distillers from husbandry, not to mention creating a possible whiskey shortage.\textsuperscript{7} By the middle of February 1864, the quartermaster’s department in Kentucky decided that the ban on distilling was no longer necessary and revoked the order.\textsuperscript{8} Though the ban was short-lived, many residents resented the fact that federal military authority could disrupt the workings of local trade.

Union military interference in the regional economy went beyond imposing bans on trade in production and involved eliminating commercial competition for government contracts. Citizens initially welcomed the military presence and its effect on the market for livestock, largely because farmers believed that the increased demand would drive up prices. Indeed, the cost of meat, especially pork, increased as the war intensified and the Union fielded additional troops. Packers and farmers both profited from the army’s demand for pork, which the quartermaster issued as rations in the form of easily preserved “salt pork.” Louisville’s chief commissary officer, Henry C. Symonds, believed that he could reduce the government’s food expenditures by running a packing operation in Louisville. Recognizing that the success of his operation depended on buying and packing pork without any competition from the speculators who often bought animals for Indiana and Ohio packers, in October 1864, Symonds subverted the free market in hogs by asking Burbridge to order a ban on transporting Kentucky hogs into Cincinnati or New Albany. Farmers in the Bluegrass Region bristled at government agents’
offer of eight cents per pound—two cents less than Louisville’s and Cincinnati’s markets. Resentful civilian speculators spread rumors that the army intended to confiscate hogs instead of buying them. The frenzy of complaints and accusations forced President Lincoln to intervene, ordering Burbridge to revoke all restrictions on hog trading. The Union army’s pork enterprise lasted less than a month, but the fiasco caused irreparable damage to the federal government’s reputation. Ohio Valley businessmen and Kentucky farmers succeeded in stopping the “Great Hog Swindle” in time to allow a bout of unrestrained buying to take place. Appalled by the army’s abuse of power, Bramlette claimed that Kentucky farmers lost as much as $300,000 during the affair. The effect was not only monetary, but also symbolic. Symonds effectively competed with packinghouses, such as the two in Frankfort, for the available stock. The first group of army buyers coerced and intimidated farmers into selling hogs to the government, causing some farmers to sell their hogs for less than market price. Symonds also forced drovers to obtain a permit to drive hogs to market, which caused many rural farmers to sell directly to the agents instead of sending their animals to Louisville, Frankfort, or Lexington. The “hog swindle” was a detriment to the normal functioning of the local economy, particularly for small farmers who depended on selling their surplus to settle debts and purchase necessities.

The Union army’s confiscation of property also caused problems for Frankfort’s local economy, even in cases where the property belonged to citizens serving in the Confederate army. In March 1864, the Union provost guard at Frankfort seized fifty-five barrels of whiskey belonging to Hugh Leonard, a Confederate ordinance sergeant in the 1st Kentucky Cavalry. The military authorities kept a guard posted on this valuable prize to keep civilians and soldiers from hauling it away, by the cupful or otherwise. The Louisville provost marshal, Maj. D. C. Fitch, other than protecting the confiscated liquor from thirsty soldiers, did not know what to do with
the goods. Burbridge concluded that the goods were federal property under the Second Confiscation Act and ordered the provost marshal to give the whiskey to the U.S. District Attorney. The Second Confiscation Act, which designed confiscation to discourage the families and friends of Confederate soldiers from carrying on business exchanges, authorized federal commanders to dispose of the whiskey at auction with the proceeds going into the U.S. Treasury. The auction was not held locally, thus depriving the people of Frankfort from all benefit. On the contrary, the military authorities removed a valuable commodity from the community, the profits of which would have gone to local merchants, farmers, and artisans. Seizure of such a large amount of private property by federal troops sobered, if not soured, many citizens regardless of their loyalty.11

Limiting trade and confiscating property damaged the local economy, but when Union military began actively recruiting slaves many rural Kentuckians attempted to reassert their previous control over black labor. The military’s restrictions on trade primarily affected citizens involved in agriculture, many of whom depended on slave labor for their livelihood. In April 1864, Burbridge authorized army recruiters to enlist slaves in Kentucky, eventually accepting recruits regardless of whether the owner agreed. This was the coup de grâce for Union sentiment among farmers, who now had to contend with a drastic decrease in available labor, along with the military’s meddling in the regional economy. The Union army’s enlistment of Kentucky slaves removed an estimated sixty percent of the state’s male slaves eligible for military service from their owners during the remainder of the war.12 A number of historians have emphasized the attention to the relationship between the inception of black enlistment and the rise in anti-Union sentiment in Kentucky. Several of these studies indicate that guerrilla activity increased in areas where the army enlisted or stationed black soldiers. Moreover, slaveholders often took
out their anger on the families of black enlistees.\textsuperscript{13} The events of the spring and summer of 1864 convinced white Kentuckians that the racial and economic status quo of the prewar period was gone for good. Unwilling to accept this, some white Kentuckians were prepared to lash out against their former friends and neighbors in retaliation.

While white citizens reconsidered the effect of the military presence on the economy, Kentucky Confederates began returning to their native state. Not all of the men who left Confederate service to return home were willing to stop fighting against the Union. Guerrilla activity increased as former Confederate soldiers returned to the state and encouraged resistance among their neighbors. Frankfort’s Unionist elite cautioned against accepting these “returning prodigals” into society. The \textit{Commonwealth} argued that returning Confederate veterans “are as vile traitors now as when they first foreswore their allegiance to the Union.” Unionists were primarily concerned that these former Confederates could sway political opinion. The \textit{Commonwealth}’s editors flippantly suggested that Kentucky’s prodigal sons “be sent off to some island, or place where their presence will not be an offense to every loyal person.”\textsuperscript{14} Loyalists knew that some of their previously nonpartisan neighbors grew resentful at the results of emancipation, black military participation, and military infractions against trade and civil law. The returning Confederate veterans, even if they took an oath of loyalty, strengthened resistance to Unionist politicians.

The increased tension between Kentuckians and the national government worked in favor of returning Confederates who were able to exploit the chaotic atmosphere. Frankfort’s loyalists worried that the deserters and refugees arriving in small groups were actually Confederate spies and agents acting as part of a plot to throw the state into pandemonium. Even as some citizens were dreading the return of Confederate veterans, others were welcoming back these friends and
neighbors. The Union elite proved unable to stem the tide of Kentucky’s prodigal sons and turned to military authorities for help. The army required the returning veterans to take loyalty oaths, but officers relied on local Unionists to filter out unworthy applicants. In order to be eligible for a pardon the returning rebels only needed a petition signed by “undoubted Union men.” Earlier in the war a U.S. marshal arrested a Cynthiana man for treason, but by 1864 the Union Army was having a difficult time keeping track of all the former rebels in their midst, much less arresting and trying all of them. Instead, Union authorities relied on Unionists to indicate which former rebels were potential guerrillas or troublemakers. A concerned citizen from Georgetown wrote Burbridge in June 1864 arguing that the method of procuring signatures for pardons was faulty because, in his words, “home rebels” (a term for local guerrillas) were using intimidation to obtain signatures. One Unionist, who admitted he signed a document in support of an applicant who was “as vindictive of the devil himself,” justified his action by remarking that “no man’s property or life is safe who refuses to sign a petition.” Unionists who lived in the countryside had little protections from intimidation by Confederate sympathizers. However, loyalists did not consider their belligerent neighbors to be the entire problem. Unionists also blamed the government for implementing a method for pardoning Confederates that engendered corruption and coercion instead of peace and stability. Forced to choose between their life and property, many men gladly traded their ideals for security.

The widespread disillusionment with federal policy, especially emancipation, endangered the stability of Kentucky’s Unionist government and hampered its governor’s ability to deal with dissension in his state. The shift of rural allegiances from conditional Unionism to outright opposition to the federal government meant that few citizens were willing to associate themselves with a Unionist state government. As a result, the state government had no troops
save those volunteer regiments in federal service, forcing Unionists to depend on the Federal army for protection. Bramlette was unsuccessful in reconstituting the state guard during the war, largely because the upper ranks of the old State Guard initially had been composed of slaveholders concerned with protecting their property and many of those men went into Confederate service. Kentucky could not fill its quota for government service, let alone field enough home guard to defend the state. Besides, the home guard was disorganized and largely unreliable, because they were not a formal state army. Consequently, Bramlette sought a way to satisfy the state’s enlistment quota and obtain a state army with minimal expenditure. On February 7, 1863, the governor had obtained some help from Congress in the form of a law allowing him to enlist twenty thousand men for one year of federal service. The law, which Congress hoped would bring peace and stability to Kentucky, stipulated that the troops serve within the state unless needed elsewhere, providing Kentucky with a fully-equipped and funded state guard. Yet Kentuckians were slow to enlist, even in regiments consigned to state service. By November 1863, Bramlette could boast less than eight thousand recruits.

The Kentucky governor’s plan to use federal money to defend his state backfired when Lincoln allowed military commanders to assume control of the newly raised troops almost immediately after the regiments finished training and gathering supplies. Bramlette hoped that he could remedy the decline in Unionism by keeping loyal troops in the state, with the bill going to the federal government. But the Act of February 7, 1863, contained a provision allowing the president to assign control of the regiments to the Union Army. Bramlette believed that the president would leave the troops under the command of the state government, and therefore mustered all available Unionists into the new regiments. Acting under this false sense of security, Bramlette ordered the Capital Guards, a state military company in charge of protecting
Frankfort, to muster into U.S. service as part of the 30th Kentucky Mounted Infantry. Kentucky’s adjutant general, John Boyle, assured Capt William B. Craddock, commander of the Capital Guards, that the measure was merely a formality meant to save the state the cost of paying and supplying the company. Craddock welcomed the incorporation of his company because it came with a promotion to colonel as well as the governor’s promise that “no contingency will ever arise to require your removal from our midst.” The 30th Kentucky conducted operations in the state against guerrillas, with one company always on duty at the capital. Yet in January 1863, Maj. Gen. J. G. Foster ordered all federal troops in Kentucky, including those organized under the Act of February 7, 1863, to Knoxville, Tennessee. Foster recommended that Bramlette call upon the enrolled militia to protect Kentuckians. But the decrease in conditional Unionism meant that a much of the militia would not muster, especially considering that Bramlette had no regular troops under his command to enforce service in the militia. The governors only recourse was to breath life into the long defunct state military system.

Reinvigorating the state guard was not simply a matter of money, because regional tensions concerning the loyalty of Kentucky slaveholders tainted Bramlette’s otherwise practical inclinations. In January 1864, both houses of the Kentucky legislature considered a bill to create a state army. The governor supported this idea and proposed a force of five thousand men under his command, which he wanted to count towards the state’s quota for enlistment. Republicans living north of the Ohio River suspected that Kentucky’s War Democrats wanted a state force that could oppose federal as well as Confederate troops. A correspondent for the Cincinnati Daily Commercial, a moderate Republican newspaper, claimed that a representative from Bullitt County supported the bill because “people across the Ohio were occasionally crossing over to
steal our Negroes” and “we could defend our property both from Southern guerrillas and Northern abolitionists.” The article depicted Kentuckians not so much as loyal or disloyal but as opportunists who cared only about protecting their slave property. Indeed, Clinton W. Terry identifies the logic behind definitions of loyalty in Cincinnati during the Civil War, and states “disagreement with the government over policy might be branded as support for the Confederacy rather than a simple difference in individual interest or political principle, and dismissed as the result.” Cincinnatians and other Ohioans viewed Kentuckians’ opposition to emancipation as a challenge to the government that could be considered a first step toward disloyalty.

The newspaper debate over the formation of a Kentucky state army increased apprehension between Unionists on opposite sides of the Ohio River and placed the issue of slavery squarely at the center of the disagreement. In Frankfort, Unionists did not appreciate the implication that Kentucky’s legislators were more concerned with protecting slave property than defeating the Confederacy. The editors of the Commonwealth politely suggested that the Commercial’s article was a mistake and asserted that the representative had actually said that with Kentucky troops guarding the state “we would hear no more complaints of negro stealing and other depredations.” The Commonwealth claimed that in spite of the erroneous report, citizens of the Bluegrass Region did not harbor any adverse feelings towards those living north of the Ohio River and remarked that “they are now and ever have been Kentucky’s friends.” While the editors of the Commercial acknowledged the correction, they did not dismiss the notion that some Kentuckians were arming to guard their slaves and thus protect the institution of slavery. The Commercial sardonically observed that the need for a state army in Kentucky “does not, however, indicate any particular fondness on the part of the negroes for slavery, even in the mild form it takes in Kentucky.” The short literary skirmish, part of a longer war
between War Democrats in Frankfort and Republicans in Cincinnati, suggests the conflict’s broader effect on the relationship between Ohio Valley residents. Republicans began to see advocates of slavery, regardless of any affirmations of loyalty, as selfish and opportunistic. Republicans in the free border states believed that ending slavery would end the war and reunite the nation. Consequently, Kentucky slaveholders would remain as obstacles to peace as long as they clung to the fading institution of slavery.

In spite of suspicions from valley residents living north of the Ohio River, Kentucky lawmakers voted to create the “Army of Kentucky” in February 1864, but white men had to fill the ranks of the new militia to make the force a reality. The state legislature allowed the governor to command five thousand troops and borrow up to five million dollars to equip, pay, and organize the state army. But the problem lay not in furnishing money or weapons as much as in finding recruits. The bulk of white Kentucky men not already in the service either harbored sympathies for the Confederacy or sought to remain unaffiliated in order to avoid guerrilla reprisals. Regardless of their stance, all believed the best way to protect property and family was to stay at home. Republicans on the river border continued to view the enterprise with distrust, noting that Frank Wolford, who publicly criticized Lincoln’s emancipation policies, would command some of these state troops. Continuous conflict with military authorities, especially over the issue of slave confiscation, stunted efforts to recruit a sizable force.

For the citizens of Frankfort, the controversy over how to defend the state was not simply a matter of politics but a question of how best to protect the community. In December 1863, the townspeople bid farewell to the men of Company L, 2nd Ohio Heavy Artillery. These Buckeye artillerists manned the fort that commanded Frankfort and the surrounding countryside. The governor wrote a letter to their commanding officer, Capt. Powell, informing him “your
command has elicited the hearty praise of all the citizens of Frankfort, not a single case of
disturbance or complaint has occurred.” Bramlette may have been comparing Company L to
another unit previously stationed in Frankfort, the 103rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, which had a
reputation for aiding and protecting runaway slaves. Citizens lamented the departure of the
disciplined men of the 2nd Ohio fearing that no government troops would replace the garrison.
Instead, Bramlette asked Capt. Sanford Goins, a Home Guard officer, to raise a company of
militia to serve as artillerists on Fort Hill. Goins assured his recruits that they would receive
standard pay for military service, but would serve only in Frankfort. Six months later Goins
did not have a full company, although he instructed some of the enrolled militia on the basic use
of the fort’s armament. Goins’ unsuccessful attempt to find volunteers to operate the fort’s
cannon demonstrated that those men willing to risk their lives for the Union cause were already
in military service. Frankfort’s Unionist volunteers were helping win the war in the South, but
meanwhile they left their community vulnerable to attacks from both regular and irregular forces.

The Unionist elite in Frankfort used the 36th Kentucky Enrolled Militia to maintain
control of the community, which meant excluding suspected rebels from the regiment’s
command. Theoretically, all available military-aged men belonged to the regiment, but
Frankfort’s military and civil authority had trouble enforcing participation. However, with
Union military authorities removing troops from Kentucky in December, local Unionists tried to
create an effective and loyal militia. When Col. Edgar Keenon held elections for the 36th
Regiment, he took care to scrutinize the men who won positions of authority. Out of the twenty-
seven men the enrolled militia elected as company officers, Keenon suspected that seven of the
would-be officers were disloyal. The colonel concluded that one candidate for lieutenant was a
“thorough rebel,” while he lamented that two men tied for a position as captain were “equally
inclined south.” The state’s Inspector General, Daniel W. Lindsey, recommended most of the elected men for commissions, excluding all of the suspected Confederate sympathizers. Lindsey included commissions for men to replace the suspected rebels, including Keenon’s son.27 Lindsey and Keenon ensured that the militia would be loyal to the Unionist government, but this meant rejecting potential militiamen. The regiment’s strength on paper included nine companies with a full compliment of officers. In reality, the 36th Regiment was the military arm of Frankfort’s Unionists elite. Citizens with neutral or pro-Confederate sentiments would be reticent to associate with this predominantly loyalist organization.

Although Unionists continued to maintain a tenuous political hold in Frankfort, the number of military age men willing and available to defend their community from guerrillas and raiders was distressingly small. Franklin County had several hundred men in Federal regiments, but many of these soldiers had re-enlisted in early 1864. Two regiments that included Franklin County men, the 10th and 22nd Kentucky Infantry, had reenlisted in 1863, some of whom did return home on furlough at the beginning of 1864 and thus the city authorities could not depend upon them for its protection. The town’s Unionists claimed the 22nd Kentucky as “peculiarly a Frankfort regiment” and many citizens anticipated the return of their friends and family members who had “on many fields of blood and carnage proved their love of the Union.”28 Although many Frankfort citizens took pride in these soldiers’ decision to serve until the end of the war, the absence of so many young loyalist men weakened the Unionists’ ability to defend themselves and to assert control over their disloyal neighbors. Moreover, Frankfort’s Union veterans reenlisted while many Kentucky Confederate veterans returned home to join guerrilla outfits. In 1864, Franklin County’s enrolled militia consisted of 1,100 eligible men of military age. The county clerk estimated in February that about 210 of the enrolled militia living south of the
Kentucky River (where most of Franklin County’s small farms were located) were in Confederate service, along with another seventy potential militiamen from the northern portion of the county. A little over twenty-five percent of the eligible militia fought for the Confederacy and a considerable number of the 820 remaining enrolled militia were sympathetic to the Confederacy.²⁹

The absence of an organized Union military presence in Frankfort not only endangered the citizens’ safety and property, but also jeopardized Unionist control of the state government. Gen. John Hunt Morgan’s final raid into Kentucky in the summer of 1864 complicated Unionists’ efforts to maintain political power and protect their homes and property. The events in Frankfort during Morgan’s final Kentucky raid provide the best indication of the limited Unionist influence in Frankfort. While the few Union troops operating in Kentucky were under Stephen G. Burbridge, now in command in eastern Kentucky, Morgan’s force of approximately 2,700 men entered Kentucky in early June 1864. Morgan led a reconstituted force of Confederate Kentuckians in a desperate attempt to challenge Union authority at a time when popular opinion was turning against the emancipationist federal government.³⁰ This raid featured looting and other depredations resembling the Morgan’s ill-fated expedition through Indiana and Ohio, more than Morgan’s previous forays into Kentucky.³¹ In spite of earlier boasts that he would take the Kentucky capital, Morgan sent only one company of men towards Frankfort as a feint to divert any troops stationed at the capital.³² Normally a group of raiders this size would have served only as a nuisance to a trained garrison at full-strength. Yet without federal troops or an effective state militia, Frankfort became the scene of panic.

Local Union men with prior military experience assumed the duty of opposing the Confederate marauders. Daniel W. Lindsey, former colonel of the 22nd Kentucky, returned to
Frankfort in October 1863 to fill the role of state Inspector General. As the son of a prominent Frankfort family, Lindsey took the opportunity to serve his state militarily while remaining among friends and relations. During Morgan’s final Kentucky raid, Lindsey and other members of the Unionist elite cobbled together meager defensive preparations. The enrolled militia had no formal military training, but Lindsey was fortunate to have the help of several Union veterans and soldiers home on leave. George Monroe, now colonel of the 22nd Kentucky after Lindsey’s resignation and who previously served as his lieutenant colonel, was on furlough during the crisis and quickly assumed command of the militia. Monroe commanded a relatively large staff of over a dozen officers, including Capt. Henry Brown of the 39th Kentucky Infantry and Lt. Goleman Ramsey of the 7th Kentucky Cavalry. John Marshal Harlan, former colonel of the 10th Kentucky Infantry and currently the state’s attorney general, volunteered his services.

Despite the quick response of the former and furloughed Federal officers, Lindsey found the civilian response to the crises less reassuring. He struggled to gather enough makeshift soldiers to defend the capital’s bridges and fortifications. Lindsey’s handful of eager veteran officers, although experienced, was insufficient to protect Frankfort. Bramlette called out Franklin County’s enrolled militia, which in theory would have yielded almost nine hundred citizen soldiers. Frankfort had 311 men enrolled in the militia, but many of them opted to stay at home during the rebel incursion. Malvina Harlan, the wife of the Attorney General John Marshall Harlan, commented that “every citizen with Union sentiments shouldered his gun, even ministers of the gospel.” While a testament to the convictions of Frankfort’s loyalists, the statement belied the disappointingly small number of men who answered Lindsey’s call. The mainstay of Lindsey’s force was one company of the 36th Regiment Enrolled Militia consisting of seventy-five men. Not all of the citizen-soldiers were passionate about defending the town;
militia officers pressed twenty-two of the militiamen into service, three of whom deserted immediately. The Peaks Mill Rangers, a troop of some forty mounted militia in state service, came from a village north of town to the bolster Frankfort’s meager force. State military staff, government officials (including the governor), and other volunteers from throughout the county augmented Lindsey’s improvised defense force. Lindsey regretted that his host “amounted to only 183 men,” a setback that caused him to describe his situation as “critical.” That Lindsey’s force constituted just twenty percent of the enrolled militia for Franklin County, excluding the county clerks’ estimation of the number of men in Confederate service, demonstrates a minority Unionist population in Frankfort during the raid and suggests a majority of citizens whose stance toward the cause of the Union (and presumably the national government) ranged from apathy to outright hostility.

The Confederate feint against Frankfort caused much excitement in the town, but it was only a sideshow to Morgan’s raid on other Kentucky communities. Frankforters’ first inclination that their town was in danger came on June 8 when the morning train from Louisville failed to arrive. Morgan’s troops also burned the bridges on the Kentucky Central Railroad, effectively isolating Frankfort. An attempt to move the state government’s records to Louisville on July 9 failed when a squad of raiders blocked the tracks. On July 10 and 11, the raiders and Frankfort’s Unionist militia skirmished intermittently without any significant results. Meanwhile, Morgan occupied nearby Georgetown on July 10 without attempting to move towards Frankfort. The cavalry raider was following his old pattern of avoiding communities with a significant Unionist presence. However, Morgan did not realize the effect Union military policies had on the sentiments of Franklin County’s farmers and small manufacturers. Although immediately after the Confederate invasion of 1862 Frankfort was well garrisoned, in 1864 the
town was ripe for the taking if the raiders had mounted a major assault. The company of raiders assaulted the fort on the night of July 10, but the cavalrymen withdrew after overrunning a militia position. The only concerted effort to capture the town came around dawn on June 11, when the raiders called a truce and attempted to sneak into town during the cease-fire. The Confederates asked for the garrison’s surrender twice that morning. Although the Confederates tried to trick the militia commanders into believing that the raiders had a full regiment, Gov. Bramlette refused to surrender and advised his officers not to accept any more truces. In truth, the raiders were only interested in capturing the capital if they could do so through subterfuge and without additional bloodshed.

The skirmish at Fort Hill and the militia’s defense of the town suggests waning local support for the Unionist elite. The county’s farmers and laborers had suffered so much at the hands of Union occupation that they did not care to risk their lives to defend Frankfort. Although one might contend that such behavior simply reflects the parochial nature of rural folk, previous events contradict this argument. In September and October 1861 men left their homes and jobs to seek out the Confederate invaders west of Louisville. During the Confederate invasion of 1862 men from both sides of the Ohio River offered their services as militia. The defenders of Cincinnati during the crisis were predominantly rural men, which led to the lasting sobriquet, “squirrel hunters.” Often the promise of adventure and excitement was enough to draw young men to the defense of a nearby town or city, but war weariness and politics dampened that impulse in Franklin County. Gen. Lindsey and Col. Monroe attempted to mask the severe lack of Union sentiment in Frankfort by writing lengthy and self-aggrandizing reports that detailed the gallantry of militia and the governor’s ability to inspire the men. Moreover, Lindsey’s military reasoning would display the racial mindset of many Kentucky Unionists. He
insisted on conscripting white militia members while refusing to accept willing black volunteers. Although Lindsey realized that his force was insufficient to withstand a rigorous siege, he was not willing to bolster his force by arming the seventy-five black laborers who were working on improving the fortifications. During the Confederate’s initial attack on July 10, Lindsey saw the black laborers running towards the fort’s main gate and ordered the workers down the hill into town instead. Although the conscripted workers may have been willing to defend the fort, Lindsey remarked in his report that he “had no intention of using them as soldiers.” The veteran officer added that if the rebels captured the fort they would have murdered any black men found inside. Because Lindsey did not want to appear as an advocate for black enlistment or an accessory to murder, he denied the workers the safety of the fort. The opportunity to triple the number of men defending the fort was not worth upsetting the racial status quo shared by Confederates and Kentuckians, whether loyal or not.

The raid’s outcome demonstrates that a small but dedicated group of wealthy citizens and their patrons formed the backbone of the Union cause in Frankfort. The men who risked their lives to defend Frankfort included a number of the elite and their families, who also happened to be the people most likely to lose property and investments during a raid. Among them was the colonel of the 36th Regiment Enrolled Militia, Edgar Keenon, a successful merchant who owned a considerable amount of real estate bordering the Louisville Road. Other prominent Unionists were too old to serve in the militia, but their sons eagerly took up arms to defend their homes and businesses. Sgt. John M. Hewett, whose father was a former state representative from Franklin County, commanded a small group of militia guarding a bridge. Gen. Lindsey personally praised eighteen-year-old Frank Gray, the son of wealthy Frankfort confectioner, for shrewdly carrying off the friction primers (essential to the operation of artillery) immediately before the
Confederates captured several cannon on Fort Hill. Many of the town’s merchants, grocers, and lawyers were Unionists who did not have strong connections to the Confederacy or slavery. Indeed, some of the men who served in the militia during the crisis were slaveowners, but their livelihood was dependent on access to the Ohio River and the railroad for supplies and customers. These businessmen had the most to lose if Confederate forces looted the town or cut the community off from trade with northern markets. Self-preservation and self-interest, and not support for Lincoln and the Republican administration, fueled the flicker of Unionism apparent during the brief crisis in Frankfort.

The town’s elite volunteered to assume command of the militia, but the majority of the rank and file had urban or cosmopolitan backgrounds. The enrolled militia contained many painters, carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and clerks who worked for or did business with Frankfort’s Unionist elite. Their livelihoods were linked not only to the local elite, but to the prosperity of the region. If Confederate raiders sacked Frankfort, businessmen throughout the region would question the community’s loyalty and worth. Patronage was not always incentive enough for some of these individuals to risk their lives because Col. Keenon pressed into service several craftsmen and small-time merchants. The men who protected Frankfort, out of commitment or compulsion, risked their lives defending the state capital, a task that some white citizens believed government troops should be doing. Besides townspeople, volunteers came from the surrounding area, primarily from the small community of merchants and artisans in the northeast corner of the county, Peak’s Mill. The rural inhabitants of Franklin County, who were most affected by the Union army’s practices of conscripting horses and restricting profits on livestock and foodstuffs, chose to sit out the fight occurring around Frankfort. But some of the rural residents avoided militia service out of antipathy for the federal government and local
Unionists. These “home rebels” interpreted the poor showing of the militia in Frankfort as a signal to increase pressure on their Unionist neighbors.

Previous narratives of Kentucky’s Civil War had not ascribed as political in nature the same interpretation of violence and intimidation in the state. Historian E. Merton Coulter indeed described guerrillas as lawless, but attributed “their rise in part to conditions produced by the Home Guards,” referring to accounts of Unionist citizens’ and soldiers’ confiscation of property and harassment of citizens. This interpretation puts the onus of violence on Unionists and depicts guerrillas as defenders or avengers, however violent or unlawful. Lowell Harrison and James Klotter, in their influential history of Kentucky, place responsibility on guerrillas and military authorities for the violence and unrest by concluding that “many civilians suffered from the depredations of guerrillas and from the illegal methods used to combat them.” Yet they do not offer an interpretation that assesses the nature or antecedents of guerrilla warfare in the Bluegrass. Indeed, periods of guerrilla violence coincided with the expansion of the government’s emancipation policy. The first flare-up took place during the winter of 1862 after the announcement of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, while a second round of guerrilla activity occurred when the U.S. Army expanded its policy pertaining to black enlistment in Kentucky in 1864. This second phase of violence took additional meaning for Unionists because Republicans in the Northwest were claiming that the Knights of the Golden Circle were preparing their treasonous plans for an uprising against the Union and the formation of a northwestern Confederacy.

More recent scholarship indicates that although some guerrilla bands were simply unaffiliated outlaws and opportunists, the fear of political, racial, and economic change motivated most guerrillas to their violent deeds. J. Michael Crane, in his study of Daviess
County (located on the Ohio River just east of Owensboro), asserts that “the violence that occurred in Daviess County during the Civil War stemmed from the divided loyalties of the community, which incessant partisan warfare and the breakdown of slavery demonstrated.” Additionally, J. Michael Rhyne’s research on the Bluegrass Region reveals a continuity between the violence during and after the war, indicating that “many acts of violence by regulators, particularly assassinations, house burnings, and mock lynchings, closely resembled terror tactics utilized by anti-Union guerrillas who had operated during the war.” Both scholars conclude that guerrillas and regulators ultimately acted out of individual economic interests and the maintenance of white supremacy. Violence aimed during the war at white Kentuckians who supported black enlistment and emancipation gave way to attacks on freedpeople after the war, which in both cases meant the victims were likely supporters of the Republican Party.

The upsurge in guerrilla violence in the vicinity of Frankfort targeted local Unionists, specifically the Home Guard, who remained the only resistance to white Kentuckians intent on reestablishing white supremacy. Loyalists knew that their situation was serious and as such forty-five men formed a State Guard company, including officers and men of the militia who participated in the skirmishes that June. Unlike the enrolled militia, this company would train regularly and serve at the behest of the governor and the adjutant general. Frankfort citizens with military experience supported resurrecting the State Guard, even though their show of loyalty made them susceptible to intimidation and violence. In early July (before the State Guard company completed organizing), a group of local guerrillas captured and hanged Gabriel S. Innis, a veteran of the 3rd Kentucky Cavalry and a lieutenant in the 36th Regiment Kentucky Enrolled Militia. While it is unclear exactly why the guerrillas singled out Innis, Col. Edgar Keenon noted that Innis was a “good and true Union man.” Adjutant General Lindsey
authorized Keenon to send twenty mounted men from the 36th Regiment to retaliate against Innis’ killers. The detachment of militia followed the guerrillas’ trail to Flat Creek, on the northern edge of Franklin County, but without apparent success. Flat Creek ran through a particularly hilly portion of the county known as Bald Knob, suitable only for grazing and subsistence farming. Although there was no strict delineation of Union or Confederate sympathies, guerrillas operated without much resistance in rural parts of the county in the neighborhood of Bald Knob, Forks of Elkhorn, and Peak’s Mill. Franklin County’s own civil war had reached a crescendo in mid-1864, exhibiting a rough sectionalism between the parochial portions of the county and cosmopolitan Frankfort.

Even the return of Union troops to the region did not curtail the activities of local guerrillas in the vicinity of Frankfort. Lt. Valentine Grebenstein of the 16th Illinois Cavalry reported about fifty guerrillas in Scott County, some who may have been involved in Innes’s lynching. According to Grebenstein, bands of these guerrillas were responsible for robbing one Unionist and killing another in the countryside near Georgetown. The Union troops had difficulty finding these guerrillas, who usually broke up into groups of five to ten men. A provost marshal in charge of eighteen cavalymen in Owen County lost five of his troopers when he stumbled into an ambush. More commonly, however, the “home rebels” in the Frankfort area singled out and attacked specific Unionists, but avoided confrontation with regular troops. While Unionists were helping to win the war in the Confederacy, the rebels were winning the war at home.

The political division and violence in Kentucky drew national attention, especially from the Lincoln administration, because it was impeding military operations in the region and further south. Joseph Holt identified his position to the secretary of war, Edwin M.
 Stanton, in July 1864. After visiting Frankfort and other parts of central Kentucky, Holt concluded “a very large part of the State is completely overrun with guerrillas.” Holt described Kentuckians’ dilemma by remarking that “they prefer yielding up their horses, goods, and other portable valuables to having their houses burned over their heads, and their lives probably sacrificed, which they think would be the immediate or ultimate result of any attempt to defend themselves.” Holt had a reputation for acting in the best interest of the people, which was evident in his efforts to persuade Kentuckians to remain in the Union during the secession crisis. However, Holt, a Democrat, saw the Copperheads and anti-government guerrillas, which he considered connected, as a danger to the nation. Therefore he advised strict, even draconian, measures in dealing with guerrilla violence and disloyalty in Kentucky. Unfortunately, Holt’s advice for ending militant opposition in Kentucky also jeopardized white Kentuckians concern for white supremacy and the protection of property. Both Burbridge and Holt advocated confiscating horses from disloyal citizens in order to mount two regiments of African American soldiers to protect white Kentuckians from the guerrillas. Holt believed this measure would invoke the “happiest influence in favor of the Government policy of employing colored troops.”

With the federal government advocating harsher prosecution of the war in other regions, Burbridge looked to Gen William T. Sherman for advice on how to quell the unrest in Kentucky. By the time Holt’s message reached Washington, Burbridge had already begun to apply the techniques of “hard war” against Kentucky’s pro-Confederate population. Holt endorsed punishing disloyal citizens, including Burbridge’s policy of holding local secessionist sympathizers responsible for guerrilla activities. Burbridge, however, was following the Sherman’s advice. While campaigning in Georgia in June, 1864, Sherman wrote several letters
to Burbridge including propositions on the situation in Kentucky. As Sherman surmised, “in our country personal liberty has been so well secured that public safety is lost sight of in our laws and constitutions.” He opined that the government had the right to take immediate action to “guard against real or even supposed danger.” If the state government was unable to prevent the descent into “anarchy,” then Sherman believed the military was obligated to intervene. If “a few innocent men should be wrongfully accused,” so be it. He advocated gathering the most obvious Kentucky sympathizers at Louisville and sending them down the Mississippi River into the Caribbean, where they could “take their negroes and make a colony with laws and a future of their own.”

In keeping with this logic, Burbridge exiled a number of Kentucky citizens, but he also adopted brutal tactics in dealing with guerrillas.

Once Burbridge accepted Sherman’s advice about the temporary suspension of personal freedom, Burbridge grew comfortable with the concept of retribution as a way of imposing law and order. According to this policy, Union troops did not have to catch the guerrillas but only needed to find suitable persons to hold responsible. On July 16, his infamous General Order No. 59 gave military authorities the freedom to pursue “stern retaliatory measures” against Confederate sympathizers in Kentucky. Under this directive, and in keeping with Sherman’s suggestion, Burbridge authorized Union authorities in Kentucky to deport “rebel sympathizers living within five miles of any scene of outrage committed by armed men” and the seizure of sympathizers’ property in order to compensate the victims of guerrilla raids. Burbridge took his plan for retribution further than Sherman’s recommendation by adopting the guerrilla’s trademark methods of terror and intimidation. “Whenever an unarmed Union citizen is murdered,” he decreed, “four guerrillas will be selected from the prisoners in the hands of the military authorities and publicly shot to death in the most convenient place near the scene of
outrage.”59 Holt applauded Burbridge’s order in a letter to Stanton, remarking that “these executions have inspired a most wholesome terror.”60

In terms of Union military policies towards civilians, the war in Kentucky and Georgia shared some interesting commonalities, with one major difference. Historian Mark Grimsley argues that Sherman exercised a limited application of “hard war” against southern civilians, “distinguishing between Unionist, neutral, and actively hostile Southern civilians.”61 Burbridge applied these distinctions to Kentucky and ceased responding to guerrilla attacks exclusively by deploying regular troops. The main difference between Sherman’s approach and that of his willing student was that Burbridge ordered executions of those who were technically civilians but who acted paramilitarily as agents of the Confederacy. By employing counter-guerrilla tactics, Burbridge followed the lead of other Union officers and made retaliatory violence an official military doctrine in Kentucky. Loyalists quickly embraced retaliation to combat proliferating local guerrillas. When members of the 36th Kentucky Enrolled Militia from Frankfort hunted for Gabriel Innis’s killers in early July, 1864, they did so in large part out of revenge. Although Kentucky’s state military commanders previously relegated the enrolled militia to local defense, in light of the guerrilla threat militia members exercised additional authority. As the historian Daniel Sutherland states, “a common desire to control communities produced acts of suppression and violence that erupted into guerrilla warfare.”62 The guerrilla violence in Franklin County was a challenge to the townspeople’s previous influence over the outlying area and a rejection of the Unionist elite as the local authority. The struggle, only loosely connected to national issues, was over who would rule at home.

Burbridge’s order assured that violence begot violence, especially in the troubled Bluegrass region. In late July, Michigan troops staged one of the first of many Kentucky
executions near Georgetown, in Scott County. The cavalrymen of the 11th Michigan shot two prisoners in retaliation for guerrillas killing a local Unionist. A similar public display of government authority and power occurred in Frankfort that following November. A detachment of Union soldiers executed four prisoners after guerrillas killed a Unionist resident of Peak’s Mill. The four prisoners, all of whom were from northern Kentucky, may have had previous affiliation with the Confederate partisan and cavalry units operating behind Union lines. Although Burbridge’s General Order No. 59 specified that Union troops execute four guerrilla prisoners for every “unarmed Union citizens” who died at the hands of “armed prowlers,” army retaliation was not always consistent. Soldiers executed four prisoners in Bardstown after guerrillas killed two black men. In the same message confirming the execution, Burbridge’s adjutant ordered four prisoners killed in Midway (east of Frankfort on the Lexington Road) to atone for the death of a white Unionist there. Burbridge’s macabre exchange rate measured black men’s lives as being half those of whites. Regardless, any retaliation on behalf of black Kentuckians appalled white conservatives.

Continued hardships and war weariness took its toll on Kentuckians’ resolve, especially those who hoped to remain neutral or at least limit their participation in the conflict. Desperate former Confederates knew that they could not get Kentucky to join the Confederacy when Union military successes indicated clearly that its days were numbered. Instead, Kentuckians concerned themselves with the question of who would control state and local government. During the critical year of 1864, Frankfort’s Unionist elite lost the support of farmers, craftsmen, and small producers who suffered from both Union military policies and pressure from returning Confederates. Unionist Kentuckians could no longer look north of the river for unity or support. The violence and endless retribution that marked the demise of slavery in the Bluegrass
splintered the coalition of border Unionists in the Ohio River Valley. Unionists north of the Ohio River decided that white Kentuckians’ opposition to emancipation and federal authority was creeping closer to disloyalty. White Kentuckians continued to fight amongst themselves for local control, but unconditional Unionists were the minority in Franklin County during the summer of 1864. Their numbers would continue to dwindle as opposition to the Lincoln administration and the Republican Party grew.
Chapter Eight

“The Ohio Was a Gulf of Raging Fire”

The Civil War brought devastation, economic hardship, partisanship, and violence to border communities, eventually eroding the regional cohesion that characterized the Ohio River Valley during the first year of the war. Slaves, abolitionists, and soldiers succeeded in destroying the institution of slavery in Kentucky at the end of the war, presenting different challenges for white Kentuckians and Indianans. The white residents of the two states had much in common, but the centrality of slavery and emancipation to the conflict forged different experiences for Hoosiers and Kentuckians. Southern Indianans came to heap blame for the host of wartime impositions they suffered onto Kentuckians, black as well as white, identifying Confederate raids, guerrilla attacks, and freedpeople’s migration as the emblems of a war against the Confederacy from which they seemed unable to escape. Simultaneously, white Kentuckians came to draw the same lines of distinction, believing that Hoosiers, who were not losing slaves, did not experience the same degree of loss as they. Moreover, many slaveholders repeatedly came into conflict with soldiers from north of the Ohio who harbored runaway slaves and encouraged black Kentuckians to enlist. Once emancipation had shaken the social and economic foundations of communities like Frankfort, many white Kentuckians came to embrace sentiment of Lizzie Hardin, a Kentuckian with strong Confederate sympathies, who articulated this sentiment in the “diary” that she wrote after the war from notes and memories of her experiences. Recalling a trip on a steamboat bound for Louisville, Hardin recollected how clearly and passionately the war had caused her to construct the ideological and political border that the Ohio River now represented: “While as I thought of those who lived beyond it the hatred
of a lifetime rushed hot upon my heart and the remembrance of the blood between them and my native land, made me echo the wish that the Ohio was a gulf of raging fire.”

The war caused northerners and southerners to complete a decades-long process by which they came to see one another as mortal enemies, enough so to participate in a costly and bloody struggle. But border citizens acquired this sense of sectionalism only at the very end of the war. Edward L. Ayers describes how the residents of two communities, one in Pennsylvania and one in Virginia, shared many characteristics until the war drew them into the conflict on different sides. As Ayers aptly observes, “the military events of the Civil War redefined the societies that waged them.” Along the border communities had to decide whether they agreed with the war’s outcome or whether, like the Confederate states, believed the Union’s prosecution of the war, including emancipation, was unjust. The war proved that straddling the fence during such a fervent contest between free and slave societies was a costly path to follow. Particularly in Kentucky, resistance to emancipation as a goal of the war alienated some citizens from their neighbors in the free states. Where at the war’s outset southern Indianans had pledged to repay Kentuckians for protecting Hoosier settlers from the scalping knife, this debt apparently did not extend to protecting slave property. Corydon and Frankfort were typical of many Ohio Valley communities in this respect. Unlike the communities in Ayers’s study, redefining society along the middle border meant relinquishing a regional identity that residents had held through the beginning of the war, only to release it once emancipation became the primary focus of the Union war effort.

Although scholars have not sufficiently identified the war on the border as such, it is in the divergence of wartime experiences in Ohio River Valley communities, rather than their similarities with those in the broader North and South, that shaped the way its residents’ memory
of the war developed. Historians often refer to Kentucky as a “border state” while including Indiana and Ohio as northern or midwestern states. Lost in their efforts to compartmentalize wartime experience along state, rather than regional, lines is the importance of the border region and its wartime ideological transformation. During the last year of the war and the following decades, Frankfort and Corydon followed very different paths, particularly in the way emancipation affected each community. Kentucky historian Lowell Harrison recognizes the Civil War’s importance as a politically formative moment for Kentuckians when he states “the heritage of the war and the bitterness engendered during the Reconstruction era led the state into the Southern Democratic ranks for years to come.” Although Harrison acknowledges the importance of the end of slavery in Kentucky, in his rendition the disillusionment he describes occurred in a vacuum. Indeed, Kentucky’s Democrats sought an alliance with southerners because their old alliance with fellow westerners was no longer feasible.

Before the war, Kentuckians and Hoosiers shared a western regional identity based on a concept of democracy and personal independence that did not conflict with proslavery sentiment. Christopher Phillips offers an interpretation of western identity that avoids the tendency to use the Ohio River as a boundary between the South and the Midwest. In an argument largely centered on Missouri but which speaks to the middle border as a whole, Phillips asserts that many western borderites “did not reject slavery as incongruent with democratic ascendance, but rather embraced the institution as perfectly consistent with the egalitarian social process they associated implicitly with national growth.” Additionally, Phillips explains that the primary reason for several border states’ “passage from western to southern identity was the assault upon and ultimate destruction of slavery.” Southern Indianans did not emerge from the war with the same resentment over the end of slavery. Further, the reaction of many white Kentuckians to the
prospect of emancipation caused lawlessness and violence in Kentucky, which threatened to extend across the Ohio River into Indiana. Southern Indianans accepted the end of slavery in Kentucky as inevitable and a logical means to achieving peace. Hoosiers’ readiness to recognize emancipation if it meant an end to hostilities made them “northerners,” in the same way that resistance to emancipation made Kentuckians “southerners.”

At the end of the war, many Kentuckians were beginning to accept the adversarial view of the federal government that would set them apart from their northern neighbors. This growing opposition to the Lincoln administration in Kentucky revealed itself in the months preceding the national election. A broad-based alliance of Union men who supported the war from its onset split in 1864 owing to anticipation over the coming presidential election. The emancipation issue was controversial enough to cause Kentucky’s Union Democrats to sever ties with the state’s few Republicans. The Union Democracy party, led by two influential Louisville citizens, James Guthrie of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad and George Prentiss of the Louisville Journal, supported the federal war effort but vehemently opposed President Lincoln. The Union Democrats won a symbolic victory when Kentucky’s governor, Thomas Bramlette, rescinded his support for Lincoln’s policies in favor of the Union Democrats’ platform that opposed black enlistment and racial equality. The Lincolnites in Kentucky, led by Robert J. Breckinridge, quickly refashioned themselves as the Unconditional Union party, seeking to obscure its emancipationist agenda with a patriotic name. Kentucky’s Peace Democrats were the only faction opposed to the war. However, an agreement between the Peace Democrats and War Democrats at the national level forced Kentucky Democrats to reconcile their differences. The parties did not merge, but both groups planned to vote for George B. McClellan for president. But the two factions rejected Ohioan George Pendleton, a Peace Democrat, as McClellan’s
running mate and chose instead to write in Bramlette. Kentucky Democrats were developing a unique sense of political identity that did not coincide with the goals of Democrats north of the Ohio River.⁵

Republicans in Kentucky countered the Democrats’ gains by making allegations of disloyalty, similar to the tactics that Oliver H. P. Morton and Gen. Henry B. Carrington employed in Indiana. Gen. Stephen E. Burbridge and Bramlette engaged in a vigorous written discussion over the governor’s opposition to black enlistment. Burbridge mollified Bramlette by promising to make sure that the army did not recruit slaves without their owners’ consent and to organize black regiments only from outside of the state. Largely from military necessity, Burbridge was unable uphold these pledges, but he maintained hard-line efforts against disloyal white Kentuckians. He investigated rumors that the “Sons of Liberty” were organizing in the state and ordered his officers to search for evidence that Bramlette had connections to Confederacy. Indiana’s adjutant general, Henry B. Carrington, was just as bold as Burbridge in arresting alleged traitors and acting on alleged conspiracies. However, when Burbridge arrested Peace Democrats who held positions in civil government or were running for office in the August state elections, Kentuckians considered this to be federal intrusion into the state’s legal and political matters, a violation of state’s rights.⁶

Burbridge’s strict military policies, mostly reactions to increasing guerrilla violence, compounded the burdens of war in Kentucky. Slavery continued to be the primary wartime issue for white Kentuckians, regardless of loyalty. Union policies in general damaged slavery and white supremacy, which white Kentuckians considered to be inextricably linked. Many white Kentuckians who did not actively oppose the Union cause objected to Burbridge’s application of retaliatory techniques. Many of the guerrillas, after all, were fighting the Union troops to uphold
white supremacy. Bramlette wrote President Lincoln in early September 1864, complaining of the “military follies and harassments to which Kentuckians are subjected.” The governor resented the fact that military authorities questioned Kentucky’s Unionism just because many loyalists were opposed to emancipation as a war aim. He informed Lincoln that Kentucky’s Unionists were “for preserving the rights and liberties of our own race.” The states north of the Ohio River border, especially Indiana and Ohio, had residents of mixed loyalties and various opinions concerning emancipation, but these states experienced no such federal intervention. Bramlette asked the president, accusingly: “Why therefore are unequal burdens laid upon the people of Kentucky?” The governor’s trenchant comment captured the inherent inconsistency of the Union military’s reaction to violence and disloyalty in the Ohio Valley. Indiana and Ohio both experienced a degree of violence between Copperheads and Unionists, but the state governments were still in charge of enforcing law. In Indiana, Harrison County was the scene of guerrilla activity, but Unionists’ call for aid yielded little intervention by state or federal authorities.

With the institution of slavery being the primary difference between Kentuckians and their neighbors across the Ohio River, as long as Kentuckians resisted emancipation the federal government viewed Kentucky differently than other western states. Historians use the term “divided loyalties” to describe Kentucky’s unique position in the Union and the intervention of military authorities in the state during the war. Indianans, too, were divided in their political opinions, especially along the river border, but even sporadic violence did not elicit government involvement. Their state’s governor oversaw the administrative and legislative responses to violence, even in incidents involving Union soldiers. Union military commanders in Kentucky, however, declared martial law on several occasions under the pretense of safeguarding the rights
of loyal citizens and upholding democratic elections. In Indiana and Kentucky, much of the violence was associated with political gatherings or took place before elections. Although violence in Kentucky was more widespread, opposition to the Union was mixed with proslavery sentiment. By the spring of 1864, an adamant defense of slavery was as good as disloyalty in the minds of many Union soldiers and commanders.

Lincoln’s re-election increased tension in Kentucky, especially among slaveholders who believed that Lincoln had betrayed them by embracing emancipation as a war aim. The majority of Kentuckians voted for former Union general and Democrat George B. McClellan, although the Unconditional Unionists mustered a little over thirty percent of the votes for Lincoln. At the national level, the Union capture of Atlanta, Georgia, in July 1864 caused McClellan to reject his previous association with Peace Democrats. The Union army’s success renewed some voters’ confidence in Lincoln and the Republican Party, but Kentucky voters were more concerned with the homefront than the battlefield. McClellan won a majority of votes in Kentucky, Delaware, and New Jersey, but support for McClellan in Kentucky derived from the state’s unique mixture of political allegiances and opinions. War Democrats, Peace Democrats, and covert Confederate sympathizers all voted for McClellan, even though they could not agree on much else.

The strong link between the Union war effort and emancipation eventually crippled the Loyalists’ cause in Kentucky. Conditional Unionists, who supported the war as long as slavery remained intact in Kentucky, abandoned their Republican allies once emancipation was a foregone conclusion. Many of these political defectors were former Union soldiers who had believed initially that Kentuckians could best protect the institution of slavery by staying in the Union. Although Lincoln’s and Burbridge’s failures to placate white Unionists seems unwise,
military authorities in Kentucky were busy harnessing the potential of Kentucky’s untapped reserve of unconditional Unionism: African Americans. Throughout the summer of 1864, white Kentuckians fell far short of meeting the state’s quota for enlistment. While 23,703 black Kentuckians, almost fifty-nine percent of black men of military age, served in the Union army during the last twelve months of the war, white enlistment in the federal ranks in Kentucky accounted for only about a third of military-aged white males. In contrast, almost three-fourths of Indiana’s eligible men served in the military or paid commutation during the war. Additionally, no significant resistance to black enlistment emerged in Indiana, very much unlike the strong response in Kentucky. Ironically Indiana recruiters sought black Kentuckians, including slaves, to help fill out their quota. The view from the north side of the Ohio River confirmed Hoosier Unionists’ fears that white Kentuckians were letting their commitment to slavery get in the way of the war effort. In their minds, vigorous volunteering and support for the war’s new aim were commensurate with loyalty. Kentucky was short on both counts.

White Kentuckians continued to blame military officers for their troubles, but resistance to the end of slavery in Kentucky was the real problem. Burbridge’s support of black enlistment, and the widespread enlistment of former slaves into Union ranks, caused pro-slavery Kentuckians to weigh their allegiances against their economic stake in slavery. Lincoln removed Burbridge in February 1865 largely to appease Bramlette, who complained that Burbridge was hampering Kentucky’s efforts to reconstruct a state guard. Republicans in Frankfort hated to see Burbridge withdrawn, but they formed a distinct minority of white Kentuckians. Most Kentuckians welcomed Burbridge’s replacement, Gen. John M. Palmer, considering Palmer’s assumption of command to be a corrective to the state’s bitter conflict between its civilians and the military. The federal government’s commitment to emancipation and not any one person’s
demeanor, however, was the root of Kentucky’s civil unrest. Palmer, a native Kentuckian like Burbridge, practiced law in Illinois before the war and was an outspoken abolitionist. Speaking before a joint session of the state legislature in Frankfort, Palmer informed Kentuckians that he understood “the sensibility and the delicacy of the[ir] position,” referring to the official loyalty of the state and the guerrilla violence that threatened the lives of its loyal citizens. Although Palmer would deal with the guerrilla problem with more diplomacy and subtlety that had Burbridge, being sure to cooperate with the state’s governor, Palmer’s dedication to freedom and emancipation soon eroded any popularity he might have enjoyed. Palmer issued several orders that solidified the independence many Kentucky slaves were already acquiring, including his infamous pass system that allowed impoverished black refugees to cross the Ohio River into Indiana to find work. The ensuing, overwhelming protest among white Kentuckians, many of whom were slave owners or who were reliant upon slave labor, to these measures suggests that the initiatives in the state against the institution of slavery, and not the presence of Union troops, caused many former Unionists to rethink their allegiances.

Although slavery was still legal in Kentucky immediately after the war, black participation in the conflict shattered the racial status quo in Frankfort just as it disrupted the local economy. White land owners and businessmen believed that their economic livelihood depended on the concept of white supremacy and black inferiority. As such, Kentucky’s legislature rejected the Thirteenth Amendment, ending slavery, based on the argument that acceptance of the amendment would lead to equal rights for African Americans including, most specifically, suffrage. White citizens who accepted the end of slavery now had to contend with the possibility of racial equality. If the state legislature could not impede emancipation, then white citizens could attempt to uphold the racial hierarchy at the community level.
Black Kentuckians, with the aid of abolitionists and the Union military, challenged this race-based system during the final year of the war. In Franklin County, African American men enlisted in the U.S. army, presenting a notable challenge to racial hierarchy. When black residents pursued military service as a way to achieve independence, their enlistment denied farmers and artisans much-needed labor. Sam Crutcher enlisted in the federal army in the summer of 1864, shortly after the death of his master, Reuben Crutcher of Franklin County. Having died intestate, when the county court divided the estate, Crutcher’s family was unable to locate the slave. Sam Crutcher journeyed to Camp Nelson to enlist while he was hired out to a Woodford County farmer, leaving the landowner without a worker during the crucial harvest months.\(^{21}\) White citizens, regardless of whether or not they owned slaves themselves, experienced a shortage of available labor during the end of the war because they depended on hiring their neighbors’ slaves.

The lack of labor was troubling to Franklin County’s farmers and craftsmen, but the implication of black participation in the war also upset both the racial and economic status quo. Before the war, white Kentuckians perpetuated the idea that African Americans, free or slave, were dependent and thus subordinate members of the community. Military service disproved this principle. Just as soldiering was an opportunity to advance the cause of emancipation, black recruits understood the social implications of military service. Volunteering was an important experience because it allowed slaves to control their own labor. This was the mark of a free man, civilian and soldier alike. Enlistment then held much appeal for African American men. Franklin County’s clerk noted that very little bounty money was raised during the end of the war because “the young men of the county, and in particular those of African descent, were too patriotic to even request any relief in the way of money.”\(^{22}\) At least one white farmer in the
Frankfort area encouraged this sense of independence by offering property to his former slave. This was a rare occurrence, because many slaveholders discouraged their white neighbors from giving property to freed slaves. This scenario happened occasionally throughout Kentucky, but almost everywhere violence resulted. Regulators, nightriders, and vigilantes terrorized black families, burning out those who refused to leave. Small groups of white supremacists murdered, raped, and mutilated former slaves throughout the Bluegrass Region in the years following the war. Indeed, as J. Michael Rhyne concludes, these acts of terror were often aimed at black veterans because “freedmen represented a direct challenge to the power of some white men in Kentucky to maintain a rigid racial hierarchy.”

In the years immediately following the war, Frankfort’s white residents eventually succeeded in re-establishing the subordinate position of African American residents. Slaves and free African Americans had a brief period of independence at the end of the war, including wartime military experience, which increased their status temporarily. Whites who dreaded the prospect of racial equality acted without secrecy or fear of community reprisal. In May 1866, a white Frankfort citizen accused his black employee of raping the employer’s daughter. Once people spread the news of the accusation, a mob forcibly dragged the accused out of the jail and hanged him. Publicized throughout the Bluegrass Region, the incident drew applause from Frankfort’s white residents for the participants’ disciplined and orderly behavior, ignoring the obvious violations of civil rights and due process. Two years later, at the request of the Freedman’s Bureau, federal authorities investigated a similar lynching, but the U.S. district court was unable to make a sufficient case against the suspects. Although the court had the names of some of the men who had hanged the accused rapist, no one would testify against these influential townspeople. Denying African Americans’ civil rights was the status quo in
Kentucky, and long after the war, many residents justified summarily punishing accused rapists as “a sufficient warning to the negro race.” Lewis F. Johnson, in his 1912 history of Franklin County, explained that “during the half century which the negro has been free, not one of them has ever been tried in Franklin County by a legally constituted court for criminal assault, and doubtless during the next half century not one of them will be so tried.”

Postwar assaults on African Americans in Frankfort continued into the postwar era, successfully returning black residents to the bottom of the social order. Kentucky’s Freedman’s Bureau did not have enough manpower to investigate all of the criminal acts committed against former slaves in Kentucky, let alone prevent abuses. A petition to Congress in 1870 from African Americans in the Frankfort area attests to the perseverance of the racial status quo in Franklin County. Frankfort’s black population almost doubled during and immediately after the war, reaching 2,335 in 1870. In Franklin County, the total black population was 3,834 in 1860, growing to 4,663 in 1870, thus where a decade earlier less than three in ten of the county’s black residents lived in Frankfort, by 1870 a full half lived there. Some white residents reacted to the increase of the number of African American residents and the concentration of the black population in Frankfort with further violence. In a little less than three years, black citizens documented over one hundred incidents of white citizens committing violence against their black neighbors in Frankfort and Franklin County, including twenty-four murders. The violent re-establishment of white supremacy in Frankfort also economically marginalized African Americans. One-third of the town’s black population however, lived in the lower part of the city, which white Frankforters nicknamed “Crawfish Bottom” or the “Craw.” This low, sloping area next to the Kentucky River on the northwest corner of town was not fully developed before the war, but soon grew into a district for poor families, mainly African Americans and
immigrants, that later newspaper articles characterized as violent, dilapidated, and immoral.\textsuperscript{28}

White Frankforters succeeded in creating a new space for African Americans legally and physically, thus preventing black citizens from realizing the opportunities and advantages of freedom. Once the war ended, partisan politics continued to dictate Kentucky’s relationship with the federal government, especially in the case of wartime claims. In January 1864, Thomas Bramlette promised compensation for loyal citizens who suffered from the consequences of military occupation by federal troops. Bramlette justified the need for troops in the state, but also noted “those who sustained losses are poor persons, many of whom are reduced to absolute want.” During the war, the Union army contributed to the hardships of Kentucky farmers, in the governor’s words, “by the taking and using of forage and subsistence, without paying or furnishing proper vouchers.”\textsuperscript{29} White Kentuckians suspected that the federal government was not as concerned with Kentucky claims as with those from the neighboring states of Indiana and Ohio. The state’s first claims agent, Charles Pennebaker, worried that Republicans would take revenge on Kentucky’s Democrats by delaying claims investigations. The state’s border status and the building resentment against the Republican Party certainly complicated Kentucky’s claims process. Some Kentuckians suspected a Republican conspiracy to hamper claims payments in the state. Although no evidence suggests Republican vengeance having hampered claim settlements, the fact that Fayette Hewitt, Kentucky’s claim agent during the 1870s, was a former officer in Kentucky’s Confederate “Orphan Brigade” caused friction with the state’s Republicans. Some were themselves former Union officers now serving the federal government, and conspiratorial accusations made claim delays plausible to many Kentucky Democrats.\textsuperscript{30}

Individual claims for property, however, were harder to substantiate than claims for military pensions and reimbursements for state expenditures. Because the federal government
did not consider the state of Kentucky ever to have been in rebellion, those residents judged to have been Confederate sympathizers were not eligible for reimbursement. Kentucky Republicans, of course, were prone to pronouncing as disloyal all Peace Democrats and even Conditional Unionists. Moreover, loyal Kentuckians who had claims under the Act of July 4, 1864, that reorganized the Quartermaster General’s office had to swear loyalty with verification by way of the statement of a civil or military government official. Such residents also were forced to demonstrate that a “proper” officer confiscated their property and produce a receipt or other proof of the confiscation. Conforming to these rules was difficult at the least, considering the subjective nature of loyalty and the exigencies of military operations. Even when citizens could prove loyalty, many could not produce receipts for food, fodder, or mounts furnished to Union troops in pursuit of Confederate cavalry or guerrillas. If an individual was fortunate enough to have the evidence and credentials needed to make a successful claim, the act further specified “claims for damages, or for losses sustained by thefts, or depredations committed by troops, will not be considered, under the act.”31 These stipulations meant that claimants had to prove that an authorized military officer took items that his troops required under normal conditions. The most common losses farmers experienced, such as soldiers stealing livestock or crops, damaging property while encamped, or vandalism, were ineligible for compensation. In effect, the government paid claims only for items normally provided by the Quartermaster that Union troops obtained through the complex channels of military bureaucracy.

The lack of collaboration between states in the Ohio River Valley during the postwar claims process demonstrates that states north of the Ohio River no longer considered Kentucky an ally. Although Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky all received similar amounts of government compensation, politicians north of the Ohio River viewed their position as quite different from
that of Kentucky. Oliver H. P. Morton, Indiana’s wartime governor and postwar senator, proposed legislation to reimburse states for private bonds like the ones he used to run the state government after the Democrats gained control of the assembly. Morton did not make an effort to cooperate with Kentucky officials who were concerned with the payment of other claims besides bonds. Recouping the money expended by the Republican state government took precedence over regional alliances and partisan politics soon obscured the opportunity to regain the spirit of cooperation that had permeated the Ohio Valley at the beginning of the war.\footnote{32}

The turmoil in Kentucky over the inevitable demise of slavery and the advent of free labor had a noticeable effect on southern Indiana’s relationship with Kentucky. Gen. John M. Palmer’s attempt to alleviate the injustices towards black refugees and the overcrowding in Louisville resulted in increased black migration to Indiana. Many southern Indianans resented the influx of former slaves into urban areas like New Albany. Initially, Democrats in southern Indiana saw Unionist slaveholders as victims of the war. In April 1865, an article in the New Albany Daily Ledger sympathized with a Brandenburg farmer who lost all of his property to guerrillas and was forced to take his slaves to New Albany and set them free.\footnote{33} By mid-May, however, the increasing number of former slaves bearing “Palmer passes” caused some Democrats to change their opinion. The editors of the Ledger expressed outrage that “the southern part of Indiana is being made a place of refuge for thousands of these negroes, most of whom have left good homes in Kentucky.” According to the editorial, Palmer was not to blame; instead, the responsibility belonged to Kentuckians who “encourage these negroes to move into Indiana representing to them that laborers are greatly in demand here at high prices.” The editors urged black Kentuckians to stay put by claiming no work awaited them in southern Indiana. Furthermore, newspapermen promised that slavery would soon end in Kentucky and the demand
for labor in that state would compel white landowners to hire their former slaves and pay good wages.\(^3\) Not only did southern Indianans consider Kentucky a source of cavalry raiders, guerrillas, and bandits, but such Hoosiers now associated the state with thoughtless slaveholders who shirked their responsibility to provide for their former slaves.

Although the number of black migrants arriving in Corydon was decidedly less than that of the burgeoning commercial center of New Albany, white resistance to free labor in Kentucky caused both white and black refugees to seek solace in Harrison County. Union troops eradicated guerrilla activity in Meade County shortly after the end of the war, but some slaveholders (many of them former Confederate soldiers), organized locally to resist emancipation. After Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution on December 18, 1865, these “rebel” slaveholders used violence and intimidation in a desperate effort to maintain control of black labor. A black veteran of the 118th U.S. Colored Infantry returned to Brandenburg to retrieve his family, but the former owner of the soldier’s wife and children refused to let them leave. Shortly after this, a prominent Brandenburg resident reported that “regulators” roamed the county, intending to find and kill black veterans. Yet this intimidation and violence was not focused solely on free blacks. A Brandenburg man beat a white Union veteran who sent his former slaves across the Ohio River while regulators burned the houses of a white farmer who allegedly planned to hire his former slaves. By January 1866, Brandenburg was firmly in the hands of former Confederates, which caused Unionists and former slaves alike to flee Meade County. Many of these refugees settled across the river in Harrison County, where the political atmosphere was less volatile.\(^3\)

Harrison Countians also experienced a degree of local disturbance and lawlessness, although most of the crimes resulted from the war-torn economy. As the often violent struggle
over the control of black labor took place across the river, Hoosiers living near the Ohio River experienced a period of frequent robberies, arson, and vandalism. These disturbances, which reached a peak during the fall of 1865, exacerbated the fear and uncertainty inherent in a community still suffering from the economic burdens of war. Horse thieves roamed the county and bandits robbed citizens at gunpoint, often in broad daylight. Most of these crimes occurred in the rural parts of the county, but on one occasion burglars broke into the post office in Corydon, taking some ten dollars in cash. Although some people suspected that Kentucky guerrillas on the run from military authorities were responsible, a number of the newspaper reports indicate that local men, unconnected to any military or paramilitary force, were often involved. The victims identified several of the perpetrators and, in one case, the local sheriff met resistance while arresting two suspected thieves in the southern part of the county. The robbery and thefts were symptomatic of a local economy ravaged by war. The southern part of the county, nearest the Ohio River, suffered the most from Morgan’s raid, guerrilla war, and the Union military’s limitations on trade and travel between Indiana and Kentucky. Local observers commented that the county saw a bumper crop of acorns in 1865 but lamented that farmers had few hogs to fatten on the abundance of nuts. Corydon’s fervent Republicans were unable to champion the cause of free labor in nearby Kentucky because they had their own problems. The poverty and hardship did not, however, cause Harrison Countians to harbor any resentment towards the federal government immediately after the war.

Although emancipation had no serious repercussions for most of Corydon’s residents, racial animosity announced itself as the acceptance of the Thirteenth Amendment approached. Indiana ratified the amendment in February 1865, but the required number of states did not do so until the following December. The apprehension of the end of slavery, and the possibility of
black migration from the South, was evident in southern Indiana. On a Sunday evening in late October 1865, a crowd of young men paraded through the streets of Corydon “hootling and cursing,” eventually arriving at St. Paul’s African Methodist Episcopal Church, where they broke in and destroyed everything inside. The new editor of the Corydon Democrat, A. W. Brewster, explained that the vandals were “fellows who had imbibed too much bad whisky, and whose names we suppress.”

Although Brewster attempted to downplay the disturbance and conceal the perpetrators’ identity, the episode was part of a rash of racially motivated violence and vandalism that occurred in Indiana after the war. That August 1865, a crowd of white men in New Albany fired pistols into an African Methodist Episcopal Church during a Sunday service, wounding one of the parishioners. There was also a lynching in Evansville, downriver from Corydon, but groups of white citizens reacted violently to black migration throughout Indiana, not just along the river border. Attacks on black churches, lynching, and the occasional riot, were rooted in the prevailing feeling of white supremacy and the belief that black migration endangered the livelihood of white workers. Like many white Kentuckians, some white Hoosiers feared competition with black laborers, especially former slaves who would presumably work for lower wages. The concern was not completely unfounded; the black population in Indiana doubled between 1860 and 1870, reaching 24,560. Black migration to Corydon was small compared to river cities like New Albany and Evansville, but the black population even in Harrison County tripled after the war, rising from 114 in 1860 to 349 in 1870. Corydon’s white residents were concerned about how black migration would affect the local economy at a time when resources were scarce and troubles plentiful. Many white Hoosiers in Corydon and elsewhere acted to bolster white supremacy while their unfortunate
counterparts in Kentucky struggled with the more urgent task of reestablishing a racial hierarchy totally upended by emancipation.

The end of the war in the Ohio Valley also further divided southern Indianans from their fellow Hoosiers who could did not directly experience the economic loss, violence, and racial turmoil occurring along the river border. Historian Nicole Etcheson concludes that the war served to solidify a midwestern identity among the upland southerners and easterners who populated Indiana. Indeed, the idea that the Middle West, like the nation, emerged “shaken but intact” holds popular appeal because it downplays the bitterness and conflict inherent in region’s internecine war. Contrary to Etcheson’s assertion, the war served to alienate, rather than unite, rural southern Indianans from fellow Hoosiers to the north, many of whom charged the mostly Democratic southern counties with being “butternuts,” a term tantamount to disloyalty. Moreover, the citizens of Indiana’s southern border never received adequate assistance from the state government in Indianapolis in arming, equipping, and organizing the Indiana Legion. The combination of financial loss and wartime restrictions on trade with Kentucky damaged the economic link between people on opposite sides of the river. Additionally, the political alliance between Unionists in Indiana and Kentucky buckled under the overwhelming resistance to emancipation and black enlistment in Kentucky. The people of Corydon and their country neighbors continued to feel increasing pressure from both north and south after the war, causing further seclusion and economic stagnation.

The federal government’s slow response to outstanding claims against its armies suggests the political and economic marginalization of rural communities such as Corydon that suffered extensive loss. Ironically, the state legislature’s ultimate failure to act on the findings of the Indiana Morgan’s Raid Claims Commission, resulted in white citizens of southern Indiana using
Morgan’s Raid to define their wartime experience. Most Hoosiers could boast about their respective communities’ participation in the war by way of local volunteers and ladies’ aid societies, but only the people of the border could claim to have fought the enemy and suffered the consequences of war. Local and amateur historians romanticized the excitement and exceptionality of the raid’s effect on citizens by compiling numerous anecdotal accounts of Confederate raiders taking horses, helping themselves to food, and confiscating other property (including cash, whiskey, and clothing). These enduring stories do not accurately depict the lasting economic impact of the raid on Corydon and the surrounding area.41 Less entertaining, this aspect of the raid conveys how the extent of loss and hardship dampened Indiana’s border citizens’ initial enthusiasm for aiding their Kentucky allies. Some 468 Harrison County residents filed $86,551.72 in claims with the U.S government, the sum of which totaled about five percent of all personal property listed in the 1860 census.42 Most were farmers and mechanics, but a number of them were merchants who lost inventories or ransom money to the Confederates. These citizens required quick compensation in order to replace the animals and tack essential to rural life. The raid deprived the community of important capital, which had long-lasting effects on the local economy. Indiana’s state government was responsible for passing legislation for payment of these claims, with the understanding that the federal government would eventually reimburse the state.

Indiana’s bitter political partisanship prevented victims of Morgan’s Raid from receiving the swift action they needed to replace property and pay debts. Ohio’s legislature took immediate action, evaluating and paying the majority of Morgan’s Raid claims by 1865. The Quartermaster General’s office reimbursed the state for claims against U.S. troops, but not for property lost to Confederates. Victims of the raid in Indiana, however, did not receive any
payments from their state government, and were lucky to receive any compensation at all.\textsuperscript{43} Indiana’s state assembly did not remedy the claims situation. In fact, Republicans seriously undermined efforts to address the Morgan’s raid losses in an attempt to maintain control over the state government. After the elections in 1862, Republican state senators reacted to the Democratic gains in the state assembly by leaving the capital and refusing to allow a quorum. The Democratic senators wanted to take away Morton’s ability to control the Indiana Legion, which led Republicans to claim that “Copperheads” were planning to use the state troops to form a northwest confederacy. Morton not only approved of this tactic, but he operated the state with private and government funds from 1863-65, occasionally using unlawful methods to accomplish this.\textsuperscript{44} The legislature did not meet, and therefore did not discuss reimbursing claimants in the years directly after the raid. Partisan squabbling occurred throughout the North during the war, but only on the border did it hamstring the economy of communities directly affected by the war.

When the state assembly finally met after the war, both Republicans and Democrats were more concerned with gaining a political advantage by “waving the bloody shirt” or dredging up wartime claims of loyalty and sacrifice than with the plight of southern Indianans who lost property in 1863.\textsuperscript{45} Contrary to Nicole Etcheson’s assertion that “the party system continued, after the war, to unify Midwesterners,” the bitter struggle between Democrats and Republicans delayed the collection of claims and contributed to the bulk of the claims going unpaid.\textsuperscript{46} Indeed, Mark Neely describes as “one party domination” Morton’s willingness to eliminate Democratic Party participation in state government (Richard Yates, the governor of Illinois, employed a similar approach the same year).\textsuperscript{47} Morton and the Republican state senators’ willingness to interfere with democracy undermined any unity between central and southern
Indiana. Not only did political scheming affect the claims process; many citizens in the heavily Democratic southern counties resented Morton’s partisan manipulation of state government.

After the war, partisanship subsided long enough for the state assembly to convene, giving southern Indiana politicians a chance to pursue the creation of a bill to pay for the losses to Morgan’s raiders. Consistent lobbying by southern Indiana representatives eventually prompted the state’s new governor, Conrad Baker, during the summer of 1867 to form a committee to gather information and decide the legitimacy of the claims. The state assembly voted down a bill to create a commission, but advocates of the claim bill were able to pass a “non-binding concurrent resolution” that allowed the governor to create a commission. Unlike Ohio’s state legislature, Indiana’s resolution only authorized the commission to collect and assess claims, making no allowance for payment. When the attorney, three commissioners, and a clerk began taking affidavits and auditing claims in Corydon on July 10, 1867, four years and a day after the skirmish between townspeople and Morgan’s cavalry, citizens swarmed to the courthouse to apply for compensation. On July 11, Thomas M. Brown, chair of the commission, wrote to Baker requesting additional staff, claiming that the commission’s single clerk was only able to process twenty-eight cases the previous day out of a total of 458 for Harrison County alone. Brown clearly dreaded the work ahead of the group, pleading “the work before us is elephantine” and that he was “hoping that we may live long enough to see the end of it.”49 However slow, the commission’s efforts renewed citizens’ hopes that they would receive payment for their losses.

The Indiana Morgan’s Raid Commission finished its work and released a report in December 1867, but its recommendations were of little worth without a bill from the state legislature to pay the claims. The commission’s report noted the effort of Corydon’s defenders
and the extensive toll the raid took. “[T]he town, having been captured,” it argued, “was to a
great extent despoiled.”50 Despite evidence of extensive losses, senators representing counties
unaffected by the raid consistently opposed efforts to pay the claims. Angry still some sixty
years later, in 1923 Strother M. Stockslager, a lieutenant in the Legion during the raid, wrote a
letter to the Corydon Democrat criticizing both the state and federal governments’ inability to
redress the claims. Stockslager remarked that the commission’s endeavor was a “false hope”
that “served to buoy up the loser who struggled on as best they could with this just hope of
ultimate payment.” Although the words of the eighty-year-old veteran, lawyer, and politician
were steeped in over a half-century of bitterness, he had personally worked to get compensation
for Morgan’s Raid sufferers while serving in the state senate from 1874-78 and as a
representative to Congress from 1881-85. Stockslager attributed to “selfishness” the inability of
the state legislature to pay the claims, explaining that because the sufferers were from nine
southeastern counties “the people and representatives of the other counties were unwilling to tax
themselves to pay them.”51 Clearly, the partisanship of the war era hampered the settlement of
Indiana’s Civil War claims and furthered local disillusionment with Indiana’s state government.

For many Harrison County citizens, the ordeal surrounding the wartime property claims
was more than just a matter of politics. It was a financial burden for people along the border that
their neighbors to the north did not bear. During the 1880s, the United States Quartermaster
General (USQG) tried to review Indiana’s outstanding claims, but the Indiana state government
failed to release sufficient documentation. Indiana’s Adjutant General claimed the detailed
affidavits and documentation that the commission collected were “lost.”52 Between 1880 and
1887, the USQG assessed and adjudged the claims as best it could, based on resubmitted
information from the citizens of southern Indiana and including 468 claims from Harrison
County. Most of the residents who lost property during the raid kept copies of their claims from 1867, although there were several cases where the deposition was lost or misplaced. The USQG was able to process and pay only those claims for property lost to Union troops; all others were marked “taking and use not proven” or “rebel.” The Senate Commission of Claims drafted Senate Bill 527 in 1884 in an attempt to pay all Morgan’s Raid claims in Indiana and Ohio. Stockslager, a state representative at the time, worked to gain support for the bill, which he believed did not pass because politicians from other states did not have any vested interest in compensating Hoosiers.53 Those citizens who lost property or money to the raiders must have shared Stockslager’s cynicism. Harrison County residents and their descendants submitted a total of $81,558.07 of claims to the USQG, but the amount paid under the Quartermaster’s Act of July 4, 1864, amounted to only $8,659.54

The war’s effect on southern Indiana was not as extensive and drastic as in Kentucky’s Bluegrass Region, but the combined consequences of Confederate raids, guerrilla warfare, and black migration changed the way Corydon’s citizens viewed the region below the Ohio River. Historians agree that during the mid-nineteenth century, the Ohio River ceased to be the cohesive force it was during the colonial and early national period. However, there is no consensus as to exactly when and why this happens. Emma Lou Thornbrough attributes the population growth and urbanization of central and northern Indiana during the postwar period to the railroad, while adding that “the Ohio River communities of New Albany and Madison, which had been the principle centers of commerce and culture at mid-century, failed to keep pace with newer cities.”55 Kim Gruenwald posits that the shift away from the Ohio River as a focal point of the region occurred before the war as merchants established new commercial ties and that it was complete by 1850. As Gruenwald contends, “only as the commercial world began to give way to
an emerging industrial economy, and as artificial transportation networks such as canals and railroads supplanted the river, did those living on the northern shore begin to define the Ohio as the boundary between North and South.\textsuperscript{56} Though perhaps true for the subject of Gruenwald’s study, Marietta, Ohio, the story of Corydon, Indiana, and its enduring ties to the Ohio River and Kentucky suggest a later and more complex shift in regional identity away from the river.

The people of southern Indiana and northern Kentucky struggled during the war to maintain connections within the region, but ultimately the conflict sealed the fate of a cohesive western identity. In Corydon, citizens could not deny that John Hunt Morgan, a Kentuckian, and his Confederate cavalry (drawn mostly from the Bluegrass Region) brought material loss, fear, and death to their doorstep. Moreover, the guerrillas who terrorized Unionists on both sides of the Ohio River during the last two years of the war were mostly Kentuckians. The black migrants who further jeopardized the racial purity that most white Hoosiers considered so important, too, were predominantly from Kentucky. In Frankfort, the war brought a similarly distasteful image of people from north of the river. Slaveholders blamed the Ohio troops camped in their midst for enticing slaves to run away or confiscating slaves in violation of state law. These same troops from across the river were nowhere to be found when guerrilla violence wracked Kentucky at the end of the war. During the spring of 1861, Unionists throughout the Ohio River Valley agreed that a war to prevent disunion was an endeavor worthy of their joint effort, much like the campaigns to settle Indiana and defeat Native American resistance at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Ohio River, as a boundary between free and slave states, symbolized the common interest of valley citizens. But after January 1863 the war became a struggle to end slavery, making the Ohio River the obvious line of demarcation for a war against that institution. Although many white Kentuckians hoped that as a loyal state, they
would avoid the consequences of a war for emancipation, such fervent wishes soon proved to be little more than naïveté.

The residents of Corydon and Frankfort shared many experiences common to border communities during the Civil War, but the war’s effect on slavery in Kentucky meant that these commonalities were not enough to preserve the prewar bond between Indiana and Kentucky. White citizens in both communities used violence and intimidation to bolster white supremacy, but only in Kentucky did this mean waging a brutal terror campaign against black veterans, black property owners, and their abolitionist allies. As residents of a new free state, and reluctant ones at that, white Kentuckians living in the racially diverse Bluegrass Region had to reassert white supremacy in response to a sizable black population. Hoosiers had long established the limitations on freedom and feared only the immediate economic consequences of black migration. Even the common experience of economic loss did not unite Hoosiers and Kentuckians against the federal government, which demanded manpower, crops, livestock, and loyalty from the crucial border region. Kentuckians saw the state government, in the form of its governor, Thomas E. Bramlette, as their savior and the last reasonable voice against emancipation. Conversely citizens in southern Indiana looked to the federal government to stabilize Kentucky and protect them when their governor, Oliver H. P. Morton, was unable or unwilling to do so. The war was a transformative event, which reunited the nation and redefined freedom. But this transformation broke the bonds that held together border society and forced residents to realign themselves. The resulting repositioning separated a people previously united by the legacy of the frontier and a common belief in white supremacy. Thus the Civil War not only reshaped communities such as Frankfort and Corydon, it broke up the Ohio Valley as an
economic, social, and political borderland, making the Ohio River the newly established boundary between the North and the South.⁵⁷
Notes

Introduction


Prologue

7. Ibid.

Chapter 1

2. *Kentucky Yeoman*, May 9, 1861.

5. Faragher, Sugar Creek, 237.


9. Ibid., 43-46.


11. Cayton, Frontier Indiana, 297.


16. Wade, The Urban Frontier, 337.

17. Harrison and Klotter, History of Kentucky, 103


21. The percentage of male household heads from Virginia was six percent, while the total for females were 8.6 percent. Men and women from Tennessee and North Carolina together were approximately one percent of household heads, while 1.4 percent was born in Pennsylvania alone. Data compiled from Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Franklin County, Kentucky, National Archives (hereafter NA).

22. Kramer, Capital on the Kentucky, 78-79.

23. Franklin County was divided into two districts, both of which had less than six percent foreign-born male household heads. In Frankfort, twenty-six percent of male and twenty percent of female heads of households were foreign born, with seventy-one percent and seventy-four percent respectively born in Ireland.


28. Franklin County Districts 1 and 2, excluding Frankfort, exhibit patterns of slaveholding similar to conclusions historians have made about the distribution of Kentucky slaves throughout small farms and workshops, instead of living on plantations like in the cotton South. The majority of Franklin County slaveholders (65.9 percent) owned five slaves or less. However, twenty-nine percent owned three to five, twenty-two percent owned six to ten, and almost twelve percent owned ten to nineteen slaves. The minority, three percent, of slaveholders owned more than twenty slaves. If one considered that fifty-one percent of slaveholders owned three to ten slaves, a labor force sufficient to increase agricultural production compared to an average farm family, it is feasible that slaveholding farmers in Franklin County had an advantage over their counterparts in southern Indiana. Eighth U.S. Census, Franklin County Kentucky, Slave Schedule, microfilm. Kentucky’s main cash crops, tobacco and hemp, did not foster the same plantation culture as more valuable and labor intensive crops like cotton and rice. On the nature of slavery in Kentucky see Robert William Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1989), 36; Lucas, *A History of Blacks in Kentucky*, 2-5; Harrison and Klotter, *History of Kentucky*, 168-69.


38. Ibid, 279.


44. Ibid., see figures 1a and 1b, 245.

45. Ibid., 253-255.

46. Ibid., 254-257.

47. The following census data were collected by counting male and female household heads, who were listed as the principle property owners or adult family members. Both husbands and wives were counted, since both individuals would influence the political and ideological tone of the household. Adults listed on the census below the principle family, mainly servants, laborers, or borders, were not included in this study. Since the Census represents a “snapshot” of the population, only permanent residents were considered as household heads. Most of these adult non-household heads were immigrants or migrants from other states, so adding them to the sample would if anything, increase the number of individuals born outside of the community’s parent state. Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Harrison County, Indiana, NA.

48. The percentage of household heads born in Kentucky for the county was fourteen percent male and 13.2 percent female. The townships bordering the river had a slightly higher percentage, Boone being the most with 29.7 percent Kentucky born males and twenty percent females. The second highest percentage of native-born emigrants were from Virginia, accounting for nine percent male and 8.6 percent female heads of household. Pennsylvania follows with 5.2 percent male and 3.7 percent female, while Ohio born males were 1.3 percent of the population and females totaled 1.8 percent. Tennessee and North Carolina each accounted for two percent of male citizens’ birthplace, while two percent of female residents were born in Tennessee and 1.5 percent born in North Carolina. Men and women born in Maryland each totaled 1 percent of the total population. Residents born in New England and lower south states accounted for less than 1 percent of the population each. Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Harrison County, Indiana, NA.

49. Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Harrison County, Indiana, NA; *Corydon Democrat*, August 13, 1861.

50. The percentage of German born male heads of households were as follows: Jackson 26.7 percent, Morgan 25.8 percent, Taylor 29.2 percent, and Webster thirty-two percent. Female household heads totaled: Jackson 24.9 percent, Morgan 22.5 percent, Taylor twenty percent, and Webster 25.4 percent. In Harrison County French born Immigrants comprised 3.5 percent of male and 2.8 percent of female household heads. Many of these immigrants were also Forty-eighers who came from the southeast part of France, bordering German states. Matilda Gresham mentioned that Spencer Township contained many Germans before the war, although there were only two German households listed in the 1860 census. This indicates that these immigrants were from the border region affected by the 1848 Revolution and spoke German, although technically born in France. Matilda Gresham, *Life of Walter Quintin Gresham*, (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1919), 65; Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Harrison County, Indiana, NA.

51. Walter W. Gresham Papers, box 2, folder 16, political scrapbooks, Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis.


Chapter 2

7. Ibid., 128. Even recent scholarship continues to use the term “border South” to describe Kentucky, without questioning the southernness of antebellum or wartime Kentucky. William W. Freehling argues that Unionist sentiment in Kentucky, among other “southern” states, ultimately led to Confederate defeat. Like Etcheson, Freehling does not question the assumption that all slave states were culturally southern, while all free states were northern. William W. Freehling, *The South vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 19.
8. Ibid., 128-29.
11. Ibid., 179-81
17. For the political tendencies and mixture of allegiances in the border region see E. Merton Coulter, *Civil War and Readjustment*, 11-15; Smith, *The Borderland in the Civil War*, 48-49; Etcheson, *The Emerging Midwest*, 108-16.


25. Ibid., Jan. 24, 1861.


34. Ibid., May 2, 1861.

35. Ibid., May 9, 1861.

36. Thornbrough, *Indiana in the Civil War Era*, 14-18

37. Corydon Democrat, February 12, 1861.

38. Ibid.


41. Thornbrough, *History of Indiana* 107-108, In Morton’s biography Magoffin’s offer is portrayed as a trick meant to prevent Morton from raising anymore troops for the Union.
Chapter 3


13. Corydon Democrat, June 18, 1861.
15. Tri-Weekly Yeoman, July 4, 1861, and July 6, 1861.
18. Carl E. Kramer, Capital on the Kentucky: A Hundred Year History of Frankfort and Franklin County (Frankfort: Historic Frankfort Inc. 1986), 158.
19. Percentage of white males in military service calculated from 1860 census. Although there could be some variation, the number of men joining either army is low compared to those who chose to stay home and enroll in the militia. The militia enrollment in Franklin County was 1,322 and 1415 for the years 1861 and 1862 respectively. Enrollment dropped slightly in 63, and then decreased to 1,100 in 1864 and to 1,044 in 1865. Frankford reflects this trend with enrollment peaking at 390 in 1862 and continuing to decrease until it bottomed out at 284 in 1865. This decrease in enrollment could be due to Gov. Bramlett’s attempts to reconstitute the previously defunct State Guard in 1864, when guerilla bands occupied portions of central and northern Kentucky. Franklin County Militia Records 1861-1869, Microfilm Reel 986707, Kentucky State Division of Archives and Libraries, Frankfort, Kentucky. For the function and organization of the enrolled militia see Richard G. Stone, Jr., A Brittle Sword, The Kentucky Militia, 1776-1912, 61-63.


33. Edward B. Church to William Bodley, July 24, 1862, Bodley Family Papers, FHS.


37. Ibid., September 23, 1861.

38. Ibid., September 24, 1861.

39. Ibid., September 30, 1861. This appears to be a paraphrase from the book of Ruth. Boaz told Ruth "You must not go gleaning in any other field. You must not go away from here. Stay close to my work–women" This passage is often interpreted as conveying Boaz’ affection for Ruth as well as his effort to protect her. The editors were probably offering biblical evidence for the impropriety of women providing protection for themselves, not to mention defending men.


41. Ibid., December 6, 1861.
42. Maria Church to William Bodley, March 6, 1862, Bodley Family Papers, FHS; 
44. Edward Church to William Bodley, letters dated August 6, 9, and October 25, 1862, 
Bodley Family Papers, FHS.
45. For an example of the communication between secessionist women and Confederate 
prisoners and the effort to provide relief to captured soldiers, see the Hosken Family Papers, 
Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky; *Frankfort Commonwealth*, February 13, 
1863.
46. Nicole Etcheson, *The Emerging Midwest: Upland Southerners and the Political 
47. Charles W. Calhoun, *Gilded Age Cato: The Life of Walter Q. Gresham* (Lexington: 
49. Ibid., June 4, 1861.
51. Indiana Legion Records, Report to Adjutant General, January 1, 1862, Folder 5, Box 
10, Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis, Indiana.
53. Ibid., January 4, 1862.
54. Ibid., July 24, 1862.
55. *Corydon Democrat*, July 16, 1861, August 13, 1861.
56. Ibid., July 9, 1861.
58. *Corydon Democrat* June 4, 1861.
60. Harrison County Genealogy File, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana. For 
another example of a Confederate Hoosier see Murrell, “Union Father, Rebel Son: Families and 
the Question of Civil War Loyalty,” 358-60.
62. *Corydon Democrat*, June 18, 1861.
63. A. J. Alexander to Gov. Magoffin, June 11, 1861, Governor’s Paper, Magoffin, Box 
5, folder 105, Kentucky State Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.
64. *Corydon Democrat*, August 13, 1861.
65. Ibid., September 3, 1861
66. Ibid., October 8, 1861.
67. Ibid., November 26, 1861.
68. Ibid., October 29, 1861. Although the account is second hand, see also *New Albany 
Daily Ledger*, October 28, 1861.
69. *Corydon Democrat*, November 5, 1861. There is no record of any charges placed 
against Jacob Kintner, and he eventually returned to Corydon. The *Ledger* articulated the 
possibility of Kentuckians turning in Hoosiers who were selling pistols to Union men. The 
article pointed out that men claiming to be loyal should not be trusted and noted that accusations 
against Hoosiers were made by “a certain Jew who was taken on Tuesday with contraband 

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11. See Judges Williams and Bullitt’s decisions in *Doniphan v Norris*, Kentucky State Court of Appeals, 4-12, 26-31. The most accessible copy of this case is on Lexis Nexis. The Kentucky State Archives in Frankfort does not have the Mason County Circuit Court Records for the Civil War period, while the Kentucky Appellate Court Records at the Kentucky Division of Libraries and Archives in Frankfort, Kentucky (hereafter KDLA) start at 1865.
18. Frankfort Commonwealth, August 15, 1862.
19. McDonough, War in Kentucky, 129.
27. Carl E. Kramer, Capital on the Kentucky: A Two Hundred Year History of Frankfort and Franklin County, (Frankfort: Historical Frankfort Incorporated, 1986), 164.
28. Harry Todd interview, Buell Court of Inquiry, January 24, 1863, O.R., ser. 1, vol. 16, pt 1, 368
29. Ibid., 368-69
32. “The Inaugural Address of the Provisional Governor of Kentucky,” broadside, Kentucky Historical Society Library, Frankfort, Kentucky.
34. Smith and Cooper, eds., A Union Woman in Civil War Kentucky, 52-55; The Frankfort Commonwealth, February 16, 1863 (quote).
35. For a scholarly account of the battle and its significance see Kenneth W. Noe, Perryville: This Grand Havoc of Battle, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2001). For the military aspects of the Kentucky Campaign see McDonough, War in Kentucky From Shiloh to Perryville, passim. and Earl J. Hess, Banners to the Breeze: The Kentucky Campaign, Corinth, and Stones River, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), passim.
36. Freehling, The South vs. the South, 60.
38. Maria Church to William Bodley, Oct. 10, 1862 (quote) and Oct 13, 1862, Bodley Family Papers, FHSM.
40. Commonwealth vs. Keeland Gaines, Franklin County Circuit Court Records, Box 122 bundle 975, Kentucky Division of Libraries and Archives. See also cases against Lewis Harvie, John Rodman, E.R. Smith, and Lyounder Hord in the same bundle.
42. Frankfort Commonwealth, January 10, 1863.
43. Ibid., January 27, 1863.
44. Ibid., February 16, 1863
45. February 19, 1863.
47. Frankfort Commonwealth, February 13, 1863.
49. Ibid, October 8, 1862, 2:2; Corydon Democrat, October 14, 1862.
50. Harry Todd interview, Buell Court of Inquiry, January 24, 1863, O.R., ser. 1, vol. 16, pt. 1, 368
55. Stiles, Jesse James, 94.
56. New Albany daily Ledger, September 22, 1862; Rockenbach, “A Border City at War,” 42-43
57. Corydon Democrat, Sept. 26, 1862.
59. Corydon Democrat, May 7, 1861.
60. New Albany Daily Ledger, January 8, 1863.
61. J. Stuart to Gen. Boyle, April 29, 1863, shelf 2173, box 1, R.G. 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Chapter 5

1. This racial hierarchy revolved around the circular logic that slavery proved black inferiority, while white supremacy dictated that only white citizens could truly realize the full benefits and windfalls of freedom. For a compelling discussion of race as an ideology


6. Frank L. Klement, *Copperheads in the Middle West* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 6 (quote), 7-10


17. In Cincinnati, Democrats blamed the violence directly on employers who hired black workers in place of whites. This may be due to the fact that Ohio did not have an exclusion law, and therefore white citizens could not blame the violence on “strange” African Americans. Still, the riots in Cincinnati and New Albany are similar in the way Republicans and Democrats politicized the events. For a detailed account of the Cincinnati riot of July 1862 and its significance to the wartime economy, see Clinton W. Terry, “‘The Most Commercial of People’;


21. Peters, Underground Railroad in Floyd County, 24-25; Lipin, Producers, Proletarians, and Politicians, 64.


25. Ibid., December 18, 1862.


29. Victor Howard, Black Liberation in Kentucky: Emancipation and Freedom, 1862-1884 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), 16-20. Howard does not indicate the origins of the seventeen regiments, although military records indicate that all of these units organized in northern or central Indiana cities.


32. War weariness provides the best explanation for white racists accepting the emancipation and enlistment in order to gain a military advantage over the Confederacy. Joseph T. Glatthaar, Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 26-29; Dudley Taylor Cornish, The Sable Arm Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865 (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), 96-97; Benjamin Quarles, The Negro in the Civil War (New York: De Capo Press, 1953), 181-82. Although Quarles overestimates black enlistment’s impact on the meaning of freedom in the North, he indicates that many white northerners were comfortable with the principle of emancipation as a way to remove the contradiction slavery posed to American ideology.

33. Corydon Democrat, April 22, 1862.

34. Ibid., September 23, 1862.

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40. Alexander Broadus began the *Corydon Daily Union* in early 1863, but stopped printing later that year for an unknown reason. The lack of a Republican paper for most of the war and the *Union*’s short lifespan suggest strong Democratic sentiment in Corydon and the surrounding area. Broadus genealogy file, Corydon Genealogy and Local History Library, Corydon, Indiana.
44. Attia Porter to John Andrews, July 6, 1863, Ibid.
50. Ibid., 21-23.
53. Benjamin S. Buckner to Helen Buckner, November 8, 22, 1862, Buckner Letters, Special Collections, Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.
54. Orlando Brown, Sr., to Orlando Brown, Jr., March 3, 1863, folder 25, Orlando Brown Papers, FHS.
55. Kentuckians would specify if an African American was free, indicating that this was an exception. Court documents and auction advertisements frequent equated race with status. The Frankfort County Commissioner advertised a sale that featured “a number of likely negroes.” *Frankfort Daily Commonwealth*, January 20, 1864; see also John David Smith and William J. Cooper, Jr., eds., *A Union Woman in Civil War Kentucky: The Diary of Frances Peter* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 151-57.
56. *Frankfort Commonwealth*, January 24, 1863.
57. Ibid., January 29, 1863.
58. George H. Yeaman, Speech of Hon. Geo. H. Yeaman, of Kentucky: On the President’s Proclamation, delivered in the House of Representatives, December 17th, 1862 (Baltimore: Printed by J. Murphy, 1863), 7
59. The Daily Commonwealth, Jan. 9, 1863.
60. James Speed to Mary L. Booth of New York, James Speed: miscellaneous papers, Jan. 10, 1863, FHS.
61. Howard, Black Liberation, 36.
63. Frankfort Commonwealth, February 27, 1863.
67. Berlin et. al., Destruction of Slavery, 508-509.
68. Commonwealth vs. Lafayette Hamilton, Jan. 27, 1863, box 121, bundle 966, Franklin County Court Civil Cases, Kentucky Division of Libraries and Archives.
69. Howard, Black Liberation 56-57.
70. Berlin et. al., Destruction of Slavery, 510-11.
72. Glatthaar, Forged in Battle, 68.

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4. Mackey, The Uncivil War, 8.
5. Michael Fellman, Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xix. 262


11. This was a common guerrilla tactic, which made citizens unsure of how to react to strangers. Fellman, *Inside War* 28-29, 32.


15. Ibid., June 23, 1863.

16. Ibid., June 30, 1863; *Corydon Democrat*, June 30, 1863.


18. Ibid., June 22, June 23, 1863.


20. Ibid., June 30, 1863.


23. Ibid., June 23, 1863.

24. Ibid., June 30, 1863.

25. The literature pertaining to Morgan’s July 1863 raid is vast, and ranges from voluminous collections of stories to short, county-specific descriptions of events. See the following books for various, and often conflicting, accounts of the raid, including some of the incidents that occurred in Corydon and Harrison County. Lester V. Horwitz, *The Longest Raid of the Civil War: Little-Known and Untold Stories of Morgan’s Raid into Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio*, revised ed. (Cincinnati: Farmcourt Publishing, 2001), passim; David L. Taylor, *With Bowie Knives and Pistols: Morgan’s Raid in Indiana* (Lexington, Indiana: Taylormade Write, 1993), passim; Arville Funk, *The Morgan Raid in Indiana and Ohio* (Corydon, Indiana: ALFCO Publishing, 1971), passim. There are also countless unpublished accounts and memoirs of the raid from Hoosiers. For a sample of some of these accounts from Indiana civilians see box 3, folder 6 of the Don D. John Collection, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort, Kentucky. This collection also contains a full-sized copy of the July 18, 1863, *Corydon Democrat* article detailing the raid. John was a private collector and enthusiast who acquired the only known original copy of that issue.

34. H.S. Hisey to Gov. Morton, July 23, 1863, microfilm reel 6, O.P Morton Papers, ISA.
35. James Ramage considers the $690 in cash that raiders took from William Hisey to be “Union funds.” Ramage, *Rebel Raider*, 172. Regardless of whether or not Morgan justified this behavior as confiscating property from the Union government, Hisey requested compensation for the stolen money and other valuables. The U.S.Q.M denied the claim in 1886 and Hisey was never reimbursed. File 248, box 603, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
36. File 393, box 604, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
40. S.J. Wright to A. Stone, January 18, 1864, Folder 5, Box 10, Indiana Legion Records, ISA.
41. In the 1880s, the owners of the three mills applied for reimbursement for the ransom they paid Morgan. Additionally, Phillip Lopp asked for $4,761 for his mill, which raiders burned on June 8, 1863. None of these claims fit the specifications of the Act of July 4, 1864, and therefore the U.S.Q.D refused payment. File 119, box 602, files 134 and 203, box 603 and file 462, box 605, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
43. Ibid., 30.
44. Henry Beebee Carrington to Gov. O.P. Morton, letter, FHS.
45. Files 123, 147, 171, box 603, files 265, 342, 345, box 604, files 405, 424, 459, box 605 and file 503, box 606, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
47. File 453, box 605, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA; File 434, Ibid.
49. Files 435 and 455, box 605, R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
51. Mark Neely suggests that the anti-Democrat propaganda, which culminated in Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt’s report on the Sons of Liberty, was not a “political scam.” Neely contends that the report was issued too late to serve as effective propaganda for the national election and was instead the result of paranoia. Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The Divided Union: Party Conflict in the Civil War North* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), 165. Although Frank L. Klement gives too much credence to the Democrat response to the report, it does appear that Holt and others had political motivation for publicizing the alleged conspiracy. Klement, *Dark Lanterns*, 145-47. The real power of the rumors pertaining to the K.G.C. and similar societies lay in Indiana state authorities’ ability to arrest and detain citizens who held opposing political views. This included military arrests and trials that violated constitutional rights. The post-election hype surrounding Republican claims of a huge conspiracy ring allowed Gov. Morton to try Lambden P. Milligan and two other men in a military, instead of a civil, court. Ibid. 225-27.
55. Ibid., 205-210.
63. Lizzie Schreiber Diary, Stith-Moreman Papers, FHS; *New Albany Daily Ledger*, June
   30, August 12, August 17, August 19, 1864, January 4, and February 14, 1865.
64. *New Albany Daily Ledger*, July 27, August 9 (quote), and August 19, 1864.
66. William Farquar to Indiana Quarter Master General, Aug 17, 1863, and Thomas
   Slaughter to “Sir,” August 17, 1863, both in folder 5, box 10, Indiana Legion Records, ISA.
68. Ibid., 103.
69. To His Excellency Gov. O.P. Morton, Petition, n.d., folder 5, box 5, Indiana Legion
   Records, ISA. Out of the thirty-five signers, twenty-eight were Corydon residents and
   identifiable in the 1860 census. These men possessed a total of $68,025 in real estate and
   $33,950 in personal property. Eighth U.S. Census, 1860, Population Schedule, Harrison County,
   Indiana, NA. Additionally, the petitioners included twelve victims of Morgan’s raid, who lost a
   total of $8,173.61 to the Confederates. Totaled derived from R.G. 92, misc. claims, 214, NA.
70. Mark Neely argues that the actions of Morton and other militant Republicans were
   part of the nineteenth century understanding of political competition as dangerous to the Union.
   The two-party system eventually evolved into a cohesive network after the war, but was ripe
   with paranoia, wild accusations, and hostility during the war. Mark Neely, *The Union Divided,
   56-59, 191*. For Morton’s claims of widespread disloyalty in Indiana, see Thornbrough, *Civil
   War in Indiana*, 180-84; Klement, *Dark Lanterns*, 55, 96.
   Legion and Minute Men*, 77-80; Testimony and Confessions in the Crawford and Orange County
   Conspiracies, in ibid., 82-84.
73. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York and
   Levine points out that although historians associate draft resistance with urban-dwelling
   immigrants, draft evasion and resistance was quite common in border areas and the rural Middle
   West.
74. Testimony and Confessions in the Crawford and Orange County Conspiracies,
   *Indiana Legion and Minute Men*, 84; E.D. Townsend to Maj. Gen. Hooker, October 4, 1864,
76. Ibid., October 5, 1864.
77. Ibid., October 4, 1864.
78. Ibid.
79. “General Order no. 117,” March 24, 1864, O.R., ser 1, vol. 32, pt. 3,146 (quote); *New
   Albany Daily Ledger*, October 4, 1864; Lowell H. Harrison and James C. Klotter, *A New History
   of Kentucky* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 179.
80. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 804-6; Thornbrough, *Indiana in the Civil War,
   220-24; Stampp, *Indiana Politics*, 252-54.
   New Salisbury (Indiana) Poll Book 1864, IHS.
83. Ibid., February 12, 1865.
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3. Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 4, 103-5, 203 (quote) 204-5,
10. Ibid., 223.
11. Maj. D. C. Fitch to Captain F. E. Jones, March 17, 1864, Record Group 393, Section 1, Box 3, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter NA).
15. Ibid.
20. Clinton Terry, “‘Let Commerce Follow the Flag’: Trade and Loyalty to the Union in the Ohio Valley,” *Ohio Valley History* 1, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 3.
27. Election Return, December 12, 1863, 36th Regiment Kentucky Enrolled Militia records, KMH; Daniel W. Lindsey to John Boyle, December 18, 1863, Ibid.
29. Gen. John Boyle to A. H. Rennick, February 16, 1864, 36th Regiment Kentucky Enrolled Militia records, KMH.
31. Ibid., 218-22.
35. Franklin County Enrolled Militia Records 1861-69, microfilm reel 986707, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.
37. Muster Roll of Co. A and Muster Roll of Peaks Mill Rangers, 36th Regiment Kentucky Enrolled Militia records, KMH.
43. Information concerning the members of the militia compiled from Muster Rolls of Co A, 36th Regiment Enrolled Militia records, KMHM and the Eighth U.S. Census, 1860 population schedule, Franklin County, Kentucky, NA.
44. Ibid.


50. R.R. Brown to D.W. Lindsey, August 12, 1864, 36th Regiment Kentucky Enrolled Militia records, KMH.


52. The internal war in Franklin County inculcated both antebellum issues surrounding the expansion of the market and manufacturing, and wartime issues concerning emancipation and the Republican party. The conflict had some connection to national issues, but citizens were mainly concerned with local conditions and circumstances. For a description of this type of warfare, see Cooling, “A People’s War,” 113-16. The rural areas of the county, including Bald Knob, voted overwhelmingly for Breckinridge in the 1860 election. Carl E. Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky: A Hundred Year History of Frankfort and Franklin County* (Frankfort: Historic Frankfort Inc., 1986), 155.


54. Joseph Holt to Edward M. Stanton, July 31, 1864, Ibid., 212.


56. This term denotes the government prosecution of war against economic resources and hostile civilians, and not just military targets. Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy Toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 4-5.


58. S. G. Burbridge to Major-General Sherman, August 1, 1864, Ibid., 215.

59. General Order no.59, July 16, 1864, Ibid.,174

60. Joseph Holt to Edward M. Stanton, July 31, 1864, Ibid., 213.


64. Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky*, 171.

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13. Ibid., 179-80.


22. A.H. Rennick to Daniel W. Lindsey, January 23, 1866, State Militia Records, KMH.  


25. Ibid., 43-45.


29. “Preamble and Resolution in relation to the adjustment and payment of Claims of Citizens of Kentucky against the United States,” Governor’s Papers, Bramlette, folder 2, box 1, Kentucky State Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.


34. Ibid., May 15, 1865.


36. *Corydon Democrat*, October 24, 31, and December 5, 1865.

37. Ibid.


43. U.S. Quartermaster General’s office to H.S. Morey, April 4, 1882, Record Group 92, Collective Correspondence File, Morgan’s Raid, box 696, NA. Lester Horwitz incorrectly concludes that Indiana paid its claims in the same fashion as Ohio. Horwitz, *The Longest Raid*, 60, 383-84.

44. Thornbrough, *Indiana in the Civil War Era*, 185-87


46. Etcheson, *The Emerging Midwest*, 142


50. “Report of Morgan Raid Commissioner to the Governor,” December 31, 1869, Record Group 92, Collective Correspondence File, Morgan’s Raid, box 697, NA.


53. To the Honorable Secretary of War from Samuel B. Holabird, Quartermaster General, February 11, 1884, Record Group 92. Collective Correspondence File, Morgan’s Raid, box 696, NA; *Corydon Democrat*, August 29, 1923.

54. These totals were compiled from R.G. 92, Office of the Quartermaster General, Claims Branch 1861-1889, Quartermaster stores (Act of July 4, 1864), misc. claims, book 214, claims 36-504, NA. The total amount of claims submitted to the U.S.Q.G. differs from the Indiana Morgan’s Raid Claims Commission ledger by only $152.83.


Appendix
Map of Indiana and Kentucky, indicating the locations of Corydon, Indiana and Frankfort, Kentucky.
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