

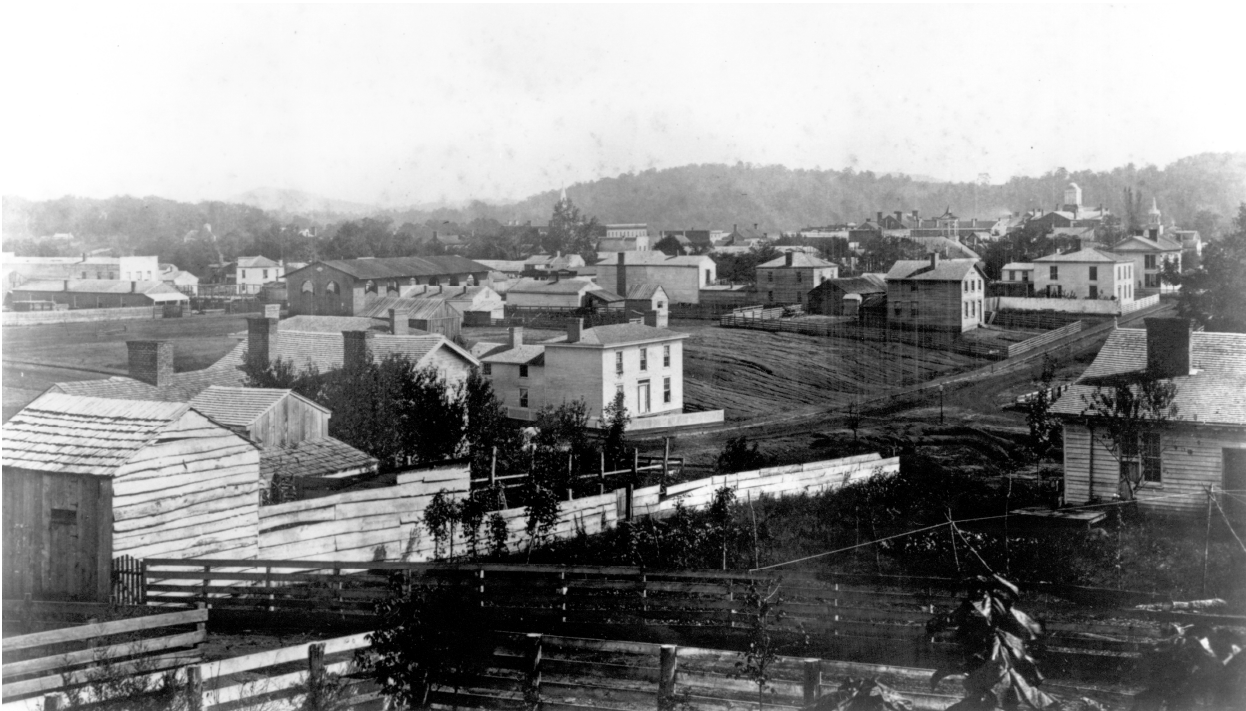
KNOXVILLE'S VOICES OF THE CIVIL WAR



A DOCUMENTARY READER

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*Knoxville, 1859, Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, East Tennessee History Center, Knoxville
Looking south toward the courthouse near present day Summit Hill and the Lincoln Memorial University Law School*

One historian has described East Tennessee during the Civil War as the “Confederacy’s madman in the attic”—the embarrassing secret that a family keeps hidden away from the prying eyes of neighbors. Collectively, East Tennessee represented an island of Unionism within the heart of the Confederacy. When the vote on secession was taken on June 8, 1861, East Tennesseans opposed the measure by more than 2 to 1. However, not all of East Tennessee cast its lot with the Union. Several counties possessed a considerable minority of pro-secessionists and in a few cases, most notably in Sullivan County in upper East Tennessee and Monroe and Polk Counties in lower East Tennessee, the citizens voted in favor of secession. Knoxville split nearly down the middle on the question of secession, as approximately 51% of the voting population opposed secession and 49% voted in favor of disunion.

Perhaps few communities throughout the nation during the Civil War have left as rich a historical record as Knoxville. Located inside the collections of Knoxville’s two prominent research libraries, the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection and the University of Tennessee’s Special Collections Library are scores of letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, photographs, newspapers, and much more. These rich sources that have been preserved for nearly a century and a half document the events that unfolded in the town (which on any given day—depending on Union and Confederate troops passing through—swelled into a large city) between 1861 and 1865 as Knoxville experienced a civil war within a Civil War.

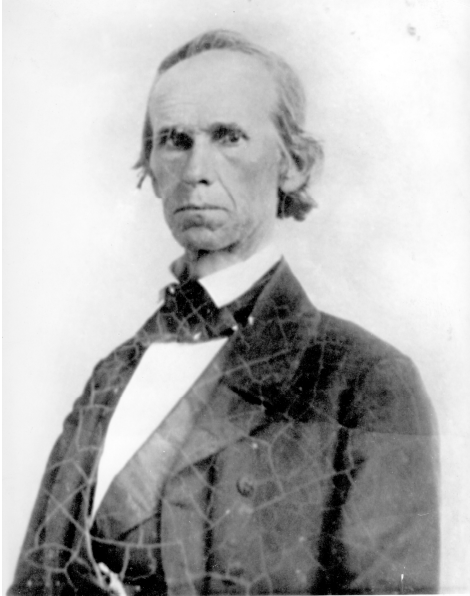
Knoxville’s Voices of the Civil War, developed in conjunction with a lecture for a July 2010 Tennessee Humanities Teacher’s Workshop, is an effort to assemble these rich primary source materials into one manuscript. Additional items such as Civil War soldier accounts and official reports can be found in the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Confederate Veteran*, as well as in numerous Civil War soldier and regiment memoirs and histories. These items have also been selected and included here to compliment the rich historical documents preserved in Knoxville’s repositories.

*William E. Hardy
July 2010*

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1. The Road to Disunion: Secessionist Voices



Dr. J.G. M. Ramsey, Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, East Tennessee History Center, Knoxville

Dr. J.G. M. Ramsey to L.W. Spratt (Charleston, S.C.), April 29, 1858 (Private) Letter 6

I conceal from no one my deep conviction that the days of our present Union are nearly numbered. Apart from the slavery issue there are other elements at work which, at an early day, must produce a dismemberment. Our people will never again be a unit. The antagonism is too strong, the estrangement is too deep seated to be reconciled or healed. We are essentially two people—we are not only not homogeneous but we have become radically homogeneous. The high toned New-England spirit has degenerated into a clannish feeling of profound Yankeeism. Our passions, our tastes, our character, our vices even, are different and dissimilar. Our interests conflict. We are no longer one family. The masses of the North are venal, corrupt, covetous, mean and selfish. The proud Cavalier spirit of the South and of the slaveholder, the virtue and integrity of the Huguenot, the probity and honor of the Presbyterian not only remain but have grown and become intensified. They tincture the whole surface of Southern society. I repeat the North and South are heterogeneous. We are essentially two people.... We are destined to a separation. Sooner or later it must take place. It is inevitable. Shall the separation be peaceful? I hope it may. I almost think it will. The South must keep herself in the *right*. Let aggression go still further, let a wrong against southern rights and against the guarantees of the constitution be not only premeditated but enacted and realized, a zone of states—certainly all south of Tennessee,—will throw off all allegiance to a broken union and regard for a violated constitution. These will become at once the nucleus of a Southern Confederacy around which from time to time other co-states, perhaps not at first co-terminous states, will upon the principle of elective affinity cluster, gradually, but of necessity certainly, and the government is separated peaceably and safely to the South and her institutions.

Source: William B. Hesseltine, ed., Dr. J.G.M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters (Knoxville, TN, 2002), 94-95

Dr. J.G. M. Ramsey to L.W. Spratt (Charleston, S.C.), April 29, 1858 (Private) Letter 7

...The present demand for Negro labor in the South and Southwest is so great that the present holders have a great vested right in that species of property and monopolize and engross its productiveness and its value. It may therefore not be expedient at once to destroy that monopoly. Such a policy might disaffect our best friends and our most steadfast auxiliaries. Wealth is timid and almost sometimes selfish. We had better not shock too suddenly those whose slaves are their only property. *Festina lente** is a good motto.

**festina lente*—“make haste slowly”

Source: William B. Hesseltine, ed., Dr. J.G.M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters (Knoxville, TN, 2002), 96-97

Knoxville Register, Sept. 27, 1860

This is not a contest, as to who shall be President the next four years. But shall there any longer by a *United States*.... Lincoln is the representative of the sectional party, and Breckenridge of the Constitution.... The great conservative masses must arise in their majesty and strength and sustain the constitutional representatives and defenders, or we shall have to meet the dangers of sectional strife and disunion.

Knoxville Register, December 6, 1860

A great deal has been said about the necessity of calm, dispassionate action. This is a proper caution in the present crisis and will apply as much force to the adoption of resolutions as to anything else. The Northern ear is open to hear every Southern expression in favor of the Union, or submission to Lincoln's election. And the Northern Press parade all such expressions, as evidence of the Insincerity of the South, and their disposition to acquiesce in Black Republican rule. No delusive hope should be held out to the North. Nothing should be done by the South, to quiet the just alarm that now pervades the Northern mind.—They have just been aroused to a full sense of their danger—their eyes have been opened to see things as they are. Let us not seek to calm their fears and divert their gaze from the real dangers that surround them. That man is blind indeed, who cannot see in the [improvements] in the South, a firm, fixed, determined purpose to carry out what they profess. A dissolution of the Union is inevitable. No expression of Union sentiments, no censure cast upon any Southern State, no wordy resolves about abstract rights can change the result. The revolution is progressing, party barriers are breaking down, and the Southern mind gradually approximating to a unit. These facts are so plain that "he who runs may read them." Let us, therefore, urge upon you, that, if you are prepared for action, look at matters as they stand, the circumstances that surround you, the events daily developing, and take your position where the honor, interest, and dignity of Tennessee directs.

2. The Road to Disunion: Unionist Voices



William G. (Parson) Brownlow, Library of Congress

Knoxville Whig, Dec. 15, 1860

This whole scheme of Disunion, is a more consummate Abolition contrivance than ever was devised at the North, by the most ultra anti-slavery men, and will work the greatest mischief to the slave population of the

country. It will bring about the overthrow of Slavery, one hundred years sooner than the Republican party could have done it.

Knoxville Whig, January 26, 1861

We can never live in a Southern Confederacy and be made hewers of wood and drawers of water for a set of aristocrats, and over-bearing tyrants. We are candid in urging East Tennessee to withdraw from Middle and West Tennessee, if they shall be so reckless as to consent to go out of the Union. The people of East Tennessee are with us in this, and will demand it, sooner than be oppressed with direct taxes and forced loans. We have no interests in common with the Cotton States. We are a grain-growing and stock-raising people, and we can conduct a cheap Government, inhabiting the Switzerland of America....

The vile and wicked leaders who have *precipitated the revolution*, will do none of the fighting, but will manage to hold civil and military offices, with large salaries, to pay for which, money will be wrung from the masses by a system of *direct taxes*. And these common people will themselves have to shoulder their knapsacks and muskets, and do the fighting.

3. Reluctant Confederates

William G. McAdoo to W.S. Patton, Knoxville, Nov. 8, 1860

The election news is bad enough. Lincoln seems to be elected by the people. The Brecks are badly used up here—particularly, as Bell seems to have beaten their man. A dispatch from McGavock, a leading democrat at Nashville, came a while ago, saying Bell had carried Tennessee. Some of the Brecks here are for going out of the Union.

This morning some one tied a rattling old tin bucket with a slip “Going out of the Union” to a dog’s tail and turned him loose. He went out with a rattling along Gay Street quite to the amusement of the crowds of spectators.

Never did dog so exert his muscular powers, or strain after speed so violently before. We hope the vicarious secession of the animal was answer all the purposes of his friends & “save the union.”

Source: William G. McAdoo Letter, 1860, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-2232

William Gibbs McAdoo Diary

December 12, 1860. I deplore South Carolina’s ‘hot haste,’ and the precipitate and uncompromising withdrawal of other Cotton States. But my position is if they will go, now or at any time, I go with them.

December 13, 1860. Soon comes the effusion of blood, soon the Lexington of this revolutionary struggle. With that effusion of blood the maddened masses of both extremes of sectional feeling will rush into a general and bloody war. Such seems the future to me.

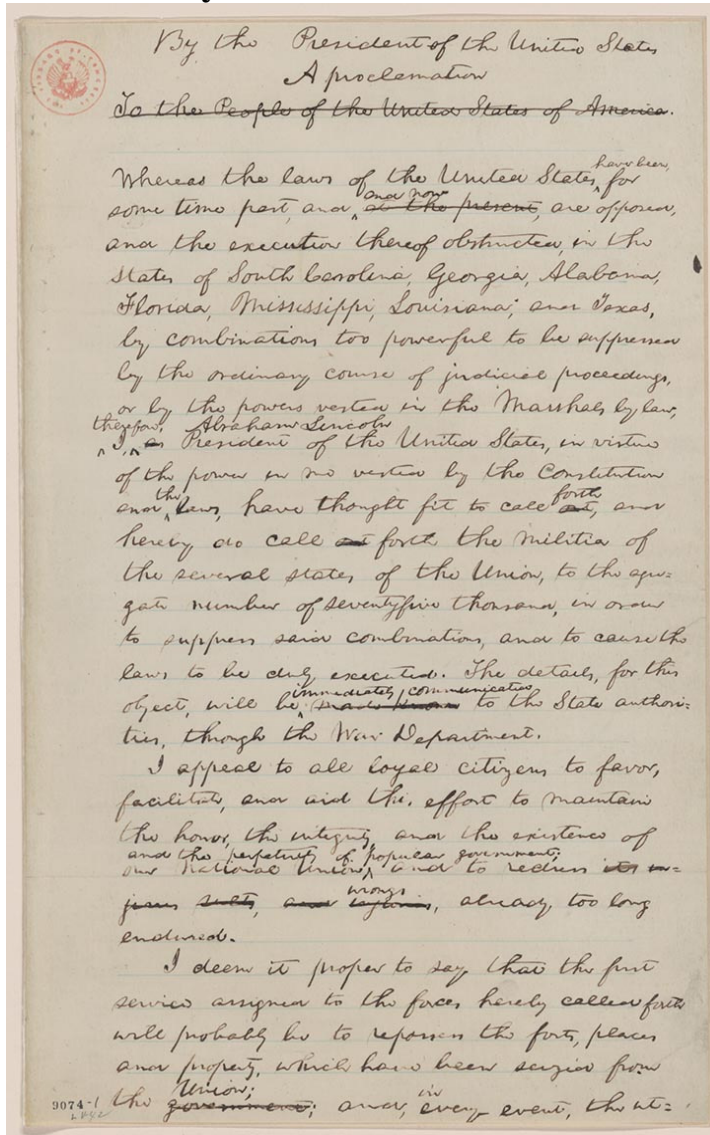
Source: William G. McAdoo Diary, McClung Historical Collection

Hugh Lawson McClung to T.A.R. Nelson, October 7, 1862

I hesitated, long hesitated a belief that our difficulties might have been averted. They were brought upon us by ... a party who preferred a disruption of the Union to a loss of office.... But, when convinced that it was narrowed down to a sectional strife, that I had to take sides either with the South or the North, I could no longer hesitate.

Source: T.A.R. Nelson Papers, McClung Historical Collection

4. The Catalyst: Lincoln's Proclamation For Calling Up the Militia



Abraham Lincoln's April 15, 1861 Proclamation calling up the militia, Robert Todd Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress

Martha Hall to Carrie Stakely, July 1, 1861

I saw the companies of Cavalry coming into town last Saturday. They looked very well indeed. The best looking & most orderly companies I have seen. U.S. Congress "meets" Thursday, I suppose, we may expect then, the war to be prosecuted with rigor, by the Lincoln government, provided it can be. I get very little news to excite me, & consequently am calm & hopeful, though everything looks dark. This "Convention" movement in East Tennessee, since the late quiet election is to my mind, worse than the height of folly & madness. How any Tennessean can be for the Lincoln government, under all the circumstances, is to me a mystery of mysteries. They call themselves Unionists but it is a perversion of the term. There can be no such thing now.

Source: *Hall-Stakely Papers, McClung Historical Collection*

James Otey (Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Tennessee) to Edward C. Burks, July 17, 1861

Your views, like mine, I doubt not, have undergone a great change in regard to the moral aspect of the contest. Since Mr. Lincoln's proclamation, and the attitude assumed, and the purposes proclaimed by the North, I have no sympathy with the U.S. government—no respect for its rulers—very little regard for the Northern people.

Our duty is clearly and unequivocally to repel by force, and to make every sacrifice rather than submit to an administration that tramples down every barrier raised by our Forefathers for the protection of personal, social, and public rights.

Source: *Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee*, Rev. 3rd ed. (Knoxville, TN, 2002), 7

Reuben G. Clark (3rd Tennessee Infantry, C.S.A.)

There was no alternative but to take sides in this bloody conflict. What should I do? I had opposed secession and did not regard the election of Abraham Lincoln as just cause for war. Here were my brethren and kindred, my people of the South, arrayed one section against the other—the North coming down to conquer the South.

I could not desert my own people, and so entered the Confederate army in July, 1861, in which army I fought until captured the second time at Morristown in the winter of 1864-1865.

Source: *Willene B. Clark, ed., Valley of the Shadow: The Memoir of Confederate Captain Reuben G. Clark* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1994), 10

5. Knoxville Confronts Secession



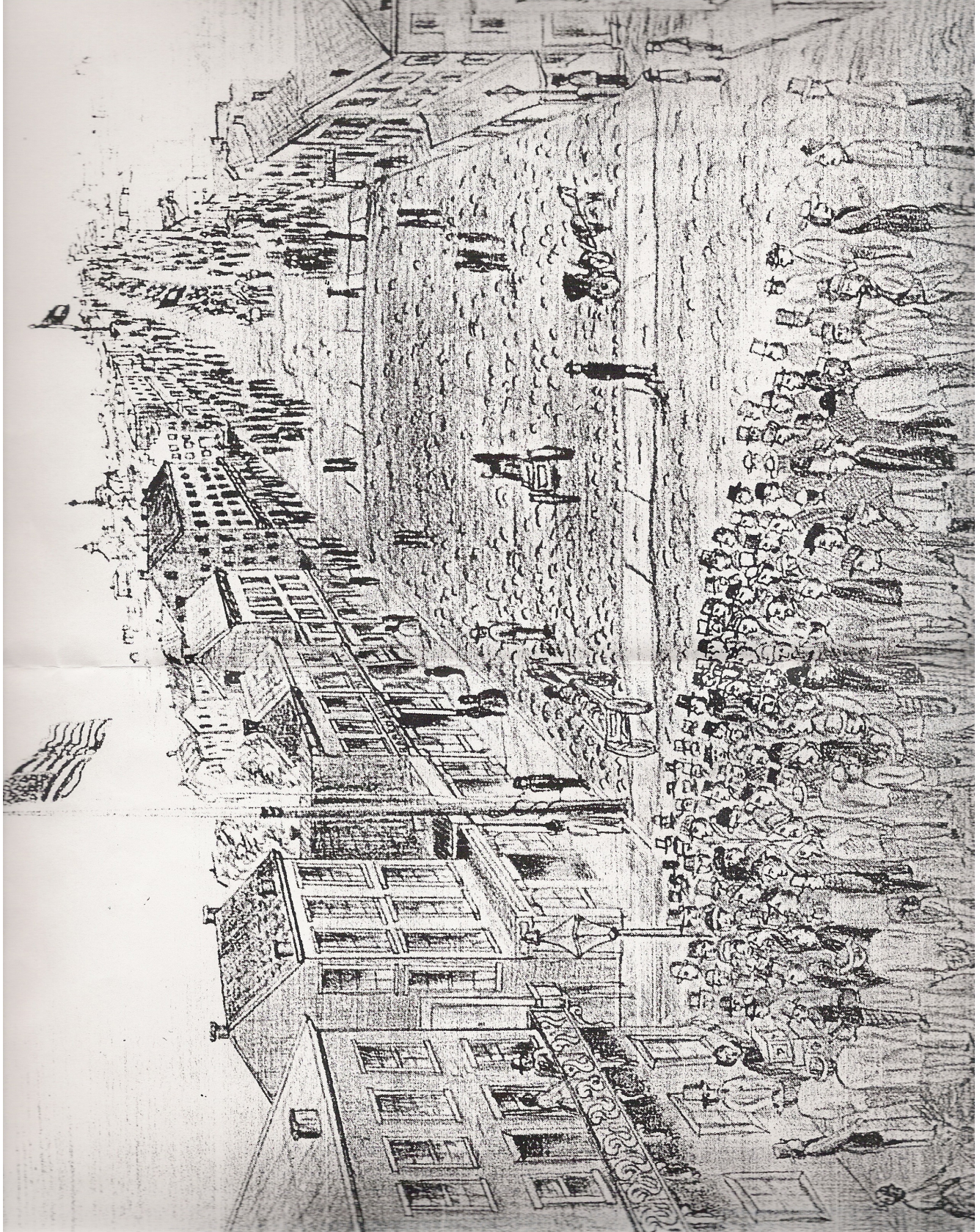
*Oliver P. Temple, Special Collections,
University of Tennessee Libraries*

Oliver P. Temple

In December, 1860, the question was whether there was a sufficient cause for dissolving the Union. In February following, the question was, shall Tennessee secede? In May, it was, what shall I, as an individual, do? Shall I go with my state into secession, or shall I remain true to the old government? So, with each stage of the great revolution, new questions arose for the solution of each individual.

Source: *Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War* (Cincinnati, 1899), 135

6. A Miracle on Gay Street



"Sketching of Gay Street from Memory," Richard Williams Collection, Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, East Tennessee History Center, Knoxville, TN

Knoxville Whig May 4, 1861

“The Interruption on Saturday”

When Gov. Johnson was almost half done speaking, the Brass Band that come up with the Monroe Volunteers struck up at just a distance as to interrupt the speaker and his crowd; and in the highly excited state of the public mind, the interruption was calculated to bring on a collision between the parties, many of whom were armed on both sides—soon thereafter, the two Military Companies, with drums, and Secession flags flying, started towards the Union meeting.—We feared a collision then, and did not see for the moment, how it was to be prevented.—Cols. David H. Cummings and Joseph A. Mabry, acted the part of gentlemen, and through their influence, and active exertions, they silenced the Band; and kept the men from advancing upon the Union crowd. To these two gentlemen, the public, of both parties, are indebted for a peaceable termination of the difficulty and for having prevented the effusion of blood, as there were many deadly weapons in the hands of men, and at their immediate command, who would have used them with most desperate effect. And we take occasion to say, that so far as these two gentlemen are concerned, they will discountenance, at all times, all attempts to create disturbances, and their influence is such as to enable them to promote quiet, when they are present.

There are other gentlemen of that party, who even turned out to hear Johnson, and who sought to keep down all riotous outbreaks, and to promote peace, and they did it in good faith. But there were, we are sorry to say, others, who, while the speaking was in progress, were urging on the Band, and prompting an encroachment by the companies. These men are as mean as their past lives have proven them to be cowardly, and our word for it, their lives would have paid the forfeit and they caused the shedding of blood!

It is due to ourselves that we say, that we now, and at all times hereafter, denounce, in unmeasured terms, any interruption of the opposite party, or their speakers, by Union men. It is mean, it is unbecoming, it is disgraceful, and ought to be frowned upon by all true hearted men, of all parties. We are contending for a great *principle*; and we should strive like men—not like *ruffians*.

Oliver P. Temple

On the 27th of April, Senator Johnson and Mr. Nelson addressed a very large meeting in this same city. In consideration of the distinguished character of these persons, I here copy in full the report of the meeting from “Brownlow’s Whig”:

“Two Noble Speeches.

We had two noble—and we are not mistaken when we say telling—speeches here, on Saturday, from Governor Johnson and Hon. T.A.R. Nelson....

There was an immense crowd in town and many persons were present from other counties. At ten o’clock the meeting was called to order by Colonel Baxter, and Governor Johnson was introduced to the audience from a stand erected on Gay street, in front of Morrow’s bank, and spoke for more than two hours with great effect. He came out manfully on the side of his country—in favor of the enforcement of the laws, and the preservation of the Union, at whatever cost. He held up the movers and originators of secession to merited scorn and contempt. He traced their treason back to the days of the South Carolina Nullification—quoted from General Jackson on them—argued the question of secession—and in a word, delivered arguments at once unanswerable and convincing on the part of the people. His speech was received with great applause and highly commended by men of talent, who have never heretofore agreed with the governor in sentiment.... In a spirit of fraternal feeling, he referred to the past political conflicts that had endangered heartburns and acrimonious feelings, during which Democrats had said things hateful to the Whigs, and Whigs had alike wounded the feelings of Democrats; but now that our beloved country was imperiled, he counseled the exercise of a forgiving spirit—the blotting out of all past differences. Turning to Mr. Nelson, who had arrived after he commenced speaking on the down train, he passed a just and handsome compliment upon him, and stated that while they battled against each other for years, in a courteous and honorable warfare, they were now shoulder to shoulder in battling for our common country....

While Mr. Johnson was in the midst of his speech and incident happened, which for a while threatened to become a very serious and bloody one. A brass band, which had come up with two companies of Confederate soldiers from Monroe County, began to play upon Gay street on which the platform was erected, at just such a distance as to interrupt the speaker and the crowd. Soon thereafter the two military companies, with drums and secession flags flying, started toward the Union meeting. A bloody collision seemed inevitable, for many of both parties were armed. The speaking ceased for the time, and the Union mass stood in expectation of a deadly conflict. It was cool and determined. Johnson was always so in the midst of danger. It was evident that the purpose was to break up the meeting, and probably wreak vengeance on Johnson and others. The Union men were determined that these things should not take place. When the Confederate procession, which was plainly visible to the meeting, had arrived within perhaps one hundred yards of the stand, and was still marching forward, two Confederate gentlemen, Colonel David H. Cummings and Mr. Joseph A. Mabry, seeing the consequences, and disapproving of such conduct, interfered, silenced the band, and by their timely and determined exertions and influence kept the procession from marching any further. Thus a conflict, which would certainly have resulted in the death and wounding of many persons on both sides, was averted, for the Union men were determined not to yield. Too much praise can not be given to Colonel Cummings, who was a brave and manly soldier, and to Mr. Mabry, who was a man of high courage, for their honorable and noble conduct on this perilous occasion.

The speaking went on after the danger was passed. To those of us who were present it looked at one time as if a conflict could not be avoided.

From this time the canvass in East Tennessee went on vigorously and incessantly.

Source: Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati, 1899), 184-86

Thomas W. Humes

One day Andrew Johnson and Thomas A.R. Nelson addressed the people of the principal business street of the town, the court-room being too small to receive them. The meeting was disturbed by the loud music of a Confederate band from a neighboring hotel, and by the threatening demeanor of armed men who had just been addressed by secession orators and were parading the streets. A bloody collision was only prevented by the friendly interposition of peaceably disposed men from both parties.

Source: Thomas W. Humes, The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee (Knoxville, TN, 1888), 100

7. The Yankees Arrive (September 1863)



Harper's Weekly

Harper's Weekly, October 24, 1863

[Senator Harris of New York received a letter from his son]

HEADQUARTERS; ARMY OF THE OHIO KNOXVILLE

Sunday, September 6, 1863

MY DEAR FATHER,

Our troops entered this place without opposition on the part of the rebels, who fled at our approach.... It was the most beautiful march of the war. We were surprised at it-the rebels more so- they did not know where to look for us, and as we came upon them by several different roads, they overestimated our force, magnifying it to an army of from 60,000 to 100,000 men, and, without the slightest attempt at resistance, retreated southward, crossed the Holston River, and burned the Loudon bridge, 1,800 feet long, to prevent pursuit. From time to time during our march, I have written you about our ride through Kentucky, but it was not to be compared in interest to that which we made through East Tennessee. The country is a wild and unsettled until you approach Knoxville. We marched from 25 to 30 miles a day, and slept at night sometimes under a tent, sometimes under a

fly, and once we bivouacked in a rain that wet us all through. General Burnside had not so much as an overcoat, but with his saddle for a pillow he lay sown and we followed suit. As we approached the settled part of the country we were greeted everywhere with shouts for the Union, cheers for the old flag, and the most unmistakable signs of loyalty. At every house the entire family would appear, often with buckets of fresh water and fruit for the welcome Yankees, and some of the people would scarcely ask for pay for the forage which we had seized to feed our animals, although the corn we had taken was all they had to look to for their winter's food. Sometimes the Stars and Stripes would be carried out to the gate of the dooryard by one of the girls, and the General and Staff would take off their hats, while the escort following gave three cheers. Old gray-haired men would come out and seize the General's hand, bidding him Godspeed, and men would flock in at every halt to be armed and join us. The sufferings of these people have been terrible. "Glory be God, the Yankees have come!" "The Flag's come back to Tennessee!" Such were the welcomes all along the road, and as we entered Knoxville, it was past all description. The people seemed frantic with joy. I never knew what the Love of Liberty was before. The old flag has been hidden in mattresses and under carpets. It now floats to the breeze at every staff in East Tennessee. Ladies wear it—carry it—wave it! Little children clap their hands and kiss it. Can you imagine the effect of this on me? My heart is so full and I am so thankful to Almighty God for this bloodless and yet glorious victory, that I will not attempt to say anymore on this subject.

Elisa Bolli Buffat

September 1, 1863. Yesterday was the first day of September, 1863. Long shall it be remembered among us! It was the day when we beheld for the first time our most dreaded foes, the Yankees! So long expected throughout East Tennessee! We were all in our rooms resting as the day was warm when sister Adele called us to the window. There was a cloud of dust on the road; presently we saw a small troop of cavalry riding by at full speed. We remained breathless, what could it be? Was it the enemy? We were soon confirmed in our fears, a whole regiment of "blue coats" was rapidly advancing and going towards Knoxville. The town was happily evacuated a few days ago and they found it deserted. Our dear brother is gone, and when shall we hear from him? And all our friends in the army, where are they? Oh, how I long to hear from them all! I know they will not forget us, should we be left in the power of our enemies. They will fight for our freedom, they are noble men and I pray God to spare them and our Sunny South.

September 3, 1863. Bad news. The Yankees in great numbers are still coming to Knoxville and putting in jail all the other Southern citizens. Uncle Esperandieu is hourly expecting the same fate, we are very anxious about him and his dear family. The hour of trial has come, let us look about for help. "In God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. God is our defense and refuge in the day of our trouble."

September 4, 1863. Burnside, a Northern General, has released all the prisoners as soon as he arrived. I thank him for such unexpected kindness. There is such great rejoicing all over the country. Elise says we can form no idea of the Jubilee there is in Knoxville at present. The soldiers say they have so many friends that they hardly know where to take their meals, the invitations being so numerous.... Really these Union people feel protected by the presence of the Yankees and think they can do as they please, we are completely in their power. They kept quiet while our men were here, but they now thirst for revenge.... We must learn to forgive if we want to be forgiven, but it seems very difficult at times. Only with God's help can we love our enemies and do good to them that hate us.

Source: Elisa Bolli Buffat, "Some Reflections of My Childhood Days and Incidents of My Life during the Civil War," reprinted in David Babelay, They Trusted and Were Delivered: The French-Swiss of Knoxville, Tennessee, 2 vols. (Knoxville, TN, 1988) 2:448-452

Ellen Renshaw House

Sept. 1, 1863. I think it is outrageous. The Yankees are here. Just think, here—here in Knoxville. Walked in without the least resistance on our part.

Sept. 13, 1863. How dark every thing seems just now. I don't think it can last much longer without a ray of light for our cause. Oh! There has been so many mistakes—fatal mistakes [have] been made by those in authority. I

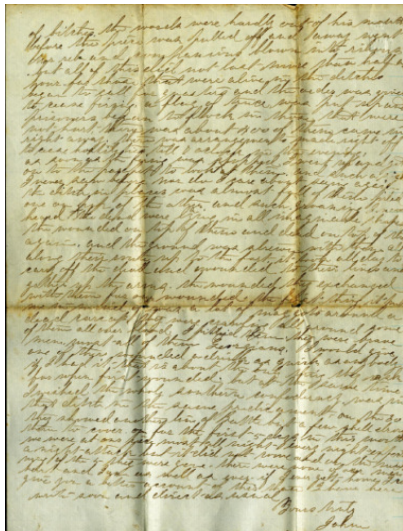
cannot see why they gave up Knoxville. I am very thankful we live in town. They are taking every thing from secessionists in the country.

Source: Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House (Knoxville, 1996), 4, 14

8. The Battle of Fort Sanders (November 29, 1863)



"Battle of Fort Sanders," oil on canvas painting, N. Jordan (1891), East Tennessee Historical Society, Knoxville, TN



John Watkins to John Probert, December 15, 1863, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries

John Watkins (19th Ohio Battery, U.S.) to John Probert, December 15, 1863

On the 20th [November] there was hardly any firing till dark then the rebels got another Battery in position fired 4 or 5 times throwing shell clear over the town and bursting 200 feet high. On the 21st it rained most all day and

no fighting. The rebels had got clear round us from the river on the west side of the town to the river on the east side of town. On the 22nd it was a fine day but no fighting. We could see the rebels at work all day. In the evening they opened a Battery on us again firing but a few times. On the 23^d our section was moved after dark into the fort on the west side of town and that night our forces burned a lot of houses outside of our lines to keep the rebel sharpshooters out of them. On the morning of the 24th the 2nd Michigan about 150 strong made a sortie out of the fort and charged on the rebel rifle pits to drive them out, but were repulsed with the loss of 80 killed, wounded and prisoners. I saw that charge. The pits that they charged were about 600 yards from us down on a flat and they had to run about 500 yards. I could see them cross all along till they got to the pits, and after they got away they yelled out cease firing and they stopped on both sides to get the wounded off the field. Then you had ought to have seen the rebel brutes rush out of the pits and strip the dead. Oh if I ever felt like taking a mans hearts blood, it was them devils, and right in plain sight to [sic].... Sunday the 29th soon after daylight they opened on us from all their Batteries or at least 5 positions and if the shell didn't fly around us I am no judge. The air was full of bursting shell but the most of them to [sic] high. I don't think that there was a man killed in the 3/4 of an hour that they shelled us and but one wounded and he was right beside us in a tent.... I was standing up against the breastwork and saw the shell coming just as plain as day. We could hear them coming before they got anywhere near us and what a noise they make. While this shelling was going on the rebels were forming for a charge on the fort and the first our folks new [sic] of them they were within 20 yards of the picket line and less than 300 from the point of the fort. And on they came with a yell 3 columns deep and one in reserve, a Brigade in each column, and as soon as they began the charge they began to fire so that our men could not use the artillery on them and the Infantry that was stationed along in the pits between the guns had to go for them just raise up over the breastwork and fire and then step back and load. but they were enough for them but the rebels came up over logs, wire, and stumps and planted there [sic] colors right on the outer slope of the fort. The slope there is on an angle of 45 degrees and about 20 feet from the top of the work down to the top of the ditch. Then the ditch is about 7 feet wide and 6 deep. They just piled in there on top of one another dead wounded and dying and the living to get away from the fire of our troops. One of them got up to one of the embrasures with some 4 or 5 behind him in front of a piece that has 3 charges of canisters in it, and he ha, hawed right out and says surrender you yankee sons of bitches. The words were hardly out of his mouth before the piece was pulled off and away went Mr. reb and companions blown into ribbons [sic]. But all of this did not last more than half an hour for those that were alive in the ditches began to call for quarters and the order was given to cease firing. A flag of truce was put up and prisoners began to flock in those that were not hurt. There was about 400 of them came in right away. There was arrangements made right off to cease hostilities till 7 o'clock in the evening. As soon as the firing stopped I went up and got on the parapet to look at them. And such a sight I never saw before nor do I care about seeing again. The ditch in places was almost full of them piled one on top of the other and such groaning I never heard. The dead were laying in all imaginable shapes, the wounded on top of them and dead on top of them again. And the ground was strewn with them all along their route up to the fort. It took all day to carry off the dead and wounded to their lines and gather up the arms. The wounded they exchanged with them for our wounded. The first thing it put me in mind of was a lot of maggots around a dead carcass. They were crawling all around some of them all over blood. I pittied [sic] them. They were brave men. Most of them Georgians. I would give one of there [sic] wounded a drink as quick as anybody if I had it. That is about the only thing they ask for when first wounded. But at the same time I wished the whole southern confederacy was in that ditch in the same predicament....

Source: John Watkins Papers, Special Collections University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-1161

Ellen Renshaw House

November 29, 1863. ...They were fighting all night. I could not sleep. I would doze a little while when bang would go two or three guns and of course I was wide awake. I could see the flash of cannons where I was in bed, since during the night there was very heavy firing of musketry, and I could hear our boys cheering distinctly. They stormed the breastworks and were repulsed. They got inside the first ditch and thought they had possession at the place when they were all taken. They had another trench to cross. When our men were in the trench the Yankees lighted the fuses to the shells and threw them at them. They say that we had six hundred men killed, and they seven, that all our dead and wounded were in their hands, and three hundred prisoners. One hundred were brought in this morning, and about fifty were brought past here afterwards. They seemed to all have blankets and be in fine spirits. I think there were eleven officers, mostly Georgian and Mississippians.

At about two they all commenced bringing in the wounded. They say that they have none at all, they were all ours. I don't believe it. If none of theirs have been wounded they would not have gone out in such a hurry this morning with a flag of truce to bury the dead and bring away the wounded. They claim a great victory, think it was very smart to stretch wire about a foot above the ground to trip our men when they got inside the trenches."

Source: Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House (Knoxville, 1996), 52

B.F. Red

After we left Chattanooga we went to Knoxville, where we charged Fort Saunders; but no one went over that fort except Adjutant Cummings, one of the 16th Georgia Regiment. An old Federal soldier here says he saw Cummings knocked in the head with an ax. There is another old soldier living in Arkansas who says he was in that fort when we charged it. They all ran out, but when they found that we could not get over it they came back and threw all the picks, shovels, and hand grenades they had over on us. They had poured water on the edge of the fort, and it ran down and froze. We charged before daylight, and had quite a time tumbling over wires that had been tied from one stump to another just high enough to trip us. We went into the ditches around the fort, but could not climb it; so we had to fall back. After that fight General Kershaw, of South Carolina, was placed in command of our division. We then went back to Virginia.

Source: Confederate Veteran 21: 585

A. J. Cone, Raleigh, Florida (18th Georgia Regiment, C.S.A.)

I was a member of the 18th Georgia Regiment, Wofford's Brigade, McLaws's Division, Longstreet's Corps, which was sent to check a force of the enemy advancing from Knoxville to flank General Bragg's position at Chattanooga. We crossed the Tennessee River on the railroad trestle, stepping from crosstie to crosstie. We heard the whistle of a train not far in our rear, and suddenly the train came in sight, and we began to hasten our pace. The trestle was crowded with soldiers, some running and jumping from tie to tie, and the train men could not see us until a sharp turn in the road brought it to the bridge. With great effort the train was finally stopped, and the struggling mass of soldiers at last made the crossing, but a few had fallen into the water below. I never shall forget that awful scene. All of us expected to be crushed by the oncoming train and scattered fragments in the river below.

Longstreet forced the enemy back into Knoxville and invested the place, and if he had pushed on we might have taken the city; but he delayed the attack until the enemy had fortified himself, building Fort Sanders and a strong line of breastworks; then he decided to attack, as a strong force was coming up in our rear from Chattanooga. The attack was ill-conceived. His men had the utmost confidence in his able generalship, but the manner of the assault was a dismal failure. He massed his men in front of Fort Sanders in columns of regiments, and ordered the columns forward. We soon got to the fort, but an impassable ditch prevented our getting over it. The men soon filled the ditch and began to help one another on the parapet, but we were subjected to an enfilading fire from both sides of the fort. No attack was made on the lines of breastworks on each side of the fort, and had that been done, we could have taken the fort and captured Knoxville and the entire enemy's force.

Source: Confederate Veteran 31: 288.

Asst. Surgeon Edward Lynn to Mira "My Dear Sister," December 25, 1863

After I wrote you our Brigade was ordered to Knoxville & took possession of the heights on the south side of the river opposite town. A detachment of our Regt. Was then ordered back to Concord & I with them. We remained there ten days or until Longstreet drove us back to Knoxville with his large Army. We fell back on the 16th of Nov. taking all our cattle hogs &c. The fighting was continued at intervals & for seventeen days during which time there was no communication with the world outside except occasionally as a scout or spy came or went. The enemy came upon both sides of the river & attacked simultaneously. Our little Brigade behaved splendidly as usual & drove the Rebs to their holes. On the other side they with no better success. That was on the 28th. On the 29th they attacked us all around. On our side of the river they were driven into their fortifications & acknowledged that they were badly whipped. On the other side they charged on Fort Sanders & when they got within short range every gun in the fort and every musket in the rifle pit was opened on them—the cannon

charged with [grape] canister & the slaughter was fearful. They lay four or five deep on the ground. One brigade—the Georgian Legion—charged into the Fort & was captured [entire]. A Lt. Col. in that is brother to Mrs. Brownlow. I met him at the Parsons house since & like him much. He thinks he has been fighting in a bad cause. By this time re-inforcements began to arrive from Chattanooga & the Rebs began to skadaddle shouting as they left “Good by Yanks Vicksburg is played out.” You see they thought they could starve us out. Thus ended the siege of Knoxville. On the 6th we were ordered out in pursuit. We fought them at this place six days ago & took some 1500 prisoners since which time we have heard nothing from them....

I can’t tell Mira when or how this war will end. Everything seems to indicate a speedy and satisfactory termination but there are so many cursed politicians—so many Presidents to make.

Source: Edward Lynn Letter, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries, MS 2848

William H. Osborne (29th Massachusetts, U.S.)

The Confederates, led by fearless officers, crowded the ditch, and crossing it on each other’s shoulders, began to ascend the bank; one of their standard-bearers came running up and planted his colors upon the parapet, in the very faces of Major Chipman’s men; but he had hardly performed his deed of daring, when one of our soldiers shot him through the heart, and he fell forward into the works. Inspired by the example of their color-bearer, a large body of the Confederates, led by a gray-haired old officer (Colonel H.P. Thomas of the 16th Georgia), with wild shouts made a dash up the bank. All seemed lost; but at this moment Companies A, C, D, and K of the regiment came running into the fort, and ranging themselves along the parapet, opened a deadly fire upon the assaulting party. The gray old leader of the enemy, while waving his sword and shouting to his men to come on, was shot dead. Many of his brave followers suffered the same fate, and the handful of survivors fell hurriedly back into the ditch. At the same instant, like scenes were transpiring all along the works....

About this time the assault slackened; but in a few moments another column of the enemy came rushing towards the fort, and with almost sublime courage faced the withering fire of our troops, and large numbers of them gained the bank. The first terrible scenes of the battle were re-enacted; three of the enemy’s standards were planted simultaneously upon the parapet, but they were quickly torn away by our men. The resistance was as desperate as the assault; officers freely used their swords, the men clubbed their muskets, others used their bayonets, and others still axes and the rammers of the cannon. A struggle so severe as this could not be otherwise than of short duration. In a few moments the enemy’s soldiers began to falter, and fall back into the ditch. Seeing this, General Ferrero, who was in command of the fort and closely watching the fight, ordered one company of the Second Michigan on the right, to go through the embrasures and charge the disorganized enemy. Sweeping down the ditch, these commands captured about two hundred of the enemy, and drove them into the fort, the little squad of the Twenty-Ninth following their captives and bearing triumphantly two battle-flags of the foe; the capturers of which were Sergeant Jeremiah Mahoney of Company A and Private Joseph Manning of Company K, both of whom afterwards received the medals of honor voted by the Congress of the United States.

Source: William H. Osborne, The History of the 29th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, in the Late War of the Rebellion (Boston, 1877), 268-269

B.F. Thompson (112th Illinois, U.S.)

... such deeds are rarely recorded, and we could not help but admire their pluck as they were marched off as prisoners of war ... before the smell of powder and smoke had passed away, I and a few others passed out of the fort over the ditch on a plank and looked on that sad scene of slaughter. Such a spectacle I never again want to witness. Men literally torn to pieces lay all around, some in the last throes of death, others groaning and their faces distorted under the extreme pain from their severe wounds. Arms and limbs torn from their bodies lay scattered around, while at every footstep we trod in pools of blood.

Source: B.F. Thompson, History of the 112th Regiment of Illinois Volunteer Infantry (Touldon, IL, 1885): 163-65

Thirty-Sixth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, U.S.

Throughout the siege both officers and men were on picket duty every third day. During this twenty-four hours of duty no one slept. The rest of the time we were on duty in the trenches, where one-third, and sometimes one-fourth, of the men were kept awake. The utmost vigilance was enjoined upon all.

Meanwhile, day by day, and night by night, with unflagging zeal, the troops gave themselves to the labor of strengthening the works. Immediately in front of the rifle-pits a *chevaux de frise* was constructed. This was formed of pointed stakes, thickly and firmly set in the ground, and inclining outwards at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The stakes were bound together with wire, so that they could not easily be torn apart by an assaulting party. They were nearly five feet in height. In front of Colonel Haskins' position, on the north side of the town, the *chevaux de frise* was constructed with two thousand pikes which were captured at Cumberland Gap early in the fall. A few rods in front of the *chevaux de frise* was the *abatis*, formed of thick branches of trees, which likewise were firmly set in the ground. Still further to the front were wire entanglements, stretched a few inches above the ground, and fastened here and there to stakes and stumps. In front of a portion of our lines another obstacle was formed by constructing dams across first and second creeks, so called, and throwing back the water. The whole constituted a series of obstacles which could not be passed, in face of a heavy fire, without great difficulty and fearful loss....

On the evening of November 20th the Seventeenth Michigan made a sortie and drove the rebels from a house and out-buildings on the Kingston road, a short distance from Fort Sanders. It was a brick house, and afforded a near and safe position for the enemy's sharp-shooters, who of late had become somewhat annoying to the working parties at the fort. The movement was a hazardous one, but was successfully accomplished, with the loss of two men killed. This sortie waked up the rebel batteries, and a few shells were thrown into our lines; but soon all was quiet, and at length the light of the burning buildings went out....

Allusion has already been made to the bastion-work known as Fort Sanders, which was named for the gallant commander of the cavalry who laid down his life in front of Knoxville at the beginning of the siege. A more particular description of this fort is now needed. The main line, held by our troops, made almost a right angle at the fort, the north-west bastion being the salient of the angle. The ground in front of the fort, from which the wood had been cleared, sloped gradually for a distance of eighty yards, and then abruptly descended to a wide ravine. Under the direction of Lieutenant Benjamin, Second United States Artillery, and Chief of Artillery of the Army of the Ohio, the fort had now been made as strong as the means at his disposal and the rules of military art admitted. Eight and thirty yards in front of the fort rifle-pits were constructed. These were to be used in case our men were driven in from the outer line. Between these pits and the fort were wire entanglements, running from stump to stump, and also an *abatis*. Sand-bags and barrels were arranged so as to cover the embrasures. Traverses, also, were built for the protection of the guns, and in passing from one position to another. In the fort were four twenty-pounder Parrotts (Benjamin's battery), four light twelve-pounders (of Buckley's battery), and two three-inch steel rifle-guns....

A little after eleven o'clock P. M., November 28th, we were called to our places in the trenches by heavy musketry to the right. It was a cloudy, dark night, and at a distance of only a few feet it was impossible to distinguish any object. The firing soon ceased, with the exception of an occasional shot on the picket line. An attack had evidently been made on our rifle-pits; but at what precise point, or with what success, was as yet unknown. Reports soon came in. The enemy had first driven in the pickets in front of Fort Sanders, and had then attacked our line, which was also obliged to fall back. The rebels in front of the Thirty-sixth, however, did not advance beyond the pits which our men had just vacated, and a new line was at once established by Captain Buffum, of Company D, our brigade officer of the day. We afterwards learned that the enemy had advanced along the whole line and established themselves as near as possible to our works.

It was now evident that the enemy intended an attack; but where would it be made? All that long, cold night—our men were without overcoats—we stood in the trenches pondering that question. Might not this demonstration in our front be only a feint to draw our attention from other parts of the line, where the chief blow was to be struck? So some thought. Gradually the night wore away.

A little after six o'clock the next morning the enemy suddenly opened a furious cannonade. This was mostly directed against Fort Sanders; but several shells struck the Powell House, in rear of Battery Noble. Roemer immediately responded from College Hill. In about twenty minutes the enemy's fire slackened, and in its stead rose the well-known rebel yell in the direction of the fort. Then followed the rattle of musketry, the roar of cannon, and the bursting of shells. The yells died away, and then rose again. Now the roar of musketry and artillery was redoubled. It was a moment of the deepest anxiety. Our straining eyes were fixed on the fort. The rebels had reached the ditch, and were now endeavoring to scale the parapet. Whose will be the victory,—oh, whose? The yells again died away, and then followed three loud Union cheers,—“Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!” How those cheers thrilled our hearts, as we stood almost breathless at our posts in the trenches! They told us that the enemy had been repulsed, and that the victory was ours. Peering through the rising fog toward the fort, not a hundred yards away—oh, glorious sight!—we dimly saw that our flag was still there....

Source: History of the Thirty-Sixth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, 1862-1865, By a Committee of the Regiment (Boston, 1884): 105-11

Sixtieth Alabama Regiment, Gracie's Alabama Brigade, C.S.A.

The following account of this assault is taken from a history of the 60th Alabama Regiment, published at Montgomery, Ala., in 1867:

At about three or four o'clock in the morning the regiment was gotten under arms. The atmosphere was damp and penetratingly cold; the men were thinly clad, and numbers of them barefoot. Their sufferings while standing under arms, clasping with numbed hands the cold barrels of their muskets, can be appreciated by those alone who have experienced similar hardships. But, despite of cold, hunger, nakedness, and approaching peril, the brave fellows were full of spirit, and stout hearts beat hopefully beneath each ragged gray jacket. General Gracie, while riding through his brigade on the day before, had pointed significantly towards Knoxville, and remarked, ‘There are shoes over there, boys,’ and visions of comfortable brogans were floating through the minds of those barefoot Confederates.

There was no noise, save the low hum of subdued voices, the rumbling of moving artillery, and the steady tramp of different bodies of troops advancing to their allotted positions. The night was dark; but the enemy, anticipating our movement, filled the heavens with streams of artificial light, which threw the shadow of our columns far to the rear, and was reflected back by many an unsheathed sword and burnished barrel.

At length, the ominous silence was broken by the discharge of a single piece of artillery from the brow of a hill to our right. Artillery had been planted on each of the hill-tops in the vicinity,—some being occupied by the enemy, and some by ourselves,—and now, in a few moments after the discharge of this pioneer piece, a brisk fire was opened from them all. Thunder peals burst forth and answered each other in quick succession; and, like destroying angels, the huge missiles flew through the dense atmosphere with an unearthly shrieking. Under the exhilaration of this stirring martial serenade, and the animating words of the colonel of the regiment (who seemed everywhere present), the line was put in motion, and, encountering a creek, plunged through, regardless of the cold.

After ascending a hill, and advancing a few hundred yards in the open field beyond, the command was suddenly ordered to fall back, and accordingly faced about and moved in retreat to the brow of the hill just passed, where it occupied a line of rifle-pits located at that point. This retrograde movement, suggestive of ill, and at first inexplicable, was soon accounted for in a manner that filled every heart with sorrow, and shrouded every countenance in gloom. We had been in the rifle-pits but a short time when day began to dawn. The firing ceased for the most part; only a stray shell now and then ricocheted through our line, or burst above our heads. While thus waiting in the rifle-pits, expecting, with much solicitude, the denouement, a solitary litter was seen advancing toward us over the field in our front; then another and another, and anon a sad procession was silently threading its way to the rear. No words were required to convey the sad tidings. The blood dripping from the litters, and the occasional groans of their mangled occupants, who had led in the charge, as they passed through our line on their way to the rear, apprised us, more unmistakably than language could have done, of the woful

[sic] fact of the morning's disaster. The charge, though gallant, was unsuccessful, and five hundred noble Mississippians lay dead or dying in the moat that surrounded the fort upon which the attack had been made. A truce had been early secured, and all day long the sad procession moved on, silently and mournfully, in the discharge of its duty.

Among the many inexpressibly sad days of our military career, no member of the regiment will, I am sure, fail to recognize this, the 29th day of November, 1863, as one of the most sad. All through that dismal day the words were ever recurring—'These are they who have passed through great tribulation.'

Source: *Lewellyn A. Shaver, A History of the Sixtieth Alabama Regiment, Gracie's Alabama Brigade (Montgomery, AL, 1867): 24-27*

Robert Franklin Bunting (Terry's Texas Rangers, C.S.A.)

January 11, 1864. Longstreet had attacked Fort Sanders; already had the gallant Georgians planted their colors upon it, but those who were to support them faltered; the enemy was reinforced, and, pouring a terrible fire into their ranks from his guns, they were compelled to fall back with heavy slaughter. It was a dreadful struggle for a few moments, but the tide had turned; we had lost our opportunity. We were defeated; and with that defeat perished the ardently cherished hopes of capturing the enemy and his stronghold....

All is now quiet again, and we fear there is something wrong. It is Sunday, the 29th. May this not account for our failure? We choose the Lord's Day for our assault and are defeated, for it is a universal fact that the party which opens a battle on that scared day is *universally defeated*.

Source: *Thomas W. Cutrer, ed., Our Trust is in the God of Battles: The Civil War Letters of Robert Franklin Bunting, Chaplain, Terry's Texas Rangers, C.S.A. (Knoxville, 2006), 228*

9. After the Siege of Knoxville

William A. Huddard (camp near Knoxville) to Father, Dec. 13, 1863 (Ohio 1st Volunteer Infantry, U.S.)

On the afternoon of the 28th we received marching orders for Knoxville. After nine days of hard marching we went into camp two miles this side of the place, just one day too late, for the game we were after had lit out the day before. Nothing of importance happened to us on the march. In the nine days, we drew but three days' rations. For the rest we were obliged to live on the country. I have always heard of East Tennessee as being a rich country and so it is, for I have never lived better than I did on this march. In some counties we passed through you could not find a single Rebel; all were for the Union. The women would show their interest in the Cause by baking our flour and brining [sic] us food of all kinds. Within the last month or so three regiments of Tennessee troops have been recruited in and around Knoxville, and a fourth regiment, the Ninth Tennessee, is now nearly full. I have visited Knoxville and must say that it is one of the strongest positions I have ever seen. The town, too, has been at one time a splendid place, but now it is pretty well run down. Many of the houses have been burned down and Breast Works have been thrown up along many of the principal streets.

Source: *William A. Huddard Papers, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-*

Elisa Bolli Buffat

March 25, 1864. This morning we had a little snow, then rain, and now sunshine. I think the Yankees brought us the bad weather from the North. I don't like them nor their ways, but then we must love our enemies. Three soldiers came wanting to kill our chickens, but we have only four left and they hid themselves, by instinct I suppose.

April 5, 1864. Albertine says that I am turning for the Union because I don't speak as boldly for the South as she does, but she is greatly mistaken, she does not seem to understand my reasons for not doing so, they are simply these, that first it is not a woman's place to discuss politics with men, next, that I fear by speaking my mind too freely to hurt their feelings, and what reward shall I have by it? All that I could say would not convince them that we are right, and all their arguments will not convince me that we are wrong, then the best thing I can do is to let them talk, and I will keep my opinions to myself. For that reason sisters say I am not as strong for the South as they are, but they misjudge me greatly. My heart never beat more true than now. I am a Rebel girl and

will always be. All my sympathies are for my brave boys fighting for our rights. They are constantly in my thoughts, in my dreams, in my prayers.

September 26, 1864. [I]t makes me tremble to read how Brownlow talks about the Rebels. He is the editor of the Knoxville *Whig*. He excites the people to murder and pillage.... He encourages the Union men to kill their Rebel neighbors wherever they find them, to do it without noise, secretly, but do it, and bury them in the woods like brutes! And that is what they do now in the mountains, men are found hung to trees in the woods, and it is the work of Union men, who take revenge on their old neighbors because they are Rebels! Oh, how much bloodshed, murder, thefts, etc. are occasioned by this war! May God be our help!

October 4, 1864. When I go out I see Negroes everywhere. A whole regiment of them paraded Gay Street beating a drum.

Source: Elisa Bolli Buffat, "Some Reflections of My Childhood Days and Incidents of My Life during the Civil War," reprinted in David Babelay, They Trusted and Were Delivered: The French-Swiss of Knoxville, Tennessee, 2 vols. (Knoxville, TN, 1988) 2: 452-66

10. After Appomattox: Coming to Terms with Defeat

Ellen Renshaw House

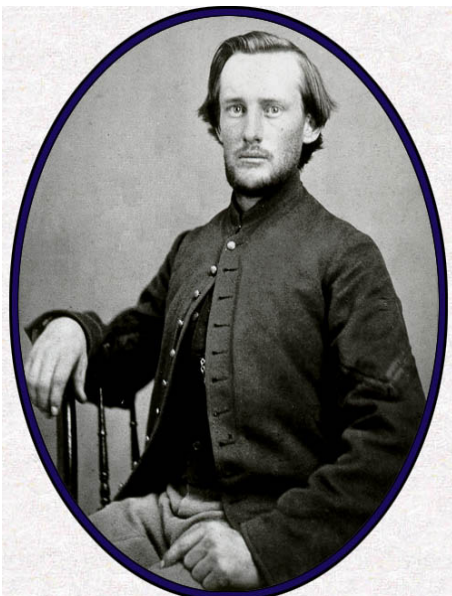
Sept. 1, 1865. Two years today since the Yanks took possession of Knoxville. Oh! how things have changed since that time. It sickens me to think of it. Then we were free, now we are slaves—slaves to the vilest race that ever disgraced humanity.

Nov. 1, 1865. So many who were wealthy before the war are now reduced to poverty, and all for nothing, for worse than nothing, to be made slaves of Northern despotism.

I am glad Lincoln was killed. We were at least saved the humiliation of being under his rule. He would have completed the ruin the war had so fearfully begun. The Southern people would have had their chains riveted with iron. Andy Johnson is more inclined to be just, not that I believe that a true sense of justice or love for the South has any influence with him, it is his ambition. He thinks that to be reelected he must have Southern votes, and all that he may do will only be to gain his own selfish end."

Source: Daniel E. Sutherland, ed., A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House (Knoxville, 1996), 190

11. A Union Soldier Returns to Knoxville



John Watkins, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries

John Watkins to Sarah Watkins, September 16, 1895

After Knoxville, John Watkins served with Sherman through the Atlanta campaign and then served with Thomas at Nashville. At War's end, Watkins returned to Ohio where he married his Sarah. However, in 1895 he was once again in Knoxville for a reunion of the 19th Ohio Battery. Two letters written to Sarah at home give us an interesting insight into his visit. Sadly, were John Watkins to visit the site of Fort Sanders today, he would find the scavenging boys and urban growth had finished their work. Today only a monument erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and a Tennessee historical marker identify the site of the bloody struggle for Fort Sanders and for control of East Tennessee:

We gave the town a pretty good going over yesterday. went to Fort Sanders looked the place over and talked with old soldiers and some other people about it. but it will soon be of the past boys are helping to tear it down the parapets to find bullets and they get lots of them.... We can locate the place where our gun stood in the Fort all right—now there is a big house built within 100 feet of it and a road is graded right through the works between where we were and Benjamins guns stood.... The hills don't look as high as they used to. Gay Street is all right but is all new and fine buildings plenty of niggers and the meanest looking lot I ever saw. we are waiting for breakfast while I write there is a good deal of old style among the people yet cows and hogs run the streets as of old, dogs and niggers are plenty....

Source: *John Watkins Papers, Special Collections University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-1161*

John Watkins to Sarah Watkins, September 16, 1895

[At the Armstrong house, a woman entertained John in the parlor to rest after arriving in Knoxville. She discussed Longstreet's occupation and showed them around the Armstrong house:]

...showed us every room in the house, showed us all the bullet-holes and shell marks, and they are all to be seen to day never being repaired, showed us where his guns were placed on the side of the house, also where some men were killed on both sides, rebel and Federal.... We were also on the spot where Gen. Sanders was shot about 80 yards from the house. He was shot by one of Longstreets sharpshooters from a window in her house.

Source: *John Watkins Papers, Special Collections University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-1161*



Knoxville, ca. 1864, Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, East Tennessee History Center, Knoxville, TN

APPENDIX: DIARIES, JOURNALS, & MEMOIRS

William Gibbs McAdoo

Tuesday, November 5, 1860. Knoxville, Tenn.

The Presidential election. Active exertions by the Bell and Brekinridge men; also by the few for Douglas. I voted early for Bell; did what I could in a quiet way to get others to vote the same way. Knoxville piled nearly 1100 votes—the largest vote ever given here. Bell 737 votes; Breckinridge 303 votes; Douglas 52 votes....
... Today, Nov. 8th, the news of Lincoln's election by the people seem confirmed. All New England went for him; also New York, Pennsylvania—and probably the Northwestern states. The Governor of South Carolina has called for ten thousand volunteers and says that state is going out of the Union. God sped her. I am willing to go with spade and pick-axe and work a month to ditch round her and float out into the Atlantic a thousand miles....

Nov. 30, 1860.

This is the last night of the fall season; gloomy, dark, cloudy boisterous—how emblematic of the portentous state of public affairs, threatening the integrity of the government and the inflicting of a Civil War on its citizens!...

Knoxville, Dec. 12, 1860.

... I do not approve of the haste with which some of the Southern States are acting; I think they ought to wait, and make an effort to obtain redress in the Union. I believe all non-slave holding states but New England would give us any guarantees of their good conduct in the future we desire, and would unite with us in turning New England out of the Confederacy. I should glory in turning vile New England out of the Confederacy; and if I could chip it off the globe itself and send it wandering among the contemptible little asteroids that astronomers have been discovering so plenteously of late, I should deem myself the world's greatest benefactor. I deplore South Carolina's 'hot haste,' therefore and the precipitate and uncompromising withdrawal of other Cotton States. But my position is, that if they will go, now or at any time, I go with them, make common cause with them, fight for them to the last drop of my blood....

Knoxville December 13, 1860. Thurs.

... There is no further news of importance from Congress; but all intelligent minds must recognize the hopelessness of preserving the Union. My mind is filled with the darkest forebodings. I see scarcely a shadow of probability that by division we shall suffer all, and even more, than the divided and warring states of ancient Greece did. But in this, I am far from entertaining any kind of prophecy. God grant that I may prove short-sighted in these fears! And if we divide, that it may prove conducive to our own happiness and prosperity, and for the good of mankind fenerally. I know that God is all powerful—that he can bring good out of everything. My fear is that He has noted our sins as a people and has delivered us for a season to the scourge of our own evil passions.

I saw today Mr. Murrah, an Express Agent just returned from Charleston S.C. He speaks of the certainty of South Carolina declaring her independence from the general government within 48 hours of the meeting of her Convention next Monday. He reports also a settled determination of the citizens to attempt the capture of Fort Moultrie. The President, in his message, says he has ordered the troops there to defend it if assailed. Soon, therefore, comes the effusion of blood; soon the Lexington of this new revolutionary struggle. With that effusion of blood, the maddened masses of both extremes of sectional feeling will rush into a general and bloody war. Such seems the future to me....

Knoxville, December 20, 1860.

... Since I last wrote my eyes have been a little inflamed from too much reading at night—especially reading the wretchedly printed New York Herald. I am not an admirer of that paper; but in these chaotic times when our Republic is breaking to pieces I was so anxious to get the latest news that I seized with avidity on the papers giving the fullest details....

Knoxville, Aug. 18, 1861.

... Gen. Zollicoffer is proving himself totally unfit for the duty of quelling this Lincolnism in East Tennessee. He strikes at the subordinates, the poor devils, and leaves the deluding villains who sin against light and knowledge untouched. Nelson, Temple, Fleming, Jno. Williams, Dickinson and others, openly preach rebellion against the majority of the state, and taking up of arms for an [internal] war against the Southern Confederacy; yet they are permitted to go on unmolested, while little leaders are threatened or arrested.... O, the corruption of human nature! We need a patriot in the post who will kill treason by cutting off its head, not attempt it by cutting off its fingers or toes.

Brownlow's newspaper is to be tolerated, nay encouraged. These miserable popularity hunting politicians unfortunately entrusted with high military power, do not understand human nature or they would promptly put down that paper. Brownlow governs by fear, and the moment down, thousands who act with him feel relieved and rejoiced. What tyrant was ever stricken down but the populace rejoiced more vociferously than they shouted for him and hour before, when his rod was over them?...

Marietta [GA.] Saturday July 5, 1862.

... I had no personal quarrel with Brownlow; we differed on the great question of the war, as hundreds who daily met each other on the streets of Knoxville. The few—very few, times I met him on the streets I bowed politely to him, and he the same to me. He was as 'treacherous' and 'insincere' as I. Indeed he invariably made the advance when we met. But we had not met at all for months before his arrest. Brownlow kept off the streets, or at least most public streets, all the time after the soldiers of the Confederacy came to Knoxville; and I ceased to visit him after war began and he still gave in his adhesion to Lincoln. As to 'professing' friendship after that date, it is simply false.... After the war all that ceased. Mr. Brownlow knew very well, notwithstanding my polite salutation the few times I met him on the streets, that I regarded him as the enemy of my country.... "Turned over to secession." A lie. I did not turn. I never saw the day I was willing, or intended, to live under Lincoln's administration unless he made an open repudiation of the Chicago platform. When South Carolina hastened forward to secession, I condemned the movement at that time, because I was a co-operationalist; I wished all the slave states to unite, present a firm protest to the Chicago Platform, and, if refused, then all go together. When weeks, months, rolled by—Lincoln (instead of publishing a patriotic letter to the whole country, repudiating the Republican dogmas and declaring his nationality, as I at first expected him to do) closed his mouth and clenched his teeth, and compromises and peace congresses were spurned by the North, I saw that we had no friends in the North, that we had revolution, resistance and a great war on the one hand, or abject submission on the other—then I was in favor of the speediest and most effectual measures. Co-operation would have required time. While its slow wheels were getting geared, and ready for motion, the federal power would have crushed us, and I now think that South Carolina and the states which followed her most speedily acted the most wisely.

Did I "turn?" or did circumstances, the posture of great affairs change? ...

Knoxville Tenn. Sept. 29, 1862.

... Affairs in East Tennessee are in a bad plight. The body of the Unionists are as bitter as ever. Thousands of them are preparing to run away to evade the conscription; other thousands will lie out in the mountains in little scattered bands, and will rob, murder, & steal. The Lincolnites are bold in this town. The leaders strut the streets with lordly pride....

Marietta, Ga. Mon, Dec. 8, 1862.

... The retrospect of East Tennessee affairs shows a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. Nelson's letter produced no effect. The people are more and more bitter against the Confederate Government. Gradually they are drifting into a state of open warfare against us. As efforts are made in the various counties to enforce conscription nearly all the men of the conscript age flee from their homes. A few remain to make nitre in the caves under Government permits which Capt. Finnie of the Nitre Bureau tells me are much sought. In this way they may do, indeed are doing, the Confederacy good service. Part make their way through the mountains of Kentucky to

the Federal army and enter its service; others hide out in their neighborhoods respectively, or, what is more common, band together in the mountains of the Allegheny Range along or near the North Carolina border....

Marietta Wed. Dec. 31, 1862

... A collateral inducement to leave Knoxville was to escape an unhealthy location there. For the last two months of my residence there, my house had never been free from a typhoid fever patient. This disease is proverbial for the tenacity with which it has once found lodgment. Five people in my house had it successively—the last one, a valuable negro man, died of the disease just before we left. I could not hope that any of my family could escape it if we continued to live there. The house was located not far from the spot where an immense Government hog-slaughtering establishment had recently been erected. Tens of thousands of hogs had been slaughtered there, and the stenches from decaying offal, etc. were scarcely to be borne....

Another secondary reason was that I foresaw that the Unionism of East Tennessee would inevitably cause that region to be occupied by large armies of one kind or the other, probably both. It was to be the theatre of war. No family that can get away is sensible if it remains amid the active operations of large hostile armies. If no other inconvenience would result, I saw that the necessities of life would be so devoured in East Tennessee that prices would be exorbitant, and possibly supplies at any price difficult to get. It has so turned out. Large armies have eaten up the substance of the land. Even my anticipations in regard to the unhealthfulness of Knoxville, as the warm season came on, have been verified. The town was never known to be so unhealthful as last year (except the cholera season)....

And over these reasons, or under them, was the fact that East Tennessee was filled with the most intense bitterness of party animosity. Door neighbors were on opposite sides of the great war; thirsted for each other's blood; held allegiances to different and warring governments; and as a matter of course friendship ceased between them and hatred usurped the place of neighborly kindness. It was a relief to bring my family out of such an atmosphere. I thought a few months of hard fighting and sound reasoning would cure all this, and when I carried my family back, the old love and unanimity would be restored. Now I think it can never be....

Melora, Monday, Nov. 30, 1863.

... Rumors are obstreperous [sic] in asserting that Longstreet has captured Burnside and his army at Knoxville, and is moving to form a junction with Bragg....

Melora, Tues. Dec. 1, 1863

...News in the mornings paper is that Longstreet has certainly captured Burnside and his forces at Knoxville; and is returning to join Bragg.... Rumor this afternoon, which leaked out from the telegraph office, that Lee has gained a great victory over Meade....

Melora Wed. Dec. 2, 1863.

... News today is that Longstreet is yet besieging Knoxville, and that the enemy is sending a powerful force to raise the siege; and that Bragg is relieved from command....

Melora, Mon. Dec. 7, 1863.

... At last conflicting rumors begin to clear up about Longstreet. Last Wednesday (the 2nd) he was certainly pounding away at Knoxville; and parties known to be reliable, report that they witnessed its capitulation last Friday....

Melora, Wed. Dec. 9, 1863.

... News today is that Longstreet, without taking Knoxville, is feeling to N. Carolina....

Midway, [GA.] Thurs. Dec. 31, 1863

This is the end of the year 1863. I write only two hours before its close. It has witnessed such floods of bloodshed on this western continent as were never before beheld. Though I have hope of independence in the end, yet I cannot close my eyes to the fact that the North is gradually gaining on us in the contest. Contrasting our situation now with what it was a year ago, we have cause for despondency. The South is to be over-run by

the Northern hordes, the off-scouring of European pauperism. But they will not be able to keep us down at all points. The immensity of our territory ensures to us the final triumph; yet while the war lasts, each portion of our territory will in turn be submerged by it. Slavery will be destroyed practically.... Farewell, 1863....

Midway, Sat. Jan. 2, 1864.

... After tea, Miss Anne Law, by invitation, came to my room and gave me her experiences among the Federals in East Tennessee. She was in Campbell's Station at the time of the battle there between Longstreet and Burnside's forces in November last. She was at Mr. Russell's. Burnside had ordered breakfast once before arriving there, but Longstreet had pressed on so closely that he could not wait to eat it. Before his breakfast, which he had ordered at Russell's could be cooked, Longstreet was again near, and he left, saying he had got acquainted with Gen. L. in Virginia and had no wish to meet him again that morning.

Macon, [GA.] Sunday Jan. 3, 1864.

... Had conversations with Miss Anne Law. She says Brownlow fled from Knoxville on the Sunday preceding Longstreet's investment of the place; made his exit by way of Cumberland Gap. Trigg and Maynard accompanied their families, and all went together—Brownlow and all. Gen. Burnside sent a courier to warn them to leave, so soon as he learned that Longstreet had crossed the Tennessee River....

Source: William Gibbs McAdoo Diary, McClung Historical Collection

The Diary of Susan Amelia Ramsey

September 1863- March 1864

... The Federals took possession of Knoxville September 1st 1863 at 3 o'clock—M. I had visited the city that day, but left a few hours before they arrived. We were then staying with my sister, Mrs. Dickson, in the country. We saw nothing of them that day, but the next day two hundred passed, rode to the river, and came back called to see us, did nothing except took a few sundry articles, and frightened us a little.

On the 5th—we moved into the city, found it rather lonely at first; some friend called every day, which made it more pleasant . . . We would feel much better if we could hear from our Papa and brothers and friends. On the Friday following our dear old homestead was burned am very glad that I did not have to witness it burning for it would have made me very sad to think of the many happy moments I had spent there with some very dear friends, and it was there that I had seen my poor sister the last time, and never will see her again, but we should not wish her here, for she has gone to a world where there is no sorrow, and trouble, as we have here, but still I cannot keep from wishing that she was with me. She was so happy and lighthearted that she did not care for trouble.

[September] 19th ...Two soldiers came here to take our servants, but I would not let them go, cannot bear to think of having to cook.

[September] 20th All went to church this morning except Arthur and I both went up to town and I am all alone when a "yank" walks in. We had quite a long argument about the north and the south. Ma dislikes for me to talk to them but gets so lonesome for us sometimes that I just do it to pass along the time....

[September] 23rd . . . I have got the "blues" tonight, worse than I have had them since the "blue coated dogs" have been here . . . Oh! If some confederates would only come to our relief, but that "big Mr. Gen. Hartsuff" says it is our time to suffer and be oppressed, that the poor union persons have been treated so badly by our dear soldiers. I would be willing to be treated as they have been, but I am willing to suffer anything for our independence, or Liberty as some body says.

[September] 24th ... Now while I write I can hear the hateful old bugle. It makes me so mad, but I dislike to see the old "stars and stripes" waving over our town more than anything else. The first time I saw it, I was so angry I could not keep from crying a little . . .

[September] 28th Oh! We have had such glorious news today, heard that the rebels were within six miles of Knoxville. I was so glad I could scarcely keep from “hollowing” but that would look too much like the “Union gals.” . . . Some say they will have to evacuate this place very soon. I would rather they would fight here, if we can whip them (the yanks I mean). I have always been so anxious to see a fight, but I don’t want any of the “Dixie boys” killed or hurt at all. If the news is only true, I can get my “flags out.”

[October] 6th ... It seems as though it had been six months since these hateful dogs came in here, but it is only one month. I do wish from the bottom of my heart they every one were dead. They all don’t like for me to abuse them, and I wish I could keep from it, (for it is always the cause of me getting a scolding) but I can’t do it. It makes me so angry when I think of the mean low yankee trash, being here invadeing our homes, and traying to kill our brothers and friends, and it makes me feel so much better after I abuse and grin and punish them. If I can only get to kill one I will be perfectly satisfied....

Nov. 16th Oh! glorious! glorious! who would believe it, the rebels have come! This morning I was in bed asleep It was about six Oclock. Sister came running into my room, and said for me to get up, that they were beginning to fight. She could then hear the firing. I jumped up and began to dress. In a few minutes she came back and said for me to hurry and come out, that the rebels had come, and that she had been talking to them.... I got out my flag, and waved it at them. They cheered, and said the yankees should never get me. We stood out at the fence for a long while.... There was a great many that had no shoes and socks on. We would call them all and give them all that was on the place. I saw a great many soldiers standing in front of the house, took out my dear little flag and waved it. One officer said I had better not wave that, asked if I was not afraid the yankees would get me. I told him no not since Longstreet had come....

[November] 19th Hear they are fighting at Knoxville today, don’t know if it is so or not. Hear that they have captured all of old Burnsid’s wagons, and that they have the town surrounded, hope it is so....

[November] 22nd Sunday. No church today, have stayed at home all day, hear news from Knoxville every hour, but nothing reliable. Hear of a great many houses being burnt....

[November] 29th This has been very little like Sunday. It has been a day of intense excitement. We heard early this morning that Longstreet had attacked Knoxville. Of course we were very anxious to hear the result. About four in the afternoon Dr. Toole came down, said we had placed flags on their batteries, when he left and that he felt certain the town was ours. He had not left the house fifteen minutes when Dr. Harrison called, and said that Longstreet was retreating, and that Brother Cro was coming down that night. Oh! what a shock, I never felt so miserable (with one exception) in my life. Some did not believe it. I thought it must be so, for brother C. was staying at Longstreet H.Q. I thought he would know. At length brother C. came said it was so that they were going to begin the retreat that night, that Jeff D. had ordered him to reinforce Bragg. I begged Pa to take Ma and I south with him, but he thought it was dangerous and would not let us go, as the enemy was at Charleston and Cleveland.

[November] 30th I was so mad I could not sleep last night. During the night a courier brought a dispatch to Pa, saying that the army would not fall back this way, but was going through Va. There was a good many soldiers here. They all could not decide which way to go, to K. or Loudon. They finally concluded to go to Loudon. I told them good bye, since I supposed it was the last rebels I would see. I felt so dreadful to think of having to stay here with the hateful old yanks again. At length we heard the rumor that the order had been countermanded and that Longstreet was ordered “to take the city at all hazards,” but some how I can not believe it. I am so much afraid they are going to give it up....

[December] 3rd Our soldiers should not become depressed because we have reverses, but should fight the harder, and look forward to that glorious time when the independence of the southern confederacy is constituted. Would that they all could live to see it. But we that have to stay here with out enemies, bare their insults, and see them destroying everything, it cannot be expected that we will be as sanguine as we ought to. Some one said the little

confederacy had “gone up.” Never will I believe it. While we have two such armies as we have because Tennessee is all in the hands of the enemy, is no reason to believe we would be subjugated....

[March] 31st I arrived here this morning, after having been at sister Mags almost one week. I had a quite a time up there. We stayed all night at cousin Franks, next morning went into town, went shopping, then went to Gen. Carters to get a pass to go to sister M. She asked for one for herself, and sister. He (Maj Gratz) asked me if I was loyal. I told him yes to the S. Confederacy. He became very angry, said I should not leave, but should stay in town. At length he became more calm, and said for me to sign an obligation. I read it, and said I would not sign the obligation but would write my name on the other side, went to the desk, and started to write, when he jerked the paper from me, and said to sign it on the other side. I threw the pen down, said I would not do it. That made him more angry than at first. Sister Mag insisted on me signing the pass. Tho, he said she should not do it often. I said I would not do if he would let me. We repeated these expressions several times. He ordered me to remain in town until further orders. Of course I did not do, but got into sister Mags wagon, and went out there. We reached there safely about four O'clock that evening. Sister M. and my self were sitting in the room, when two yanks walked up to the door, asked for me, took a paper out, and read. It was an order to arrest me, take me to Knoxville, to uncle Deadericks, and remain inside his premises. I told him I would not go. He said then he would have to leave a guard. He did so, and went back, said he would come back next morning, bring an ambulance. He came back but did not bring it, said if sister M. would be responsible for me I could remain there a few days, then I would be sent south. It was the 26th of March, that I was arrested. Every thing went on very quietly until Tuesday, and Israel came out, said Ma had received orders that I must leave, and that she could go if she wished. Ma was not going, wished me to go there before I left, so I came down this morning got along very well....

Source: Robert Tracy McKenzie, ed. “A Teenage Confederate Experiences Union Occupation: The Diary of Susan Amelia Ramsey, September 1863-April 1864,” *Journal of East Tennessee History* 78 (2006): 60-72

Elizabeth Baker Crozier Diary

Elizabeth Baker Crozier left a diary from the commencement of hostilities in April 1861 until April 1865. It was destroyed when her house was burned by Federal troops besieged within Knoxville. She managed to reconstruct a portion of her journal commencing Sunday, November 15, 1863, and described the siege of Knoxville from the point of view of a Southern sympathizer trapped in her own town by the Federal Army which was encircled by an attacking and, for her, a liberating Confederate force. The spelling and grammar in this journal have not been altered. Explanatory notes, which appear in brackets, have been added for clarity.

Nov. Wednesday morning 18th returning to my home found but little damage done. The kitchen open the [soldiers] had been cooking. We returned to Mr. Deadericks and in a short time Leut. Coleman a Federal officer came to me and told me that the soldiers had broken open my house and that he had taken some silver from them which he gave to me. He went over with us being Commander of the Sharp Shooters who were then occupying 3 rows of rifle pits between my home and Mr. Deadericks. We passed through them, reached my residence. I beheld a scene that I never thought of witnessing in my life. Every lock in the house was broken open the contents of every wardrobe, closet and side board, the front of which had been busted out, were scattered over every room. I was overwhelmed with amazement not knowing what to do. My wine all drunk, my hams, bacon, butter and sugar all gone, and my faithful old dog stretched upon the garments groaning most piteously. Yet I pushed back the scattered garments out of my sight if possible and resolved that we would not leave again. Longstreet advancing slowly—yes too slowly—upon the Federal army for he could save us now if he would but press on them. Of course they are [the Yanks] falling back upon us. Thinking it would be safe for us, determined to take refuge in one of the cellars, although we had just had water taken out a foot deep, but notwithstanding there being an elevated place we arranged planks so as to lift us up from the water covering it with a carpet, comforts and a mattress intending to spend the night—taking also with us an oven in which to build our fire, some candles, matches etc. I returned to my room and there I met a Yankee officer who said to me that he had come around to see if any one was disturbing me. I told him that my house had been plundered. I asked him if Mr. Mapes house

had been broken open, he remarked, "Oh no, I have placed a faithful guard around it." I just then saw Mr. Mapes and the Rev. Mr. Woodford on their way to his house. The minnie balls were now flying through the air in every direction. Now as the evening was about to cast its shades of night around us we go to our cellar to prepare for the night having seated ourselves on the mattress in our gloomy apartment, consulting with my servant and two little ones what would be for the best. Mr. Mapes & Woodford entered, said that they had been obliged to leave their home. The Yankees had taken possession of it and were firing from it, the Confederates were in sight—that it was not safe to remain. He told me when he approached his house they refused to let him advance—that they [had] a safe guard around the house, that nothing should be disturbed. He told them that he was the owner of it, and passed on. In the house he found soldiers packing and bundling everything in the house for their own benefit and everything busted up in his house. We could see them firing and falling back. Mr. Mapes insisted that I should not stay there, that the damp place would not do, but whilst discussing the subject an order came to us to leave the house forthwith that their army was falling back and would occupy our house in a short time. The question was at once settled, we left the cellar went over to Mr. Deadericks. After supper the same Lieut. Came for me again and said that he would go over with me to my home, that I might save something. I took my servant, Katie, Carrick and Chalmer Deaderick, Miss Pheeby & Ellen ----- were with us as they lived across the street and had also sought shelter at Mr. D. We went into my once happy family room and found it filled with a miserable set of soldiers and one covered up in my nice white bed with a large marsaile quilt and linen pillow cases and no doubt he felt comfortable—yet he felt and looked too mean to stay there. They were all whispering and seemed to feel ashamed to be there, I asked the man if he was wounded he said not, but had chills. He said they would go into another room if I would rather so they moved into the dinning room with the promise that he would watch over my things. He wished to buy some provisions for which he paid me a silver half dollar. An old negro woman was resting upon my lounge quietly.

We gathered up considerable scattered clothing, some boxes of candles etc. carried them over to the Dr.'s sister. We returned again to Mr. D. till the morrow.

Thursday Nov. 19th the same officer [Coleman from Boston] came to me again and said that he would go with me over to [Lindon] my home—perhaps I could save something more. All of my furniture with 6 carpets part mine, part Mrs. Cr. Ramseys the Dr.'s oldest sister (and whose home they had burned when the Yanks had first come in on a raid). They had been staying with us and were absent at this time. She lost a great deal of linnen here, a great many nice hams, a barrel of sugar not opened etc. Of course I found great confusion as the Yanks were cooking in every room. I had no possible chance of moving any heavy things, every pathway was guarded, pickets out in every direction, death's messengers flying in every direction. They had blockaded the culvert with our feather beds and mattresses and the creek backed over all the low grounds. Mr. Woodford said he would try to get my piano, divans, chairs out if he could get a waggon, as it was a new piano we would have been glad to have moved it, but I thanked him and said it was too discouraging to attempt—no effort was made to do anything, we had taken a great many small things to Mr. Deadricks, so we took a final look at our once delightful and happy home.

Thursday 19th 3 p.m. some uneasiness began to arise whether or no we were in danger at Mr. Deadricks. We were right, soon we were ordered to leave that house for safety. The sharp shooters had fallen back to the last trenches, which were in that yard. There was great confusion and excitement among the officers and soldiers. We hastened without delay to leave, 16 women and children, with hope that we would soon return—so leaving all, we had so carefully taken over, we never returned to that place. As we were crossing the railroad we had a view of Mr. Mapes house in flames. Mr. Deaderick and his son, a young man, (Crozier D.) said that they would stay but they [soldiers] began their course of destruction. Mr. D. became excited and his son feared he would get into trouble, insisted upon his leaving, that he [the son] would remain,

but they soon found it necessary for both to leave, so we never returned to that abode again and of course lost all we had taken there. Miss Campbells had left their brother who was paralyzed and could neither walk or talk. Mr. D. applied to headquarters for a waggon to bring him away. They went after him that night and so they brought a wagon load of their goods with them. We had all taken shelter with Margareta Scott for a time.

Nov. Friday 20th The enemy now occupying our homes and are firing from them.

21st- Mrs. Deaderick applies this next morning for another waggon to go over to her house to get another load of goods. She with a servant got into the waggon, started. The Confederate shells bursting over the waggon which alarmed sister Betsy so much, the driver more alarmed turned his horses heads and drove back with full speed. Sister Betsy being much relieved in reaching a place of safety. In the meantime Crozier had gone on to the house found the soldiers going into the cellar with the fatal torch. He begged them to wait till his mother came to get out some beds etc. but he said he was obliged to obey orders. Crozier returned to his sisters, Mrs. Scott, where we all were. It was just at the setting sun. He said, "Mother we can do no more, in a few minutes you will see the flames of the old homestead of our forefathers and ours resting amidst the spreading oak that surround it," and sure we did behold the sad and mournful sight of the house of those aged parents. Crozier found his money he had buried before he came away. At the same time the heavens were lighted with the burning of Mrs. Coffins home with many others. My house still stands—how long I know not.

Saturday 21 Nov. '63. The firing has not ceased for a week directly over my house. Standing just between the 2 armies the enemy's breastworks lying all along the eastern hills. The Confederates in the woods directly to the west about five hundred yards apart. They have my house ready prepared for the torch, also Mrs. Walkers, Mrs. Leymours, Miss _____, the large Georgia Machine Shop, with half doz. Others, ready waiting orders. The Confederates are spreading themselves a little further out.

Sunday 22. We are all waiting with great anxiety for Longstreet to make one grand move upon our town and deliver us at once from the cruel enemy. My home is still a standing monument. Some little hope ventures into our hearts that perhaps the Rebels may reach it before they apply the torch. The Dr., my husband, and son is with Longstreets army almost in sight of their home. The incendiaries to burn our house are close at hand, waiting the order, notwithstanding hope still lingers, as hope maketh not ashamed. I had now taken up quarters with my son and daughter and Mrs. Vanuxems, where my brother Dr. William Baker and wife were, they having left their pleasant and beautiful home after the Yankees had murdered our brother, Dr. Henry Baker who lived near to him 10 miles below Knoxville. I sought my brothers protection as soon as I could. He was very sad and dispirited from the loss of our dear and beloved brother, he was also in poor state of health, consequently had but little help from him. Margaret Scott, my husbands niece, had every preparation made for leaving her home, bundles packed, her china and glass were wrapped in table linnen and sheets ready to be dropped into the cistern. The last night we spent with her she had buiscuit & ham all sliced. Each of us had made a large pocket with a band to button around us, in case we would be obliged to take refuge in a church, that we might have something to eat. We have slept in our cloths for more than a week.

Oh the anxiety of a people in the midst of a battle. The cannon roars day and night. They are constantly belching forth their Breath of fire from the breastworks of perdition. Friends meet together to talk and cheer each other, hoping and praying that the Rebels will soon burst in and remove the iron heel of despotism from the necks of an innocent people.

Monday 24th [23], our home is still standing. Can it be that it will not meet the fate of others? We still cast a lingering look toward it, not yet without hope—not like some I have heard to say

their anxiety was so great about their homes that it would be a relief if all was over. All night the cannon pours forth his mighty, thundering voice, shakes not only the very earth, but it seems that the house in which we are will be brought to the ground.

Monday evening, now the great battle begins [actually at dawn on Sunday, November 29, 1863] The Confederates make a gallant rush upon Fort Sanders, succeeded in mounting the Breastworks by climbing one upon another when reaching the top were thrown into the ditch by wires upon spikes and their heads mashed with the axes of the enemy, poor fellows. The rest were captured. At the same time the incendiary was doing his work in our home and as the darkness of night came on, the light of many of our dear homes illuminated the city with one grand light. Lieut. Commings was the leader of the grand charge. Longstreet had the Fed. Pickets flanked and took them prisoners. The Confederates move around the city and complete a siege.

Tuesday, many ladies visited the prisoners, found them almost famished. They all received every attention in food and clothing. Judge Reeses 2 daughters were out in their yard when they were spied by the enemy, only had on their sunbonnets and calico dresses. They were ordered to leave, they never entered their house again, but it was set on fire in a few minutes.

My own home now on fire. Whilst I was looking upon the flames that rose far above the forrest trees that was to bring my home level with the earth that supported it, I felt not that trembling in every nerve and limb that I did when I knew that our brave and gallant soldiers had made that mighty rush to the deathly mouth of the enemy's cannon where so many would surely be launched in a moment to an eternal world. Great excitement with the citizens during the siege which lasted about 10 days during which time the authorities had had every residence examined and the provisions taken an account of with the intention of confiscating them for the Yankee Armie, provided the siege continued. I have seen the soldiers beg for the scraps when the dishes were washed. My oldest Brother, Caleb Baker a Union man, died during the 2nd year of the war, leaving a widow with several children the occupants of his beautiful and delightful home on the south side of the Holston. His widow, a kind and noble hearted woman, obtained a permit to come in the town, bringing some provisions. Said to me "bring Kate and Carrick and stay with me. I have plenty for us all now if they will only let me keep it and as long as I have a dime I will divide with you." I know not what I should have done without this great kindness for which I pray Our Father in Heaven t bless her, with many blessings. She went through much trouble the remainder of the war, many times brought to much want and many sever trials, much loss of property and finally her beautiful home was consumed by fire. My family remained with her until the 6th of next April when we were allowed the privilege of going south on the hunt of my husband and children, Lizzie, Sallie and Baker—my oldest son, a darling boy, having been killed on the battle field at Chicamauga [Lieut. Robert Crozier gallantly leading his men in front of a hot contest in which they were every one either killed or wounded]. I have never heard from anyone of my family since the unfortunate night they were compelled to arrise from their beds at 1 o'clock on the 28th of August 1863 and hasten for a southern train....

Source: Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee, Rev. (Knoxville, TN, 2002), 189-96

David Deaderick

1861. Our great nation is in a state of civil war; brought on us by the legitimate workings of Democracy. We had abandoned years ago, the purposes our Fathers, who had given us a Constitution for a National Representative Republic.

It worked for a while as a Representative Government; but Demagogues have made it, as far as they could, a "Democracy," almost all elections given direct to the people, even those of judges in the States or most of them. The reverence for law and order thus, in the minds of the people, diminished; offices once intended to serve the peoples interest, now made bribes and gifts to political partisans; and "State rights," an original democratic doctrine, has culminated into "secession," resulting consequently in Civil War.

1862. The war has been more than a year in progress. Many battles have been fought. Many thousands have been killed in battle. More, perhaps on the side of our enemies than ours; and doubtless more have died from disease; for one of the peculiar features of the war is, the vast number who are sick. Another strange feature of this unnatural war is, the want of *reliable* of statements of the killed and wounded on either side. "A lying spirit is abroad in the land on all matters" connected with the operations of the armies.

God is doubtless punishing the whole people North and South for their sins. The nation had forgotten God, had magnified itself against him. Had prospered as never nation prospered before, and had never, in thankfulness, looked to the great source for all their blessings. Had deserted God's Sabbaths, and in many ways repudiated his authority. And he had permitted the vile passions of men to rule them, and a cause of quarrel which could have been, and should have been adjusted peaceably, has brought on the terrible civil war.

The North are the aggressors, in having for years intermeddled with the subject of slavery, which very remotely *concerned them*, but vitally affected the South. On the other hand, the South, instead of submitting for four years to the rule of an administration hostile, it is true, to their institutions, and wholly sectional, precipitated war upon us by the first hostile attack.

The evil of such a result of the Presidential election was great, very great; but it was done constitutionally, and in four years, the power of the party in the ascendant, by divisions among themselves, and other causes, may have been so weakened as to become impotent for evil.

The "negro questions" may have ceased to be the absorbing question, and the South be made secure against further agitation to their injury, of this fruitful cause of all their trouble.

Surely it would have been wiser to have forborne, and to have taken other measures (for the peaceful measures were not yet exhausted), rather than by violence, to have brought this terrible civil war upon us.

Mr. Lincoln, as I think, should, when he came into office, and found that the rebellion had been permitted by his predecessor to proceed so far as to have become a revolution, have recommended to congress, that the 7 states then seceded, should be permitted to go. This would have been a great blow to government constituted as ours. But there was a choice of two great evils, the breaking up of the government or civil war; and such a civil war, as is now waged. Certainly the least of the two evils was, to have allowed the seceded States to separate from the Union.

It will have to be done when this war is closed; for I have no idea that the South can be conquered. And if she could, how does it comport with republican government, a government of consent, that one portion [should be] in a military subjection to the other.

What an absurdity there is in the idea of such a government being a republic. And yet this is the only way in which there can now be a restoration of the Union. The North must know, after what has passed, that there can be no other way of reconstruction. And it seems to me wonderful, that they persist in the effort to restore such a union as this. A union of force. How or when the terrible scene is to close, we know not. May God in mercy soon determine it, for we would look to him. June 12, 1862....

1863. On the 1st Sept. the Federals took possession of Knoxville. All that have arrived yet are cavalry. 1500 to 2 or 3000 it may be numbered.

The matter of nearest concern to us is that our two sons, Robert and Inslee were at home. Inslee was in town and had, on the first alarm, rode up Prince Street toward home, and seeing the Federals coming, turned down Clinch Street between Jno. Crozier's & Doct. Wm. Baker's lots. He saw directly however a party of them passing along Water Street; and thus he was between them & could not escape. He stopt in the Street (State Street) that leads between the 1st Presbyterian church and Mr. Sam B. Boyd's, left his horse and jumped over the fence into the

graveyard of the church. It is very densely covered with undergrowth and he hid there. This was about 4 O'clock, P.M. He intended remaining till night and then escaping.

A man, who is known ascertained that he was in the grave yard. Inslee fell asleep and did not wake till about midnight. In the meantime the Federals had placed a guard around the graveyard & the dogs of the informer were put in, and Inslee was found asleep and captured.

Robert was at home, & when the lines of the Federals were passing along, for they were in full view from our house, he took his horse & went back of our house through the fields to the woods, intending to pass the road along which the enemy were approaching, when it was open or free from them & thus make his way to the south. We have heard nothing from him since. Sept. 3 1863.

Later, we heard of Robert's safe arrival at the lines of the southern army. Inslee was allowed by Gen. Carter, to remain at home till the prisoners are sent off, or till he calls for him. He is at home yet. (October 10, '63) ...

Siege of Knox. by the Confederates

Chiefly what was witnessed & experienced by our own family.

Tuesday November 17. 1863.

On Sunday last there was fighting on the south side of the river, some two miles from town; result not certainly known, but many reported killed on both sides.

It is understood that the Confederates subsequently went down the river and crossed, and joined their other forces on the north side of the river.

The Confederate forces are commanded, we hear, by Gen. Longstreet.

From about ½ past 10 A.M. there was considerable picket firing, west of town apparently near the Armstrong's, 2 miles or less from town. Sometimes the firing was heavy, and indicated sharp engagement. The night was quiet except an occasional shot.

Wednesday Nov. 18th

The Confederate skirmishers were advancing from the west, and those of the Federals took positions, some near Doctr. C. W. Crozier's house, and others along our fence, now located between our buildings and the orchard; and not more, at the nearest part, than 50 or 60 yards from our house.

They fired at each other all day. The rear line of Federal skirmishers in the latter part of the day were around our premises and in Mrs. Coffin's orchard.

The firing ceased at dark.

Thursday, Novr. 19th.

Very heavy fog this morning and the firing did not commence till about 10 O'clock.

Our family were all yet occupying the house, though minnie balls struck about it occasionally; yet we supposed we could continue to occupy it; and even should shells or cannon shot be thrown at it, as might be the case, should the confederates get possession of it, we supposed we should be safe in the cellar and intended to remain.

A Federal soldier was killed today near Doctr. Crozier's house: and another wounded on the hill west of the spring house just outside of our fence, near a cedar bush. It may have been a mortal wound, as he was struck in the head or neck.

The front line of Federal pickets or skirmishers extended today, from a point towards Mrs. Coffin's upper house, in the direction of John Moses house. This line fell back, setting Jno. Moses barn or stable on fire; and the Confederate skirmishers occupied the woods, or the North portion of it which lies west of our orchard.

The Federal pickets fired today from our yard, and from behind our smoke house [&c.] and 4 or 5 from the garret windows.

An officer had inferred us that a regiment would soon pass and form in our garden; and we were advised to leave the house. No regiment however came, except the skirmishers above mentioned as falling back.

All did leave the house, for Frank Scott's opposite to the Asylum, except Crozier & myself. We remained with a hope of protecting the property still in the house, and thinking that we might be able to stay in the house till a decision of the contest.

Crozier afterward insisted that I should come to F. Scott's to relieve his mother of her anxiety and leave him there. This I finally did.

Nov. 19th.

Afterward the soldiers so deported themselves, as to induce Crozier to believe that they would depredate on the property, and he came to town with the purpose of trying to get something out of the house, leaving John McCampbell, a paralytic man, who with his three sisters had come to our house as safer than their own. We now procured an ambulance from the authorities, through the kindness of Genl. Saml. P. Carter and a permit to return with a wagon to our house.

Mrs. Deaderick, two servant women (Maria and Elvira), Crozier & myself went out to the house.

It was after dark before we reached the house, attended by a Federal officer. We brought away a wagon load of our effects and some in the ambulance. All returned (with Jno. Campbell) to Frank Scott's except myself. I remained all night. It was still during the night.

Friday Nov. 20th.

Firing of skirmishers commenced today at an early hour and the balls struck the house and around it from a northern direction; rifle pits having been advanced in that direction nearer to the house. When I was in the back porch 5 or 6 balls struck the house & locust tree near the smokehouse &c. within a few minutes. From the besieged condition of the house and other causes, I concluded to go to town, taking with me what I could carry. During the day the fire continued, and in the afternoon we concluded to try to get something more from our house. We procured a permit and a Government wagon and borrowed another wagon; and Mrs. D. Crozier & Chalmers started out, while I was prevented from going by a report that my Clerk's office was occupied, and my books and papers should be looked to.

The firing in the direction of our house was still going on and the wagons stayed behind the steam mill, and Crozier went to the house to see where the creek could be crossed*, so as to approach the house with least danger from the firing of the skirmishers, and to let the officer know he was coming.

While waiting at the mill, a shelling commenced from Confederate batteries in a North or Northeast direction from our house and Mrs. D. became alarmed, but not as much as the drivers of the two wagons, who turned and drove rapidly back to town.

Crozier, in the meantime, came down to where the wagons had been, but found that they had left. He immediately returned to the house, to secure some valuables of his own; and now learned from the officer at the house, that he had been ordered to burn the house, which he would do immediately.

Crozier ascertained that much of our property had already been taken out of the house, but had no time to go upstairs as the officer hurried him to get off what he wished to take. Before Crozier left the premises, the fire had been put into the ell or wooden part of the building upstairs over the "old kitchen," and the soldiers had left. Crozier thinks he was the last to leave the place.

The barn was also fired, and all we had, except the one load (and that a small one) and what we had in the ambulance as before mentioned, and the little I had carried when I left the house, was either stolen or consumed in the fire.

The night was quiet. We slept at F. Scott's.

***The culvert had been damned and back water was in the way of crossing readily**

Saturday Nov. 21.

It rained a good part of last night, and pretty steadily this morning, and till the afternoon; and there was but occasional firing during the day by skirmishers, apparently in the direction of Doc. Crozier's house.

Great numbers of wagons and a good many troops are within the trenches of the Federals.

The wagons occupy the vacant spaces & lots in town, and many of the troops are in the streets with tents in the yards, and under coverings stretched along the sidewalks, leaned against the fences.

The first and second Presbyterian churches, as also the Methodist and Baptist churches, the Court House, College buildings Female Academy, Lamar and Mansion houses &c as well as the D & D Asylum are occupied as Hospitals.

Sunday Nov. 22.

A bright sunny morning.

The skirmish firing this morning, is in the direction of East Knoxville, with occasional firing in the old direction. About sun down several exchanges of cannon shot occurred, between the battery (apparently of 2 guns) on the ridge back of our house (Confederate) and the "Summit hill" battery of the Federals.

Not long afterward shots were exchanged between the same Confederate battery and that of the Federals on the high hill beyond and overlooking East Knoxville. The night was quiet, the moon shining brightly.

Monday Nov. 23.

Skirmish firing heard this morning in the direction of our house & in the fore part of the day but otherwise apparently quiet.

The firing of the cannon was heard about 1 o'clock P.M. but we could not determine by which side or from what point, as it was more distant than the firing heard yesterday.

In the afternoon the firing of the skirmishers was quite brisk in the old quarter.

Toward sundown brisk firing was heard from about Doct. Crozier's house, and the woods adjoining, and we supposed that the Federal skirmishers who held the house and buildings adjacent, fell back; for soon the flames were seen in the buildings about the Rail Road round house, and the Round House, the Miss McCampbell's house, (formerly the Rev. [M.] Hillsman's) Doct. Crozier's house, and several buildings in that vicinity were in flames. In a little while after we saw, beyond the Asylum, the glare of burning buildings, apparently about the steam mill. During the Progress of this burning, incessant discharges were heard, which we suppose preceded from Maxwell's machine shop, which had been used by the Confederates as an ordinance shop and depot, and to have been the firing of cartridges and bursting of shells, and perhaps the discharge of musketry stored in the building; all of which may have been left there, when the Confederates evacuated the place.

I went to the top of Asylum hill this morning to see what buildings had been burnt, but was not allowed to go high enough to see. The night of this day passed off quietly.

Tuesday Nov. 24th.

At 7 or 8 o'clock A.M. a brisk firing of skirmishers was heard, seemingly north of the E. Ten. & Ga. R. Road depot; also west of us, in the direction of the round house. Several cannon shot were fired from the hill west of Mrs. Barnes' ("Loudon" Col. Ramsey's) and throughout the day firing was kept up, both in that direction and, and North of the Asylum or Northwest in the vicinity of our house.

Rifle pits of the Confederates have been sunk back of our house in a NW direction from it, on the rise in our old-field and perhaps in Mrs. Coffin's orchard.

We hear today, that a charge was made by the Federals somewhere N or NW of the steam mill, by which the Confederate skirmishers were driven back with the loss of several prisoners. The Federal loss, killed and wounded, we hear was considerable.

The night was very quiet.

Wednesday Nov. 25th.

This morning scattering shots were heard in the direction of Doct. Crozier's house. The Federal skirmishers still hold the house or its ruins, and I suppose, ours also.

The firing at intervals continued, and at about 8 o'clock P.M. cannon was heard. We could see the smoke followed by reports of cannon, from Frank Scott's back porch, a little East of South on the Ridge over the river.

From what we hear it is probable that a fight is going on across the river.

The skirmish firing as usual ceased when darkness came on.

Thursday Nov. 26th.

Between 7 and 8 A.M. picket firing commenced.

I had a view this morning from the "Summit House" (Ristine's) and notice that the machine shop, foundry, Humphrey's House, and all or nearly all the buildings N. of the E. T. & V. R. Road round house, on the east side of Broad Street, have been burnt. The steam mill is still standing, also the White house near it (Driscoll's), as also the line of houses on the left or west side of Broad Street going to the Cemetery.

Some cannon shot was heard, apparently from the south side of the College, supposed to have been fired at a battery of the Confederates, on the hill over the river. The skirmish firing continued till night. A quiet night.

Friday Nov. 27th.

Today passed off very much as yesterday. Less firing however, both of cannon and small arms.

Three or four cannon shot were fired from a battery of the Federals, directly in front of the college, at, as we supposed, the Confederate Battery on the Ridge back of our house. The night was quiet except that a shot was heard occasionally.

Saturday Nov. 28th.

After several pleasant sunshiny days, we have rain this morning.

Firing of both cannon and musketry was heard about [?] o'clock A.M. Could not ascertain from what quarter it proceeded.

The firing of skirmishers was heard all day, and at times quite brisk. A little time before sundown, several discharges of cannon were heard, chiefly from the Federal battery on the hill above, and beyond Miss Marg. White's supposed to be aimed at the Confederate battery on the bluff on the south bank on the river.

Sunday Nov. 29th.

Last night was comparatively quiet, till about half past ten, when a brisk fire of musketry was heard in the direction of the college, and very heavy cannonading continued till after sun rise.

It is understood that an attempt was made by the Confederates to take the battery or fort on the hill, back of Miss Margt. White's. (Fort Sanders). The attempt failed, with the loss, it is said, of about 200 prisoners, with many killed and wounded on both sides. Part of the prisoners, about 100, passed by us, in front of the Asylum this morning. All the batteries around us, South and West, seemed to have been engaged in the firing.

The batteries engaged extend from the one placed on the west slope of the ridge, across the river, above Churchwell's (the lower) ferry, around to "Summit Hill" (Ristine's).

The Confederate batteries, four in number, are placed as nearly as we can ascertain—one on the bluff across the river, south of the College, one near Armstrong's, one west of John Moses', and one on the ridge NW of our house.

Skirmish firing entirely ceased, from about 10 o'clock A.M. under a flag of truce to bury the dead. The skirmishers of the two parties were seen from the window upstairs to meet near Doct. Crozier's house, in a friendly manner, and since, the men on either side are walking about exposed, and no firing heard.

The fighting last night was more serious than we had supposed.

We hear that the Confederate loss was very considerable, they having been the attacking party and much inferior to the Federals in number. Notwithstanding Fort Sanders was actually entered by them, but not having been properly supported, they were obliged to surrender. These, or a part of them, were the prisoners we saw passing along by the Asylum. There was no firing at night, and all was perfectly quiet.

Monday Nov. 30th.

Skirmish firing commenced after 10 o'clock A.M. and was kept up at intervals, through the day. A few cannon shots were also heard.

The night was quiet.

Tuesday Dec. 1st.

Skirmish firing began early and continued all day.

Wednesday Dec. 2nd.

The Firing commenced early, and continued through the day. In the afternoon considerable firing of cannon was heard. And after dark repeated shots from Fort Sanders were heard. No reply was made by the Confederate batteries.

As late as 10 o'clock cannonading was heard.

Tuesday Dec. 3rd.

Firing of cannon at 4 o'clock A.M. pretty brisk, and throughout the day, with picket firing till dusk, not as briskly as yesterday. A minnie ball struck the house today and one yesterday. Three have struck Mrs. P.M. McClung's, the second house west of us; and several have struck in other places in our immediate vicinity.

It is safest to keep within doors, but we have become so accustomed to the flying balls, that we don't observe this precaution.

The night was quiet except some picket firing about 12 o'clock.

Friday Dec. 4th.

Less picket firing this morning than usual; though it continued all day. Toward evening there seemed to be a stir among the troops in and about town, as if they apprehended an attack, and considerable firing of Federal cannon was heard from different batteries around town but nothing occurred; and with the close of the day quiet was restored.

The night was perfectly still.

Saturday Dec. 5th.

There was no firing this morning, and it soon appeared that the Confederates had left their rifle pits, and that they had raised the siege and gone with their forces.

We then went west to our house, no one stopping us, to see if there was anything we could save.

We got one wagon load chiefly of irons, and dug our parsnips and salsify. We found but one cow of the four we had, and two fine calves had been killed.

We found rifle pits dug close to the house. I counted 13 Confederate pits, with short intervals between them, from the houses, in a line North, to the division fence between us and Mrs. Coffin and some 100 yard beyond. They extend also from the SW corner of the house, 2 or 3 hundred yards in the direction of the round house of the E. Ten. & Go. Rail Road.

Those were the last pits occupied by the Confederates. On the line of our back garden fence, three rifle pits were dug and had been used by the Federals, between Crozier's house and the barn yard fence; and one at the gate where the garden fence joins the barn yard fence.

I counted a day or two after our first visit to the house 44 rifle pits which had been dug on our grounds, accommodating from one to 4 men each, as indicated by each man's fire place. All by the Confederates except 6.

A great many minnie balls had struck the west end of our house; we counted 37 or 38 marks of the balls on the bricks of that end alone.

The state of things in and about Knoxville—Dec. 30th 1863.

In reading the history of the American Revolution, I do not remember to have noticed that the right of private property and the personal liberty of citizens were habitually interfered with as they have been during the present contest.

While the Confederates had possession here, that is from the beginning of the war till Sept. 1st 1863, when the Federals came in, many sets of lawless violence had been committed by them both on persons and property. Citizens were arrested, in many cases, Union men, so called at the instance of a personal enemy or on some frivolous charge and put in prison. The county jail was used, and the house at the NE corner of Main and Prince St. near the Court House. In many cases the prisoners were left ignorant of the charges made against them, Some have laid in jail for weeks or months, who were finally discharged nothing having been established against them. No redress could be had by the sufferer in such cases of outrage. The property of citizens, both union and secession, had been taken from them by authority of the military, and doubtless without authority of the military, and some of it has been paid for at their own prices, but in numerous instances no payment has been made. The plea of military necessity must satisfy the sufferer.

Seizures of private property have been more extended under the Federal rule.

A leading doctrine under which they justify their enormities is, that a rebel can claim no property as his own, it has been fortified by his disloyalty. Hence, they take whatever they please from those whom they call disloyal, though no proof is made, as ought to be made, that they are so. The authorized robbers, for surely it is robbery, give sometimes a receipt for what they thus forcibly take, at their own measure and price, promising to pay, when the loyalty of the sufferer is established. They pay loyal men, or promise to do so.

They have taken possession of buildings both public and private, by force, and use them, and the property found in them, for their own purposes, without compensation to the owners.

My son, Crozier, and my two sons in law, Frank A. Scott and C. [?]. Park, own a mill in Knoxville, on First or White's Creek.

The Federal military authorities have taken it from them, put their own men in it, and run it for their own benefit, and have taken all the flour and wheat they had of their own and of their customers, also several boxes of tobacco, without paying them a cent; and without encouraging the expectation of their ever being paid for their property or rent for their mill, unless they will prove their loyalty. Now, it would seem, that to give pretense to such an outrage, the authorities should make proof of disloyalty against them.

The steam mill, owned by a Company, has been taken in the same way.

Such proceedings seem very enormous to one who has for more than 60 years lived under a government of justice and equality; and which has, by its laws, given protection to his person and property, while he did no act to compromise his right to claim this protection.

There seems however to have been wrought a strange and radical change in the morals of men and on their views of what is right. Wars we know are demoralizing in their influence.

But I have never had my attention so arrested before, by anything I have seen or read, to the so frequent occurrence or cases, exhibiting a total disregard of the obligations of common honesty, as developed by the parties to this war, both Confederates, but more the Federals.

The last named, are particularly cool, heartless and relentless in their robberies. They take what is yours, even some of those who claim to be gentlemen, with an indifference and callousness as to your rights, resulting, it may be, from long and active practice, but exhibiting a total want of moral principle.

With this evil example before them, many of our own people have not yet escaped its infection, and have taken what they found of property that did not belong to them.

There has been destruction of buildings and timber around Knoxville; the buildings burnt and trees cut down as a "military necessity". Especially was this the case during the siege in Nov. and Dec. Since the siege, where dwellings had been burnt and out buildings left, they have been pulled down and burnt or hauled to town, citizens participating in the thefts[.]

Our own spring house and privy, the only buildings left unburnt, have been pulled to pieces and the material taken away.

Source: David Anderson Deaderick, Register of Events and Facts Recorded Annually, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Libraries, MS-403