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Urban Renewal

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President's Message, Fall 2013

Throughout the country and perhaps in particular in Alabama, we have been commemorating important historic anniversaries. We are currently in the third year of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, last year marked the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, and the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Mims Massacre was this past summer. Next spring marks the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. All of these events had an impact on Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama, and the entire nation.

I hope that you are taking advantage of the events and re-enactment of these occasions, and the ability to experience them as close to first hand as we will ever be. There are a number of interesting articles coming out as a result, in many different venues. We owe it to the people of our past to remember them, respect and recognize them for their trailblazing and sacrifices.

More importantly, don't miss an opportunity to involve our young people in learning about these events. Take someone with you, encourage them to research and write about our history, bring them to our meetings, and write your own story. How many times have *you* said, "I wish I had asked more questions!"

Jacquelyn Procter Reeves, President

Huntsville Historical Review
Editor's Message, Fall 2013

It has been a while since the *Huntsville Historical Review* has arrived in your mailbox . . . but it is finally here! I would like to apologize for the long wait and promise you that we have enough articles to already have a winter 2014 edition ready for printing. This promise, however, comes with a caveat. In order to continue to publish articles about local history we need local historians to write and submit them. We would love to have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to future articles about Huntsville, Madison County, northern Alabama, or the Tennessee River Valley. I am asking anybody with an idea, rough draft, or finished manuscript to contact me at john.kvach@uah.edu and we can talk about your project.

As you will see in this edition we have some emerging local historians who explore Huntsville's distant and more recent past. John O'Brien's article on housing in Huntsville after World War II might bring back some memories for those of you old enough to remember "Boogertown" and other downtown areas that conflicted with Huntsville's contrived "Rocket City" image. Ben Hoksbergen and Brian Hogan explore a Civil War skirmish that occurred in Madison County in 1864 but that continues to yield archeological clues. Their interesting historical/archeological approach creates a unique look at the affair at Indian Creek Ford. Lastly, Jennifer Coe compares Civil War-era Huntsville with Knoxville, Tennessee, and finds similarities and differences in both towns. All four authors are excited to share their research with members of the Huntsville/Madison County Historical Society. So sit down and enjoy the *Review* and we will continue to find new articles about our past.

<div align="right">John F. Kvach, Editor</div>

"If You Burn It, They Will Come: The Housing Authority in Huntsville, 1941-1960

By John O'Brien

Between 1950 and 1960 Huntsville did not merely grow, it transformed. On April 1, 1950, two war-time manufacturing sites, the Huntsville Arsenal and Redstone Arsenal, merged and became the primary research center for the Army's guided missile command. The Thiokol Chemical Corporation relocated their headquarters from Maryland to Redstone Arsenal and the Army's rocket research division transferred to the new Huntsville site from Fort Bliss, Texas.[1] The resultant tide of in-migrants overwhelmed the city's infrastructure as Huntsville's population soared 340.3 percent during the 1950s.[2] Rents doubled, and then quadrupled. Traffic stretched the length and breadth of the city. Cars crowded Memorial Parkway and it soon became the city's main thoroughfare instead of a convenient overpass. Huntsville's historic heart, the courthouse square, withered from lack of investment and low property values. Slums caught the public attention and substandard housing proliferated while the city boomed.[3] The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville received the unenviable task of handling the disparate issues presented by the city's rapid growth.

The Huntsville Housing Authority negotiated between the city's needs and federal concerns from its inception in 1941. Throughout the 1950s, the city council found it difficult to

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1   Mary T. Cagle, "History of Redstone Arsenal," *MSFC History Office,* http://history.msfc.nasa.gov/huntsville/history_redstone_arsenal.pdf, 1-10.

2   "Booming Cities Decade-to-Decade, 1830-2010," *United States Census Bureau,* October 4, 2012, http://www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/017/508.php

3   *The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville: A History, August, 1941 – March, 1973.* (Huntsville, AL: The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville, 1973) 4-7.

manage the issues of infrastructure, population growth, poverty, and housing alone. The council leaned on the Local Authority to represent the city's interests on a federal level through formal and informal channels. The city required federal funds; both to address the pressures of a large population living in a small town, and to expand a collection of cotton mills and watercress farms into the largest city in north Alabama. In return, the Housing Authority not only promoted the various schemes of local officials but also played a direct role in shaping the geography and demography of this new rocket city.

The limited literature produced on Huntsville in this period focuses on the imposition of the federal government's will without the concerns of local interest. Bruce Schulman's *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt* proclaimed that throughout the South, "in-migrants captured a large percentage of the new jobs in space and defense centers,"[4] and the concerns of native whites went unheeded as to the distribution of federal funds. However, in Huntsville, attracting the in-migrants served the purposes of the city's elite. Businessmen and city officials welcomed the influx. Schulman identified Huntsville as one of the Southern boom cities where federal funds and the cooperation of local business leaders made the transition between the Cotton South and the desegregated modern South smoother.[5] Although the boom cities desegregated and urbanized without the violence and drama of Birmingham, they still offer insight into the processes by which federal monies transformed a region. Huntsville experienced unprecedented growth and investment during a turbulent period

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4   Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 159.

5   Schulman, *Cotton Belt to Sunbelt,* 208. Schulman mentions Huntsville a total of three times in his book. One of the pages cited state that federal money made desegregation easier in Huntsville without much exposition as to how. Birmingham received substantial federal aid and violence still erupted there.

of Southern history. Yet, besides scholarship on Redstone Arsenal or the Marshall Space Flight Center, Schulman and other historians of the industrialized South have done little to understand the relationship between federal institutions and local government in Huntsville, Alabama.

During the Great Depression, Congress recognized the shortage of decent housing nationwide and produced a variety of laws that empowered local housing authorities and provided them with funds. The Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932 authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to make loans to local corporations dedicated to slum clearance and the eradication of urban blight. Title II of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) allowed direct federal aid for public housing. These early efforts at housing reform culminated in the United States Housing Act of 1937, aimed at providing local housing authorities with resources to relocate their most unfortunate denizens. Four years later, the American entrance into World War II shifted the focus from slum clearance and urban renewal programs, to housing defense workers.[6] The Lanham Public War Housing Act of 1940 addressed this concern and authorized the distribution of aid to, "those areas … in which the President shall find an acute shortage of housing exists … [that] would not be provided by private capital."[7] Huntsville received its first housing loans under this program.

In 1946 Charles F. Palmer deemed substandard half the homes, apartments, and other dwellings in the southern United States. He understood the issue better than most; Palmer organized Techwood Homes, Atlanta's first housing project and one of America's first federally funded public housing sites. He served as the Coordinator of Defense Housing from 1940 until

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6   John J. Gunther, *Federal City Relations in the United States: The Role of Mayors in Federal Aid to Cities.* (Newark: The University of Delaware Press, 1990), 124-128.

7   "Lanham Public War Housing Act." (PL 76-849, October 14, 1940.) United States Statutes at Large 54, (1940), 1125-1126.

President Roosevelt abolished the office via Executive Order 9070 in 1942.[8] Palmer published *Adventures of a Slum Fighter* in 1955 about his study of housing projects across three continents. Thus, his condemnations of housing conditions in the southern United States carried an authority and understanding earned through obsessive research.[9] Throughout the latter 1940s, housing reformers, such as Palmer, pushed for new legislation that would continue the construction boom and provide jobs nationwide. Palmer argued that the continued use of federal funds to subsidize Southern housing could stem the flow of migrants northwards and stimulate the growth of new metropolises in the "nation's number one economic problem."[10] Unknown to him, Palmer prophesied the future of Huntsville.

By 1950 a bevy of federal housing laws sat ready for use. Like other cities in Alabama and across the nation, Huntsville manipulated these laws to suit its local needs with little real oversight from either Washington D.C or the Public Housing Authority regional office in Atlanta. Though the money came from outside the city, the Local Authority made the decisions. In this way, Huntsville followed national and state wide trends in its local housing policies.[11] Unlike other housing programs in Alabama, Huntsville experienced federal investment during its economic and demographic ascent and the programs focused on expanding housing opportunities within or near the city. The first programs in Alabama reflected President Roosevelt's focus on rural housing initiatives. Mark Gelfand described the 1933 amendment to the NIRA as an "officially sponsored exodus from

8 *Housing Yearbook, 1942.* ed. Coleman Woodbury and Edmond H. Hoben (Chicago: National Association of Housing Officials, 1942) 47.

9 Charles F. Palmer, *Adventures of a Slum Fighter* (Atlanta: Tupper and Love Inc., 1955), ix.

10 Charles F. Palmer, "Housing, The South's Number One Economic Opportunity," *Social Forces* 25, no. 2 (1946): 189-191.

11 Arnold Hirsch, *Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 269.

the cities."[12]

Of the $25 million appropriated for housing and homesteads under the 1933 amendment to the NIRA, the federal government spent a quarter of the money in Alabama. Five communities in Jefferson and Walker counties; Palmerdale, Gardendale, Trussville, Bessemer, and Jasper suffered either from the lack of demand for workers in Birmingham's steel industry or a collapse in agricultural prices. Federal funds provided these communities with rural housing, construction work, and local industries, often a textile mill.[13] Birmingham's leaders used housing grants from Washington D.C to restructure the city and preserve valued cultural areas following its economic collapse and the migration of the steel industry to other states and nations. The Magic City's use of federal grants morphed it from a steel town to the home of a leading medical research center.[14] Previous federal programs in Alabama focused on renewing a community, not redesigning it. The experience of federal funds in Huntsville differed from the rest of the state and by 1958, Huntsville possessed more housing and urban renewal projects than any other city in Alabama.[15]

Huntsville's history lacked a previous example of explosive growth and prosperity. Much of the city's identity and cultural expression emerged from its extensive contact with the federal government during the latter half of the 20th century. Also, unlike Birmingham, Huntsville served as home to John Sparkman, an influential Senator committed to the growth of the city. Sparkman worked closely with the Huntsville Housing

12 Mark I. Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities: The Federal Government and Urban America, 1933-1965.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975) 24-25.

13 Wayne Flynt, *Poor but Proud: Alabama's Poor Whites.* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001), 306.

14 Christopher Scribner, *Renewing Birmingham: Federal Funding and the Promise of Change, 1929-1979.* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2002), 140-147.

15 "Housing Board Has New Aide," *The Huntsville Times,* October 08, 1958.

Authority to ensure its needs were met. His later appointment as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs solidified this relationship. This combination of factors; the early contact with federal agencies like the United States Housing Authority and Department of the Army, the efforts of Senator Sparkman, and the rapid growth of Huntsville allowed the local Housing Authority to exercise an inordinate degree of influence in shaping the development of the city.

The Huntsville Housing Authority emerged from a city council resolution on August 14, 1941. Local Authority officials dealt with federal concerns within the first nine months of operation. This early exposure primed the Board of Commissioners for the booming population and new demands that emerged in the 1950s. Between 1941 and 1943 the men behind the Housing Authority learned how to cope with the competing interests of city, county, state, and federal agencies. In July 1941, twenty-five prominent citizens signed a petition demanding the creation of a housing authority. Mayor A.W. McAllister appointed the five original members of the Housing Authority in August 1941, they organized in a month. The City Council awarded the new Authority with an operating budget of $2,500. On September 2, 1941 Chairman Herbert Johnson and Commissioners Hunter, Ashford Todd, Oscar Mason, and H.E. Monroe met to discuss the possibility of declaring Huntsville a defense area under the Public War Housing Act of 1940. They contacted R.C. Ditto, the commander of the Huntsville Arsenal and dispatched letters to the United States Housing Authority and 8th Congressional District Representative John Sparkman.[16] The existence of the Authority hinged on whether or not housing officials in Washington D.C. classified the Chemical Warfare Plant at Huntsville Arsenal as an industry, "connected with and

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16 "Minutes of the Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville, Alabama No. 1," The Vault at 200 Washington Street, Huntsville, Alabama, September 2, 1941 to November 3, 1941, 1-15.

essential to the national defense."[17]

Washington said no. The recent American entry into World War II meant high demand for defense housing projects and exhausted funds with which to build them. The $150 million appropriated in 1940 was gone by January 1942. A second appropriations bill meant another chance at federal aid and on February 2, 1942 Chairman Herbert Johnson announced that the Huntsville Housing Authority received a grant. Representatives from the United States Housing Authority arrived later that month. Earl Gauger, E.T. Pairo, and Henry Taylor met with the Board of Commissioners in a special session on February 16, to outline the relationship between the Authority and the federal government.[18]

E.T. Pairo explained that "a 300 unit Defense Housing Project had been set up for Huntsville and ... the Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville [were] to acts as agents of the United States of America in the development and construction of this Project."[19] The Authority recognized their precarious position and the responsibility laid before them. W.B. Mills Jr. received the nomination to become the Authority's first Executive Director and they passed Housing Authority Resolution No. 3 as a guiding set of principles.

Housing Authority Resolution No. 3 outlined the goals of the Housing Authority as a corporate body caught between federal money and local concerns. The Commissioners believed it was their duty to ensure "adequate housing ... to properly care for the workers in the industries of Huntsville engaged in ... the war efforts." The resolution also mandated the use local labor and construction materials in the building and maintenance of the project and included the assurance that Authority policies would not "devalue the investments of the citizens of the city of Huntsville." This pledge reinforced their position as federal

17 "Lanham Public War Housing Act." (1940), 1126.
18 Minutes, No. 1, November 3, 1941 to February 16, 1942, 17-23.
19 Minutes, No. 1, February 16, 1942, 24.

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entity acting in Huntsville's interests.[20] In early May the Housing Authority passed Resolution No. 12, a contract between itself and the United States government. The Local Authority received $10,000 from the Federal Public Housing Authority and the Commissioners decided to return the original $2,500 disbursement granted by the city council.[21] Between August 1941 and May 1942 the Housing Authority shifted from an institution created by the city of Huntsville to corporate agents of the American government that operated off and depended upon federal funds.

Connections with federal agencies brought limited attention to the previous actions of the Housing Authority. In order to receive funds for the construction and operation of the project, the Authority needed to meet the standards imposed by the Atlanta Region Office. Prior to the grant of federal aid the Commissioners hired Charles H. McCauley of Birmingham as the principal architect and Paul M. Speake of Huntsville as the assistant architect for the Defense Housing Project. The Federal Public Housing Authority notified the Commissioners that all personnel hired had to be approved by the government prior to employment. The local Authority complied with the federal regulations and rescinded McCauley and Speake's employment.[22]

Despite occasional interference from the Federal Public Housing Authority Office in Atlanta, oversight remained minimal. Construction of Redstone Park and its role in the war effort dominated all other business between the Local Authority and the Atlanta office. Though representatives from the Atlanta office directed the Commissioners to cancel his contract, in November 1942 Paul M. Speake became the Local Authority's second Executive Director. Speake's employment stemmed from W.B. Mills Jr., the previous Executive Director, receiving a

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20 Minutes, No. 1, February 16, 1942, 26.
21 Minutes, No. 1, May 4, 1942, 61-62.
22 Minutes, No. 1, March 12, 1942, 45-48.

commission as First Lieutenant in the Marine Corps.[23]

The arrival of federal aid heralded the start of development. However, several agencies needed to decide upon a site for Project Ala-1094, later known as Redstone Park. Throughout 1942 Housing Authority officials continued in their role as mediators between the city and Washington D.C. No work could begin without consent from the Redstone Arsenal, the recently organized Federal Public Housing Authority, and the Local Authority. On February 19, the Huntsville Housing Authority proposed that Defense Housing Project Ala-1094 should border Fifth Street and Madison Street and be carved from 50 acres of the Rhett property.[24] The commanding officer of the Chemical Warfare Arsenal immediately protested the site and scheduled a meeting in early March between representatives of the Department of the Army, the USHA, and Executive Director Mills and Commissioner Mason in Atlanta. Mason and Mills returned to Huntsville with no consensus beyond an agreement with the Army to let housing officials in Washington D.C. decide upon the proper location for a defense housing project.[25]

Apparently Washington moved too slowly. Less than a month later, on April 6, Herbert Johnson and W.B. Mills met with the commander of the Redstone Arsenal and representatives of the Federal Public Housing Authority. Defense Housing Project Ala-1094 moved from the proposed location in Huntsville to a new site in Farley. Federal officials asked for the blessing of the Local Authority and the Board of Commissioners offered their unanimous consent.[26] The Army agreed to collect garbage, maintain sewerage and water lines, and provided military police and fire services to the new project if the City of Huntsville connected Redstone Park to its electrical grid.

However, no construction began. Though the Authority

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23 Minutes, No. 1, October 5, 1942, 75.
24 Minutes, No. 1, February 19, 1942, 34.
25 Minutes, No. 1, March 2 – 12, 1942, 39-43.
26 Minutes, No. 1, April 6 – May 4, 1942, 49-51.

negotiated a site selection that fit the needs of the Department of the Army and the Huntsville city council, Redstone Park stayed a potential development. The Authority had a site development plan, agreements from the city and the Army for extension of services, and no authorization to continue work on the Project. Without a Notice to Proceed, the contractors remained idle. W.B. Mills Jr. bypassed the Atlanta Region Office of the FPHA and traveled to Washington D.C. at his own expense. He met with housing officials in the capital, returned with a Notice to Proceed, and in August 1942 construction began on Redstone Park.[27] This episode proved that the Local Authority could not only operate off of federal funds but could also maneuver between agencies.

Although the Housing Authority depended upon the federal government for its funding and local ties for its influence, it sometimes found itself forced to exert autonomy. The successful construction of Redstone Park and the critical nature of the war time manufacturing sites in Huntsville meant expansion of the Housing Authority's activities. On January 14, 1943, E.T. Pairo returned to Huntsville with an announcement from the Atlanta Field Office of the FPHA. John P. Broome, the head of the Atlanta Field Office, decided to allocate funds to Huntsville for the construction of a "new war housing project ... Ala-1098 [Binford Court], to contain 220 family dwelling units for the housing of Negro workers at the Huntsville Arsenal and the Redstone Ordnance Plant."[28] Once again, site selection caused controversy. This time the Local Authority exercised its powers as the city's representative and did not locate the new project at the Redstone Ordnance Plant's proposed site. Pairo and the Board of Commissioners identified three possible sites: one between Seminole Drive and the city limits, one north of Fifth Avenue and east of the N.C. & St. L. railroad, and one in "the

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27 Minutes, No. 1, August 2, 1942, 69.
28 Minutes, No. 1, January 14, 1943, 109.

North part of town lying in the area of the Winston Street Negro School."[29] Commanders at the Redstone Ordnance Plant protested the Seminole Drive site and wanted the new housing project in Farley, near Redstone Park.

The Board of Commissioners did not budge. Herbert Johnson, Oscar Mason, Commissioner Hunter, Ashford Todd, and Paul M. Speake conferred with the men from Atlanta and sited Binford Court, "West of the City Limits and East of Seminole Drive and North of Fifth Avenue,"in a unanimous vote. This choice combined the first two site options and allowed Huntsville to receive further federal investment while removing a portion of the black population to a project outside of the city limits.[30]

Few people wanted to move. Administering Binford Court presented the Local Authority with a new challenge, race relations in Huntsville. The Local Authority learned how to deal with minority populations. This proved invaluable practice, the 1950 census identified 1,545 nonwhite homes in the city. Of that number, 47% of the homes qualified as slums due to their inadequate sanitation facilities alone.[31] The Board of Commissioners utilized federal and local resources to not only construct Binford Court but to people it. The previous project, Redstone Park, suffered no problems in reaching full occupancy. However, the prospective tenants of Binford Court viewed the motives of the Local Authority with suspicion.

Housing Manager Claude D. Phillips addressed this issue in a letter to John P. Broome, Director of the Atlanta Field Office of the FPHA. Binford Court's first tenants moved in on July 26,

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29 Minutes, No. 1, January 14, 1943, 108.

30 Minutes, No. 1, January 14, 1943, 109.

31 *U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1950: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics: Alabama.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951, 28.; "Minutes of the Huntsville Housing Authority, No. 2," The Vault at 200 Washington Street, Huntsville, Alabama. April 3, 1950, 66.

1943, yet by November 1, only 58 of the 220 units were occupied. The Local Authority already toured Binford Court, in August 1943, with prominent black ministers, "to familiarize them with the convenience and cleanliness of the housing units ... so as to get the project before a great number of colored people."[32] Despite the tour, occupancy remained low. This lack of tenants damaged the position of the Local Authority. In February 1943, H.E. Monroe wrote to John Broome about construction bids for Binford Court. He suggested that the more expensive masonry construction be used instead of wooden frames. Monroe and the Local Authority assumed that due to the poor housing conditions for black residents in Huntsville the project would operate after the end of the war.[33] However, if the Local Authority could not fill Binford Court then future grants for other projects might have seemed uncertain.

With the need for more tenants in mind, Housing Manager Phillips requested that school teachers and mill workers from Huntsville's black community be allowed to move into Binford Court. He argued that textiles formed an essential part of the materiel produced in Huntsville because the local mills were "doing 80% or more work toward the war effort." Atlanta granted his request but went a step further in modifying renter eligibility. I.C. Brewer, assistant director of the Atlanta Region Office, responded to Phillips's request with a proclamation of local discretion for placing tenants in Binford Court, "This is your authority, therefore, to accept applications from ... other workers from the Huntsville area." Binford Court no longer existed solely to house defense workers. Now, any black citizen with substandard housing qualified to rent from the local authority.[34] In an effort to match the needs of the new tenants with the needs of the local authority, Herbert Johnson suggested that "an advisory committee for [Binford Court] be organized

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32 Minutes, No. 1, August 2, 1943, 160.
33 Minutes, No. 1, February 5, 1943, 132.
34 Minutes, No. 1, November 1, 1943, 173.

and presented the authority with a list of prominent negroes," from the Huntsville area. Oscar Mason selected seven names and addressed letters to: Dr. Joseph Fanning Drake, Mabel Powell Cooke, Rev. O. Tucker, Myrtle Turner, Earl McDonald, and Rev. A.L. Lamar, requesting they help ease the process of relocation.35 Extension of renter eligibility provided the Local Authority with a ready source for new tenants and the cooperation of the local black elite assuaged the fears of those prospective tenants. Binford Court neared full occupancy by December 1944.[36]

Although the final site of Binford Court momentarily irritated the commanding officers of the Redstone Ordnance Plant, it proved a popular decision with the white citizens of Huntsville; so popular in fact that Binford Court appeared on booster material designed to promote Huntsville to the outside world. A brochure attached to a tourist map of the city proclaimed Huntsville the "Heart of the Powerful Tennessee Valley," and implored the traveler to settle in this idyllic southern town of "Agriculture – Industry – Recreation." It praised Madison County's status as the top agricultural producer in Alabama, highlighted the local mills and mill villages, and made sure to mention the easy fishing found in the Tennessee River. A section entitled 'Homes' elaborated on the cheap price of houses in the area without failing to mention that "Negro workers and their families have homes provided in the new 220-unit Binford Court housing development."[37] Such ready mention of Binford

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35 Minutes, No. 1, January 3, 1944, 186.

36 Minutes, No. 1, January 1, 1945, 228.

37 "Historical Maps of Madison County," Alabama Maps, last modified February 25, 2013, http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/counties/madison/madison.html ; I assume the map is from the early 1950s because it lists the city's population at 38,153. This number is twice as high as the 1950 population of 16,437 yet only half as large as the 1960 population of 72,365. The largest amount of growth took place in 1955, so this is probably before that.

Court on the brochure indicates that by the early 1950s, the business community of Huntsville perceived the Local Authority and its urban renewal and housing efforts as a selling point designed to attract people to the city.

Huntsville despised its slums, yet the city owed the urban renewal efforts of the 1950s to their presence. The Local Authority assumed control over eradicating the city's slums in July 1950.[38] Huntsville's most famous slums received monikers that echoed the citizenry's distaste for their shacks, outhouses, and inhabitants: "Brogtown," "Honey Hole," and Dixie Village also known as "Boogertown." Prior efforts to impose garbage and sanitation regulations on these areas proved useless. As early as 1947, the Madison County health department brought trucks into "Boogertown" to haul away the mounds of garbage. This sanitation program stemmed not from charitable urges but from a desire to prevent the spread of disease inside the city limits. "Boogertown" lay outside of the city proper but Dr. A.M. Shelamer, county health officer, reminded the people of Huntsville that, "Diseases and the fly observe no city limits lines." Shelamer voiced a theme that became common in Huntsville among advocates of slum removal; slums contained disease and were a threat to the city.[39] In 1951, "Brogtown" became the first slum evacuated. The smallest of the three slums, it stretched for 26 acres along the intersection of West Clinton and Spring Street. The *Huntsville Times* made little mention of the conditions of "Brogtown" beyond describing the slum as, "down-at-the-heels."[40] The Housing Act of 1949, required completion of a project to house the displaced before slum-clearance began. Construction of the all white Butler Terrace project, the Local Authority's longest operating site, began in

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38 "Minutes, No. 2," July 3, 1950, 88.

39 "'Booger Town' Clean-Up Starts Sanitation Drive," *The Huntsville Times,* May 15, 1947.

40 "Brogtown Buzzes With Development," *The Huntsville Times,* May 13, 1951.

February 1951, and the project reached half occupancy by July 1952.[41] The acquisition of "Brogtown" occurred without much drama and the inhabitants relocated to Butler Terrace.

In order to tackle the "Honey Hole" the Local Authority needed to confer with city and county officials. The slum loomed larger than "Brogtown" due to its size and location. "Honey Hole" lay inside the city limits and its forty acres stretched for eight blocks. A young mother who lived in the "Honey Hole" off O'Shaughnessy Avenue, contracted typhus and Dr. Otis Gay, county health officer, declared the whole area to be in a state of emergency due to his concerns about a possible outbreak of dysentery or tuberculosis.[42] On September 4, 1958, Nathan Porter, executive director of the Huntsville Housing Authority, joined other city officials at the Madison County Health Department.[43] Through the combined efforts of the Local Authority, city officials, and the County Health Department; a four-point plan emerged to dismantle the slum. The plan consisted of the Local Authority purchasing the worst tracts, spraying the whole area with DDT to eliminate fleas, poisoning the hundreds of rats that roamed the streets, and eventual demolition of the entire site to make way for urban renewal efforts.[44] In December 1958, the demolition began as novice firefighters burned down the first shacks in the "Honey Hole." Destroying the slum served as practice for the Huntsville Fire Department.[45]

41 "Butler Terrace Groundwork Set," *The Huntsville Times,* February 27, 1951.; "84 Families Move Into Butler Units," *The Huntsville Times,* July 20, 1952.
42 "Rats, Disease Said Threat to North Huntsville Area," *The Huntsville Times,* August 29, 1958.
43 "Solution Sought in Winston Area," *The Huntsville Times,* September 4, 1958.
44 "Huntsville Plans Anti-Disease War," *The Huntsville Times,* September 5, 1958.
45 "Torch is Put to Honey Hole Blight Area," *The Huntsville Times,* December 16, 1958.

To the people of Huntsville, the Dixie Village or "Boogertown" slum seemed worse than the others. The largest slum rested on 10th Street, between Madison Pike and Ninth Avenue. Originally slated for demolition in 1956, the start of the project delayed until 1958 and construction finished in 1966.[46] However, "Boogertown" represented more than slow progress on the part of the Local Authority. More than any other slum, it represented the poverty that Huntsville hoped to leave behind. In July 1959, Huntsville Hospital admitted two starving children. Seven year old James Strickland weighed about 22 pounds and his eight month old brother, eight pounds. Both lived in "Boogertown."[47] Outrage swept through the city. People accosted the boys' mother, Geneva Hovis Strickland, for failing to feed them. Strangers visited the eight month old in the hospital. A local church donated a wood-burning stove to the family. In an interview with the Mrs. Strickland the *Huntsville Times* asked, "How could this happen here?"[48] The Local Authority required the presence of slums to operate. Public outcries over the miserable living conditions of Huntsville's slums forced the Local Authority to develop closer ties with city and county officials. Also, these slums provided the reason for the Authority's continued existence. Under Title I of the 1949 Housing Act, the Housing Authority of Huntsville received no funds unless there existed some form of, "a slum or blighted area or deteriorating area," to tear down the buildings of and relocate the people within.[49] Without these disadvantaged areas, federal investment in housing and urban renewal in Huntsville would have ceased after World War II.

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46 *The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville,* 6.
47 "2 Starving Children Hospitalized in City," *The Huntsville Times,* July 21, 1959.
48 "Root of Stricken Tots' Story Found in Boogertown Mire," *The Huntsville Times,* July 26, 1959.
49 "Housing Act of 1949." (PL 81-171, July 14, 1949.) Senate Document No. 99 (1949), 3638-3639.

The largest urban renewal project of the 1950s epitomized the Local Authority's role as an intermediary between local and federal institutions. Hannes Luehrsen designed Memorial Parkway and in January 1957, the formerly German city planner presented an idea to the Huntsville city council. Luehrsen's recent endeavors in Huntsville, and his role as the head planner for Redstone Arsenal, made the architect's vision for a new city center little more than a delayed reality. Luehrsen asserted that previous city planners had failed to address the growth that accompanied Redstone Arsenal. He advocated a new downtown area between the Big Spring Park and Memorial Parkway. Luehrsen believed the proposed city center would concentrate businesses, house municipal offices, and alleviate the parking situation; an essential service since he claimed that the people of Huntsville had "lost the knowledge of walking and are used to doing everything by drive-in."[50] The day after his meeting with the city council, Huntsville's Planning Commission called a special session to hear Luehrsen's proposal. The Board of County Commissioners offered its approval the same day.

Now, the plan needed funding. Huntsville's leaders turned to the Local Authority. They hoped to receive federal funds by including Luehrsen's proposal in the West Clinton Street Redevelopment Project.[51] By February 20, the Local Authority's executive director, Nathan Porter, arranged for a meeting in Atlanta between members of the Planning Commission, the city council, the the Board of County Commissioners, Luehrsen, representatives from the Local Authority, and public housing officials from the region office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA). The men hoped to secure federal funds for a survey of the proposed development area.[52] However,

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50 "Luehrsen Gives City Center Plan," *The Huntsville Times,* January 13, 1957.

51 "Plan's Reception Said Enthusiastic," *The Huntsville Times,* January 13, 1957.

52 "Luehrsen Plan Moves Toward Formal Study," *The Huntsville Times,*

several months passed before a reply came from Atlanta and Mayor R.B. Searcy requested that Porter attempt to arrange another meeting. This time the housing officials agreed to travel to Huntsville and inspect the proposed site.[53] A complete study of the area emerged in February 1958, after the city council hired the Sydney Carter planning firm. They deemed Luehrsen's original city center idea the Heart of Huntsville. Mayor Searcy requested that the Local Authority forward the plan to Atlanta for further study.[54] Another year passed before Atlanta granted permission to compile a development plan on the Heart of Huntsville project. The Local Authority made the final decision in selecting the firm that would present said plan.[55] HHFA officials approved the plan in September 1960, and instructed the Local Authority to obtain approval from the city council. The council passed a unanimous vote and the Local Authority resubmitted the original plans with an application for federal funds.[56] At every point in the planning and development of the Heart of Huntsville project, the city of Huntsville found itself dependent on its Local Authority. Mayor Searcy asked the executive director to arrange multiple meetings with federal agencies and from Luehrsen's first proposal to the city council until the approval of the final plans, Huntsville's leaders knew this project depended on the Local Authority and its ability to secure funds from the HHFA.

Senator John Sparkman's relationship with the Local Authority personified its roles as both a federal and local

February 20, 1957.

53 "Porter To Slate City Center Meet," *The Huntsville Times,* April 22, 1957; "Luehrsen's Plan Meeting Slated," *The Huntsville Times,* April 28, 1957.

54 "City Center Plan Study Is Sought," *The Huntsville Times,* February 25, 1958.

55 "Planner Picked For Civic Center," *The Huntsville Times,* December 11, 1959.

56 "U.S. Agency Approves Heart of City Plan," *The Huntsville Times,* September 1, 1960.; "City Backs Downtown Area Plan," *The Huntsville Times,* September 9, 1960.

institution. Throughout his tenure in the Senate, the Local Authority turned to Sparkman to represent their specific interests in Washington D.C. In 1973, the Local Authority published its first official history and dedicated it to the legislative work of Senator Sparkman, who they deemed, "Mr. Housing and Urban Renewal."[57] Sparkman helped author the Housing Act of 1954, which allowed housing authorities to shift from slum clearance to urban renewal projects.[58] His role as a member of the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, and appointment as the first Chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Affairs, put Sparkman in a position to influence federal housing officials on behalf of the Local Authority. Gail Carter, the longest serving employee of the housing authority, current manager of the Northwoods site, and the first female maintenance superintendent in the state of Alabama; recalled Sparkman's influence on housing projects and urban renewal in the city, "He was very instrumental in getting a lot of public housing in Huntsville... and Sparkman Homes is named after him."[59]

　　The first interactions between the Local Authority and John Sparkman occurred before his election to the United States Senate. In December 1942, the War Production Board cut the refrigerator appropriations for the Redstone Park defense housing project and informed the Local Authority that it needed to requisition enough ice boxes to supply the project. However, the Local Authority failed to secure a contract for the delivery of ice because none of the local ice plants wanted to deliver to Farley. Instead, the Local Authority found a manufacturing company in Indiana that agreed to sell 301 kerosene refrigerators to the Redstone Park project. The Local Authority contacted Senator Lister Hill and Congressman Sparkman in relation to the

57 *The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville*, ii.
58 "Torch is Put to Honey Hole Blight Area," *The Huntsville Times,* December 16, 1958.
59 Gail Carter, interview by John O'Brien, 1402 Yukon Street NW, February 22, 2013.

purchase for their help in, "getting the approval of the War Production Board." Neither, however, responded in time and the National Housing Agency ordered the Local Authority to find a way to deliver ice.[60] Later efforts by Senator Sparkman proved fruitful. During the attempts to populate Binford Court; Sparkman met with Senator Hill, Wilbur Nolen the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) director for Alabama, and Earle S. Draper the National Deputy Commissioner of the FHA to reduce the rents at Binford Court. Sparkman and Hill succeeded in convincing the federal men to lower the rents in Huntsville by nine dollars.[61]

These were not isolated incidents; Sparkman developed a relationship with the Local Authority that lasted for decades. In August 1949, Herbert Johnson penned a letter to Sparkman on behalf of Mayor McAllister. It began, "Dear John ... we are having some housing trouble again." Due to the end of World War II and the lack of need for defense housing, Huntsville faced the loss of Redstone Park. They appealed to Sparkman to help find a way to keep both defense projects, Redstone Park because the city suffered from a housing shortage and Binford Court because it was, "much better than 90% of the present colored housing." Johnson concluded the letter by congratulating Sparkman on his "swell job" in helping pass the Housing Act of 1949.[62] Sparkman's intercession delayed the transfer of Redstone Park until December 31, 1955, when the Department of the Army assumed control of the property.[63] Sparkman's role with the Local Authority sometimes included an active participation in slum clearance. Around 2:00 pm on December 15, 1958, the Senator held the torch that burned the first shack in the "Honey Hole"

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60 Minutes, No. 1, December 7, 1942, 97.

61 Minutes, No. 1, June 4, 1944, 198.

62 "Minutes of the Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville, No. 2." The Vault at 200 Washington Street, Huntsville, Alabama, August 1, 1949, 15.

63 "Redstone Park Change Is Slated," *The Huntsville Times,* November 3, 1955.

slum. As the flames flickered behind him, he spoke of the Local Authority's programs and deemed them, "the finest demonstration of [urban renewal] of any small city in the whole country."64

The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville left a complex legacy and its later actions were built upon the experience gained between 1941 and 1960. Created under the Lanham Public War Housing Act of 1940 and envisioned as agents of the federal government in Huntsville, the Local Authority fast became agents of Huntsville operating within the federal government. However, more study of their role in the city's development is needed. The history of the Local Authority spans seven decades and leaves a significant impact in each. Turn-over among its Commissioners remained low throughout the 1950s; in 1959, four of the original five board members still presided over housing and urban renewal efforts in the city.[65] The Housing Authority's first chairman, Herbert Johnson, served on the Board of Commissioners until his death in 1967.[66] However, these men remained a part of the Local Authority for a reason. They delivered the results that Huntsville's leaders wanted.

The Local Authority petitioned Alabama's congressmen to help secure Huntsville as a defense area, worked with John Sparkman to ensure the continuance of federal housing projects in the city after World War II, reshaped ethnic boundaries by removing a portion of the city's black population outside of Huntsville's limits, played a direct role in eradicating the large slums that plagued the city, and provided a link to federal funds

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64 "Torch is Put to Honey Hole Blight Area," *The Huntsville Times,* December 16, 1958.

65 "Huntsville, Alabama: Space Capitol of the Universe," 1959, Huntsville-Madison County Archives, 2010-10 Box #2, Folder HHA 60's – 70's, 25.

66 "Mr. Johnson Dies at Home; Services Set," *The Huntsville Times,* December 22, 1967. It is interesting to note that Johnson died the same day as former Mayor R.B. Searcy, who presided over Huntsville from 1952 - 1964.

that made local schemes like the Heart of Huntsville a possibility. As the first generation of Commissioners the experience they gained from navigating city politics, housing laws, and federal directives during the boom period of the 1950s proved priceless in the coming decades. The Housing Authority of the City of Huntsville used the influence granted them as an arbiter of federal funds to reshape the city of Huntsville, Alabama.

The Affair at Indian Creek Ford:
The Archaeology of a Small Civil War Battle

By Ben Hoksbergen and Brian Hogan

...Learned this morning that there had been quite a fight near Ellick Jones' and that the enemy had brought in 49 prisoners and several wounded men of Col. Wynn's [sic] regiment with the exception of Capt. Jordan and two of his men...The wounded men were badly cut up with saber cuts, as it was a hand-to-hand fight, and the enemy says the young rebels fought bravely...
-Diary of Mary Jane Chadick December 23, 1864

Background

It was the winter of 1864. Huntsville was being reoccupied by Union forces for the fourth time. They had left town in a panic a month earlier, fleeing northeastward up the Memphis & Charleston Railroad to avoid being outflanked by the advancing forces of Confederate General John Bell Hood[1]. In mid-November, Hood had crossed the Tennessee River at Florence on his way to Nashville to lure Sherman away from his Atlanta Campaign, but now Hood was defeated, and the Union forces were sweeping back down the railroad to cut off his retreat.

Confederate cavalry units under Brigadier General Philip D. Roddey[2] had been covering and supplying Hood, but now were dispersed across northern Alabama engaging the advancing

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[1] John W. Andes and William A. McTeer, "McTeer" , *Loyal Mountain Troopers: The Second and Third Tennessee Volunteer Cavalry in the Civil War, Reminiscences of Lieutenant John W. Andes and Major Will A. McTeer* (Maryville, Tennessee: Blount County Genealogical and Historical Society, 1992), 183; James Bennington Irvine, *The Civil War Diary of James Bennington Irvine (1829-1881)*, (Peter bennington Irvine, 1987) 42.

[2] The following units were commanded by Brig. Gen. Roddey: 4th Alabama Cavalry (Roddey's 4th) under Lt.Col. F.M.Windes, the 5th Alabama Cavalry (Patterson's) under Lt.Col. James M.Warren, the10th Alabama Cavalry under Col. Richard O.Pickett, Burtwell's Alabama Cavalry under Col. John R.B.Burtwell, Stuart's Battalion under Maj. James H.Stuart, and Ferrell's Geogia Battery under Capt. Coleman B.Ferrell.

Union forces and delaying their advance[3]. Roddey ordered part of a cavalry regiment under Colonel John R. B. Burtwell to advance from their camp in Mooresville toward Huntsville where they were to occupy and hold the town and await reinforcements from Colonel Josiah Patterson's Brigade[4]. Burtwell and his Inspector General, James B. Irvine, rode to Huntsville on the evening of December 20 to assess the situation. As they rode into town from the west, they were met by two companies of Roddey's men who had been on picket at Paint Rock Bridge, but had been routed by advancing Union cavalry who chased them westward toward Huntsville. One of Burtwell's companies that had been on provost duty in Huntsville had retreated toward Athens. Burtwell ordered the retreating men to join his unit at Mooresville and fell back with them to regroup.

The Union force that arrived in Huntsville consisted of detachments of the 10th, 12th, and 13th Indiana Cavalry and the 2nd Tennessee Union Cavalry under Lieutenant-Colonel William F. Prosser. They pushed into Huntsville from the east on December 21, and set about resupplying and ransacking stores and houses[5]. Soon after, Union infantry under Major General James B. Steedman began arriving from Nashville to reinforce them. Upon recapturing Huntsville, the Union troops settled down for an occupation that would last through the end of the war.

On the morning of the 22nd, Col. Burtwell advanced with at least two companies of cavalry[6] from Lieutenant Colonel F.

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[3]There were two units known as 4th Alabama Cavalry that were involved in the delaying tactics. The 4th Alabama Cavalry in this case was under Brig. Gen. Philip D.Roddey's command. Roddey commanded the District of North Alabama, in the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, and cooperated with General Hood but was not commanded by him. The 4th Alabama Regiment, on the other hand, reported directly to General John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee and was commanded by Colonel Alfred A. Russell (4th Alabama Cavalry, Russell's).

[4] Irvine, *Diary,* 42.

[5] Chadick, *Diary,*

[6] Irvine (p. 44) states that there were about 150 men in the Confederate camp at Indian Creek; Andes (p. 180) estimated the Confederate force to be about 390 strong, while McTeer (p. 192) claimed that there were 800 rebels. If there

M. Windes 4th Alabama Regiment and detachments of the 10th Alabama Cavalry and Moreland's Cavalry Battalion to a position on Indian Creek, six miles west of Huntsville about three-quarters of a mile upstream from the Memphis & Charleston Railroad Bridge[7]. Burtwell and his officers set up camp in a house[8] in the bluffs west of Indian Creek, while the enlisted men camped about 200 yards away on the floodplain. Leery of the substantial Union force in Huntsville, the Confederate troops hunkered down to await reinforcements from Patterson's Brigade. In the meantime, Burtwell gave the order to pile fence rails on the railroad bridges between Huntsville and Decatur in case the Union forces attempted to advance further westward by rail[9].

Meanwhile, Union gun-boats advanced down the Tennessee River toward Decatur, bombarding any possible Confederate positions there[10]. The heavy cannonading to their rear and the large Union force to their front unnerved the Confederate soldiers at Indian Creek who were already receiving rumors of Hood's defeat. There was no word from Patterson's brigade, and the scouts and couriers they sent out never returned. On the afternoon of the 23rd, Burtwell ordered the railroad bridges burned, and the men settled in for an uneasy night leaving their clothes on and their horses saddled. Burtwell sent out extra pickets and ordered a scouting party to head toward Huntsville to warn of any Union movement[11]. They held their position and waited in vain for reinforcements.

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were two companies of cavalry present, there were probably between 150 and 200 men in Burtwell's camp.

[7] Irvine (p. 46.) says the distance was a quarter mile from the bridge, but the archaeological survey indicated the distance was more like three-quarters of a mile.

[8] Probably the double log cabin mentioned by McTeer (p. 193) where they came upon a mortally wounded Confederate soldier after the battle.

[9] Irvine, *Diary*, 44.

[10] James B. Steedman, "Report of Maj. Gen. James B. Steedman, U.S. Army, Commanding Provisional Detachment (District of Etowah), The Battle of Nashville", January 27, 1865; Irvine, *Diary*, 44.

[11] Irvine, *Diary*, 44-45.

The Battle

During the night of December 23rd, a slave belonging to the residents of the house occupied by Burtwell and his officers, reacted to the harsh treatment he had received from the Confederate troops and escaped to Huntsville where he warned the Union garrison of the Rebel force at Indian Creek. Irvine, Burtwell's Inspector General, noticed the slave's absence soon after nightfall and reported it to his command[12], but by then it was too late. Col. Prosser had already received word of the Confederate position and was ordering around 200 of his men[13] to advance on Indian Creek. The Union force made up of parts of the 10th Indiana and 2nd Tennessee left Huntsville at 3:00 a.m., setting off down the Decatur Road[14].

The night was cold, and the ground frozen, but the Union cavalry rode hard and arrived at Indian Creek at dawn, driving the Confederate pickets and scouts ahead of them. Col. Prosser and Captain George R. Mitchell led the charge with the 10th Indiana while the 2nd Tennessee held up the rear[15]. Col. Burtwell and his staff had arisen just before dawn and rode to the railroad bridge across Indian Creek to make sure it was destroyed, but no sooner had they returned to camp when gunfire was heard toward Huntsville. Burtwell set up a line of defense at the narrow ford across Indian Creek with Sloss Company (4th Alabama, Co F) commanded by Lieutenant Thomas J. Williams in front, "25 to 30 steps[16]" from the bank of the creek. The other company, Company I[17], began forming a line on the bluff overlooking the floodplain[18]. The formation was done leisurely since they thought that the scouts and pickets would delay the Union

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[12] Irvine, *Diary*, 44-45.

[13] Andes (p. 180) and McTeer (p. 192) both state that the Union force was 200 strong; *Official Records* concur.

[14] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences*, 191. See discussion below.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Irvine, *Diary*, 47.

[17] Company I was organized in Huntsville as Jordan's Life Guards by Captain Thomas B. Jordan. Many of these men were newly-mustered after the Union forces fled Huntsville to avoid being flanked by Hood's army.

[18] Ibid.

charge, but no sooner had the company on the bluff began to dismount to advance into position with Sloss Company when they spotted a Union saber charge driving down the tight road-cut east of the creek. The Union advance began to cross the narrow ford with Prosser and Mitchell leading the charge and the 2nd Tennessee driving hard to join the fight. The Confederate company on the bluff wavered and turned, fleeing westward down the road toward Madison and Mooresville beyond. Sloss Company was only able to fire off one volley of shots from horseback before the Union charge crashed into their line, forcing them to join their fleeing comrades[19]. The 2nd Tennessee cavalrymen used their sabers with devastating effect while the 10th Indiana clubbed at the retreating Rebels with their carbines[20]. Burtwell and his officers tried in vain to turn the retreating column. The Confederate troops were pursued along the road all the way to Mooresville[21], many being cut down and captured along the way.

The small battle was little more than a rout of the Confederate force. It was primarily a saber charge, and one Union eyewitness stated "There was not exceeding one hundred shots fired on our side"[22]. Confederate casualties included 50 to 60 captured and several wounded and killed[23]. A review of the Confederate rolls identified 51 Confederate cavalrymen captured near Madison Station on the day of the battle (see list at end of article). The account of John W. Andes of the 2nd Tennessee mentions the citizens of Mooresville reporting that about 100 wounded Confederate soldiers had passed that way. In her diary, Huntsville resident Mary Jane Chadick reported hearing that the Union occupiers brought in 49 prisoners and several wounded men from the fight[24]. The wounded were "badly cut up with

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[19] Ibid. 48.

[20] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences*, 192.

[21] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences*, 180.

[22] Ibid., 192.

[23] Andes estimated 15 Confederates killed and 15 mortally wounded.

[24] McTeer (p.193) reported 54 prisoners, Andes reported 50 prisoners. Various accounts from the *Official Records* include 25 (I,vXLV/1, 570) and 60 (I,vXLV/2, 342).

saber cuts, as it was a hand-to-hand fight"[25]. Union casualties are listed in the Official Records as one killed, three wounded[26], but first-hand accounts list one killed[27] and only one wounded[28].

The prisoners were taken back to Huntsville where they were marched to the public square and placed under guard. Some of the captured Confederate troops were released through the intercessions of their loved ones, but the remainder was divided up and sent by rail to Union prisons. The officers were sent to Fort Delaware on the Delaware River, while the enlisted men were sent to Camp Chase in Ohio[29]. Captain Mitchell was later commended for leading the Union charge[30].

Locating the Battleground

The initial battlefield survey was conducted as part of an archaeological and historical survey of around 7,635 acres of western Huntsville and eastern Madison conducted by the Redstone Arsenal Environmental Management Division to assess impacts to historic properties from the Redstone Gateway development on the north end of Redstone Arsenal[31]. It was known at that time that the battle had occurred somewhere in the survey area, but its exact location was up for debate. Available historic maps were digitally scanned and uploaded using the ArcGIS program to electronically georectify them so that they could be overlaid on modern aerial imagery to help narrow down the location of the battle.

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[25] Chadick

[26] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washinton, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. XLV, Part 2, 342.

[27] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences*, 193.

[28] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences,*, 180, 193; The wounded man was a Lieutenant named A. S. Prosser who was shot in the foot while attacking an unmounted rebel with his saber.

[29] Irvine, *Diary*, 50.

[30] *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XLV, Part 1, 570.

[31] Ben Hoksbergen and Katie Stamps, *A Section 106 Assessment of Impacts to historic Properties Resulting from the Redstone Gateway EUL Development at Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama* (Redstone Arsenal, 2011).

Original pier of the Memphis & Charleston Railroad Bridge across Indian Creek; a pier still stands on either side of the creek, even though neither is used for support anymore.

Based on a detailed account in James Bennington Irvine's wartime diary, the battle took place around a quarter of a mile away from the Memphis & Charleston Railroad Bridge across "six mile branch[32]" six miles west of Huntsville. All Union accounts list the creek as "Indian Creek". The drainage now known as Indian Creek is located about six miles west of downtown Huntsville, although the creek went by many other names in the past. It is labeled Hurricane Fork on an 1837 map[33] and Price's Fork on the 1875 Madison County map which reserves the name Indian Creek for that portion of the drainage below its confluence with Huntsville Spring Branch. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that this was the creek where the battle took place.

The Memphis & Charleston Railroad followed the same route as what is now the Norfolk Southern line through Huntsville and Madison. The modern Norfolk Southern bridge crosses at the same place the Memphis & Charleston line crossed during the Civil War. All that is left of the Memphis &

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[32] Irvine, *Diary*, 43.

[33] John LaTourrette, "An Accurate Map of the State of Alabama and West Florida (New York: Colton & Co., 1837).

Charleston railroad bridge over Indian Creek are the two end pilings which are left intact but no longer support the bridge deck. Rock from the remaining original pilings is spread out as rip-rap along the north side of the bridge abutments. It is likely, but uncertain that these stone pilings are the remains of the original bridge that was present during the skirmish on December 24, 1964.

Another contemporary account by Major William A. McTeer of the Union 3rd Tennessee Cavalry states that the Union force set off down "Decatur Road" from Huntsville to attack the Confederate position. The 1861 Hunstville city map[34] shows the main westward thoroughfare out of Huntsville as "Pulaski Road". This is where Holmes Avenue runs now. The 1875 Madison County map[35] shows the same road as "Athens Pike" which follows the current route of Holmes Avenue westward to what is now Sparkman Drive where it comes to a fork. The southward branch of the fork is called the "Huntsville to Madison" road on the 1875 map. It followed what is now Sparkman Drive southward until it got to where I-565 is now and then turned westward toward Madison. The road angled across Indian Creek about 165m upstream from where Old Madison Pike currently crosses it. The crossing is indicated by a deep roadcut on the east side of the creek, and there is still a narrow natural ford across the creek at that location. The 1875 road then passed southwest across the Indian Creek floodplain and up into the bluffs where it turned westward again, following the current route of Old Madison Pike until it branched again a mile west of what is now Wall-Triana Road. The south branch of this fork is labeled "To Decatur" on the 1875 map suggesting that this was the route that was considered the "Decatur Road" during the Civil War.

These locations were compared to the first-hand descriptions of the battle allowing the battleground to be laid out on modern aerial imagery. This was viewed in ArcGIS using a

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[34] "City of Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama" (Louisville: Hartley and Drayton, 1861).

[35] James H. Mayhew, "Map of Madison County, Alabama" (Cincinnati: Strobridge and Co., 1875).

hillshade model produced using high-resolution digital elevation data generated through a Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) scan of the landscape. This imagery was used to locate areas with minimal ground disturbance for a metal detector survey to determine if any material residue of the skirmish remained.

The metal detector survey was conducted using a White MXT Tracker E-series metal detector with an Eclipse 950 coil. The initial survey was conducted by sweeping all undisturbed ground along transects laid out every five meters. Wherever Civil War era artifacts were found, the surrounding area was swept at closer intervals in an increasing radius around each find to delineate any concentrations. Each metal detector hit was excavated. All 19th century artifacts were collected, and their find locations were electronically marked using a Trimble GeoXH hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) unit with sub-meter accuracy. This data was then uploaded as an ArcGIS shapefile so that it could be overlaid on maps and analyzed for any spatial patterning.
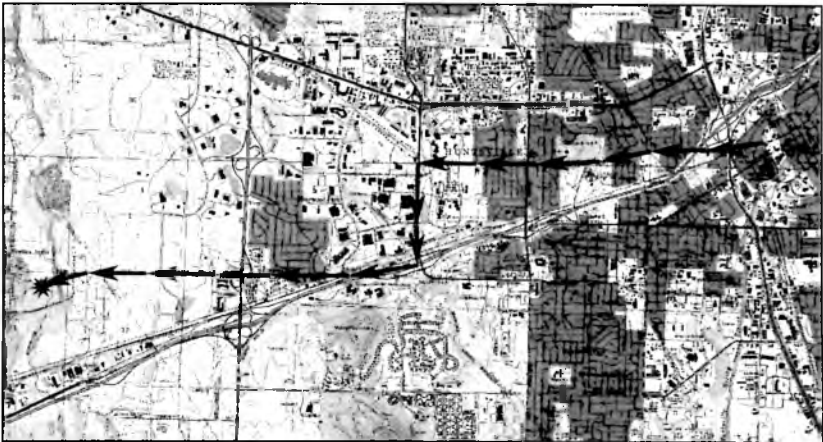
Probable route followed by Union cavalry from Huntsville to Indian Creek.

Survey Results

The metal detector survey focused on three areas (hatchered areas on map below). The first area investigated was

designated Survey Area 1. The survey of this area was based on Irvine's account which put the Confederate soldiers' camp on the west side of Indian Creek, "about 1/4 mile" from the railroad bridge. All undisturbed ground within this radius was surveyed. About six hours were spent on the actual survey. The vast majority of this area had been disturbed by modern construction. Four parcels (circled by a yellow line in the figure) were determined to be intact enough to be selected for the metal detector survey. All four of these parcels were on the low ridge above the Indian Creek floodplain. Each of these parcels was surveyed with the metal detector in transects spaced a maximum of 10m apart. While lots of 20th century debris (aluminum cans, oil filters, shotgun shells, modern bullets, etc.) was recovered, only two artifacts possibly dating to the Civil War period were collected. One half of a mule shoe was recovered north of a modern electric substation, and a horseshoe was collected in the center of a turnaround in the Madison Academy driveway. Both of these artifacts could have been associated with 19th or early 20th century agriculture, but the 1937 aerial photographs indicate that both find locations were not in cultivation at that time. Nonetheless, there was no evidence that there were any Civil War camps or skirmishes at that location.

The next area surveyed was the vicinity of the ford across Indian Creek which was identified through the analysis of historic maps. The west side of the creek was a parcel of mature hardwoods that was designated Survey Area 2. It was surveyed in transects spaced at 5m intervals. A total of about 30 hours were spent metal detecting this area once all the 19th century finds were delineated. The north boundary of the survey area was a deep historic road cut which shows up as a secondary road on the 1936 quad map and may mark the original location of the historic Huntsville to Madison Road. The survey area was bound to the south by The Vintage Apartment Complex and to the east by a dense stand of Chinese privet on the Indian Creek floodplain which inhibited metal detecting. Several Civil War and possibly related 19th century artifacts were recovered in this survey area including a fired Henry repeating rifle casing, a dropped Burnside .54 caliber bullet, two dropped .54 caliber Merrill carbine bullets, a melted Minié ball, a dropped .44 Colt pistol

bullet, two fired small caliber pistol balls, a fired pistol bullet, a Union issue knapsack hook, a Union uniform button, a civilian spur, two concentrations of cut nails, a trace chain, and several horse and mule shoes. All 19th century artifacts were plotted using the GPS, and all GPS points were uploaded into ArcGIS for distributional analysis.

Survey Area 3 was the east side of Indian Creek where the historic Huntsville to Madison Road cuts through the Indian Creek bluffs and leads to the natural ford across the creek. Only about three hours were spent at this location. The north side of the road was heavily disturbed by earth borrowing around a modern house, so the metal detector survey focused on the south side of the historic road trace. Transects were spaced 5m apart. Only three Civil War era artifacts were recovered there including a carved .44 caliber Sage bullet, a cut nail, and half of a horseshoe.
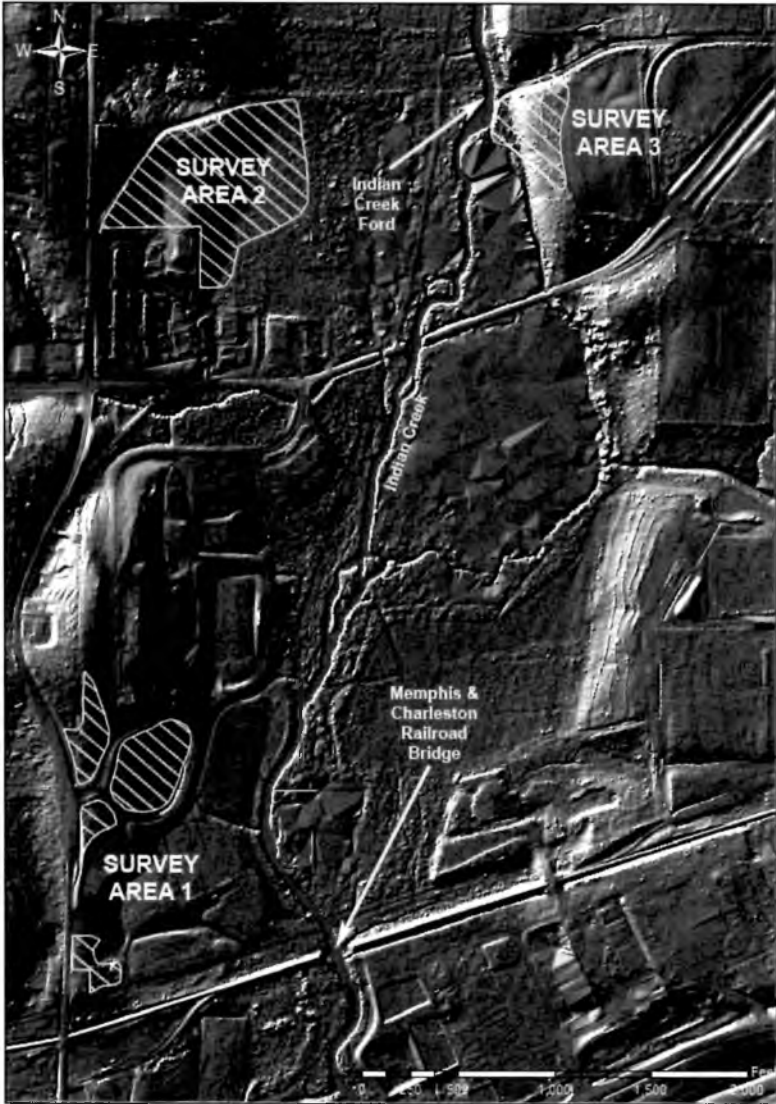
Survey areas on LIDAR hillshade imagery

Artifacts Recovered

Many of the artifacts recovered from Survey Areas 2 and 3 on either side of the Indian Creek Ford are without a doubt associated with the Civil War. These artifacts include both camp items and items associated with the actual fighting. Many other artifacts have more
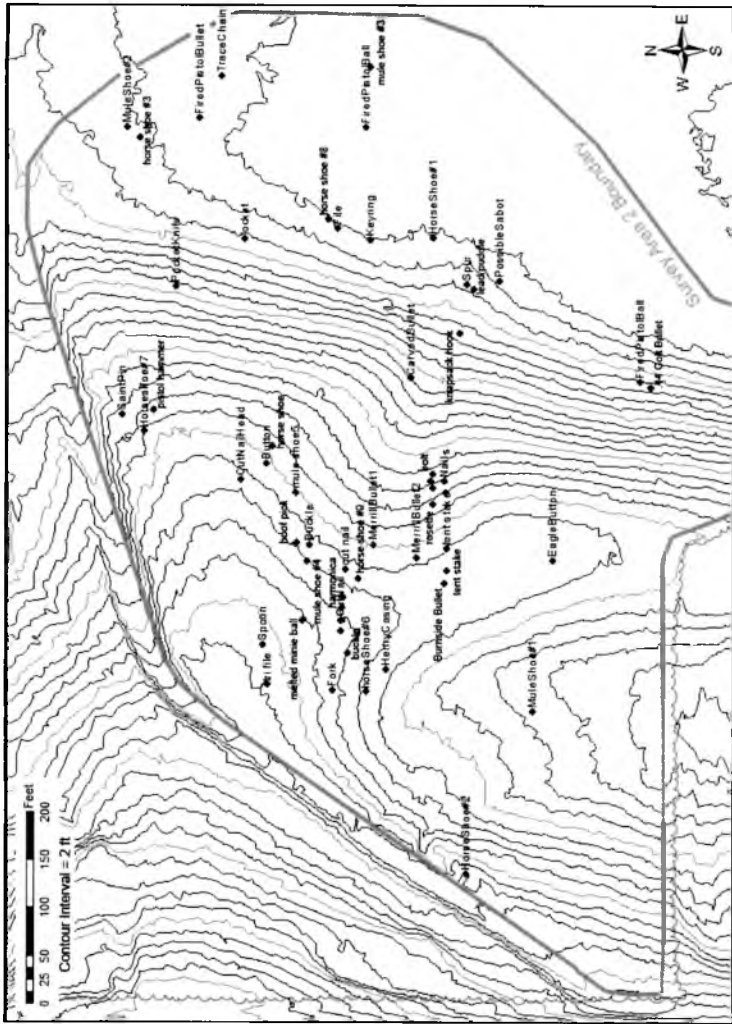
ambiguous association, and while they might date to the middle 19th century, are not absolutely associated with Civil War activity.

All artifacts were cleaned and analyzed. Significant iron artifacts were stabilized through electrolysis and coated with micro-crystalline wax to prevent further oxidation. All collected artifacts will be curated with the rest of the Redstone Arsenal collection at the Erskine Ramsay Archaeological Repository in Moundville, Alabama.

Small Arms Ammunition

Eleven bullets and bullet casings associated with small arms used during the Civil War were recovered from the survey areas around Indian Creek Ford. They represented rifle, carbine, and pistol ammunition.

.577 or.58 Caliber Minié Ball.

One melted Minié ball (l. in figure below) was recovered from the bluff top among a concentration of camp items. These bullets were cast in .58 caliber for the Springfield rifle musket or slightly narrower for the Enfield rifle musket, the two most common infantry weapons of the war[36]. Minié balls had a conical cavity in the base that allowed the bullet to expand upon firing to grip rifling with grooves around the exterior of the bullet. This specimen is half melted and probably represents recycling of a found bullet by melting it in order to pour the lead into a mold for another type of ammunition. The remaining bullet weighs 19.7g or 304.0 grains. Since most .577 or .58 caliber Miniés weighed around 500 grains, around 200 grains of lead has been melted off. This bullet could be associated with either Union or Confederate activity, but its association with camp debris at the crest of the bluff suggests that it was left there by Burtwell's troops camping there just prior to the battle.

.44 Henry Repeating Rifle Casing.

One .44 caliber copper casing from a Henry Repeating Rifle (a. in figure below) was recovered from the bluff top in Survey Area 2. This fired casing bears the distinctive double firing pin marks diagnostic of the Henry rifle[37]. The Henry was a breech-loading lever-action rimfire rifle first patented in 1860 and used throughout the Civil War and into the last half of the 19th century. Some Henry rifles were introduced to the war theater early in the war by soldiers who brought their personal weapons into battle with them, although the first Henrys did not hit the market until the summer of 1862[38]. The U.S. Ordnance Department did not purchase any Henrys until the summer of 1863

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[36] Earl J. Coates and Dean S. Thomas, *An Introduction to Civil War Small Arms* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1990), 16-19.

[37] Dean S. Thomas, *Round Ball to Rimfire: A History of Civil War Small Arms Ammunition, Part II: Federal Breechloading Carbines and Rifles* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 2002), 289.

[38] Joseph G. Bilby, *Civil War Firearms: Their Historical Background, Tactical Use and Modern Collecting and Shooting*, (Conshohocken, Pennsylvania: Combined Books, 1996), 192.

when 240 Henry rifles were ordered to arm the recently-mustered 1st D.C. Cavalry[39]. Even by the end of the war, however, the vast majority of Henry rifles used in combat were privately purchased[40]. Several Union regiments with known Henry rifles among their ranks[41] passed through the area or occupied Huntsville around the time of the Affair at Indian Creek Ford:

-The 16th Illinois Infantry passed down through the area in August of 1863 on their way to Stevenson[42].

-The 51st Illinois Infantry passed through Huntsville and Athens on their way to engage Hood at Spring Hill[43]. They arrived back in Huntsville with Steedman following the Battle of Nashville, arriving just before the Affair at Indian Creek Ford, and it's conceivable that some of the infantrymen from that regiment joined in the battle.

- The 73rd, 80th, and 96th Illinois Infantry regiments joined in the occupation of Huntsville from early January to mid-March of 1865[44].

Union soldiers used Henry rifles far more than Confederate soldiers since they had better access to the ammunition, but with as many as 10,000 Henrys in use during the war[45], undoubtedly many were captured and used by Confederate troops. Many Union infantry regiments armed with Henrys participated in the Atlanta campaign with Sherman, and some of the weapons may have been captured there and made their way into Roddey's Division in north Alabama. The position of the Henry casing on the battlefield makes it inconclusive whether it represents a Union or Confederate shot, but what is known

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[39] Thomas *Round Ball to Rimfire*, 291.

[40] Andrew L. Bresnon, "The Henry Repeating Rifle", accessed January 9, 2011, http://www.rarewinchesters.com/articles/art_hen_02.shtml

[41] Bilby, *Civil War Firearms*, 193-195; Coates and Thomas, *Civil War Small Arms*, 92.

[42] "16th Illinois Infantry Regiment History: Adjutant General's Report", accessed January 9, 2011, http://civilwar.ilgenweb.net/history/016.html

[43] "51st Illinois Infantry Regiment History: Adjutant General's Report", accessed January 9, 2011, http://civilwar.ilgenweb.net/history/051.html

[44] "73rd Illinois Infantry Regiment History: Adjutant General's Report", accessed January 9, 2011, http://civilwar.ilgenweb.net/history/073.html; "96th Illinois Infantry Regiment History: Adjutant General's Report", accessed January 9, 2011, http://civilwar.ilgenweb.net/history/096.html; "80th Illinois Infantry Regiment History: Adjutant General's Report", accessed January 10, 2011, http://civilwar.ilgenweb.net/history/080.html

[45] Bresnon, "The Henry Repeating Rifle"

is that Union troops armed with Henrys were in the area at the time of the battle.

While some Henry cartridges had an "H" headstamp, the casing recovered at Indian Creek Ford has none. It measures 0.865 inches long with a rim diameter of 0.511 inches and a rim thickness of 0.068.

.54 Burnside Carbine Bullet

A single badly-corroded .54 caliber Burnside Carbine bullet (b. and c. in the figure below) was found on the crest of the bluffs. A portion of the brass casing was still clinging to the lead bullet, so the cartridge was presumably dropped without being fired. The bullet weighed 391.98 grains (25.4g) without the casing.

Burnside Carbines were patented by (future Brigadier General) Ambrose E. Burnside in 1856. The Burnside was one of the first successful breech-loading carbines with metal cartridge casings. The distinctive tapered casing with a projecting bead for holding lubricant around the distal end is unique to Burnside cartridges, and is very diagnostic. The U.S. Ordnance Department purchased over 50,000 Burnside Carbines throughout the war making the Burnside the third most widely used carbine in the Union Cavalry[46]. Captured Burnsides were also widely used by Confederate Cavalry[47].

.54 Merrill Carbine Bullets

Two dropped .54 caliber Merrill Carbine bullets (d. and e. in the figure below) were found on the top of the bluff in the vicinity of the Burnside bullet. Both of the bullets appear to be unfired, although one of them has some damage that probably resulted from trampling. The trampled specimen weighs 379.64 grains (24.6g) while the other weighs 407.41 grains (26.4g).

Over 15,000 Merrill Carbines were issued to Union Cavalry beginning in 1861. It was never a very popular weapon, and by 1863, most of the Merrills still in use were concentrated in the western theater. Many Merrill Carbines were captured by the Confederate Cavalry early in the war, and they were in common use among Confederate horsemen[48]. Merrill bullets had paper cartridges which would have decayed on dropped specimens.

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[46] Coates and Thomas, *Civil War Small Arms*, 38.

[47] Ibid..

[48] Coates and Thomas, *Civil War Small Arms*, 44.
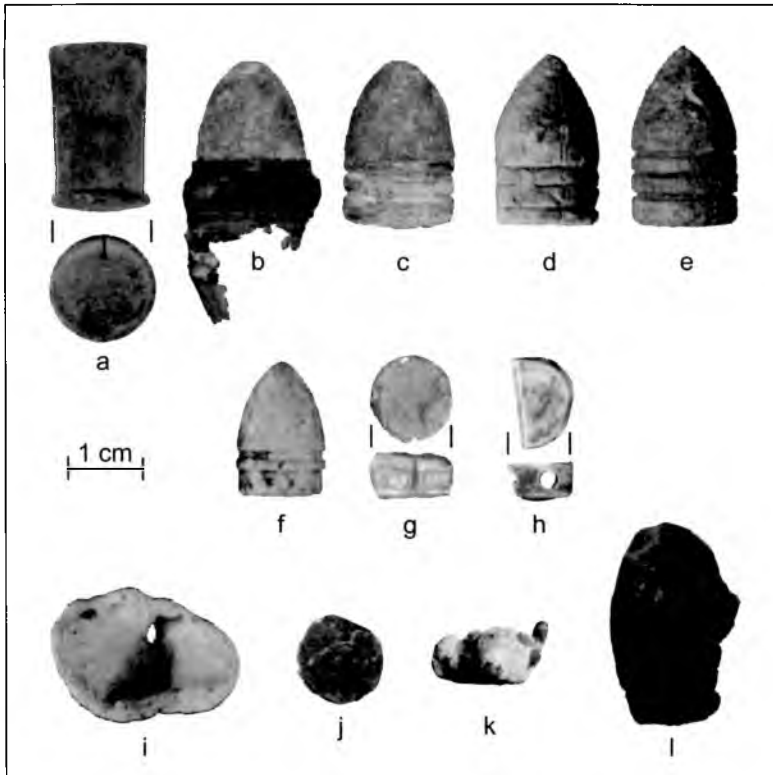
Small arms ammunition recovered during the metal detector survey.

.44 Colt Pistol Bullet

One dropped .44 caliber bullet (f. in figure above) for a Colt revolver was found at the base of the bluff in Survey Area 2. The bullet would have had a paper cartridge which has since rotted away, but the bullet is undamaged indicating that it was dropped and not fired. The Model 1860 Colt Army Revolver was the most widely-used handgun of the Civil War, and many soldiers on both sides brought their personal guns with them when they enlisted[49]. The recovered bullet weighs 211.42 grains (13.7g).

Carved .44 Sage Pistol Bullet

A single carved .44 Sage pistol bullet (g. in figure above) was recovered from the top of the bluff in Survey Area 3. Only the

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[49] Coates and Thomas, *Civil War Small Arms*, 54.

proximal end of the bullet was recovered, the distal end having been cut off with a knife. Obvious cut marks are visible on the truncated cross-section of the bullet, and the band around the base of the bullet is truncated by a knife cut. The .44 Sage cartridge was used in both the Colt and Remington revolvers, the two most common revolvers of the Civil War[50]. The U.S. Ordnance Department purchased over 3 million Sage cartridges between the summer of 1863 and the autumn of 1864.

Whittling of bullets and other lead was evidently a common pastime among soldiers of both sides during the Civil War based on the vast array of carved bullets that have been recovered from period military camps[51]. The presence of a carved bullet near the top of the bluff along the historic road cut on the east side of Indian Creek suggests that a picket was posted there.

Carved .44 Caliber Bullet

Another carved bullet (h. in above figure) was recovered from Survey Area 2 on the west side of Indian Creek midway up the bluff in a low draw that may have been the route of the mid-19th century Decatur Road. The measurable diameter of the bullet averages 0.486 inches, so the original bullet may have been .50 caliber, the diameter has probably been modified. The bullet was cut latitudinally, two 0.08 inch diameter holes were drilled through the base, and then the base of the bullet was cut along one of the holes resulting in a D-shaped piece. The cutting was well-executed, and the cuts appear to have been sanded or otherwise smoothed. A 0.237 inch diameter raised area is evident on the base of the bullet, although it's difficult to tell whether this was sprue from a bullet mold or whether the raised area is the remains of the pin from a lead plunger from a cleaner bullet. The latter is likely since the raised area is very close to the same diameter as the plunger pin on Type III Williams cleaner bullets. Williams cleaner bullets came in .58 caliber and had zinc washers attached by a cast lead plunger to the base which were intended to grip the rifling of the gun barrel upon firing[52]. The carved bullet was found in the vicinity of other camp debris and is likely associated with the Confederate Cavalry camp.

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[50] Coates and Thomas, *Civil War Small Arms*, 54 and 61.

[51] W. Reid McKee and M. E. Mason, Jr., *Civil War Projectiles II: Small Arms & Field Artillery* (Orange, Virginia: Publisher's press, Inc., 1980), 69-72.

[52] James E. Thomas and Dean S. Thomas, *A Handbook of Civil War Bullets & Cartridges* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 2007), 55.

Fired Pistol Bullet

This fired bullet (i. in figure above)was found embedded in the soil at the base of the bluff in Survey Area 2. It was badly deformed upon impact, but weighs 12.2g or 188.27 grains, similar to the weight of a .44 caliber pistol bullet.

Fired Pocket Pistol Balls

Two fired pocket pistol balls were recovered from Survey Area 2. One (j. in figure above) was recovered from near the dropped .44 Colt bullet at the base of the bluff. It was crushed upon impact, but appears to have been a round ball. It weighed 50.93 grains (3.3g), indicating that it was probably from a small caliber pistol in the .28 to .36 caliber range. A sprue eye mark and seam from a two-piece mold can be distinguished on the bullet. The other (k. in the figure above) was recovered from the floodplain of Indian Creek about 30m from the base of the bluff. It too was badly deformed and weighed 44.75 grains.

Clothing and Accoutrements

Several items were recovered from Survey Area 2 that are definitely associated with the Civil War including government-issued accoutrements and parts of uniforms. Others have a more ambiguous association but are still likely related to Civil War activity based on their spatial association with other artifacts.

Union Uniform Eagle Button

A gilded eagle general service button (a. in figure below) for a Union great coat was recovered from the top of the bluff in Survey Area 2. The button has a legible stamped maker's mark on the back for "Steele & Johnson·Waterbury". The Steele & Johnson Button Company operated in Waterbury, Connecticut from 1858 to 1875[53].
They produced many uniform buttons for Federal troops during the Civil War.

Union Knapsack Hook

One copper hook from a Union issue M1855/1864 knapsack (b. in figure below) was recovered from a sunken draw in the bluff west of Indian Creek which may have been the mid-19th century route of the Decatur Road. The clasp of the hook is sharply bent as if the

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[53] Warren K. Tice, *Uniform Buttons of the United States, 1776-1865* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1997), 41.

strap of the knapsack had been violently pulled forcing the hook to give way.

## Possible Blanket Roll Buckle

A small iron buckle (d. in figure below) similar to those used to secure the blanket roll to the Federal issue M1855/1864 knapsack, was recovered from the top of the bluff in Survey Area 2. The buckle was found along with a light concentration of camp items.

Iron Roller Buckle

A 1.5" by 1.0" iron roller buckle (e. in figure below) was recovered from the bluff top in Survey Area 2. The buckle is similar in shape and size to those used on Enfield pattern leather cartridge boxes[54].

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[54] H. R. Crouch, *Civil War Artifacts: A Guide for the Historian* (Fairfax, Virginia: SCS Publications, 1995), 14.
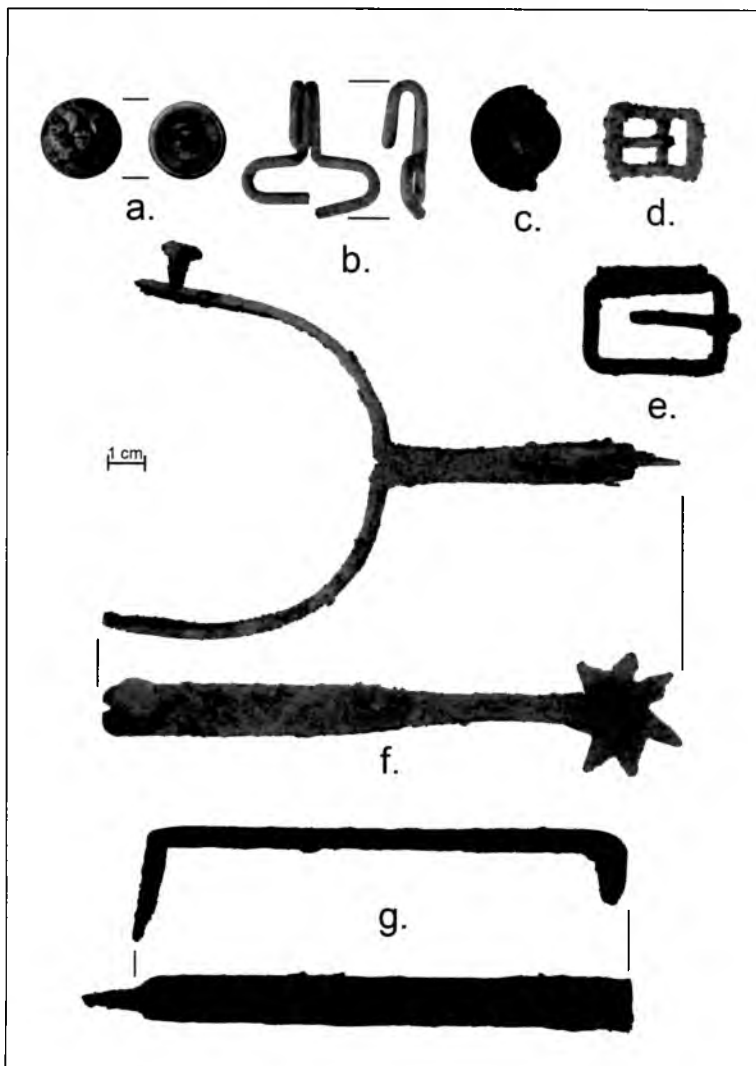
Uniform button and accoutrements recovered during the metal detector survey.

Civilian Rowelled Spur

A nearly-complete non-issue spur (f. in figure above) was recovered from the base of the bluff in Survey Area 2. The spur was found in a small concentration of camp items and may be related to the Confederate camp. It is a hand-made rowelled spur with riveted pegs for attachment to the spur strap.

One of the pegs is missing – probably resulting in the spur being lost or discarded. The yoke and shank are forge-welded from two pieces of

bar stock, and the 7-pointed rowel is hand cut from a piece of sheet metal. Since the spur is not military issue, it cannot be said for certain that it is associated with Civil War activity, but its spatial association with Civil War camp items suggests that it is related.

Rosette

A stamped sheet brass rosette (c. in the figure above) was recovered from the side of the bluff along the shallow draw that may have been the early route of Decatur Road. It measures 1.13 cm in diameter and appears to have once had some sort of gem stone mounted in the center. It may have once adorned a bridle or saddle. It is not military issue, so it is not definitely associated with the Civil War, although it was found in the vicinity of other 19th century artifacts that appear to be Civil War camp debris.

Horseshoes

A total of ten horseshoes were recovered during the metal detector survey. Horseshoes were produced both by machine and hand forging throughout the nineteenth century. Most horseshoes purchased by the U.S. Army during the Civil War were machine-made by a machine invented by Henry Burden in Troy, New York in 1835[55]. Machine-made horseshoes were often modified by farriers to adapt them to specific terrain or to fit individual horses, so it is often difficult to tell how recovered specimens were made. The shape of a horseshoe can indicate which foot it was made for. Front horseshoes are more circular toward the toe and wider at the heel, while rear shoes are more pointed at the toe with a greater constriction at the heel and the widest point at the back quarter. For rear shoes, the outside web or branch is always longer than the inside one, indicating whether the shoe is for the right or the left foot[56].

Survey Area 1 yielded one horseshoe, a heavily worn and bent shoe with forged heel calks. Survey Area 2 yielded eight horseshoes and horseshoe fragments, only two of which were whole horseshoes. Survey Area 3 yielded a half of a hand-forged horseshoe. The characteristics of the horseshoes recovered are shown in the following table.

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[55] Nathaniel Bartlett Sylvester, "Henry Burden" in *History of Rensselaer Co., New York* (Philadelphia, Everts & Peck, 1880), 218.

[56] Dale L. Berge, *Simpson Springs Station: Historical Archaeology in Western Utah*, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Museum of Peoples and Cultures, 1980), 237-239.

FS #	Horse shoe#	Survey Area	Posi tion	Manufac ture	Calk s	Ful ler	Nail Holes	Wear/ Damag e
14		1	left rear	hand-forged	forge d heel	yes	6?	heavy toe wear, bent
32	1	2	left rear	Burden machine?	forge d heel	yes	8	modera te toe wear
44	2	2	right rear	Burden machine?	none	yes	8	modera te toe wear
33	3	2	fron t	unknown	forge d heel	no	6	halfed, heavy toe wear
47	4	3	unk now n	hand-forged	none	yes	6?	halfed, heavy toe wear
64	5	2	fron t	unknown	forge d heel	yes	8?	halfed, heavy toe and heel wear
65	6	2	fron t	hand-forged	forge d heel	yes	6?	halfed, heavy toe wear
	7	2	fron t	unknown	forge d heel	yes	8?	halfed, heavy toe wear
19	8	2	fron t	hand-forged	forge d heel	no	6	halfed, heavy toe wear
	9	2	rear	Burden machine?	none	yes	8?	halfed, heavy toe wear

It is difficult to determine whether any of the horseshoes are definitely associated with the Civil War engagement. Certainly, the possible Burden machine-made shoes are likely candidates for having fallen off Union horses during the charge, although Burden shoes were also saw plenty of civilian use throughout the mid to late nineteenth century. Under normal circumstances, U.S. cavalry units would routinely re-shoe their horses once a month[57], so it is unlikely that any of the shoes thrown by Union horses would have extremely heavy wear. Also, since the Union cavalry engaged at Indian Creek had been on the move since the evacuation of Huntsville on November 27, it is likely that they re-shod their stock immediately after re-occupying Huntsville. If this was the case, they could have used locally-produced horseshoes commandeered in Huntsville, and very few shoes would have been lost since the horses were freshly-shod. As for the Confederate cavalry camped at Indian Creek, their horses could have been shod with either locally-forged shoes or captured machine-made shoes.

It is clear that there was much equestrian traffic in the area that was not directly related to the battle. In addition to the horseshoes, no less than six mule shoes were also recovered – a half from Survey Area 1 and five whole shoes from Survey Area 2. Since neither side involved in the battle would have been mounted on mules, these shoes must have been lost during regular traffic along the Decatur road. The 1936 quad map and the 1937 aerial photographs show all three survey areas heavily forested, so it is unlikely that the shoes were lost during agricultural activities.

Possible Hoof Pick

A common tool carried by horsemen on both sides was a hoof pick for removing pebbles, impacted dirt, or other material from the "frog" or the soft recessed sole of a horse's foot. There were several different types of hoof picks including double-headed muller picks which had both a pointed tip for prying out stones and a flat tip for scraping away mud or dirt. This type was in common use among Confederate cavalrymen[58]. Another common type consisted of a

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[57] Douglas D. Scott, Richard A. Fox, Jr., Melissa A. Connor, and Dick Harmon, *Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 208-209.
[58] Ken R. Knopp, *Confederate Saddles & Horse Equipment*, (Shepherdsville, Kentucky: Publisher's Press Inc., 2002)154.

pointed hook on a simple handle with a loop on the proximal end for suspending from a lanyard.

One possible hoof pick (g. in figure above) was recovered from Survey Area 2 on the bluff top among a concentration of camp items. This pick seems to be a variation of a muller pick. It is hand-forged from half-inch flat stock. Both ends are bent 90 degrees to the handle. One end is hammered to a point, while the other end is hammered or filed to a flat edge for scraping.

Camp Items

Several artifacts are typical of material found in Civil War camps. These include lead for making bullets, lost or broken personal items, and lost or discarded utensils and tools. Most of these items are not military issue but rather represent personal property carried along with the soldiers into theater. Since they are not military issue, it cannot be said with certainty that they are related to the battle, but their age and spatial associations suggest that they are Civil War related.

Camp Lead

Three items recovered from Survey Area 2 represent "camp lead" or lead scrap for recycling into usable items or for melting into bullet molds. The first example is the .58 or .577 caliber Minié ball discussed above. Another example appears to be a fragmented piece of lead sabot from an exploded artillery shell (a. in figure below). This fragment weighs 6.1 oz. (173g) and has a maximum width of 1.7" with a thickness of 0.2". It has jagged edges and is heavily deformed by apparent impacts with rock and soil. Many different artillery shells used by both Union and Confederate forces had lead sabots to seal against the cannon barrels and grip the rifling. Since artillery was not used in the Affair at Indian Creek Ford, and there is no record of artillery use in the immediate area, this piece of artillery shrapnel was probably picked up elsewhere and brought to the site as a source of lead for molding bullets. Only 28 ft. away from the sabot, a 0.77 oz. (21.7g) puddle of lead was recovered further suggesting that scrap lead was being melted and molded into bullets at this location.

Improvised Tent Stakes

Various iron spike-shaped items were frequently foraged by troops on both sides for use as tent stakes. A wide variety of these

items have been recovered at Civil War camps for both sides[59]. Three such items were found in a concentration near the top of the bluff in Survey Area 2. One is a hand-made carriage bolt (d. in figure below). It measures 4.12" long and is made from a hand-headed piece of ½" bar stock with die-cut threads up the lower 1" of the shank. Another is a headless shank of ½" bar stock which has been hammer-tapered to a point (e. in figure below). The third is the proximal end of a bent and broken hand-made stake forged from ½" bar stock with a hand-hammered 1.3" diameter head (f. in figure below).

Harmonica Reed Plate

An iron harmonica reed plate (c. In figure below) was found on the bluff top in the center of a concentration of camp items. It had ten reeds, remnants of seven of which were still affixed to one face of the plate. This is one of two reed plates which would have been part of a typical Richter-tuned diatonic harmonica, colloquially known as a "blues harp". These harmonicas were introduced to the North America in the 1850's. Since they were easy to play and very portable, they became immensely popular among troops on both sides of the Civil War. Broken and discarded harmonicas are frequently recovered from Civil War camp sites[60].

Files

Portions of two rat-tail files were recovered from Survey Area 2. One was a whole mill file (i. in figure above) found in the vicinity of the lead sabot, lead puddle, and other camp items at the base of the bluff. The other was the proximal end of a tri-file found among a concentration of camp items on the bluf ftop.

Cut Nails

Ten cut nails and cut nail shanks were recovered during the metal detector survey. One was found on the slope of the bluff in Survey Area 3, but the majority was found in two concentrations in Survey Area 2. One of the concentrations was located in a 5m diameter scatter along the shallow draw in the side of the bluff near the

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[59] James M. Moore, "Artifact Descriptions" in Lawrence S. Alexander and Elsa Heckman, *Archaeological and Historical Survey and Preparation of a Battlefield Protection Plan for the Western Perimeter of the Lookout Mountain Battlefield, Hamilton County, Tennessee* (Wildwood, Georgia: Alexander Archaeological Consultants, 2006), 152.
[60]Moore, "Artifact Descriptions", 155.
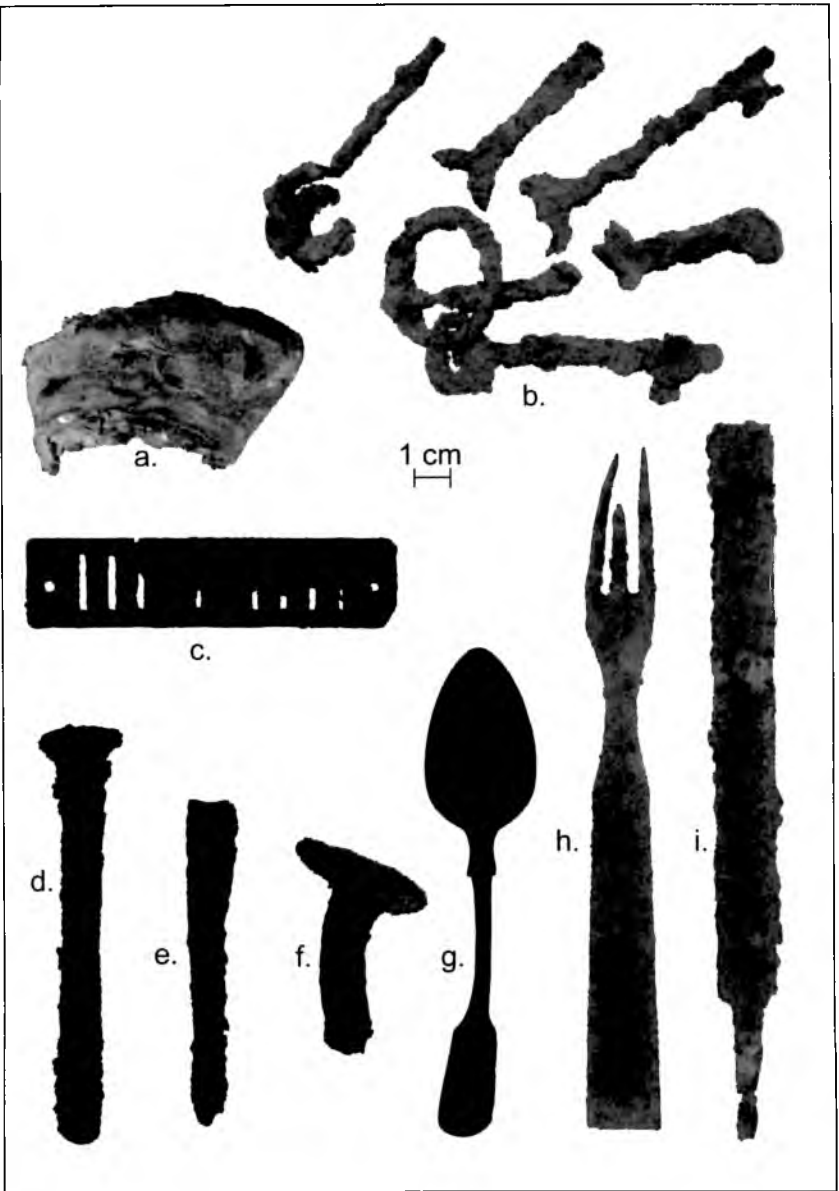
Civil War camp items recovered during the metal detector survey.

improvised tent stakes. The nails in this concentration were all small, around an inch-and-a-half long and are typical of those used as fasteners in wooden ammunition boxes. Four whole nails and one shank were recovered from this concentration. The other concentration

was among a scatter of several other camp items on the bluff top. Nails in this concentration included one proximal end, two shanks, and one whole nail. The whole nail measured 2.5 inches long, and the three partial nails all appeared to have been the same size. In addition to being pried from ammunition or food boxes, cut nails might have arrived at camp in boards salvaged for firewood, although none of the nails exhibit any signs of having been burned.

Fork and Spoon

A brass spoon and a three-tined fork (g. and h. in the figure above) were found 26m apart in one of the concentrations of camp items on the bluff top in Survey Area 2. The fork is iron with a flat handle with rivets for affixing a two-piece wooden or bone handle. The spoon was stamped out of sheet brass. Neither utensil bears a maker's mark, but both are typical of the Civil War era.

Ring of Skeleton Keys

An iron ring with at least six keys including three iron skeleton keys (c. in figure above) was found at the base of the bluff in Survey Area 2. The iron was heavily-corroded, and three of the objects hanging on the ring couldn't be identified, but they probably represent additional keys of one type or another.

Non-Civil War Artifacts

Several items were collected from Survey Area 2 that are probably not related to the Civil War engagement, but are either contemporary or are unique and worthy of mention. They shed light on the non-military use of the area during and after the Civil War.

Trace Chain

A portion of a harness trace chain was found on the floodplain below Survey Area 2. The chain is heavily corroded, but it appears to include at least nine links and one of the toggles. Trace chains were used to attach a breastcollar or harness to the wagon, caisson, or other load. This specimen probably dates to the 19th century, but since the accounts don't mention any draft vehicles pulled during the affair at Indian Creek ford, it is probably not related to the battle.

Pocket Knives

Two pocket knives were found during the metal detector survey. Both are straight-handled stockman style knives. One (FS#39) is two-bladed. The handle has brass bolsters with a glittered celluloid

inlay on one side. The inlay on the other side apparently fell off during the use-life of the knife and was replaced with a strip of leather. The other knife (FS#70) is a three-bladed stockman with brass handle bolsters and dark brown or black jigged delrin inlays. One side of the handle has an inlaid crest shield. Both of these knives probably date to the early to mid-twentieth century.

Locket Cover

A gilded brass locket cover with a scrolled heart motif was found at the base of the bluff away from any of the camp item concentrations. It cannot be easily dated.

Coins

Two coins were recovered during the metal detector survey. They were in close proximity to one another on the north end of the survey area on the bluff top. One was a 1916 penny, while the other was a heavily-worn 1907 Liberty-head quarter.

Saint Christopher Pin

A Roman Catholic Saint Christopher pin was found near the edge of the early twentieth century road cut near the rim of the bluffs in Survey Area 2. The pin appears to be made from stamped nickel alloy, possibly with silver plating. It has a pin soldered to the back and bears the inscription "SAINT CHRISTOPHER BE MY GUIDE" surrounding a bas-relief of St. Christopher carrying the Christ child. It is interesting that the pin was found near the road bed since St. Christopher is typically evoked for protection of travelers.

Civilian Buttons

Four civilian buttons were recovered. One (FS#40) is a unique brass button with a Sanders-type shank with the front inlaid with a white and copper spattered glass cabochon. The cabochon is fixed in an oval setting giving the button the appearance of an eye. It probably dates to the mid-nineteenth century. It was found on the bluff top near the concentration of box nails and tent stakes and could possibly be associated. A brass O'Bryan Bros. coverall button (FS#27) was also found on the bluff top. It bears the Duck Head logo of O'Bryan Brothers indicating that it dates post-1892. Another button is a Sanders shank button with an iron back and a brass front embossed with "LPE 1904" and "SWEET ORR & CO OVERALLS". Sweet, Orr

& Co. was founded in 1871 in Wappingers Falls, New York[61]. This button was found on the bluff top among one of the concentrations of camp items, but obviously post-dates the Civil War. The iron back of a similar button (FS#71) was found 160 ft. to the northeast along the rim of the bluff. It too probably dates to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

Pistol Hammer
An iron pistol hammer was found adjacent to the St. Christopher pin. The hammer appears to be from a late-nineteenth or early twentieth-century derringer revolver or similar small handgun.

Post-Civil War Ammunition
A total of 185 pieces of post-Civil War small arms ammunition were found in Survey Area 2 during the metal detector survey. By far the most common artifacts found in Survey Area 2 were early- to mid-twentieth century shotgun shells (n=158). All but 13 of these were the brass bases for paper shells with headstamps dating from the 1870's to the 1930's. The 13 plastic shells indicate recreational firearm use in the area into the last half of the twentieth century. The majority of the shotgun shells were for small game loads suggesting that the area was a popular spot for squirrel and rabbit hunting. The parcel was probably also used for target practice judging by the sheer number of bullets and shells, and was used by the whole community based on the variety of guns represented. At least ten guns are represented including four sizes of shotguns, as well as .30 and .22 caliber rifles, and .45, .36, and .32 caliber pistols. The area is currently a forest of mature hardwoods and red cedars. The 1937 aerial photographs show it then already as mature forest stretching from what is now Slaughter Road eastward to the top of the bluff on the east side of Indian Creek. This would have been an excellent hunting area throughout most of the twentieth century.

Early 20th Century Condom Tin
The cover of an aluminum condom tin embossed with "3 MERRY WIDOWS", "Price $1.00", "SELECTED-TESTED" was found on top of the bluff near the south end of the survey area. The lower part of an aluminum condom tin was found about 125 yards (115m) away on the slope of the bluff toward the north end of the

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[61] John J. Nutt, *Newburgh: Her Institutions, Industries and Leading Citizens* (Newburgh, New York: Ritchie & Hull, 1891), 270.

survey area. The two halves are from the same brand of condom tin and are probably a match. The 3 Merry Widows brand condoms were popular during the early twentieth century[62]. Apparently, hunting, target practice, and warfare weren't the only human activities conducted at this location.

Conclusions

The presence of Civil War artifacts in Survey Areas 2 and 3 seems to confirm that location as the battleground for the Affair at Indian Creek Ford despite Irvine's misestimating of its distance from the railroad bridge. Based on the artifact scatter, certain conclusions can be drawn about the battle.

Few of the 19th century artifacts were found in the immediate vicinity of either the deep historic road cut in the bluffs west of Indian Creek or the location of the road shown on the 1875 map. Rather, most were concentrated along an east-west oriented saddle in the bluff between the two. The saddle shows up well in the hillshade imagery and also appears to have some artificial modification on the west end where it converges with the deep road cut. It can be surmised that this saddle was the route of the mid-19th century Decatur Road and that the deep road cut was a later right-of-way. The route is probably slightly misplotted on the 1875 map. The saddle in the bluff also marks the mid-point in the distribution of equestrian-related artifacts such as the horseshoes, mule shoes, and the trace chain. This supports the theory that the saddle was the route of the Decatur Road up the bluffs west of Indian Creek when the battle took place.

There are three concentrations of camp-related items in Survey Area 2 (see map above). One is located along the base of the bluff roughly centered on the saddle. The artillery sabot fragment was found in this concentration indicating a Civil War association. Another concentration included the box cut nails and improvised tent stakes and was situated near the top of the bluff along the south side of the saddle. The third concentration was located on the broad level blufftop north of the saddle. This concentration included the melted Minié ball, confirming a Civil War association. These three camps could represent undocumented picket outposts not associated with the battle, but based on the diversity of the artifacts and the still usable items that were

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[62] G. K. Elliott, George Goehring, and Dennis O'Brien, *Remember Your Rubbers!: Collectible Condom Containers* (Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 1998).

recovered from the camps, they more likely represent portions of Burtwell's Confederate soldier's camp. The camp items indicate that the soldiers were involved with various activities while they awaited orders to advance toward Huntsville or withdraw. Scavenged lead was being melted down to mold fresh bullets. Knives or sabers were being sharpened as indicated by the files. At least one tent was being occupied. Overall, the artifacts in the camps suggest that the occupants were surprised and fled dropping their tools on the spot and leaving meals uneaten. Undoubtedly, much of the usable items were looted by the Union victors, but dropped tools such as the hoof pick, the file, the fork and the spoon suggest a hasty departure.
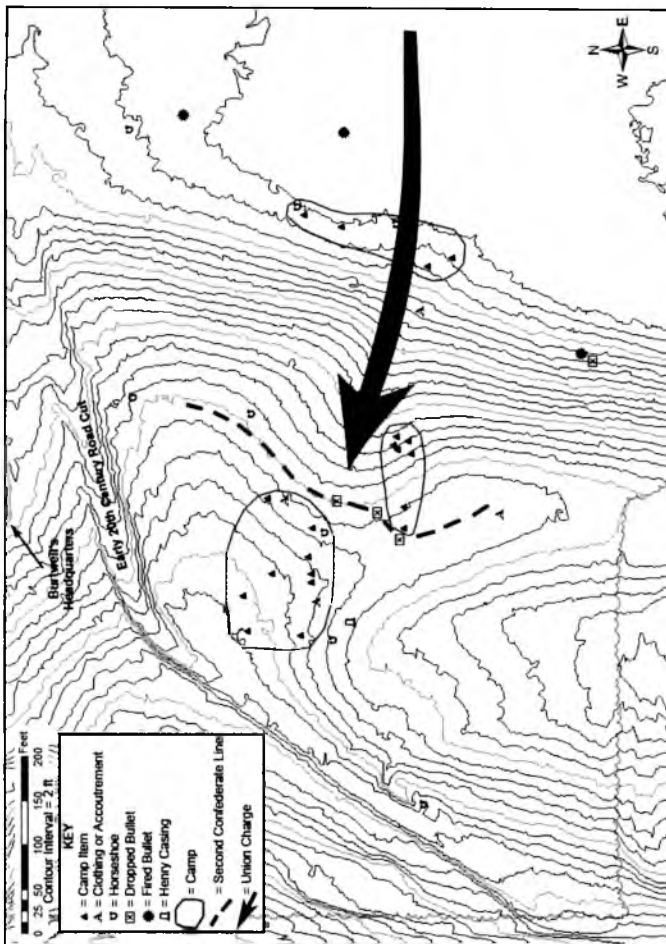
The house on the bluffs that the Confederate officers commandeered for their headquarters was probably located north of the soldiers' camp. McTeer's Union accounts mention a "double log cabin" on the left of the Confederate line. A soldier with the 10th Indiana Cavalry brought McTeer and Colonel Prosser to this cabin where he had found a mortally-wounded Confederate soldier hiding after the battle[63]. This double cabin is likely the same house that the Confederate officers spent the night before the battle in. Two houses are shown in the vicinity on the 1937 aerial photographs of the area. Neither house is still standing. One was located about 130 yards (119m) west of the bluffline, around 115 yards (105m) north of the deep road cut. That location has been covered by modern fill. The other house was located at the bluffline about 120 yards (110m) north

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[63] Andes and McTeer, *Reminiscences*, 193.

of the deep road cut. Yucca plants and a hewn limestone chimney base still marked the location of this house. A single shovel test was placed on the downhill side of the chimney base resulting in the recovery of a cut nail along with a slate fragment, a wire fragment, and two shards of glass. Cut nails were mostly replaced by wire nails by 1880, so the presence of a cut nail suggests that the house dates to the 19th century. It very well could have been there when the battle took place.

Three dropped bullets along the edge of the bluffline probably mark the Confederate line that began forming in rear of Sloss Company, but wavered and retreated, leaving Sloss Company to fire one volley before they joined the retreat. The three bullets, two for Merrill rifles and one for a Burnside carbine were probably dropped in the panic. If this is the case, it indicates that at least some in Burtwell's unit were armed with Merrill carbines and at least one Burnside carbine, probably captured at some point from Union troops. The Henry casing might also be associated with this line indicating at least one shot fired from the second Confederate line. The Henry may have been previously captured from Union forces, possibly during Hood's Nashville campaign.

At least two types of fired pistol bullets were found embedded near the base of the bluff. These were probably fired by the Union Cavalry as they charged across Indian Creek. If this is the case, the Union force was firing their .44 Colts and small-caliber pocket pistols as they charged toward the Confederate line. The Union accounts mention several incidents in which pistols were used in the battle.

The bent knapsack hook and lost Union button hint at the grappling and hand-to-hand combat that occurred as the Union cavalrymen overtook the fleeing Rebel force.

The preservation of this battlefield appears to have been a happy accident. The marshy floodplain of Indian Creek was not suitable for building or agriculture at this location, and somehow, the bluff in Survey Area 2 has escaped development. While the data recovered from the battlefield did not dramatically alter our understanding of the Affair at Indian Creek Ford, it did clarify the events and made them tangible. Countless similar small engagements occurred during the four years of our Civil War. Some have been forgotten. Some are mentioned in diaries or are given passing mention in the official records. Some were more important than others in terms of the broad strategic campaigns of the war. If nothing else, this study has demonstrated that even these small relatively insignificant battlegrounds can yield valuable archaeological data that can be used to help flesh out history. Undoubtedly, additional archaeological work

at this battleground could yield more important information, and every piece in the puzzle increases our understanding of the event. Sites such as this are becoming more and more rare as they succumb to suburban sprawl or are stripped of data by uncontrolled collecting. During this sesquicentennial anniversary of the war, it is more important than ever to identify even these small plots of hallowed ground, and recognize them as repositories of our shared national heritage.

Collected Artifacts

Site	FS number	Provenience	Specimen	Notes
Survey Area 1	14	metal detector survey	1 mule shoe half 1 bent horse shoe with heel calks	
Survey Area 2	15	metal detector survey	1 .54 cal. Burnside carbine bullet	Bullet #1; dropped, possibly misfired; only distal part of cartridge; bullet 25.4g
Survey Area 2	16	metal detector survey	1 M1855/1864 knapsack "J" hook	bent strap loop like it was violently pulled off
Survey Area 2	17	metal detector survey	1 small iron buckle	possible from a M1855/1864 knapsack blanket roll strap
Survey Area 2	18	metal detector survey	1 mule shoe with heel caulks	Mule Shoe #4; probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	19	metal detector survey	1 half of a colt or donkey shoe with heel caulk	Horse Shoe #8
Survey Area 2	20	metal detector survey	1 mill file	possibly camp associated
Survey Area 2	21	metal detector survey	1 cut nail 1 cut nail shank	small, possibly box nails
Survey Area 2	22	metal detector survey	1 iron "Mexican style" spur	hand-made, non-issue; missing button
Survey Area 2	23	metal detector survey	1 iron ring with 5(?) iron skeleton keys	badly rusted; possibly camp associated
Survey Area 2	24	metal detector survey	1 hand-made carriage bolt	probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	25	metal detector survey	1 possible lead artillery shell sabot	not-heavily patinated; may be camp associated as a curated source of bullet lead
Survey Area 2	26	metal detector survey	1 carved lead fragment	appears to be a cut bullet with two laterally-drilled holes; 2.9g
Survey Area 2	27	metal detector survey	1 brass coverall button with lead shank	"O'BRYAN BROS." Duck Head (post-1892); not related to battle
Survey Area 2	28	metal detector survey	melted lead "puddle"	not heavily patinated; may be

				recent, but found near FS# 22 and 25
Survey Area 2	29	metal detector survey	1 mule show with heel caulks	Mule Shoe #1; probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	30	metal detector survey	1 half of mule show with heel caulk	Mule Shoe #2; probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	31	metal detector survey	1 mule show with heel caulks	Mule Shoe #3; probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	32	metal detector survey	1 horse shoe with heel caulks	Horse Shoe #1
Survey Area 2	33	metal detector survey	1 half horse shoe with heel caulk	Horse Shoe #3; large nail holes, probably post-dates battle
Survey Area 2	34	metal detector survey	1 harness trace chain	end tie and ~10 links; contemporary with but probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	35	metal detector survey	1 fired pistol bullet	Fired Bullet #1; 12.2g
Survey Area 2	36	metal detector survey	1 .44 rimfire casing	.44 Henry; double firing pin
Survey Area 2	37	metal detector survey	1 .44 Colt pistol bullet	Bullet #2; dropped; 13.7g
Survey Area 2	38	metal detector survey	1 fired pistol ball	Fired Bullet #2; 3.3g
Survey Area 2	39	metal detector survey	1 pocket knife	plastic over glitter on one side, replaced with leather on other; probably post-dates battle
Survey Area 2	40	metal detector survey	1 brass shank button with white and copper glitter glass cabochon	probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	41	metal detector survey	1 iron 3-tined fork with flared handle	missing handle attachments
Survey Area 2	42	metal detector survey	1 1907 quarter	obviously post-dates battle
Survey Area 2	43	metal detector survey	1 1916 penny	obviously post-dates battle
Survey Area 2	44	metal detector survey	1 horseshoe without heel caulks	Horse Shoe #2
Survey Area 3	45	metal detector survey	1 cut .44 Sage pistol bullet	cut with knife just above ring; 4.9g
Survey Area 3	46	metal detector survey	1 cut nail	
Survey Area 3	47	metal detector survey	1 half horseshoe without heel caulks	Horse Shoe #4
Survey Area 2	48	metal detector survey	1 aluminum condom tin	"3 MERRY WIDOWS Price

				$1.00 SELECTED-TESTED"; ca. 1915-1935
Survey Area 2	49	metal detector survey	1 stamped brass rosette	central setting for gemstone
Survey Area 2	50	metal detector survey	4 cut nails	small, possibly box nails; same location as FS 21
Survey Area 2	51	metal detector survey	1 .54 cal. Merrill carbine bullet	Bullet #4; possibly fired into soft ground; 24.6g
Survey Area 2	52	metal detector survey	1 .54 cal. Merrill carbine bullet	Bullet #5; dropped; 26.5g
Survey Area 2	53	metal detector survey	1 fired bullet	Fired Bullet #3; 2.9g
Survey Area 2	54	metal detector survey	1 gilded brass locket cover	heart design
Survey Area 2	55	metal detector survey	1 hand-made spike shank	tent stake?
Survey Area 2	56	metal detector survey	1 hand-made spike head	tent stake?
Survey Area 2	57	metal detector survey	1 mule shoe with heel caulks	Mule Shoe #5; probably not related to battle
Survey Area 2	58	metal detector survey	1 cut nail shank	
Survey Area 2	59	metal detector survey	1 brass coverall button	Sweet-Orr & Co. "LPE 1904"; not related to battle
Survey Area 2	60	metal detector survey	1 .58 minie ball	melted; 19.7g
Survey Area 2	61	metal detector survey	1 iron buckle	"Buckle #2"
Survey Area 2	62	metal detector survey	1 brass spoon	
Survey Area 2	63	metal detector survey	1 triangular file proximal fragment	
Survey Area 2	64	metal detector survey	1 half of horse show without heel caulk	Horse Shoe #5
Survey Area 2	65	metal detector survey	1 half of horse shoe with heel caulk	Horse Shoe #6
Survey Area 2	66	metal detector survey	1 half of horse shoe with heel caulk	Horse Shoe #7
Survey Area 2	67	metal detector survey	1 half of horseshoe without caulk	Horse Shoe #9
Survey Area 2	68	metal detector survey	1 cut nail 1 cut nail shank 1 cut nail head	
Survey Area 2	69	metal detector survey	1 Saint Christopher pin	
Survey Area 2	70	metal detector survey	1 pocket knife	
Survey Area 2	71	metal detector survey	1 iron button	
Survey Area 2	72	metal detector survey	1 pistol hammer	

Survey Area 2	73	metal detector survey	1 hand-forged hoof pick	
Survey Area 2	74	metal detector survey	1 harmonica reed plate	
Survey Area 2	75	metal detector survey	1 Union general service eagle button	"Steele & Johnson . Waterbury"
Survey Area 2	76	shovel test N1000 E1000	1 slate fragment 1 cut nail head 1 wire fragment 1 light aqua flat glass 1 colorless container glass body shard	on east side of house ruin

Confederate Casualties

The confederate rolls for units that were known to be operating in this area during the Affair at Indian Creek Ford were examined to identify those captured or wounded on December 23, 1864.

4th Alabama Cavalry (Roddey's)

Armistead, George W., Pvt., Co F. - Residence in Lauderdale Co., took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Carroll, John E., Pvt., Co. F - Wounded, gunshot wound left shoulder, surrendered, took Oath of Allegiance December 25, admitted to post hospital (Thomas Barracks) December 26, released January 24,1865.

Flint, Samuel, Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co., age 19

Hendrick, Alonzo D., Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co., age 18, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Ingram, Benjamin, Pvt., Co F. - Died of pneumonia March 14, 1865 in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1650.

Irvine, James B., Inspector General and Adjutant to Colonel Burtwell, - Residence, Florence, Lauderdale County, Captured at Madison Station, December 23, sent to Fort Delaware POW Camp via Nashville and Louisville. Took Oath of Allegiance, released June 13,1865.

Irvine, Seymour, Pvt., Co F - Residence, Florence, Lauderdale Co., Sent to Camp Chase POW Camp. Took Oath of Allegiance June 13,1865. James B. Irvine's brother. Actually captured a few days prior to the battle – may have been serving as a vidette or scout.

Kirkman, J.J., Sgt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co.

Oliver, Albert W., Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co.

Reeder, Reuben A., Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co. Actually captured a few days prior to the battle – may have been serving as a vidette or scout.

Stewart, Edward M., Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co., age 18, took Oath of Allegiance June 12, 1865.

Weems, James M., 2nd Lieut., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co.

Young, Samuel C., Pvt., Co F - Residence in Lauderdale Co., age 23, took Oath of Allegiance June 13,1865.

Jordan, Thomas B., Captain, Co I - Captured at Madison Station, December 23, sent to Point Lookout (MD) POW Camp via Nashville and Louisville. Transferred to Aiken's Landing (VA) for exchange on March 17, 1865. Other information indicates that he had been arrested April 16, 1864 by Major General Logan and held by order of Major General Sherman. Released from confinement August 2, 1864 by bail-bond of $10,000. Charged with violating parole, awaiting trial. Recruited and commanded a company during the rebel army advance on Nashville.

Leedy, W.B., Sgt, Co I - Appears on muster roll, dated March 20, 1865, of a detachment of paroled and exchanged prisoners at Camp Lee, near Richmond. He was shown as enlisting in Huntsville December 1, 1864, by Captain Jordan. Leedy had been sent to Point Lookout POW Camp from Nashville for special exchange. Exchanged March 17, 1865. He had been charged with being an employee of the QM Department, US Army, and deserted to the enemy. Tried February 14, 1865 at Nashville, but was released on special exchange near City Point, VA.

Moore, Alfred, Pvt., Co I - Residence in Madison Co., age 17, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

4th Alabama Cavalry (Russell's)

Hancock, Henry E., Pvt., Co K - Captured at Ft. Donelson Feb.3,1863, paroled and delivered to City Point, VA Feb 11,1863, in General Hospital, Branch A, Petersburg, VA Feb 20, returned to duty Feb 27, 1863, then captured near Huntsville Dec 23,1864, sent to Camp Chase via Nashville and Louisville, Oath of Allegiance June 13,1865.
Enlisted at New Market, AL, age 30
Note: Do not know if he was captured at Indian Creek. May have been captured near his home. Russell's 4th not known to have been at Indian

Creek but perhaps he got separated from his command and joined up with Roddey's 4th.

10th Alabama Cavalry

Littleburgh, H.Binford, Surgeon - Sent to Ft. Delaware POW Camp via Nashville and Louisville, transferred to Fort Monroe (VA) for exchange. Exchanged January 22. 1865.

Castleberry, William, Sgt., Co. B - Residence in Tishomingo Co., MS, age 35, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Ganong, Cornelius, Pvt., Co B - Residence in Tishomingo Co., MS, age 20.

Nunley, William, Pvt., Co B - Residence in ?, age 31, took Oath of Allegiance June 12, 1865.

Smith, Thomas R., Pvt., Co B - Residence in Tishomingo Co, MS, age 31, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Landers, Josiah B., Pvt., Co E - Took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865, admitted to Branch A, Post Hospital , Louisville, KY June 21, 1865, scurvy, discharged June 25, 1865.

Covington, Thomas, Pvt., Co G - Residence in Lauderdale Co., age 17.

Wilson, William, Pvt., Co G - Residence in Lauderdale Co, age 20, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Branson, David, Pvt., Co. I - Residence in Tishomingo Co., MS, age 32.

Nance, Washington P., Pvt., Co I - Died March 9, 1865 in Camp Chase, pneumonia, buried in Grave # 1699, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Martin, William R., Pvt., Co K - Admitted to USA General Hospital # 2 at Vicksburg, MS, May 27, 1865 from Marine Barracks, acute dysentery, returned to duty June 3, 1865.

Hamilton, George W., Pvt., Co. L - Residence in Limestone Co., age 19, took Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Nelms, James L., Pvt., Co L - Residence in Lawrence Co., age 38, took Oath of Allegiance June 12, 1865.

Sholar, William A., Pvt., Co. L - Died February 28, 1865 in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1477 , 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

May, Samuel W., Pvt., Co. ? - Residence in Franklin Co., deserted December 23, took Oath of Allegiance March 13, 1865.

Owens, Marquis L., Pvt., Co.? - Residence in Giles Co., TN, deserted December 23, took Oath of Allegiance March 9, 1865, was a conscript.

Note: Civil War Soldiers and Sailors (CWSS) lists Branson, Castleberry, Covington, Ganong, Landers, Martin, Nance, Nelms, Nunley, Smith, and Wilson as being in the 11th Alabama Cavalry. The 11th was organized by the consolidation of Warren's and William's battalions on 14 Jan, 1865.

Moreland's Alabama Cavalry

Pierce, Thomas W., Asst. Surgeon - Sent to Ft. Delaware , then Ft. Monroe for exchange on February 22, 1865.

Clark, Julius F., Pvt., Co A - Died January 28, 1865 in Camp Chase, pneumonia, buried in Grave # 9340, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Gains, H.M., Pvt., Co A - Residence in Franklin Co., Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Sartin, Langford, Sgt., Co A - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point, VA February 25,1865, for exchange. (alternate name: Sartain).

Cathey, Andrew D.A., Pvt., Co C - Residence in Tishomingo Co, MS, age 15.

Kay, John, Pvt., Co C - Died June 5 1865 in Camp Chase, pneumonia, buried in Grave # 2017, 1/3 mile south of Camp C. Enlisted at Dickson, AL.

Davis, James H., 2 Lt., Co D - Residence in Tishomingo Co, MS, sent to Ft. Delaware, Exchanged and released Jan.17,1865.

Holder, Benjamin A., Pvt., Co D - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point, VA February 25, 1865, for exchange, in Jackson Hospital, Richmond, VA March 10, 1865. Enlisted at Warren Mills, MS.

Looney, Lowry B., Pvt., Co D - Residence in Tishomingo Co., MS.

McCoy, William F., Pvt., Co D - Died March 2, 1865 in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1530, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Moore, John, Sgt., Co D - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Pont, VA February 25, 1865, for exchange, in General Hospital, Camp Winder, March 10,1865.

Spencer, William A., Pvt., Co D - Died February 20, 1865 in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1394, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Tackett, Enoch B., Pvt., Co D - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point, VA February 25, 1865, for exchange Roddey's Escort Company.

Gurley, John S., Pvt., Co G - Residence in Tishomingo Co, MS.

Burgess, Richard F., Pvt., Co H - Gunshot wound, right side, admitted to Granger General Hospital, December 24, then sent to prison, where he died on February 20, 1865. Buried in grave # 1353, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Crowell, George W., Pvt., Co H - Residence in Franklin Co., age 24.

Leadbetter, Henry, Pvt., Co H - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point,VA for exchange, in Jackson Hospital, Richmond, VA March 8,1865. furloughed March 9.

Norris, William W., Pvt., Co H - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point, VA February 25, 1865 for exchange.

Patterson A.W., Capt., Co H - Sent to Ft. Delaware January 9, 1865. Oath of Allegiance June 10, 1865.

Rogers, John H., Pvt., Co H - Paroled at Camp Chase and transferred to City Point, VA February 25, 1865 for exchange, in Jackson Hospital, Richmond, VA March 8, debilitas, Forloughed March 10. (alternate name: Rodgers).

Gable, James H., Cpl., Co I - Died May 16, 1865 in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1972, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

All the following were captured near Huntsville but were not involved in the battle at Indian Creek. They would have been sent as prisoners to Huntsville, then transferred to Camp Chase, via Nashville and Louisville.

Chittwood, Richard O., Pvt. - Captured December 20, 1864, Died February 20, 1865 and buried in Grave # [illegible].

Coons, Everitt, Pvt. - Captured December 20, 1864, at Maysville. Residence in Franklin Co, Oath of Allegiance June 13, 1865.

Dodson Willis, Pvt. - Captured December 27, 1864, at Madison Station. Residence in Lawrence Co. (Note: one card says captured January 15, 1865.).

Doss, James M., Pvt. - Captured December 27, 1864 in Madison Co, sent to Camp Chase, then Vicksburg MS for exchange. Admitted to General Hospital # 2 from Marine Barracks May 21, 1865, remittent fever, returned to duty May 22.

Heflin, Alexander, Pvt. - Captured December 27, 1864 in Madison Co. Residence in Lauderdale Co, age 18, (Note: one card says captured December 25.).

Roberts, Henry C., Pvt. - Captured December 20, 1864 at Brownsboro, died in Camp Chase, buried in Grave # 1748, 1/3 mile south of Camp C.

Yerby, Tolbert, Pvt. - Captured December 20, 1864. Residence in Fayette Co, age 18.

Stuart's Battalion

None found. Assumed not engaged at Indian Creek.

5th Alabama Cavalry

None found. Assumed not engaged at Indian Creek. Believed to have been in Decatur. (Note: Only Roll # 19 (A-L) was reviewed on the basis that if there were no captures on or about December 23 of the men on this roll that it would be unlikely to find any on Roll # 20 (M-Y). There were a number of captures December 29, 1864 at Pond Springs (Courtland), which supports the preceding statement.

Unionism in Huntsville and Knoxville: A Comparative Study of Tennessee River Valley Towns, 1860-1865

By Jennifer G. Coe

A comparison of the two cities in the Tennessee Valley, Huntsville, Alabama, and Knoxville, Tennessee, during the American Civil War reveals that both cities held political, economic, and strategic assets that made them important military objectives to the Union army. Many Unionists in both Huntsville and Knoxville never wanted to secede from the United States and continued to remain loyal to the old government throughout the war. In order to study Unionism in a broader context and better understand why some Southerners rebelled against the Rebels, this method will contrast the occupation of Knoxville by the Confederacy with the Union occupation of Huntsville. The goal of the comparative is to trace the behavior of Unionists while living in the occupied cities of the South, in an effort to better understand what loyalty to the Union meant to them; whether it was founded mainly on an attachment to the nation as a whole or informed more by local ties to their communities.

Due to the initial Union occupation and control of North Alabama railroads and commercial traffic, as well as the early establishment of a garrison at Huntsville, most Unionists in the area chose to remain at home in order to defend their families and property. Most Knoxville Unionists under the Confederate military government also preferred to remain quietly at home, however this was no longer a possibility after a series of uprisings and Confederate conscription laws first announced in April of 1862. The Confederate hard policy provoked most Unionists there to embark upon the treacherous journey through the rebel infested Cumberland pass to Kentucky to muster into Federal forces.

Under Federal protection in Huntsville, Unionists took advantage of the urban character of the town and its surrounding county. The diversification of commercial development combined with a broad set of economic and social connections

extended the physical, social, and demographic scope of the Unionist neighborhoods. Their communities formed coextensive with a large proportion of slaves and a slave-owning population of loyalists, which allowed them to stay at home and contribute to the Union cause through networks of cotton planters, non-slaveholding yeoman, white and black artisans, and town-dwellers.[1] This community of disparate individuals, who otherwise held nothing in common, often cooperated as spies. Huntsville's Unionists also acted as home guards, and held administrative positions appointed by the post commander.[2]

By tracing these overlapping ties to each other and their secessionist neighbors it is evident that many of the reasons that Unionists in both cities chose to remain loyal to the old government and constitution remained essentially the same. However, differences in the upper valley region in Knoxville combined with the circumstances of the occupation highlights the different ways Unionists acted to support the Federal Government. The evidence reveals that more loyalists from Knoxville supported the Union by volunteering to serve in the Union army, while most loyalists in Huntsville and Madison County remained at home to protect their families and property.

In the decade that preceded the war Unionists in both cities supported the right to own slaves and the expansion of slavery into the territories. Nevertheless, a minority of unconditional Unionists' chose not to support a radical solution that involved nation building or that risked losing their old government and constitution, in order to guarantee the right to own slaves.

Even though the city of Knoxville portrayed a "house divided" on the subject of secession, two referendums in Tennessee revealed that Knox County residents as well as most of East Tennessee roundly defeated disunion by a margin of two

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[1] Margaret M. Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, (2004), 4-5.
[2] Storey, 88.

to one; most likely on the basis that, as a Knoxville Unionist Oliver Temple declared during a public rally on secession, Unionists believed that "the only safety for Slavery is in the Union under the Constitution."[3]

Similarly, Huntsville remained loath to give up slavery but reluctant to secede over it. It contained a burgeoning industrial and professional class who easily adapted the institution to their small manufacturing and farming concerns. Huntsville, Alabama, situated between the Tennessee River and the Tennessee state line, lay at the fringes of cotton country within the Tennessee Valley. Its fertile land accommodated many moderate to large cotton plantations (although they were by no means as large as those of the black-belt region). Initially settled in 1805, and established in 1811, Huntsville attracted a diverse mixture of small freeholders, well-to-do planters, and sons of the educated professional class, such as the future territorial governor and U.S. Senator, Clement Comer Clay, who incidentally migrated to Madison County from East Tennessee near Knoxville. As the territorial seat of government and temporary capital where the first state constitution was drafted, Huntsville enjoyed immense political influence within the state until 1819, at about the same time the Planters' and Merchants' Bank (known as the Huntsville Bank) failed. After Alabama was admitted to the Union, the capital relocated several times before its permanent establishment at Montgomery in 1846, denoting a southward shift in political power in the state, the location of Alabama's large and prosperous Black-Belt region. However, many socially and politically prominent individuals still resided in Huntsville, so that by 1860 it often led the way in economic and community progress. The town still exuded an air of prosperity with spacious public buildings constructed primarily of brick, a handsome courthouse, and four churches, (two Methodist, one Baptist, and one Presbyterian). The city boasted

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[3] Temple quoted in Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolnites and Rebels: A Town Divided in the American Civil War,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 55.

three well-established institutions of learning, the Huntsville Female Seminary, the Huntsville Female College, Greene Academy, and one yet complete $35,000 preparatory school called North Alabama College that would prepare students for their higher education at prestigious northern schools such as Yale and Princeton, only to return and serve as doctors and lawyers in the community.[4]

Other examples of Huntsville's increasing economic and urban sophistication, the development of the first public water system west of the Alleghenies, gas lights and Macadamized roads. These roadways and turnpikes linked stagecoach routes to Memphis, Nashville, and Chattanooga, and from Chattanooga links went as far as Boston, New York, and Charleston. Businessmen and cotton-factors also made connections by water, mostly to New Orleans and Mobile. However. However by 1850 North Alabamians secured enough local government funding, supplemented with private investment and state loans, to begin construction on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad.[5] Coextensive with the development of the railroad, North Alabamians also experienced the return of high cotton prices, and cotton profits fueled investment and the diversification of Huntsville's commercial development. This important northeast to southwest rail artery linked Huntsville to a regional trade hub that included North Alabama, East Tennessee, and North Georgia. By 1860, a newly completed depot housed the division headquarters for the Memphis & Charleston Railroad that included machine shops, turntables, and engine-houses as well as a main office for the North Alabama Telegraph Company operated by J.H. Larcombe. The telegraph and railroad linked Huntsville with the rest of the country faster than steamboats and

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[4] Mary Jane Chadick, *Incidents of the Civil War: The Civil War Journal of Mary Jane Chadick*, edited by Nancy M. Rohr (Huntsville: Silver Threads Publishing, 2005), 4-6.; 1859-1860 Huntsville, Alabama City Directory (Originally Published in 1859 by Coltart & Son), 26.

[5] Paul Harncourt, *The Planter's Railway: Excitement and Civil War Years,* (Arab: Heritage Publishing Company, 1995), 75-80.

stagecoaches. So, although geography seemed to separate the sub-regions of the Tennessee Valley from the Hill Country just south of it and from the rest of the state, Huntsville, and Madison County had long built economic and political ties to its northern neighbor Tennessee and beyond. The development of modern transport and communications contributed to the city's place as a center of commerce and industry in North Alabama. Consequent to the decade of economic diversification and technological development before the war the population of Huntsville inflated to 3,600 people whereas the surrounding county experienced a decrease in whites and an increase in slaves.[6]

Knoxville, Tennessee, founded in 1791, like Huntsville, was the state's first capital and up until the War of 1812 at least, had been an important seat of government. After its temporary heyday the state legislature voted to move the capital from Knoxville to the boomtown of Nashville, owing mainly to the economic opportunity to be had in the fertile valley in Middle Tennessee. Situated in a valley surrounded by the Smokey Mountains to the southeast, and on the northwest by the Cumberland Plateau, Knoxville remained isolated by high mountains not conducive to overland trade. Moreover, shallow rivers, only navigable for half of the year, frustrated efforts to increase trade further south into North Alabama. As a consequence East Tennessee lost population and political influence to the more productive farming region to the west, precipitating its decline into a provincial backwater. Although its valley lands were quite fertile and well situated to produce corn, wheat, hay, cattle, and hogs, the region was not suitable for the type of large remunerative plantation economies like those of Middle Tennessee and the lower South. Until the rail road came to Knoxville, prohibitive transportation costs discouraged shipping or a large scale trade in agricultural commodities, and as a consequence no development of a large plantation economy,

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[6] Chadick, 5-6; Anthony Lyndon Helton, 1991 "Economics and Politics in Antebellum Madison County, Alabama: 1850-1860", Masters Diss., University of Alabama, Huntsville.

which obviated the establishment of a large population of slaves: however it did sustain an abundance of independent, self reliant, white yeoman farmers.[7]

Economic growth stagnated while farmers depended upon hauling goods by wagon or on foot. The Tennessee River offered the area's best opportunity for a north-south avenue for commerce but thanks to a series of treacherous shoals in northern Alabama the river system primarily facilitated trade within Tennessee. Yet at least since the 1830s regular steamboat traffic operated between Knoxville and northern Alabama carrying a small but significant trade in foodstuffs between the small yeoman farmers in East Tennessee and the large plantations on the fringes of cotton country in North Alabama.[8]

Much like Huntsville, a bustle of commercial activity took place in the 1850s with the development of the railroad to Knoxville. After decades of political wrangling related to Knoxville's political impotence, and the repeal of the State Internal Improvements act in 1838 which generated enormous resentment in much of East Tennessee, finally the state, along with the private investment of Knoxville's leading citizens, subsidized construction of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. The advent of this transportation revolution served to integrate East Tennessee into the broader regional and national markets. East Tennessee farmers shifted more heavily into wheat production to take advantage of new markets causing an agricultural boom in the countryside. New agricultural markets led to an expansion of the wholesale trade in Knoxville, causing the town to increase its role as a commercial center of the region. In 1850 Knoxville listed only four wholesale firms, but by 1860 there were fourteen. During the decade nascent small-scale industry increased, including carriage and furniture makers, flour and grist mills, an iron foundry, stove makers and machine shops. Along with more industry and trade the population of Knoxville doubled between 1850 and 1860. In 1860 Knoxville's

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[7] McKenzie, 14-16.

[8] McKenzie, 16.

free population grew in size reaching approximately 4,000 while the size of its slave population decreased from the previous decade. In comparison Huntsville gained 540 free people and showed a slight increase in slaves who were often owned by the factories and industrial concerns where they worked side by side with whites that migrated into town from the county.[9] Approximately one in ten households in East Tennessee owned slaves whereas on-third of southern households overall owned slaves with an even higher number of slave-owners per capita in most of the lower South. As a result, elite secessionists concentrated within urban Knoxville failed to persuade planters and small farmers in the countryside that separation from the Union would not separate them from their property.[10]

By 1860 Knoxville affected an air of intellectual refinement reflected by an obvious interest in learning and higher education. There was certainly evidence of widespread literacy considering it boasted four newspapers: a Democratic newsweekly, two Whig papers and a religious publication. The most conspicuous evidence of a learned and cultured populace, were Hampden-Sydney Academy, a preparatory school, and East Tennessee College, which would become the future University of Tennessee.[11]

With some exceptions the two cities were in parallel as examples of nascent commercial and railroad development that swept through the south and states west of the Mississippi River in the 1850s. What stood out was their location along the Confederate strategic line of defense, more specifically a railroad artery or so-called trunk -line. Originally conceived of to link the South economically, the rail system that linked Huntsville with Knoxville formed the sternum of the Confederacy. This trunk line ran southwest from Richmond, Virginia through the Cumberland Gap, down through Knoxville, Tennessee, to Chattanooga where junctions connected with Alabama's

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[9] Helton, 45.

[10] McKenzie, 22-25.

[11] McKenzie, 20.

Memphis and Charleston line that ran east to west to the Mississippi River, and Georgia's Western & Atlantic (W&A). The W&A supplied Lee's army from the arsenal in Atlanta. In fact, the junction at Chattanooga, center-square between Huntsville and Knoxville, was key to sever the Confederate forces in the east from those in the west as well as stop supplies and troops from Georgia and Alabama from reaching Lee's army in Virginia. Under the circumstances, the exigencies of war necessitated military occupations at Huntsville and Knoxville, whose cities had the unfortunate occasion to be located between Confederate and Union armies and Chattanooga.[12]

Politically East Tennessee was a strategic asset to the Union. Knoxville, at the center of a region legendary for the pro-Union sentiments of its East Tennessee farmers figured prominently in President Lincoln's war strategy. The prospect of an immediate occupation of this vast and friendly territory, populated by an estimated 40,000 potential Union Army recruits was so vital to the president's war objectives that it reportedly kept him awake at night.[13] Lincoln understood that since most small freeholders of the hilly countryside still remained isolated from the larger market economy, owned few if any slaves, they held no stake in a risky venture like secession. To exploit this opportunity, by June 1861 the war department proceeded with orders to send Federal officers to the Cumberland Gap in southeastern Kentucky in order to form regiments and muster in recruits from East Tennessee. The local Confederates also recognized the strategic value of Knoxville as a leading food-producing region, and located along the East Tennessee railroad line that linked them from Virginia to the arsenal in Atlanta, it made them an obvious target for federal occupation, notwithstanding the fact they perceived themselves as

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[12] Russell S. Bonds, *Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase and the First Medal of Honor,* (Yardley, Pennsylvania: Westholme Publishing, LLC, 2008), 5-6.

[13] Richard Nelson Current *Lincoln's Loyalists: Union Soldiers From the Confederacy,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 29.; Bonds, 7.

surrounded by a hostile "fifth column" of "Lincolnite" traitors who would help the Union invade Tennessee. [14] With that in mind, the Confederate forces established their command of the District of East Tennessee at Knoxville.

Confederate military mobilization for the region centered in Knoxville, and facilitated troop movements for armies deployed throughout the western and eastern theaters of war. Confederate Commander of the District of East Tennessee, Felix Zollicoffer approached the twin challenges of suppressing subversion from within and preventing invasion from without by adopting a conciliatory policy toward Unionists in the town that promised to leave them and their property unmolested if they submitted to Confederate authority. Although most local belligerents probably held a sincere desire to avoid conflict, circumstances eventually conspired to undermine their peaceful coexistence in the garrison. As thousands of rowdy rebel soldiers passed through Knoxville in the summer of 1861, and the government in Richmond passed a new Alien Enemies Act, conflict over old partisan grudges culminated in the arrests of over one hundred Unionists. Civil authorities sympathetic to the Rebel government exercised broad interpretations of the act in order to charge Unionists with a wide variety of crimes of disloyalty. On the other hand, Unionist sheet, the *Knoxville Whig* contributed several withering editorials that scolded the town's most ultra Confederate elite for not volunteering for military service, criticizing those who "made big speeches in favor of the war" of staying behind and collecting large profits by selling supplies to the army. [15] No doubt the editor's right to free speech came into conflict with the Alien Enemies Act.

Throughout the early part of the Confederate Occupation of East Tennessee only a few Unionists, approximately 1,500 men crossed over enemy territory to volunteer for Federal military service; that is until 8 November when an insurrection in the countryside occurred. Small cells of Unionists attacked and

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[14] From the *Knoxville Register* quoted in McKenzie, 87-88.

[15] *Whig* editorial quoted in McKenzie, 99.

seriously damaged five out of the nine attempts on bridges that were burned along the main trunk line from Bristol, Tennessee and down as far south as Bridgeport, Alabama. Post Commander Kirby Smith issued draconian reprisals and declared martial law in Knox, County, where military trials took place for many of the estimated 1,000 prisoners implicated in the rebellion. Two of the five found guilty of the burnings were hanged on a gallows that the military erected in the middle of town. Dozens of Knoxville's influential Unionists including a judge and several state legislators were ordered to be imprisoned without trial until the end of the war.[16] And incidentally, one of those prisoners happened to be the editor of the *Whig.*[17]

Initially, under the watchful eye of the Confederate military authorities Unionists concluded overt resistance was foolhardy. Aside from that, before the bridge burnings the hitherto tolerant Rebels coexisted side by side with Unionists in relative peace. However, the uprisings outside of Knoxville frightened and angered the Confederate authorities prompting them to suppress all public expressions of disloyalty and pass the Confederate Conscription Act. Conscription deeply offended Unionists, many of whom were not old enough, or wealthy enough, to avoid the draft, resulting in a hardening of their attitude. So far, the evidence in East Tennessee was that the primary beneficiary of Confederate conscription was the Union army.[18]

There is evidence that a "radicalization" of East Tennessee's Unionists took place that resulted from the harsh recriminations for the bridge burnings of 8 November 1861. Testimony in claims filed with the Southern Claims Commission after the war corroborates the determination of Union men who resolved they would join the Federal army. Gilbert Underdown of Knox, County responded soon after the conscription act. He maintained that Confederate policies put himself, as well as his

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[16] Current, 29-42.

[17] McKenzie, 105.

[18] Current, 43.

family at risk of reprisal so he decided to leave and he "organized a company for the federal army among my neighbors…I left the Confederate States [so called] at night on 13 December 1861. I left at night afoot in company with some other Union men."[19]

The Conscript Act of 1862 forced Andrew Swan to "leave secretly in the night. I left on foot with a shotgun on my back. I went to Kentucky for the purposes of joining the federal army and to keep out of the rebel army."[20] Official reports of confirm this exodus of Unionists when Knoxville commander J.P. McCowan noted with dismay "Governor Harris' and General Bragg's conscription orders have thrown the whole country into a feverish state and thousands are stampeding to the mountains and to Morgan."[21] McCowan's replacement at Knoxville, Samuel Jones took decisive action to round up the "disloyal and disaffected" Unionists when he sent out a detachment to "kill, capture, or disperse a party of some 200 or 300 armed men collected together in the mountains" to join the enemy in Kentucky.[22]

Another Knox County Unionist testified that, "he aided in the recruiting of the 9th Regiment of the Tennessee Cavalry."[23] He left to go to Kentucky and returned with General Burnsides to liberate Knoxville in September of 1863. He worried about recriminations against his family because of his loyalty to the Union. In order to protect them from the rebel authorities he kept his aid to the enemy a secret from his family and other loyalists in his community. A fellow Unionist and neighbor said of Thompson, "he kept his monetary contributions to the Union to himself so his family would not be injured." Jessie Simpson, a Unionist from Knox County did not leave the area but

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[19] Claim #19921, Gilbert Underdown, Knox County, March 11, 1876.

[20] Testimony of Andrew M. Swan, claim# 15167, Andrew M. Swan and D.B. Swan, Knox County, Tennessee, December 5, 1877,

[21] McCowan quoted in Current, 49-50.

[22] Jones quoted in Current, 50.

[23] Claim#16384, John Thompson, Knox County, October 9, 1877.

contributed to the Union cause by giving "food to the army, and supplying clothes and money to men trying to get over to the federal army." He also took great risks by concealing these men in his home until nighttime so he could ferry them across the French Broad River.[24]

Unionists reacted differently to the Federal occupation of Huntsville. Perhaps the most helpful strategic assistance in support of the Union invasion and occupation of Huntsville came from its own citizen J.Howard Larcombe, the Telegraph Operator. Since Huntsville had the eastern division headquarters for the Memphis & Charleston railroad it was an important objective in Union strategy in order to cut the Confederacy in half by severing the east-west rail artery that connected Chattanooga, Tennessee all the way to the Mississippi River. On the night of 10 April 1862, the eve of General Ormsby McKnight Mithel's planned invasion of Huntsville, several southern couriers arrived at the telegraph office uptown with an urgent dispatch to General Beauregard currently located at the western division in Corinth, Mississippi, that 4-5,000 Union troops were as close as Meridianville. The telegraph was to be dispatched from the uptown office where Mrs. Larcombe operated on the same circuit as the depot office where her husband Mr. Larcome had replaced the regular operator that night.[25] The dispatch was never sent, so as a result, the oblivious inhabitants of Huntsville were jarred awake at dawn by 5,000 undisciplined, overtaxed, and hungry troops. The treacherous Larcombe it was later discovered, also kept a journal where he had written down information about potentially dangerous rebels, and for his trouble Mitchel promptly promoted him to railroad superintendent. Many townspeople immediately suspected the Larcombes branding them as Yankees and Lincolnites.[26]

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[24] Claim #16384, John Thompson, Knox County, October 9, 1877.; Claim #3341, Jessie Simpson, Knox, County, May 19, 1871.

[25] Harncourt, 177.

[26] Chadick, 98-99.

Since Federal forces established headquarters at Huntsville loyalists inside Union lines were protected from Confederate conscription and had access to jobs working for the Federal government. This suggests reasons why fewer Unionists from Madison County than those of East Tennessee mustered into the Federal army. Records of the Southern Claims Commission document that Unionists from the area provided other valuable services to the cause in cooperation with the post at Huntsville. Unionists Thomas McFarland, a mill owner, and local farmer Seaborn Jones, provided reliable information that helped Union soldiers undertaking reconnaissance operations. Proof of their cooperation with the Federal government appeared in records of their names found in a secret service ledger kept by Emile Bourlier, a Federal spy who worked in Huntsville.[27] Spies for the Union either identified themselves personally or communicated through others who vouched for them. Former slaves in the county noticed that McFarland strenuously objected to secession even before the war. The testimony of former slave George Miller established that "I knew he was a union man because I heard him say he was for the union before the war commenced," and another former slave Andrew Rogers who "lived a neighbor by" said "us colored people...thought he was one of the upright and just's men in the country" as he explained "because he had a heap of property and could own slaves but would not do it." Accordingly, McFarland developed a following of ex-slaves who testified that he spoke openly in the presence of fifteen or twenty of them at a time. Other Madison County Unionists periodically reported to the Union district command at Huntsville. According to a Madison County SCC claimant, George Mann, he would periodically show up at Huntsville and claims that, "I went out with commands to show the roads to places where they wanted to go."[28]

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[27] Chadick, 176.

[28] Claim #10249, Thomas McFarland, Madison County, April 16, 1872: Testimony of George Miller and Testimony o of Andrew Rogers.; Claim #2200, George W. Mann, Madison County, August 25, 1876.

Politics in Huntsville reflected the ideology of Jacksonian-era democracy represented by the Democratic Party. North Alabama, including Madison County traditionally voted as conservative Democrats or in 1850 and 1851 as so-called Union Democrats.[29] However, in contrast to the other slaveholding towns of the western Tennessee Valley, Huntsville, seat of the eastern district of North Alabama hosted a Democratic States-Rights party contingent led by Clement Claiborne Clay, who incidentally cooperated with the black-belt fire-eater William Lowndes Yancey.[30] Some scholars attribute this faction in the area to Huntsville's settlement by Georgia's Broad River Group, a socially connected circle of wealthy land speculators, who were also important allies of Senator Clay. Throughout most of this period Northern agitation over the issue of slavery did not dominate North Alabama politics. Any agitation for secession in Alabama largely emanated from Yancey's stronghold in the black belt. Coincidently by the 1850's a geopolitical schism that developed between the northern and southern regions of the state allowed North Alabama's conservative Democrat majority to cooperate with a minority Black-Belt Whig coalition in order to manage each antislavery crisis as it emerged until 1860. In fact, agitation for secession in 1850 met with hostile opposition from Huntsville's Whig press the *Southern Advocate* with a threat that, "If you happen to get North Alabama out of the Union, North Alabama will secede from the new Kingdom and petition to be admitted again into the Union attached to Georgia or Tennessee."[31]

By the time of the vote for secession at the secession convention held in Montgomery, the results demonstrate that the state of Alabama was geographically divided on the issue. North Alabama voted unanimously as cooperationist and South

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[29] Lewy Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860,* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1995), 24-25.

[30] Dorman, 14-16, 23-24.; A fire-eater was an extremist pro-slavery politician who advocated immediate secession from the Union.

[31] Dorman, 24-26.

Alabama voted for immediate secession. There were only a minority of unconditional Unionists left in North Alabama who still remained opposed to secession under any condition and even they dwindled after Lincoln won the election. Most voters sought strategies to forestall an immediate crisis. Delegates to the Convention, cooperationist candidates Nicholas Davis and Jeremiah Clemens handily defeated the secessionist candidates, George P. Beirne and Dr. M.P. Roberts. Cooperationists argued for the more moderate strategy that states should secede together in cooperation rather than individually as way to leverage power and demand further guarantees from the North. Although Nick Davis and Clemens were not enthusiastic about secession, neither the Huntsville district nor any other county in the entire state of Alabama sent an unconditionally Unionist delegate to the convention. One reason is that by 1860 the states-rights faction of the Democratic Party had successfully persuaded a large proportion of the electorate, who had heretofore confidently put their trust in the Federal Government and the Constitution to provide solutions to sectional problems, that the South faced the specter of impending doom. Even in the conservative northern section of Alabama there were not enough pro-Union men left to represent them at the convention. Some counties simply elected Union men on the Cooperationist ticket.[32]

Unionism in Huntsville was best exemplified by a moderate approach demonstrated by the Cooperationist Jeremiah Clemens. Motivated less by political orthodoxy than by winning an election, he astutely adopted a 'wait and see approach' to forestall disunion at least until Lincoln forced the issue by announcing the emancipation of the slaves. Since cooperationism bridged the two extremes, representing a variety of ideas about when and how to cooperate with secession, the ticket also attracted Huntsville's small but committed contingent of unconditional Unionists. Although he was a Cooperationist, Clemens signed the Ordinance of Secession anyway, albeit not without issuing a statement during the convention that

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[32] Dorman, 176.

rationalized his decision based on the promise that he would not have signed it if his vote made a difference in the outcome.[33] He also signed the "Address to the People of Alabama" which committed the signatories to "faithful and zealous support of the state in all consequences that may result from the Ordinance of Secession" and which also contained a sop to the Unionists by its commitment to the democratic principle that the ordinance should be submitted to the state for voter ratification.[34] The irony in putting his name down next to all of those high flown, if not contradictory principles, is Clemens's imminent desertion of his command of the Confederate militia of Alabama within one year, and at no less a rank than major-general. A result of an allegedly corrupt bargain he wrangled in exchange for his influence.

As if Clemens could not be more insufferable at this point, as soon as the Union army occupied North Alabama he was purportedly back in Huntsville acting as an advisor to the post commander at the office of the Provost Marshall, along with the unconditional-Unionist Judge George Washington Lane. Anecdotal evidence of this was found in letters written to the Huntsville native, Confederate Senator C.C. Clay, from his secessionist brother, passing this intelligence along to Senator Clay at Knoxville, Tennessee. In a letter from his desk in exile at Macon, Georgia, the intrepid editor of the *Huntsville Confederate*, J. Withers Clay penned a sarcastic reference to "Jere Clemens, Lane, & Jolly hand in glove with the Feds, hanging about the Provost Officer & apparently enjoying themselves."[35] While also mentioning the generous favors

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[33] Jeremiah Clemens, "The Disunion Movement.: How Hon. Jeremiah Clemons voted for the Secession of Alabama.", *The New York Times,* January 28, 1861, under "Archives."
http//www.nytimes.com/1861/01/28/news/disunion-movment-hon-jeremiah-clemens-voted-for-secession-alabama.html (accessed February 18, 2012).
[34] Ibid.
[35] John Withers Clay to Clement C. Clay, April 1862, Clay Letters 1861-1865, Huntsville Madison County Public Library.

dispensed on behalf of friends of the Union, W. Clay goes on to say that, "Clemens had written a recommendation of Lane for Military Governor of Alabama."[36] All this only one year after Clemons's apoplectic reaction to President Lincoln's appointment of Judge Lane to serve as Federal Judge for the District of North Alabama prompted him to write the Confederate Secretary of War to inform him that the acceptance of this Federal appointment "was treason" and that the '"north Alabama men would gladly hang him.'"[37] One begins to question if Clemens's Unionism is hypocritical or he is just unstable.

Clemens and John Bell who was formerly of the Constitutional Union Party, continued to try work with the Federal government to find ways to end the war. When they attempted to act as emissaries on a trip to Washington they were instructed to return and use their influence to start a Peace Society in Huntsville.[38] The Rebuff by the Lincoln Administration begs the question as to whether Clemens qualifies as a Unionist, or just an opportunist. A glimpse into Clemens's theory of mind could be found in his somewhat biographical novel *Tobias Wilson,* published in 1865. It chronicled the abuse suffered by Union supporters and anti-secessionists in North Alabama during the first years of the war. Perhaps, Clemens feared for his own safety or else he never would have signed the ordinance of secession.[39] However, there is no doubt about Judge Lane. He was an outspoken unconditional-Unionist from the beginning until the end and never recognized secession. For this he endured the persecution of his secessionist neighbors and most especially from the exiled editor of the *Huntsville Confederate.* Dated Wednesday 3 December 1863 under the headline "Portrait of a traitor drawn

[36] Ibid.

[37] Clemens quoted in Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (Spartanburg: The Reprint Company Publishers, 1978), 125.

[38] Fleming, 125

[39] William Warren Rogers et al., *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1994), 131.

from Life," J.Withers Clay scornfully rebuked Judge Lane for "sponging off of others" while living a lavish lifestyle in order to "keep up a genteel appearance."[40]

Unconditional Unionists in Huntsville and Madison County remained pro-Union throughout the war, even under persecution and threats by their rebel opponents. They most likely resorted to casting their lot with Jeremiah Clemens if they had any hope for representation at the Secession Convention. Unionists such as farmer George Campbell or his wealthier neighbor Archibald Steele, who both lived in the same neighborhood for years, built trust over time so they could count on each other for advice and support when talking about their increasingly unpopular opinion about secession. During the canvass on secession in late 1860 Campbell testified to the Southern Claims Commission that, "Mr. Steele said he was a union man and if the people kept changing and going over to the rebels we would all be ruined." That Mr. Campbell took the advice can be summarized by his testimony that, Mr. Steele's reputation made him a trustworthy confidant, and that "I had confidence in what he said."[41] Since Steele had a prosperous five hundred acre plantation and owned twenty-five slaves at the time, he must have exerted some significant influence on his less affluent neighbor.

By comparison politics in Knoxville traditionally reflected a more militant pro-Union and Whig party based ideology. This point of view was informed by its most zealously committed newsweekly, the *Knoxville Whig*. Its editor, the self-proclaimed "unconditional Unionist" leader, Parson William G. Brownlow was famous for piling on epithets to attack his enemies in the Democratic Party. In one particular issue that insulted future president Andrew Johnson, the *Whig* informed readers, "God of compassion! What could the people have been thinking of when they elected this huge mass of corruption to

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[40] *Huntsville Confederate, 1863.*

[41] Testimony of George W. Campbell, claim # 2652, Archibald J. Steele, Madison County, August 3, 1872.

Congress!- this beast in human form" and further assaulted
Johnson's character by instructing his loyal Whigs to conclude
that he was fit only to "serve as one of the body guards of
Belzebub![sic]."[42] The editor scorned the Democratic
"aristocracy" in an effort not to persuade the undecided but to
encourage his faithful readers, the common man. The salient
point here is that Brownlow's 14,000 subscribers identified with
his populist rhetoric, which underscores the character of a region
where a skewed distribution of wealth lent itself well to the
partisan style polemics in the *Whig.* Even in the county,
populated by small holders, tenet farmers, and laborers, the top
five percent of free households owned nearly two thirds of the
wealth.[43] Certainly Parson Brownlow marshaled a powerful base
of support for unconditional Unionism in East Tennessee.
Notwithstanding the different circumstances in wealth and
political representation between the two regions, unconditional
Unionism in North Alabama was not the force of that in East
Tennessee.

Ironically, Brownlow who faithfully preached his anti-
secession message in 1860, either by public speaking tours or in
editorials in the *Whig,* enthusiastically supported East
Tennessee's proposal for independent statehood in the early
1840's. The region's political decline in the state legislature and
consequent failure to secure funds for internal improvements
prompted East Tennessee to question its political attachment to
the rest of the state. Brownlow championed resolutions for
independence, denouncing Nashville as the "seat of dictation."[44]
Evidence that it garnered widespread support east of the
Cumberland Plateau underscores a regional inferiority complex
that parallels the persecution of the Unionists of East Tennessee
that are portrayed in Brownlow's *Whig* by his strenuous defense
of the common man. The sectional strife also parallels North
Alabama's threat to secede from the rest of Alabama in 1851.

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[42] Brownlow quoted in McKenzie, 12.

[43] McKenzie, 41.

[44] Brownlow quoted in McKenzie, 18.

The prospect of disunion threatened to tear the country apart, and no one hated abolitionists more than Parson Brownlow, who blamed all of the big guns of anti-slavery, including Horace Greeley, Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Parker and others who he denounced regularly for agitating sectionalism. For several years leading up to the war the ex-circuit riding clergyman turned newspaper editor toured the North and South to speak on the topic of slavery, and argue strenuously against disunion. The famous polemicist is on record having toured Huntsville in late 1857 to exhort Unionist supporters, and others "irrespective of parties" to fight abolitionism within the Union, for the principle reason that Southerner's should not give up their rights to the national treasury, navy, and the government property.[45] He adroitly decoupled the issue of abolitionism with his anti-secession message. In Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley where many Unionists owned slaves he acknowledged the South's regionally universal identification of Unionism as pro-slavery by denouncing abolitionists as "infidels, as slanderers, as hypocrites, as liars, and as God-forsaken wretches."[46] It stands to reason that Brownlow commonly endorsed a pro slavery populism that sought to portray political conflicts as a struggle between the common people and the corrupt. Parson Brownlow's speech in Huntsville lent his unqualified endorsement of "slavery in the abstract," which made political sense to all Unionists in the Tennessee Valley.[47]

Despite a commonly held erroneous comparison of Knoxville with the heart of a region populated by the loyal mountaineers of East Tennessee who lived in an egalitarian society of freedom and democracy that city was divided. It represented the extreme in wealth stratification. The top five percent of free persons held nearly two thirds of all the town's wealth and property. This disproportionately small aristocracy

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[45] Chadick, 15-16.

[46] Brownlow quoted in Chadick, 15.

[47] McKenzie, 41.

owned all of the slaves and represented some of the town's leading Unionists. Disaffected by Lincoln's issuance of a preliminary emancipation proclamation 22 September 1862, one of Knoxville's leading wealthy Unionists, Thomas A.R. Nelson met with Confederate commander Jones and agreed to write an address to the people of East Tennessee for public circulation. The address denounced Lincoln for the second confiscation act that freed the slaves of any person in rebellion, and proclaimed that, "he would have advocated secession had he believed it was the object of the North to subjugate the South and emancipate our slaves."[48] Emancipation clearly emerged as a wedge issue. Nelson also claimed that, "The Union men of East Tennessee are not now and never were Abolitionists."[49] A week after Nelson's address appeared in the *Knoxville Register,* the pro slavery Parson Brownlow proclaimed to an audience that he endorsed the proclamation merely as a military measure in order to punish the rebels who were responsible for the war but expressed reluctance to give slaves complete freedom. However, further evidence that a significant conflict of interest emerged over slavery is that Unionists already enlisted in the Union's Army of the Cumberland met in March 1863 to voice their approval of the Emancipation. They represented a growing Unionist population that actually advocated emancipation. They would derive great joy in "depriving the rebel master of his slaves" and other property in order to vigorously prosecute the war.[50] Whether out of extensive hardship under Confederate rule, military expediency or old partisan grudges, these "practical-abolitionists" wanted win the war so they could return to their homes and claim their right to take control of the reins of political power.[51]

Partisan conflict emanating from the *Whig* pre-figured what may have led up to the bridge burnings of November of

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[48] T.A.R. Nelson quoted in Current, 50.

[49] Ibid.

[50] McKenzie, 123.

[51] James McPherson quoted in McKenzie, 123.

1861. Three days before the uprising Brownlow slipped out of town after an informant from Nashville warned him that charges were to be brought against him for his treasonous vituperation that the *Whig* had heaped upon the local Confederate garrison commander. With his sarcastic accusations of the local war profiteering allowed at Knoxville, compounded by a local Unionist uprising in the countryside, Brownlow forced the hand of the otherwise magnanimously tolerant Whig, District Commander General Felix Zollicoffer who declared martial law and ordered the parson's arrest along with hundreds of other political prisoners that were dragged in from the countryside. Evidence points to the fact that Brownlow had no knowledge of the planned attacks but with his *Whig* privileges suspended and threatened with exile, the parson went north to serve his cause. So much for Zollicoffer's version of the "Rosewater policy.[52]"

In comparison, Unionists in Huntsville and Knoxville, sympathized or aligned themselves with the Union not so much by their incorporation of national patriotism, as much as by their overlapping, and intertwined relationships with Unionists and others in their community. Unionists identified their loyalty not by their state of mind, but by the way they behaved within the wider community of families, neighbors, churches, and political party associations.[53] In Huntsville after the war commenced, connections between unionists changed, and clear-cut racial and class boundaries became blurred by the need to coalesce around a common cause.

In contrast however, the division within the ranks of Knoxville's Unionists over Lincoln's emancipation of the slaves underscores the differences between Knoxville and Huntsville. The "radically abolitionized" group of men who served in the

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[52] The Rosewater policy is a reference to the Union high command's embrace of lenience toward slaveholders in the occupied garrisoned towns of the South. In this instance the Confederate high command used a similar approach, in hopes that they would win the hearts and minds of the Unionist contingent that remained at the CSA garrison in Knoxville.

[53] McKenzie, 232.

Union army who suffered the most from the war charged their stay at home critics with opportunism. Their divisions erupted over the pre-existing class-consciousness when the war overturned the racial hierarchy.[54]

In summary, Unionists in both towns could not be identified by a so-called "loyal state of mind." Unionism could not be defined as commitment that superseded all other connections to the state, community, or family. It is just as likely that opposition to secession in East Tennessee and North Alabama was not just about loyalty to the Union but also about an incorporation of other bonds, rather than a way to supersede local and familial bonds that Unionists truly did hold dear.

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[54] McKenzie, 189.

NOTES

Huntsville-Madison County
Historical Society
Box 666
Huntsville, Alabama 35804