

KENTUCKY'S "PURCHASE" AREA DURING THE CIVIL WAR

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In 1861, events in Paducah and the "Jackson Purchase" region of Kentucky forced the Commonwealth to take a stand and remain in the Union as a loyal, slave-holding state. This region was still Indian territory as late as 1819 and its late settlement, in part, explains why its people were ardently pro-south when secession from the federal union began. The people had only recently arrived in the area. No bridge connected Kentucky to the north in 1860. Trade and family connections in the Purchase were also oriented toward the south. Ironically, Kentucky's last frontier also was the Commonwealth's first part to be described by Europeans; hence, the first and last frontier was the "Purchase" region. In 1673 French Father Jacque Marquette noted in his diary that "we have entered mosquito country." He also pointed out that they had seen natives armed with English weapons. The party of Marquette and Joliet entered into a mighty river they called *la belle Rivière* and continued south, passing high banks marked with seemed to be bands of rusting ore. To this day the name given by Marquette persists: *mines au fer* or Iron Banks at what is now the dying town of Columbus. English claim to what is now Kentucky derives from the grant to the Virginia Company to settle and claim all lands west and northwest from sea to sea. Gradually Virginia pushed west, seeping through the mountain barrier via the "Cumberland Gap" and by using the

Ohio River. In 1780, George Rogers Clark established Fort Jefferson on the Mississippi River but was driven out by the Chickasaw and their English allies. Due to the hostility of these native claimants it was not possible to settle in this region until after the Treaty of 1819, ending Chickasaw claim to that part of Kentucky [and Tennessee] between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers.³⁰ By the time settlement started in this region, the old frontier, started under the claim of Virginia, had breached the Appalachian mountains, added what is now Kentucky; and, with the conquest by George Rogers Clark during the American Revolution of the Old Northwest Territory, the Ohio valley to that of the United States; then adding a further claim, purchased from France in 1803, extended to the Pacific Ocean. Missouri became a state in 1820 before the western part of Kentucky was opened to settlement.

In 1819, Isaac Shelby of Kentucky and Andrew Jackson of Tennessee purchased the

³⁰ *Journal of Father Jacques Marquette in Illinois Historical Collections*, edited by H. W. Beckwith (Springfield: H. W. Rokker Co., 1903) I, 33. Native Americans held that the principal river in America was the Ohio and the lower Mississippi. Anyone taking the time to see Fort Defiance at Cairo, IL would agree. At the confluence of the upper Mississippi with the Ohio, the Ohio is over a mile wide while the Mississippi is a puny tributary stream. The French, however, insisted that the upper-lower Mississippi was one stream, giving them claim to the entire Ohio Valley. In 1671, Abraham Wood of Virginia sent a party out that reached a stream flowing into the Ohio. This conflict of claims led to a series of wars for control of North America. England won; still, the French perception of the main river- the Mississippi- persists.

Chickasaw claim to all lands in both Tennessee and Kentucky between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers. A boundary dispute between Kentucky and Tennessee delayed settlement until 1821. Kentucky created Hickman County with its seat at Columbus in 1821 to extend to all lands newly acquired.³¹

The probability that one of the last towns formed in the Kentucky Purchase region would become the largest, despite a bewildering dispute of ownership, but such was the founding of Paducah. On the way to the conquest of the Northwest Territory in 1777-8, George Rogers Clark passed the mouth of the Tennessee River. Later, he would claim 37,000 acres along what became Clark's River under a Virginia Treasury Warrant. The Porterfield family laid a rival claim, based on a Virginia Military Warrant which usually took precedence over a Treasury Warrant. The dispute went to the Supreme Court of the United States. The man responsible for the U.S. having the area north of the Ohio, east of the Mississippi River over to the Appalachian Mountains, George Rogers Clark, died bitter, broke, and burned [literally as he fell into the fireplace while drunk, contributing to his death]. His claims to the mouth of the Tennessee River were tied up and kept younger brother William from getting a title for some years. In 1827, William laid out a town

³¹ In 1805, James Robertson and Silas Dinsmoor purchased the Chickasaw claim to lands between the Cumberland and the Tennessee rivers. See James J. Malone, *The Chickasaw Nation* (Louisville: John P. Morton and Co., 1922), 305. For act creating Hickman County, see *Acts of Kentucky, 1821*, 390. Later Calloway was added in *Acts 1822-23*, 86 Graves, *1823-24*, 338, and McCracken in *1824*.

at the mouth of the Tennessee River and named it Paducah [not for an individual, but for a tribe he heard of on his westward trek with Meriwether Lewis] the *Padouca*. In a letter to his son, Meriwether Lewis Clark, then 15 and a cadet at West Point, Clark changed the spelling to make it easier for English speakers to master PA DU CAH.³²

Ironically, the seat of McCracken originally was at Wilmington but that proved subject to periodic flooding and county offices were moved to Paducah in 1831, despite the fact that this site was on the extreme northern end of a county that originally extended from the Tennessee River to the Mississippi River [later, Ballard was created from the southwestern portions of the country. McCracken County, founded in 1825, was the last formed in the Kentucky share of the original four counties in the Purchase after Hickman, 1821, Calloway, 1822, and Graves, 1823.

In 1827, lots were sold for the village of Paducah. Located at the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio rivers, the town proved suitable as a break-in-bulk site for river traffic. The shore of

³² Clark's Treasury Warrant was dated May 18, 1780. Charles Porterfield commanded a regiment at the Battle of Camden in the Revolution; he was killed. The Porterfield family had three patents dated 1824, 1825, and 1826 based on the military warrant. See *Reports of Decision of the Supreme Court of the U.S.*, ed. B. R. Curtis, Vol. XV (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1870). *Porterfield v Clark* 2 How 76, 40-61 and *Reports of Cases Argued and Decided in the Supreme Court of the U.S.*, ed. Stephen K. Williams, Book XI, cont How Vol. 1, 2,3, 4 (Newark, N.Y.: The Lawyers' Co-op Publishing Co., 1883) 74-125. The affirmation of the Clark claim came in 1844.

the village became lined with piles of timber for fueling passing steamboats. Paducah grew. In 1842, Watts, Given & Co established a wharf boat company to cater to river traffic. In 1843 Elijah Murray constructed the Marine Ways to build and repair river craft. It took seventeen days to travel against the current from New Orleans to Louisville, where the falls were an impediment. Paducah was a stop to transship cargo destined up the shallower streams. The Tennessee was open as far as Mussel Shoals in Alabama. One could go up the Ohio to Smithland and take the Cumberland to Nashville; however, shallow water at what is now Eddyville limited the size of boats and cargo.

In 1840, The Methodist Episcopal Church organized territory purchased from the Chickasaw in 1818 into the Memphis Conference with boundaries generally coinciding with the Chickasaw claims. The conference ran from the Tennessee River at Paducah to northern Mississippi. In 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Baltimore, became the first national organization to split north and south over slavery. Ironically, in 1867 at the 28th annual meeting of the Memphis Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South held in Paducah voted to rejoin into one national organization, the United Methodist Church, which was done in 1939. The North-South schism ended. However, the Memphis Conference still contains lands in western Kentucky.

The Census of 1850 listed 1,141 males and 972 females in Paducah. This included 374 slaves and 18 free African Americans. A wide variety of firms and services were available. One could buy agricultural

implements and ambrotypes. These were 21 attorneys available [and needed] to settle land disputes, protect property, and uphold the law in a raw river town. Nine carpenters and two carriage makers assured those wishing for better buggies and dwellings. Three bakers matched three bankers if one needed "bread." Three tailors, three suppliers of shoes, and three sellers of jewelry were available. One silversmith was enough apparently. Fair's Cornet bank livened up the scene in the city as did two coffee houses, a distillery, and four hotels. Rounding out cultural opportunities were four schools, two seminaries, and one seller of magazines. The visitor also could count on Louis Mueller's Pleasure Garden for potables. Paducah progressed. On March 10, 1853, the community became a third-class city. By 1860, the town had a population that exceeded 6,000.

The 1850s saw railroads expanding rapidly across the nation. Steamboats continued to be the main mode of travel up to the Civil War but the shift to rail was gaining rapidly. In 1850 Congress encouraged a railroad linking the Great Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico. The Illinois Central ran from Chicago to Cairo with standard gauge [4 feet 8.5 inches] while the line running from Mobile to the Ohio River [actually ended at Columbus on the Mississippi] was five feet wide. A ferry carried engine and cars fifteen miles to close the gap. The General Assembly of Kentucky in 1851-2 helped Paducah to fulfill its dream of connecting into this north-south rail line. The city agreed to buy stock in the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad to run from Paducah to connect with the IC-M&O near Troy, TN. Judges L. M.

Flournoy and James Campbell joined with John W. Crockett, S. F. Singleton, B. F. Givens, Henry Enders, James Langstaff, and William Norton to promote the line. Lloyd Tilghman, a West Point graduate, was the engineer named to supervise construction.

Tilghman had experience on various railroad projects in the North and in Central America. Completion of this project made Paducah more important strategically as war approached between the North and South. Along with the railroad, the telegraph connected Paducah to southern points; no permanent bridge existed. The Ohio River still was a barrier to both communication and transportation in 1860. Paducahans were more connected to the South than to the North.

Paducah, one of the most pro-Southern sites in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, guarded portals into river routes that pierced deeply into the heart of the southern states. This proved to be a decisive fact in the winning of the Civil War when U. S. Grant took on himself to seize neutral Paducah to prevent its fall into Confederate hands. Many in Paducah supported the idea of separating from the rest of Kentucky [as the Methodists had] and joining the seceding states. At a meeting held at Mayfield, Kentucky, on May 29, 1861, "a group of Southern sympathizers from Kentucky and Tennessee met at the Graves County Courthouse to discuss the possibility of aligning the Purchase" with Tennessee in secession. "Most records of the event were lost, possibly in an 1887 fire that destroyed the courthouse. In 1907, Fulton County judge Herbert Carr declared in a speech that the Mayfield Convention adopted a resolution for secession, and

a historical marker in front of the courthouse also proclaims this as fact. However, the surviving records of the meeting, authored by a Union sympathizer, make no mention of this resolution, and historian Berry Craig opines that the convention believed the whole of Kentucky would eventually secede and make a resolution for the Purchase to break away unnecessary."³³

The Governor's election in Kentucky in 1859 signaled that the Commonwealth stood for the Democratic Party. Beriah Magoffin and Linn Boyd won. Magoffin became Governor while Boyd, who lived in Paducah at the time of the election, previously had worked diligently along with Whig Henry Clary of Kentucky to get the last successful compromise on slavery through the Congress in 1850. Boyd died before he could be sworn in as Lieutenant Governor. The victory of the Democratic Party signaled that Kentucky leaned southward politically. Therefore, it was no surprise that in the presidential election of 1860, Kentucky had little regard for the new Republican Party and Abraham Lincoln [despite his being a Kentuckian by birth]. Kentucky chose a moderate position and backed John Bell of Tennessee and his Constitutional Union party rather than either Democratic candidate, Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois for the northern Democrats or even Kentuckian and sitting Vice

³³ See *Wikipedia* article quoting Craig's account in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*. See Craig, Berry F. (Autumn 2001). "The Jackson Purchase Considers Secession: The 1861 Mayfield Convention". *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 99 (4): pp. 339-361.

President John C. Breckinridge for Southern Democrats.

Q. Q. Quigley, city attorney, kept a diary. As Kentucky teetered between North and South after South Carolina seceded he noted on page 100, Friday night December 21, 1860: "For several months the dread of dissolution of our union has awakened the deepest concern in the minds of our people. The dread preceding principally from the belief that South Carolina would go out under the doctrine (erroneously), I think, that each state has a right under the constitution to secede. She, being the proof of the sufficiency of the cause [sic]. In the exercise of that principle she, South Carolina, on the 19th has conventioned, called by the legislature, passed a resolution declaring her disservernace [sic] from the Union. This I regard as the apple of discord, as a new Pandora's box opened up scattering over the whole country seeds which shall ripen with revolt, revolution, Civil War, and a thousand untold and incalculable evils that time alone can fully develop. The principle once established that a state can thus with impunity throw off her allegiance to the general government only establishes the fact that in reality we never had such and that our boasted constitution was simply a sublime farce and the changes in making may but foreshadow by her change from sunshine to storm the political state we are reaching."

A meeting held in Paducah's Gardner Hall on December 22, according to Quigley, "seethed with hostile undercurrents." Editor R. B. J. Twyman offered a resolution Quigley belittled. Twyman was an outspoken Democrat. When word reached

Paducah that South Carolina had seceded, Twyman noted: "when the telegraph announced that South Carolina had seceded from the Union, there were not half a dozen out-spoken secessionists in Paducah." Over time, that changed. "But as State after State went out and took their stand by the side of South Carolina, the secession element gained strength, and one by one, the people turned over to the side of the Southern Confederacy." Twyman reminded his audience that "The Union party, however, maintained the ascendancy in Paducah until military force of South Carolina fired upon Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861. As soon as the wires flashed the news of the surrender of this fortification throughout the country, war was considered as having commenced, and all were wild with excitement. Men and women seemed really to go mad." Firing began at 4:30 a.m. eastern time. In Paducah, the telegraph brought the news while the town slept. When they heard about the opening shots, "Paducahans lit lanterns and hung them on their gates as a gesture of support. By first light, the town glowed." Still, Paducah did nothing even though the Union officer forced to surrender Fort Sumter was related to the Andersons at Paducah. Nor did Kentucky take a stand.

Both North and South asked Kentucky to join them as the state had a large, well equipped State Guard. Governor Magoffin refused Lincoln's request rather brusly but was equally unwilling to go South [however, his refusal was in softer terms.]. Confederate Gideon J. Pillow, commanding at Memphis, and John C. Frémont, commanding

Federal forces from St. Louis, watched Kentucky's wavering with trepidation, both fearing that the Commonwealth might go against their positions. The prize both sought was the high ground at Columbus on the lower Mississippi River and Paducah at the mouth of the Tennessee River with the terminus of the NO&O railroad at that city. Pillow heard that federals seemed to be preparing to take Columbus. The mayor of that town begged Pillow to come shield them from the Northern threat. The source of this anxiety was the voyage of the *City of Alton* down the Mississippi from Cairo, IL. The steamer came upon Columbus and noted that a rebel flag was flying. The boat coasted with the current past the town, while a non-military party jumped off the boat, tore down the flag, and re-boarded the boat as it turned back north. Technically neutrality was not breeched. An account in the *Louisville Daily Courier* June 1, 1861, with a Cairo dateline identified William Banks, captain of the boat, and its pilot as the landing party. General George McClellan, commanding officer at Cincinnati, called upon General Simon Bolivar Buckner, head of the Kentucky State Guard, and Beriah Magoffin, the Governor, to enforce neutrality in Kentucky or he would be compelled to take action. Lloyd Tilghman, commanding the State Guard at Paducah, took six companies of the Guard, four of infantry, one of artillery, and one of cavalry to Columbus. The incident was resolved for a time. [Shortly after, Tilghman went to Guthrie, TN and organized the Third Kentucky regiment, with many of the former state guard members included. Tilghman never returned to Kentucky.]

Just as worries over the neutrality of Kentucky seemed assured, another incident at Paducah threatened to force Kentucky into a decision. On August 20, 1861, a federal gunboat, the USS *Lexington* arrived at Paducah, "fastened on to the [W.B.] *Terry*, cut her cables, and went off down the river" according to Quigley's journal. The action took place at "half past six a.m." and the "affair was handsomely and speedily done." R.N. Stembel, commander of the Union gunboat, reported the action to Colonel Richard J. Oglesby at Cairo as being "justified." He reported that "I had indisputable proof which examination of her papers found on board confirmed, that she was running in the employment of the Confederacy." Word of Stembel's raid reached the area commander, General Frémont, who, in turn, sent his own report to General Lorenzo Thomas, adjutant general of the army. "Events had thus transpired clearly indicating the complicity of citizens of Kentucky with the rebel forces, and showing the impracticability of carrying on operations in that direction without involving Kentucky."³⁴

³⁴ John E. L. Robertson, *Paducah, Frontier to the Atomic Age: The Making of America Series*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2002, 30-31. Three residents of Paducah and one from Mississippi jointly owned the packet. In retaliation for Stembel's seizure, Captain Johnson, late skipper of the *W. B. Terry*, A. M. Watson, White Fowler, and other Paducah citizens seized the *Samuel Orr*, the regular mail packet between Paducah and Evansville, IN. and ran it up the Tennessee River to Confederate territory. After the war, citizens of Paducah had to pay damages to the owners of the mail packet.

In Memphis, newly arrived Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk heard of the violations of the neutrality of Kentucky and decided to take prompt action without consulting with Richmond. He sent a telegram explaining his action to Governor Magoffin of Kentucky. "I think it is the greatest consequence to the Southern cause in Kentucky or elsewhere that I should be ahead of the enemy in occupying Columbus and Paducah." Polk sent Pillow to Hickman and he took Columbus. Since the South invaded neutral Kentucky, the Legislature declared for the Union. Kentucky was a loyal state.³⁵

At Cairo, IL a new commander, U.S. Grant, arrived in Cairo on the IC RR late in the evening and went to the headquarters of Colonel Richard Oglesby. In civilian clothing and travel worn, Grant was not an impressive figure to the desk NCO who notified Oglesby that the stranger wished to see him. Looking out, the colonel told the NCO not to bother him. When Grant heard the response, he sat down, took out an envelope, and wrote a brief note relieving Oglesby and sending him out to Fort Defiance to commune with the ducks. A new force had arrived! News of Polk's move into Kentucky came late in the day and Grant moved decisively. He organized a landing party consisting of the 9th and 12th Illinois and a four-gun battery of artillery, boarded steamers, and lay out on the Ohio River

³⁵ *Ibid.* Later, the Confederates invaded Kentucky. While occupying Bowling Green, a poll was taken among Kentuckians behind the Rebel lines and of those in the rebel army and they did proclaim a Confederate State of Kentucky; however, it never was approved by the Legislature.

until dawn. [He chose this to prevent a recall from his commander, General Frémont in St. Louis]. Early the next day Paducahans, with galluses off their shoulders, went out toward the conveniences behind their houses only to see blue coated strangers marching up from the river. Confederate flags were flying in Paducah in anticipation of the imminent arrival of Southern troops, who were expected about noon, according to common report. The unexpected appearance of blue uniforms offended many in Paducah.

Many Federals thought most Paducahans were rebels. However, the troops, according to Grant's *Memoirs*, noted so many "plump small-boned women" a pleasant surprise, and they "fell in love with Paducah on sight." Grant wrote, "When the National troops entered the town the citizens were taken by surprise. I never after saw such consternation depicted on the faces of the people." "Men, women, and children came out of their doors looking pale and frightened at the presence of the invader. They were expecting rebel troops that day." According to Grant, the rebels had nearly 4,000 men from Columbus and "were at that time within ten or fifteen miles of Paducah on their way to occupy the place." Actually, Frank Cheatham did have a small group near Mayfield and was proceeding toward Paducah when he heard of Grant's move. Cheatham returned to Columbus. Once ashore Grant moved swiftly. He had to. Grant seized the Marine hospital, the railroad, and the telegraph office. As he recalled, "I had but two regiments and one battery with me; but the enemy did not know this and returned to Columbus. I

stationed my troops at best points to guard the roads leading into the city, left the gunboats to guard the river front and by noon was ready to start on my return to Cairo."

Grant tried to assuage the populace. "Before leaving, however, I addressed a short printed proclamation to the citizens of Paducah assuring them of our approaches to the city." He also seized a quantity of supplies including 2 tons of leather destined for the South and other contraband items. Grant left explicit orders for the deportment of the troops to prevent their plundering the populace or aggravating them further than was absolutely. Brigadier Eleazer A. Paine of Illinois was placed in temporary command.³⁶

³⁶ Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs*. Two Vols. New York: Charles L. Webster and Co., I, 264-5, 1885.

PROCLAMATION, O THE CITIZENS OF **PADUCAH!**

I have come among you, not as an enemy, but as your friend and fellow-citizen, not to injure or annoy you, but to respect the rights, and to defend and enforce the rights of all loyal citizens. An enemy, in rebellion against our common Government, has taken possession of, and planted its guns upon the soil of Kentucky and fired upon our flag. Hickman and Columbus are in his hands. He is moving upon your city. I am here to defend you against this enemy and to assert and maintain the authority and sovereignty of your Government and mine. I have nothing to do with opinions. I shall deal only with armed rebellion and its aiders and abetors.

You can pursue your usual vocations without fear or hindrance. The strong arm of the Government is here to protect its friends, and to punish only its enemies. Whenever it is manifest that you are able to defend yourselves, to maintain the authority of your Government and protect the rights of all its loyal citizens, I shall withdraw the forces under my command from your city.

U. S. GRANT,

Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.

Paducah, Sept 6th. 1861.

Grant's next act helped bind Kentucky to that part of the United States north of the Ohio River. He spanned the Ohio with a pontoon bridge consisting of one hundred and twenty three 40-foot barges. This first physical link N-S across the Ohio River allowed Grant to rush additional troops to Paducah. Confederates were in fact moving toward Paducah, but withdrew on learning of Grant's coup. The bridge ended near the Federal Hospital serving mariners on the inland waterways. This allowed Grant to store military supplies without having to

commandeer Kentucky owned sites. Grant sent a telegram to Governor Magoffin explaining why he took this action. For this, he was reprimanded but the Union kept Paducah and Kentucky declared for the Union.³⁷

It soon appeared that Paducah would be the staging point for a major offensive against the South. Grant was a fighter. No one would fault him on that. Grant sent General C. F. Smith to Paducah to replace Paine. Smith was Regular Army and had been at West Point when Grant arrived to study there. Grant was confident that Smith would soon have the Paducah garrison in tip top fighting trim. In fact, Grant kept new recruits at Cairo and sent Smith his more experienced men. Smith faced a growing Confederate presence in Kentucky. The rebels established a line running from Columbus in the west to Bowling Green, where Simon Bolivar Buckner, lately of the Kentucky State Guard, held the high ground, cutting the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. To the east, Felix Zollicoffer held the passes near the Cumberland Gap. Grant countered with Fort Holt and Fort Jefferson at Wickliffe and Fort Anderson at Paducah. Confederates under General Polk still held the high ground at Columbus and mounted heavy artillery to interdict traffic on the Mississippi River. Grant repeatedly asked for permission to move against it.³⁸

³⁷ This bridge lasted until the next flood; still, it proved its usefulness. After the war, a whole series of permanent bridges were built across the Ohio River.

³⁸ John E .L. Robertson, *Paducah 1830-1980: A Sesquicentennial History*. Paducah: Image Graphics, 1980, 41. This Federal Marine Hospital was among those initially authorized by John

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On September 8, 1861, Union Colonel G. Waagner boarded the ironclad steamer *Lexington* at Cairo and set off for a reconnaissance of rebel positions at Columbus. Approaching Lucas Bend at the extreme range of Confederate artillery, he came under fire from twenty four pounder howitzers along with both twenty-four and thirty-two pound artillery on barbette carriages. All fell short due to weak powder and fuse cut too long. Two Confederate boats set out, charging against the current. The *Lexington* retired without damage.³⁹

Grant kept requesting that Frémont allow him to attack Columbus. He continued to send scouts down river. On September 10, the situation changed. General Albert Sidney Johnston, a Kentuckian many considered to be the most effective and experienced officer in either army, superseded Polk as commander of Department #2. After another minor skirmish, Grant and Polk reacted differently. Grant petitioned Frémont more vigorously for permission to move against Columbus while Polk asked for more personnel to defend his post. Grant reported on September 10 that the Confederates were sending troops across the Mississippi River to Belmont, MO. He noted in his latest assessment that artillery had been placed at

Adams in 1798 as a prepaid health insurance plan for those working on the inland waterways. Kentucky had two: Louisville, with one hundred beds, and Paducah, with fifty beds. Architect Robert Mills designed the structures.

³⁹ *Official Records*, Series I, III, 167-168, report of the sortie by Waagner to Grant. Waagner was Grant's Chief of Artillery and he was assessing the strength of the Confederate batteries.

Belmont, allowing a cross fire on any craft running the defenses of the Iron Banks. Grant felt the skirmishes near Lucas Bend was "good for Morale" and added "with a little addition to my present force I would take Columbus."⁴⁰ The following day Grant ordered Colonel Oglesby, commanding at Norfolk, MO, to probe the enemy and "keep annoying the enemy in every way possible."⁴¹ The next day Grant told Frémont that he was "of the opinion that if a demonstration was made from Paducah toward Union City [TN] supported by two columns on the Kentucky side from here, the gunboats, and a force moving upon Belmont, the enemy would be forced to leave Columbus, leaving behind their heavy ordnance. I submit this to your consideration, and will hold myself in readiness to execute this or any plan you may adopt."⁴²

Nothing came of Grant's pleas until early in November. On the second, Grant received orders to assist Frémont's effort to oust Sterling Price from Missouri. Price had taken Lexington, MO and the Union desperately needed to drive him out. Grant was to send Oglesby with his troops, along with those of Colonel J. B. Plummer (with the Eleventh Missouri Volunteers at Cape Girardeau) toward Bloomfield. This would attract the attention of the enemy.⁴³ Grant then ordered all remaining troops

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 168-9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 487, Grant to Oglesby and Waagner, September 11.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 268. Oglesby was to take the 8th, 18th, and 29th Illinois infantry, four companies of the 11th Illinois, three companies of

under his command to make a demonstration against Columbus. Grant also informed General Smith, commanding at Paducah, to make a similar demonstration on the Kentucky side of the river toward Columbus, forcing Polk to react, relieving further pressure on Frémont.

The Battle of Belmont often is overlooked as it was to be a diversion. Some hold that it was a Confederate victory in that they occupied the field and suffered fewer casualties. However, Grant did accomplish his mission in that he cut through the enemy defensive line and took Belmont. True, his forces became disorganized due to looting the enemy camp but Grant managed to reform them, cut his way back through an encircling foe, and embark on his transports. The last man back was Grant. Also the South came within a few inches of winning the war in this battle. The boats were pulling away from the bank as Grant rode up. Someone pushed out a plank to the bank and his horse slid down it to safety. Grant went to the cabin on the bridge and threw his exhausted body on a couch. Then "I did not keep that position a moment, but rose to go out on deck to observe what was going on. I had scarcely left the sofa when a musket ball entered the room, struck the head of the sofa, passed through it and lodged in the foot." Without

cavalry, and a section of artillery and proceed to Sikeston (thirty miles from Oglesby's position at Bird's Point, near Cairo). Plummer was to go from Cape Girardeau with his 1th Missouri Volunteers toward Bloomfield to distract the enemy who were reported to be sending troops from Columbus to aid Price.

Grant it is doubtful that the Union would have won the war.⁴⁴

On the Kentucky shore, events were less hectic. General Smith did as Grant ordered and expected. One of Smith's officers let his enthusiasm [or desire for glory] generated by the sound of battle excite him so that he advanced beyond the limit set by Grant. This breach of discipline so incensed Smith that he demanded a court martial for E. A. Paine. Smith charged Paine with having "a fixed purpose from the start to gain notoriety without reference to the public service or his plain duty as a soldier." Paine proved later to be a nemesis for Paducah, offending Jews, merchants, mayors, and masses in Paducah before he was finished.⁴⁵

Occupation of Paducah by Union forces led to friction between the troops and many civilians that gradually hardened into hatred as time passed. Many in Paducah did not hesitate to show displeasure with federal officials during the election of 1862. General Jeremiah T. Boyles, the new commander of the Department of Kentucky, ordered the military to assure that only loyal citizens were voted. This effectively prevented any Democrat from casting a ballot.

Another source of friction arose as the military effectively commandeered the services of several Paducahans such as George Oehlschlaeger, the baker, and Ferd Hummel, gunsmith. Nevertheless,

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 164-167.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 299-300. Unfortunately for Paducah, Smith did not put Paine to trial. He had powerful allies in Illinois and Ohio.

the city remained quiet through 1861-2 except for local delight at the developing discontent between Union generals Smith and Paine. Smarting over the reprimand he received at the raid on Belmont, a letter appeared criticizing Smith for being "soft" on rebels. Smith felt he knew the source of the rumor: "they were the work of a poor devil as a man or as a soldier by the name of Paine." Smith felt Paine was trying to get him removed from command. General Henry Halleck had replaced Frémont in command at St. Louis. Halleck sided with Smith and sent Paine to Bird's Point near Cairo. Later, Paine did return to Paducah, much to the regret of many.⁴⁶

Early in 1862, Grant started the campaign that eventually cost the South use of the Mississippi and perhaps the war. The first objective was a poorly designed and even worst constructed fort on the Tennessee River near the border with Tennessee. Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman of Paducah commanded Fort Henry. This post was poorly planned and placed in a position subject to flooding because at the time Kentucky was neutral and it was the best available. A better site just to the south lay in Tennessee. In 1862, Fort Henry actually was not defensible but Tilghman had to try. He sent his infantry by land to Fort Donelson and readied the fort to face Grant's fleet under Andrew Foote. For some reason, Tilghman decided to stay

⁴⁶ Bruce Catton, *Grant Moves South*. Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown, and Co., 1960, 87, quoting Smith Papers and a letter of John O. Hawkins, a staff officer of Halleck's, writing in 1906 in *Reunion Book of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee*, 92-93; Also "Recollections of the Fallen" in the *Army and Navy Journal*, July 8, 1865.

and serve as a gunner. This decision on February 6 resulted in his being the first of many Confederate generals to surrender to U.S. Grant.⁴⁷

Union forces withdrew down the Tennessee to Paducah and then up the Ohio eleven miles and entered the Cumberland River. With high water, the rough patch at Eddyville was no problem. What proved to be a most difficult problem facing the Union force was Fort Donelson where Generals Gideon Pillow, John Floyd, and Simon Bolivar Buckner hunkered down and allowed the Union force to surround them. Grant assumed Pillow was in command. He had been a Major General of Volunteers during the Mexican War where Grant met him and saw him as an incompetent amateur. John Floyd, recently Secretary of War under the Buchanan administration, had seen to it that all federal arsenals in what became Confederate states were stocked with arms and equipment and feared he would be charged with treason if captured. Even though he was junior to Pillow or Floyd, Buckner found himself alone to ask for terms of surrender. Grant, thinking he was dealing with Pillow, gave the most insulting terms possible: **unconditional surrender**. Word of this made Grant a

⁴⁷ Tilghman was in the Mexican War but got little combat experience. Late in the conflict he did command an artillery unit. He never got over the thrill of directing artillery, as was evidenced at Fort Henry. Later, after conducting a successful withdrawal in the face of a determined enemy near Vicksburg, Tilghman made a decision to stay behind and direct artillery. This cost General Lloyd Tilghman and his son their lives.

national hero. To the grateful North, U.S. Grant became Unconditional Surrender Grant.⁴⁸

Relations between Kentucky state officials and federal military became strained in 1862. The latter wished to assure that the rebels would gain no supporters in the elections. In Louisville, General Jerry Boyle issued General Order Five: "No persons hostile in opinion to the government and desiring its overthrow, will be allowed to stand for office in the district of Kentucky." This order was instrumental in achieving the election of R. K. Williams of Paducah to the Court of Appeals for the Fourth District; however, other candidates did not fare as well. Voter turnout was light. Union supporters won everywhere because the decision to allow a person to vote was not determined by the state's election officials but by the military. Officials of the state protested this violation of their constitutional rights as a loyal state. Governor Magoffin supplied a detailed list of irregularities to the state legislature on August 12, 1862. Documents included correspondence between Circuit Judge Wiley P. Fowler of Smithland, County Judge G. A. Flournoy and Circuit Clerk Thomas D. Grundy of McCracken County, and Colonel S. Noble, commanding the U.S. Army at Paducah.

The dispute between Noble and Fowler questioned the extent of state power during a period of war. Noble wrote Fowler that "officers of

⁴⁸ There is an irony in the surrender of Buckner to Grant. After leaving the Army, Grant found himself in New York without funds to return to Illinois. He ran into Buckner who he had known at West Point and got the needed ticket home.

your court in different counties are secessionists, and have not taken an oath of allegiance." He further claimed that these same men were "oppressing Union men and talking treason in the very presence of the court." Noble lectured Fowler: "the Union army came here to sustain and defend the constitution of the United States, to protect Union men, and punish treason wherever it may be found, whether in high or low places." Fowler must assure that all jurors, both grand and petit, should take the oath before being impaneled. Noble concluded, "I want a record of such oath sent to these headquarters." Fowler refused to comply. He noted that he had complied with all the requirements of the Constitution of Kentucky and "refused to yield to any dictation by military authority as to the discharge of his duties as presiding officer of the court, and ordered an immediate adjournment until court in course" according to Richard Collins's *History of Kentucky*. Magoffin advised Fowler not to appear as ordered at Paducah. Fowler did appear on May 23.

Noble also held Flournoy and Grundy to the same oath requirement. They told the colonel that they had taken all the oaths necessary and required by the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. They were also denied the exercise of their offices. Magoffin protested this usurpation of power over the state to John J. Crittenden and the senator took the matter to the secretary of war. On June 7, Crittenden was informed that General Halleck would investigate. Nothing happened.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Robertson, *Paducah: Frontier to the Atomic Age*, *op. cit.*, 45-6.

After Donelson, Grant continued to move south despite the desperate struggle at Shiloh and his temporary relief by General Hallick. Paducah helped deal with the growing number of wounded. The Federal Marine Hospital was not able to cope and additional facilities were added: A tobacco warehouse, the courthouse, and the Grace Episcopal Church were pressed into service. Despite the growing distance Grant was from Paducah, his actions often vibrated up the rivers and shook to the very core of the city. For example, Jews in Paducah were among those singled out by Grant and ordered to leave his command without delay. This was the infamous General Order 11 issued December 17, 1862 from HQ at Holly Springs, MS. It stated: "The Jews, as a class violated regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department within twenty-four hours from receipt of this order." The wording made no exceptions, not even to Grant's officers and men. This proved to be most blatant example of anti-Semitism in the history of the nation. The problem Grant wished to solve involved contraband cotton. At the start of the war, the South hoped to use its cotton crop as a bribe to get European recognition. This did not happen. As Grant and his Army of the Tennessee probed ever deep into the core of the Confederacy, the explosive demand for cotton for the northern mills soared. Lincoln insisted that Treasury Department, with enforcement by the military, control this profitable "black market." As commander of the military theater, Grant was

responsible for issuing licenses to deal in the treasured bales. Unlicensed traders tried to bribe Union officers and often succeeded. In the fall of 1862 Grant's HQ was besieged by parties seeking trade in cotton, including Grant's father! Perhaps in exasperation Grant retaliated with General Order 11. Like Grant, Henry Halleck, commanding General of the Army, felt that this illegal trade was heavily influenced by "Jews" and "unprincipled traitors." In fact, it seems likely that both Grant and Halleck assumed that Jews were *de facto* not citizens of the United States [most were immigrants from Germany]. *They were Jews*. Some Jewish traders had to trudge forty miles to get out from Grant's territory. In Paducah, the military gave the thirty Jewish families twenty-four hours to leave. Most did. According to the Jewish Virtual Library, among those expelled were two Union army veterans and no speculators in cotton. Expulsion of citizens of Paducah continued throughout the war, but for different reasons.

One group expelled from Paducah decided to take their case to higher authority: Father Abraham. J. W. Kaskel, David Wolff, and Caesar Kaskel went to Cincinnati and got Congressman John Gurley of Ohio to go with them to Washington where they presented their plight to President Lincoln: "We respectfully ask your immediate attention to this enormous outrage on all law and humanity, and pray for your effectual and immediate interposition." Lincoln had the order rescinded forthwith. To date, this is the most

egregious act of anti-Semitism in the history of the United States.⁵⁰

As Grant moved deeper into the South, much of the area in western Kentucky was left alone. Union garrisons held Paducah, Smithland and Columbus while rebel sympathizers were free to flow through the hinterlands. This seemed to please the majority of the population in that area. Early in March of 1862, Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War, informed General Halleck that the act of Congress of July 12, 1861, which prohibited trade with states south of Kentucky and Missouri, remained in force. Instruction by the Secretary of the Treasury regulated trade with the conquered regions.⁵¹ All baggage and package taken into this region had to display an official seal. All vehicles, railroad cars, and water craft were forbidden to carry any merchandise not covered by permits issued by the custom houses. These permits were "not upon trade, or to impede or in any manner interfere with the freedom of legitimate and proper transportation or travel." The surveyors of customs granted these permits. Federal officials were instructed to "use liberally, though cautiously, the discretion with which they are intrusted."⁵² The system failed. On April 15, new regulations required each boat trading south of St. Louis or Louisville to show their manifest at every port and also had to carry federal agents called

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 44-5. After the war Grant reconciled with American Jews and carried their vote in his races for president.

⁵¹ *Official Records*, I, Part 2, 19 in Series I.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Series I, VIII, 585.

"aids to the revenue" to prevent taking on any additional cargo along the way.⁵³ This galled many wholesale merchants in western Kentucky.

In order to cope with Confederate raids into parts of Kentucky, such as the forays of John Hunt Morgan in 1862 and Nathan Bedford Forrest's two raids in 1864, martial law was declared in Kentucky on July 31, 1862, on order of Ambrose Burnside. This action was taken "for the purpose only of protecting the rights of loyal citizens and the freedom of election." In practice, disloyal people could not vote. The power of enforcing this act was left to the military, not to the state. Merchants of all kinds could not stockpile materials that might fall into Confederate hands. This was delegated to federal Treasury agents for enforcement. Many in Paducah found this galling in the extreme.⁵⁴

On February 27, 1864 Lorenzo Thomas telegraphed Stanton: "I arrived here this morning. In my letter of the 1st instant, I reported instructions respecting the First Artillery Regiment Colored Troops, to be raised at Paducah, Kentucky. Shall I proceed with its organization?" By the end of the war, two black artillery regiments and parts of several black infantry regiments had been recruited at Paducah.

⁵⁵ This may have been part of the reason that

⁵³ *Ibid.*, XIII, 553, 698-700.

⁵⁴ Collins, *op. cit.*, I, 124. Federal officials claimed that some merchants had more on hand than they had sold the previous two years. In effect, they had become the commissary of the Confederacy.

⁵⁵ *Official Records*, Series III, IV, 138. If a Kentucky slave joined, he and his family were freed.

Nathan Bedford Forrest headed north toward Kentucky while the Confederacy was fighting for its life before Atlanta. An example needed to be made. The former slave trader headed north toward Paducah.

JENNIE FYFE IN WAR AND PEACE

The Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan in Lansing houses a collection of letters written between Jennie Fyfe and her family during the latter years of the Civil War. Always candid in her observations; Jennie does not hesitate to share her fears and joys at the events that she experienced. At age 31 in the spring of 1864, Jennie Fyfe felt compelled to give of her time and service as a nurse to the continuing war effort on the behalf of the Union. She boarded the Illinois Central Railroad in Chicago on March 20 and set off toward Paducah, Kentucky. About 6:00 a.m. she arrived at the end of the line in Cairo, Illinois and immediately felt the consequences of war profiteers. The St. Charles Hotel charged her one dollar to light a fire in her room. "Deliver me from Cairo" she wrote to her sister. She left about 6:00 p.m. by boat for Paducah. The crew of the *General Anderson* proved to be courteous as its clerk saw her to the Continental Hotel at Main and Broadway where she stayed the night and had breakfast. She recalled that the staff of the hotel gave her attention, "but we paid for it." She walked to the federal Marine hospital, sensing

that among the locals, "secession prevails," but she felt no personal danger.⁵⁶

Jennie was surprised at the size of Paducah, estimating its population to be 10,000. The presence of gas lights also was noted and reported in a letter March 20, 1864 to her sisters. Kentucky was a slave state despite its decision to remain in the Union during the War of the Rebellion. When fighting started in 1861, Kentucky chose to remain neutral and threatened to fight either North or South if they violated Kentucky soil. The posture of neutrality lasted into early 1862 when General Leonidas Polk, acting upon his own initiative, invaded Kentucky and seized Hickman and Columbus along the Mississippi River for the Confederacy. General U.S. Grant, newly in command at Cairo, IL, seized Paducah early the next day and Kentucky then declared for the Union as a loyal slave-holding state. The Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 did not free one Kentucky slave. In fact, slavery remained legal in Kentucky after the end of the war. Kentucky slavery ended in December of 1865 when the Thirteenth Amendment became official. On July 8, 1863, the United States War Department authorized the enlistment of free Negroes into the armed forces. Kentuckians protested strongly and Lincoln lifted the application in Kentucky on October 25. By 1864, the situation changed. February 27, Lorenzo Thomas telegraphed Secretary of War Stanton from

⁵⁶ Dr. Achilles Anderson had offices at Third and Broadway but resided at the Marine Hospital and was the "surgeon and steward" at the time the institution was given over to the Union Army.

Paducah: "I arrived here this morning. In my letter of the 1st instant, I reported instructions respecting the First Artillery Regiment Colored Troops, to be raised at Paducah, Kentucky. Shall I proceed with its organization?" Authorization was given.⁵⁷ This action made Paducah a target for retaliation by the Confederates. If a Kentucky slave enlisted, he and his family were freed. The Eighth Heavy Artillery Regiment (Colored) served new Fort Anderson.⁵⁸

In 1864, Paducah was protected by the two wooden gunboats, the U.S.S. *Peosta* and the U.S.S. *Paw Paw* and a dirt redoubt, Fort Anderson, near the federal Marine hospital where Jennie worked. Fyfe soon heard that rebels had been reported near Mayfield, about twenty miles south. The authorities at the hospital told her that if the rebels did attack that the soldiers in the fort under Colonel Hicks were instructed to "fire the place to prevent the commissary stores from falling into the hands of the rebels." In fact, the prevailing sentiment was the rebels "do not care to hold the place. It is merely plunder they are after. This being the case & so many rebels here, many think the place will not be attacked after all." As a result, many in sympathy with the Confederates "use their influence against it [the attack] of course, for in that case their property must go with the rest." She went on to note the presence of "Pox." Death is a thing so common that it rules but "for a *little* while & all is merry again."

On March 25, Major General Nathan B. Forrest attacked Paducah with a few less than 3,000 mounted infantry and cavalry. The 650 man

⁵⁷ *Official Records*, Series III, IV, 138.

garrison under Colonel Stephen G. Hicks retired to the fort, supported by two gun boats. Among the troops was the Eighth Artillery, a recently recruited black regiment. Jennie wrote of her experiences immediately after the battle; however, that letter was lost. On April 6, Jennie wrote again. "You, of course, have read numerous accounts of the Paducah Raid. I see some much exaggerated; & others quite correct. Will tell you something of what we witnessed of it here. Think I told you in a previous letter, that rumors of an attack were rife among us, yet little heeded. Thursday, March 24th we were surprised by the ringing of the alarm bell, calling the Union League together. The Enemy were said to be coming upon us yet no one seemed alarmed & things moved on quietly as usual. Soon after dinner it again sounded & all went immediately to the Hall. A little excitement prevailed for awhile but died away as evening approached. We ladies walked out to the Fort to see something of the stir. The guns were all mounted there, & the gun Boats in readiness for an attack, but after all, none among us seemed to think but we were all safe."

Jennie continued, "Things passed on as usual till after dinner [noon on the 25th]. Miss Cox had lain down, the rest of us were scattered here & there, when all suddenly came the news. The Rebels were coming. "The hospital staff looked out and saw the Confederates approaching. Fyfe went to check on the wards, trying to remain "apparently calm & lively." She looked out a window and saw a rebel with a pistol in hand, ready to fire. "I drew away from the window, when orders came for the ladies to go below. I went. Had no sooner got there, than

the boom of cannon was heard & the Rebel officers were entering our Hospital & demanding surrender. [The able bodied men had gone to the Fort previously.] "We were powerless, & of course could do nothing but surrender, and allow them to plunder as they pleased. They first entered the office – took nearly all our medicines." Jennie and the other nurses were angered at the loss of their supplies. "It made our blood boil a little to see them perform & hear them command our men—They were exceeding polite to us ladies, during all of their stay here, but became rough & profane, to the men generally. " Next, the raiders searched the closets where the soldiers' knapsacks were kept. Jennie estimated that about fifty men were involved in the raid of the hospital. "They presented a ludicrous appearance dressed in all sorts of colored clothing, their horses laden with cloths of all kinds, shawls, silks, etc. etc. Old Forrest himself stood in the back yard, close to the house & and gave his orders."

Jennie continued in her letter to revel in how she and the other Union personnel managed to deceive, obstruct, and confuse the pillagers. Two shells came through the windows. "They alarmed the patients much, who crouched in corners, under beds, etc., etc. One of the Scamps came into Ward C – my ward – and with aimed pistol demanded the money of each patient & Nurse – the patients most fortunately had none." [Most of the men had given their money & watches to Jennie and the other ladies on seeing the rebels coming.]

During the evening, Jennie and her companions had occasion to hear "the scandalous treatment" of the ladies of building No. 1, who were

all taken prisoners, but all escaped. "One of them came to us. All excitement & so wearied all night long she moaned & sighed, 'O, could I forget it.' She would say, but it is all before me worse than reality. Another of them we saw, who said, she saw no Rebels, nothing but stump which she got behind for protection from the fire & shell. When the Flag of Truce was sent in & the firing for a few moments ceased, she made her escape to the river which she crossed, & remained there till Monday."

The "Battle" of Paducah is more appropriately described as a raid. Forrest advanced from Mayfield, drove in federal pickets, and, under a flag of truce, demanded that Stephen Hicks surrender Fort Anderson on the river. Among the Confederate troops were the Third Kentucky with many from Paducah. The federal forces under Colonel Hicks were in the new redoubt near the Federal Hospital with support from the two gun boats. The surrender demand was rejected. While one part of Forrest's command liberated or destroyed Union supplies along Broadway, others took cover in buildings facing the fort and kept the garrison occupied. Confederate long rifles atop buildings fronting on the river kept Union gunboat portholes closed, limiting the effectiveness of that artillery. An impromptu assault on Fort Anderson failed, with heavy losses. During this attack, Col. A. P. Thompson who had left Paducah in 1861 to join the Third Regiment of the Confederates [under Paducahan, Lloyd Tilghman] at Guthrie in Tennessee was killed. One eyewitness reported the cannon shot knocked Thomson from his horse, killing both. As he remembered, Thompson's spine was burst from the

body and lay writhing like a coiled snake. Forrest gathered his spoils and left town that evening. The next morning, Hicks ordered houses near the fort to be burned to prevent their use again in attacks on the fort. Many citizens resented this deeply as most of the property was owned by those favorable to secession.⁵⁹

On March 31, Jennie again wrote to her sister, elaborating on the Good Friday raid. On the following Sunday, "we saw twenty or thirty horsemen entering with a flag of truce. All was excitement again, as we supposed they came to demand surrender but we were most happily mistaken, as they only wished the body of one of their men." [Thompson?] The next day continued to bring fear. "Rumors were rife all day Monday, however, and all night we expected the enemy were approaching for an attack in the morning. Tuesday, rumor came that Morgan [Kentucky General John Hunt Morgan] had joined with Forest [sic] & that they were to

⁵⁹ Louis Kolb, Sr. recalled the Battle of Paducah in an article in the *News-Democrat* on March 2, 1947, 63 years after the event. The advanced rebel contingent arrived at the Union outpost at Eden's Hill about 2:20 Saturday afternoon. By 3:00 p.m., Forrest's main body reached what is now Fifteenth and Broadway, where they dismounted to wait for dark. Kolb and his young wife got to "the river bank about 5 o'clock, on the afternoon of the battle." Kolb managed to gain a place for his family in a small boat. "I clung fast to the bottom of the boat while the firing was going on, near a woman with a bad case of smallpox, having less fear of contracting the disease than the shots from in and around the fort." The Kolbs crossed to Brookport, IL where they remained until the fighting ended on Sunday. Forrest may have left sooner than intended due to the presence of smallpox.

make an united attack." Nothing occurred. Still Jennie fretted. "We looked for no mercy from the guerrillas & our own guns might be directed this way to reach the enemy." An orderly from the hospital went to Colonel Hicks to get assurance that friendly fire would not be forthcoming if they remained in the hospital. He refused. "How comforting to us, & how noble of him." If fighting resumed, able bodied men were to go immediately to the fort. The ladies remained. "A few things were gotten together in case we left, ourselves dressed ready for any emergence & then we laid down to rest—yes, & sleep, strange as it may seem—we have had such continued excitement, and alarm, that we are fast learning to do as the soldiers do, rest till the enemy comes—But they did not come."

Jennie did inform her sisters of the conduct of the black soldiers during the attack. "Our colored troops did nobly. They fought with perfect desperation & nearly all the killed and wounded was among them. Went over to see the wounded—found them quite as intelligent as most of the Kentuckians. By the way, my ideas of Kentucky and Kentuckians have been taken down a peg since I came to this place. Low ignorant in the extreme, we find so many of them, that cannot neither read or write."

After the smoke cleared, many in Paducah boasted that Forrest had been duped by the wiles of Paducahans. They crowed about the many fine horses they hid successfully from the southern forces. Forrest allowed General Abe Buford and his fellow Kentuckians in Forrest's command to return to Paducah to get the horses, which they did on April

14. Then, the Kentuckians went on furlough while Forrest and his troops from Tennessee and Mississippi attacked Fort Pillow which also had black recruits among the Federals. A massacre resulted after the surrender. Paducah was fortunate. Alarms continued and irregulars operated openly throughout western Kentucky, but Jennie was secure.

The return of General Eleazor A. Paine to Paducah on July 19, 1864 boded ill for those favoring the Confederacy. He had been among those arriving with U.S. Grant in 1862 to keep western Kentucky from falling into Confederate hands and thus was known to the citizens and disliked by many for his ardent support of those loyal to the Union. Paine declared that only loyal people would be allowed to trade. All trade was subject to military oversight. Bank drafts also had to bear military approval. A group of known Southern sympathizers were expelled to Canada on August 10, 1864. Mayor John Sauner was ordered to appear before Paine who gave him "a good cussing" for about an hour which ended with a threat that Paine would shoot him if needed. Sauner left town. This period is remembered in Paducah as the Reign of Terror. Jennie approved of Paine's efforts. General Solomon Meredith replaced Paine September 8. In her letter of September 27, 1864, Jennie commented that "if Payne [sic] did which many dispute, he [Meredith] certainly is undoing it with all possible speed - The city is now full of Rebels, everybody being allowed to come in, trade, & carry it; their purchases to the enemy as they see fit. It's certainly fearful to see things going as they are-

Can't understand, & sometimes get pretty nearly discouraged. – the general feeling here, however, is that the war is nearly over – May it be so – but may it not be so by making an inglorious peace.”⁶⁰

On June 15, 1866, Jennie wrote Nell on new stationary—that of the United States Sanitary Commission. A new leaf in the book of life for Jennie had opened.” I think you will say, when I tell you, I am in school, and the weather a large portion of the time, scalding hot.” She told her sister that she had left the hospital over two weeks ago and now “I have a delightful teaching place where I feel so much at home.” The pupils number over forty ranging in age from six to forty. “I am entered into the missionary work of teaching contrabands, and my pupils are all shades of complexion, from white to coal black.” Her new employer was the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands led by Army chaplain Thomas K. Noble. Although Kentucky was a loyal state, it was a slave-owning state. Freedmen had no protection under Kentucky law at the time. Federal intrusion into the care of freed blacks was deeply resented by many in Kentucky and vendetta, violence, and lawlessness swept the

⁶⁰ *Official Records*, Series I, XXXIX, Part 3, 355. Later, Paine faced court martial in 1866 but not convicted. In a letter of February 15, 1866, Jennie said that Paine “has many friends here among the Union people, but the Rebels go in for Meredith. Several Generals are here to officiate in the trial of Gen. Payne [sic]. Do not know the charges against him, but have heard they were many & of a very grim character. He has certainly done much for Paducah & the country around, & we are this day even reaping the benefits, notwithstanding all Gen. Meredith has undone.”

state for a decade. But Jennie was ecstatic. She had found her vocation.

From the Fyfe Family Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

John E. L. Robertson is a longtime member of the Jackson Purchase Historical Society and a frequent contributor to the Journal. Robertson wrote *A Study in Empathy* by John E. L. Robertson with research assistance by Vonnie Shelton and presented a program on Jennie Fyfe for the Society which was well received. Shelton is also a longtime member of the JPHS.