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The Nature of Guerilla Warfare in the Heart of 'Mosby's Confederacy': Reconstruction in Fauquier County, Virginia

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THE NATURE OF GUERILLA WARFARE IN THE HEART OF “MOSBY’S
CONFEDERACY”: RECONSTRUCTION IN FAUQUIER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
History

by
Brett D. Zeggil
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Accepted by:
Dr. Paul Christopher Anderson, Committee Chair
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Dr. Richard Saunders

ABSTRACT

During the American Civil War, Colonel John S. Mosby launched one of the most successful guerilla campaigns for the Confederate war effort. “Mosby’s Confederacy,” a section of northern Virginia that encompassed four counties, came under the control of Mosby, and what would eventually become the Forty-third Battalion Virginia Cavalry, from 1863 through the end of the war. One county in particular, Fauquier, Virginia, served as the base of Mosby’s operations. The partisan style of warfare, that Mosby employed, demanded a significant amount of participation and collaboration from the local citizenry. The majority of Fauquier’s white community embraced Mosby’s Rangers and the objectives of the unit. The civilian population provided Mosby and his men with protection, resources, and intelligence. Symptomatic of their active participation in the war effort, a fervent Confederate “patriotism” became intimately woven into the fabric of Fauquier’s society. When the Confederacy fell and Mosby dissolved his band of rangers, the extremist sentiments of Confederate nationalism that remained entrenched in Fauquier’s white citizenry would have profound implications for Reconstruction in the county.

The nature of partisan warfare instilled a guerilla mentality in the local citizenry that had supported Mosby during the war. This mindset survived the war, and continued to unite the majority of the white community in the defense of the county. During Reconstruction, former Unionists and African Americans were socially ostracized and violently rebuked for their sentiments. By castigating the “others,” the white community hoped to defy their conqueror, and regain control of the county economically, and

politically. In a subtle manner, African Americans and the minority pro-Union white population resisted the harsh persecution they were subjected too. The unique wartime circumstances that the civilian population in Fauquier County endured created a unique situation in the postbellum period. The Reconstruction experience of the people residing in Fauquier was uncharacteristic of northern Virginia. The nature of guerilla warfare altered the course of the Civil War and Reconstruction for the inhabitants of Fauquier County, Virginia.

DEDICATION

For my family; without your unwavering support, none of this would have been possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people whose contributions have made this thesis possible. Without the aid of my advisor and committee chair, Dr. Anderson, this project could not have come to fruition. Before any history graduate student even arrives on campus for their first day, Dr. Anderson has already provided support and guidance to each and every student in our program. Every graduate history student owes a great deal of gratitude to him. Beyond his dedication to the graduate students, I am indebted to him for his wealth of knowledge on guerilla warfare. His work and expertise were significantly influential in shaping my own ideas and thesis. Throughout the research and writing process there were many struggles to overcome, Dr. Anderson was always there to point me in the right direction.

As is customary at the first meeting of the history graduate students at Clemson, we are all asked what we think we might eventually write our thesis on. I had written my undergraduate thesis on Civil War causation. I was convinced that I would continue on this path as I embarked on the daunting task of writing my master's thesis. After having the opportunity to take a class with Dr. Andrew my first semester, I knew this would no longer be the case. His knowledge and teaching abilities immediately shifted my interests toward Southern History. Over the next two years I took every graduate course available offered by him. The coursework and readings he assigned, and the seminar discussions he directed have provided the foundation on which this thesis was built.

Though I was never able to take a course from Dr. Saunders, I have had the privilege of serving alongside him as a teaching assistant for the past two years. His

passion for history, and his students, as well as his always helpful advice will be something I will always remember. Working and learning from him at my time at Clemson has positively influenced many of my decisions, and guided me in the pursuit of my future endeavors. It was an honor to have the opportunity to work with him in his last two years at Clemson and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to my friends and family. Though I have lived so far away from home, for so long, they have all found a way to support me each and every day. Whether it be the long drive to visit me, or a phone call, they have all helped me through this process. I consider myself very fortunate to be able to have so many good people in my life that I can rely on.

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INTRODUCTION

I. MOSBY'S CONFEDERACY

Confederate Captain John S. Mosby, later to become colonel, departed from the residence of his commander, Colonel Chancellor, shortly after dinner on the evening of March 8, 1863. As the captain mounted his horse, and gallantly began to ride away, he looked back at his superior and intrepidly avowed "I shall mount the stars to-night or sink lower than plummet ever sounded." Mosby was taking the short ride to Dover, in Loudoun County, Virginia, to meet a contingent of twenty-nine men that had assembled at his behest. In a practice that would become very familiar to his men during the war, Mosby refused to brief his soldiers on their mission's objective until all men were congregated at their rendezvous point. On this particular night, Mosby divulged to his soldiers that they would be executing a scheme to infiltrate the headquarters of, and capture, Union General Edwin H. Stoughton and General Percy Wyndham. Mosby and his rangers rode twenty-five miles across the northern Virginia countryside toward the Union Army, who had made camp at Fairfax Court House.¹

Three miles from the Union camp Mosby and his men penetrated enemy lines, concealing themselves from their Union foes under the cover of darkness. A small cohort of Mosby's troops expeditiously gathered intelligence that revealed General Wyndham had left camp earlier that evening for Washington, but General Edwin H. Stoughton was in the Episcopal rectory nearby. Mosby's squad began gathering prisoners and horses,

¹ John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby*, ed. Charles Wells Russell (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1917), 172.

while Mosby was escorted to the rectory. Mosby and several of his soldiers took control of Stoughton's headquarters, and Mosby found his way into the bedroom chambers of the sleeping general. "There was no time for ceremony, so [Mosby] drew up the bedclothes, pulled up the general's shirt, and gave him a spank on his bare back, and told him to get up." The captain announced, "I am Mosby," and we have "possession of the Court House." With the capture of General Stoughton, and many of his men and horses, the success of this raid solidified the approval of General Robert E. Lee and the Confederate government to the formation of Mosby's Rangers, what would eventually become the Forty-third Battalion Virginia Cavalry.²

During the Civil War, the Confederate government and its military leaders had been reluctant to endorse partisan warfare. The Confederate Partisan Ranger Act was passed by the Confederate Congress in April of 1862, only to be revoked less than two years later in February of 1864 under the pressure General Lee and other Confederate leaders. Lee expressed his disdain toward this type of warfare by calling partisan rangers "lawless bands" that were inclined "to plunder and rob" in order to "procure subsistence." He believed that, "bushwhacking" was rarely effective against Union forces, and in actuality the southern civilians were victimized by these so called "soldiers." At the conclusion of the war Lee favored surrendering to Union General Ulysses S. Grant over partisan warfare, calling surrender a more "dignified course." But, Mosby and his men were the exception to the rule. For two years Mosby was able to successfully wreak havoc on the Union Army in northern Virginia. The Virginia counties of Loudoun,

² Ibid, 175.

Fauquier, Prince William and Fairfax became synonymous with his name; the area was dubbed “Mosby’s Confederacy.” His activities became infamous among Union forces, whose counter-operations consistently failed to conquer the Mosby command. Only two partisan ranger groups were exempt from the Confederacy’s 1864 recall of the Partisan Ranger Act, Mosby’s Rangers were one of them.³

The capture of General Stoughton, and the success of this raid, was equally as important for the local espousal of Mosby’s command. It was this act that garnered Mosby the civilian support that his guerilla style of fighting would desperately need to flourish in the region. In particular, the citizens of Fauquier County, Virginia, would devoutly embrace the cause of Mosby and his rangers. The unwavering support and abundant assistance Mosby received from the people of Fauquier transformed the county into the heart of Mosby’s Confederacy. Fauquier became the base of his operations, and the launching point of the majority of his campaign. The civilian population of Fauquier associated Mosby’s Rangers with the protection of their homes; thus, the majority of the white residents in the county took on the objectives of Mosby as their own, and provided any means necessary to help the rangers succeed.

The style of warfare that Mosby and his men employed to defend the region from Union encroachment frequently obscured the distinction between warfront and home-front, and made it difficult to distinguish citizen from soldier. Such a system of combat demanded a great deal of involvement from the local citizenry, which carried enormous risks. Each citizen in Fauquier played an intricate role in the complex web created by the

³ Edward Porter Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 532.

perpetual stress of partisan warfare. The pro-Confederate residents of Fauquier County frequently put their own well-being in danger to aid Mosby and his men. They established communication networks to pass along information, provided food and other resources, equipped their homes with trap doors and removable panels for quick escapes, and became Mosby's most important source of intelligence. Without the complete devotion of the citizens of Fauquier County Mosby's efforts would have been rendered ineffectual. As a result of the white community's active participation in the war effort, extremist sentiments of Confederate nationalism prevailed in the region. This fervent "patriotism" became intimately woven into the fabric of Fauquier County society. However, with the demise of the Confederacy and Mosby's band dissolved, the question remained as to how the people of Fauquier would acclimatize themselves to Reconstruction when remnants of Confederate nationalism remained entrenched in the county.⁴

II. HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the context of Civil War historiography, partisan warfare has generated a significant amount of debate among historians. The highly local orientation of most guerilla units, a distinct deficiency of military discipline, the lack of government approval demonstrated by the majority of partisan outfits, and their insufficient presence in the major theaters of the war, has caused many scholars of past decades to dismiss guerilla warfare as "a sideshow." In more recent scholarship, historians have been less inclined to reject the role that guerilla units have played in the war. A recent trend within Civil War

⁴ Jeffrey D. Wert, *Mosby's Rangers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 9.

historiography has unleashed a flurry of books, journal articles, and dissertations that have expanded the discipline's understanding of irregular operations throughout the war. Several historians have argued that guerilla warfare is "no longer a sideshow," but a "crucial part of the larger war." In particular, the sections of northern Virginia that composed "Mosby's Confederacy" have become the cynosure of several studies discussing the effectiveness of guerilla warfare for the Confederate war effort.⁵

In this region the famous partisan warrior John Singleton Mosby launched one of the most successful Confederate guerilla campaigns for the Confederacy. Mosby and the Forty-third Battalion have drawn a significant amount of the attention from academics. The ability of the partisan unit to exercise control over a large section of northern Virginia and frequently evade Union forces has led some scholars to suggest that the outfit positively influenced the larger Confederate war effort. Mosby's leadership capabilities, his enforcement of rigid military discipline, and the battalion's unusual war tactics have been offered to explain the success of the partisan rangers when so many guerilla outfits plummeted into "lawlessness." But historians of this region have neglected the role of the civilian population in Mosby's campaign. Despite the popularity of "Mosby's Confederacy" with historians, the bottom-up inquisitiveness that accompanied the rise of social history has only marginally been applied to the region. Lacking from the scholarship that has developed surrounding Mosby and his men has been a civilian focused inquiry that illustrates the nature of guerilla warfare from the

⁵ For a historiographical overview of studies about guerilla warfare see Daniel E. Sutherland, "Sideshow No Longer: A Historiographical Review of the Guerilla War," *Civil War History* 46, no. 1 (2000), 5-23; see also, James G. Ramage, "Recent Historiography of Guerilla Warfare in the Civil War," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 103, no. 3 (2005), 517-541.

perspective of those who inhabited the area. In the study *Inside War*, author Michael Fellman highlights the civilian experience of those living in the state of Missouri, where guerilla units were rampant. In the guerilla conflict that transpired in Missouri during the Civil War, the civilian population became active participants in the war. It is evident that guerilla warfare uniquely shaped life on the Missouri home front; this style of warfare had significant implications for the civilian population that resided in the state.⁶

There is a distinct lack of scholarly work that raises similar questions as Fellman about the civilian population in “Mosby’s Confederacy.” In his dissertation, Michael Stuart Mangus offers the only study that examines the experiences of those civilians who lived in this section of northern Virginia during the war. *The Debatable Land*, specifically focuses on two counties that were central to Mosby’s operations during the Civil War, Loudoun and Fauquier. Mangus makes the argument that Mosby’s presence in these counties reinvigorated Confederate supporters with such optimism that their allegiance had become two-fold, pledging loyalty to both the Confederate States of America and “Mosby’s Confederacy.” His contention challenges the notion that Confederates lost the will to fight, maintaining that local secessionists remained committed to the war throughout its entirety. The active role that the citizens of Fauquier County played in the war effort, a necessary component to the success of partisan warfare, strengthened their determination for the Confederate cause. Despite the

⁶ For studies that focus on Mosby and his men throughout the Civil War see James G. Ramage, *Gray Ghost: The Life of Colonel John Singleton Mosby* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999); see also, Jeffrey D. Wert, *Mosby’s Rangers* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), and Virgil Carrington Jones, *Ranger Mosby* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1944); Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerilla Conflict In Missouri During The Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

“wholesale devastation” that the civilians of Fauquier and Loudoun had to endure, the secessionist white populace remained fortified in their convictions.⁷

The primary concern of Mangus is explaining the effect of guerilla warfare on civilians in Fauquier and Loudoun during the Civil War, though he does conclude with a chapter that carries his study through the Reconstruction period. This chapter suggests that, by 1877, those who resided in Loudoun and Fauquier County “had much to savor.” Their counties had been devastated by the war, yet they “successfully reconstructed their lives.” Economically, politically, and socially, the people of Fauquier and Loudoun rebuilt their respective counties, and overcame the insecurity that accompanied the Reconstruction years. Absent from the dissertation of Mangus is the connection that can be drawn between the social environment created by Fauquier’s Civil War experience and the profound effect it had on Reconstruction within its borders. For the citizens of Fauquier, the conditions of Reconstruction were shaped by their wartime experience. The Reconstruction social milieu of Fauquier was constructed as a result of the nature of guerilla warfare. The unusual wartime situation in Fauquier created a unique Reconstruction experience for the people residing in the county. A study that focuses on the implications of guerilla warfare in the postbellum era for this region has yet to be attempted by historians.⁸

⁷ For the argument that the Confederate civilian population lost the will to fight see Beringer et al., *Why The South Lost The War* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986); Michael Stuart Mangus, “The Debatable Land: Loudoun and Fauquier Counties, Virginia, During the Civil War,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1998), 7; Charles Royster, *The Destructive War: William Tecumseh Sherman, Stonewall Jackson, and the Americas* (New York: Vintage Publishing, 1993), xii.

⁸ *Ibid*, 398.

This study focuses specifically on Fauquier County to explore how the nature of guerilla warfare instilled a social cohesion in the secessionist white population that united them in the defense of their community. As a result of the guerilla conflict, the white community that supported Mosby remained a virtual monolith in defense of Fauquier during the Reconstruction era. Daniel Sutherland identified the “principal responsibility” of guerilla units operating throughout the South as “local defense.” Their main reason for being was the “protection of their families or communities against both internal and external foes.” In a region where guerilla warfare was the defining characteristic during the Civil War, the civilian population incorporated this wartime experience into their mentality. Those who participated in the partisan war effort were part of a community that was united by a primary objective, the defense of Fauquier County. An exclusionary policy became a distinct component of Fauquier’s social milieu establishing the dissidents who failed to conform to Fauquier’s societal expectations. Pro-Union whites and African Americans were considered an internal threat to the community; therefore, they were castigated and ostracized for their wartime loyalty.

Former Confederates in Fauquier emerged from the war with the will to maintain the fight. Harboring these sentiments led the white community to continue to defy the Union, prolong hostility with Union forces, and harshly persecute both the black populace and pro-Union whites. The Reconstruction experience of those who resided in Fauquier was thus the product of the nature of guerilla warfare. By presenting the perspective of the pro-Confederate white population, the pro-Union white population, African Americans residing in Fauquier and John S. Mosby, this study attempts to

enhance the knowledge of how guerilla warfare impacted Fauquier's civilian population during the Civil War, and Reconstruction.⁹

A similar study, with the purpose of examining the impact of wartime experience on Reconstruction, has previously been conducted for several counties surrounding Fauquier. This is significantly useful for comparative purposes. The counties that compose the Lower Shenandoah Valley - Berkley, Clarke, Frederick and Jefferson - constitute an area of northern Virginia that is in close proximity to Fauquier. In many ways the people of Fauquier resemble those inhabitants of the Lower Shenandoah Valley. All counties elected conditional Unionist candidates to the secession convention in 1861. Throughout the war the flow of both armies caused a great deal of destruction in the area. All counties were constantly passing between the control of Union and Confederate forces. The primary difference is that the wartime experience of the counties of the Lower Shenandoah Valley did not include guerilla warfare. The impact of guerilla warfare elicited some distinct differences in the civilian population in Fauquier that made the county uncharacteristic of the region. Actively participating in the partisan war differentiated the white populace in Fauquier from the white community residing in counties surrounding Fauquier that did not experience this style of fighting during the war.

In the dissertation of Jonathan M. Berkey, he focuses on civilians living in the lower Shenandoah Valley during the war. Berkey's comprehensive study contends that a remarkable degree of collaboration between pro-Union and pro-Confederate citizens

⁹ Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), xii.

emerged throughout the war. When hardship struck many of the families that lived in the lower valley, loyalty and allegiance became frivolous; the white populace worked together to survive the devastation of the war . Berkey charged that the “traditional mores of cooperation and coexistence” that “characterized the border society of the lower Valley” prevailed in the region throughout the war and Reconstruction. Daniel Sutherland made a similar argument after examining the residents of Culpeper County, Virginia, a county located directly South of Fauquier. While Culpepper residents were certainly divided, Sutherland argues that civilian did not engage in “physical abuse” of neighbors. Tension between citizens of the county with opposing allegiances was prevalent, but violence in Culpepper remained the occupation of soldiers, not civilians.¹⁰

Fauquier County, both during the Civil War and Reconstruction, starkly contrasts the situation in these surrounding counties. The white population that supported Mosby during the war became a significantly close-knit community that harbored extremely pro-Confederate sentiments. African Americans and pro-Union whites faced threats and molestation not only from Mosby and his men, but also the civilian population. Though Fauquier’s civilian population had to execute caution, abuse of civilians of opposing allegiance did take place. The presence of Mosby’s Rangers also served as a tool for targeting pro-Union members of the community. This internal hostility carried over from the war into the postbellum period. The social unity in the majority of the white

¹⁰ Jonathan M. Berkey, “War In the Borderland: The Civilians Civil War in the Lower Shenandoah Valley,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2003), 284; Daniel E. Sutherland, “The Absence of Violence: Confederates and Unionists in Culpepper County, Virginia,” in *Guerillas, Unionists and Violence on the Confederate Homefront*, ed. Daniel E. Sutherland (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1999), 75.

population remained a defining characteristic of Reconstruction era Fauquier. Wartime loyalty determined a person's place in society in the years following the war.

The nature of guerilla warfare manifested extremist sentiments of Confederate nationalism in the majority of the white citizenry in Fauquier. This fervent "patriotism" remained entrenched in Fauquier's former secessionist white community; the outcome of the war failed to subdue it. In her study *Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy*, Anne Rubin argues that Confederate nationalism outlasted the survival of the Confederacy as a political entity. During the postbellum years, many white southerners would divide their identities. To "rebuild their lives" white southerners became Americans "politically," but "emotionally, in their true hearts, the continued to remain apart, protecting their memories." The dissolution of the Confederacy transformed the identity of the white community, and nationalism underwent a significant change in Fauquier. It became decentralized, transformed into state loyalty and influenced by local wartime experiences, rather than by the devotion to a country that ceased to exist. For Fauquier's pro-Confederate white population, loyalty in the postbellum years suffused their experience as active participants in the partisan war with a devotion to their native state of Virginia. Taking a forced oath of allegiance did not transplant their allegiance to the United States.¹¹

For the loyal Confederate white citizens living in the region, actively participating and supporting the partisan war influenced the postwar identities of these people. The nature of guerilla warfare developed a guerilla mentality in the local white citizenry that

¹¹ Anne Sarah Rubin, *Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2007), 141, 171.

remained despite the outcome of the war. The term guerilla mentality will be used in this thesis to describe the mindset that developed in white citizens of Fauquier County. As a result of the demands of guerilla warfare, many of Fauquier's residents took an active role in the war; they protected Mosby's men, provided unwavering support for the war effort, and willfully put their own well-being at risk to contribute to the success of Mosby's campaign. Due to the white community's involvement and risk in the war, the civilian population took on many of the objectives of the guerilla unit. In particular, the defense of home became a joint effort on which Fauquier's civilians and Mosby's Rangers collaborated. These people frequently defied the Union and built a society that became ultra-exclusive to aid Mosby in protecting northern Virginia. Fauquier's white society functioned as a phalanx, operating in unison for a common goal, the defense of Fauquier and "Mosby's Confederacy." This frame of mind, which guerilla warfare instilled in the people of Fauquier, continued to shape their decisions and actions during Reconstruction. It became a defining characteristic of their postwar identity.

The second aspect of the postwar identity and allegiance of Fauquier's former Confederate white population was a devotion to the state of Virginia. They emerged from the war not as Americans, but Virginians. The battle for control of the state between Virginia's government officials and radical Republicans in Congress also unfolded at the local level. Fauquier's white populace continued to wage war against the alien institutions that the Federal government imposed in their county, and fought to undermine Republican influence in the state. In her thesis, Madeleine Forrest analyzes the amnesty papers of Fauquier's white males. As stipulated by the exception rule in

President Andrew Johnson's Amnesty Proclamation, many of Fauquier's male citizenry were required to apply to the President for pardon. Forrest illustrates that the class of men that fell under the exception rule were those who had been in political power in Fauquier during the antebellum period. They recognized that to regain power over the county they had to regain the right to vote. Most applied for pardon to regain the rights of citizenship, not for devotion to the United States. These men lied about their sympathies, they concealed their wartime activities, and continued to protect Mosby and his men. Most importantly, through their amnesty pardons the white men of Fauquier subtly defied the Union by pronouncing the power of the state over the Federal government.¹²

The white populace in Fauquier used local politics to undermine Republican influence in the county and state. C. Vann Woodward's analysis of the "redeemers" in the southern states contends that redemption was not the "restoration of the old ruling class." Rather, Woodward suggests that those southern political leaders that led their respective states back into the Union sought to conform to "contemporary industrial capitalism." In his study of the Virginia Conservative Party, Jack P. Maddex agrees that the conservatives in the state fit Woodward's "general model of redeemer leadership." However, Reconstruction politics at the local level contradicts Woodward's argument. The indivisible former Confederates swiftly restored the planter class to power in Fauquier. Confederate leaders, who were barred from running for state political positions, touted their wartime records to be elected to positions in the county. Since Fauquier's economic interests remained primarily agricultural based, and did not diversify,

¹² Madeleine Claire Forrest, "When the Rangers Came Home: Reconstructing Lives In Fauquier County, Virginia, 1865-1866," (master's Thesis, Clemson University, 2012), 11-13.

controlling the land and agricultural economy enabled the planter class to regain control of politics. The ability of the white population to remain unified during the Reconstruction years allowed them to elect their chosen local leaders into positions of power. With agriculturally driven, white supremacists in the control of the county, the former secessionists could institute traditionalist policies of Old Virginia.¹³

As the dissidents of the socially cohesive white population, African Americans and pro-Union whites found they faced harsh persecution for their wartime allegiance. The civilian population that supported Mosby and his men purposely targeted pro-Union whites during the Civil War. Threats and molestation became a standard that the Southern Claims Commission manipulated to determine loyalty within the county. The end of the war brought little solace for this minority group of Union faithful. The former Confederates in Fauquier remained unified against the pro-Union whites, and defiant of the policies the Union tried to implement that would have benefitted those who had stayed loyal to the United States. The white population in Fauquier continued to define itself by allegiance. But Fauquier's Unionist white population was a significant minority in the county. This made it especially difficult for Unionists to challenge the authority of former secessionists. Violent confrontation between former Confederates and Unionists was often the result of the social milieu that continued to be characterized by the wartime experiences of the county.¹⁴

¹³ C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 21-22; Jack P. Maddex, *The Virginia Conservatives, 1867-1879: A Study in Reconstruction Politics* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970), xi-xii.

¹⁴ Berkey, "War In The Borderland," 284.

The African Americans residing within Fauquier County also encountered hostility both during the Civil War and in its aftermath. Mosby's presence in the region meant that Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation did little to offer freedom to many slaves. The institution of slavery would persist throughout the war in the county. African Americans identified the cause of the Union war effort as their own, and attempted to provide assistance to the Union. However, the grave danger they often faced served as a significant deterrent for most of the black populace. Despite the inability of Fauquier's black community to fully embrace the Union war effort, in the postwar years they took on their own struggle for freedom.

The white population attempted to impose a restrictive form of freedom on the black community living in Fauquier. African Americans responded by asserting their independence and autonomy. In his study of Reconstruction, Eric Foner argues that "blacks were active agents in the making of Reconstruction." The black community's "quest for autonomy" was influential in establishing "Reconstruction's political and economic agenda." African Americans residing in Fauquier County certainly conform to Foner's notions. They built independent black communities, relentlessly pursued educational aspirations, and withdrew from white churches to establish their own centers of worship that offered more than spiritual support for the black populace. Confronted with a hostile environment that attempted to subdue their autonomy, African Americans in Fauquier County forged a place for themselves. Ultimately, the inhibitor to their equality arose from the white population's ability to control the county's labor. Maintaining control of labor, and thus the work force, meant the white community could

reestablish the rigid hierarchy that reinforced white supremacy. Within the social structure constructed by the white community, the black populace remained in a position of inferiority. But the ability of African Americans in Fauquier to establish an independent society permitted the black populace to assert autonomy and prevent the re-institution of slavery in all but name.¹⁵

The final perspective that will be presented is that of the guerilla leader Colonel John S. Mosby. He was the last of the Forty-third Battalion to give up the fight. Mosby's wartime experience greatly contrasts that of his Reconstruction years. The leader sequestered himself from the public sphere for most of the postbellum period. As Reconstruction was winding to a close Mosby reappeared, only now in the political arena. At first he became a symbol for the fight to restore the state of Virginia; endorsing the Conservative Party, and condemning the radical Republicans, Mosby for a short period remained a figure of immense popularity and reference among Virginians. Mosby is more important for another reason though; his perspective evinces the contradicting interpretations of restoring Virginia statehood. Mosby utilized a relationship that he developed with Grant to reconcile differences between his state and the North; he publicly endorsed Grant in the 1872 presidential election. For doing so, the people of Virginia attempted to kill Mosby, and forced him into exile from the state for nearly twenty years. They had restored Virginia to the Union, but reconcile with the North they would not. The majority of white Virginians continued to harbor hostility toward the Federal government. For Mosby to publicly declare his support for a former Union

¹⁵ Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 1988), xxiii.

general was “traitorous.” Mosby was placed in a category alongside those pro-Union whites that were frequently ostracized for their sentiments. Virginia was back in the Union, but the outlook of the majority of the people in the state remained southern in orientation.

III. IMPLICATIONS

The nature of guerilla warfare created a unique war experience for the people residing in Fauquier County. This highly localized interpretation of Reconstruction attempts to enhance our understanding of the effects of this style of warfare on the civilian population. This project started as a Reconstruction focused study that wanted to explain how the ultra-nationalistic sentiment that developed in Fauquier County impacted the county’s Reconstruction. It became apparent that to answer that question it was vital to understand their wartime experience. Reconstruction in Fauquier is intricately connected to the county’s unique Civil War experience. The experiences of the white population that supported and assisted Mosby developed a guerilla mentality as a result of the nature of this style of fighting. They took on the characteristics of guerilla units, especially in their focus on the objective of “local defense.” When the war ended this state of mind persisted in the white population that actively participated in the war effort. The course of Reconstruction in Fauquier County is thus the product of guerilla warfare’s distinctive influence on the inhabitants of this region.

A great deal of work has accumulated dealing with Mosby and his men during the Civil War. The academics that advocate for the importance of guerilla warfare to the larger war have slowly gained momentum in support of their contentions. But, this step

needs to be taken further and connect guerilla warfare to the Reconstruction period. Academicians have failed to perorate how these distinctive regions have underwent the process of Reconstruction. The circumstances created by guerrilla warfare in the Civil War established a highly differentiated and variously nuanced postwar experience. To understand the postbellum years in areas of the South that experienced this style of fighting it is necessary to comprehend the implications of partisan warfare. While this study is concerned only with Fauquier County, its conclusions help develop a better understanding of the postwar effects of partisan warfare in general.

Historiography of the Reconstruction period in Virginia is rich, but there is a distinct lack of localized focus to contribute to a greater understanding of the era. A study of Fauquier County during Reconstruction provides valuable new evidence for this approach. This is important as a result of the uniqueness of this particular section of northern Virginia. The counties that composed “Mosby’s Confederacy” experienced the Civil War differently. Therefore, Reconstruction in this area was uncharacteristic of the region. The Reconstruction of “Mosby’s Confederacy” as a whole is a major project that has yet to be attempted by historians. An inquiry aimed directly at Fauquier County would provide a foundation upon which this much larger endeavor could be built. Guerilla warfare had profound implications for the civilian population in Fauquier County. This study argues that the effects of this partisan war did not end with the Confederacy. As a result of this style of warfare, Reconstruction in Fauquier took a different path than most of the other counties in northern Virginia.

CHAPTER 1 - THE GUERILLA MENTALITY

I. THE SECESSIONIST COMMUNITY

The perspective of the white population that had actively participated in the partisan war is necessary to evince the implications of guerilla warfare in the Reconstruction era. The nature of guerilla warfare established a unified majority within the white population that emerged from the war determined to remain defiant of the Union. Fauquier's social milieu was uncharacteristic of the counties that composed northern Virginia. Social exclusion, as defined by wartime loyalty, and participation in the guerilla war effort, differentiated Fauquier's society in the aftermath of the war from others in the region. Wartime loyalty remained the most important indicator of how a person was treated during the Reconstruction years. The white communities of other northern Virginia counties transcended their wartime allegiance to work together during the postbellum years.

The nature of guerilla warfare instilled strong Confederate sentiments in the white community that influenced the postwar years. Conservatism rose to power immediately following the war in Fauquier. It took much longer for the conservative candidates to emerge victorious in the majority of counties that bordered Fauquier. Fauquier's local politics also challenge the notion that postwar "redeemers" were not of the planter class. The agrarian economy of Fauquier failed to diversify during the Reconstruction period. Members of the planter class continued to maintain power as a result of their ability to control the economy. Political power at the local level quickly fell back into the hands of this class, bolstered by the support of the white community. The nature of guerilla

warfare created a unique Reconstruction experience for the people that lived in Fauquier County. This style of warfare elicited certain circumstances that made the county distinctive in northern Virginia.

II. THE HEART OF “MOSBY’S CONFEDERACY”

In the late months of 1862, the course of the Civil War had been quite favorable to the Confederacy. The Army of Northern Virginia had repelled the Union advance toward the Confederate capital and forced the Union Army back across the Rappahannock River. The rival armies had taken winter quarters on opposite sides of the river. To “relieve the monotony” of the temporary cessation of hostilities, Confederate cavalry commander, J.E.B Stuart, led a “Christmas raid to Dumfries” in an effort to harass Union communication lines to Washington. After the completion of the raid, Stuart allowed one of his most trusted scouts, Captain John S. Mosby, to remain behind with six men to “operate on the enemy’s outposts.” Overjoyed with the success of this initial engagement, upon Mosby’s return Stuart gave his captain fifteen men from the First Virginia Cavalry and granted Mosby permission to begin his “partisan life in northern Virginia.” Recalling this event in his memoirs, Mosby wrote, “this was the origin of my battalion.” On January 24, 1863, Mosby and his band of fifteen soldiers “crossed the Rappahannock” into an area of northern Virginia that “Joe Johnston had abandoned a year before.” Mosby’s primary objective was to “threaten and harass the enemy on the border,” and in this way “compel him to withdraw troops from his front

guard to the line of the Potomac and Washington.” Mosby recalled feeling as though he was “leading a forlorn hope,” but nevertheless he was “never discouraged.”¹⁶

For the remainder of the war Mosby launched the most successful guerilla campaign commissioned under the Confederate Partisan Ranger Act. Mosby’s band of fifteen increased rapidly; though no more than eight hundred soldiers served under Mosby’s command at any given time, it is estimated that over two thousand men had belonged to Mosby’s Rangers throughout at some point during the war. The Confederacy officially commissioned the formation of Company A of Mosby’s Rangers in June of 1863, it would eventually become the Forty-Third Battalion of Virginia Cavalry. In correlation with the growth of his forces Mosby was promoted to the rank of a colonel. The operations of Mosby’s Rangers expanded to include a swath of territory that encompassed four northern Virginian counties - Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Fairfax. The tenacity of Mosby’s brilliant leadership, his knowledge of the counties he patrolled, the “bravado” of the exploits of his men, and the military discipline he instilled in his troops brought the region firmly under the control of the Forty-Third Battalion. These four counties became synonymous with his name; the region was dubbed “Mosby’s Confederacy.”¹⁷

The nature of guerilla warfare required the consummate devotion of the civilian populace in order to operate successfully. For that reason, Mosby conceptualized a much smaller version of his “Confederacy.” At the heart of the 125 square mile triangle that

¹⁶ John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby*, ed. Charles Wells Russell (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1917), 148-149.

¹⁷ Wert, *Mosby’s Rangers*, 297.

Mosby delineated to be the base of his operations lay Fauquier County. When Mosby began operations in Fauquier County he found the white populace was deeply devoted to the cause of the southern Confederacy. In 1860, 21,706 people lived within the borders of Fauquier County. Of the total population 11,276 were African Americans, only 845 of which were not held in slavery. With over 40 percent of the white families in Fauquier owning slaves, and over 13 percent of those families owning 20 or more slaves, the county boasted substantially higher percentages than that of Virginia, or the South as a whole. A black majority residing in the county, and a large investment in human property, firmly put the interests of the Fauquier's white population with that of the South. In opting for a partisan style of warfare that required local support to function, Fauquier's demographics provided Mosby with a population that would yield the necessary assistance to launch such a campaign.¹⁸

The white population of Fauquier openly embraced Mosby and his men. Prior to Mosby's arrival, Fauquier's borders had been outside the control of the Confederate Army for some time. One of Mosby's most faithful men, John William Munson, wrote after the war that the people of Fauquier were "glad to have Mosby's men among them;" as well as, they were thankful for the "protection which the presence of the Partisans afforded them." Mosby's presence in the county served as a unifying force that reinvigorated the morale of the loyal Confederate population, and shaped their lives for the remainder of the war. In a sense, a dual identity formed among the Fauquier's white

¹⁸ Ibid, 115-116; Francis A. Walker, *A Compendium of the Ninth Census: June 1, 1870* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), 98, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112001864096;view=1up;seq=595>; Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 101.

population over the latter half of the war. They were devout Confederates that wanted an independent South that would guarantee the protection of slavery indefinitely. But, they were also active participants in a guerilla war. The geographic location of Fauquier County, and the Confederate Army's inability to sustain a presence in the region created a detachment between the loyal citizens of Fauquier and the Confederacy; Mosby offered the remedy. Their sub-identity to "Mosby's Confederacy" was intricately related to their association of Mosby and his success with the protection of their homes. Mosby and his men were viewed by the secessionist white community as the "safe guard" that diverted Union troops from capturing their homes and emancipating their slaves.¹⁹

"[We] had no camps nor fixed quarters," and we "never slept in tents" wrote Munson. "The idea of making coffee, frying bacon, or soaking hard tack was never entertained." When the soldiers in Mosby's command wanted to eat or sleep they "stopped at a friendly farm house." Every man "had some special farm he could call his home." For many of the soldiers that came to serve in the outfit, staying in their actual homes was a viable option. Approximately 28 percent of Mosby's men were from Loudoun and Fauquier Counties, 80 percent were native Virginians. Elizabeth Edmonds, who resided near the Fauquier town of Paris on her plantation "Belle Grove," had three sons in the Forty-third. Elizabeth and her daughter, Amanda "Tee" Edmonds, frequently provided hospitality and shelter for not only her sons, but also many others under the command of Mosby. "Tee" proudly proclaimed that she had become "perfectly devoted to the society of Rebels." Many owners of the homes frequented by Mosby's men often

¹⁹ John William Munson, *Reminiscences of A Mosby Guerilla* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1906), 21; Mangus, *The Debatable Land*, 7; Wert, *Mosby's Rangers*, 115; Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 100.

equipped their dwellings with trap doors and removable panels for quick escapes, to ensure the safety of the rangers. For over two years Mosby's men boarded in homes throughout Fauquier and the surrounding region.²⁰

Beyond providing food and shelter, the civilian population assisted Mosby abundantly. They established communication networks that functioned both as a messenger service and a warning system. When men dispersed to homes throughout the region Mosby would pass along information, usually a time and location of a rendezvous point, through the "grapevine system" of civilians. In some instances this network also operated as a way to alert Mosby's men of approaching danger. Having breakfast at the home of a Mr. Blackwell in the Blue Ridge foothills on February 20, 1864, Mosby and several others were alerted by word of mouth of Union forces advancing quickly toward their location. "The Yankees are on the pike: it's just blue with 'em," reported a sibling of a member of the breakfast gathering. Civilians also became Mosby's most important source of intelligence. From the white inhabitants of the county Mosby could ascertain the location of Union forces, and gain insight into possible movements or raids planned by Union forces. The loyal, white people of Fauquier and Mosby's Rangers worked in collaboration and unison for the protection of the region.²¹

For their "sacrifices and dedication" Mosby praised the civilians of his Confederacy, calling their unified efforts similar "to one of the great people's wars of Medieval Europe." He compared the loyalty of the white community "to the people of

20 Munson, *Reminiscences*, 22; Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 96; Amanda V. Edmonds Chappellear Diary, January 19, 1865, Virginia Historical Society, quoted in Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 366; Wert, *Mosby's Rangers*, 123.
21 Munson, *Reminiscences*, 80.

Flanders who supported Guy de Dampierre, Count of Flanders, in repelling the invading French Army of Phillip IV early in the fourteenth century.” Mosby was well versed in the European classics, and had a tendency for the dramatic. He proudly christened his Confederacy, “The Flanders of the South.” However, Mosby was not the only one to give the credit for his success to the civilian population. His northern foe came to understand that without the cooperation of the residents of Fauquier and Loudoun County Mosby’s outfit would cease to exist. Major General Henry Wager Halleck, sitting atop the Union military command, diagnosed the inability of northern forces to subdue Mosby’s Rangers as symptomatic of the “conduct of the pretended non-combatant inhabitants of the country. They pretend to act the part of neutrals, but do not. They give aid, shelter and concealment to guerilla and robber bands like that of Mosby.” The irregular tactics utilized by Mosby invited Union counter-operations in the region that began to target the civilian population in order to suppress their morale, and deplete the resources of the counties that supplied Mosby’s men.²²

In the late months of 1864 the Union forces entered the counties of Fauquier and Loudoun to implement a counter-guerilla policy aimed at the non-combatants that Union leaders had come to condemn for aiding Mosby’s Rangers. On August 16, 1864, Major-General Phillip Sheridan received the following order from his commander, Lieutenant-General Ulysses S. Grant:

“If you can possibly spare a division of cavalry, send them through Fauquier County, to destroy and carry off the crops, animals, negroes, and all men under fifty years of age capable of bearing arms. In this way you will get many of Mosby’s men. All male citizens under fifty can fairly be

²² Newspaper clipping, *John Singleton Mosby Scrapbook*, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library, quoted in Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 99; Wert, *Mosby’s Rangers*, 115.

held as prisoners of war, and not as citizen prisoners. If not already soldiers, they will be made so the moment the rebel army gets hold of them.”

When the Union effort to break Mosby by cutting off his economic support proved ineffective in subduing the partisan, Union officials enforced a harsher policy in late November. Brevet Major General Wesley Merritt was directed to enter Fauquier and Loudoun “to clear the country of these parties that are bringing destruction upon the innocent as well as their guilty supporters by their cowardly acts.” In response to the futility of the more lenient first endeavor in the region, Merritt’s instructions encouraged more strident action. He was ordered to “consume and destroy all forage and subsistence, burn all barns and mills and their contents, and drive off all stock in the region the boundaries of which are above described.” The dwellings of those who inhabited the region were the only exception to the destruction. Sheridan’s tactics did little to quell Mosby’s civilian support base or capture the leader.²³

The Union’s late war strategy to directly confront Fauquier’s civilian population in an attempt to assail Mosby only reinforced the white community’s image of Mosby as the defender of their region. The majority of the white populace remained socially unified in their resistance to the Union despite the destruction of the county. As a result of the Union policy, many Fauquier citizens became further entrenched in their convictions, and continued to strongly oppose the prospect of rejoining the Union. Though Mosby always contextualized his defense of northern Virginia within the larger war being waged by the Confederacy, throughout the war the people of Fauquier County aligned their unwavering

²³ *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 127 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1880-1901), (ser.1) 43 (1): 811, <http://ehistory.osu.edu/books/official-records/097/1396> (accessed January 15, 2015) (hereafter *OR*); *OR* (ser. 1) 43 (2): 679.

support for Mosby for his ability to protect their families and community against “internal and external foes.” The white community in Fauquier, over the course of Mosby’s command of the region, took on this guerilla mentality. This state of mind surrounding the protection of their borders, that maintained morale for the duration of the war, became instilled in those loyal Confederates. The power of a close-knit community, such as the one they created, engraved itself in the minds of the white population residing in the region. This group functioned as a unit throughout the latter half of the war as a necessary component to Mosby’s campaign for local defense. This sense of communalism and social unity established a virtual monolith among this group.²⁴

The events of the Civil War in other theaters of battle ultimately brought an end to the guerilla war in “Mosby’s Confederacy.” The surrender of General Lee at Appomattox ended the possibility of salvaging the Confederacy. But, only one man could end the war in northern Virginia. On the twenty-first of April, 1865, the remaining members of the Forty-third Battalion reported to Salem, Virginia, on a fittingly dreary afternoon. Mounted upon his steed, motionless and silent, Colonel John S. Mosby sat between two of his most loyal and reliable men, Captain Chapman and Richards, as his younger brother Willie read aloud a farewell address that Mosby had written on a slip of paper:

“I have summoned you together for the last time. The visions we have cherished of a free and independent country have vanished, and that country is now the spoil of the conqueror. I disband your organization in preference to surrendering it to our enemies. I am no longer your commander. After an association of more than two eventful years, I part from you with a just pride in the fame of your achievements and a grateful recollection of your generous kindness to myself. **And at this moment of bidding you final adieu, accept the assurance of my unchanging confidence and regard.**”

²⁴ Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2009), xii.

The men's eyes glistened as their final meeting broke and they all parted ways. The conclusion of Mosby's sentimental final message to his troops officially ended the Civil War for the people of Fauquier County. But, the nature of guerilla warfare had engendered a unique guerilla mindset in Fauquier's white community; this mentality survived the war and significantly shaped their postwar social world. The military battles the soldiers and civilians engaged upon to defend the county of Fauquier had come to an end; however, Fauquier's white community remained defiant of the Union in the Reconstruction era.²⁵

III. A STRICT POLICY OF EXCLUSION

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the white residents of Fauquier County, like many former Confederates across the South, were devastated by the war's outcome. For four long years southerners had dedicated all their resources towards the war effort, they sacrificed a generation of young men, and swore their allegiance to a country that had been destroyed by Union troops. The Confederacy ceased to exist as a political entity. But, as Anne Rubin pointedly asserts, Confederate nationalism persisted in the hearts of those who had supported and served under the Confederate banner. Despite the failure of the Confederate States of America the postwar identities of white southerners would continue to be shaped by their unabated devotion to the Confederacy. In Fauquier, where a particularly hardcore brand of "diehard rebel" evolved throughout the war, Confederate nationalism certainly outlasted the existence of the Confederacy as a country. Upon hearing the news of General Lee's surrender Mosby's mother wrote in her diary that,

²⁵ Virgil Carrington Jones, *Ranger Mosby* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1944), 271; *OR* (ser.1) 97 (1): 1396.

“there are hearts too noble to be conquered.” However, nationalism in Fauquier County underwent a significant transition following Confederate defeat.²⁶

After the South lost the war, Confederate nationalism in Fauquier County became largely decentralized. The white populace no longer pledged their allegiance to the fallen Confederacy; the dream of an independent South that could provide safety for the institution of slavery had been destroyed. But the wartime experience of the white community continued to influence their postwar identity. As active participants in the partisan war, the soldiers and civilians from Fauquier County had united under the banner of the Confederacy in the defense of their homes. Though that banner had now been removed, their devotion to the protection of their county and community remained intact in their minds. This highly localized form of nationalism, shaped by the white populace’s collective experience as partisans, became the cynosure of Fauquier’s Reconstruction nationalism. The social milieu in postbellum Fauquier County was significantly influenced by this disposition that developed as a result of the nature of guerilla warfare.

In several northern Virginia counties that surrounded Fauquier, the conclusion of the war shifted the loyalty of many people living in the region. White people who had openly supported the Confederacy changed allegiance following Union victory, and openly claimed to be pro-Union. The white populace, whether pro-Union or pro-Confederate, in many counties of the Lower Shenandoah Valley began to harmoniously work together in the postwar period to rebuild their war-torn counties. An inclusionary policy was the nature of the “traditional mores of cooperation and coexistence that

²⁶ Rubin, *A Shattered Nation*, 2; Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2007), 2; Mosby, *Memoirs*, 358.

characterized the border society of the lower Valley.” The postwar situation in Fauquier County starkly contrasts the Reconstruction collaboration demonstrated by citizens residing in the various counties that compose the lower Shenandoah Valley. Guerilla warfare had forced the issue of loyalty to the forefront in Fauquier. Allegiance became a primary characteristic of individuals, determining every person’s place within Fauquier’s social milieu. Symptomatic of the uniformity displayed by Fauquier’s white population was the strict exclusion of those non-ex-Confederates that had not participated and unwaveringly supported the guerilla war. The “others,” specifically African Americans living in Fauquier, the minority white population that supported the Union, and northerners and their alien institutions, were ostracized for their loyalties. Throughout the war those loyal to the Confederacy in the county used harsh persecution and violence to intimidate the dissidents. This policy continued to be enforced in Fauquier for the duration of Reconstruction.²⁷

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, more commonly referred to as the Freedmen’s Bureau, was formed in March of 1865 as an act of Congress to help ex-slaves in the devastated South transition into society. The local Freedmen’s Bureau was located in Warrenton, Virginia, and guarded by about a hundred men of the Ninety-Sixth New York Volunteers. Captain M.E. Orr was the government’s chief agent assigned to the bureau in Warrenton. The presence of the Freedmen’s Bureau in Fauquier County spurred a great deal of hostility from the white population. The white community, though certainly not enthusiastic about it, came to realize that the

²⁷ Berkey, “War In the Borderland,” 284.

abolishment of slavery was a fact “that must be recognized and accepted.” However, the former secessionists would not accept the autonomy that the Bureau helped many African Americans to assert. White citizens of Fauquier County resisted the independence emphasized by the black population by employing familiar tactics utilized during the Civil War. Violence towards African Americans during Reconstruction became a form of white resistance to the alien institutions that had invaded Fauquier’s borders, and attempted to instill progress for African Americans.²⁸

The black population in the county had begun to organize by the end of 1865, and had issued a rallying cry to the Freedmen’s Bureau for their own school. The local Warrenton newspaper, *The True Index*, alerted its readership to the coming of the new school, and a new teacher who hailed from Massachusetts. The New England Freedmen’s Aid Society of Boston provided the salary and expenses for Miss S. Fannie Wood to relocate to Warrenton and educate the black population of the town. Upon learning of the new school and a northern white teacher, the white population became infuriated. On the first day of school, Miss Fannie Wood discovered an anonymous letter slid under the door:

“Head Quarters, Negroeville Va. Feb. 19, 1866. Mrs. Fannie Wood, We the young men of this town think you are a disgrace to decent society and therefore wish for you to leave this town before the first of March and if you don’t there will be violence used to make you comply to this request.”

These individuals proceeded to “serenade” Miss Fannie Woods with what the newspaper reported were “songs and expressions not intended for polite ears.” In the middle of

²⁸ Eugene M. Scheel, *The Civil War In Fauquier County* (Warrenton: The Fauquier National Bank, 1985), 90; “To The Patrons of the True Index,” *The True Index*, November 11, 1865.

March Miss Fannie Woods' schoolhouse came under fire from a hail of rocks.²⁹

Miss Fannie Woods was not the only teacher to face opposition from the white community for her northern roots, and the general goal of educating African Americans. George Morse was a white man who, like Woods, came to teach at a Freedmen's school in Warrenton under the auspices of the Freedmen's Bureau of Boston. Morse reported that he was frequently the victim of verbal threats and intimidation from white citizens in Fauquier. In a report to the Freedmen's Bureau Morse complained that, "he was physically threatened by a group of men who threw stones at him." Morse was concerned that if the conduct of this group was permitted to continue, then his students and their parents would likely be subjugated to similar horrors. As African Americans actively sought to obtain education during Reconstruction, the white population responded harshly to maintain their status of superiority.³⁰

The white population of Fauquier County had a distinct advantage over the black population in that they controlled most of the labor. Many whites utilized this power to assert power over African Americans and prevent black autonomy. In the immediate aftermath of the war white Fauquier citizens frequently complained about the "vagrancy" of the black populace residing in the county. *The True Index* published a notice from the Assistant Commissioner, State of Virginia, Orlando Brown, calling the attention of the many agents of the Bureau throughout the state to fulfill their duties, and secure African

29 "New Colored School in Warrenton," *The True Index*, January 27, 1866; Scheel, *The Civil War in Fauquier County*, 94; "Anonymous Letter," *The True Index*, February 24, 1866.

30 Donna Tyler Hollie et al., *African Americans of Fauquier County* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 57.

Americans “into contracts for their services with the planters and others who have steady employment for them.” It would seem that throughout the state the African American population had been resisting the call to return to the labor force under the control of those that only a short time ago had held them in the shackles of slavery. *The True Index* praised the assistant commissioner, stating that it is “important that the colored people should be honest laborers, instead of thieving vagrants which they are sure to become if left to themselves.” Control over the labor force enabled whites to restrict the independence that African Americans sought to exert.³¹

In time, many African Americans were forced to return to their former owners’ land, or work in the homes of the white families that once held them in slavery for a subsistence that was hardly sufficient to maintain independence. The white population sacrificed only the minimal amount of compensation to their black employees, which was determined by the Freedmen’s Bureau, to maintain their position of superiority. The white population used the workforce to resist the African American desire to assert their autonomy. African American workers who attempted to send their children to schools faced the risk of having their jobs terminated. Black families who chose to leave white churches to join one of the many newly established black churches in the county were confronted with similar economic reprisals. The white population used control of the work force as a means to continue to dominate the African American race throughout the Reconstruction era in Fauquier County.³²

31 O. Brown, “Headquarters, Assistant Commissioner, State of Virginia,” *The True Index*, January 6, 1866.

32 Michael Stuart Mangus, “The Debatable Land: Loudoun and Fauquier Counties, Virginia, During the Civil War,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1998), 362; Hollie et al., *African Americans of Fauquier County*, 57.

Many white citizens of Fauquier County simply reacted violently, as had been the case during the Civil War, to the presence of African Americans to instill fear, and sentiments of inferiority in the black population. The social unity created in the white populace of Fauquier as a result of guerilla warfare in the region enabled white citizens to maintain control in the county. Since the Civil War a steady flow of blacks out of the county had put the white population firmly into the majority. Still, a united black population in the county could pose potential problems for white supremacy. As African Americans in the region began to collaborate with one another and the Freedmen's Bureau, the persecution of the black population became harsher. Lieutenant W.S. Chase reported from Warrenton's Freedmen's Bureau office in September of 1866 that, "there is a class of irresponsible persons that endeavor to abuse the freedmen every chance they get." On the night of the September 5, 1866, two white residents of Fauquier, Eddie Wooden and Robert Martin, whom Chase reported as "two bad characters," brutally "attacked two freedmen." One of the African Americans, Henry Taylor, was shot by Wooden, "the ball striking the right lower rib coming out in front just grazing the intestines." The victimization of African Americans at the hands of the white Fauquier population became the primary tool of resistance to the change the Federal government was actively trying to impose on their society.³³

The emergence of the Ku Klux Klan sparked a great deal of violence across the South after 1865. As Klan members attempted to restore white supremacy in the South,

33 W.S. Chase, "Narrative Reports of Criminal Cases Involving Freedmen, Mar. 1866 - Feb. 1867" Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Virginia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865 - 1869, National Archives, Washington, D.C., <http://freedmensbureau.com/> (accessed January 10, 2015).

African Americans, and white members of society charged as “negro-lovers,” were targeted to halt the advancement of the black population and instill fear. The primary objective of the KKK organization seemed to coincide with the overall attitudes of the majority of whites living in Fauquier County during Reconstruction. The Freedmen’s Bureau records indicate that Klan activity in Fauquier was operational by the end of 1867. Although it is difficult to discern the exact reasoning for the increase of violence in the county, the timing in connection with the advent of black enfranchisement seems like more than a coincidence.

The first instance of Klan activity, in December of 1867, involved an African American man named Edward Davis who was “knocked senseless with a fire shovel.” When Davis finally awoke from the blow to his head he discovered his body had been moved so that his feet were “burning in the fireplace,” and “they were literally roasted.” One of his assailants, a white man named Gustavus Creel, was eventually apprehended. In April of 1868, Bureau records indicate the presence of “an organization known as the ‘Klu Klux Klan’ composed of young men generally, and who go about this place at midnight disturbing the colored people and committing outrages upon them.” A week prior to the Freedmen’s Bureau letter being written an African American man was coaxed out of his house late at night by a band of six or so men. “They ordered him to come out, which he complied with- they then set-upon him and beat-him with the butt end of pistols and sabers, and left the premises.” Morton Havens, the man who originally wrote the Freedmen’s Bureau officials describing the violence against the colored man, also reported that the band of outlaws proceeded to “break into the colored school-house near

his place, and committed outrages there.” Under the guise of the Klu Klux Klan many white Fauquier citizens actively participated in the resistance of African American agency, and attempted to defend the county from the progress alien institutions were trying to impose.³⁴

The Union victory in the Civil War and the demise of the Confederacy did little to alleviate the enmity directed at white citizens of Fauquier County who supported the Union during the Civil War. Wartime loyalty remained a defining characteristic of social inclusion within the white population during the Reconstruction era. Those who had been loyal to the Confederacy continued to harbor hostility towards the Federal government, and deemed the minority white population who supported the Union as an inhibitor of their restoring the glory of Virginia. Any white members of the Fauquier community found to be assisting African Americans faced reprisals. Several homes were burned down by angry white mobs for renting to blacks. The owner of Blooming Dale Woolen Factory, John R. Holland, was threatened by an old lady that lived in the vicinity of his mill for renting to a black man. Holland wrote to the state Freedmen’s Bureau commissioner reporting the incident and demanding “protection.” He added, the people who reside in the Upperville area attempt to make blacks feel “that freedom is worse than slavery and it is a general remark with the Secesh here that blacks may live in with the whites but the people shall not rent them houses.” Dissidents, white and black alike, who

34 "Records Relating to Murders and Outrages," Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Virginia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, 1865 -1869, National Archives, Washington, D.C., <http://freedmensbureau.com/> (accessed January 10, 2015) ; Tyler et al., *African Americans of Fauquier County*, 57.

failed to conform to the white majority's notion of how Reconstruction should transpire encountered violent retribution for their flout.³⁵

With the hope of finding sympathetic locals to aid the Freedmen's Bureau in their mission to advance the position of African Americans in Fauquier County Brigadier General Orlando Brown asked Lieutenant W.S. Chase to provide a list of names of "loyal persons" in the county. Chase was able to compose a list of eleven names, five white and six black. He regrettably informed his superior that most in the county are "bitterly opposed to anything that looks like reconstruction or true loyalty." The white population that had unified in the partisan war effort remained a virtual monolith in the Reconstruction era. The intractably indivisible nature of white society enabled them to resist the forces of change that alien institutions such as the Freedmen's Bureau had attempted to fortify in the county. The guerilla mentality, that had become part of their postwar identity, brought forth a violent reaction against northerners, blacks, and pro-Union whites. Though the white community in Fauquier County remained socially unified in the defense of their county, the future of the county was undoubtedly linked with that of their native state of Virginia.³⁶

IV. "VIRGINIA IS MY MOTHER"

The majority of people residing in Virginia opposed secession until the outbreak of violence at Fort Sumter, and Lincoln's call for troops to Washington. Upon Virginia's secession from the Union, Mosby appeared at his home in Bristol donning his new

³⁵ Scheel, *The Civil War In Fauquier County*, 91.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 98.

Confederate grey uniform. Mosby's dear friend Austin Sperry looked at him with astonishment, recalling a former conversation the two shared prior to Virginia's secession where Mosby expressed that he would fight for the Union. Sperry exclaimed, "Why Mosby," now that is no "Federal uniform." Mosby opined, "When I talked that way, Virginia had not passed the ordinance of secession. She is out of the Union now. Virginia is my mother, God bless her! I cannot fight against my mother." The sentiments evoked by Mosby epitomize the response shared by many Virginians at the beginning of the Civil War. It was an emotion that would resurface as the war came to a close. The white populace of Fauquier County was against rejoining the Union, but they followed their conquered state back under the control of the Federal government.³⁷

Loyalty to the state of Virginia became a major component of individual identity and allegiance in the postwar years. The citizens of Fauquier would emerge from the war, after four years of identifying with the Confederacy, self-identifying as Virginians once again. In the first edition of *The True Index* following the war, the editors proclaimed that "our sympathies" are with "the Commonwealth which gave us birth, and in whose welfare we shall ever feel an absorbing interest." The editors went on to say that they "shall therefore indulge in no vapid boastings of uninterrupted devotion to the Union, nor in abuse of leaders upon whom but recently all professed to look with pride and admiration." In the years between April of 1865 and January of 1870, between the fall of the Confederacy and Virginia's reinstatement into the Union, the former Confederates of Fauquier County linked their allegiance with their native state. These years of political

³⁷ Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 32.

tranquility that were waged between Virginia's government officials and the Federal government for control of Reconstruction policy were also fought at a local level. The white residents of Fauquier County resisted the power the Federal government attempted to assert in the South, and fought to restore the Virginia of old.³⁸

In the Reconstruction era, the white community in Fauquier County first encountered the Federal government's infringement on their lives through the amnesty proclamation. On May 29, 1865, President Andrew Johnson issued an amnesty proclamation that was intended to revert southerners' loyalties back to the United States of America. The oath was offered to all participants in the rebellion of the South. Any individual who took the oath would be endowed with the full rights of a citizen of the United States including all rights of property, with the exception of human property. However, there were fourteen classes of people who were exempt from amnesty and who would be required to apply for a pardon from President Johnson. These classes included, but were not limited to, all persons whose taxable property was over twenty thousand dollars, any person who served in the Confederate military above the rank of colonel in the army or lieutenant in the navy, and all members of the Confederate government. The response of Fauquier's white populace varied, but the primary objective of defying the United States government undergirded them all.³⁹

To "solemnly swear" to "faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the union of the States," and "faithfully support all laws and

38 L. W. Caldwell, and John W. Finks, "To The Patrons of the True Index," *The True Index*, November 11, 1865.

39 UNC School of Education, "Johnson's Amnesty Proclamation," Learn NC: North Carolina Digital History, <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-civilwar/4807> (accessed January 18, 2015).

proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves,” proved to be a task many people in Fauquier County were unwilling to accept in the immediate aftermath of the war. Some members of Fauquier’s white community demonstrated their defiance to the Federal government by refusing to take the mandatory oath of allegiance. This class of people, despite the fall of the Confederacy, would not recognize the United States as their own. The county’s newspapers indicate that in the late months of 1865 of the 2,500 white males that inhabited Fauquier about 1,228 had taken the required oath. Most of those who had taken the oath realized the importance of obtaining their rights as citizens. To vote, it was necessary for white southerner males to first swear their allegiance to the United States. For those who had been loyal to Confederacy, this necessary measure tasted “awful bitter” coming out of their mouths. But without the rights of citizenship, the white community in Fauquier realized that it would be difficult to combat government influence in the region. To restore the Old Virginia, the people of Fauquier, and Virginia as a whole, first had to fraudulently portray themselves as loyal citizens of United States, to endow themselves with the power to defy it.⁴⁰

The white men of Fauquier County who had to apply for pardon from the President illustrate another aspect of defiance, “smokescreen” lies. The citizens of the county that were required to fulfill this necessity to regain their rights of citizenship were very wealthy men. For the most part, they had served Mosby as economic support for the guerilla war. The thirteenth exception of the amnesty proclamation, forcing men whose

⁴⁰ “Oaths of Allegiance,” *The Virginia Sentinel*, December 23, 1865; Mangus, *The Debatable Land*, 385.

property was valued over \$20,000 to apply for pardon, meant this group of men hailed from the aristocracy. In antebellum Virginia this socioeconomic class was firmly in power. The frequent reference to farmer as their occupation in the amnesty papers reveals that Fauquier's planter-class certainly understood that for them to regain control they needed the government to recognize their citizenship. But, they were not willing to make the government privy of their wartime activities. In relation to their support and assistance of Colonel Mosby and his men they were especially silent. The nature of guerilla warfare masked the involvement of those citizens who actively participated in it, but when given the opportunity to reveal such things, they eluded the government.⁴¹

The majority of these men highlighted their pro-Union voting record during the late antebellum period to disguise their sentiments. William Cocke claimed to belong to the "union party," emphasizing that he voted for Scott and Marr as representatives from Fauquier to the secession convention of 1861. These were the Unionist candidates that were elected to the convention. Sampson Bayly also tried to appeal to President Johnson by presenting himself as a Unionist as a result of voting for Bell and Everett, of the Constitutional Union Party, in the presidential election of 1860. On the issue of the vote for the ratification of secession that followed the secession convention, most of the men pointedly asserted that everyone voted in favor of secession in the county. William H. Gaines responded, "I subsequently voted for the ratification of said ordinance by the people as did every other voter from my county except four." The tendency of Fauquier's men to highlight their antebellum support for the Union was utilized to distract the

⁴¹ Forrest, "*When The Rangers Came Home*," 9.

President from the fact that for four years they were absolutely devoted to the Confederacy. Putting a pro-Union voting record as the cynosure of their amnesty applications, the wealthy men of Fauquier attempted to create an image of themselves as loyal Americans.⁴²

When wartime activities are mentioned in the amnesty applications, equivocal language is used to conceal their loyalty in the war. Soldiers and government officials of the fallen Confederacy had records that indicated their service. Therefore, the men who had fought in the war or were elected to office were forced to mention so. But, if the person writing the application had not served the Confederacy, it is implied in many applications that they had no part in supporting either side. “I stayed home on my farm,” is the most common response to the question of what the person may have been doing during the war. With no military record to indict them, most choose to assert, as James Skinker did, that he had “no connection with the war.” Others, like William Beale, elected to insist that he “in no way aided the rebellion.” Mosby’s presence in Fauquier County during the Civil War made it impossible to not take some part in the partisan war. Loyal Confederates assisted the guerilla outfit, loyal Unionists faced hostility. The nature of guerilla war induced the involvement of every citizen. To protect their unified society, and re-establish the white community’s rigid hierarchy, the men lied in their applications. Not only did they conceal their own wartime activities, they were extremely deceptive about Mosby and his men’s activity throughout the war. The applicants were given plenty

42 William Cocke, “Application for Amnesty,” War Department, The Adjutant General’s Office, Record Group 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. www.fold3.com (accessed December 10, 2015) (Hereafter “Application for Amnesty”); Sampson Bayly, “Application for Amnesty”; William H. Gaines, “Application for Amnesty.”

of opportunity to divulge information; when necessary they provided the minimal amount to secure their enfranchisement, but not enough to implicate the partisan warrior.⁴³

In a subtle manner the men of Fauquier who applied for pardon exhibited a devotion to their state that characterized their postwar allegiance. The oaths that they were forced to swear to the United States did not transfer their loyalties to the Union. Rather, in the absence of the Confederacy, the white community came to identify themselves as Virginians. “I took sides with [my] state,” proclaimed B.H. Shackleford, and stood in defense of “her territory from invasion.” In the majority of applications, each man began his statement with “I am a native of Virginia, and citizen of Fauquier.” To justify his military actions during the war, James F. Jones responded that he answered “the call of his state for soldiers.” When asked where his sympathies lie during the conflict James Marshall retorted, “from the date of the military invasion of his state, his sympathies were with those charged in her defense.” The authority of the state was illuminated in the majority of pardons written by Fauquier’s men. They were defying the Federal government and the President by establishing the supremacy of the state over the nation. With their citizenship restored they could take action against the Federal government and restore Old Virginia.⁴⁴

The social unity instilled in the white community by the nature of guerilla warfare created a virtual monolith in voting in the postwar years. The postwar politics of Fauquier County became a testament to the conservatism that was rampant in the county. The *True*

⁴³ James Skinker, “Application for Amnesty”; William Beale, “Application for Amnesty.”

⁴⁴ B.H. Shackleford, “Application for Amnesty.”; James F. Jones, “Application for Amnesty.”; James Marshall, “Application for Amnesty.”

Index made a public declaration of the “conservative course” that it would follow to coincide with the “conservative and enlightened sentiment of the community.” Under the direction of Governor Pierpoint, 1865-1867, the county praised his moderate insistence that the Civil War had punished Virginia enough, and that the state should be restored as soon as possible. Members of the white community condemned the efforts of those “political quacks” in Washington that sought “to tear down the sacred bulwarks of State sovereignty and inaugurate the dominion of centralized power.” The efforts of radicalism were “steadfastly opposed,” the white populace firmly advocating “the right of each State, for itself, to determine the question of suffrage and to manage its own affairs within the limits prescribed by the constitution.” The radical Republicans, whom most assumed were in control of the Federal government, were vehemently opposed by the white citizens of the county, but in President Johnson they saw a degree of hope for lenient Reconstruction.⁴⁵

The Conservative Party did not officially organize in Fauquier County until 1867, but a candidate’s conservatism became his measure of success with the voters of Fauquier. In the first election following the war, October 12, 1865, the Conservative candidate for the House of Representatives won a landslide victory in the county. This trend would continue for the duration of Reconstruction. Fauquier voted overwhelmingly for the Conservative candidate in state elections throughout the Reconstruction era; a similar pattern began to emerge in the county’s local elections. Though former

⁴⁵ *The True Index*, January 6, 1866; Jack P. Maddex, *The Virginia Conservatives, 1867-1879: A Study in Reconstruction Politics* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 41; *The Virginia Sentinel*, December 23, 1865; W.H.T. Squires, *Unleashed At Long Last: Reconstruction in Virginia* (Portsmouth: Printcraft Press, Inc., 1939), 66-67.

Confederates were not allowed to run for state office, nothing barred them from local politics. Immediately, former Confederates and members of the planter-class began to seize office positions in the county for their traditionalist views. James Marshall successfully ran for sheriff in 1866 adorning his campaign with his impressive war record as a lieutenant in the Army of Northern Virginia. Ownership of land again transferred into local political power, as agriculture returned as the dominant force in Fauquier's economy. Controlling the region's economic resources ultimately allowed former slaveholders to continue to command authority over politics. In time, the local economy and political structure in Fauquier resembled that of the county in the antebellum period. The resistance of the white community had proved to be effective, and Fauquier seemed to have restored many traditional aspects of Old Virginia.⁴⁶

Across the South, African Americans faced hostile resistance to the autonomy they asserted as a result of their freedom. The states of the South fought to preserve the institutions and policies of the antebellum period, without accepting the change that the outcome of the war would require. The radical Republicans in Congress rebuked President Johnson and his Reconstruction policy for being far too lenient on the South. On March 2, 1867, the First Reconstruction Act was passed by Congress forcing the southern states to hold biracial elections, where the people would vote for members to a constitutional convention to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. The failure of the southern states to comply with the initial Reconstruction Act caused Congress to pass the Supplemental Reconstruction Act. This act, passed later in the month of March, instituted

⁴⁶ Mangus, "The Debatable Land," 13.

martial law in the southern states. Since the South was not willing to follow the orders issued by Congress, military commanders were directed to implement the process of reconstruction. Thus, Virginia was put under the command of General John Schofield and became the First Military District, and Governor Francis Pierpont was replaced by Radical Republican Henry Wells. Fauquier's white community had worked adamantly to reestablish their control over the African American populace, which reinforced white supremacy despite the outcome of the war. The Reconstruction Acts issued by Congress elicited a harsh response from the white populace, condemning the radicals as "political conspirers" that sought to victimize the South. All Republicans subscribed to the notion that some steps were necessary to protect the freemen after the war. Some basic level of equality was commitment that united the political party. But, for a society that had always been able to dictate their own racial relations, any sanctions imposed on the South regarding the advancement of the black population was deemed "radical." The postwar years in Fauquier leading up to this moment had been marked by the restoration of their world that existed prior to the war, but the Reconstruction Acts of Congress initiated a process of inexorable change.⁴⁷

Under military Reconstruction, the Virginia Conservative Party formally organized itself. The genesis of the party coming from counties throughout the state, much like Fauquier, which had already been significantly conservative in their postwar voting. The Conservative Party formed a coalition with the moderate Republicans to run

⁴⁷ Maddex, *The Virginia Conservatives*, 45; Mangus, "The Debatable Land," 387-388; Squires, *Unleashed At Long Last*, 223.

Gilbert C. Walker for Governor in 1869. Walker campaigned for the end of Reconstruction in the state, and advocated a constitution of “universal suffrage and universal amnesty.” Biracial suffrage had become a reality that Virginia was forced to accept. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which provided suffrage and civil rights for African Americans, had to be ratified by the states in order to rejoin the Union. On July 6, 1869, Virginians overwhelmingly elected Walker for Governor and filled the state’s House of Delegates and Senate with Conservatives, virtually expunging the radical Republicans from Virginia. Fauquier County voters firmly put their support behind Governor Walker, and he won a decisive victory in each voting district in the county. Virginia’s Conservative Party had redeemed the state, and the Virginia was readmitted to the Union.⁴⁸

Fauquier rejoiced in the restoration of the state, and the removal of the authority of Radical Republicans. Alien institutions like the Freedmen’s Bureau, and Union military forces were now out of the state. Their defiance of the Union in the postwar years had restricted the power of Reconstruction to effect change. In Fauquier, the agricultural economy had rebounded by 1870, politically the Conservative Party had seized control of the state, and in local elections former Confederates and slaveholders had maintained power. African Americans were firmly back under the control of the white community, and white supremacy prevailed. Social unity that had been established as a result of the nature of guerilla warfare had enabled the white population to strongly resist the forces of Reconstruction. But, the course of the Civil War had inflicted a

48 Maddex, *The Virginia Conservatives*, 46, 82-84; Mangus, “The Debatable Land,” 382-383.

change in the South that inevitably altered the postwar years. African Americans, with the aid of the Federal government and pro-Unionists, emerged from the war with their freedom. The struggle between the white and black populace to define the parameters of that freedom was determined at the local level. By asserting their autonomy and taking an active role in securing their own racial equality, African Americans in Fauquier ensured that the most sacred tradition of Old Virginia would never be restored.

CHAPTER 2 - THE DISSIDENTS

I. THE PERSPECTIVE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS AND UNIONISTS

The perspective of pro-Union whites living within Fauquier County, and the African American population is important to determine how the dissidents responded to a hostile, and unified white majority. The nature of guerilla warfare had pitted the secessionist population against both of these minority groups. They were considered an internal threat to the defense of the county. African Americans and pro-Union whites responded in subtly defiant ways. The constant flow of troops through the county enabled these two groups to take advantage of the Union presence. This benefitted the Unionist white population in particular. Threats, and physical abuse administered by Confederate civilians could be countered when the Union forces were present in the area. By doing so, they were able to instill a degree of fear in the Confederate civilian population as well. Mosby did not conceive of his role within the sections of northern Virginia that he controlled as a police force. The civilian population, regardless of allegiance, had to conduct themselves in a way that did not invite retribution for their actions. This served as a means of keeping the hostile Confederate civilian population from following through with many of their threats. The pro-union white population was able to provide themselves with a degree of protection by effectively defying the Confederacy in this subtle manner.

African Americans living in Fauquier County were kept tightly under the control of the white population during the Civil War. However, accompanying the cessation of hostilities was the end of the institution of slavery. The black populace entered into a

battle during Reconstruction with the white populace within the county. Opposing views of how freedom should be defined vied for control of policy. In Fauquier, the African American population asserted their autonomy and independence despite white resistance. The white community fought to establish white superiority, and in many ways succeeded in that endeavor. But, the ability of African Americans to combat those forces of subjugation allowed them to maintain a new degree of freedom. Through education, religion, and independent communities, the black populace attempted to remove themselves from under the control of the white community. Though white supremacy certainly prevailed, the black community established firm roots that would become the foundation for the push toward equality.

II. THE STRUGGLE FOR LOYALTY

Unionism in Fauquier County was by no means prevalent in the region. For the small minority of the white population that elected to remain loyal to the stars and stripes, the four years of the Civil War were a difficult time to endure. Escalated tension, as a result of the war, intensified the pro-Confederate white community's authority over their slaves, and the free black population in the county. As Colonel Mosby and the Forty-third Battalion began to exercise control over Fauquier and the surrounding counties, blatant hostility towards Unionist whites and blacks became rampant throughout the region. Overt acts or declarations of pro-Union sentiment were not tolerated by Mosby and his men, or by the loyal civilian population that supported them. "Mosby's Confederacy" became an ultra-exclusive society, functioning as a system of parts, where every member played an intricate role in the defense of their homes and community. Unionism in this

society that developed in Fauquier County after 1863 became a blemish on an otherwise perfectly functioning system in unison. The white population that continued to support the Union, and African Americans found to be harboring Unionist sentiments, or attempting to aid the Union war effort, were chastised for their dissent.

Under the direction of President U.S. Grant in 1871, the United States government created the Southern Claims Commission. This organization enabled citizens of the United States who resided within the southern states to receive reimbursement for personal property losses that may have incurred as a result of the Civil War. Within the applications filed by claimants, the nature of the guerilla war in Fauquier County is illustrated from the perspective of pro-Union whites and African Americans that resided in the county during the war. The Southern Claims Commission became an opportunity for those Unionists who risked their lives during the war to share their sacrifices in order to gain some sense of retribution for the losses they incurred during the Civil War. These losses included a wide range of items that Union forces had taken during the war. The most frequent article mentioned in the claims was by far livestock; cattle and hogs accompanied the majority of claims petitioning for compensation. The seizure of horses was another popular claim. Claimants demonstrated that supplies used by the Union forces were varied; these included bushels of corn, cords of wood, stocks of straw, fodder, oats, rails and wheat, among many others. The Federal government was fully aware that the Union Army had seized many of these items and was prepared to provide restitution to those who aided the war effort, but first, those southerners had to prove they had been loyal.

“On which side were your sympathies during the war, and were they on the same side from beginning to end,” asked the fifth question of the Southern Claims Commission standing interrogatories. The only answer that satisfied the commissioners was “Union.” However, a statement of loyalty was not sufficient evidence for the United States government to reimburse any southern citizen who claimed to be loyal. Seventy-five questions followed, all of which were designed to force any claimant to prove their loyalty. The Southern Claims Commission had three stipulations each claimant had to fulfill to receive a reimbursement for property loss. The claimant had to prove loss of property, either through receipts received from Army officials during the war, or witness testimony. The claimant had to have supported the Union during the war, and actively taken a role in aiding the Union cause. Furthermore, sufficient evidence was necessary to substantiate their claim to loyalty. Finally, all claimants were held responsible for any and all actions taken during the war. Therefore, each claimant had to demonstrate explicitly that they had not in any way provided assistance to the Confederates.

In theory, the Southern Claims Commissioners sought to apply their blueprint for loyalty to those claimants from Fauquier County. In practice, their template for unionism failed to account for the highly Confederate nationalistic sentiment that was pervasive in the region. The experiences of the people residing in Fauquier County during the American Civil War were significantly different from most during the conflict. Each citizen, whether pro-Union or pro-Confederacy, played an intricate role in the complex web induced by guerilla warfare. With a minority of Unionists juxtaposed with a significant number of devout Confederate residents, it demanded a great deal of risk to

remain loyal to the United States. The cases filed by pro-Union citizens reveal that only subtle measures could be taken to aid the Union cause. This section of Virginia's ultra-nationalistic inclination forced those with Union sentiments to defy their oppressors through less conspicuous measures. By doing so, even though they were trapped within a society where everyone knew their neighbors allegiances, they were still able to marginally support the Union effort to suppress the Confederacy.

The most significant way the pro-Union men of Fauquier County could defy the Confederacy was to fight in the war for the Union. Applicants that had fought for the Union proved beyond a doubt their allegiance to the United States and were guaranteed financial restitution for losses incurred during the war. Few men from Fauquier fled the county to join the ranks of the Union Army. Gustavus R.B. Horner spent over forty years in the U.S. service as a surgeon when he finally retired. When the Civil War broke out in 1861 his allegiance lay where it always had, with the United States. He served as a fleet surgeon in the U.S. Navy and other government services for the duration of the war. Such a commitment earned a comment by the special commissioner on his report, "there is no doubt, nor ever has there been about the loyalty," of Gustavus R.B. Horner. Annie E. Dixon's husband was appointed paymaster in the Union Army where he served for the duration of the war. In November of 1865 the wartime loyalty of Major Dixon would result in his murder. Some families sent sons or son-in-laws off to fight for the Union. Nathaniel G. Carter, too advanced in years at the outbreak of war to fight, convinced his son James and son-in-law Moses Thorpe to head North and do his bidding for him.

Compelled to support the Union war effort in some form, these families had to sacrifice their children.⁴⁹

The cases involving men from Fauquier who fought on the side of the Union are a rarity. But fighting for the Union Army was by no means a subtle act of defiance by the pro-Union men of Fauquier County. When the country divided they ultimately risked their lives to defend the U.S. government. Nevertheless, by joining the Union Army these men were removed from Fauquier County and trained as soldiers. Their acts of defiance against the Confederacy were part of organized warfare. Those who remained in Fauquier were at the behest of a civilian population, and guerilla unit that despised them for their opinions and affiliations. Those Unionists who remained in Fauquier County had to commit less conspicuous means of defiance in order to remain loyal to the Union.

After the Confederate government passed a military draft to counter the U.S. Army's vastly superior numbers, men across the South found themselves being conscripted into the Confederate Army. Like many of their pro-Confederate neighbors, the pro-Union men in Fauquier County were being drafted despite their conflicting loyalty. For the men who had been opposed to the formation of the Confederacy, or more specifically Virginia's bid to join that country, joining the army against the side they supported was not acceptable. Draft dodging became an inconspicuous measure of defying the Confederacy. William M. Fletcher accomplished this task by fleeing into Maryland, or heading further North. When possible he would return home, but Mosby's

⁴⁹ Gustavus R.B. Horner, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.41786, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims; Annie E. Dixon, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.36715, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims; Nathaniel G. Carter, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.41718, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

constant presence in the region made it difficult. Some pro-Union men elected to remain in their homes regardless of the frequent visits from Confederate conscription guards. Robert L. Jeffries spent up to ten days on multiple occasions hiding in a forest close to his home to escape conscription. Thomas A. Brooks found himself in a similar predicament as Jeffries on numerous occasions. His known sentiments made him a target for conscription guards, who would stake out his house in order to capture and force him into Confederate service. In a rather close call Brooks barely escaped the guards and had to hide out in bushes near his home for two weeks while the conscription guards watched his residence. This tendency to attempt to conscript these Union men into the Confederate service was typical of the army, though Mosby and his men found little use for it. Fully aware of those in Fauquier County who were in favor of the Union Mosby sought not to force them into the Confederate Army, but rather punish them for their treason.⁵⁰

The prevalence of violence in the county, as a result of Mosby's Rangers, became a useful tool for commissions in determining loyalty. The way civilians were treated by Mosby's men and the pro-Confederate civilians became a primary indicator of an applicant's sympathies during the war. Reports of threats, molestation, and other injustices in claimants' interrogatories with the commissioners suggested that applicants displayed pro-Union sentiment. John E. Thorpe reported that on several occasions Confederate soldiers threatened to arrest him and ship him off to Richmond. His brother, George L. Thorpe, boldly spoke out against the Confederacy and proudly declared his Union sentiments. The Confederate Army threatened to hang him, and a group of pro-

⁵⁰ Robert L. Jeffries, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 36644, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims; Thomas A. Brooks, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.48632, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

Confederate civilians broke into his shop, destroyed it, and burned it to the ground. In determining the loyalty of each claimant the commissioners could easily base decisions on how poorly each claimant was treated by the highly nationalistic Confederate community in which they lived.⁵¹

Correspondingly, employing this very line of reasoning the commissioners demurred against the loyalty of several applications. For example, based on the interrogatory of the claimant, and the testimony of the witnesses he provided, Thornton Payne appeared by all accounts a pro-Union man. However, the commissioners found his testimony to be rather odd; at no point during the war had he been accosted for his sentiments. The commissioners found that he “lived happily and undisturbed in the Confederate community.” Consequently, Payne had his claims disallowed by the claims commission. The commissioners knew that any pro-Union civilian could not escape such a hostile territory without repercussions for their allegiance. In a similar situation Sinclair A. Embry’s claim was denied on account that there was no evidence that he was mistreated by the Confederates as a Union man. Fauquier County was a dangerous environment for all whom held favorable convictions for the Union cause. For those sentiments they were threatened and molested to instill fear in the pro-Union minority. Any individual who truly harbored Union afflictions suffered that fate for the duration of

⁵¹ John E. Thorpe, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 43080, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims. George L. Thorpe, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 43081, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

the war. The claims commissioners could manipulate these dire circumstances to ascertain the true loyalties of all claimants.⁵²

The authority of Mosby in Fauquier commanded a unified white populace that was unwilling to tolerate dissent, but the Union men and women of the county were not completely deterred. Though danger was constantly lurking for pro-Union citizens, they sought to remain loyal to the United States and aid the war effort. The testimony of Union soldier Silas Thorpe in the case of Nathaniel G. Carter reveals that one evening around midnight, Thorpe accompanied a Union scout to Carter's house. Nathaniel revealed a great deal of information to the scout about Mosby's men, including their current location and numbers. With their newly acquired information the Union Army was able to launch a successful attack the next day against Mosby. Within the tightly-knit community in Fauquier even the Unionists were privy to a great deal of information about Mosby and his men. Countering guerilla bands had proved a significantly difficult task for Union forces throughout the war. The guerilla's ability to blend back into society hindered any Union policy to subdue these unconventional fighting units. The knowledge of Unionists, inside the enemy's lines, provided the Union Army with intelligence that substantially facilitated the capture of many of Mosby's men, and suppressed Mosby's control over the region.⁵³

The blueprint for unionism constructed by the Southern Claims Commission required that applicants prove they in no way provided aid or assistance to the

⁵² Thornton Payne, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 13149, Southern Claims Commission Barred and Disallowed Claims; Sinclair A. Embry, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 21070, Southern Claims Commission Barred and Disallowed Claims.

⁵³ Nathaniel G. Carter, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 41718, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

Confederacy. This task would prove to be rather difficult for those living in the belligerent county. Refusing to feed a Confederate soldier that demanded a meal could potentially be dangerous for that individual. In actuality, Unionists during the war would have had to support the Confederacy in some way. It was a necessity in order to survive the Civil War. Unionists would have to comply with Confederate demands; otherwise there would be dreadful consequences. The Unionists in Fauquier County did not have the luxury of avoiding indirectly supporting the Confederacy. Staunch Unionism attracted hostility, whether it be getting shipped off to a Richmond prison, or being assaulted, Unionists in Fauquier had to submit to the Confederacy in some way to avoid these repercussions. The Southern Claims Commission failed to acknowledge that applicants in Fauquier County had to capitulate to the enemy forces or they faced real danger. The minority pro-Union white community in Fauquier could subtly defy the Confederacy by withholding support, but the nature of guerilla warfare meant they still had to maintain a level of accommodation with the partisans.

African Americans living in Fauquier County found supporting the Union during the Civil War even more difficult than pro-Union whites. In a report filed by Ham Brown to the Southern Claims Commission, Brown illustrated an opinion of the war that echoed with African Americans across the South. He replied to the question to which side did your sympathies lie by stating, "I sympathized with the Union, how could I do otherwise? I didn't want my whole race to be slaves always. I thought the Union cause was my cause and I think so still." But, the potential for harsh persecution that harboring Unionist sentiment could elicit from Mosby's Rangers or the loyal Confederate civilian population

was a major deterrent for the black population in the county. Beverly W. Howard responded to the question of how he expressed his sentiment, by informing the commissioners that, “[he] was quiet as all free men of color had to be. He kept his sentiments to [himself].” Howard’s convictions were typical of most African Americans in the region that filed claims after the war. The claims reveal that while risk was pervasive in Fauquier for anyone who held pro-Union sentiments, African Americans faced graver repercussions. Whites were frequently threatened, arrested, or shipped off to Richmond jails for their unionist inclinations. African Americans were regularly beaten and threatened with the noose. These graver threats occurred much more frequently among the African Americans in Fauquier County. Therefore, the majority of African Americans elected to keep the Union sentiments concealed unless among fellow African Americans who could be trusted and held similar convictions. Subtle acts of unionism among the African American population were less prevalent than among white pro-Union civilians.⁵⁴

In some instances the African Americans residing within the county would assume the risks to provide support to the Union. This usually transpired through the exchange of information about the location of Confederate troops. Ham Brown provided whatever aid he could to the Union cause when the opportunity presented itself. Thomas Anderson bravely shared information with Union forces, and used his vast knowledge of the area to escort the Union Army through the rugged terrain of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Aside from providing information to Union troops, the black population

⁵⁴ Ham Brown, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 41706, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims; Beverly W. Howard, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.14554, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

defied their slave-masters by running away. The location of Fauquier County in proximity to the North and Washington provided the incentive for many slaves to flee the county. The Emancipation Proclamation would provide the justification for many slaves to make their flight across the Mason-Dixon Line. But, for the most part, slaves would be stuck in the shackles of slavery until the end of the war.⁵⁵

The Civil War for pro-Union whites and African Americans in Fauquier was a period in which they were forced to endure many hardships. They put their lives in danger to support the Union in an area that was particularly hostile toward their sentiments. When Mosby and his men took control of the region, the white community became a united force that castigated them as traitors and outcasts. The subtle defiance of the Confederacy that these pro-Union individuals and African Americans undertook was not without risk. Many people were punished for their loyalty to the North, but the result of the war meant their sacrifices would not be in vain. These individuals overcame the challenges presented by Fauquier's fervent Confederate patriotism to aid the Union cause in their winning effort. The minority white community that remained loyal to the Union had reason to be hopeful that Reconstruction would bring reconciliation with their Confederate neighbors, and alleviate wartime hostility. African Americans emerged from the war with an opportunity that most of the black population had only dreamed of, freedom. The outcome of the war offered promise for both these groups of people; however, the nature of guerilla war instilled a mentality in Fauquier's former

⁵⁵ Mary Anderson, (Fauquier Co., VA), no. 55218, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

Confederates that continued into Reconstruction, ensuring that wartime loyalty remained the primary characteristic of their society.

The Southern Claims Commission, though firmly established on the requirements for the white claimants to prove their loyalty, was much less rigid when considering claims presented by African Americans. This created a double standard that becomes apparent even in the language articulated by the commissioners. In the reports that accompany every file the commissioner assigned the case wrote a summary about the details of the case and highlighted particularly important aspects of each individual. A major discrepancy arises from these reports. In white claimants from Fauquier County only those that were described as “without a doubt loyal,” typically received reimbursement. However, numerous African American cases were accompanied by reports that stated the claimant had only “satisfactorily provided their loyalty.” Nevertheless, the African American claimants were unanimously reimbursed for the property destroyed and utilized by the Union Army.

Several factors also must be taken into consideration when evaluating the scale of judgment for African Americans and whites. Most importantly, many of the disqualifying elements that the claims commissioners were analyzing the black populace were barred from. In Fauquier County, as with the rest of the South, African Americans did not enjoy the rights and privileges of citizenship. Therefore, they did not have the right to vote for the ordinance of secession. Furthermore, for the majority of the war the Confederate Army had no interest in utilizing African Americans. They were not conscripted, although many were forced into army services as servants. The general attitude of the

claims commissioners seemed to acknowledge the sentiments of Ham Brown. Why would a war to end slavery be opposed by those the war intended to free? Finally, the decisions administered by the Southern Claims Commissioners exemplify certain assumptions about white and black manhood that were instilled in the white population. All white men who remained in the Confederacy were considered disloyal by the commissioners. White men, as stately, independent individuals, had the power to remove themselves from the region. While a white man who claimed to be loyal, but remained in Fauquier County and did nothing for the war effort would be highly suspect to the commissioners, an African American man doing the same thing would be considered part of his innate human nature. Like the majority of the white population, the white commissioners made their decisions based upon the assumption that African Americans were dependent and inferior human beings. These underlying assumptions about African Americans obviously weighed heavily on the claims commissioners and resulted in different standards for the black and white claimants.

These stereotypical assumptions about race would have significant implications for the Southern Claims Commissions. With the commissioners relaxed standards towards the African American population in Fauquier County, only one African American was denied reimbursement. 22 of the 23 claims made by Fauquier's colored population were allowed. In total the claims made for property losses by all the Southern states amassed 22,298; however, only a mere only 7,092 or 32 percent of the claims were

approved for settlements.⁵⁶ Fauquier's success rating considerably exceeds the national average. 151 claims were made in Fauquier, with 61 being approved for reimbursement. A grand total of 41 percent of all claims made were accepted. Fauquier's black majority and the high success rate of African Americans with the commissioners played a major role in the substantial difference between Fauquier and the national average. Of the 61 successful claims from the county, the African American population accounted for 22 of those, or 36 percent. The outstandingly high approval rating gives the allusion that a much higher percentage of claims were approved in Fauquier County. The white approval rating for Fauquier County sat at a dismal thirty percent, while the African American claimants had a 95 percent success rate. When taking that into consideration, if the African American claims were taken out of the equation, the success rate for Fauquier County is slightly below the national average.

The statistical analysis of the claims filed by the citizens of Fauquier is revealing from another standpoint. Only 128 of the approximately 11,000 white citizens of the county filed claims with the commissioners. There is a distinct lack of reference to the motivation of the white community for not applying, but it is telling that they chose not to. To speculate, it would seem that the importance of wartime loyalty, the definition of a person's place in Fauquier's social milieu, deterred most of the white community from filing claims. Publicly pledging loyalty to the Union through a medium such as the Southern Claims Commission would not be condoned by Fauquier's former secessionist community. It would align a member of the white community with the pro-Union whites,

⁵⁶ "Guide to Researching the Southern Claim Commission," last modified January 30, 2014, <http://www.slcl.org/content/guide-researching-southern-claims-commission-records>.

and African Americans that were socially ostracized and castigated for their wartime allegiance. Applying to the commission was a formal declaration that a person did not support the Confederacy, or those who fought to maintain it. Even the prospect of financial restitution could not break the solidarity of the white community that remained defiant of the Union.

IV. THE FIGHT TO DEFINE FREEDOM

Across the South the freedom of African Americans came to fruition through several different avenues. There were many African Americans who were born free; in Fauquier County, on the eve of war, the free-colored population was 845. In a few instances, though fairly rare in Fauquier, slaves were emancipated by their masters through wills. Fauquier's geographic location in relation to the northern states initiated the flight of many slaves into Washington, D.C. to escape bondage by their own means. For the majority of African Americans in the South the Emancipation Proclamation that Abraham Lincoln's issued on January 1, 1863, was the facilitator of freedom. But many slaves would remain in captivity until Union forces were able to physically free them from their masters on plantations throughout the South. Nevertheless, freedom did not necessarily mean citizenship. And, as African Americans were able to finally throw off the shackles of slavery, they began to encounter new hostilities across the South. In theory, the measures taken by the Republican Party should have enfranchised African Americans and instituted some degree of racial equality. In practice, white Southerners launched a campaign that would re-enforce white supremacy and attempt to force African Americans back into a position of slavery in everything but name. African Americans

responded truculantly by asserting their independence and forging a degree of autonomy.⁵⁷

In Fauquier County, the end of slavery brought forth a great deal of resistance from white citizens. The freedom of African Americans posed a significant threat to the community unity that guerilla warfare had instilled in their society. Several members of Fauquier's white population refused to accept that the Confederacy's failure meant the extinction of slavery. In August of 1865, an African American named John Berry, who was residing in Alexandria, Virginia, following the conclusion of the war, returned to his former plantation in Fauquier to reunite with his family and bring them back to his home. Benjamin Triplet's plantation, near Ashby's Gap, Virginia, continued to hold Berry's wife and six children in bondage nearly four months after the war. Triplet refused to allow Berry to take his family and even threatened Berry's life. According to Berry, Triplet angrily condemned Berry for going to the "damned yankees to fight against him." Triplet refused to acknowledge that the war was over, or that African Americans were free. Berry repeatedly asked for his family, but Triplet told him "he should not have them - that nobody [will] take them away, and that if anybody came into [his] yard he would shoot them." Triplet, like many other white Fauquier citizens, continued to deny the outcome of the Civil War. Acknowledging the freedom of Berry and his family meant accepting that African Americans could no longer be held as property.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Hollie et al., *African Americans in Fauquier County*, 9.

⁵⁸ Statement of John Berry, 11 Aug. 1865, Miscellaneous Records: Court Cases, series 3878, Alexandria VA Superintendent, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, & Abandoned Lands, Record Group 105, National Archives.

Triplet also reveals the betrayal that many white slaveowners felt across the South. The South's culture of noblesse oblige that emerged in the wake of the second great awakening instilled a master-slave relationship in the form of paternalism. This propensity was cultivated from the "necessity to discipline," while simultaneously "morally justify[ing] a system of exploitation." The journal entries of the famous South Carolinian planter James H. Hammond exhibit this white mindset that had come to fruition in the South. Hammond envisioned himself as a "beneficent master" that exerted "guidance and control" over his "uncivilized and backward" slave population as a worldly duty "entrusted to him by God." Hammond did live to see African Americans attain their freedom, but members of his planter class, like Triplet, struggled to relinquish control over a group of people they perceived as inferior, and belligerently waged a social war to maintain superiority and authority over the entire black population.⁵⁹

The African American population in Fauquier during the postwar years, with the aid of the Freedmen's Bureau in Warrenton, attempted to maintain their freedom and establish their own tradition in the county despite the hostility they faced. In the immediate aftermath of the war, many African Americans like John Berry sought to reunite with their families. Slavery and the Civil War had displaced many African American families across the country. George Tyler and his wife Marjorie Chapman were both slaves on the plantation of the Boetler/George family near Midland in Fauquier. They were the parents of fourteen children, but five of them had been sold away prior to

⁵⁹Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 4; Drew Gilpin Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 73.

the war. George and Marjorie were able to reunite their family a short time after the cessation of hostilities. Many African Americans in Fauquier were not merely content with reestablishing their relationships- they sought to formally legalize them. Prior to the war marriages between slaves had no legal standing. Records indicate that among the many responsibilities of the Freedmen's Bureau, assisting African Americans formerly held in slavery with the legalization of their marriages became a duty of immense importance to the black population. For Solomon Neverdon and Zacharetta Blackwell, who were among the first freedmen to marry in Fauquier County, the marriage certificate issued by the Freedmen's Bureau was more than a document "sealing the bonds of holy matrimony." It was a "symbol of freedom" that served as a testament to African American's ability to "maintain a sense of family and sustain long-lasting relations," in spite of the conditions slavery imposed on them.⁶⁰

In the absence of slavery the white population in Fauquier wanted to impose a significantly restrictive form of "freedom" on African Americans. African Americans sought to expand the boundaries of "freedom" that the united, majority white population attempted to foist upon them. The sentiments of white residents of Fauquier during Reconstruction illustrate their desire to re-instill slavery in all but name; thus, firmly establishing white supremacy and control over the black population. As a measure to avoid remaining under the control of white inhabitants of the region, African Americans throughout Fauquier sought to establish their own society, independent from the white

⁶⁰ Hollie et al., *African Americans of Fauquier County*, 15-17; Reginald Washington, "Sealing the Sacred Bonds of Holy Matrimony, Freedmen's Bureau Marriage Records," *Prologue: Journal of the National Archives* 37, no. 1 (2005), doi: <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2005/spring/freedman-marriage-recs.html>.

population. In a study of middle Tennessee, Stephen V. Ash found a similar pattern for African Americans in the region. Ash ascertained that African Americans in Middle Tennessee recognized the need to “build an independent black society,” in order to seize the “opportunity for advancement.” Likewise, Jonathan M. Berkey’s research revealed that African Americans living in the lower Shenandoah Valley in the postwar years echoed resoundingly similar sentiments. In each region, African Americans attempted to overcome the restrictions imposed on their “freedom” by instigating a separation of many communities, churches and schools. An early form of institutional segregation developed, initiated by the black population.⁶¹

The establishment of black communities across Fauquier County immediately found a major obstacle. In the postwar years the cost of land in the county increased drastically, impeding the possibility of many African Americans from acquiring property. Land ownership became a symbol of wealth, further empowering the white population in the Reconstruction period. Since the white populace owned the majority of the land they controlled the county’s agricultural economy. The *True Index* boasted that Fauquier’s land had been valued at an average of \$16.50 an acre, which significantly exceeded several of the surrounding counties’ average land prices. The prodigious plantations, possessed by former slaveholders, dominated Fauquier’s finest and most expensive soil. Inflated land costs proved to be a significant deterrent for many African American families that wanted to remain in the county. The black communities that would emerge

⁶¹ Stephen V. Ash, *Middle Tennessee Society Transformed 1860-1870: War and Peace in the Upper South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 210; Berkey, “War In the Borderland,” 291.

throughout Fauquier appeared on the cheapest and rockiest soil. Many black families had to combine their resources to afford land. James and Sally Washington partnered with Samuel and Ellen Taylor in the postwar years to purchase five acres of land just outside of Rectortown. Despite being confined to the most undesirable sections of the county, the African American community took pride in the independence that their newly erected towns represented. As a symbol of the optimism displayed by the black populace, many communities were given names such as Good Hope and Pilgrim's Rest. The white inhabitants in the region developed their own designations for these places, "Negroeville, Va." and "Little Africa" became synonymous with a multitude of black communities.⁶²

The most successful venture of the Freedmen's Bureau involved the ability to build an education system for blacks throughout the South. In Fauquier, the push for education came from the black populace, not the Bureau. The Bureau provided the facilities and teachers, but the demand to learn the ability to read and write came from the black residents of the county. Lieutenant William Augustus McNulty, the newly appointed head of Warrenton's Freedmen's Bureau, jubilantly reported to the head of the regional Bureau in Fredericksburg on January 24, 1866, that, "I have the honor to state that the colored people at Warrenton desire the establishment of a school at that place." With the aid of Major James Johnson, McNulty was able to secure a building at the corner of Lee and Fourth Street in Warrenton to convert into a schoolhouse. In the presence of white hostility, the school overcame the threats issued to the new teacher, Miss Fannie Woods, and the student body. Woods was delighted that by May of 1866

⁶² Mangus, "The Debatable Land," 365-366; Hollie et al., *African Americans in Fauquier County*, 29.

approximately 55 students were attending the school in the daytime, and about 110 attended the night sessions offered by John W. Pratt. The school focused primarily on two subjects, reading and writing. Woods reported that half the school's population had the ability to do both. To honor the fortitude of the Massachusetts Quaker abolitionist, John Greenleaf Whittier, Woods named the institution the "Whittier School."⁶³

In a July 31, 1867 letter sent from an agent in Warrenton's Freedmen's Bureau, the education of the black populace appears to be flourishing in Fauquier. Lieutenant Chase states that despite the "bitterness" of the "feelings against" the black community by the whites, the Freedmen "have done remarkably well." The desire of the adult population "for education" has been "greatly stimulated by reason of their rights given them" by the recent acts of Congress. He boasted that "4 school houses" had been built, much to his "gratification." African Americans throughout the county became relentless in their pursuit of education. Literacy became the black community's most cherished entity in their devotion to autonomy. In larger towns, such as Warrenton, the Freedmen's Bureau provided the necessary resources to aid African Americans in this objective. Beyond the reach of the Bureau, in the many rural areas of the county, the black community took it upon themselves to institute education. The newly established churches for the black populace became not only centers of worship, but educational facilities. In 1866, African American Reverend Leland Waring founded and became the first pastor of St. James Baptist Church. Waring's church, with the assistance of his

⁶³ William McNulty to James Johnson, January 24, 1866, H-59 1866, Registered Letters Received, series 3798, VA Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, & Abandoned Lands, Record Group 105, National Archives, Washington D.C., <http://freedmensbureau.com/> (accessed January 24, 2015); Scheel, *The Civil War In Fauquier County*, 95.

friend Lyttleton Jackson, who had been licensed to teach by the state, began literacy classes for members of the community. Acquiring education, for those who had been denied that opportunity before the Civil War, became the primary objective of African Americans residing in Fauquier in the Reconstruction era.⁶⁴

In their quest for freedom, the African American population swiftly removed themselves from the white churches they had been forced to attend in the antebellum period. In creating their own places of worship, the African American churches became a source of empowerment for the black community in a hostile environment. White resistance to the establishment of black churches, and financial complications, forced the construction of churches to begin rather primitively. The origins of many churches can be traced back to “bush arbors,” outdoor spaces with tree branches overhead as shelter from the elements, served as the location of worship before they could erect permanent buildings. Others would gather in the home of a family for prayer meetings. Over time, the financial means would be raised and formal churches would be erected throughout the county. The Mount Olive Baptist Church in Rectortown emerged from the prayer meetings that Charles and Julia Grant hosted in their home twice a week. By 1870, they were able to build a church in their community. In the same year that Mount Olive constructed their first church, approximately ten other African American Baptist churches had been built in the county. This number would continue to multiply exponentially throughout the rest of the nineteenth-century. In a society that forced African Americans into an inferior position, and violently opposed their independence, the African American

⁶⁴ Scheel, *The Civil War In Fauquier*, 98; Hollie et al., *African Americans In Fauquier County*, 33.

church provided a sanctuary for not only the “spiritual,” but also the “emotional, educational, economic and physical well-being” of its members. During Reconstruction in Fauquier County, the church would endow the African American population with tremendous strength to assert its autonomy and independence.⁶⁵

The Freedmen’s Bureau was able to provide some assistance to the black community, but outside of this institution African Americans would find minimal reinforcement. The pro-Union white community continued to face harsh persecution for their wartime loyalties. Henry Thomas Dixon lived in the town of Marshall, located just north of Warrenton, in 1860. He was the only man from his precinct to vote for Abraham Lincoln in the presidential election of that year. After being driven from his home by the hostile community he sought an appointment as paymaster in the Union Army and served until the end of the war. Following the war Dixon returned to Virginia, where he was shot and killed by a former Confederate soldier that also lived in Fauquier at the outbreak of war. In his wife’s application to the Southern Claims Commission, the commissioners found that there was “no doubt that political hate was the cause” of his murder. The pro-Union members of Fauquier County continued to be involved with their own battles with the hostile former Confederates in the community. Proving aid to the African American population only invited more brutality and social ostracism.⁶⁶

Some members of the white community that had been loyal to the Union did attempt to provide assistance to the black population. Renting out homes, or rooms to

⁶⁵ Ibid, 9, 38, 46.

⁶⁶ Annie E. Dixon, (Fauquier Co., VA), no.36715, Southern Claims Commission Approved Claims.

African Americans was a marginal measure to aid the black population residing within the county's borders. The former Confederate population reacted harshly, and many homes were burned down in the region. In a sense, voting for the Republican Party allocated some degree of reinforcement for the black community. This also could be potentially dangerous though. At the first election held in the county since the war, former Union soldier Wash Fletcher went to the polls to cast his vote for the Republican candidate. Wash Fletcher was identified by one of Mosby's former men, Fletcher Hunton. After seeing Fletcher at the polls, Hunton immediately rebuked the former Federal soldier, calling him a "grand rascal," and verbally accosting him. The two became engaged in a violent confrontation in which Wash Fletcher killed Fletcher Hunton. Following Wash Fletcher's arrest, a group of former Confederates had gathered demanding retribution for the "wanton assassination" of Hunton. The unified former Confederates within Fauquier effectively prevented the minority white community who had been loyal to the Union from helping the black community. Collaboration between these two groups would have threatened the authority the unified whites had reestablished. Through violence and social ostracism, pro-Union whites and African Americans remained under the control of the majority white population.⁶⁷

Many African Americans found refuge outside of Fauquier's borders. The black population that accounted for more than fifty percent of the total population in 1860 had dwindled to less than forty percent by 1870. This number would continue to decrease throughout the next decade. In the face of a hostile white population it was simply safer

⁶⁷ Mangus, *The Debatable Land*, 373-374.

to escape their control and head North. The white majority only prospered from their movement out of the county. But, for those African Americans who stayed in Fauquier, they effectively forged a degree of autonomy that they had never had before. Despite the hostility and violence evoked by the white population, African Americans instituted their own interpretation of freedom. Before Congress enacted the Reconstruction Acts that established voting and provided military support for blacks, the African Americans in Fauquier were already establishing roots of independence. They built their own communities, erected churches, and actively pursued education on their own accord. The Freedmen's Bureau and Federal forces facilitated the development of these institutions, but the black population asserted the demand. African Americans initiated segregation in as many facets of life as possible to avoid confrontation with white population's conflicting vision of how much freedom should be given to blacks. The white community had regained control of the economy, politics, society, and culture, but by asserting their autonomy and independence the black populace refused to allow the traditional policies of Old Virginia to completely control the Reconstruction years in Fauquier County.

CHAPTER 3 - THE PARTISAN WARRIOR

I. THE PARTISAN PERSPECTIVE

The perspective of John S. Mosby is necessary to understand the change that Fauquier, and most of Virginia, underwent following the restoration of Virginia to the United States. The wartime exploits, and sacrifice of the partisan ranger instilled a passion for the Confederacy that few during the war replicated. He was a brand of “diehard” soldier that struggled to come to terms with the end of the war. In time, Mosby’s life came to typify most in Fauquier during Reconstruction. He focused on his career, and attempted to rebuild his life in Warrenton as a successful lawyer. For most of the Reconstruction years though he abstained from politics; he choose not to exert any of the influence that his wartime accolades had garnered him. In 1869, Mosby emerged from the shadows to aid the Conservative Party in their bid for control of Virginia. Mosby, and the majority of the white Fauquier citizens, rejoiced in the election of Gilbert C. Walker to the position of governor. Under Walker, and a Conservative dominated state legislature, Virginia was restored to the Union.

After Virginia rejoined the United States, the majority of the white population in the county of Fauquier experienced a shift in the orientation of their objectives. Since the end of the war, the white populace was determined to overthrow the control of the Federal government in their state. Home defense and the restoration of Virginia were the focus of most white’s residing in the county. The alien institutions that the Federal government imposed were removed with Virginia’s entrance back in the Union; the white population had regained control of local politics, and rebuilt the agrarian economy that

sustained the county; and, with the success of the Conservative Party in state politics, the Republicans were no longer in control of Virginia. The white population of Fauquier had accomplished most of their Reconstruction objectives. As Virginia took its place back in the United States, the white people of Fauquier joined their fellow white statesmen in a new task that ushered in a new era for the state.

This is a breaking point for Mosby and the people of Virginia. As the white population turned their attention toward, what Mosby falsely claims to have coined, the construction of the “Solid South.” The memory of the war begins to be manufactured throughout the South and expressed by white southerners in what came to be referred to as the “Lost Cause.” For Mosby the restoration of Virginia was the juncture of reconciliation. He condemned the South’s desire operate as a faction within the United States to protect white southerners’ interests. He loathed the message of the Lost Cause, and renounced the memory of the war that the South constructed. Mosby believed that once Virginia was back in the Union he was again a citizen of the United States of America. For the majority of white southerners, rejoining the Union was not a point of reconciliation. The citizenship of white southerners might be more accurately described as the “United Southerners of America.” Mosby attempted to be a leader in bringing the people of his state toward reconciliation by developing a relationship with Ulysses S. Grant. His actions earned him harsh rebuke and social ostracism. Throughout the 1870s the ideological positions of Mosby and the people of Virginia polarized. Mosby’s perspective evinces the change that the majority of the white populace residing in Fauquier, and much of the state, underwent following Reconstruction. The post-

Reconstruction era brought new objectives and ideologies that Mosby, as a defector, illustrates through his experiences and confrontations with the white population of Virginia.

II. THE LAST OF THE FORTY-THIRD

Standing before a room of more than one hundred and fifty of his former comrades, thirty years after the war, Mosby addressed a reunion gathering of the Forty-third Battalion by recalling the moment he last saw them all convened:

“Your presence here this evening recalls our last parting. I see the line drawn up to hear read the last orders I gave you. I see the moistened eyes and quivering lips. I hear the command to break ranks. I feel the grasp of the hands and see the tears on the cheeks of men who dared death for so long it had lost its terror. I know now, as I knew then, that each heart suffered with mine the agony of the Titan in his resignation to fate.”

In the years that had transpired since the war Mosby, his men, and his state had grown a great distance apart. Despite that distance as Mosby said to conclude his speech, “[his] heart” had always “dwelt among the people in whose defense [he] had shed [his] blood and given the best years of [his] life.” For a brief moment they all transcended their reality, and were back in saddle again fighting “with unshaken fidelity to the last.” This would be the first and the last reunion that Mosby would ever attend.⁶⁸

More than any of his rangers Mosby struggled to accept defeat; he was the last member of the Forty-third to relinquish the fight. In April of 1865, fully aware that General Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, Mosby agreed to a meeting in Millwood at the request of Union General Hancock to discuss the terms of what Mosby considered a

⁶⁸ Munson, *Reminiscences*, 276; Jones, *Ranger Mosby*, 302-303.

temporary cessation of hostility. It became clear to Mosby that the staff officer and his contingent that Hancock had assigned to meet with him were present to set the conditions for Mosby's surrender. Mosby furiously proclaimed, "I will not accept a parole before Joe Johnston has surrendered," and dashingy avoided capture, escaping by horseback into his Confederacy. In his heart he knew that any further bloodshed by his men would be in vain. To avoid further loss of life, and sacrifice of his rangers he "disbanded" the Forty-third Battalion leaving the option to continue the fight in hands of each individual. Though a large majority of Mosby's men had already been captured by Union forces, most who were present at the final meeting planned under the leadership of William Chapmen to meet the following day, April 22, 1865, in Paris, Virginia, to ride together to Winchester and obtain their paroles. Among the many members of the Forty-third who accepted this as the necessary conclusion to the war, and an opportunity to resume their lives as civilians, Mosby was not. When Mosby released his rangers two days following his confrontation with General Hancock's men, Mosby stayed true to his word. The colonel, with about six others, opted to head South with the intention of joining General Joe Johnston's troops, the Confederacy's final hope. John W. Munson, one of the six who accompanied Mosby, later wrote, "Mosby was left with a handful of boys who preferred to remain at his side, to follow him blindly wherever he chose to lead them, to become Knights Errant in a new crusade."⁶⁹

His small contingent reached the outskirts of Richmond two days later only to learn that Johnston had surrendered, and the Civil War was officially over. Had Mosby

⁶⁹ OR (ser. 1) 46(3): 868; Munson, *Reminiscences*, 271.

given the command his group of men would have stormed the capital of their fallen Confederacy. Mosby would acquiesce in their forlorn request. It is “too late” he despondently countered, “it would be murder and highway robbery now. We are soldiers, not highwaymen.” The reputation for marauding and robbery had become synonymous with guerilla outfits across the South, but these qualities were not among Mosby and his men. Throughout the war Mosby demanded discipline from his troops to avoid this very thing. The war was over, but the unfortunate circumstances of the occasion did not justify such dishonorable behavior. The “new-born crusade” that Munson described “had come to a sudden end.” Mosby “bade the four of five” of his men left an “affectionate farewell,” and in the company of Ben Palmer “rode away toward his home in Lynchburg.” The last of the Forty-third Battalion had walked off the field of battle, bringing the end to the Civil War for “Mosby’s Confederacy,” and the start of the struggle against Reconstruction.⁷⁰

The majority of Mosby’s troops that had left Salem following the disbandment of the Forty-third found they were able to return home and begin rebuilding their lives. Mosby’s refusal to surrender and continue the fight brought forth a 5,000 dollar reward for his capture. He remained a fugitive for the remainder of May in 1865, finding refuge at his uncle’s home in Nelson County along with his brother. At the end of June, Grant intervened and Mosby was issued his parole. When Mosby met with General John Gregg in Lynchburg to obtain the parole, the Union commander attempted to have him arrested. Mosby and his brother were able to escape. Apparently, a miscommunication between

⁷⁰ Munson, *Reminiscences*, 272-273.

Grant and Gregg was the cause of the mishap. Nevertheless, Mosby was allowed to return home as long as he honored the agreement of his parole, which stated that he must remain in Fauquier County and obey the law. Many of the Union soldiers that remained in the region found it difficult to accept that Mosby would not receive harsh retribution for his wartime activities. Mosby attracted raucous treatment from the Union soldiers, and was jailed twice over the course of the year for no apparent reason other than merely appearing in public.

Constantly having to evade Union forces that were keen on publicly shaming the former guerilla, and determined to put him in jail, pushed Mosby into one more outlaw escapade. He had spent most of the war antagonizing the Federal Army; on the one year anniversary of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Mosby would do so a final time. Appearing in Leesburg wearing the full Confederate uniform and buttons, knowing quite well that the U.S. government had forbidden wearing Confederate buttons or insignia, Mosby made a point of strolling past the office of Union Captain John T. McCauley, the Federal provost marshal. A conflict with the Federal troops and Mosby was inevitable. But in unusual fashion, the former ranger shot a rant of insults, rather than gun fire, at the troops that attempted to subdue him. The Union soldiers that confronted Mosby saw an opportunity for revenge, and elected to inflict damage on the assailant with weapons that could cause more harm than words. Mosby, as he had so many times during the war, rode dashing away, evading the Union Army for the final time in his illustrious career as a guerilla warrior.⁷¹

⁷¹ ⁷¹ Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 268-270; Mangus, "The Debatable Land," 373.

III. THE WARRENTON LAWYER

Like many of his fellow Fauquier County citizens Mosby set off in the pursuit of rebuilding himself economically after the war. Mosby opened a law practice, and bought a house in Warrenton, and moved his family to the area. The renown that Mosby had garnered as a result of his wartime exploits ironically led to his success in the immediate postwar period. It seems that everybody who lived under his command in “Mosby’s Confederacy” wanted to come to him for legal services. For the next four years Mosby dedicated himself to his business, and his family. The charismatic leader faded from the public eye, at least nationally. His presence in Warrenton each day still drew a crowd. Many people went out of their way to strike up a conversation with him, or shake the hand of the famous leader. Many of those who resided in the region honored their wartime leader by naming their newborn children after Mosby. But the greatest adventure of his life was over, and unlike many of the former Confederates who continued to fight against Union influence in the county, Mosby relinquished the battle for the majority of the Reconstruction era.⁷²

In 1869, much to the satisfaction of his fellow Fauquier residents, Mosby reemerged from the shadows. Mosby had been quietly focusing primarily on his business pursuits in Warrenton, but political circumstances suddenly ushered him back into the limelight. The Conservative Party candidate for governor of Virginia, Gilbert C. Walker, whose political platform condemned Republican Reconstruction, was welcomed by Mosby in the summer of 1869 upon his arrival in Warrenton. In his first political remarks

⁷² Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 272.

in a public forum in four years, since the late war, the famous partisan chieftain stood before his community and condemned the Republican Party as the epitome of “barbarism.” Introducing Walker as a man who “stood for civilization,” Mosby launched himself into the political arena and into the camp of the Virginia Conservatives with the majority of his fellow Fauquier County constituents. Mosby spent the rest of the campaign season actively canvassing for both Walker and James Keith, a fellow Warrenton attorney and friend who was running for the state legislature. Both officials were successfully elected to their respective positions. Walker as Governor, and Keith as a member of the Conservative state legislature, were part of the governing coalition that was eventually responsible for bringing an end to Reconstruction in Virginia. The people of Fauquier were eager to once again follow their wartime leader, and Mosby momentarily became a symbol for the battle to regain Virginia statehood.⁷³

The endorsement of Walker and Keith was Mosby’s bid to play a role in removing Federal forces and their imposing institutions from the state of Virginia. Like his fellow Fauquier constituents Mosby felt that Reconstruction brought unfavorable circumstances on the South. They may not have been at war militarily, but they were still battling the Federal government. The restoration of Virginia removed this hindrance and allowed Virginia to be a functioning part of the United States once again. Mosby and the white population in Fauquier had different visions about what it meant for Virginia to reenter the Union though. For Mosby, the end of Reconstruction and the restoration of Virginia to the United States was the point of reconciliation for Virginians and

⁷³ Ibid, 272-273.

Americans. As Mosby came back into the public sphere as a leader on political issues, Mosby actively sought to enter the new decade moving Virginians in the direction of reconciliation. For the people of Virginia rejoining the United States gave them the opportunity to break free from the subjugation that Reconstruction imposed on them. Redeeming the state was a point of celebration as a result of the Conservative Party ousting Radical Republicans. But, reconcile they would not. Mosby spent the 1860s becoming famous for his wartime exploits; he would spend the next decade becoming equally as infamous for his politics and abstention from the Lost Cause.

IV. "HELL IS BEING A REPUBLICAN IN VIRGINIA"

In the early months of 1872 Mosby found himself in the company of Virginia senator John F. Lewis quite by accident. The two had boarded a Midland Railway train bound for Warrenton, and happened to share a seat. At the time President Grant was about to embark on his second campaign for presidency. When the conversation of Mosby and Lewis turned to politics, Mosby expressed a high degree of gratitude for the President. Without the aid of Grant, Mosby jokingly professed to Lewis, "I may still be in hiding." He also admired Grant for the "magnanimous treatment" that the former General had displayed to the "southern soldiers at the close of the war." Beyond Mosby's personal reasons for respecting Grant, he commended him for the benevolence he had shown to the South in his first term. With the knowledge that the Democratic Party had nominated Horace Greeley for the presidential ticket in the 1872 election, Mosby told Lewis that he certainly favored the incumbent, and wanted to see that Grant won reelection to a second term. As the train arrived and its destination, the two shook hands and parted ways.

Mosby was aware that Lewis was a Republican, and as such “was on very friendly terms with the Administration.” He could have predicted that Lewis may have relayed his sentiments to the President. Nevertheless, at the time Mosby could not have known that this meeting would be the catalyst to his conversion to the Republican Party and eventual exile from the state of Virginia.⁷⁴

A short time after the happenstance encounter between the former partisan ranger and Virginia senator, Lewis reached out to Mosby with an invitation to meet the President. After Mosby accepted the offer, the two men again found themselves sharing a seat during a train ride, this one bound for Washington. Upon entering the White House for the first time, and walking into the room where Grant was sitting, Mosby recalled “his presence inspired something of the awe that a Roman provincial must have felt when first entering the palace of the Caesars.” The former wartime foes quickly broke free of the necessary cordialities to exchange war stories. President Grant informed Mosby that he nearly captured him aboard a train as the general was en-route take command of the Army of the Potomac. In a laughing manner Mosby replied, “well Mr. President, if I had caught you things might have been a little different now. You might have been calling on me.” Despite the obvious wartime differences between these two former leaders for their respective sides, it became apparent that they shared similar postwar objectives. Both had a “burning desire” for “reconciliation between North and South.” Mosby told the President that he would support him in the upcoming election, but garnering support for Grant in Virginia would be a difficult task. Though Greeley was extremely objectionable

⁷⁴ Mosby Talks of Grant: The Great Soldier’s Magnanimity and Modesty,” *New York Times*, August 21, 1892.

to most southerners, Mosby knew that the Democratic Party was still the political party of the South. Mosby informed Grant that it was necessary to “hold out an olive branch to the South” to sway the southern voting bloc in his favor. By getting “Congress to pass an act relieving [the South’s] leading men from the disability imposed by the fourteenth amendment” Mosby thought that Grant could take Virginia.⁷⁵

A couple of days later the Amnesty Act of 1872 was passed, restoring the full rights of former Confederate leaders, and returning their ability to voice an opinion and cast a vote for the country they lived. Mosby’s suggestion seemed to work; Grant took the election in Virginia by a landslide margin. While Mosby had gained a new friend and political ally in Grant, his visit to the White House and public endorsement of Grant had caused a significant debacle for him in his native state. Media sources expressed their disdain for Mosby’s actions by condemning him as “Grant’s partisan in Virginia.” Later in his life Mosby would recall “there was more vindictiveness shown to me by the Virginia people for my voting for Grant than the North showed to me for fighting four years against them.” For the majority of Virginians, though they had become Americans again, their interests were still distinctly southern. As each southern state reentered the Union they banded together in an attempt to gain control of national politics. The Democratic Party emerged again to be the party of the South; the South became a virtual monolith in voting for the Democrats. Mosby had gone against the grain to attempt to

⁷⁵ Ibid; David Goetz, “*Hell Is Being A Republican In Virginia: The Postwar Relationship Between John Singleton Mosby and Ulysses S. Grant* (Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation, 2012), 52.

lead the southern people toward reconciliation with the North. Instead, Mosby was socially ostracized by his fellow Virginians, and considered a traitor.⁷⁶

Over the next four years, the duration of Grant's second term as President, Mosby found that he had fallen out of favor with many former comrades and friends in Virginia. The name Mosby seemed to evoke "a certain toxicity in the air" throughout the state. His once thriving law practice had declined drastically over the past four years. People across "Mosby's Confederacy" were willing to travel great distances to be legally represented by their wartime hero, but none were eager to be associated with Mosby "the Republican." People refused to speak to him in public, former comrades stopped acknowledging that they had served in the Forty-third Battalion, even his children were abused. For the safety and wellbeing of his family, Mosby packed up his children, moved them into his mother's home, and sold the house in Warrenton. Mosby moved his practice to Washington, and only returned to Warrenton for court, always arming himself when he did.⁷⁷

Virginia's disdain for the former romantic hero became even more apparent with the arrival of the 1876 presidential election. In 1872, Horace Greeley was a Democratic candidate that most southerners did not want to see win office. Grant offered the lesser of two evils, and was able to win the state of Virginia. In 1876, the political tides had changed. The conservatives in Virginia, and the Democratic Party had firmly established themselves as the political party of white supremacy. The politics of race had become

⁷⁶ Ramage, *Gray Ghost*, 274; John S. Mosby, *Taking Sides With the Truth: The Postwar Letters of John Singleton Mosby to Samuel F. Chapman*, ed. Peter A. Brown (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 79.

⁷⁷ Goetz, "Hell is Being a Republican In Virginia," 63.

engrained in the mindsets of most southerners. For Mosby to endorse the Republican Party was viewed as a betrayal of his race. The Republicans since antebellum period had always been portrayed by white southerners as the “Black Republicans,” whose interests aligned with African Americans. For the first time since the war the Democratic Party had the potential to compete and challenge the Republicans for the presidency. Most of the southern states were back in the Union and had broken free from the confines of Reconstruction. For Mosby to support the Republican Party now was viewed by Virginians as the abandonment of his state and their values.

A former Confederate acquaintance of Mosby wrote him a letter asking his old friend to support Samuel Tilden in the Presidential election and help the South overcome their northern oppressors. Mosby bluntly responded to his former friend, “I thought you knew that I ceased to be a Confederate soldier eleven years ago, and became a citizen of the United States.” Mosby, unlike the majority of his fellow white southerners, had accepted that the war was over. He conducted himself, and made informed decisions, in the best interest of the United States, not the Confederate states. Mosby informed his friend that he would be staying within the Republican camp, voting for Rutherford B. Hayes. It was Mosby’s belief that the “political solidarity” demonstrated by the southern people was debilitating to their cause.

“The sectional unity of the southern people has been the governing idea and bane of their politics. So long as it continues the war will be a controlling element of politics; for any cry in the South that unifies the Confederates re-echoes through the North and rekindles the war fires there. Thus, every Presidential canvass becomes a battle between the two sections, and the South, being the weaker, must be the losing party.”

Mosby refused to conform to the southern notion that their interests would be better served by uniting in defiance of the North. In Mosby’s opinion the South needed to

reconcile its differences with the North and operate in the best interest of the country, not just the southern states.⁷⁸

Interconnected with the South's inability to reconcile with the North was the Lost Cause. In the fervor of Lost Cause mythology Mosby wrote his dear friend and former comrade, Sam Chapman, about his disgust with the message reunion speeches were disseminating throughout the South. His recollection of the coming of the Civil War significantly contradicted that of the proponents of Lost Cause rhetoric:

“The South went to war on account of Slavery. South Carolina went to war – as she said in her Secession proclamation – because slavery [would] not be secure under Lincoln. South Carolina ought to know what was the cause for her seceding. I am not ashamed of having fought on the side of slavery – a soldier fights for his country – right or wrong – he is not responsible for the political merits of the cause he fights in. The South was my country.”

Mosby despised reunions and the overall message of the Lost Cause. In his letter he asked Sam why do reunion orators “not talk about witchcraft.” Such an outrageous discussion represented the same thing as saying “slavery was not the cause of the war.” He gratifyingly claimed that “[he] committed treason and was proud of it.” Despite the persecution Mosby faced, he remained firmly within the Republican Party, and pitted against the memory of the war that southerners constructed. Though it broke his heart to be forced from Virginia, he felt compelled to “take sides with the truth.”⁷⁹

In the years that would follow Reconstruction, the memory of the war and conforming to the “Solid South” would replace wartime loyalty as the measure of social inclusion. Nevertheless, the divisions within southern society would continue to follow similar patterns. Constructing a memory of the war that sanctified southern wartime

⁷⁸ John S. Mosby, *Taking Sides With the Truth*, 26-27.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 94, 101.

leaders and reveled in the heroism of Confederate soldiers to vindicate the South ensured that the experiences of African Americans and pro-Union whites during the war would be forgotten. Uniting behind the Democratic Party to regain control of national politics, white southerners sought to protect their own interests. The white population of Fauquier County succumbed to both of these movements. The “noble guerilla” emerged as a hero of the region, and the protector of the white population in Fauquier County. The case of Mosby illustrates the power that the Lost Cause exerted over white southerners.

Colonel Mosby starred in the mythology of the Lost Cause. He appeared as a romantic hero that many people revered for his ideals and wartime actions. The Mosby of the Civil War undermined the efforts of Mosby living in the 1870s. The citizens of Virginia could consecrate him for his Civil War exploits, while exiling him for his failure to comply with the memory of the war. This illuminates the dissent between what Mosby considered to be the reality of the Civil War, and what the rhetoric of the Lost Cause had fabricated as the memory of the war. The Lost Cause and support for the Democratic Party replaced wartime loyalty as the indicators of social inclusion in the state. Mosby’s refusal to conform to Virginia’s new social milieu by endorsing the Lost Cause and the Democratic Party elicited his exile.⁸⁰

Upon returning from a trip to Washington, D.C. one fall evening in 1877, Mosby stepped off a train car at the Orange & Alexandria Railroad’s spur in Warrenton, VA. Suddenly a recognizable sound from his not so distant past could be heard ringing as it struck the side of the train. In the darkness of night the shooter’s assassination attempt

⁸⁰ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Bleknap Press, 2002).

had been unsuccessful, but this time it was not the Union Army that was shooting at him. The Union had become Mosby's ally, and in the South he had become a traitor. The Confederate zealot that attempted to take his life would have received a great deal of support from most Virginians. The event symbolizes the zenith of hostilities that had been accumulating since Virginia had been restored to the Union in 1870. The hero of Fauquier County once famed for his accolades in Confederate grey had achieved equal notoriety in the post-Reconstruction years for his conversion to the Republican Party and support for Ulysses S. Grant. Mosby realized that he was no longer safe, or wanted in his native state. With the aid of Grant, he would obtain a position as the U.S. consul to Hong Kong. Mosby entered a period of his life in which he would refer to as "exile." He would not step foot back within the borders of Virginia until 1895.⁸¹

V. THE CONCLUSION OF FAUQUIER'S GUERILLA MENTALITY

While guerilla warfare has struggled to find its place within historical debates about the Civil War, it has been virtually nonexistent in discussions about Reconstruction. Historians have come to acknowledge the unique experience of civilians who resided in areas where guerillas were present. But, determining how these unique wartime experiences affected the Reconstruction of these communities has largely been ignored by historians. This study has attempted to answer that question for one particular community, Fauquier County, Virginia. Guerilla warfare defined this region for the latter half of the war. As Mangus illustrates, Mosby's presence in Fauquier reinvigorated the civilian population's faith in the war effort. At the conclusion of the war, the majority of

⁸¹ Goetz, "*Hell is Being A Republican In Virginia*," 71.

the white populace continued to provide unwavering support for the war, and wanted to maintain the fight. These sentiments made the white residents of Fauquier County particularly hostile towards Reconstruction. African Americans and wartime pro-Union whites found little solace in Fauquier County during Reconstruction despite the outcome of the war. The former secessionist white population remained united, and though the pro-Confederates had been conquered they continued to subjugate African Americans and those loyal to the Union that resided in the county. The defense of the county against Union imposition remained the primary Reconstruction objective of the former partisan participants.

In the years following the war, the fearless guerilla leader Colonel Mosby took up residence in Fauquier. He became a symbol for the white populations fight to restore Virginia. But, once Virginia was back within the Union Mosby's decision to support the Republican Party virtually outlawed him from the state. The white community of Fauquier, and Virginia as a whole, had accepted the notion that they were again American citizens. Former secessionists viewed their citizenship in a different manner than the typical American. For white southerners, their primary concern was protecting the interests of the South. The white community in Fauquier associated their own local interests with the South as a whole. Thus, following Virginia's restoration to the Union, Fauquier's locally oriented mentality broadened in scope. By collaborating with the "Solid South," the white populace in Fauquier could protect their own local interests. The measures of social inclusion transferred from wartime loyalty toward voting, and the propagation of the Lost Cause. The Democratic Party was championed throughout

Fauquier as the political party that would maintain white supremacy, and protect the traditionalist values that the county revered. In the 1876 presidential election, Tilden won by a significant margin in Fauquier.

The restoration of Virginia was a breaking point in the environment created by the nature of guerilla warfare. The social milieu that the partisan war established maintained a rigid social structure that endured the Reconstruction years. In Virginia's post-Reconstruction period, voting and memory of the war became the indicators of social inclusion. Even wartime heroes such as Mosby could be castigated and ostracized for voting against the party of the southern people. This social environment facilitated the rise of a memory of the war that favored the cause of the white populace. In constructing a memory of the Civil War that championed Confederate leaders, and ideals, former Unionists and African Americans again found themselves socially excluded. However, not all former secessionists conformed to the imaginative fabrication of Civil War remembrance. Some, like Mosby, refused to deny their true motivations for fighting in the war. Mosby took exception to the version of the Civil War the Lost Cause perpetuated in the South. For him slavery was the outright cause of war, and he was not ashamed to admit that he had fought on the side that wanted to preserve it. The Lost Cause rewrote the war and its outcome so that white southerners could maintain honor and justify their cause for fighting. Mosby's conversion to the Republican Party and relocation to the North demonstrated his unwillingness to succumb to the mythology that the South grew to cherish. In a southern society that denied why he fought, and what the war was about for him, refuge in the North was a comfort.

As the end of Mosby's life was drawing to a close, though Mosby was not a religious man, for the sake of his family he permitted a minister to visit him. Mosby's response to many of the preacher's questions and general demeanor toward religion forced the irritated clergyman to ask, "Colonel, do you believe in hell?" In a moment of clarity Mosby replied, "Oh yes! Hell is being a Republican in Virginia." The famous partisan leader had tried to do what he thought was right for those who had always supported him. He established a relationship with Grant in an effort to serve as an example of reconciliation between North and South. However, the wounds of the Civil War remained too fresh in the minds of southerners. The heroics of soldiers North and South would serve as the bridge for reconciliation, but not for over another decade. Mosby had the interests of his fellow Virginians at heart; however the Civil War continued to pit the sections of the country against one another. History remembers the "Gray Ghost of the Confederacy" for his Civil War heroics, and his willingness to sacrifice his life for the Confederacy. But, what has been forgotten, his efforts to reconcile the country, was a cause that nearly cost Mosby his life as well. In an interview that was conducted with Mosby in 1892, the former partisan stated that he had been informed that the southern people would never forgive him. To which he responded, "they ought not to forgive me. No man ought to be forgiven before he repents."⁸²

⁸² Goetz, "Hell Is Being a Republican In Virginia," 405-406; Mosby Talks of Grant: The Great Soldier's Magnanimity and Modesty," *New York Times*, August 21, 1892.

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