Hope Within a Wilderness of Suffering:
The Transition from Slavery to Freedom
During the Civil War and Reconstruction
in Tennessee

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Introduction: Emancipation in Tennessee
Emancipation was one of the most profound consequences of the American Civil War. During and after the war, about four million enslaved African Americans in the United States became free persons. This generation had a significant influence on American history, an influence that has yet to be fully recognized. During this remarkable period of transition, former slaves stabilized their family lives, sought to control their work environments, established their own schools and churches, and participated in public life as citizens.

While these goals may appear straightforward to us today, they were anything but simple to achieve at the time. The transition from slavery to freedom was as extraordinary as it was complex. Newly freed African Americans experienced both boundless joy and excruciating disappointment as they established themselves as free persons. Freed people frequently encountered violent resistance to their efforts to become paid workers and active citizens. Many white southerners refused to accept former slaves as free persons.

The state of Tennessee provides a particularly rich case study of the transition from slavery to freedom during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Second only to Virginia in the number of skirmishes and battles on its soil, Tennessee was at the heart of the conflict between North and South.[1] The chaos of war visited many Tennessee communities and served to break down the bonds that kept 275,000 individuals enslaved. Most Tennessee slaves gained their freedom during the war, not after it was over. According to a leading scholarly work on emancipation, "By the spring of 1865, few Tennessee blacks were still living as slaves."[2]

As soon as the war began, enslaved Tennesseans paid attention to the conflict and how their owners reacted to it. For some slaves, the outbreak of war brought what they dreaded most: being uprooted and separated from their families and kin. Some slaveholders responded to the uncertainties of living in wartime Tennessee by selling their slaves or relocating with them to the south, into the interior of the Confederacy. The many enslaved men and women who remained in Tennessee stayed alert, listening, observing, and sharing information with each other. As the Union army pushed into the state early in 1862, slaves could hear the battles and skirmishes, the rumble of the troops' wagon trains.[3] Tennessee's African Americans hoped and prayed that the war would bring about a change in their condition.

By the end of 1862, the Union army occupied large areas of Middle and West Tennessee, including Nashville and Memphis; at the close of 1863, the Federals also had control of Chattanooga and Knoxville in East Tennessee. Union occupation would contribute significantly to the demise of slavery, even though that was not the army's intention. Early on, most officers steadfastly refused to accept escaping slaves into Union lines, and some returned escaped slaves to their Unionist owners.[4]

In countless other cases, however, Union army officers and soldiers represented an alternative authority to slaveholders, and this played an important role in breaking down the bonds of slavery. John McCline, who was a boy when Union forces camped near his owner's plantation outside of Nashville in 1862, recalled how his owner had no power to stop the Federal troops from killing his livestock: "Master and the over-seer went out, under their umbrellas, and begged them to stop, but they went right on, paying no attention to them." McCline related how the troops also took rail fences to use as firewood, gave the slaves blankets and clothing, paid some of the slave women to work for them, and encouraged the slaves to claim their freedom by becoming laborers for the army. By the end of 1862, McCline had done so with the 13th Michigan Infantry.[5]

Enslaved African Americans in Tennessee achieved their freedom in various ways, for there was no single emancipation experience. Men appear to have been more likely than women to escape to Union lines, particularly early in the war. Many female slaves decided whether to stay or go during the war based on what they thought would be best for their children; they wanted to be free, but they did not want to break up their families. Women with young children in particular found it difficult to make their way to Union-occupied areas, although many did so.[6]

For thousands of slave men in Tennessee, an important element of the transition from slavery to freedom was service in the armed forces. By war's end, more than 20,000 Tennesseans had joined the United States Colored Troops (USCT); only two states furnished more black men to the Union war effort. African Americans eventually made up forty percent of Tennessee's Union troops. Even those enslaved Tennesseans who did not join up were heartened by the idea that black men were serving as soldiers.[7]

Many of the men who joined USCT units in Tennessee first contributed to the Union war effort by working as military laborers. The first men to enroll in the 2nd U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment (later known as the 13th Regiment, USCT) in Murfreesboro in July 1863, for example, had worked for the Union army at such posts as Clarksville, Gallatin, and Nashville. Local women showed their pride in the regiment by giving it a flag that read "Presented by the Colored Ladies of Murfreesboro." The 13th helped complete the Nashville & Northwestern Railroad to Johnsonville, served as guards along the railroad, and then fought gallantly in the Battle of Nashville in December 1864.[8]

Many of the former slave men who joined the Union army in Tennessee had wives, children, and other family members who also sought their freedom behind Union lines.[9] These fugitives, particularly women with young children and elderly persons who could not work, did not receive a warm welcome but were viewed as a problem by Union

commanders. Many escaped slave women tried to get work at Union encampments, and despite limited opportunities, some succeeded in working for the army as cooks, laundresses, seamstresses, and hospital workers.[10]

Wartime freedom proved extremely difficult for families behind Union lines and was sometimes disastrous due to horrendous living conditions. By war's end, hastily built contraband camps had been established near Union army camps throughout Tennessee but proved to be very poor refuges for former slaves. The flimsy shelters in the camps provided little protection from the elements, and the overcrowded conditions resulted in alarming rates of disease and death. What is more, contraband camps existed in war zones and offered little stability. Some refugees had to move from place to place; others, like the residents of the contraband camp at Fort Pillow in April 1864, found themselves under attack when Confederate forces struck. In addition, women living in the camps suffered from sexual assaults by white Union soldiers and officers. In Union-occupied towns, most former slaves tried to find their own accommodations rather than settle in the camps. [11]

It is important to remember that some enslaved Tennesseans chose to remain at the home place rather than escape during the war, especially after they learned of the squalid living conditions in many of the contraband camps. Even those slaves who stayed with their owners during the war, however, began to experience the transition from slavery to freedom. The threat of escape gave enslaved Tennesseans some leverage with their owners. They were able to gain some concessions from their masters and mistresses, including doing more work for themselves and having more time for their families.[12] Slaveowner Sarah Kennedy of Clarksville, for example, complained in 1863 that a slave man named Phil "did nothing but cut the wood for some time before he left." Before running off, Phil also apparently did not turn over to Sarah what he earned from hiring himself out.[13]

Family Life as Free Persons
Once no longer enslaved, a primary concern for African Americans throughout the South was to locate family members from whom they had been separated under slavery. With the mobility that they had long been denied under slavery, freed people in Tennessee took to their feet. They traveled to towns and cities, looking for each other and seeking any leads that might help them reunite. In addition, for years after the war, former slaves took out detailed ads in newspapers, trying to find each other. Henry Hill, for example, put a notice in the *Colored Tennessean* in October 1865 seeking information about his wife, Lucy Blair, whom he had not seen for five years: "I am a wagon maker by trade, and would be thankful for any information respecting [Lucy's] whereabouts. I am in Nashville, Tennessee, on Gay Street, north of the Statehouse."[14] Those families who succeeded in reuniting experienced the joy of reconciliation, along with the strain of rebuilding severed relationships.[15]

The desire to keep their families intact continued to motivate former slaves after the war. Many external pressures threatened the family unit, however. Limited resources, depressed economic circumstances, and manipulation by white employers looking for

inexpensive laborers prompted some parents to bind out, or apprentice, their children to white employers.[16]

The legalization of slave marriages was an important result of freedom. During and immediately following the war, federal authorities and missionaries encouraged former slaves to make their marriages legally binding for the first time. Officials in West Tennessee were particularly diligent about this, requiring as of March 1864 that all couples who lived together in contraband camps had to be married.[17]

Families especially embraced the opportunity to learn to read and write; it is virtually impossible to overestimate the desire for education among former slaves (and this topic will be discussed in more detail later in this essay). This strong dedication to education brought former slaves into close contact with teachers sponsored by religious and secular societies. Most of these teachers came from the North, and the majority of them were white women. They provided moral instruction; taught the ABCs; distributed clothing; ran sewing classes; administered medical care; and gave out advice on conduct, dress, childcare, and household organization.[18]

Really better described as missionaries given the range of assistance they provided to freed families, these female teachers showed concern for black women and their families (a solicitude that was often in stark contrast to the indifference shown by Union officials). Freedwomen responded to this concern by relating their past and present troubles, taking advantage of the opportunity to testify to the suffering they had experienced. The teachers tried to help former slaves reunite their families, and they encouraged black men and women to marry. While these female missionaries could often be both patronizing and paternalistic toward former slaves, they provided an important signal that slavery was no more, and that freedom would be different than slavery.[19]

Work

Ensuring that freedom truly would be different than slavery was an uphill battle during the years of Reconstruction, particularly in the area of work. Many former slaves worked for their former owners, often in agricultural jobs and usually for very little compensation. Former slaves wanted to have autonomy within their work lives and control over their own time. These desires often clashed with former slaveowners' belief that black Tennesseans should remain "in their place."

Important to the transition to free labor during the early postwar years was the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau. Congress created the Bureau in March 1865 to help freed slaves achieve payment for their work, get an education, and gain access to their civil rights. After the war ended, both the Freedmen's Bureau and Tennessee planters sought to convince newly freed slaves to remain on the land as agricultural workers (or, in the case of the many former slaves who had left rural areas for towns and cities, to return to the plantations). The planters wanted workers, and the Bureau hoped to reduce overcrowding in Tennessee's towns and cities. In addition, the Bureau believed that African American workers were best suited for agricultural labor. The Bureau also wanted to promote

stability. In most areas under Union occupation, the federal government had established a contract labor system under which former slaves raised crops on lands abandoned by Confederates. Using this system as a model, the Bureau encouraged freed people to sign labor contracts to work for landowners for the year 1866.[20]

During the first several months after the end of the war, many of Tennessee's former slaves held out hope that they would receive land as compensation for their years of enslavement. When at the end of 1865 they realized that they would not be provided with the rumored "forty acres and a mule," many freed people signed labor contracts for the upcoming year. The vast majority of these labor contracts were for agricultural work. Often entire families would contract with a landowner to cultivate the crops. For compensation, the black workers received wages or a share of the crop. They might also be furnished with housing, food, firewood, clothing, and, occasionally, medical care.[21]

Former slaves gladly left their bondage behind, but they wanted to retain some of the traditions they had developed in order to survive slavery. Agricultural workers who were living on land owned by their employers, for example, often insisted in their labor contracts that they be able to keep a separate garden plot for their families or raise hogs for themselves, privileges that had been customary under slavery. The 1866 contract between A.W. Moss and Sam Bostick of Williamson County, for example, contained the provision that "Sam is to have two acres of ground for his wife to cultivate and that they are to have the products there of."[22]

Planters also sought to continue some of the legacies of slavery. Many wanted to control the comings and goings of their workers, limit their visitors (or prohibit visitors altogether), and dictate how they should and should not behave. W.A. Crockett of Williamson County, for example, insisted that Sophia Crockett "be perfectly civil and use no impudent language." He also stated, "I require her to work at what I desire."[23] The vestiges of slavery would linger for many years. The struggle between former slaves trying to exercise their freedom and former slaveholders used to having total control over their workers meant that postwar workplaces were tense, and often violent.[24]

Many former slaves did not receive the compensation promised in their labor contracts. With the wartime devastation of the Tennessee economy, many planters did not have much money with which to pay workers after the war. Even given the limitations of the postwar economy, however, there is considerable evidence to suggest that many employers did not want to treat former slaves as free workers and compensate them accordingly. Many freed people turned to the Freedmen's Bureau and its court system for redress, but white Tennesseans resisted the courts' authority, and they were discontinued in May of 1866. Still, former slaves persisted. On January 1, 1868, Murfreesboro's *Freedom's Watchman* reported that "the Bureau agents of the various counties are being applied to by scores of colored people who wish some aid in forcing their employers to fulfill the contracts made with them."[25]

While agricultural work predominated, freed people performed many other types of labor after the war. They built stone fences; worked in hemp factories; preached at newly

formed churches; sold fruits, vegetables, and baked goods; worked at branches of the Freedmen's Savings Bank; taught school; ran groceries, hotels, and brothels; and did blacksmithing. They cooked, washed, ironed, cleaned, milked, spun, and wove. When working for white employers, former slaves tried, often unsuccessfully, to be sure that freedom differed from slavery. Female house servants sought to live at home at night, rather than be on call twenty-four hours a day at the home of their employers. Field workers tried to negotiate for shorter hours. Most freed people worked long hours, with little time off.[26]

Some USCT veterans were able to translate their wartime experience into postwar employment. Private William Holland, for example, became a federal government employee at the United States National Cemetery in Murfreesboro. As a member of the 111th USCT, Holland had worked for Chaplain William Earnshaw at the cemetery, re-interring remains of Union soldiers from throughout Middle Tennessee. After the war, Holland also owned a small farm near the cemetery. Although his views on his postwar life are not known, Holland achieved the kind of independence that remained a goal for most African Americans during the early years of freedom. [27]

Schools and Churches
Beyond their work lives, freed people established greater independence. They founded their own churches and schools throughout Tennessee. Hand in hand with these institutions, they also created benevolent and political organizations.

The first wartime schools in Tennessee were begun by black people themselves during the fall of 1862. As the war went on, the number of schools grew, many of them sponsored by Northern benevolent organizations, such as the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, the American Missionary Association, and the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission. After the war, the Freedmen's Bureau oversaw many of the schools established in Tennessee for former slaves. One, the Fisk School in Nashville, became a university in 1867 to train black teachers.[28]

During the war and afterward, schools served both children and adults. In 1867, the assistant commissioner for the Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee stated, "Everywhere in the State the colored people are fully alive to the importance of educating their children and themselves. Nearly every school contains a class of adult persons, some middle-aged and some older." Lizzie Wilson of Nashville, who had been enslaved for 56 years, expressed her joy at the opportunity to attend school: "I have been praying for this very time for near 20 years and now that it is here I must work with all my heart . . . . my whole heart is set on learning to read."[29] Wilson's inspiring testimonial was typical.

The Tennessee legislature established a system of public education in 1867, and schools for black and white children were opened in every county except one. In 1867, 72,350 African American children in Tennessee attended these public schools, 88,866 in 1868, and 89,503 in 1869. Funds earmarked for the schools were diverted elsewhere, however, and political opposition to state-supported education resulted in the repeal of the

legislation when the Democrats won control of the General Assembly from the Republicans in 1869.[30]

Tennessee's African Americans founded hundreds of new churches during and after the war. Former slaves wanted to meet when they wished and worship as they pleased. As early as 1866, there were more than seven black churches in Nashville, and at least twelve in 1869. Murfreesboro had four black churches by 1870, two Methodist and two Baptist.[31] In many cases, these churches did not just spring up out of nowhere, but the seeds of these new congregations had their origins in the antebellum period. A good example of this is St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in Columbia, founded shortly after the end of the war. St. Paul's founders descended from a group of black Christians who had first joined in fellowship at the white Methodist Episcopal church, meeting weekly in the basement.[32]

Churches became important community institutions. They provided education through their Sabbath schools, which usually met on weekends and in the evenings. Many church buildings were also used as schools during the day. In addition, African American churches spawned numerous benevolent organizations that provided services for their members in times of sickness and death. Cemeteries were established in many church yards. Churches also hosted political meetings. With the foundation laid during Reconstruction, African American churches would be the most vital racially independent organizations within black communities for the next century.[33]

Under slavery, African Americans in Tennessee had developed strong kin and "fictive kin" networks for supporting each other when families were torn apart. This ethos of mutuality continued during and after the war. Women in contraband camps in Clarksville and on President's Island started orphanages. Black Nashvillians ran a relief society after the war for the poor, regardless of color.[34] Many former slaves founded and joined fraternal organizations designed to provide social fellowship and to do good works in the community.

Both churches and schools became the targets of white Tennesseans who did not want to accept African American education or autonomy. Certainly, in most communities, there were some white individuals who supported black schools; these men and women sometimes donated land, or sold it at a low price, for the establishment of school buildings. Yet there was a very strong undercurrent of opposition to African American schools in Tennessee.

Opponents to black schools used intimidation and violence to try to shut them down. J.A. Edmonson, the superintendent for schools in Williamson County, reported in January 1869 on opposition to black schools in Franklin: "On Friday night 300 masked men rode through the village of Franklin, yelling like demons. Mr. Gray, a [school] director in the 4th District, (where they had given notice that the less done about negro schools, the better), let it be know that he wanted to talk with them. They rode to his house, and after quite a long parley, consented to let the negro school go on without disturbance, provided it was managed and controlled by white men." Two months later, Edmonson reported

much greater acceptance of the local free schools.[35] While violence was averted in this case, many schools (and churches that housed schools) were burned during the postwar period.

Politics and Citizenship
During and after the war, Tennessee's former slaves frequently took to the streets to celebrate their freedom and express their hopes and dreams for the future. Slaves had been forbidden from assembling in public, so the opportunity to gather in civic spaces was a clear way to distinguish freedom from slavery. Freed people held meetings and parades in courthouse squares and on main streets, claiming their right to these important public areas.

Public activities held during the war included rallies to spur enlistment in the Union army, Independence Day parades, and celebrations in honor of emancipation and Tennessee's ratification of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery forever. Black leaders used these events to call for full civil and political rights, education, and economic opportunity for Tennessee's African Americans.[36]

One forum developed by black leaders after the war was the "state colored convention" held annually to assess the needs of freed people, draw up lists of grievances, and agitate for equal rights. The first such convention was held in Nashville in August 1865 and attracted delegates from twenty-two counties. The convention successfully petitioned Congress not to seat Tennessee's delegates until the state legislature had granted African Americans equal rights. A second such convention was held in Nashville the following summer. After much debate over whether to focus on politics or economics and education, the participants called for suffrage for black men and for the acceptance of African Americans into the state militia. State colored conventions continued to meet into the 1870s, and Nashville hosted the Colored National Convention in 1876.[37]

Former slaves viewed the right to vote as a key element of freedom and lobbied hard for it. The General Assembly's approval of the 14th Amendment, and Tennessee's subsequent readmission to the Union on July 24, 1866, paved the way for black suffrage. African American men in Tennessee succeeded in gaining this right through a law passed by the General Assembly in February 1867. The same law, however, barred black men from sitting on juries or holding office, provisions that would be overturned about a year later. At this time, most former Confederates in Tennessee were barred from voting. During the twenty-five years after the end of the Civil War, Tennessee's black voters helped send thirteen African Americans to the General Assembly; the first, Nashville barber Sampson Keeble, was elected in 1872, and twelve more held office during the 1880s. (These successes were short-lived, however, as the General Assembly passed a series of laws in 1889-1890 that disenfranchised the vast majority of black voters.)[38]

Once they had won the franchise in 1867, African American men found themselves courted by political party representatives. Although during the heady early days of enfranchisement there was some support among black Tennesseans for the Conservatives, most former slaves favored the Radical Republicans. Freedmen across the state joined

political groups called Union Leagues, where they gained political organizing skills and bolstered the Radical Republican Party. Excitement grew particularly high before the August 1867 election for governor, which would be the first opportunity for former slave men to cast their votes in Tennessee. Black Tennesseans provided Republican Governor William G. Brownlow with more than half of the votes needed for him to win a second term and helped Republicans dominate the election at every level.[39]

While women did not gain the right to vote themselves, they showed a keen interest in political issues and attended mass meetings and rallies. During the postwar period, men, women, and children publicly celebrated Emancipation Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and other holidays. Parades, speeches, song and dance, and refreshments characterized these events. Ministers, soldiers and later veterans, and other prominent men usually led the parades and gave the speeches, but women made important contributions as well, performing patriotic songs, reading aloud civic documents such as the Emancipation Proclamation, carrying the United States flag, dressing up to represent "Liberty" or the states of the Union, presenting gifts to visiting dignitaries, and, especially later in the nineteenth century, raising funds and helping organize the celebrations themselves.[40] A July 4th parade held in Memphis in 1875, for example, included twelve carriages filled with members of female benevolent organizations. A "Queen of the Day" was accompanied by her maids of honor.[41]

Emancipation Day celebrations were particularly significant events in demarcating slavery and freedom. One of the lesser known aspects of emancipation in Tennessee is the fact that the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to the state; President Abraham Lincoln exempted Tennessee, accepting the argument of Military Governor Andrew Johnson and other Unionists that the "rebellion" was over in Tennessee and that the war-related measure of freeing the Confederacy's slaves should thus not apply to the state.[42] Despite this, January 1, the effective date of the proclamation in 1863, was celebrated by Tennessee's former slaves, and President Lincoln was widely revered. The initial state colored convention, in fact, proclaimed January 1 as Tennessee's "Day of Jubilee." African Americans in some parts of the state, however, held Emancipation Day celebrations on other days. East Tennesseans, for example chose August 8, the day that Andrew Johnson was said to have freed his slaves. African Americans commemorated Emancipation Day for years after the war, with excursion trains bringing rural folks into the larger towns and cities to celebrate. "Five Hundred Excursionists Attend Emancipation Celebration at Johnson City," read a headline in the *Knoxville Sentinel* in August 1897. Black Tennesseans continued to celebrate emancipation into the twentieth century, even as conditions for them worsened with the implementation of legalized segregation.[43]

Many white residents of Tennessee deeply resented African American political activity, and some used violence to try to intimidate and silence former slaves. During the immediate postwar period, mobs attacked public, communal political gatherings in several Tennessee communities. Other groups of angry men sought vengeance against black soldiers. One of the worst postwar "riots" in the former Confederacy occurred in Memphis in May of 1866 when 46 African Americans were killed, and many others were

injured, robbed, or had their homes destroyed. No one was ever punished for the crimes committed against black citizens during the Memphis violence.[44]

Vigilante groups seeking to intimidate black Tennesseans formed in the months after the end of the war, with the most well-known being the Ku Klux Klan, founded in Pulaski late in 1865. These groups often targeted individuals and families, spreading fear through postwar communities. A white Unionist storekeeper and his black clerk, for example, were killed in Franklin in August 1868 by masked horsemen. A northern newspaper reporter concluded, "It is certain that bitter feuds and animosities exist all around, which require but little to fan them into a flame of bloody strife."[45] Governor Brownlow responded to the statewide violence by using the state militia to protect black voters and by pushing the Ku Klux Klan Act through the General Assembly. The Klan dissolved itself early in 1869, but organized violence against African Americans had taken firm root in Tennessee and would continue.[46]

Despite exceedingly grim conditions, during and after the war former slaves lay down the foundations of new black communities. The first freed people nurtured and created the key community institutions of family, schools and churches, and civic participation for Tennessee's African Americans. The transition from slavery to freedom was more of a process than an event, with freedom first claimed during the Civil War, worked out during Reconstruction, and more completely fulfilled one hundred years later during the Civil Rights movement (often called the Second Reconstruction).

[1] Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University, *The National Heritage Area on the Civil War in Tennessee: Compact and Master Plan* (2001), 65.

[2] Ira Berlin, *et al.*, eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867; Series I, Volume I: The Destruction of Slavery* (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), 268.

[3] Mark M. Smith, "Of Bells, Booms, Sounds, and Silences: Listening to the Civil War South," in Joan E. Cashin, ed., *The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002): 26.

[4] General U.S. Grant established the first contraband camp in Tennessee at Grand Junction. The former slaves received shelter, food, and medical care in return for working for the government picking cotton in abandoned fields. John Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee, 1861-1865* (University, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1985), 48; Berlin, *et al.*, eds., *The Destruction of Slavery*, 251-252, 256-258.

[5] Jan Furman, ed., *Slavery in the Clover Bottoms: John McCline's Narrative of His Life During Slavery and the Civil War* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1998), xvii, 43-44. See also Daniel W. Stowell, "'A Family of Women and Children': The Fains of East Tennessee during Wartime," in Catherine Clinton, ed., *Southern Families at War: Loyalty and Conflict in the Civil War South* (N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000): 161. For an example of Union soldiers yielding to the wish of a Confederate slaveowner to retain her house slaves, see Robert Tracy McKenzie, "A Teenage Confederate Experiences Union Occupation: The Diary of Susan Amelia Ramsey, September 1863-April 1864," *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 78 (2006): 63.

[6] Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (NY: Vintage Books, 1986), 47, 51.

[7] Center for Historic Preservation, *Compact and Master Plan*, 65. Eliza Fain of Hawkins County made note when two of her enslaved workers, Gus and Caroline, went to get a look at black troops late in the war. Stowell, "'A Family of Women and Children,'" 165.

[8] Michael Thomas Gavin, "Rutherford County's African American Soldiers During the Civil War: The 13th and 17th Regiments, USCT," Research Report (May 2007): 1-3.

[9]` The 110th and 111th Regiments, USCT, formed at Pulaski, for example, included many men who had left the plantations of northern Alabama and Mississippi with their families. Michael Thomas Gavin, "Giles County's African American Soldiers During the Civil War: The 110th and 111th Regiments, USCT," Research Report (October 2004), 1.

[10] Both the Union military and private groups relocated some escaped slaves to employers in the upper Midwest. Leslie A. Schwalm, "'Overrun with Free Negroes': Emancipation and Wartime Migration in the Upper Midwest," *Civil War History* 50 (June 2004): 158. Women made clothing at industrial schools established in Memphis, Pulaski, and Clarksville. Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 56; Jane E. Schultz, "Seldom Thanked, Never Praised, and Scarcely Recognized: Gender and Racism in Civil War Hospitals," *Civil War History* 48 (2002): 224; Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, 50.

[11] Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 46-47, 49-50, 57-58. There were 1,850 residents of contraband camps in middle Tennessee as of September 1864 (1,100 at Clarksville, 480 at Nashville, and 270 at Gallatin). Ira Berlin, *et al.*, eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867, Series I, Volume II: The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South* (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 383-385; Jane E. Schultz, "Seldom Thanked, Never Praised, and Scarcely Recognized," 234; Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, 50.

[12] Berlin, *et al.*, eds., *The Destruction of Slavery*, 264.

[13] S. Kennedy to "My Dear Husband," Clarksville, Aug. 19, 1863, Papers of Sarah Ann (Bailey) Kennedy, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

[14] Bobby L. Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville, Tennessee, 1780-1930* (Fayetteville, AR: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1999), 59.

[15] Catherine A. Jones makes the point that freedom brought former slaves both the freedom to reunite with each other and the freedom to leave each other. Jones, "Children in the Reconfiguration of Virginia's Postemancipation Households," *Intimate Reconstructions:Family Life and Female Identity After the Civil War* Panel, Annual Meeting of the Southern Historical Association, Richmond, VA, Nov. 2, 2007.

[16] Rick Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work in the Reconstruction Era: The Freedmen's Bureau Labor Contracts of Williamson County, Tennessee* (Franklin, TN: Heritage Foundation of Franklin and Williamson County, 2006), 3, 58-59, 70-71; David S. Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work, Nothing More Nor Less': The Freedmen's Bureau, White Planters, and Black Contract Labor in Postwar Tennessee, 1865-1868," *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 78 (2006): 44.

[17] Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 75.

[18] By war's end, there were 900 Northern teachers working in the former Confederacy. Nina Silber, "A Compound of Wonderful Potency: Women Teachers of the North in the Civil War South," in Cashin, ed., *The War Was You and Me*, 36-37.

[19] The teachers also condemned the sexual abuse of ex-slave women and girls by Union soldiers. Silber, "A Compound of Wonderful Potency," in Cashin, ed., *The War Was You and Me*, 45-47, 51-52; Joe M. Richardson, "The Negro in Post Civil-War Tennessee: A Report by a Northern Missionary," *Journal of Negro Education* 34, no. 4 (Fall 1965): 421.

[20] David S. Leventhal argues that the Bureau often did more to further the agenda of white planters than to help the freed people achieve their goals. Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work,'" 24, 25; Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work*, 25; Cimprich,

Slavery's End in Tennessee, 67-71.

[21] David S. Leventhal analyzed 378 contracts from 3 Tennessee counties (Shelby, Robertson, and Hamilton) from 1865-1868 and compared them to studies of labor contracts in other states; he found that Tennessee workers were much more likely than laborers in other states to receive wages rather than a share of the crop. He also found freed people less and less likely to receive medical care over time. Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work,'" 25, 35-36, 42. In Williamson County in 1866, freed workers raised, in order of importance, corn, cotton, wheat, oats, tobacco, sorghum, hemp, potatoes, peas, broomcorn, and cabbage. Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work*, 2, 41-207.

[22] Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work*, 51.

[23] Ibid., 3-4, 125.

[24] Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work*, 35-36; Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work,'" 44-45.

[25] Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work,'" 35, 43, 46; *Freedom's Watchman*, Jan. 1, 1868. This unwillingness to pay former slaves for their work was evident in wartime free-labor situations as well. Berlin, *et al.*, eds., *The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South*, 383.

[26] Leventhal, "'Freedom to Work,'" 31, 41; Warwick, comp., *Freedom and Work*, 2-5; Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 71.

[27] Gavin, "Giles County's African American Soldiers," 5; Miranda L. Fraley, "The Politics of Memory: Remembering the Civil War in Rutherford County, Tennessee" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2004), 89-90.

[28] Tennessee's postwar superintendent of education, John Eaton, Jr., estimated that even before the Freedmen's Bureau had been established in March of 1865 more than 4000 black children were being instructed in Tennessee. Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 75-76; John Eaton, Jr., *First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee, Ending Thursday, October 7, 1869* (Nashville, 1869), 92; John T. Trowbridge, *A Picture of the Desolated States; and the Work of Restoration, 1865-1868* (Hartford, CT: L. Stebbins, 1868), 288.

[29] J.W. Alvord, Gen. Supt. Schools, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, *Fourth Semi-Annual Report on Schools for Freedmen*, Jul. 1, 1867 (Washington, D.C.: 1867): 66 (quote), 67; *American Missionary Magazine* 10 (April 1866): 88.

[30] Eaton, Jr., *First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee,* xxxix, xlii, ccv; J.W. Alvord, Gen. Supt. of Schools, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, *Ninth Semi-Annual Report on Schools for Freedmen*, Jan. 1, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: 1870), 48-49.

[31] Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville*, 174-175; Laura C. Jarmon, *Arbors to Bricks: A Hundred Years of African American Education in Rutherford County, Tennessee, 1865-1965* (Murfreesboro, TN: Middle Tennessee State University, 1994) , 31.

[32] Michael T. Gavin, *Maury County African-American Heritage Tour Guide* (Columbia, TN: Middle Tennessee Visitors Bureau, 2004), 3.

[33] James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1988), 12-15; Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville*, 121, 128, 173.

[34] Trowbridge, *A History of the Desolated States*, 287; Cimprich, *Slavery's End in Tennessee*, 75.

[35] Eaton, Jr., *First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee*, cxlix-cl.

[36] Tennessee had abolished slavery on February 22, 1865, and the state ratified the 13th Amendment on April 5, 1865. Judy Bussell LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee, 1865-1866," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 65 (Fall 2006): 231-235.

[37] LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee," 236-238, 241-242, 249.

[38] Tennessee's new state constitution, written by an all-white constitutional convention and ratified in 1870, contained a poll tax designed to limit the number of black voters; this provision was repealed three years later but then implemented again in 1890. It would be 1965 before another African American was elected to the legislature. Center for Historic Preservation, *Compact and Master Plan*, 68-69; LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee," 239, 244, 247.

[39] Black conservatives held a convention in Nashville in April 1867. LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee," 245.

[40] Antoinette G. van Zelm, "Forming a 'Sisterhood Chain': Women and Emancipation Celebrations in the Post-Civil War South," *The Evolution of Emancipation Celebrations in American Culture* Panel, American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, January 5, 2007. See also W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2005), 9-11, 57-59, 100, and Kathleen Ann Clark, *Defining Moments: African American Commemoration and Political Culture in the South, 1863-1913* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006), 2-3, 6-9, 91.

[41] *Memphis Daily Appeal*, July 6, 1875, 1. Working-class women held leading positions within Memphis's benevolent organizations; washerwomen, for example, were prominent in the Daughters of Zion. Brian D. Page, "Stand by the Flag: Nationalism and African American Celebrations of the Fourth of July in Memphis, 1866-1887," in Carroll Van West, ed., *Trial and Triumph: Essays in Tennessee's African American History* (Knoxville, TN: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2002), 188-190.

[42] Walter T. Durham, *Nashville: The Occupied City, The First Seventeen Months—Feb. 16, 1862, to June 30, 1863* (Nashville, TN: Tennessee Historical Society, 1985), 233-234.

[43] LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee," 238; *Knoxville Sentinel*, Aug. 7, 1897.

[44] Bobby L. Lovett, "Memphis Race Riot of 1866," in Carroll Van West, ed., *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press for the Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 614-615; James B. Jones, Jr., "The 'Battle' of Franklin: A Reconstruction Narrative," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 64 (Summer 2005): 110-119; John C. Spence, *The Annals of Rutherford County, Vol. 2: 1829-1870* (Murfreesboro, TN: Rutherford County Historical Society, 1991), 273-275; Kathleen R. Zebley, "Unconditional Unionist: Samuel Mayes Arnell and Reconstruction in Tennessee," in Carroll Van West, ed., *Tennessee History: The Land, the People, and the Culture* (Knoxville, TN: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1998), 193.

[45] The murders apparently occurred in connection with interracial violence associated with a black-on-white rape. *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1868 (excerpting the *Philadelphia Telegraph*).

[46] LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee," 245.