

THE CONTINUANCE OF AN UNHOLY TRAFFIC: THE VIRGINIA SLAVE TRADE  
DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Robert Colby

A thesis submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of History.

Chapel Hill  
2015

Approved by:

Harry Watson

William Barney

Thavolia Glymph

©2015  
Robert Colby  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## ABSTRACT

Robert Colby: The Continuance of an Unholy Traffic: The Virginia Slave Trade During  
the Civil War  
(Under the direction of Harry Watson)

During the nineteenth century, slave traders conveyed nearly one million enslaved persons from the Upper to the Lower South and as many more between masters locally. During the Civil War, in Virginia the slave trade continued with surprising vigor until the war's end. Masters and slave traders adapted to a declining long-distance trade and to the chaos of war by buying and selling in new areas and according to new economic and social rationales emerging from the conflict. The continuance of the slave trade suggests not only slavery's continuing viability in Civil War Virginia, but also the deep connection between the survival of the institution and of the trade. For the enslaved, masters' adjusted trading patterns often meant separation from family and community even as freedom beckoned, demonstrating slavery's continued wartime power. The slave trade thus shaped the experiences of all involved in slavery until the end war's end.

For Erin.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations.....	vi
Introduction.....	1
Slave Trading in Antebellum Virginia.....	5
Slave Trading and the Secession Crisis.....	11
The Long Decline of the Long Distance Trade.....	25
The Adaptation of the Local Trade.....	31
Continuity and the Effects of Slave Trading on African-Americans.....	60
Conclusion.....	77
Works Cited.....	78

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	American Antiquarian Society.
FSSP	Freedmen and Southern Society Project.
LoC	Library of Congress.
Duke	David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.
LVA	The Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA 23219.
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
RASP	Records of Antebellum Southern Plantations From the Revolution Through the Civil War.
SHC	Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
UVA	Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.
VHS	Virginia Historical Society.

## Introduction

On April 2, 1865, as news of Richmond's impending fall coursed through the city, slave jailer and sometime-trader Robert Lumpkin hurried a coffle of slaves toward the Richmond & Danville Railroad depot. Even as the Confederacy collapsed around him, Lumpkin strove to save his investment in enslaved human beings. Denied passage on the last trains leaving Richmond, Lumpkin had no choice but to face the advancing Union army, the emancipation of his slaves, and the advent of a world in which his business was a relic.<sup>1</sup> Lumpkin was not alone in speculating in slave property in the war's waning days. In July 1865, Lynchburg's James Hargrove, said to be "one of the wealthiest and largest negro traders in Virginia" shot himself in the head. Many speculated that financial ruin drove him to suicide, his losses headlined by thirty slaves purchased only three days before Lee met Grant at Appomattox.<sup>2</sup> The slaves Lumpkin and Hargrove bought and sold were among the last of thousands traded in Virginia during the Civil War. These commonplace transactions raise important questions about how those most invested in the slave trade (and by extension in slavery itself) reacted to the traumas of war, about their motivations for buying and selling even in the war's last days, and about the ways in which African-Americans negotiated and endured a slave system altered by four years of war.

Over the last twenty-five years, scholars have come to understand that slave trading underpinned the institution of slavery and embodied its exceedingly exploitative nature; their

---

<sup>1</sup> Charles Carleton Coffin, *Four Years of Fighting: A Volume of Personal Observation With the Army and Navy, From the First Battle of Bull Run to the Fall of Richmond* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), 501-502.

<sup>2</sup> Untitled, *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, July 18, 1865. See also "Virginia News," *Alexandria Gazette*, July 12, 1865.

works have thereby created “an even more sophisticated victimization thesis” for the enslaved than that posited by previous generations.<sup>3</sup> Building on the pioneering work of Frederic Bancroft and the revisionist writers of the 1950s, these scholars thoroughly demolished understandings of slavery that minimized the trade’s scale and impact on American (and African-American) life.<sup>4</sup> Michael Tadman demonstrated the massive volume of slave trading that occurred in the antebellum South and that masters were more than willing to break up slave families in pursuit of an extra dollar. Walter Johnson’s study of the New Orleans slave market located the “chattel principle” at the heart of both the plantation economy and planters’ self-conceptions; regardless of the values they verbalized, slaveholders’ worldview rested entirely on the commodification of black bodies. Steven Deyle and Robert Gudmestad emphasized slave trading’s centrality to Southern cultural, social, and political life, highlighting both its critical role in enabling the Southern economy and the mental and rhetorical gymnastics in which slaveholders engaged to distance themselves from this most brutal aspect of slavery. Most recently, Edward Baptist’s provocative *The Half Has Never Been Told* hammered this point home to a broader public: slave

---

<sup>3</sup> David W. Blight “The World the Slave Traders Made: Is There a Postrevisionism in Slavery Historiography?” review of *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* by Michael Tadman, *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Mar. 1991), 38.

<sup>4</sup> Though U.B. Phillips recognized that much slave trading took place, he considered it ancillary to a pre-capitalist plantation slavery and thus not motivated primarily by masters’ search for profits. Despite Frederic Bancroft’s vigorous challenge in the early 1930s, the domestic slave trade remained largely ignored until the 1950s. See Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966 (original printing 1918), 187-204; for an example of the work of one of his students, see Wendell Stephenson, *Isaac Franklin: Slave Trader and Planter of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1938). Bancroft offered the first critical examination of the domestic slave trade in *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996 (originally 1931)). Kenneth Stamp, who placed the pursuit of profit on the plantation at the center of his study of slavery, followed Bancroft in fleshing out the legal and economic structures supporting a vigorous slave trade, as well as the some of the practices of the traders. See Kenneth M. Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), particularly 237-278. Eugene Genovese, then Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman renewed the debate over the capitalist characteristics of slavery, though each argued for a minimal slave trade as part of his case; Genovese suggested that slaves considered protection from sale one of their master’s paternalistic obligations, while Fogel and Engerman saw protection from sale as an incentive masters offered their slaves in return for their labor. See Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974) and Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (2 vols.) (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1974).



trading “unlocked the monetary value stored in the family bonds that enslaved people had built so richly in the Chesapeake and Carolinas” and this value in turn financed the development of the American nation state and its nascent capitalist economy.<sup>5</sup>

These works, however, all focused exclusively on the antebellum period and avoided following the slave trade into the turbulent years of the Civil War. Indeed, it would be only a slight exaggeration to say that the entire corpus of academic work on wartime slave trading consists of a single essay penned in 2006 and 15 pages Bell Irvin Wiley wrote in 1938. Where scholars have engaged it, they have done so only cursorily; a few sentences and a smattering of sources serve to dismiss it as meager and doomed from the war’s onset.<sup>6</sup> Wiley established the pattern followed by most subsequent scholars when he concluded that “the general tendency

---

<sup>5</sup> See Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), which rebutted both Genovese and Fogel and Engerman by placing slave trading for profit at the center of the Southern enterprise. See also Herman Freudenberger and Jonathan B. Pritchett, “The Domestic United States Slave Trade: New Evidence,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol. 21, No. 3 (January 1991), 447-477; Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Walter Johnson, ed., *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Robert H. Gudmestad, *A Troubled Commerce: The Transformation of the Interstate Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); David L. Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power: How the Struggle Against the Interstate Slave Trade Led to the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); and Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), quote on 179.

<sup>6</sup> Tadman intentionally ended his study prior to the war and gave the subject only a few sentences (see *Speculators and Slaves*, 44, 105-106). Johnson, Gudmestad, and Deyle also devoted but little space to what took place during the war. And while David Lightner gives trading during the war a full chapter, most of his analysis centers on Northern debates on outlawing the trade; how it functioned in the wartime South receives only three pages (see *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 177-179). The only work specifically devoted to slave trading during the war is Jaime Amanda Martinez’s, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” in Gary Gallagher, Edward Ayers, and Andrew Torget, eds. *Crucible of the Civil War: Virginia From Secession to Commemoration* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 106-135, though Bell Irvin Wiley also gave it a section in *Southern Negroes, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 85-98. Martinez’s study shows the effect of Confederate morale on slave prices but does not give much attention to changes in the structures supporting the slave trade during the war, nor does it significantly interrogate the experiences of African-Americans bought and sold during the war. Wiley’s work provides an overview of the subject but offers little more than a glimpse at the realities of trading during the war.

from the beginning to the end of the conflict was toward an increase in the current prices of Negroes, a decrease in their real value, and a shrinkage in the volume of the trade.”<sup>7</sup>

Understanding the nuances of wartime trading in Virginia, however, complicates this straightforward understanding. Rather than fitting neatly into a declension narrative, the practice of slave trading revealed remarkable tenacity in wartime Virginia. While major portions of the long distance slave trade evaporated almost immediately, masters continued to buy and sell slaves across state lines to a surprising degree until quite late in the war; the long distance slave trade, therefore, underwent more of a slow decline than an abrupt collapse. Within the Commonwealth, Virginian masters and slave traders drew on a long tradition of adapting slavery to changing economic realities to reorient localized slave trading to meet the new demands placed on them by the war, which in turn allowed the trade to survive until the war’s end. Moreover, the slave trade’s critical role in sustaining the institution of slavery meant that as long as slavery lasted in the Commonwealth, the slave trade by necessity would as well. Finally, the wartime experience of Virginian African-Americans affirmed the lingering potency of the slave trade. Though it slowly diminished in scale, until the end of the war it threatened black families and interfered with many slaves’ quests for freedom. Slave trading during the Civil War, therefore, deserves closer examination for what it can tell us about the resilience of the Southern slave system and about Confederate adhesion to the institution.

---

<sup>7</sup> Wiley, *Southern Negroes*, 97.

## Slave Trading in Antebellum Virginia

Though Southern planters had always bought and sold slaves within the country, the closure of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1808 and America's simultaneous westward fueled the rise of a large-scale internal slave trade. At the same time, many Virginian planters found in slave trading a solution to the decline of tobacco agriculture and their ensuing debts. They sold their excess slaves to planters exploiting the virgin lands of the Southwest, which not only provided Virginians with a new revenue stream but also helped mitigate their fears of slave revolts.<sup>8</sup> The rise of the Cotton Kingdom thus linked all the slaveholding states together in a symbiotic relationship in which Southwestern planters financed the mass removal of slaves from the institution's northern frontier to the newly-opened territories in the Mississippi Valley, with Virginians among those willingly supplying the slaves. Between 1790 and 1860, the better part of one million slaves marched south; Virginia alone contributed half a million to this river of humanity. While migrating planters took many slaves along with them, the majority (particularly after 1810) were sold in one market and purchased in another.<sup>9</sup> Thus, for every slave living in Virginia in 1860, another had departed south, mostly in a slave trader's coffle. As Herbert Gutman has suggested, somewhere in the South a slave was sold on average every 3.6 minutes.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South*, 88-89; Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 16, 22-25, 37-39.

<sup>9</sup> Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves*, 12, 17-19, 31; Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 43-46.

<sup>10</sup> Census data for 1860 retrieved via the University of Virginia Library's Historical Census Data browser, available at <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/index.html>, last retrieved October 23, 2014; Herbert Gutman, *Slavery and the Numbers Game: A Critique of Time on the Cross* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 124.

This commerce in human beings had devastating effects on lives of those bought and sold. A teenager living in the Upper South in 1820 had a one in three chance of being sold away and husbands and wives faced similarly bleak odds; one third of first marriages likely ended due to sale, as did about one in six slave marriages overall.<sup>11</sup> The constant threat of family separations did not make them any easier when they happened; slave narratives are replete with the pain of separation. Ishrael Massie recalled that when masters began discussing money, the slaves “know dat mean dey gonna sell some slaves to do nex’ nigger trader dat come ‘roun’...Den sech prayin’ honey. Dem what ain’t named would pray to God ole Marsa ain’t gonna sell dem, an’ dem what been named would pray dey get a good Marsa.”<sup>12</sup> Moses Grandy recalled his mother hiding him and his siblings to prevent their sale, but when this failed his mother became “frantic with grief,” “was beaten and held down,” and was later “tied...up to a peach tree in the yard, and flogged.” Grandy’s own wife was later sold away from him surreptitiously; when he asked to make his farewells a trader threatened to shoot him.<sup>13</sup> Nearly all former slaves shared similar memories; Charles Crawley recalled young children being sold, but refused to discuss it further, saying “I don’ like to talk ‘bout back dar. It brung a sad feelin’ up in me.” Anna Harris’s memory of her sister’s sale so embittered her against all white people that she refused to allow them on her property for decades thereafter.<sup>14</sup> Thus, African-Americans’ experience taught them exactly how integral slave trading was to the slave system.

---

<sup>11</sup> Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves*, 45, 171, 178.

<sup>12</sup> Charles L. Perdue, Jr., Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips, *Weevils in the Wheat: Interviews With Virginia Ex-Slaves* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 211.

<sup>13</sup> Moses Grandy, *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy, Late a Slave in the United States of America* (London: C. Gilpin, 1843), 8, 16. Available through Documenting the American South at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/grandy/grandy.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 79, 128.

The demand for Virginian slaves incentivized traders' development of highly sophisticated entrepreneurial methods.<sup>15</sup> From Alexandria, Virginia's first major slave mart, Isaac Franklin and John Armfield shipped massive numbers of slaves directly to Southern markets. They vertically integrated their business by acquiring slave ships, which allowed them to regularly transport up to 180 slaves from Alexandria to New Orleans or Natchez. They also cultivated networks of individual traders who scoured the countryside for slaves. At Alexandria's market peak in the late 1830s, 3,000 to 4,000 slaves were sold there annually, ranking the city among the nation's leading slave trading centers.<sup>16</sup>

In the decades before the Civil War, Richmond surpassed Alexandria as chief among the Commonwealth's slave markets.<sup>17</sup> By 1850, Alexandria "had become an appendage of the Richmond market" and slave trading in northern Virginia declined as a whole.<sup>18</sup> Richmond traders adopted many of Franklin and Armfield's innovations while also taking advantage of the developments of the transportation revolution. Local traders roamed defined territories buying slaves opportunistically either for themselves or on behalf of the Richmond auctioneers and commission merchants who supplied them with funds. These dealers then served as middlemen between itinerant Virginian traders (or planters selling directly to the commission merchants) and

---

<sup>15</sup> For more on the methods developed by slave trading and its development in Virginia, see Tomoko Yagyu, "Slave Traders and Planters in the Expanding South: Entrepreneurial Strategies, Business Networks, and Western Migration in the Atlantic World, 1787-1859" (Ph.D. Diss., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 2006), 64-138.

<sup>16</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 100-105; Michael Ridgeway, "A Peculiar Business: Slave Trading in Alexandria, Virginia, 1825-1861" (M.A. Thesis, Georgetown University, 1976), 38-45; Donald Sweig, "Northern Virginia Slavery: A Statistical and Demographic Investigation" (PhD Diss., College of William and Mary, 1982), 195-214.

<sup>17</sup> Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South*, 92-95.

<sup>18</sup> Ridgeway, "A Peculiar Business", 88-92, 95-96, 129. Traders operating out of Alexandria and Norfolk also continued to sell to Deep South buyers, but Richmond buyers dominated these markets as well.

buyers from the Southern states, taking a small commission on each transaction.<sup>19</sup> Men like Hector Davis, Silas Omohundro, William S. Deupree, R.H. Dickinson, the brothers Charles B. and Nathaniel Boush Hill, D.M. Pulliam, William Betts, and E.H. Stokes thus facilitated the sale of enormous numbers of slaves to the Deep South and within Virginia.<sup>20</sup>

By the end of the 1850s, these men had made Richmond the largest slave-exporting market in the country. The city's location at the center of what was both the nation's largest slaveholding and slave-exporting state enabled the collection of the Commonwealth's slaves at a single point. Richmond's extensive rail connections aided this collection and eased the removal of slaves to the Cotton Kingdom. Its location on the James River also facilitated coastwise transport for those buying for New Orleans and Gulf Coast plantations.<sup>21</sup> Thousands (sometimes tens of thousands) of slaves left Richmond annually, putting millions of dollars into the pockets of slave traders, auctioneers, and commission merchants. Indeed, by the late 1850s, the firm of Dickinson, Hill & Co. alone boasted sales of over \$2 million annually and the Richmond market on the whole sold \$4 million worth of slaves per year.<sup>22</sup> In short, at the onset of the war, Virginia's slave market was booming.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves*, 49-53. In Richmond in the 1860s, for example, the auctioneering firm of Browning, Moore & Co. forged partnerships with smaller associations or individual traders across the state. Traders like C.W. Parris, John A. Scruggs, and D.M. Pattie roamed the Piedmont, buying slaves for them; John Rucker bought in Lynchburg, and the Fredericksburg consortium of Stephens & Taliaferro purchased slaves for Richmond markets. See C.B. Acriss to Browning Moore & Co., July 3, 1860; C.W. Parris to Browning Moore & Co., April 20, 1860; John Rucker to Browning Moore & Co., July 16, 1860; D.M. Pattie to Browning Moore & Co., April 11, 1860; John A. Scruggs to Browning Moore & Co., July 25, 1860; Stephens & Taliaferro to Browning Moore & Co., April 4, 1860, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>20</sup> Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves*, 57-64.

<sup>21</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 110-112, 115-118; Robert H. Gudmestad, "The Richmond Slave Market, 1840-1860" (M.A. thesis, University of Richmond, 1993), 35-36, 56-62.

<sup>22</sup> Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South*, 116-117. Dickinson, Hill & Co. was the partnership of R.H. Dickinson with Charles B. (and later his brother Nathaniel B.) Hill.

<sup>23</sup> Gudmestad, "The Richmond Slave Market," 114-115.

Slave trading's significance simultaneously lay in and transcended its economic impact. The institution of slavery's survival rested upon Southerners' ability to transport labor to places where it could be deployed more efficiently; moreover, the ability to turn slaves into cash and vice versa provided the financial flexibility needed to keep slaveholders afloat.<sup>24</sup> Slave sales also permitted the expansion of the Cotton Kingdom as slaveholders depended on slaves to clear the land and cultivate the cotton from which they obtained their profits as well as on a constantly available supply of slaves to further expand the plantation system.<sup>25</sup> While the Chesapeake sometimes eyed the Southwest with suspicion, the slave trading routes across the South bound them together through mutual economic interests.<sup>26</sup>

Slave trading also made possible the spread of the Southern civilization and slave-based way of life. As Walter Johnson has noted, the slaves sold South represented not only "field hands and household help" but slaveholders' "stake in the commercial and social aspirations of the expanding Southwest." Slaveholders' ability to commodify black bodies through purchase and sale underpinned the entire functioning of the slave system. Without doing so they could not cultivate cotton or sugar, could not establish their plantation homes, and could not assert their pretenses to paternalistic gentility. In short, Johnson pointed out, "the history of the South is the history of two million slave sales."<sup>27</sup> By 1860, Southerners could only envision a future based

---

<sup>24</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 173; Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told*, 244-259.

<sup>25</sup> On slavery's expansion into the old Southwest, see Rothman, *Slave Country*, especially 165-216; Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), particularly 31-45 for slavery's initial incursion into the area. For an extensive discussion of the issue, see Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told*, 1-109.

<sup>26</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 40-46.

<sup>27</sup> Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 7, 16-17.

on the sale of hundreds of thousands more slaves. When events progressed so as to threaten this vision, they went to war to defend it.



## Slave Trading and the Secession Crisis

In 1857, Edmund Ruffin took to *De Bow's Review* to warn of the dangers posed by the emerging Republican Party. Among the leading threats was a ban on “the removal of slaves by sales from States where they were in excessive numbers, to other States or new territories where they were most deficient.” This, he feared, “would prevent the making of any new slaveholding states” while rendering slavery in the Border States unprofitable—which would in turn make slavery both politically insecure and economically untenable. If the interstate slave trade were banned, therefore, “the institution of slavery would be hastened toward its doomed extinction,” an outcome anathema to Ruffin and to nearly all Southerners.<sup>28</sup>

Ruffin's article indicated the three main ways the domestic slave trade influenced the sectional crisis: as an abolitionist weapon, a political pressure point, and a means of closing off the westward expansion of slavery. Through anti-slavery periodicals, works like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the testimonies of former slaves, abolitionists parlayed the pathos of the slave trade into a powerful critique of the institution as a whole.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, because they believed that the Constitution's Interstate Commerce Clause permitted a Congressional ban on transporting and selling slaves across state lines, abolitionists saw the slave trade as an exposed weakness for

---

<sup>28</sup> Edmund Ruffin, “Consequences of Abolition Agitation,” *De Bow's Review, Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress and Resources* Vol. 22, No. 6 (June 1857), 588.

<sup>29</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 177-191. For efforts of slave traders to deflect this criticism see Gudmestad, *A Troublesome Commerce*, 148-168.

slavery, and continued to press it even after the Supreme Court ruled the trade protected.<sup>30</sup> During the debates preceding the Compromise of 1850, Henry Clay suggested a resolution reaffirming Congress's impotence regarding the slave trade, hoping to "put an end to the question" for all time.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the antislavery politics of the Republican Party kept the debate alive as many Radical Republicans rejected the Court's decision and made banning the coast-wise and internal slave trades part of their struggle against the peculiar institution.<sup>32</sup>

Southerners worried most about a ban on the slave trade because of its critical role in expanding slavery westward. If it were prohibited, how could the Cotton Kingdom be supplied with the slaves it needed to grow? If masters could no longer sell slaves westward, how could new territories be made into allies in the sectional struggle? These fears did much to shape Southern thinking on the slave trade during the 1850s.<sup>33</sup> As the westward expansion of slavery became the focal point of the escalating crisis, the slave trade implicitly functioned as an underlying cause of the debate.<sup>34</sup> Virginian senator Robert M.T. Hunter, for example, tied the

---

<sup>30</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 192-203; Gudmestad, *A Troublesome Commerce*, 179-181, 186-189. Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 90-112. Abolitionists also focused on banning the slave trade in and from the District of Columbia. And though the Supreme Court upheld the trade's legitimacy in 1841 in *Groves v. Slaughter*, debate over Congress's exact powers continued. A case about Mississippi's law regulating the importation of and speculation in slaves, *Groves v. Slaughter* saw Henry Clay arguing for an inalienable right to trade slaves across state lines, while Daniel Webster (in theory arguing for the same side) suggested that the Federal government ought to be able to regulate commerce in slaves across state lines. See Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 71-77. See also Gudmestad, *A Troublesome Commerce*, 195-199 and James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861-1865* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013), 20-21, 27, 52-59.

<sup>31</sup> Holman Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict: The Crisis and Compromise of 1850* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1964, 2005), 53-54; Frank W. Prescott, ed. *Documents Illustrating the Compromise of 1850* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Dept. of History, 1926), 13. Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 203. Clay's resolution was not included in the final Compromise, though a measure banning the importation of slaves for sale into Washington, D.C. was included.

<sup>32</sup> Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970 and 1995), 83-84, 115-117.

<sup>33</sup> Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 133-135.

<sup>34</sup> Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 141-164. Southerners generally listed the slave trade among other things they feared Republicans would attack (as demonstrated by Edmund Ruffin's previously-cited article).

right of Southerners to trade and carry their slaves along the coasts to the right to take them into the territories; the federal government, he argued, had no more power over one than it did over the other.<sup>35</sup> Closing the slave trade would, he argued, keep slaves “pent up” in the Upper South and thus make the institution both “dangerous and unprofitable.”<sup>36</sup> As Liberty, Virginia’s *Bedford Democrat* noted, “no man in the slave states... would not rather see the Union dissolved than the inter-state slave trade abolished.”<sup>37</sup> Though some Southerners feared what might happen should Constitutional protections for slavery be removed, many more worried about the loss in value their slaves would undergo should the institution be threatened in the least.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the escalating rhetoric surrounding slavery’s future, slave traders and their clients continued to buy and sell with little disturbance. Even as traders kept one eye on unfolding events, trying to guess what they might augur for their livelihood, prices continued their virtually unabated rise. John Brown’s raid, for example, only minimally disrupted slave prices, though it spooked some traders. Shortly after the raid one trader considered there to be “nothing of importance for news,” and reported that “negroes are selling very high,” but another sold off all his slaves when “he became alarmed about the Harpers Ferry affair.” The trader Philip Thomas

---

Lightner argues that its seeming unimportance stemmed from a broader Southern rhetorical strategy of treating the slave trade as a relatively insignificant matter for the purposes of countering abolitionist attacks. Putting it in too prominent a place would be protesting too much (142). In spite of a lack of specific Southern focus on the slave trade, its demonstrable importance in spreading slavery into new territories (retaining access to which was indubitably the primary goal of Southern politicians in the secession crisis) suggests that directly and indirectly, the fear of a ban on the slave trade played a major role in fomenting the secession crisis.

<sup>35</sup> R.M.T Hunter to Sheldon Leake, 1857(?) in Charles Henry Ambler, ed. *Correspondence of Robert M.T. Hunter, 1826-1876*. American Historical Association Annual Report, 1916. 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: 1918), II: 260-261.

<sup>36</sup> Robert M.T. Hunter, “Speech...on the Resolution Proposing to Retrocede the Forts...Delivered in the Senate of the United States, January 11, 1861” in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Pamphlets on Secession November 1860-April 1861* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 264.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in W. Harrison Daniel, *Bedford County, Virginia, 1840-1860: the History of An Upper Piedmont County in the Late Antebellum Era* (Bedford: The Print Shop, 1985), 139.

<sup>38</sup> Christopher G. Memminger, for example, wrote “after secession is consummated, no negro can be removed...to the other states of the Union,” with a corresponding “destruction of value” to those slaves remaining in the state. Henry D. Capers, *The Life and Times of Christopher G. Memminger* (Richmond: Everett Waddey Co., 1893), 218.

wrote to his partner Jack Finney that it was “quite a critical time to be engaged in the negro trade...I am firmly of the opinion that times are growing worse and worse as fast as the moments flies and the sooner we get out of it the better it will be for us.” Thomas recommended selling the slaves they had on hand so they “could wait till it becomes more settled.”<sup>39</sup>

In spite of these concerns, slave traders continued to establish new concerns and financial institutions throughout 1860, indicating confidence in their continued prosperity. In February, a number of traders incorporated the Traders’ Bank of Richmond to help fund their future enterprises.<sup>40</sup> They also formed new business alliances to maximize the trading opportunities available to them. Major traders R.H. Davis, William S. Deupree, and S.R. Fondren formed Davis, Deupree & Co. in June.<sup>41</sup> A Princess Anne County trader promised to funnel the business of his “county-men” to Richmond traders Browning & Moore for a share of the commission. C.W. Parris promised to go “into the trade more industriously” that summer. Men on the make continued to seek entry into the trade and to align themselves with established traders.<sup>42</sup> While one trader conceded that due to the uncertain “Political aspect of things” a “political price” prevailed in the market, more optimistic traders hoped that so long as the crisis remained

---

<sup>39</sup> Sandford R. Finney to William A.J. Finney, October 24, 1859; Philip Thomas to Jack Finney, November 19, 1859; Philip Thomas to Jack Finney, December 3, 1859, William A. J. Finney papers, Duke. Another trader conversely took advantage of the panic, buying slaves unloaded by those exiting the market and turning them around in the Richmond market for a \$300 profit.

<sup>40</sup> “Trader’s Bank,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 21, 1860. Among the bank’s commissioners were Hector Davis, C.B. Hill, William S. Deupree, S.R. Fondren, John B. Davis, Robert Lumpkin, William H. Betts, and Solomon Davis. Many of the major trading firms also sold stock in the bank at their offices. The bank ended ignominiously when in order to halt the fires spreading through Richmond after its fall, Union forces dynamited it to create a firebreak. “Interesting From Richmond,” *Washington Evening Star*, April 6, 1865.

<sup>41</sup> Broadside 1860:23, VHS.

<sup>42</sup> C.B. Acriss to Browning Moore & Co., July 3, 1860; J.O. Hanfield to E.C. Moore, August 30, 1860; C.W. Parris to Browning Moore & Co., June 26, 1860; John Rucker to Browning Moore & Co., July 16, 1860; D.M. Pattie to Browning Moore & Co., April 21, 1860 Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

“political” it might be resolved.<sup>43</sup> Thus, prices remained high throughout the summer.

Dickinson Hill found “good demand” in June and added in July that “prices rule high for good negroes, which are scarce and much wanted.”<sup>44</sup> Even in September, Davis, Deupree & Co. encouraged the purchase of “good shipping negroes.”<sup>45</sup> It was, as Betts & Gregory proclaimed, a fine “time to buy good ones & bring them in.”<sup>46</sup>

Not until the weeks immediately prior to the November election did the mounting crisis begin to cast a pall on Virginia’s slave markets. One Virginian found October “a most unfavourable time for selling negroes,” with prices down as much as \$250 on men.<sup>47</sup> L.H. Dix wrote from Lancaster County that despite the large numbers slaves available, he was “afraid to buy as the price is so low...I cannot give the lists price they ask for unless they are in better demand.”<sup>48</sup> D.M. Pattie reported that but few slaves could be sold in Warrenton due to low prices.<sup>49</sup> Betts & Gregory reported the market “dull,” as “the presidential election is having considerable effect on the market how it will go no man can tell.” They advised buying “nothing

---

<sup>43</sup> Thomas A. Powell, Jr. to W.A.J. Finney, June 25, 1860, William A. J. Finney papers, Duke.

<sup>44</sup> Dickinson Hill & Co. to “Dear Sir,” June 26, 1860; Dickinson Hill & Co. to “Dear Sir,” July 21, 1860, William A. J. Finney papers, Duke.

<sup>45</sup> Davis, Deupree & Co. to Hudson Martin, September 7, 1860, Hudson Martin Papers, 1857-1870, Accession #4874, UVA.

<sup>46</sup> Betts & Gregory to “Dear Sir,” July 20, 1860, R. J. Reid. Papers, 1777-1870. Accession 22032. Personal papers collection. LVA. Hector Davis acquired a 14-year-old Wallace Turnage for \$950 and made \$50 profit on his sale to Alabama. See David W. Blight, ed., *A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation* (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2007), 214-215. Even Robert E. Lee, then stationed far away in Texas, considered adding to his stock of slaves, wondering if the time were right to purchase a servant for his personal use. See Robert E. Lee to William Henry Fitzhugh Lee, July 9, 1860, George Bolling Lee Papers, 1841-1868, Mss1 L5114 c 36, VHS.

<sup>47</sup> Roscoe Briggs Heath to Lewis Edmunds Mason, October 5, 1860, Mason Family Papers, 1813-1943, Southampton and Greensville Counties, Virginia; also Mississippi, Mss1M3816c, Series M: Selections from the Virginia Historical Society, Part 5: Southside Virginia, RASP.

<sup>48</sup> L.H. Dix to Betts & Gregory, September 5, 1860, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS.

<sup>49</sup> D.M. Pattie to Moore & Dawson, September 5, 1860, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

but good negroes & buy them at prices to sell immediately it will not do to hold them under the present prospects.”<sup>50</sup> A British traveler in October found trading in Richmond brisk (nearly 500 sold per week), but reported diminished prices.<sup>51</sup> Lincoln’s election caused “flatness and inactivity” across Virginia’s slave markets.<sup>52</sup> One trader from Amherst County could only hope slaves “will get back to good prices in a few months.”<sup>53</sup> Another trader, writing from Memphis, predicted Tennessee’s time in political limbo would produce “a very bad afflict on the negro market... We think our state ought to be in Hell.” Another Tennessee trader wrote that the “full extent of the storm in this political excitement” meant there was “nothing in the way of trade going.”<sup>54</sup> Staunton’s *Valley Star* noted a twenty-five percent decline in the value of slaves due to “the cry of disunion” instilling “a want of confidence in holders of slave property,” while the Richmond *Whig* confirmed that slaves had lost hundreds of dollars in value due to “the threats of disunion.”<sup>55</sup>

These were not the only threats being issued in early 1861. In its new constitution, the Confederacy allotted its Congress the power to ban the importation of slaves from states outside

---

<sup>50</sup> Betts & Gregory to “Dear Sir,” September 11, 1860, R. J. Reid. Papers, 1777-1870. Accession 22032. Personal papers collection. LVA.

<sup>51</sup> R.A. Slaney, *Short Journal of A Visit to Canada and the States of America, in 1860* (London: Hatchard & Co., 1861), 44-45.

<sup>52</sup> Betts & Gregory to “Dear Sir,” November 9, 1860, William A. J. Finney papers, Duke.

<sup>53</sup> H. McGinnis to Moore & Dawson, December 14, 1860, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC. Of course, there were localized exceptions to this trend; from Orange County, C.C. Moore reported, “negroes sold higher than I ever saw.” See C.C. Moore to Moore & Dawson, September 19, 1860, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>54</sup> J.W. Christopher to J.J. Price, February 10, 1861; William W. Saunders to E.H. Stokes, Undated, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS.

<sup>55</sup> Both papers quoted in “The Other End of the Panic,” *Orleans Independent Standard* (Irasburgh, Vermont), November 9, 1860. “The Fall in the Price of Negroes,” *Richmond Whig*, October 16, 1860. The *Whig* implied that whether they seceded or not, the cotton states would benefit from their threats by driving down Virginian slave prices.

the Confederacy.<sup>56</sup> Though Henry Benning, Georgia’s commissioner to Virginia’s Secession Convention, denied “that there [was] any threat in such a clause,” he argued that Virginia could avoid its effects by joining with the South.<sup>57</sup> While this sparked fear in many Virginians, it in and of itself was not enough to make them secede—and the threatened coercion angered others.<sup>58</sup> Some slaveholders, however, pre-empted these potential losses by selling off slaves. William Cabell Rives advised Reuben Maury “to sell his slaves, gather up his family and go abroad or to Canada till the war ended.”<sup>59</sup> Richmond merchant Samuel Mordecai, responding to a rumor that his brother had sold fifty slaves, congratulated him on having “reduced your trouble on satisfactory terms.”<sup>60</sup> E.H. Stokes’ cousin wrote him that he would like to sell a slave, even for the reduced price of \$950 as he worried that “If I don’t get my money out of the negro now I don’t know when I can get it.”<sup>61</sup>

By January, the Virginia slave market had recovered somewhat. Betts & Gregory described it as having an “upward tendency,” and Hector Davis assured potential buyers, “you

---

<sup>56</sup> The carrot to this stick came in the banning of the African slave trade, the reopening of which Virginians consistently opposed. See Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, 158. See also Charles Robert Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 65-66, 101; and Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 100-101.

<sup>57</sup> Fulton Anderson, *Addresses Delivered Before the Virginia State Convention* (Richmond, VA: W.M. Elliott, 1861), 41.

<sup>58</sup> “Virginia and Senator Hunter,” *Washington National Republican*, December 6, 1860. Northerners and Unionists pointed out that between joining the Confederacy and the abrasion of the all-but-certain war, Virginia would suffer lowered slave prices and might end by losing all of its slaves anyway. See “The Spirit of the Morning Press,” *Washington Evening Star*, March 21, 1861. John T. Harris of Harrisonburg, for example, projected 50 percent losses should war take place “Hon. Jno. T. Harris,” *Staunton Spectator*, November 27, 1860. See also George H. Reese, *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861: February 13-May 14* 4 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1965), I: 180-181.

<sup>59</sup> Caroline Morrill Brown, “War-Time Memories By an Old Lady Who Was Then Young” *The Magazine of Albemarle County History*, Vol. 30 (1972), 30.

<sup>60</sup> Samuel Mordecai to George W. Mordecai, March 9, 1861, in the George W. Mordecai Papers #522, SHC.

<sup>61</sup> T.A. Fowlky to E.H. Stokes, April 23, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

cannot go wrong in buying good grown negroes;” women and children were “selling as high as I ever saw them.”<sup>62</sup> These high prices continued to draw new traders into the market; one wrote to Betts & Gregory claiming that he “could make something” for them.<sup>63</sup> The *Richmond Daily Dispatch* relayed an auctioneer’s report that “the price of negroes has advanced considerably” and later took high attendance at a Louisa County auction as evidence of support for secession. The *Dispatch* continued to report rising prices and suggested to the Secession Convention delegates that if they would “at once to declare their purpose, objects, aims and intents, the rise in all descriptions of property would be unprecedented.”<sup>64</sup> Samuel Mordecai confirmed, “the price of negroes has greatly advanced of late” in late March.<sup>65</sup> Simultaneously, Pulliam & Betts reported prices of from \$1,500 to \$1,600 for men, near their pre-war high.<sup>66</sup>

Outside of the Richmond market, however, things were less rosy. The *Farmville Journal* reported decreases of twenty-five to fifty percent in slave values, and a lot of slaves sold in April in Albemarle County brought only \$500 each.<sup>67</sup> Some saw an opportunity in these prices—a Warrenton slave trader reported that “a good many in this neighborhood that can be bought quite

---

<sup>62</sup> Betts & Gregory to “Dear Sir,” January 5, 1861, R. J. Reid. Papers, 1777-1870. Accession 22032. Personal papers collection. LVA. Hector Davis to “Dear Sir,” January 20, 1860; Memorandum, Hector Davis, January 13, 1860, Papers on Slavery, Brunswick, Franklin, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Pittsylvania, and Smyth counties, Virginia; North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, Southside Virginia Family Papers (Reid Papers), 1748-1918, Bedford, Campbell, Charlotte, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax, and Mecklenburg Counties, Virginia Accession Number 550, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 3, Reel 5, RASP.

<sup>63</sup> Hiram McGinnis to Betts & Gregory, February 23, 1861, Cornelius Chas Papers, LoC.

<sup>64</sup> “Price Advanced,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 19, 1861; “Sale of Negroes and Land—Large Crowd—The Crisis, &c.,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 13, 1861; Untitled, *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 8, 1861.

<sup>65</sup> Samuel Mordecai to George W. Mordecai, March 26, 1861, in the George W. Mordecai Papers #522, SHC.

<sup>66</sup> Betts & Gregory, Circular, March 1861, Mss4 B4666 a 1, VHS.

<sup>67</sup> Reprinted as “Hard Times,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 4, 1861. “Sale of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, April 6, 1861.



low just now”—but others were depressed.<sup>68</sup> W. A. Creasy sought relief from his debts to a commission merchant incurred on recent purchases as he had bought “on the eve of the decline and when I bought right it was wrong before I could sell;” another trader noted that he was not buying at the moment because he wanted “a sufficient political guarantee” before he would “bestir” himself.<sup>69</sup> Long distance traders faced uncertainties as well, and often found prices better in Richmond than in the markets to which they traveled. A.J. Rux, who regularly traded between Virginia and Alabama, reported that selling in Alabama was “the most up hill business now that a man can undertake.” New Orleans slaves sold “a long way under cost” and Rux feared that there wouldn’t “be any market this winter to do any good.”<sup>70</sup> Another trader confirmed the poor performance of slave prices in New Orleans, and E.H. Stokes responded with dour predictions for Richmond’s spring market.<sup>71</sup>

The more flexible hiring markets took up some of this slack. One Richmond master noted, “I have never seen so many hands offered for hire before any number of persons are hiring out their hands with the understanding that they are to be returned in case of Civil war.”<sup>72</sup> William Weaver, the owner of Buffalo Forge in the Shenandoah Valley, found that he could hire more than twice the hands he had the previous year and at a lower average cost; moreover, one of his correspondents reported that Lynchburg’s streets “were crowded” with slaves seeking

---

<sup>68</sup> J.R. Shirley to “Mr. Dorsey”, February 7, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>69</sup> W.A. Creasy to Betts & Gregory, February 13, 1861; G.W. Dillard to Betts & Gregory, March 11, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>70</sup> A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, February 14, 1861; A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, February 8, 1861; A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, February 22, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>71</sup> J.J. Price to E.H. Stokes, February 17, 1861; A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, February 24, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Taylor to Benjamin Temple, January 9, 1861, Harrison Family Papers, 1662-1915, Mss1 H2485a 492, VHS.

employment.<sup>73</sup> An Alexandrian, however, knowing he and his neighbors would be the first to endure any changes to slavery, reported, “persons do not seem much disposed in this section to hire at all, owing of course to the present unsettled state of affairs.”<sup>74</sup>

Even as they weathered the economic fluctuations of late 1860 and early 1861, many slave traders actively supported the secession movement. And while their exact role in the secession crisis is often difficult to discern amidst the swarms of rumors that characterized the period (Northern newspapers often used “negro traders” as an epithet for all those Richmond residents who demonstrated in favor of secession—a group they believed came from the city’s most degraded elements) the evidence on balance indicates that they actively supported secession.<sup>75</sup> Many Virginians believed slave traders had influenced elections through liberal spending and demagoguery. The *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, for example, argued that “a ferocious mob of Richmond negro traders, blacklegs and general ruffians” coerced the Secession Convention into voting to leave the Union.<sup>76</sup> John Minor Botts, a prominent Unionist, believed that he had only been defeated in an election for the Virginia Secession Convention because “the gamblers and nigger traders of Richmond spent ten thousand dollars to defeat him;” similar tactics were allegedly deployed to influence events in Petersburg.<sup>77</sup> Botts argued that these men

---

<sup>73</sup> Charles B. Dew, *Bond of Iron: Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 292.

<sup>74</sup> C.L. Fendall to R.H. Stuart, January 22, 1861, Richard Stuart Papers, 1831-87, Accession #6406, UVA.

<sup>75</sup> The *New York Tribune*, for example, reported on March 20 that “The negro traders let themselves loose.” These “deep-mouthed, lecherous and brutal autocrats of wool and ebony” were “usually loose enough in their morals, their manners, their language and their swagger,” but the secession crisis brought them out of their “grog shops” and into the streets. See “From Virginia,” *New York Tribune*, March 20, 1861.

<sup>76</sup> “Virginia and West Virginia,” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, April 12, 1865. See also Daniel W. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 277, 315-316.

<sup>77</sup> “From Richmond,” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, February 27, 1861. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 277.

supported secession “for the exclusive benefit of the holders and dealers in slaves.”<sup>78</sup> The *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* put things more stridently. Shortly after Virginia’s secession, the paper claimed:

The Richmond nigger traders were the first to embrace Secessionism—they contributed the first money to the cause, and the first Secession flag in that city appeared from the window of one of their auction rooms. All the processions, by day or night, were headed by them—they were the leaders of every Secession enterprise.

And well might they be. The *Daily Intelligencer* further spoke to the urgency of the situation for the slave traders: “Negro trading is at an end, and will never be revived, unless the South is victorious...upon the success of their cause, depends, now and forever, the continuance of their unholy traffic.”<sup>79</sup> If cut off from the Confederacy, from the buying markets of the Cotton Kingdom, and from whatever territory the new nation might thereafter acquire, slave traders would lose everything. To forestall this, they advocated secession and war.<sup>80</sup>

Many slave traders were quite political, and worked within this sphere to advance secession.<sup>81</sup> All three partners of Dickinson, Hill & Co. (along with several other major traders) served on a “Vigilance Committee” supporting Southern Democrats John C. Breckinridge and

---

<sup>78</sup> John Minor Botts, *The Great Rebellion: Its Secret History, Rise, Progress, and Disastrous Failure* (New York, 1866), 240.

<sup>79</sup> “Late News From the Rebel States,” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, August 17, 1861.

<sup>80</sup> In this, they mirrored the sentiments of the younger generations of Virginians, who feared the loss of the opportunities available to them in the expanding nation. For more on the sentiments of young Virginians, see Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 113-115.

<sup>81</sup> Horace Greeley would later claim that the slave trader was “an active politician, almost uniformly of the most ultra Pro-Slavery type, and naturally attached to the Democratic party.” See Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict: A History of the Great Rebellion in the United States of America, 1860-'64: Its Causes, Incidents, and Results: Intended to Exhibit Especially its Moral and Political Phases, With the Drift and Progress of American Opinion Respecting Human Slavery, From 1776 to the Close of the War for the Union* (Hartford, CT: O.D. Case), Vol. I, 69.

Joseph Lane.<sup>82</sup> This in and of itself is not conclusive, as a handful of traders also supported Constitutional Unionists John Bell and Edward Everett; moreover, many Breckinridge supporters opposed secession, and he was not an overtly secessionist candidate.<sup>83</sup> Many, however, made their ardor for secession more readily apparent. Soon after John Brown's raid Phillip Thomas claimed, "no body cares here a dam if the Union is dissolved every body nearly wants to Volunteer to go to fight."<sup>84</sup> A Culpeper slave auction turned into an impromptu secession rally when Otho R. Singleton, a Mississippian congressman in attendance, was pressed into giving a speech.<sup>85</sup> N.B. Hill acquired and planted a palmetto tree in his yard in March 1861 and Hector Davis bought a Confederate flag to fly above his property.<sup>86</sup> Most telling of all, if one of their number can be believed, slave traders raised the first secession flag over the state capitol, when, after the fall of Fort Sumter, a mob assembled on Capitol Square and, inspired by a number of fiery speeches, "several impulsive gentlemen" entered the Capitol itself and raised the

---

<sup>82</sup> "Notice," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 5, 1860. Slave traders on the committee included Nathaniel Boush and Charles Hill, R.H. Dickinson, William S. Deupree, Silas Omohundro, and Ash Levy. Though Charles Hill managed the firm on a day-to-day basis, Nathaniel Hill had an ongoing interest in its operations. Additionally, although I cannot confirm it, I suspect there is a relationship between Nathaniel Boush, captain of one of Franklin & Armfield's trading vessels, and Nathaniel Boush Hill of Dickinson Hill & Co. See British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States of America* (T. Ward & Company, 1841), 51.

<sup>83</sup> Among these were E.S. Turpin, John Frazier, and Centreville's Alexander Grigsby. Grigsby even laid out a \$500 wager that Breckinridge would lose Virginia. E.H. Stokes later claimed to be an "old line Whig" who never supported secession, and Petersburg's Reuben Ragland claimed to have supported "the only unconditional Union candidate...and did all I could to secure his election." See "Political Notices," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 3, 1860; "Bell and Everett in Fairfax," *Alexandria Gazette*, August 24, 1860; "Advertisement," *Alexandria Gazette*, September 29, 1860. Edward H. Stokes, Amnesty Petition, July 17, 1865; Reuben Ragland, Amnesty Petition, July 4, 1865, Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons ("Amnesty Papers"), 1865-67, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780s-1917, Record Group 94, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). The reliability of these petitions is somewhat suspect, as neither mentioned their occupation as slave traders, and would have had no incentive whatsoever to identify as secessionists. On Breckinridge and secession, see William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion Volume II: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 338-339.

<sup>84</sup> Philip Thomas to Jack Finney, November 26, 1859, William A. J. Finney papers, Duke.

<sup>85</sup> G.D. Gray to Angus R. Blakey, December 31, 1860, Angus R. Blakey Papers, Duke.

<sup>86</sup> "The Palmetto Tree," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 23, 1861; Gudmestad, "The Richmond Slave Market," 119.

Confederate flag over the edifice.<sup>87</sup> James L. Apperson named many of Richmond's leading slave traders as the instigators of this act, including N.B. Hill, R.H. Dickinson, John B., Solomon, and Benjamin Davis, E.H. Stokes, S.R. Fondren, D.M. Pulliam, and Ash Levy.<sup>88</sup> It therefore seems likely that slave traders were indeed some of Richmond's leading secessionists.

Whatever their initial stance on secession, a considerable number of slave traders contributed materially to the Confederate cause. R.H. Dickinson volunteered his St. Charles Hotel as a temporary hospital for the wounded after First Manassas; later, Turpin & Yarborough donated additional space for a hospital.<sup>89</sup> Hector Davis helped the Confederate army hire slaves to work on the Peninsula and allowed his facility to be used first for the assembling of a volunteer company of soldiers and then for the receipt of supplies for out-of-state soldiers.<sup>90</sup> Davis, Deupree, & Co. similarly offered their offices as a rallying point for volunteers, E.H. Stokes allowed his to be used as a recruiting point for skilled workers for the Confederacy (and also helped men hire substitutes), and Pulliam & Co. provided storage space and other services to Southern troops (a choice that, they complained, cost them business).<sup>91</sup> N.B. Hill cycled through appointments in the Confederate government, though he continually sought an

---

<sup>87</sup> "Local Matters," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, April 15, 1861.

<sup>88</sup> Apperson also named N.B. Hill as one of the leading opponents of the Union during this period. James L. Apperson, Amnesty Petition, June 21, 1865, Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons ("Amnesty Papers"), 1865-67, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780s-1917, Record Group 94, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). Apperson sold slaves as part of Goddin & Apperson, and continued to do so into the war. See "By Goddin & Apperson, Auct'rs," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 4, 1862.

<sup>89</sup> Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate State of Richmond: A Biography of the Capital* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), 55; Fannie A. Beers, *Memories: A Record of Personal Experience and Adventure During Four Years of War* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1891), 43-46. Though not fulltime traders, Turpin & Yarborough continued to buy and sell slaves into 1863. See "List of slaves bought between the years 1851 and 1860 [manuscript] 1860. Turpin & Yarborough", Accession #11598, UVA.

<sup>90</sup> "Negroes Wanted," *Richmond Enquirer*, January 21, 1862; "Volunteers," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, April 23, 1861; "Louisiana Depot," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 11, 1861.

<sup>91</sup> "Reserve Guard, Attention," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, May 15, 1861; "Wanted," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, May 12, 1862; John Robertson to E.H. Stokes, July 9, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC; Untitled, *Richmond Enquirer*, December 15, 1862.

appointment in the quartermaster department “which would pay me enough to employ a man to attend to my auction business.”<sup>92</sup> D.M. Pattie and Petersburg’s Thomas Pannill served as provost marshals for the Confederate government.<sup>93</sup> Late in the war, Bacon Tait assisted in the exchange of prisoners between the Union and Confederate armies, and Reuben Ragland served as president of an ambulance committee around Petersburg.<sup>94</sup> Many hired slaves to the Confederate government while also selling it horses, mules, and foodstuffs produced by their ancillary auction or farming enterprises.<sup>95</sup> In all of these capacities, slave traders stepped beyond their trading enterprises to contribute materially to the Southern quest for independence.

Slave trading and slave traders thus played an important role not only in inducing the sectional crisis but also in bringing Virginia into the Confederacy and aiding its initial war effort. Slave traders (and Virginians more broadly) went to war at least in part to retain access to the markets and territories of the Deep South. One of the war’s great ironies, then, was that one by one these would be lost to them.

---

<sup>92</sup> N.B. Hill to George W. Randolph, April 22, 1862 in N.B. Hill, *Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65*. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, compiled 1874-1899, documenting the period 1861 - 1865. Record Group 109, Publication M346, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). He particularly sought such a position after the death of his brother in late 1861, arguing that any absence from his firm would cost him \$1,000 per month.

<sup>93</sup> “Auction Sales,” *Richmond Examiner*, October 28, 1864; William D. Henderson, *Petersburg in the Civil War: War at the Door* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1998), 46.

<sup>94</sup> “The Campaign in Virginia,” *Boston Herald*, October 11, 1864; “From the South Side,” *Richmond Whig*, May 13, 1864.

<sup>95</sup> See Tabb & Son, J.M., *Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65*. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, compiled 1874-1899, documenting the period 1861 - 1865. Record Group 109, Publication M346, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). See also files for Thomas J. Bagby, Wm. S. Deupree, Bacon Tait, and E.H. Stokes in *Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65*. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, compiled 1874-1899, documenting the period 1861 - 1865. Record Group 109, Publication M346, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com).

## **The Long Decline of the Long Distance Trade**

Much of the profit wrung from the sale of Virginian slaves came from their value to buyers in the markets of the Cotton Kingdom. The war severely constricted Virginians' ability to sell to these clients as the Union quickly blockaded both Chesapeake ports of origin and New Orleans, while many Deep South trading centers fell into Union hands before the war's first full year was out. Despite these blows, however, Confederates continued to trade slaves across significant distances within the ever-shrinking bounds of the Confederacy. The wartime long distance slave trade, while in retrospect enduring consistent decline, nevertheless retained a surprising amount of vitality until late in the war.

Where before the war Virginian slaves had dominated the auction blocks in New Orleans and Natchez, the loss of these cities forced traders and masters to adjust and to exploit new markets. The war's effect on the New Orleans market was particularly immediate. The number of slaves traded there declined drastically and the real price of slaves plummeted as much as 70 percent.<sup>96</sup> As early as May 1861, the market was in a "general depression;" by the end of that month, Union blockades had sealed off the Mississippi above and below the city and all

---

<sup>96</sup> Stanley Engerman and Robert Fogel, "New Orleans Slave Sales Sample, 1804-1862" (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research), 5-7. Fogel and Engerman's sample included 135 sales in 1860, 19 in 1861, and 15 in 1862. No other year after 1820 had fewer than 48. Laurence J. Kotlikoff, "The Structure of Slave Prices in New Orleans, 1804-1862" *Economic Inquiry*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Oct. 1979), 501. Surprisingly little is known about slave trading in New Orleans during the war; none of the major histories of the city go beyond antebellum practices, and wartime histories do not mention it. Thus, the nature and scale of wartime trading in New Orleans must be inferred from other sources.

commerce was in dire straits.<sup>97</sup> The city's isolation discouraged Virginian traders as the Federal blockade forestalled the annual migration of Lower South buyers to Richmond. In October 1861, traders advertising for the long distance trade sought slaves for markets in "Arkansas and Mississippi," which may suggest that while they continued dealing with Deep South markets, they were ignoring New Orleans.<sup>98</sup> New Orleans traders struggled. One found his ship trapped in New Orleans by the blockade, another abandoned the city for his country residence after the Union blockaded New Orleans in the fall of 1861, a third was soon described as a "former negro trader" and on the run from creditors, and a fourth managed Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin's former estate.<sup>99</sup> Thus, by the time the Union army entered the city in late April 1862, buyers in the former slave-importing capital of the South had all but ceased to acquire human chattels.

Natchez had long been another major terminus for slaves sold from Virginia; by 1860 the city's markets did more than \$2 million in business annually.<sup>100</sup> This major importing market also struggled from the war's outset. One man wrote in January that he paid \$1,250 for a slave

---

<sup>97</sup> "New Orleans Money Market," *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 6, 1861. Scott P. Marler, *The Merchants' Capital: New Orleans and the Political Economy of the Nineteenth-Century South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 127, 132.

<sup>98</sup> "Wanted-One Hundred and Fifty Negroes For Sale," *Richmond Examiner*, October 31, 1861.

<sup>99</sup> On Andrew J. Parmele, see Chester Barney, *Recollections Of Field Service With The Twentieth Iowa Infantry Volunteers, Or, What I Saw In The Army: Embracing Accounts Of Marches, Battles, Sieges And Skirmishes In Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Texas, And Along The Northern Border Of Mexico*. (Davenport: Printed For The Author At The Gazette Job Rooms, 1865), 261. On Louis Generes, see *Louis F. Generes v. Walter L. Campbell* in Stephen K. Williams, *Cases Argued and Decided in the Supreme Court of the United States December Terms, 1870-1871, in 11, 12, 13, 14 Wallace, With Others, Book 20* (Rochester, NY: The Lawyers' Co-Operative Publishing Company, 1901), 110. On Bernard Kendig see "Home Department," *New Orleans Daily True Delta*, September 26, 1861; see also Richard Tansey, "Bernard Kendig and the New Orleans Slave Trade," *Louisiana History*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Spring 1982), 159-178. On the unnamed trader managing Benjamin's property, see "Slavery as it is in Louisiana," *New Orleans Daily Delta*, October 29, 1862. Somewhat surprisingly, New Orleans continued to tax "establishments where negroes are kept for sale" even into 1863. See "Legislative," *New Orleans Daily Delta*, December 31, 1862; Marler, *Merchants' Capital*, 145.

<sup>100</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 155.



that would have brought half again that price only months before.<sup>101</sup> In May 1861, a Mississippian complained that “likely negroes could not be sold here at \$500 in good money” and that “negro traders are as scarce here as in Boston.”<sup>102</sup> British journalist William Howard Russell reported in June 1861 that a slave had “only a nominal value” in Natchez because “there is no one to buy him at present...the trade of the slave-dealers is very bad.”<sup>103</sup> Despite the diminished prices, because many slaves reached Natchez by traveling overland, that market remained open to Virginians slightly longer than did New Orleans. By the spring of 1862, however, the Union army’s advance into northern Mississippi cut across traders’ traditional routes and made Natchez inaccessible to Virginian traders.<sup>104</sup> Virginian traders thus quickly lost two of their largest markets.

In August 1863, Robert Garlick Hill Kean, an official in the Confederate War Department, noted that after the territorial losses they had suffered, “the part of the Confederacy we still hold is in the shape of a boot, of which middle Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia to the Gulf is the leg and Alabama and part of Mississippi the foot; besides this, the Trans-Mississippi.”<sup>105</sup> Traders adjusted to the loss of New Orleans, Natchez, and other markets by focusing their operations within this “boot,” particularly along the roads and railroads running from Richmond to markets in Alabama and what remained of Confederate Mississippi. Along

---

<sup>101</sup> S.J. Love to Robert Love, January 26, 1861, Papers of Kelly Walker Trimble, 1770-1954, Accession #7792, UVA.

<sup>102</sup> “The Whining of a Traitor,” *Memphis Daily Appeal*, May 30, 1861.

<sup>103</sup> “The Civil War in America,” *Times of London*, July 12, 1861.

<sup>104</sup> Jim Barnett and H. Clark Burkett, “The Forks of the Road Slave Market at Natchez,” *Journal of Mississippi History*, Sept 2001, Vol. 63 Issue 3, 185-186.

<sup>105</sup> Edward Younger, ed., *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 100. Charleston, another regional market, showed signs of depression as well; an English visitor noted that visiting the market represented “but a sorry entertainment.” The slaves for sale were “a badly damaged lot of merchandise” for which he did not hear a single bid offered. J. Milton Mackie, *From Cape Cod to Dixie and the Tropics* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1864), 103.

the way, they bought and sold in Georgia and the Carolinas. Thus, the long distance trade endured, albeit in an ever-diminishing space.

These southward routes, common for traders before the war, took on new significance after the loss of New Orleans and Natchez and served as the ligaments that connected slave buyers and sellers across large distances. Buyers for “two Southern plantations” purchased slaves offered by Edmund Ruffin in June 1862; several months later he sold others whom he believed to be “bound for Texas.”<sup>106</sup> When the Richmond market was saturated in late 1862, the *Richmond Enquirer* recommended that prospective sellers send their slaves “further South.”<sup>107</sup> A trader named George Jones sold two Virginian children, Anderson and Priscilla, in Greensboro, Alabama in 1862.<sup>108</sup> Buyers in Georgia and South Carolina also sought Virginian slaves in that year.<sup>109</sup> The trade between Virginia and Alabama particularly flourished. Mark Alexander sold twenty-one slaves to Montgomery’s S.N. Brown in July 1863.<sup>110</sup> Virginian Jeremiah Morton corresponded with Mobile trader John Ragland regarding the sale of his slaves in that city and Montgomery throughout 1863; Ragland noted that he had sold thirty slaves for an average of \$3,000 each—“better than I had any idea I could do.”<sup>111</sup> Whereas before the war,

---

<sup>106</sup> Edmund Ruffin, *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin (3 vols.), Vol. II: The Years of Hope April, 1861-June 1863* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), 353, 466. As Ruffin’s comment suggests, the Trans-Mississippi remained open and, until the fall of Vicksburg, somewhat accessible to those willing to take the risk.

<sup>107</sup> “The Negro Market,” *Daily Richmond Enquirer*, October 18, 1862.

<sup>108</sup> C.W. Pierce to T.P. Wright, October 27, 1866, vol. 138, Letters Sent, ser. 78, Demopolis, AL Subassistant Commissioner, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-2145]

<sup>109</sup> See Henry Fitzgerald to E.H. Stokes, April 27, 1862 and L.D. Merrimon to E.H. Stokes, June 21, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>110</sup> List of Slaves Sold, 1863, Robert Dortch Baskervill plantation affairs and dispute over slave ownership, Baskervill Family Papers, 1787-1891, Mecklenburg County, Virginia, Mss1B2924d, Series M: Selections from the Virginia Historical Society, Part 5: Southside Virginia, RASP.

<sup>111</sup> See, for example, D.M. Prichard to Jeremiah Morton, November 12, 1863, Jeremiah Morton, 1863, Morton-Halsey Family, 1812-1865, Culpeper County, Virginia; Alabama; and Florida, Accession Number 3995, Series E:

Ragland might have compared prices in Mobile to those in New Orleans, Natchez, or Memphis, by the fall of 1863 Ragland could only compare them to those offered in “Georgia or Tennessee.”<sup>112</sup> Not all traders shared Ragland’s success. Though Virginians A.J. Rux and J. Wimbush Young continued to sell along the roads and railroads between Virginia and Alabama, they complained constantly of the difficulties in the market; in late 1863 Rux noted, “it is a very dull time and a hard matter to sell it requires hard pressing to get out and some I am afraid I never will get out.”<sup>113</sup>

Trade between Georgia, Mississippi, and Virginia continued as well. D.D. Hall wrote to W.M. Sutherlin in January 1863 that he had bought twenty-two slaves in Atlanta and hoped to sell them on his way back up to Virginia. Silas Omohundro also informed Sutherlin that he would be undertaking a slave-buying trip to Georgia.<sup>114</sup> A free black woman captured during the Gettysburg campaign was sold there; another mother and child were sold South separately in 1863, as was free black Robert Dixon.<sup>115</sup> Some slaves identified being “sold to Georgia” as a

---

Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Reel 37, RASP. John D. Ragland to Jeremiah Morton, September 2, 1863, Jeremiah Morton, 1863, Morton-Halsey Family, 1812-1865, Culpeper County, Virginia; Alabama; and Florida, Accession Number 3995, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 1, Reel 37, RASP. See also Lem Public to James R. Crofon, Esq., January 3, 1863, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>112</sup> John D. Ragland to Jeremiah Morton, September 2, 1863, Jeremiah Morton, 1863, Morton-Halsey Family, 1812-1865, Culpeper County, Virginia; Alabama; and Florida, Accession Number 3995, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 1, Reel 37, RASP.

<sup>113</sup> Quote from A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, September 11, 1863, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS. For the activities of Rux and Young, see Receipt, November 13, 1863; A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, February 23, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC. See also J. Wimbush Young to E.H. Stokes, November 19, 1863, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS. Young found trade in Alabama dull, but noted that there were many sales upcoming, and that he was “working hard to buy a lot and to have them sold by the time the sales come off.”

<sup>114</sup> D.D. Hall to William T. Sutherlin, January 26, 1863; Silas Omohundro to William T. Sutherlin, January 30, 1863, William Thomas Sutherlin Papers, Duke.

<sup>115</sup> Thaddeus Stevens to Oliver Otis Howard, December 4, 1865, S-97 1865, Letters Received, ser. 15, Washington Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA. [FSSP A-7315]; Endorsements through Va. FB Agents to GA AC, Vol. 20, p. 377, Endorsements Sent, series 628, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Georgia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-435]; J.H.M. McKenzie to W. Storer How, September 2, 1865, Unregistered

major threat, and others recalled being taken to Richmond and sold as far away as Mississippi even late in the war.<sup>116</sup> One slave even feared sale to Louisiana as late as 1864.<sup>117</sup> Virginian traders thus continued their enterprises in whatever areas remained open to them, seeking opportunities throughout the South until late in the war. Not until Sherman's Atlanta Campaign and subsequent march to Savannah did the long distance trade receive its mortal wounds; these campaigns fragmented it into increasingly localized spheres. On the whole, the long-distance trade's decline was sporadic and piecemeal, with masters and traders continuing to buy and sell opportunistically throughout the South. By late 1864, however, Virginia's slave trading sphere had declined to the Commonwealth itself and its North Carolina hinterlands.<sup>118</sup> Virginians increasingly relied on internal supplies of slaves to meet needs created by the war; they did so quite successfully, constantly adapting the trade to meet the contingencies of the war.

---

Letters Received, ser. 4307, Winchester, Virginia Subassistant Commissioner, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-8235].

<sup>116</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 282; George P. Rawick, Jan Hillegas, and Ken Lawrence, eds., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, Supplement, Series 1, Vol. 9, Mississippi Narratives Part 4 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 1370, 1579.

<sup>117</sup> Sara Agnes Rice Pryor, *Reminiscences of Peace and War* (London: The MacMillan Company, 1905), 310-311.

<sup>118</sup> For North Carolinian slaves sold in Virginia, see John Inscoc, "Mountain Masters as Confederate Opportunists: The Profitability of Slavery in Western North Carolina, 1861-1865," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post Slave Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 1995), 91-92. See also J.H. Burnett to E.H. Stokes, August 17, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC; Wife to Tyre Glen, January 3, 1865, Tyre Glen papers, Duke; H.S. Merrell to Orlando Brown, February 6, 1866, M-135, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7685]

## **The Adaptation of the Local Trade**

Though the Civil War gradually strangled the long-distance slave trade emanating from Virginia, Virginia-based traders and sellers redirected their energy into a reinvigorated local slave trade. Indeed, the war produced a wide variety of circumstances that encouraged the buying and selling of slaves within the state, prompting Virginians to draw on a long history of adapting slavery to meet these new contingencies. Most important of all the changes was the nearly constant presence of the Union army and navy, which across broad swathes of Virginia encouraged slaves to flee and masters to sell to avoid financial losses. Perhaps as many as several thousand slaves were sold either to prevent their flight or to punish them for attempting it. War industries, the construction of fortifications, and the departure of thousands of men for the army drew many more. Finally, the chaos of the war (particularly in the Confederate currency) encouraged many to seek out slaves as a profitable investment. Even amidst this change lay strands of continuity. In many places the war did not radically change traditional patterns of life; moreover, across Virginia, masters remained deeply ideologically committed to slavery as an institution. Because slave trading was essential to the survival of slavery as a whole, masters would not totally abandon it until the peculiar institution no longer existed. Overall, the ebbs and flows of the war shaped trading, and though diminishing prospects for Confederate victory eventually eroded demand significantly, the slave trade survived as long as the Confederacy did (and, in some rare cases, outlived it).

While the long-distance slave trade acquired greater notoriety, in most places it was numerically matched—or exceeded—by a vibrant local trade. Buying and selling slaves locally helped masters meet immediate labor (or cash) needs, ensured reliable information regarding the slaves to be purchased, and in some cases abetted masters’ paternalistic self-conceptions.<sup>119</sup> The local trade’s flexibility dovetailed with slavery practices developed by Virginians over the previous century. As Virginian masters found themselves with more slaves than they could effectively use, the slave trade provided one outlet, the practice of slave hiring another. As many Virginians shifted from tobacco to wheat production in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, slave hiring gave them agricultural flexibility as well as a steady influx of cash.<sup>120</sup> Virginians also employed their slaves in the burgeoning industries and cities across the state.<sup>121</sup> In Virginia, then, slaveholders already had decades of practice in adapting slavery to meet shifting economic realities. This served them well during the war, as in many places Union incursions created a constant crisis for slaveholders.

The first Union incursion into Virginia struck a symbolic blow against the slave trade. On May 24, 1861, Federal troops crossed into Alexandria. Despite slave trade’s decline in the city in previous decades, a few disciples of Franklin and Armfield remained; George Kephart

---

<sup>119</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 144-145, 157-173; Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves*, 118-120.

<sup>120</sup> See Robert McColley, *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia* (Urbana: Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, 1964), 1-33; Charles Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia, 1776-1861* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910), 186-188; John J. Zaborney, *Slaves For Hire: Renting Enslaved Laborers in Antebellum Virginia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 9-27; Lynda J. Morgan, *Emancipation in Virginia’s Tobacco Belt* (Athens: UGA Press, 1992), 18-21.

<sup>121</sup> On slaves as industrial workers in Richmond, see Midori Takagi, “Rearing Wolves to Our Own Destruction:” *Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1865* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1999), particularly 71-95. On slavery in urban Virginia more broadly, see David Goldfield, *Urban Growth in the Age of Sectionalism: Virginia, 1847-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), especially 98-138. On industrial deployment in the iron industry see Charles Dew, *Bond of Iron: Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994) and *Ironmaker to the Confederacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredegar Ironworks* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).

even operated out of their old slave pen.<sup>122</sup> The Union invasion immediately ended organized slave trading in Alexandria. Kephart abandoned his mart mere hours ahead of Union troops' arrival and fled the city—the last of its professional slave traders.<sup>123</sup> Only a handful of slaves remained behind to greet the Union soldiers bringing freedom's first fruits to Alexandria. One account recorded only an old man, “chained to the middle of the floor by the leg,” while Orlando Wilcox, the officer whose men captured the pen, reported finding “several slaves, including a man, a ‘likely looking \$1,800 girl,’ and a boy...waiting either to be sold or to be taken away by their respective masters or mistresses.” They set these free, and when a master tried to reclaim his property, the slave “resisted,” and the master was “hustled off alone amid the jeers of the Michigan men.”<sup>124</sup> These short encounters prefigured the damage that the Union army would do to both slavery and slave trading.

The Michiganders acted against slavery without orders but indicated the direction in which Union policy toward the enslaved would slowly evolve. Given the Union army's continuous and massive presence in Virginia, its policies (official and unofficial) were of critical importance. As one historian has noted, “Virginians endured enemy occupation longer, and on a larger scale, than any of their Confederate brethren;” Union soldiers and sailors consistently occupied or harassed the counties around Washington, the Eastern Shore, and much of the Chesapeake Bay periphery. Later, soldiers also patrolled most of Virginia north of the

---

<sup>122</sup> Ridgeway, “A Peculiar Business,” 149-150. Major late antebellum slave traders in Alexandria included William H. Birch, J.C. Cook, C.M. Price, and George Kephart.

<sup>123</sup> Ridgeway, “A Peculiar Business,” 153.

<sup>124</sup> Moncure Daniel Conway, *Testimonies Concerning Slavery* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1864), 21-22; Robert Garth Scott, ed., *Forgotten Valor: The Memoirs, Journals, & Civil War Letters of Orlando B. Wilcox* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1999), 267-268.

Rappahannock as well as significant parts of the Shenandoah Valley, and could easily access many other parts of the Commonwealth.<sup>125</sup>

Union policies regarding slavery developed slowly, but consistently moved toward general emancipation. Almost concurrent with Wilcox's opening of the slave jail, on the Virginia Peninsula General Benjamin Butler determined that three escaped slaves were contraband of war and therefore subject to confiscation on the grounds of military necessity. The Lincoln administration supported this decision, and Congress affirmed it through the First Confiscation Act of August 1861, which allowed the army to take all slaves being used to support the rebellion. In March 1862, Congress prohibited the military from working to return fugitive slaves, and in July passed the Second Confiscation Act, which freed the slaves of masters in active rebellion. The Emancipation Proclamation, made official on January 1, 1863, freed all slaves in areas still in rebellion, a category that included nearly all of Virginia.<sup>126</sup>

Even as Congress and Lincoln moved on these official fronts, the flood of enslaved persons arriving within Union lines forced officers and men to make constant, on-the-spot decisions regarding their status. While officers generally upheld the Union's official policies limiting the emancipation of slaves, enlisted men frequently undermined them, many having acquired practical abolitionist principles through their contact with slavery.<sup>127</sup> The combined

---

<sup>125</sup> Stephen V. Ash, "White Virginians Under Federal Occupation, 1861-1865" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (April 1990), 170.

<sup>126</sup> Louis Gerteis, *From Contraband to Freedman: Federal Policy Toward Southern Blacks, 1861-1865* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 12-17, 22-23.

<sup>127</sup> Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 31-33. For changes in the Union attitude toward slaves and toward the purpose of the war, see Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007). Officers might also subvert official policies. The case of James Wadsworth, who oversaw the District of Columbia in its early years, shows this well, as he regularly clashed with civilian authorities over fugitive slaves and sometimes worked outside of official channels to secure liberty for escaped slaves. See Judith A. Hunter, "Abolitionism as Logical Conclusion: General James S. Wadsworth as a Case Study in Anti-Southern Sentiment and the Radicalizing Experience of the Civil War" in Orville Vernon Burton, Jerald Podair, and Jennifer



efforts of the slaves themselves and of Union soldiers eroded slavery wherever the army went. As one Union soldier noted in November 1861, “this war is playing the Dickens with slavery,” and might soon “clear our Countrys name of the vile stain.”<sup>128</sup> He did his part by encouraging a slave to take “leg bail” and disappear amidst the Union encampments.<sup>129</sup> Another Union soldier’s experience demonstrated the shift the army underwent. At the war’s outset, he recalled seeing “a posse of soldiers carefully searching” for an escaped slave, who would then be imprisoned and “claimed at leisure by his master.” A year later, however, on a march through Fauquier County, his unit offered to give a slave they passed a gun and enlist his help in fighting the rebellion. “God,” he noted, “is unloosing those that were bound”—with the Union army’s assistance.<sup>130</sup> The combination of the Union’s expanding emancipationist policies and the unbalancing effects of the Union army thus dealt slavery a serious blow wherever Union forces arrived.

As Union forces radiated out from Alexandria, northern Virginians saw their effects on slavery first hand. Slave trading had been declining for decades due to economic changes in northern Virginia, but the impetus of the Union army inspired impromptu revivals as Union soldiers liberated slaves with whom they came in contact.<sup>131</sup> One Confederate noted that near Fairfax, Union soldiers had visited a Mr. Fitzhugh and “took off all his negroes, who were

---

L. Weber, eds., *The Struggle for Equality: Essays on the Sectional Conflict, the Civil War, and the Long Reconstruction* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 34-35. See also Ira Berlin, Barbara Fields, Thavolia Glymph, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867 Series I, Volume I The Destruction of Slavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 13-18.

<sup>128</sup> Brewster, Charles Harvey. *When This Cruel War is Over: The Civil War Letters of Charles Harvey Brewster*. Edited, with an introduction, by David W. Blight (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 57.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>130</sup> A.M. Stewart, *Camp, March and Battlefield; Or, Three Years and a Half with the Army of the Potomac* (Philadelphia: Jas. B. Rodgers, 1865), 21, 262, 404-405.

<sup>131</sup> Sweig, “Northern Virginia Slavery,” 235-237.

willing to go, but did not force any away;” an Alexandrian recorded that her “servants now are gradually deserting to the enemy.”<sup>132</sup> Some masters preempted this liberation by selling off their slaves. War correspondent Charles Coffin reported that a Falls Church master had sold a woman and child away just ahead of the Union army.<sup>133</sup> A resident of Dranesville claimed that Confederate soldiers planned to take a black man who they had captured “south and sell him.”<sup>134</sup> The presence of both armies in Northern Virginia in the winter of 1861-1862 proved disruptive to slave trading in the region more broadly due to the general friction of war. Alexander Grigsby, a Centreville trader, noted that the Confederates “took possession of my property against my consent, & compelled me to leave my home.”<sup>135</sup> Northern Virginia, exposed as it was, was the first region in Virginia to see the slave trade all but expunged.

Elsewhere, however, slave trading went unmolested in the war’s early months. In April 1861, Staunton’s James Carson offered to spend \$100,000 on slaves, claiming that he wanted to “invest his entire estate” in chattels, while letters continued to pour into the offices of the Richmond trading firms with planters expressing a desire to sell slaves.<sup>136</sup> In Lynchburg, the

---

<sup>132</sup> Preston Johnson to Wife, October 3, 1861, Preston Family Papers, LoC; Anne S. Frobel, *The Civil War Diary of Anne S. Frobel of Wilton Hill in Virginia* (Florence, AL: EPM Publications, Inc., 1992), 86.

<sup>133</sup> Coffin, *Four Years of Fighting*, 44-45.

<sup>134</sup> Deposition of Spencer Lloyd, May 9, 1874, claim of Spencer Lloyd, Fairfax County, Virginia, Barred and Disallowed Case Files of the Southern Claims Commission, 1871-1880; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1407, 4829 fiche); Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, Record Group 233, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com).

<sup>135</sup> Grigsby, A.S. Amnesty Petition, August 31, 1865, Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons (“Amnesty Papers”), 1865-67, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1780s-1917, Record Group 94, NARA. Accessed via [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com). He relocated to Lynchburg, though it is unclear whether or not he continued dealing in slaves. The Federal government confiscated Grigsby’s property in 1864. See “U.S., V.A.,” *Alexandria Gazette*, July 22, 1864. For more on Alexander Grigsby’s long career trading in the area, see Donald Sweig, “Alexander Grigsby: A Slavebreeder of Old Centerville?” *Fairfax Chronicles*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (May/July, 1983), 1-3.

<sup>136</sup> “\$100,000 to Spend,” *Staunton Spectator*, April 23, 1861; See James G. Wollard to Dickinson, Hill & Co., March 13, 1861; Benjamin H. Scruggs to Dickinson Hill & Co., September 20, 1861; Peter Hunter to Dickinson Hill & Co., December 24, 1861; W.W. George for James W. Grisham to Dickinson Hill & Co., October 12, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

same day that the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, Bryan Akers auctioned off seven slaves for between \$715 and \$1130.<sup>137</sup> Shortly thereafter, a cousin of E.H. Stokes reported that he wished to sell, though he knew the market was “flat.”<sup>138</sup>

Around the periphery of Virginia, the pressure exerted by Union forces soon began to tell. In the Northern Neck, King George County alone lost over \$100,000 worth of slaves by November 1861, while Union forces removed an estimated \$5,000 to \$8,000 in slave property from Mathews County each week.<sup>139</sup> John Fayette Dickinson recorded that he had lost seven slaves worth \$5,800 from May to July of 1862.<sup>140</sup> In response to this threat, slaveholders turned to sale as a means of countering their slaves’ flight. One Northern Neck slaveholder dispatched his slaves to South Carolina to prevent their capture; another, having lost most of his 50 slaves to Union raids, managed to sell off at least three before they could escape.<sup>141</sup> Across the Rappahannock in Gloucester County, Lewis J.J. Garrett sought to offload a slave “if I can do so without making too great a sacrifice.”<sup>142</sup> An enslaved man in Middlesex was sold away from his wife and five children.<sup>143</sup> When the garrison at Fortress Monroe threatened holdings on the Peninsula by enthusiastically propagating the contraband policy, P.M. Thompson of nearby

---

<sup>137</sup> William Asbury Christian, *Lynchburg and Its People* (Lynchburg: J.P. Bell Company, 1900), 192. These prices were fairly low, but none of the slaves sold were prime field hands.

<sup>138</sup> T.A. Fowlky to E.H. Stokes, April 23, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>139</sup> “Southern News,” *Alexandria Local News*, November 19, 1861; John Bankhead Magruder to Col. George Deas, Yorktown, Va., August 18, 1861, in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. 4, 634.

<sup>140</sup> John Fayette Dickinson, *Diary, 1855-1890*, Mss1 D5607a 6, VHS.

<sup>141</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 275; Gary Loderhose, “Thomas Brown of ‘Buena Vista,’ Hague, Virginia, 1817-1880” *Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine* Vol. 39 (1989), 4466-4467.

<sup>142</sup> Lewis J.J. Garrett to Dickinson Hill & Co., October 8, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>143</sup> Deposition of William Brown, January 31, 1866, B-146, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7559].

Williamsburg asked Dickinson Hill & Co. to sell one of his slaves because “he has ideas very prevalent in this part of the country since war began which render it a disagreeable task to manage him.”<sup>144</sup> Where the threat of the Union army was less, the slave trade ran a little slower; a Floyd County slaveholder complained that he held property only “in negroes and real estate, neither of which will sell at this time.”<sup>145</sup>

The arrival of 100,000 Union soldiers on the Peninsula in early 1862 reverberated through Virginia’s slave system. Expeditions to Norfolk and Portsmouth permanently closed these cities as slave trading centers, finishing work that the Union blockade had already begun.<sup>146</sup> A number of former slaves recalled masters frantically executing sales in Portsmouth prior to the Union army’s arrival; the city had “hundreds of mothers and children...just waiting their turn to be sold South. Each day some were sold off.” When the Yankees entered Portsmouth, however, “the slaves fell in line and followed the Union army.”<sup>147</sup> One frustrated slaveholder sought to sell in Suffolk rather than Norfolk (likely due to the latter’s diminished role as a slave market); even there he failed, probably because of Suffolk’s exposed position.<sup>148</sup> Other Norfolk slaveholders had “to sell in Richmond or find some market on the South” as slavery in the area wore away.<sup>149</sup> What had been slave trading centers of moderate prewar importance were

---

<sup>144</sup> P.M. Thompson to Dickinson Hill & Co., January 28, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC. See W.W. Vest to Dickinson Hill & Co., December 11, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC for another Williamsburg slaveholder seeking to sell of a slave.

<sup>145</sup> P. Howell to Dickinson Hill & Co., October 30, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>146</sup> Robert M. Browning, Jr., *From Cape Charles to Cape Fear: The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron During the Civil War* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 10, 41.

<sup>147</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 135, 235, 256.

<sup>148</sup> S.T. Gaylord for Thomas Armistead to Dickinson Hill & Co., January 26, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>149</sup> W. Hall to Dickinson & Hill, December 7, 1861; Wm. M. Chaplain to E.H. Stokes, April 28, 1861, Cornelius Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

removed from the equation by the late spring of 1862. While slavery continued to exist legally in these places (due to their explicit exemption from the Emancipation Proclamation), masters found it impossible to exert the same control they had once had even as the recruitment of black soldiers and Union officials who increasingly disregarded Federal policies respecting slavery further pressured them. Freedom may have been incomplete in these areas, but slavery in its antebellum form had been largely destroyed.<sup>150</sup>

More importantly, the Union army's advance up the Peninsula offered ever-increasing numbers of slaves the chance for freedom.<sup>151</sup> Here too, many masters chose to sell their slaves in order to preempt financial losses. Hector Davis reported in March 1862, "our place is crowded with negroes from the exposed portion of the state," despite the fact that "there is not much demand."<sup>152</sup> A slave named Eliza ran from Chesterfield County many times in 1862, gaining a reputation as "refractory" to the point of being a "total loss." Other slaves acted out to the degree that their owners found "their continued possession...uncertain and insecure and their value greatly diminished"—and therefore sold them.<sup>153</sup> These twin processes of flight and sale

---

<sup>150</sup> Benjamin H. Trask, "A gift from God: Missionary Teachers and Freedpeople in Southeastern Virginia" in William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr., eds., *Virginia At War 1863* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 38-39. See also Robert Francis Engs, *Freedom's First Generation: Black Hampton, Virginia, 1861-1890* (Philadelphia, 1979), 25-43. In Virginia, Berkeley, Accomack, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk Counties, along with the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth were to be treated "as if this proclamation were not issued" according to Lincoln's instructions. Of course, events were so far gone that this could never be. Berlin, et. al., *Freedom*, 1: 63-69. As Stephen Ash points out, in many places where slavery remained legal but the Union army was present, many masters simply fled, functionally abandoning the institution. See Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 18-24.

<sup>151</sup> For the effect of the Peninsula Campaign on slavery in the area, see Glenn David Brasher, *The Peninsula Campaign & the Necessity of Emancipation: African-Americans & the Fight for Freedom* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 134-148, 224-228; see also Engs, *Freedom's First Generation*, 27 for the effects of Union occupation before the Peninsula Campaign.

<sup>152</sup> Hector Davis to A.R. Blakey, March 20, 1862, Angus R. Blakey Papers, Duke.

<sup>153</sup> *Robert B. Winfree v. Robert Hatcher*, PAR Accession #21686204, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11; *Lawson M. Burfoot, et. al. v. William Howlett*, PAR Accession #21686306, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

went on to such an extent that, one Union general claimed (if somewhat overly optimistically) “There will soon be no slaves in Virginia. They are either leaving their masters, or their masters are leaving them.”<sup>154</sup> A Union surgeon reported, “The Peninsula has been cleared of the more valuable portion of the slave property.”<sup>155</sup> Though much of this “clearing” had come through slaves seeking shelter in Union lines, much also came through sale.

Even as the Army of the Potomac advanced on Richmond, slaves trickled in from other parts of the state (indeed, Richmond was unique among the South’s markets in having “something doing in the way of trade,” according to one slave trader).<sup>156</sup> William and B.B. Warren of Fredericksburg sent a slave named William to Richmond ahead of a Union force advancing on that quarter, and a trader sent slaves up from Goldsboro, North Carolina and South Boston, Virginia.<sup>157</sup> J. Wimbush Young dispatched a number of slaves from Goldsboro, North Carolina to the Richmond market; in June, he sent three more slaves to E.H. Stokes from South Boston, Virginia. Reuben Ragland hoped to send up a number of slaves from Halifax County, if he could “get anything for them.”<sup>158</sup> Things were so bad in Alabama that A.J. Rux recommended bringing two slaves back to Richmond if even \$1,200 could be gotten for them.<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Robert McAllister to “My Dear Daughters,” April 11, 1862 in James I. Robertson, Jr., ed. *The Civil War Letters of General Robert McAllister* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 132.

<sup>155</sup> Quoted in Brasher, *The Peninsula Campaign & The Necessity of Emancipation*, 223.

<sup>156</sup> A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, March 10, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>157</sup> “Twenty Five Dollars Reward,” *Richmond Examiner*, July 19, 1862. William was later sold to Danville by Hector Davis but escaped from his new master. J. Wimbush Young to E.H. Stokes, April 28, 1862; Wimbush Young to E.H. Stokes, June 24, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>158</sup> Reuben L. Ragland to E.H. Stokes, March 7, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>159</sup> A.J. Rux to E.H. Stokes, March 10, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

Though prices diminished during the Union drive on the city (Edmund Ruffin reported that real prices had fallen by nearly one half) the markets remained active, if not quite prosperous.<sup>160</sup>

On the whole, the war's first full year had been hard on slave traders, particularly given the run of Union victories in early 1862. In late 1861, Davis, Deupree & Co. petitioned the Richmond city council for a tax break, stating "that they ceased to do business in June 1861." The council denied their request as their closure was not planned; rather, "they were induced to stop it, because from the condition of the country it had ceased to be profitable." E.H. Stokes sought a similar indulgence later in the summer—an odd choice given that he assessed taxes by the Commonwealth of Virginia in May 1862 on \$60,000 in sales.<sup>161</sup> Dickinson, Hill, & Co. paid taxes on \$133,175 in sales, a significant amount of money, but much less than the \$2 million in sales the firm had claimed a few short years earlier.<sup>162</sup> Silas Omohundro had lost over \$4,000 from January 1861 to June 1862 as Confederate morale collapsed, taking slave prices along for the ride.<sup>163</sup> When the Confederates drove the Army of the Potomac from the gates of Richmond in the Seven Days battles, Confederate fortunes on the whole revived. Slaves continued to arrive in for sale, and in the summer of 1862, the markets slowly recalibrated.<sup>164</sup> The experience of

---

<sup>160</sup> Edmund Ruffin, *The Diary of Edmund*, II, 353.

<sup>161</sup> Louis Manarin, *Richmond at War: The Minutes of the City Council 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 91, 104. Davis, Deupree & Co. does not appear in the state tax lists for this period. See Auditor of Public Accounts. Administration of State Government: Revenue Assessment and Collection - Fees and Licenses. Entry 454: License Returns, Danville-Richmond, 1862, LVA.

<sup>162</sup> Auditor of Public Accounts. Administration of State Government: Revenue Assessment and Collection - Fees and Licenses. Entry 454: License Returns, Danville-Richmond, 1862, LVA. Hector Davis reported \$138,700 in sales that year as well.

<sup>163</sup> Omohundro Slave Trade and Farm Accounts, 1857-1864, Accession #4122, UVA. Jaime Martinez sees this as the most direct evidence linking slave trading with Confederate fortunes, and I am inclined to agree. Martinez, "The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia," 112.

<sup>164</sup> J. Wimbush Young to E.H. Stokes, June 13, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC. For an example of traders adjusting their prices to the Union defeat, see S.C. Woodroof to E.H. Stokes, August 3, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

Silas Omohundro and his brother underscored this shift. Despite their losses earlier in the year, as Confederates won victories at Second Manassas, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville and invaded Maryland and Pennsylvania, the Omohundro brothers' profits increased, netting them \$2047.25 from June 1862 to the end of 1863.<sup>165</sup> S.R. Fondren and Dickinson, Hill & Co. also saw significant increases in their sales; while inflation certainly accounted for a good percentage of this gain, it is clear that from the summer of 1862 to the summer of 1863, slave traders' businesses recovered and even stabilized.<sup>166</sup>

They did so in spite of the Union's continually expanded emancipation policies, culminating in the Emancipation Proclamation. Although deeply symbolic and profoundly important to African-Americans in the Confederacy, the Proclamation had relatively little impact on the market for slaves, particularly in light of the revival of Confederate military fortunes. The *Abingdon Virginian* pointed out that to most Confederates, the Proclamation did not represent a practical change in policy, as Union soldiers "have, from the beginning of the war...stolen and freed every negro they could lay their thievish hands on."<sup>167</sup> And Virginians thumbed their noses the Proclamation by publicizing the high prices available for slaves. The *Richmond Whig* argued that high prices in Lynchburg "seem to show that confidence is yet felt in this kind of property, notwithstanding Uncle Abraham's proclamation."<sup>168</sup> A forty-year-old carpenter sold in

---

<sup>165</sup> Omohundro Slave Trade and Farm Accounts, 1857-1864, Accession #4122, UVA.

<sup>166</sup> In 1863, Fondren paid taxes on \$542,000 in sales (compared to \$12,860 in 1862). Dickinson, Hill & Co. was taxed on \$1,775,000 in 1863 (compared to \$133,175 the previous year). This, unfortunately, is the last year for which state license taxes are available. Auditor of Public Accounts. Administration of State Government: Revenue Assessment and Collection - Fees and Licenses. Entry 454: License Returns, Danville-Richmond, 1862 and Danville-Richmond, 1863, LVA.

<sup>167</sup> "Lincoln's Proclamation," *Abingdon Virginian*, October 3, 1862. While an exaggeration to be sure, this does reflect the significant damage the Union army did to slavery wherever it went.

<sup>168</sup> "The Price of Negroes," *Richmond Whig*, October 17, 1862.



Lynchburg for \$3,000 on the heels of the Proclamation.<sup>169</sup> And the *Staunton Spectator* crowed that Southerners “never felt that the institution of slavery was ever safer than at the present time.”<sup>170</sup> A British traveler in Richmond that fall confirmed slave trading’s stability in the fall of 1862 by noting that “sales of negroes go on at auction, just as usual, below ‘Ballard’s Hotel,’ and high prices for them, as indeed all other ‘property,’ are obtained.”<sup>171</sup>

Edmund Ruffin noted that despite a decline in demand due more to “the want of employment...than the hazard of losing slaves,” by October 1862 “the demand in the market, & the prices...for slaves are higher now than any available employment can return a profit upon.” The slave market, in other words, was the most profitable place Virginians could put their slaves. To Ruffin, this meant that the Confiscation Acts and preliminary Emancipation Proclamation had given “no sudden shock or notable repression...to the current prices of slaves,” nor would they in the future have “the least effect on the market price of slaves.”<sup>172</sup> For all that the Proclamation did to shape the war’s broader meaning, and for all that its symbolism enraged Virginians, it changed little for Virginian slaveholders in terms of their sense of their slaves as assets. Until the Union army reached them, masters could continue to hold, buy, and sell slaves, regardless of what Lincoln’s Proclamation said.

With the armies returning to the Rappahannock line after the Battle of Antietam, slaveholders increasingly dispatched their chattels to Richmond. John B. Jones, a clerk in the Confederate War Department noted in November 1862 that trains arriving from Fredericksburg

---

<sup>169</sup> Christian, *Lynchburg and Its People*, 208.

<sup>170</sup> Quoted in Edward Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War In the Heart of America, 1859-1863* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 355.

<sup>171</sup> W.C. Corsan, *Two Months in the Confederate States: An Englishman’s Travels Through the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 85.

<sup>172</sup> Ruffin, *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin*, II, 466.

were “crowded with negroes... their owners sending them hither to escape the enemy.”<sup>173</sup>

African-American war correspondent George Stephens found northern Virginia “depopulated of its slaves” and reported that families had been rent by masters dispatching slaves South.<sup>174</sup>

Masters and traders alike bought and sold in Culpeper and Fauquier Counties ahead of the armies; one Fluvanna County slaveholder feared that slaves sold from these spaces would damage the institution as “there are none in the market but those who have been with the Yankees, and they will corrupt the whole neighborhood of servants.”<sup>175</sup> Whatever the effect on slaves offered for sale, this influx had a negative effect on the market for slaves. The *Richmond Enquirer* labeled it “overstocked” and in a “decided depression” due to “the large numbers of slaves brought from the upper counties of Virginia.”<sup>176</sup> The activities of slave traders reflected this surfeit—over two days in October, Dickinson, Hill & Co. offered up twenty-six slaves, Hector Davis another twenty-five, and S.R. Fondren fifty more.<sup>177</sup> A month later Pulliam & Co. and Hector Davis sold lots of eight and seventeen more, respectively.<sup>178</sup> Slaveholders as far away as Tarboro, North Carolina sought to offload endangered slaves on the Richmond market.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>173</sup> John B. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary* (New York: Sagamore Press, 1958), 122.

<sup>174</sup> Donald Yacovone, ed., *A Voice of Thunder: The Civil War Letters of George E. Stephens* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 208.

<sup>175</sup> “One Hundred Dollars Reward,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 6, 1862; “\$300 Reward,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, December 13, 1862; Arabella Pettit to William B. Pettit, November 16, 1862 in Charles W. Turner, ed. *Civil War Letters of Arabella Speairs and William Beverley Pettit of Fluvanna County, Virginia March 1862-March 1865* (Roanoke, VA: Virginia Lithographs & Graphics Company, 1988), 68.

<sup>176</sup> “The Negro Market,” *Daily Richmond Enquirer*, October 18, 1862. “The Negro Market,” *Richmond Examiner*, December 11, 1862.

<sup>177</sup> Untitled, *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 22, 1862; Untitled, *Richmond Enquirer*, October 23, 1862.

<sup>178</sup> “The Negro Market,” *Washington National Republican*, November 26, 1862.

<sup>179</sup> See H. Williams to E.H. Stokes, November 21, 1862; J.H. Burnett to E.H. Stokes, August 17, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

This glut provided speculative opportunities for those with the means to do so. Possibly encouraged by the progress of the war, a South Carolinian soldier wrote to his father from Fredericksburg asking him to invest in slaves, “if the [prices] do not run too high.”<sup>180</sup> On the occupied Eastern Shore, a man named Frank Bull purchased a slave, “with the evident expectation of making a big speculation” should the South prevail.<sup>181</sup> Virginian mistress Mary Rose suggested selling a slave named William Henry and buying another in his place, presumably while pocketing the difference in price.<sup>182</sup> J.H. Burnett of Williamston, North Carolina proposed to E.H. Stokes a scheme for buying slaves cheaply from near Union lines and selling them in Richmond.<sup>183</sup> Slaveholders in regions at a remove from the Union army willingly bought slaves at these diminished prices. One slaveholder in Abingdon, Virginia, far in the Commonwealth’s southwest corner, bought five such slaves in November 1862. Another purchased slaves in Lynchburg and Richmond alike.<sup>184</sup>

Buyers took advantage of this surfeit, and slaves continued to sell apace in the early months of 1863.<sup>185</sup> In Lynchburg, 117 slaves were auctioned for over \$120,000; in Richmond, Pulliam & Co. sold forty-nine in one session, generally getting over \$1,500 in return per slave.<sup>186</sup>

---

<sup>180</sup> George M. McDowell to “Dear Father,” November 27, 1862, McDowell, George Marshall, 1838-1863. Letter, 1862 November 27, Mss2 M1481 a 1, VHS.

<sup>181</sup> George T. Garrison to Major Sherwood, Accomack C.H., August 9, 1867, P-41, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7766].

<sup>182</sup> Mary Eliza Rose to Charles Alexander Rose, November 7, 1862, Rose Family Papers, 1850-1992, Mss1 R7208 a 23-95, VHS.

<sup>183</sup> J.H. Burnett to E.H. Stokes, August 17, 1862, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>184</sup> “\$150 Reward,” *Abingdon Virginian*, March 6, 1863; “\$200 Reward,” *Abingdon Virginian*, May 8, 1863.

<sup>185</sup> “Market Reports,” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, January 8, 1863 (quoting the *Richmond Examiner*).

<sup>186</sup> “Sale of Negroes—Enormous Prices,” *Memphis Daily Appeal*, January 12, 1863; “Effects of Lincoln’s Proclamation,” *Athens Post*, January 16, 1863.

S.R. Fondren noted that while the market was in “a slight depression,” he believed this reflected the poor quality of the slaves in the market, and “that number one or first class negroes will rally and sell as high as ever,” while Loudoun’s William Berkeley expressed eagerness to sell his slave Mira, as “her market value...is fully double what it was last year.”<sup>187</sup> An estate sale in King and Queen County brought “high prices” as well, with even a fifty-six-year-old man selling for \$840.<sup>188</sup> Sam Barnes of Charlotte County sought to take advantage of these prices by bringing 3 “likely negroes” to Richmond for sale; he wished for constant updates on prices available, however, noting that he had “no confidence in trade at this time.”<sup>189</sup>

Barnes was right to be nervous. Despite continued assertions of prosperity, slaves were becoming an increasingly risky investment. By early 1863, at least 5,000 Virginian slaves (and likely many more) had fled to Union lines.<sup>190</sup> Charles City County had lost more than half of its slaves to the invaders, and within the year Culpeper would retain only about 75 slaves of prime working age (out of a pre-war population of nearly 6,000).<sup>191</sup> In areas between Union and Confederate lines, slavery sustained nearly mortal damage as Union power eroded that of the masters.<sup>192</sup> As one scholar put it, “wherever federal troops occupied slave territory, slavery as an

---

<sup>187</sup> S.R. Fondren to Lewis Edmunds Mason, January 30, 1863, Mason Family Papers, 1813-1943, Section 52, Mss1 M3816 c 2620, VHS; William N. Berkeley to Cynthia W. Berkeley, January 25, 1863, William N. Berkeley, Cynthia W. [Smith] Berkeley, Norborne Berkeley, Crissey Family, Lavinia H. Berkeley, Charles Fenton Berkeley, Crawford Smith, Jennie Smith, and Richard Cox, 1863, Berkeley Family Papers, 1536, 1653-1865, Carolina, King William, Loudoun, Middlesex, and Prince William Counties, Virginia; also Arkansas, Accession Number 38-113, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 2, Reel 17, RASP.

<sup>188</sup> Alfred Bagby, *King and Queen County, Virginia* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1908), 168-170

<sup>189</sup> Sam Barnes to Unknown, January 21, 1863; Sam Barnes to E.H. Stokes, January 15, 1863, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>190</sup> Phillip J. Schwarz, *Slave Laws in Virginia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 147.

<sup>191</sup> Ash, “White Virginians Under Federal Occupation, 1861-1865,” 185.

<sup>192</sup> Ash, *When the Yankees Came*, 163-168.

institution crumbled and collapsed;” the form of this collapse, however, developed according to local conditions.<sup>193</sup> The threat of escape reduced prices on the Richmond markets by simultaneously injecting uncertainty into the slave system and flooding the markets with the slaves of at-risk masters. The *Richmond Examiner* noted in April 1863 that the slaves available for sale were “principally from the counties threatened by the public enemy, and for that reason quotations are a little lower, owners being willing to sacrifice a figure rather than retain them where they would most probably lose them without remuneration.”<sup>194</sup>

Many owners avidly pursued this remuneration; a Mr. Fitzhugh sold his slave Elmira via Dickinson Hill in the spring of 1863, and *Harper’s Weekly* reported that masters along the Rappahannock had arranged with a Confederate general to send slaves to Richmond under guard, destined either for work on the city’s fortifications or for the slave market.<sup>195</sup> On a single day in March 1863, Hector Davis advertised the sale of fifty slaves, a reinvigorated Davis, Deupree & Co. promised another as many more, and Pulliam & Co. and E.H. Stokes promised to auction twenty-five each.<sup>196</sup> James A. Davis sought fifty slaves in Augusta County, and S.F. Jordan of the Buena Vista Furnace bought three slaves in Richmond to aid with wartime production.<sup>197</sup> One Virginian reported likely men selling for between \$1,500 and \$1,800 in January 1863, but inflation increased prices to an estimated \$1,700-\$2,500 by March.<sup>198</sup> Inflation accelerated—

---

<sup>193</sup> Gerteis, *From Contraband to Freedman*, 11.

<sup>194</sup> “City Intelligence,” *Richmond Examiner*, April 29, 1863.

<sup>195</sup> “\$100 Reward,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 6, 1863. “Stealing a March,” *Harper’s Weekly*, April 18, 1863.

<sup>196</sup> “Auction Sales,” *Richmond Daily Enquirer*, March 30, 1863.

<sup>197</sup> “Fifty Negroes Wanted,” *Staunton Spectator*, April 28, 1863. “\$750 Reward,” *Staunton Spectator*, May 12, 1863.

<sup>198</sup> Roscoe Briggs Heath to Lewis Edmunds Mason, January 30, 1863; Mason Family Papers, 1813-1943, Southampton and Greensville Counties, Virginia; also Mississippi, Mss1M3816c, Series M: Selections from the

gold that cost in \$3.00 in February sold for \$5.00 in March and continued to rise from there—which in turn caused prices to fluctuate wildly. Where a slave sold in Farmville for \$1,640 in June, in August a slave named William went for \$3,250 in Richmond.<sup>199</sup> Daniel Cobb, a Southampton farmer, bought a slave in June in Richmond for \$2,480, which he considered “a high price.”<sup>200</sup> By the end of 1863, the Confederacy had experienced 1,452 percent inflation, and this was only a taste of what was to come. Inflation hit 3,992 percent by the end of 1864 and approached 10,000 percent by the end of the war. Real slave prices could not and did not keep pace with inflation of that magnitude, but they nonetheless showed considerable resilience.<sup>201</sup>

Indeed, in spite of this inflation, slaves remained a popular investment, whether due to buyers’ confidence in eventual Confederate triumph, the anticipated appreciation in the value of slaves, or simply a lack of better options.<sup>202</sup> Some traders explicitly touted slaves’ value as an investment; Staunton’s H.H. Peck, for example, suggested the best “place for Confederate money” was the “5 Negro Boys and Men, and 4 young Negro women” he offered for sale.<sup>203</sup> More practical was Francis W. Smith, who wrote to his father-in-law that “negroes are undoubtedly the best purchases that you can make, provided you feel sure that the Confederacy

---

Virginia Historical Society, Part 5: Southside Virginia, RASP; “Extracts From Rebel Papers,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 3, 1863; “City Intelligence,” *Richmond Examiner*, April 29, 1863.

<sup>199</sup> Receipt, June 30, 1863, Miscellaneous Hutter Collection chiefly concerning J. M. Booker, 1846-1879, Accession #3125, UVA; Booth, R.W. Receipt, 1863 August 18, Richmond, [Va.], to Will T. Clark for the sum of \$3,250 covering the purchase of an African-American slave., Mss2 B64478 a 1, VHS.

<sup>200</sup> Daniel T. Crofts, ed., *Cobb’s Ordeal: The Diaries of a Virginia Farmer, 1842-1872* (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 216.

<sup>201</sup> Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” 117, 124; Don Paarlberg, *An Analysis and History of Inflation* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 51-53.

<sup>202</sup> Martinez argues that vigorous markets for slaves in the spring and summer of 1863 represent the “continued confidence of Virginians in the success of their new government.” While this is true, I find the arguments for slaves as an investment that could outperform Confederate money quite compelling as well. Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” 120-121.

<sup>203</sup> “A Place For Confederate Money,” *Staunton Spectator*, March 1, 1864.

will succeed.” Of this outcome Smith had no doubt. “Your money” he argued “will pay you...invested in negroes a handsome percentage.” Slaves bought at \$1,100 or \$1,200 the previous fall were worth only \$225 in gold, but when the Confederacy prevailed, would provide a lucrative return on any money invested in them. Smith acknowledged the risk of Confederate defeat but downplayed it, saying, “that idea does not enter my brain except in argument.”<sup>204</sup>

Robert N. Trice wrote to E.H. Stokes that on the slave market “opportunities are beginning to present themselves in a way that I can make some purchases.”<sup>205</sup> One master uniquely exploited the uncertain times; when slaves ran to the woods, he would go to their masters and buy them at a reduced rate. He would then offer to let the slaves hire out their time and buy their freedom. The pressures of war gave him leverage as masters feared losing the total value of their slaves; one master named Granby held out for \$1,500 instead of the \$1,300 offered for his slaves, but, “then the war ended and Granby lost all by waiting. It was all gone with the war.”<sup>206</sup> Slave trading, therefore, continued to provide lucrative opportunities for those shrewd (or audacious) enough to seize them.

Despite setbacks at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in 1863, Confederates and slave traders alike soldiered on. The *Richmond Examiner* decried the “alarmists” who believed slavery was in a “precarious situation” and pointed to ever-increasing slave prices as evidence of its stability

---

<sup>204</sup> Francis W. Smith to Josiah Lilly Deans, August 17, 1863, Smith Family Papers, 1815-1928, Mss1 Sm686 b 14-17, VHS. An Alabama planter shared these ideas, writing to his father “I intend to keep my last dollar invested in tobacco, cotton & Negroes,” as currency did not provide the same potential returns. See James C. Francis, Jr. to James C. Francis, March 27, 1863 in James P. Pate, ed., *When This Evil War is Over: The Correspondence of the Francis Family, 1860-1865* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 121. Francis W. Smith went on to argue that slaves represented a better investment than land because a man could “always move them from the enemy, & employ them to the greatest advantage.” Francis W. Smith to Joseph L. Deans, October 1, 1863, Smith Family Papers, 1815-1928, Mss1 Sm686 b 14-17, VHS.

<sup>205</sup> Robert N. Trice to E.H. Stokes, July 8, 1863, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC.

<sup>206</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 261.

(even while ignoring the inflation that drove these high prices).<sup>207</sup> Indeed, by October 1863, the *Daily Dispatch* bragged—again ignoring inflation—that slaves had reached “probably the highest prices ever obtained in this market,” with one woman going for \$4,600.<sup>208</sup> In January 1864, thirty-six slaves sold for cumulatively more than \$100,000 in one session at Petersburg.<sup>209</sup> Nominal, if not real, prices would continue to ascend; more importantly, traders continued to be active in Virginian markets. S.R. Fondren wrote to E.H. Stokes that “there is a very good outside demand for negroes and I made some very good private sales yesterday.” Other traders were active in Virginia and North Carolina both bringing in and removing slaves.<sup>210</sup> Moreover, new firms continued to emerge. Davis, Deupree & Co. reopened in September 1863.<sup>211</sup> Solomon Davis and Robert Richardson formed a new trading venture (S.N. Davis & Co.), and new firms emerged in Lynchburg and Staunton as well.<sup>212</sup> And while Hill, Dickinson & Co. conceded to one seller in January 1864 that the market was “rather dull” and prices unpredictable, they continued to buy and sell, and promised “do the best we can to sell” his slaves.<sup>213</sup> The prices offered for slaves tell us less about the system’s functioning than does the fact that men

---

<sup>207</sup> “Advance in Negroes,” *Richmond Examiner*, November 18, 1863. Martinez points out that Confederates were often willing to overlook the impact of inflation in order to score rhetorical points. See Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” 114-115.

<sup>208</sup> “High Price of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 3, 1863.

<sup>209</sup> “From Florida,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 4, 1864.

<sup>210</sup> S.R. Fondren to E.H. Stokes, October 12, 1863, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS.

<sup>211</sup> “City Intelligence,” *Richmond Whig*, September 1, 1863.

<sup>212</sup> “High Price of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 3, 1863; “Co-Partnership Notices, &c.,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 9, 1863; “L.C. Robards & Co.,” *Abingdon Virginian*, October 2, 1863; “New Auction Concern,” *Staunton Spectator*, January 3, 1863; “James B. Hargrove & Co.,” *Staunton Spectator*, January 27, 1863. Bruce & Peck later became Peck & Taylor. See “By Peck & Taylor, Auctioneers,” *Staunton Spectator*, February 16, 1864.

<sup>213</sup> Hill, Dickinson & Co. to Iverson L. Twyman, January 25, 1864, Austin-Twyman Family Papers, 1765-1939, Amherst and Buckingham Counties, Virginia, Series L: Selections from the Earl Gregg Swem Library, the College of William & Mary in Virginia, Part 4: Austin-Twyman Papers, 1765-1865, RASP.



continued to enter the business of buying and selling them; though by late 1863 “wartime vicissitudes” began to “seriously impair slavery’s economic vitality” as one historian has put it, the continued interest in engaging in the slave trade suggests a degree of resilience in the market that highly inflated prices cannot explain.<sup>214</sup>

Once again, the winter of 1863 brought the armies to the Rappahannock line, and once again, slaves poured in “from the exposed Portions of the state.”<sup>215</sup> The spring of 1864, however, brought renewed hope for Virginian slaveholders and slave traders. Robert Garlick Hill Kean noted that there were “many hopeful indications of a general breaking up in the United States, political as well as financial,” though “everything depends on the next battle in Virginia.”<sup>216</sup> Until those battles were fought, the prices for slaves remained high and demand slow. The *Richmond Whig* noted, “the negro market is dull, but few purchasers being found now, willing to invest their money at the late high prices.”<sup>217</sup> One Albemarle County purchaser who did buy got five slaves (two men, a woman, and two children) for \$11,800.<sup>218</sup> As the Army of the Potomac drove south, however, new slave populations received opportunities for freedom; one Northern newspaper commented that the number of runaways fleeing into Union lines “would have driven a negro trader crazy.”<sup>219</sup> And General Judson Kilpatrick reportedly

---

<sup>214</sup> Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., *Black Confederates and Afro-Yankees in Civil War Virginia* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 45.

<sup>215</sup> Quoted in Morgan, *Emancipation in Virginia’s Tobacco Belt*, 113.

<sup>216</sup> Younger, ed. *Inside the Confederate Government*, 143.

<sup>217</sup> “Financial and Commercial,” *Richmond Whig*, May 1, 1864.

<sup>218</sup> “Nellie” to “Bettie,” January 10, 1864, Letters, 1864, Edgehill School, Albemarle County, Va., Accession #38-421, UVA.

<sup>219</sup> “The Negroes Welcome Our Troops,” *Watertown New York Daily Reformer*, June 7, 1864.

interrupted a Fredericksburg slave auction in person, “bid” for the men on the block, and took them away into Union lines.<sup>220</sup>

The summer and fall of 1864 strained the Confederacy mightily. With Lee besieged in Petersburg, Sherman capturing Atlanta, and other forces held at bay, Confederate hopes grew increasingly dim. Correspondingly, as Sherman reached the sea and turned north, as Sheridan descended the Valley, and as Grant tightened the noose around Petersburg in the winter of 1864, the market for slaves was badly strained and wracked with uncertainty. Many Confederates looked at their slave property with despair. One Virginian lamented that except for war,

I know of no other way by which negroes could have progressed so rapidly from their original state. They have been stolen from their masters and have run away of their own accord, to such an extent that the deficiency can only be supplied by reopening the slave trade... Surely no one will go South and buy them at very high price and bring them here, where they can slip off across the border with very little trouble & be free.<sup>221</sup>

Hill, Dickinson, & Co. effectively threw up their hands when asked to estimate the prices of slaves in their market; they replied to one prospective seller that it was, “impossible to give any reliable prices for the negroes mentioned therein, and we must decline attempting it. Many of them are entirely unsaleable in this market, and we can make no estimate whatever of their value.”<sup>222</sup> As if to affirm this, the *Alexandria Gazette* reported slaves selling for anywhere between \$3,025 and \$6,500 on the Richmond market in September 1864, demonstrating both the rampant inflation and inconsistent pricing present there.<sup>223</sup>

---

<sup>220</sup> “Gen. Kilpatrick at a Slave Auction,” *The Liberator*, April 1, 1864.

<sup>221</sup> Benjamin Robert Fleet, *Green Mount; A Virginia Plantation Family During the Civil War: Being the Journal of Benjamin Robert Fleet and Letters of His Family* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1962), 349.

<sup>222</sup> Hill, Dickinson & Co. to J.M. Holladay, September 21, 1864, Holladay Family Papers, 1753-1961, Mss1 H7185b 6536, VHS.

<sup>223</sup> “Untitled,” *Alexandria Gazette*, September 7, 1864.

And yet slaves sold. Despite their complaints, Hill, Dickinson & Co. sold two men for \$5,300 each in December 1864, along with a boy and a girl for \$4,650 and \$5,225, respectively.<sup>224</sup> A Shenandoah Valley slaveholder offered to buy a slave from a neighbor in spite of the “condition that our country is in at the present.”<sup>225</sup> Another slaveholder paid \$4,350 for two girls in January 1865, who were sold because their master desperately needed the money.<sup>226</sup> A correspondent of the *New York Tribune* accurately captured the essence—if not quite the reality—of the situation when he wrote that Richmond’s slave traders had, due to “the proximity of the lines of this army, found their occupation about gone.”<sup>227</sup>

As voluntary sales diminished, legally mandated sales—those sales required by law so long as slaves remained property—continued. While these had always been extremely common (accounting for nearly half of all sales in some places), by the end of 1864 and early 1865, they represented a considerable portion of the sales occurring in Virginian markets. A look at the advertisements in the *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, for example, shows that increasingly the sales advertised by slave traders were estates being broken up at the death of a master, or slaves and free blacks sold for criminal violations.<sup>228</sup> As the Confederate outlook grew increasingly dire in February 1865, Nathaniel Riddick, a member of the Virginia legislature, wrote of the need to

---

<sup>224</sup> Gudmestad, “The Richmond Slave Market,” 116.

<sup>225</sup> George Monroe to John B. Eventon, November 8, 1864, Waller family. Papers, 1799-1867. Accession 22975a. Personal papers collection. LVA.

<sup>226</sup> Receipt, John B. Brockenborough to William O. George, January 13, 1865; George Family. Papers, 1733-1920. Accession 24642, City of Richmond Circuit Court Records, Local government records collection, LVA.

<sup>227</sup> “From Richmond,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 26, 1864.

<sup>228</sup> Deyle, *Carry Me Back*, 166-167. See “Untitled,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 7, 1865, for an estate sale by Hill, Dickinson & Co. and “Untitled,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, July 11, 1864 for a slave sold by order of the Hustings Court of Richmond. See also “Negroes for Sale,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 23, 1865; “Commissioner’s Sale of Two Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 25, 1865; “Sergeant’s Sale of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 13, 1865; “Executor’s Sale of Three Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 21, 1865. Many other examples of these sorts of sales exist in contemporary accounts.

evacuate slaves from endangered areas, but admitted, “I should not know what to do with them or where to carry them.”<sup>229</sup> Virginians sought to retain their slaves almost reflexively, but increasingly could find no market for them and had almost no sense of what purpose they might serve.

There were also fewer and fewer traders around to help them find solutions in the market. Despite the slave market’s rebound in 1862 and 1863, many of the major trading firms had declined noticeably. Many of the most notable slave traders had simply died.<sup>230</sup> William S. Deupree suffered the most colorful fate; while working for the Torpedo Bureau of the Department of War he accidentally stepped on a landmine and was “immediately killed.”<sup>231</sup> Others quietly prepared exit strategies. As early as 1862, Ash Levy began working as a military substitute broker to supplement his trading practices.<sup>232</sup> The Augusta trader James E. Carson sold his own property and seventeen slaves in January 1863.<sup>233</sup> In March 1864, Pulliam & Co. shifted primarily to selling household goods (though they continued to sell and hire slaves when possible); by May, however, D.M. Pulliam had left the business.<sup>234</sup> N.B. Hill started a new

---

<sup>229</sup> Quoted in Brian Steel Wills, *The War Hits Home: The Civil War in Southeastern Virginia* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 241-242.

<sup>230</sup> Charles B. Hill died in November 1861, Hector Davis on January 7, 1863, and Silas Omohundro in June 1864. “Dissolution of Co-Partnership,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 11, 1861; “Died,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 8, 1863; “Funeral Notice,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, June 27, 1864. Hector Davis continued selling slaves until mere days before his death, which ironically resulted in the sale of yet more slaves when his estate was divided. See “H. Davis, Auctioneer,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 9, 1863 and William T. Otto, *Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1876* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1877), 514-515.

<sup>231</sup> G.J. Rains to James A. Seddon, November 17, 1864 in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. 42, Part III, 1220.

<sup>232</sup> “Wanted—Substitutes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 22, 1862.

<sup>233</sup> “Public Sale of Land and Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 3, 1863.

<sup>234</sup> “Notice,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 10, 1864; “By Pulliam, Hanes & Weisiger, Auct’s.,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 22, 1864; “By D K Weisiger, Auct.,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, May 4, 1864.

commission house centered on the sale of dry goods; presumably he did so to supplement Hill, Dickinson & Co.'s faltering income.<sup>235</sup> John Davis had switched from selling slaves to manufacturing torpedoes for the Confederacy by December 1864.<sup>236</sup> N.M. Lee and S.M. Bowman dissolved their partnership in January 1865, though Lee remained in the business (and was still selling slaves in late March).<sup>237</sup> The partial or complete exits of many of these men reflected the reality of the slave trade—while still very much a factor in Virginian life, by 1865 it was but a shadow of its former self.

Nevertheless, slaves sold until the end of the war. On December 3, 1864, William Wirt Henry of Charlotte Court House bought a girl named Clara for \$3,000 in Confederate money; on March 6, 1865, he sold a girl named Sally for \$4,000 in the same medium.<sup>238</sup> A slave named Jefree sold in February for \$3,950.<sup>239</sup> Robert Garlick Hill Kean found masters “selling their slaves very rapidly” in January 1865.<sup>240</sup> In Richmond’s North Carolina hinterlands, W.F. Askew & Co. opened an auction house in Raleigh in January 1865 (and were still advertising slave sales in April).<sup>241</sup> Robert Lumpkin was still buying slaves in February 1865 and had a full jail when Richmond fell.<sup>242</sup> E.H. Stokes sold slaves as late as February 1865; Hill, Dickinson, & Co. planned to auction off an entire estate (up to 40 slaves) in

---

<sup>235</sup> “Commission House,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, February 13, 1865.

<sup>236</sup> “From Richmond,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 26, 1864.

<sup>237</sup> “Dissolution of Partnership,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 9, 1865; “Thirteen Negroes For Sale at Auction,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 9, 1865; “Executor’s Sale of Three Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 22, 1865. N.M. Lee would be elected to the Virginia House of Delegates at the War’s conclusion. See “Political Matters in N.C. and V.A.,” *Watertown New York Daily Reformer*, October 14, 1865.

<sup>238</sup> William Wirt Henry Account Book, 1857-1881, Henry Family Papers, 1763-1920, Mss1 H3968 a 695, VHS.

<sup>239</sup> Bill of sale for the slave Jefree, 1865, Accession #13747, UVA.

<sup>240</sup> Younger, ed., *Inside the Confederate Government*, 186.

<sup>241</sup> “Negro Auction and Commission House,” *Raleigh Weekly Standard*, April 5, 1865.

<sup>242</sup> “Five Hundred Dollars Reward,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 21, 1865.

March 1865.<sup>243</sup> In Charlottesville, Benson & Bro. advertised the sale of “nine valuable negroes” less than two weeks before Union troops accepted the town’s surrender.<sup>244</sup> In Petersburg, a “negro man about thirty-five years old, trusty,” sold less than twenty-four hours before Lee abandoned the city; former slave Fannie Berry recalled slaves being sold there until “just before the shelling,” though they went “for little nothin’ hardly” and “didn’t stay slave long ‘cause de Yankees came and set ‘em free.”<sup>245</sup> John B. Jones marveled on March 22, that “although the insecurity of slave property is so manifest, yet a negro man will bring \$10,000 at auction” (though he acknowledged that \$10,000 in Confederate currency equaled only \$100 in gold).<sup>246</sup> S.N. Davis advertised slave sales in Richmond up through April 1.<sup>247</sup> Perhaps the strangest deployment of the slave trade came in late March, when “a gentleman, a refugee” offered “a large sum of money” to buy slaves willing to enlist in the Confederate army.<sup>248</sup> And Thomas Bocock, Speaker of the Confederate House of Representatives, purchased 16 slaves *after* Lee’s surrender at Appomattox, giving up food in exchange—food that soon proved more valuable than his new slaves.<sup>249</sup>

---

<sup>243</sup> Receipt, February 21, 1865, Cornelius Chase Papers, LoC; “Five Hundred Dollars Reward,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 17, 1865.

<sup>244</sup> Gayle M. Schulman, “Site Of Slave Block?” *Magazine of Albemarle County History*, Vol. 58 (2000), 83.

<sup>245</sup> William D. Henderson, *Petersburg in the Civil War: War at the Door* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1998), 134; Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 39.

<sup>246</sup> John Beauchamp Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk’s Diary at the Confederate States Capital* (2 vols.) (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1866), II., 457.

<sup>247</sup> Nelson Lankford, *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (New York: Viking, 2002), 53.

<sup>248</sup> “Liberality to be Imitated,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 25, 1865.

<sup>249</sup> Jaime Amanda Martinez, “‘The question of bread is a very serious one:’ Virginia’s Wartime Economy” in William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr., eds., *Virginia At War 1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 40; Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” 128. William Marvel suggests that Bocock may have conceived of this as an act of charity, taking valueless slaves away from someone who could no longer care for them. See William Marvel, *A Place Called Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 271.

What explains the slave trade's survival in Civil War Virginia? Jaime Martinez has suggested that its continuance reflected resilient confidence in an ultimate Confederate victory on the part of Confederate Virginians—a suggestion that has much to recommend it.<sup>250</sup> Many in the Confederacy certainly believed that they would eventually prevail. As late as January 1865, Confederate ordinance chief Josiah Gorgas argued that the Confederacy was not “even half beaten.”<sup>251</sup> And a former slave recalled that even though masters struggled to “buy or sell any slaves...they could hold them they had till freedom.” Even though the events of the war had long augured freedom's coming, “when it come—[masters] hardly expected it.”<sup>252</sup>

The events related above, however, suggest something deeper at work. Certainly basic economic calculus remained a powerful motivator as masters sought to maximize their profits from slaves while also factoring in whether or not they could afford to keep them. Beyond this, however, slaves remained fundamentally property, a medium of exchange, and an idiom of power and commerce that was well-understood and familiar, even in times of great turmoil. Slaves, moreover, were a unique form of property—liquid so long as the institution was legally supported, but dangerous, even insurrectionary if left to their own devices. And if slavery ended, masters would have to contend with their liberated chattels on social, political, and economic fronts.<sup>253</sup> Slavery thus transcended purely economic concerns, and given that the slave trade was integral to maintaining slavery, it makes sense that slave trading would do the same.

---

<sup>250</sup> Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” 127-131.

<sup>251</sup> Frank E. Vandiver, ed. *The Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1947), 166.

<sup>252</sup> George P. Rawick, ed., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Volume 18, Unwritten History of Slavery (Fisk University)* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1941, 1972), 59.

<sup>253</sup> Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*, 12-14.

The case of Mary Blair McCarty of Ashland illustrates the paradox of slave property. In January 1865, she recognized “that the days of slavery are numbered, I have but little doubt” as the institution “exists but in name.” Nevertheless, she hoped to sell a slave and to “get the most that I can for him.” She had others she would have liked to have sold, but she retained them because “there is no way of investing the proceeds.”<sup>254</sup> McCarty and her peers might intellectually understand slavery was nearly at an end; however, slaves remained property (and thus a legitimate commercial item) in most of Virginia until the war ended, and therefore had to be dealt with as such. Even though the friction of war did much to undermine slavery, where Confederate power remained, so did the peculiar institution.<sup>255</sup> Masters continued to buy and sell slaves as the opportunities to do so presented themselves, and the structures needed to facilitate these transactions remained in place as long as masters were willing to do so. The diminution of voluntary sales, combined with the increasing importance of sales from estate breakups and criminal cases and with the engagement of many traders in other pursuits suggests that by the end of the war, many of slavery’s forms were simply being observed; slavery might be dying, but masters were unwilling to simply abandon it.

As James Roark has shown, there existed a disconnect between masters’ circumstances and their beliefs. Many were justifiably weary of war and had not seen tangible benefits from slavery in years. And yet, as Roark points out, their “commitment to slavery survived the actual

---

<sup>254</sup> Mary Blair McCarty to Harriett Boswell Caperton, January 8, 1865, McCarty Family Papers, 1839-1865, Mss2 M1278 b, VHS.

<sup>255</sup> In many ways this recalls Clarence Mohr’s findings in Georgia, where the collective effects of refugeeing slaves and deploying them in unfamiliar places and on unfamiliar labor undermined the institution. Masters continued to recognize and participate in slavery, but the institution was irrevocably changed. Clarence L. Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), particularly chapters 4-7.



destruction of the institution.”<sup>256</sup> Masters simply could not conceive of a world beyond slavery, and the crisis of the war hardened their views on this front.<sup>257</sup> Any move to a post-slave system might have been politically and socially inconceivable, but that did not mean that slaves had to be sold with any gusto. Virginians adapted to their changing circumstances within a framework that they understood; familiarity and an unwillingness to conceive of a world without slavery thus went a long way towards perpetuating the purchase and sale of slaves within Civil War Virginia.

---

<sup>256</sup> James L. Roark, *Masters Without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 85-91, 94.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-106.

## **Continuity and The Effects of Slave Trading on African-Americans**

In terms of pure transformative power, no part of the Civil War matched the freeing of the slaves. This transformation, however, was anything but instantaneous. It depended on a number of factors, from the policies adopted the Union high command and commanders on the ground to the proximity of the slaves themselves to Union forces to the relationships both between slaves and masters and among slaves. Events, in short, “seldom followed the same course” in different locales as particular circumstances (most importantly the presence or lack of a “safe harbor” to escape to) shaped the choices available to enslaved people.<sup>258</sup> Additionally, as Anthony Kaye has suggested, the Civil War radically restructured the way slaves viewed their community and situation, bringing within their grasp new sources of power (such as the Federal government and its laws and army) that could be deployed against the power held by their masters. The choice to test these powers, however, was “not monolithic but plural” and for most “freedom came not in a single stroke but in several moments of emancipation”—if it came at all.<sup>259</sup> Recent scholarship on emancipation has affirmed this view. Not only did freedom demand hard choices from the slaves, always regarding whether to abandon their homes (and often whether to abandon their family), but it could also involve intense personal risk, both before and after escape. Rather than a single triumphal moment, emancipation was a messy, highly

---

<sup>258</sup> Berlin, et. al., *Freedom*, 1:3, 5, 11.

<sup>259</sup> Anthony E. Kaye, *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 178.

negotiated process, and the continuance of the domestic slave trade played a major role in shaping it.<sup>260</sup>

Slave trading during the Civil War played a major but underappreciated role in influencing individual acts of emancipation. For those slaves with opportunities to escape, sale always loomed as both a motivating factor and as a consequence of failure. Moreover, the dislocation of war heightened for many slaves the likelihood of sale as masters contended with economic challenges new and old, as well as with the unprecedented erosion of their authority. Sale might come in response to an unforeseen need, or as punishment for “insolence” at a moment when masters felt themselves weakest. And whether sold on the day of Fort Sumter or Appomattox, sale presented the same challenges to African-Americans that it always had: family separations, marital divisions, and the heartbreak and dislocation that accompanied them. If possible, however, these wartime sales evoke increased pathos because of their proximity to instances of freedom. The harm it continued to inflict on African-Americans affirms the continuing vitality and importance of the wartime slave trade.

The Civil War certainly provided unprecedented opportunities for African-Americans to attain their freedom, but each fleeing slave had to make a choice. A successful flight to the Union army meant freedom, but failure could bring sale, and separation from loved ones. Freedom and sale, in other words, were two sides of the same coin. John R. Woods sold his slave Henry south after he ran away, hoping to intimidate his other slaves and to forestall

---

<sup>260</sup> The progenitor of much modern scholarship on the complications of emancipation is the work of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project at the University of Maryland as recorded in their multivolume work *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867*, which as of this writing includes six published volumes as well as four smaller collected works. Good examples of related scholarship on the intricacy of emancipation are Louis Gerteis, *From Contraband to Freedman: Federal Policy Toward Southern Blacks, 1861-1865* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973); Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and “Rose’s War and the Gendered Politics of a Slave Insurgency During the Civil War” *Journal of the Civil War Era* Vol. 3 No. 4 (Dec. 2013), 501-532; and Jim Downs, *Sick From Freedom: African-American Illness and Suffering During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

permanently Henry's reaching Union lines.<sup>261</sup> Edmund Ruffin and his son sold many of their slaves who had attempted to flee to Union lines and were caught; they sold at least 29 in June 1862, with more escapees dispatched in July and October 1862 and July 1863.<sup>262</sup> These slaves were almost certainly sold out of state; Edmund Ruffin, Jr. engaged Reuben Ragland, a long-distance slave trader, to conduct the sales.<sup>263</sup> Another slave, Jim, escaped from Front Royal, only to be recaptured at Harpers Ferry in 1862; when she learned his master intended to sell him, Jim's wife Eliza broke down in grief.<sup>264</sup> In Southampton County, the Briggs family sold a slave named Henry who had escaped but was apprehended a mere five miles from Union lines. Believing Henry might run away again, the Briggses sold him, seeking "under the present trying condition of the country to save his value to the estate."<sup>265</sup> One family sent a slave named Nicholas to North Carolina, far from Union lines. He still escaped, which prompted them to sell him upon his recapture rather than risk financial loss.<sup>266</sup> Near Fredericksburg, a slave named Dick was captured after an escape attempt; months later, his owner sold him via Dickinson Hill.<sup>267</sup> Edward Tayloe's slave Moses was captured while "signaling to Yankee tugs" in the

---

<sup>261</sup> John R Woods to Micajah Woods, 2, 18 July 1863, Woods Papers, UVA. Quoted in Morgan, *Emancipation in Virginia's Tobacco Belt*, 113.

<sup>262</sup> Ruffin, *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin*, II: 351-353, 375, 466; Edmund Ruffin, *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin* (3 vols), *Vol. III: A Dream Shattered June, 1863-June 1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 38.

<sup>263</sup> "Negroes for Sale," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, June 27, 1862. Ruffin, Jr. sought to sell 23 more slaves in Amelia County in November 1864. See "'Twenty Three Negroes for Sale at Amelia Courthouse,'" *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, November 19, 1864.

<sup>264</sup> Elizabeth R. Baer, ed., *Shadows on My Heart: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck of Virginia* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 152.

<sup>265</sup> *Dolly A. Briggs v. Nancy E. Briggs and Caroline A. Briggs*, PAR Accession #21686201, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>266</sup> *Thomas B. Powell v. Mary Powell*, PAR Accession #21686301, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>267</sup> Letter, Montgomery Slaughter to Robert Alexander Grinnan, December 9[?], 1861; Account of Benjamin Franklin Nalle, July 10, 1862, Nalle Family Papers, 1800-1862, Mss1 N1495 a 78-79, VHS.

Potomac River and was dispatched shortly thereafter to Richmond and sold.<sup>268</sup> Thus, in many cases, slaves' persistent efforts to free themselves encouraged masters to sell who might not otherwise have done so.

Occasionally, slaves who had reached freedom became exposed again by the ebb and flow of the armies, and when they were recaptured they were often resold into slavery.<sup>269</sup> In the lower Shenandoah Valley, many slaves escaped in the chaos of the passing of the armies. Elizabeth Ashley Buck noted that “nearly everybody in the neighborhood lost some” slaves, but also that those belonging to a Colonel Larue were quickly recaptured and sold.<sup>270</sup> During the throes of the Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1862, Mary Greenhow Lee of Winchester reported “a panic amongst the free blacks, who have heard that when Jackson comes back, they are to be sold to indemnify those whose slaves have absconded.”<sup>271</sup> Slaves could be retrieved from Union lines as well. Union general Rufus King wrote that near Warrenton in the summer of 1862 his men encountered “small parties of mounted men” who were “hunting up and carrying off negroes South,” while Confederate raider John S. Mosby noted that a successful attack on a Union wagon train in Fauquier County resulted in the capture of “upward of 30 negroes.”<sup>272</sup> In

---

<sup>268</sup> Farm Journal of Edward T. Tayloe, 1850-1869, January 1, 1862, Tayloe Family Papers, 1708-1869, King George Co. Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 1, Reel 3, RASP.

<sup>269</sup> See B. Randolph to Col. Josiah Gorgas, Stanton, Va., July 15, 1863, R-681 1863, Letters Received, ser. 12, Adjutant and Inspector General's Department, RG 109 War Department Collection of Confederate Records, NARA [FSSP F-307].

<sup>270</sup> Elizabeth Ashley Buck to “My Dear Boys,” October 15, 1862 in William Pettus Buck, ed. *Dear Irvie, Dear Lucy, Civil War Letters of Capt. Irving A. Buck General Cleburne's AAG & Family* (Birmingham, AL: Buck Publishing Company, 2002), 105.

<sup>271</sup> Mary Greenhow Lee, *The Civil War Journal of Mary Greenhow Lee (Mrs. Hugh Holmes Lee) of Winchester, Virginia* (Winchester: Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 2011), 51.

<sup>272</sup> Rufus King to Division Headquarters, Warrenton, Va., June 7, 1862 in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I., Vol. 12, Part III, 351; Report of Major John S. Mosby, C.S. Army, Fauquier County, October 27, 1863, in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I., Vol. 29, Part I, 495.

another raid Mosby recaptured the escaping Willis Hanson and his family; a local slaveholder presumed that they would be “carried South.”<sup>273</sup> When a slave named Dick reached the Union army, his masters successfully sent a man to smuggle him out again; Dick was then sold for \$1,100 through the efforts of E.H. Stokes.<sup>274</sup> The father of Norfolk’s Katie Darling Wallace unsuccessfully bribed Union soldiers to smuggle slaves out of Norfolk for his plantation.<sup>275</sup> General John Dix reported that Confederates were raiding contraband camps as far away as Maryland and carrying “off to Richmond...the able-bodied males.”<sup>276</sup> When a raid by General Averill into western Virginia was repulsed in early 1864, “some forty or fifty negroes were captured and returned to their owners.”<sup>277</sup>

Even free blacks could be subjected to this; in November 1863, William Breedlove and William Chandler were arrested in Essex County while aiding a slave named John in his escape. For their efforts they were sentenced to be sold into slavery.<sup>278</sup> Merrit Spratley, a free black in southeastern Virginia, was sentenced to be sold after being captured leading his wife, children, and over thirty other individuals in a dash for the Union lines near Hampton Roads.<sup>279</sup> Another

---

<sup>273</sup> John Peyton Dulany to Richard H. Dulany, November 2, 1864 in Margaret Ann Vogtsberger, *The Dulanys of Welbourne: A Family in Mosby’s Confederacy* (Berryville, VA: Rockbridge Publishing Company, 1995), 229.

<sup>274</sup> *John W. Darden, Jacob Austin, and Emeline Darden Austin v. Mary J. Darden and Walter S. Darden*, PAR Accession #21686203, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>275</sup> Eleanor P. and Charles B. Cross, Jr., eds., *Child of Glencoe: Civil War Journal of Katie Darling Wallace* (Chesapeake, VA: Norfolk County Historical Society, 1983), 10.

<sup>276</sup> John A. Dix to John A. Andrew, Fort Monroe [Va.], 5<sup>th</sup> November 1862 in Berlin, Ira; Miller, Steven F.; Reidy, Joseph P.; and Rowland, Leslie S. *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867 Series I, Volume II The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 131.

<sup>277</sup> “Gen. Averill’s Raid,” *Staunton Spectator*, January 5, 1864.

<sup>278</sup> C.G. Griswold to Gen. Schofield, October 18, 1867, G-404 1867, Letters Received, ser. 5068, 1<sup>st</sup> Military District, RG 393 Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Part 1, NARA [FSSP SS-1047].

<sup>279</sup> Wills, *The War Hits Home*, 76.

free black named Jim who aided slaves in their bids for freedom was sold mere weeks before Richmond fell, paying a dire price for his generosity.<sup>280</sup> Runaways who were recaptured and whose masters failed to reclaim them might also find themselves sold and thus removed even further from the freedom they had sought; at least 3 Henrico County slaves met this fate in the summer of 1864.<sup>281</sup> Along the war's frontiers, therefore, as the promise of freedom beckoned to the enslaved, those seeking it had to engage in a terrible calculus over the risks entailed in seeking it—risks heightened by the possibility of sale.

Free blacks ran an elevated risk of being sold into slavery during the chaos of war. Governor John Letcher noted that some free blacks had entered the state along with the Union army, and when they were captured he requested that they be sold as required by Virginia law.<sup>282</sup> Near Petersburg, a Confederate soldier named Timothy White was arrested for trying to sell free blacks he represented as being his slaves.<sup>283</sup> Even captured Union soldiers could be subjected to this punishment; upon capturing black Union soldiers near Williamsburg, a Confederate officer recommended to Eppa Hunton, “the best disposition of such soldiers was to sell them and give the proceeds to the command capturing them.”<sup>284</sup>

---

<sup>280</sup> “Sergeant’s Sale of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 15, 1865.

<sup>281</sup> James H. Bailey, *Henrico Home Front 1861-1865 A Picture of Life in Henrico County, Virginia: Based Upon Selections from the Minute Books of the Henrico County Court* (Richmond: Henrico County Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963), 190, 193.

<sup>282</sup> John B. Letcher to G.W. Randolph, August 15, 1862, in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series II, Vol. 4, 849-850.

<sup>283</sup> C.Y. Savage to the General Commanding Post at Petersburg, March 26, 1863, John Hart. Collection of Confederate letters and receipts, 1860-1868, Accession 20234, Personal papers collection. LVA.

<sup>284</sup> W. Pinkney Shingler to Eppa Hunton, March 6, 1864 in United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series II, Vol. 6, 1022-1023.

The Gettysburg Campaign in particular exposed free blacks to the terrors of capture and sale. Scholars estimate that as many as one thousand escaped slaves and free blacks were scooped up on the campaign, turning it into an enormous “slave raid.” Official policy called for the capture of fugitives and their dispatch to Richmond. Not only did the apprehension of former slaves and free blacks provide a measure of revenge for the Emancipation Proclamation, but it also provided an opportunity to acquire much-needed labor for the Virginia home front.<sup>285</sup> The Buck family of Front Royal heard rumors that many of their slaves had been re-captured by Confederate raiders, and while the women and children would be returned to them, the men had been sent to Richmond to work on fortifications.<sup>286</sup> The Alesworth family, captured by raiders near Greencastle, Pennsylvania, was taken to a man near Middletown, Virginia who claimed they were his property. Shortly thereafter, he sold them to a Staunton slave trader for \$3,000; in doing so he profited off slaves that may or may not have been his and removed them from the exposed Lower Shenandoah Valley.<sup>287</sup> Slave trading thus reached beyond the enslaved population to grab those who had already attained freedom and dragged them back into bondage, potentially placing them farther from freedom than where they started.

The mere possibility of a slave escaping could prompt skittish masters to sell, seeking to preempt the loss of property. In the first months of the war, one slave reported that his master had sold his wife and child South as the Yankees advanced into Fairfax County; he lamented that

---

<sup>285</sup> David G. Smith, “Race and Retaliation: The Capture of African Americans during the Gettysburg Campaign,” in Peter Wallenstein and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, eds., *Virginia’s Civil War* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 138-140.

<sup>286</sup> Baer, ed. *Shadows on My Heart*, 228.

<sup>287</sup> Blackburn & Haldeman to Oliver Otis Howard, October 31, 1865, H-188, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7670]; Wm. Kersee, endorsement of W.S. Howe to T.F.P. Crandon, December 20, 1866, H-188, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7670]



it “broke me all up...to see ‘em all chained up and taken off away down South to Carolina. My mind is almost gone.”<sup>288</sup> Sister Harrison of Norfolk noted, “Jes’ before the war, my mistress sold [her brothers] an’ a niece of Mother’s away, like all the other white folks was doin’, to keep em from runnin’ away to the yankees...lots of people wuz separated that way.” Similarly, Artnaci Edwards remembered that Norfolk masters chose to “sell all de slaves down Souf ‘cause de fightin were neah.”<sup>289</sup> In Warrenton, a master sought to preempt the flight of a slave named Carter and his wife by dispatching him to Richmond for sale (he fortunately escaped before being sent to the city).<sup>290</sup> In the Shenandoah Valley, Lethea’s master sold her “to prevent her leaving with the Yankees,” despite the fact that she had not taken advantage of previous opportunities to escape.<sup>291</sup> In Southampton County, the Darden family followed a similar course, seeking to sell slaves as they were “near the lines of the federal army and all may be lost.”<sup>292</sup> John Washington’s master sought to prevent his hiring himself out in Fredericksburg, as he feared it was too close to Union lines, and when the Yankees approached, sought to hire him in safety at Salisbury, North Carolina.<sup>293</sup> Many sold their slaves to prevent their loss; many who subsequently lost their slaves would no doubt have echoed a South Carolina master who

---

<sup>288</sup> Coffin, *Four Years of Fighting*, 45.

<sup>289</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 135, 1.

<sup>290</sup> Susan Emeline Jeffords Caldwell to Lycurgus Washington Caldwell, June 9, 1862 in J. Michael Welton, ed. “*My Heart is So Rebellious:*” *The Caldwell Letters, 1861-1865* (Fauquier National Bank, 1991), 127.

<sup>291</sup> Cornelia Peake McDonald, (Minrose C. Gwin, ed.), *A Woman’s Civil War: A Diary, with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 81-82.

<sup>292</sup> *John W. Darden, Jacob Austin, and Emeline Darden Austin v. Mary J. Darden and Walter S. Darden*, PAR Accession #21686203, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>293</sup> Crandall Shifflet, ed. *John Washington’s Civil War: A Slave Narrative* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 36-37, 39.

lamented, “Had I foreseen how things would be...when every Negro was set free by ‘force of war,’ I & everyone else would have gladly put them all in their pockets.”<sup>294</sup>

Masters and mistresses also deployed sale to shore up their authority in the face of its erosion by the war. The Blackfords of Lynchburg sold one slave when she refused to accept discipline at the hands of her mistress; they contemplated selling another who had run away, but could not find a favorable opportunity.<sup>295</sup> A Chesterfield family found their slaves exhibiting “disobedience” and “difficulty of controlling and managing.” They therefore sought to sell them as “their continued possession has become uncertain and insecure and their value greatly diminished.”<sup>296</sup> A Saltville slave named Elizabeth was sold because of her “infamous” behavior and “palpable misdemeanor.”<sup>297</sup> One Lynchburg master, upon discovering that one of his slaves could read and write, sold him to prevent him from passing these skills on to others.<sup>298</sup> As a slave named Rob asserted his independence in the war’s last days, his mistress believed the only recourse was to sell him, and asked that a neighbor get rid of him in Richmond.<sup>299</sup> And George C. Lester sold his slave in September 1863 because he “was afraid he might give me some trouble as I am in the army and could not see to him.”<sup>300</sup>

---

<sup>294</sup> Quoted in Heather Andrea Williams, *Help Me to Find My People: The African American Search for Family Lost in Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 140.

<sup>295</sup> Steven Elliott Tripp, *Yankee Town, Southern City: Race and Class Relations in Civil War Lynchburg* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997), 147-148.

<sup>296</sup> *Lawson M. Burfoot, et. al. v. William Howlett*, PAR Accession #21686306, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>297</sup> William King to Annie K. Leftwich King, December 18, 1863, King Family Papers, 1811-1890, Accession #6682, UVA.

<sup>298</sup> Walter R. Vaughan, *Vaughan’s ‘Freedmen’s Pension Bill* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 77.

<sup>299</sup> Wife to Tyre Glen, January 3, 1865, Tyre Glen papers, Duke.

<sup>300</sup> George C. Lester to E.H. Stokes, October 7, 1863, Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905, AAS.

Slaves who belonged to Union sympathizers but fell under Confederate control could also easily be confiscated and sold. A family in the Southern Piedmont was broken up after being confiscated by the Confederate government; the oldest daughter and her three children were sold to North Carolina, while the rest of the family (except the husband) were dispatched to Richmond for sale.<sup>301</sup> In August 1864, Dickinson Hill sold nine slaves belonging to L.J. Bowden, who was an “enemy alien.” The firm sold five more the next month.<sup>302</sup> When the Confederate government confiscated Monticello and its attendant property, they sold off a number of slaves belonging to the family of Uriah Levy (an officer in the Union navy); newspaper reports suggested one man went for more than \$7,000.<sup>303</sup> Masters’ loyalties could therefore determine the fate of the enslaved.

The pressures of the war also reached out to touch slaves far from the front by placing unforeseen financial strains on their masters. Abner Dawson Ford, for example, repeatedly beseeched his wife to sell some of their slaves in order to purchase a substitute who would allow him to exit the army.<sup>304</sup> Kate Drumgoold’s master sold her mother for the same reason.<sup>305</sup> Another Confederate asked for his uncle to “trade Darkey for a good tough horse,” as he desired

---

<sup>301</sup> N.Y. Perkins to J.B. Crenshaw, Goldsboro, NC, December, 5, 1865, P-20, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, NARA [FSSP A-7702].

<sup>302</sup> “By Hill, Dickinson & Co., Auct’rs,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, August 11, 1864; “Receiver’s Sale of Negroes,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, September 17, 1864.

<sup>303</sup> “Sale of Monticello,” *Baltimore Sun*, November 26, 1864. The sale was conducted by Piedmont slave trader D.M. Pattie, who served as a Confederate marshal for the region. See also “Monticello and the Civil War,” [available online] <http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/monticello-and-civil-war> (last retrieved October 25, 2014) and Marc Leepson, *Saving Monticello: The Levy Family’s Epic Quest to Rescue the House that Jefferson Built* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 91-92.

<sup>304</sup> Abner Dawson Ford to Mary Jane Ford, January 4, 1863; Abner Dawson Ford to Mary Jane Ford, January 23, 1863, Ford, Abner Dawson, 1830-1895. Papers, 1863-1864, Mss1 F7501 a, VHS.

<sup>305</sup> Kate Drumgoold, *A Slave Girl’s Story. Being the Autobiography of Kate Drumgoold* (Brooklyn, NY: 1898), 4-5.

to replace his current mount.<sup>306</sup> Robert H. Turner sought to purchase a slave named Thornton to serve as a cook for him while in the army.<sup>307</sup> William Yager claimed that his master “sold all the slaves he could” before he left for the army.<sup>308</sup> Daniel Brady of Buffalo Forge bought two slaves so his own hands would not be among those conscripted by the Confederate government; to spare his slaves the experience, he disrupted the lives of two others for three months, at which point he sold them again.<sup>309</sup>

In other cases, slaves were sold simply for money to “meet expenses” and to help masters adapt to new financial realities.<sup>310</sup> One Petersburg family sold their slaves in 1864 because of the “the exigencies of the times and the great scarcity of provisions,” as well as the slaves’ general lack of profitability.<sup>311</sup> Another Petersburg resident bemoaned the cost of keeping slaves, and wondered aloud, “what statesman said? ‘masters would run from their slaves, not slaves from their masters.’”<sup>312</sup> P.M. Tabb offered two slaves for sale in December 1864 but

---

<sup>306</sup> J. Thos. R. Martin to Susan Martin, July 17, 1864, Elizabeth Perry Papers, ca. 1800-1930, Accession #6806-a to 6806-b, UVA.

<sup>307</sup> Robert H. Turner to Angus R. Blakey, July 20, 1864, Angus R. Blakey Papers, Duke.

<sup>308</sup> Perdue, et. al., Weevils in the Wheat, 336.

<sup>309</sup> Dew, *Bond of Iron*, 326.

<sup>310</sup> R. Walker Wilson to William O. George, January 22, 1865, George Family. Papers, 1733-1920. Accession 24642, City of Richmond Circuit Court Records, Local government records collection, LVA.

<sup>311</sup> *William E. Cameron v. Evelyn Byrd Cameron, et. al.*, PAR Accession #21686402, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11. Some Southern slaveholders made the opposite choice, as their survival rested on the money to be made from the hire of their slaves. Cremona Jackson of Madison County stated she hoped to hire her slaves for “meat or flour” by the summer of 1864, but that she was keeping them until they ran to the Yankees out of necessity. See Cremona Jackson to A.R. Blakey, August 27, 1864, Angus R. Blakey Papers, Duke. On the economic realities of the Virginia home front, see William Blair, *Virginia’s Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>312</sup> Eleanor Beverley (Meade) Platt to Rebecca Wormley Beverley Meade, December 31, 1864, Eleanor Beverley (Meade) Platt Letter, 1864, Mss2 P6977 a, VHS.

noted that they “would not be sold if the owners had room for them.”<sup>313</sup> One Petersburg slave was offered in March 1865 unabashedly to “raise money.”<sup>314</sup> William Berkeley of Loudoun County advised his wife to sell his slaves Mira and Nancy Ellen, and told her “You will have to learn to live with fewer servants than we have heretofore been accustomed to.”<sup>315</sup>

Slaves resented the measures masters took in response to the war. Even 70 years later, Anna Harris claimed to have never allowed a white person in her house, and said she “can’t stand to see ‘em” as they “sole my sister Kate...sole her in 1860, and I ain’t seed nor heard of her since.”<sup>316</sup> After being sold by Francis McFarland, Julia attacked her former master with an axe.<sup>317</sup> A slave named Horace, who ran off and was recaptured, told his master that he would never have fled “save for the fear of being sold.”<sup>318</sup> One group of slaves challenged their wartime sale and reproached their master for selling them, sending back word through an intermediary that “they disliked being put in Raglands hands for sale worse than being sold & all say that they had served you faithfully, and if you intended selling you should not have herded them like horses & mules to a trader, but done it yourself and given them a chance” to make their

---

<sup>313</sup> “Negroes For Hire and Sale,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, December 27, 1864.

<sup>314</sup> “Negroes For Hire and Sale,” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 3, 1865.

<sup>315</sup> William N. Berkeley to Cynthia W. Berkeley, October 9, 1862, William N. Berkeley, Cynthia W. [Smith] Berkeley, Norborne Berkeley, Edmund Berkeley, Estate of John Westfield, Crissey Family, and Mary R.S. Berkeley, 1862, Berkeley Family Papers, 1536, 1653-1865, Carolina, King William, Loudoun, Middlesex, and Prince William Counties, Virginia; also Arkansas, Accession Number 38-113, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 2, Reel 17, RASP.

<sup>316</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 128.

<sup>317</sup> Augusta County: Diary of Francis McFarland (1859-1864), December 21, 1864, Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War, University of Virginia Library (<http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/head/AD9500>).

<sup>318</sup> Lucy R. Buck to Irving Buck, June 19, 1863 in Buck, ed., *Dear Irvie, Dear Lucy*, 161.

own more favorable arrangements.<sup>319</sup> Occasionally, slaves could still shape their own fate. A slave named Davey appealed to George Monroe of Rockbridge County to hire or buy him from his current master; Monroe offered to do so at “a fair price for him in Confederate money” despite the “a grate risk” he ran given “condition that our country is in at the preasant.”<sup>320</sup> Despite these occasional opportunities to express frustration or resist their fate, the Civil War subjected many slaves to harsh conditions and sale.

Besides the traumas of the war, slaves still had to contend with the same threats to the integrity of their families and communities that had always existed. Slaves who no longer represented an economic asset to their masters could be sold; one woman recalled that her master sold off her aunt, who, having never recovered from a fever, negatively influenced his profitability; similarly, a slave at Buffalo Forge was sold after contracting syphilis in 1863.<sup>321</sup> Another woman was dissuaded from buying a slave in late 1864, as she had “worthless negroes enough” already.<sup>322</sup> Debts threatened Southern households just as they had before the war, and slaves represented collateral available to pay off debts.<sup>323</sup> Katie Blackwell Johnson of Lunenburg County believed her family was sold during the war because her master had “drank us up;” they ended up on another plantation a few miles away.<sup>324</sup> Estate sales continued to

---

<sup>319</sup> D.M. Prichard to Jeremiah Morton, August 30, 1862, Jeremiah Morton, 1863, Morton-Halsey Family, 1812-1865, Culpeper County, Virginia; Alabama; and Florida, Accession Number 3995, Series E: Selections from the University of Virginia Library, Part 1, Reel 37, RASP.

<sup>320</sup> George Monroe to John B. Eventon, November 8, 1864, Waller family. Papers, 1799-1867. Accession 22975a. Personal papers collection. LVA.

<sup>321</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 346; Dew, *Bond of Iron*, 274.

<sup>322</sup> Mary Blair McCarty to Harriette Boswell Caperton, November 26, 1864, McCarty Family Papers, 1839-1865, Mss2 M1278 b, VHS.

<sup>323</sup> See *Endymion D. Cornick v. William P. Morgan, et. al.*, PAR Accession #21686103, Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867, Series 2, Reel 11.

<sup>324</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 161.

divide families; an English traveler reported encountering 21 slaves sold in 1862 for \$25,000 due to the demise of their owner.<sup>325</sup> The staggering death toll of the war only added to the numbers of estates being divided, with slaves often paying a further, personal price for their masters' rebellion.<sup>326</sup>

Sales also remained a potential punishment for transgressions beyond running away. Though many slave convicts during the war were retained to serve as convict labor on Confederate fortifications, civilian backlash against the presence and use of these slaves continued to force the sale of many. At least 100 were sentenced to be sold from the state between 1860 and 1864 (with about two-thirds being retained for wartime labor).<sup>327</sup> In January 1862, the Richmond County Court sold two blacks convicted of burglary for between \$600 and \$700 dollars each; others sold in May brought even lower prices.<sup>328</sup> By 1864, however, the prices for runaways and freed slaves had attained nearly the same level as slaves sold on the standard market; four sold in April each went for \$2,900 or more.<sup>329</sup>

The evidence presented herein shows that hundreds if not thousands of slaves were bought and sold in Civil War Virginia. Precisely how many went South or moved within the state presents a vexing question. Even the best studies of slave trading present only the most

---

<sup>325</sup> W.C. Corsan, *Two Months in the Confederate States: An Englishman's Travels Through the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 71. See also "Sales by Hill, Dickinson & Co. on acct. of F.E. Graves atty for the legatees of Asa. W. Graves dec'd, February 6, 1863," Graves Family. Papers, 1731-1863. Accession 20563. Personal papers collection. LVA. Also Albemarle County, Va., Court document, 1864, Accession #11428, UVA.

<sup>326</sup> Robert J. Driver, Jr. *Lexington and Rockbridge County in the Civil War* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1989), 35.

<sup>327</sup> Schwarz, *Slave Laws in Virginia*, 105, 114-115. See also William King to Annie K. Leftwich King, December 18, 1863 and William King to Annie K. Leftwich King, May 4, 1864, King Family Papers, 1811-1890, Accession #6682, UVA.

<sup>328</sup> "County Court," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 9, 1862. "Sale of Negroes," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, May 13, 1862. Three free blacks convicted of felonies brought \$860, \$600, and \$100.

<sup>329</sup> "Sale of Free Negroes and Runaways," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, April 12, 1864. See also "Sale of Negroes," *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, September 13, 1864.

approximate estimates over time periods spanning decades, and can easily be challenged based on whether they can be considered representative.<sup>330</sup> The relative brevity of the period in question engenders yet greater challenges, particularly in the context of the Civil War. The war increased the forms of movement available to slaves, from individual escapes to hundreds of thousands of enlistments in the Union army. Moreover, the census of 1870, from which data on the locations of slaves moved during the war would presumably be drawn, may misrepresent a region's black population by as much as 20 to 30 percent.<sup>331</sup> Finally, the census stands at a remove of 5 years from the end of the war, years that saw tremendous movement by former slaves in search of family; thus, many African-Americans by 1870 lived far from the locations they inhabited at war's end.<sup>332</sup> The limitations imposed by the nature of the available evidence and the variables involved therefore prevent even an approximation of the number of slaves sold from Civil War Virginia. We do know, however, that many hundreds (at the very least; the number is more likely in the thousands) suffered sale, separation, and alienation due to slavery's continuance during the war, and to the particular circumstances it created for the enslaved. The experiences the slaves endured were no less traumatic than those of their forebears; in some ways, they are more tragic given the opportunities for freedom available to many of the slaves

---

<sup>330</sup> Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman's sample came under particular attack based on their examination of only a specific part of the trade and the conclusions they drew from it. See Fogel and Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (2 vols.) (Boston: Norton, 1974), Vol. I, 38-58. For critiques, see Herbert Gutman, *Slavery and the Numbers Game: A Critique of Time on the Cross* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 102-123; and Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 22-25. I do not wish in any way to diminish the quality of Tadman's work, but merely to highlight the difficulty of coming up with anything resembling accurate numbers on slave trading. A margin of error of only a few percent in Tadman's work could conceivably cover the experiences of thousands of slaves sold South.

<sup>331</sup> Richard Reid, "The 1870 United States Census and Black Underenumeration: A Test Case From North Carolina" *Histoire Sociale-Social History*, Vol. 28, No. 56 (Nov. 1995), 488-493, 499. Reid focuses on North Carolina, but his methodology could easily be applied to Virginia.

<sup>332</sup> For more on migrations for unification, see Heather Andrea Williams, *Help Me to Find My People: The African-American Search for Family Lost in Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 140-168.



who were instead sold. The experiences of African-Americans in the wartime slave trade therefore accentuate the continued importance of the slave trade during the war, give a human dimension to its tenacity, and reify the trauma it inflicted on generations of enslaved persons.

## Conclusion

Three days after the war's end, Charlotte Brown sat with other freedmen and freedwomen debating the meaning of liberty. Did it mean no more days of backbreaking labor? Did it mean no more nights apart from family? Did it mean no more abuse by masters, or denial of religious, social, or political equality? As they sat together, all "quiet an' peaceful," an aged woman began to sing:

Tain't no mo' sellin' today,  
Tain't no mo' hirin' today,  
Tain't no pullin' off shirts today,  
It's stomp down freedom today.

As Charlotte Brown recalled, "Wasn't no more peace dat Sunday...dat was one glorious time!"<sup>333</sup> Whether the war would bring total freedom and equality to blacks remained ambiguous, but it had undoubtedly executed a fundamental transformation by removing the legal authority of one human being over the body and work of another, a fact most neatly encapsulated in the right to buy and sell humans as chattels.

This end was not predetermined. The slave trade's fate was bound up with the outcome of the war and continued vigorously during the conflict as white Virginians adapted it to meet the contingencies thrust upon them. When the long-profitable interstate trade declined, Virginian owners and traders innovated to continue buying and selling their slaves. At home, they sought to maximize the value of their slaves in the context of the war, whether by sending them away to the front, deploying them in new ways, or using them as chips in a long-term bet on Confederate

---

<sup>333</sup> Perdue, et. al., *Weevils in the Wheat*, 59.

success. Buying a slave might be a savvy economic move, an act of economic desperation, a vote of confidence in the Confederate cause, or an affirmation of a master's control over his chattels. The endurance of slave trading during the war reflected not only remarkable optimism regarding the Confederate cause, but also a significant degree of cultural inertia; while the war had weakened the slave system, it had not totally eradicated it as an economic or social institution. Because slave trading was so intimately bound up with the survival of the slave system, it could not disappear so long as blacks remained chattels to be bought, sold, and controlled. Without a serious proposal for Confederate emancipation, or any conceptions of a post-slavery world, the only option for dealing with slaves was to continue buying and selling them until this was literally no longer possible.

Beyond this, a focus on slave trading underscores the complexity of the African-American experience during the war. Freedom loomed as an ever-present but elusive goal and the road to it held many pitfalls, of which sale was the most daunting. Slaves who gambled on flight and were recaptured often found themselves separated from family and community; unfortunately, the contingencies of war—economic depression, unexpected expenses, and masters' efforts to shore up their authority—could also lead to sale and lay outside the control of slaves. The nearness of these sales to final freedom made them particularly tragic, but underscores the radically transformative nature of the Civil War. When Charlotte Brown sang "Tain't no more sellin' today," the day she sang of was not far removed. Mere days previously she could have been sold hundreds of miles from her family; today that was no longer a threat. No change could better encompass the meaning of the Civil War for Virginian masters and slaves.

## WORKS CITED

### Manuscripts

#### **American Antiquarian Society**

- Slavery in the United States Collection, 1703-1905.

#### **Freedmen and Southern Society Project, University of Maryland**

- Endorsements through Va. FB Agents to GA AC, Vol. 20, p. 377, Endorsements Sent, series 628, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Georgia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-435].
- C.W. Pierce to T.P. Wright, October 27, 1866, vol. 138, Letters Sent, ser. 78, Demopolis, AL Subassistant Commissioner, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-2145].
- Thaddeus Stevens to Oliver Otis Howard, December 4, 1865, S-97 1865, Letters Received, ser. 15, Washington Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7315].
- Deposition of William Brown, January 31, 1866, B-146, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7559].
- Blackburn & Haldeman to Oliver Otis Howard, October 31, 1865, H-188, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7670]
- Wm. Kersee, endorsement of W.S. Howe to T.F.P. Crandon, December 20, 1866, H-188, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7670].
- H.S. Merrell to Orlando Brown, February 6, 1866, M-135, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7685].
- N.Y. Perkins to J.B. Crenshaw, Goldsboro, NC, December, 5, 1865, P-20, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7702].
- George T. Garrison to Major Sherwood, Accomack C.H., August 9, 1867, P-41, Registered Letters Received, ser. 3798, Office of the Assistant Commissioner for Virginia Headquarters, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-7766].

- J.H.M. McKenzie to W. Storer How, September 2, 1865, Unregistered Letters Received, ser. 4307, Winchester, Virginia Subassistant Commissioner, RG 105 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP A-8235].
- B. Randolph to Col. Josiah Gorgas, Stanton, Va., July 15, 1863, R-681 1863, Letters Received, ser. 12, Adjutant and Inspector General's Department, RG 109 War Department Collection of Confederate Records, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP F-307].
- C.G. Griswold to Gen. Schofield, October 18, 1867, G-404 1867, Letters Received, ser. 5068, 1<sup>st</sup> Military District, RG 393 Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Part 1, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. [FSSP SS-1047].

### **Library of Congress**

- Cornelius Chase Papers.
- Preston Family Papers.

### **Library of Virginia**

- Auditor of Public Accounts. Administration of State Government: Revenue Assessment and Collection - Fees and Licenses. Entry 454: License Returns.
- George Family. Papers, 1733-1920. Accession 24642.
- Graves Family. Papers, 1731-1863. Accession 20563.
- John Hart. Collection of Confederate letters and receipts, 1860-1868, Accession 20234.
- R. J. Reid. Papers, 1777-1870, Accession 22032.
- Waller Family. Papers, 1799-1867. Accession 22975a.

### **National Archives and Records Administration**

- Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780s-1917, Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons ("Amnesty Papers"), 1865-67.
- Record Group 109, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, compiled 1874-1899, documenting the period 1861-1865.
- Record Group 233, Records of the House of Representatives, Barred and Disallowed Case Files of the Southern Claims Commission, 1871-1880.

### **David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University**

- Angus R. Blakey Papers.
- William A.J. Finney Papers.
- Tyre Glen Papers.
- William Thomas Sutherlin Papers.

### **Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1775-1867.**

- *Dolly A. Briggs v. Nancy E. Briggs and Caroline A. Briggs*, PAR Accession #21686201.
- *Lawson M. Burfoot, et. al. v. William Howlett*, PAR Accession #21686306.

- *William E. Cameron v. Evelyn Byrd Cameron, et. al.*, PAR Accession #21686402.
- *Endymion D. Cornick v. William P. Morgan, et. al.*, PAR Accession #21686103.
- *John W. Darden, Jacob Austin, and Emeline Darden Austin v. Mary J. Darden and Walter S. Darden*, PAR Accession #21686203.
- *Thomas B. Powell v. Mary Powell*, PAR Accession #21686301.
- *Robert B. Winfree v. Robert Hatcher*, PAR Accession #21686204.

### **Records of Antebellum Southern Plantations**

- Series E, Part 1: Selections from the University of Virginia Library.
  - Tayloe Family Papers, 1708-1869, King George Co. Accession 38-62.
  - Morton-Halsey Family, 1812-1865, Culpeper County, Virginia; Alabama; and Florida, Accession Number 3995.
- Series E, Part 2: Selections from the University of Virginia Library.
  - Berkeley Family Papers, 1536, 1653-1865, Carolina, King William, Loudoun, Middlesex, and Prince William Counties, Virginia; also Arkansas, Accession Number 38-113.
- Series E, Part 3: Selections from the University of Virginia Library.
  - Brunswick, Franklin, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Pittsylvania, and Smyth counties, Virginia; North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, Southside Virginia Family Papers (Reid Papers), 1748-1918, Bedford, Campbell, Charlotte, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax, and Mecklenburg Counties, Virginia Accession Number 550.
- Series M, Part 5: Selections from the Virginia Historical Society.
  - Mason Family Papers, 1813-1943, Southampton and Greensville Counties, Virginia; also Mississippi, Mss1M3816c.
  - Baskervill Family Papers, 1787-1891, Mecklenburg County, Virginia, Mss1B2924d.

### **Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.**

- George W. Mordecai Papers, #522.

### **Special Collections, University of Virginia Library**

- Albemarle County, Va., Court document, 1864, Accession #11428.
- Bill of sale for the slave Jefree, 1865, Accession #13747.
- Letters, 1864, Edgehill School, Albemarle County, Va., Accession #38-421.
- Miscellaneous Hutter Collection chiefly concerning J. M. Booker, 1846-1879, Accession #3125.
- King Family Papers, 1811-1890, Accession #6682.
- Hudson Martin Papers, 1857-1870, Accession #4874.
- Omohundro Slave Trade and Farm Accounts, 1857-1864, Accession #4122
- Elizabeth Perry Papers, ca. 1800-1930, Accession #6806-a to 6806-b.
- Papers of the Steele Family, 1789-1966, Accession #10616.
- Richard Stuart Papers, 1831-87, Accession #6406.
- Papers of Kelly Walker Trimble, 1770-1954, Accession #7792.
- List of slaves bought between the years 1851 and 1860 [manuscript] 1860. Turpin & Yarbrough, Accession #11598.

- Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War
  - Augusta County: Diary of Francis McFarland (1859-1864), (<http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/head/AD9500>).

### **Virginia Historical Society**

- Betts & Gregory, Circular, March 1861.
- Booth, R.W. Receipt, 1863 August 18, Richmond, [Va.], to Will T. Clark for the sum of \$3,250 covering the purchase of an African-American slave.
- Broadside, 1860.
- Abner Ford Dawson, 1830-1895. Papers, 1863-1864.
- John Fayette Dickinson, Diary, 1855-1890.
- Harrison Family Papers, 1662-1915.
- Henry Family Papers, 1763-1920.
- Holladay Family Papers, 1753-1961.
- George Bolling Lee Papers, 1841-1868.
- Mason Family Papers, 1813-1943.
- McCarty Family Papers, 1839-1865.
- McDowell, George Marshall, 1838-1863. Letter, 1862 November 27.
- Nalle Family Papers, 1800-1862.
- Eleanor Beverley (Meade) Platt Letter, 1864.
- Rose Family Papers, 1850-1992.
- Smith Family Papers, 1815-1928.

### **Official Records and Documents**

Anderson, Fulton. *Addresses Delivered Before the Virginia State Convention* (Richmond, VA: W.M. Elliott, 1861).

Prescott, Frank W., ed. *Documents Illustrating the Compromise of 1850* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Dept. of History, 1926).

Berlin, Ira; Fields, Barbara; Glymph, Thavolia; Reidy, Joseph P.; and Rowland, Leslie S. *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867 Series I, Volume I The Destruction of Slavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Berlin, Ira; Miller, Steven F.; Reidy, Joseph P.; and Rowland, Leslie S. *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867 Series I, Volume II The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Hunter, Robert M.T., "Speech...on the Resolution Proposing to Retrocede the Forts...Delivered in the Senate of the United States, January 11, 1861" in Jon L. Wakelyn, ed., *Southern Pamphlets on Secession November 1860-April 1861* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

Manarin, Louis. *Richmond at War: The Minutes of the City Council 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966).

Otto, William T. *Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1876* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1877).

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. 4.

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I., Vol. 12, Part III.

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I., Vol. 29, Part I.

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. 42, Part III.

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series II, Vol. 4.

United States War Dept. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series II, Vol. 6.

Williams, Stephen K. *Cases Argued and Decided in the Supreme Court of the United States December Terms, 1870-1871, in 11, 12, 13, 14 Wallace, With Others, Book 20* (Rochester, NY: The Lawyers' Co-Operative Publishing Company, 1901).

#### Newspapers and Contemporary Publications

*Abingdon Virginian*

*Alexandria Gazette*

*Alexandria Local News*

*Baltimore Sun*

*Boston Herald*

*De Bow's Review, Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress and Resources*

*Harper's Weekly*

*The Liberator*

*Memphis Daily Appeal*

*Milwaukee Sentinel*

*New Orleans Daily Crescent*

*New Orleans Daily Delta*

*New Orleans Daily True Delta*

*New York Tribune*

*Orleans Independent Standard* (Irasburgh, Vermont)

*Philadelphia Inquirer*

*Raleigh Weekly Standard*

*Richmond Daily Dispatch*



*Richmond Enquirer*  
*Richmond Examiner*  
*Richmond Whig*  
*Staunton Spectator*  
*Times of London*  
*Washington Evening Star*  
*Washington National Republican*  
*Watertown New York Daily Reformer*  
*Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*

### **Memoirs and Edited Accounts**

Baer, Elizabeth R., ed. *Shadows on My Heart: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck of Virginia* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1997).

Barney, Chester. *Recollections Of Field Service With The Twentieth Iowa Infantry Volunteers, Or, What I Saw In The Army: Embracing Accounts Of Marches, Battles, Sieges And Skirmishes In Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Texas, And Along The Northern Border Of Mexico.* (Davenport: Printed For The Author At The Gazette Job Rooms, 1865).

Beers, Fannie A. *Memories: A Record of Personal Experience and Adventure During Four Years of War* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1891).

Brewster, Charles Harvey. *When This Cruel War is Over: The Civil War Letters of Charles Harvey Brewster.* Edited, with an introduction, by David W. Blight (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992).

Brown, Catherine Morrill. "War-Time Memories By an Old Lady Who Was Then Young" *The Magazine of Albemarle County History*, Vol. 30 (1972).

Buck, William Pettus. *Dear Irvie, Dear Lucy, Civil War Letters of Capt. Irving A. Buck General Cleburne's AAG & Family* (Birmingham, AL: Buck Publishing Company, 2002).

Coffin, Charles Carleton. *Four Years of Fighting: A Volume of Personal Observation With the Army and Navy, From the First Battle of Bull Run to the Fall of Richmond* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866).

Conway, Moncure Daniel. *Testimonies Concerning Slavery* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1864).

Corsan, W.C. *Two Months in the Confederate States: An Englishman's Travels Through the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996).

Crofts, Daniel T. *Cobb's Ordeal: The Diaries of a Virginia Farmer, 1842-1872* (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1997).

Cross, Eleanor P. and Charles B., Jr., eds. *Child of Glencoe: Civil War Journal of Katie Darling Wallace* (Chesapeake, VA: Norfolk County Historical Society, 1983).

Fleet, Benjamin Robert. *Green Mount; A Virginia Plantation Family During the Civil War: Being the Journal of Benjamin Robert Fleet and Letters of His Family* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1962).

Jones, John B. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary* (New York: Sagamore Press, 1958).

Jones, John Beauchamp. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital* (2 vols.) (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1866).

Lee, Mary Greenhow. *The Civil War Journal of Mary Greenhow Lee (Mrs. Hugh Holmes Lee) of Winchester, Virginia* (Winchester: Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 2011).

Mackie, J. Milton. *From Cape Cod to Dixie and the Tropics* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1864).

McDonald, Cornelia Peake (Minrose C. Gwin, ed.), *A Woman's Civil War: A Diary, with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

Pate, James P. ed., *When This Evil War is Over: The Correspondence of the Francis Family, 1860-1865* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2006).

Pryor, Sara Agnes Rice. *Reminiscences of Peace and War* (London: The MacMillan Company, 1905).

Robertson, James I., ed. *The Civil War Letters of General Robert McAllister* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998).

Ruffin, Edmund. *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin* (3 vols), *Vol. II: The Years of Hope April, 1861-June 1863* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976).

Ruffin, Edmund. *The Diary of Edmund Ruffin* (3 vols), *Vol. III: A Dream Shattered June, 1863-June 1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989).

Scott, Robert Garth, ed., *Forgotten Valor: The Memoirs, Journals, & Civil War Letters of Orlando B. Wilcox* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1999).

Stewart, A.M. *Camp, March and Battlefield; Or, Three Years and a Half with the Army of the Potomac* (Philadelphia: Jas. B. Rodgers, 1865).

Slaney, R.A. *Short Journal of A Visit to Canada and the States of America, in 1860* (London: Hatchard & Co., 1861).

Turner, Charles W., ed. *Civil War Letters of Arabella Speairs and William Beverley Pettit of Fluvanna County, Virginia March 1862-March 1865* (Roanoke, VA: Virginia Lithographs & Graphics Company, 1988)

Vandiver, Frank, ed. *The Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1947).

Welton, J. Michael, ed. “*My Heart is So Rebellious:*” *The Caldwell Letters, 1861-1865* (Fauquier National Bank, 1991).

Yacovone, Donald, ed., *A Voice of Thunder: The Civil War Letters of George E. Stephens* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997)

Younger, Edward. *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957).

### **Slave Narratives**

Blight David W., ed., *A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation* (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2007).

Drumgoold, Kate. *A Slave Girl's Story. Being the Autobiography of Kate Drumgoold* (Brooklyn, NY: 1898).

Grandy, Moses. *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy, Late a Slave in the United States of America* (London: C. Gilpin, 1843). Available through Documenting the American South at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/grandy/grandy.html>.

Perdue, Charles L., Jr.; Barden, Thomas E.; and Phillips, Robert K. *Weevils in the Wheat: Interviews With Virginia Ex-Slaves* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

Rawick, George P., ed., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Volume 18, Unwritten History of Slavery (Fisk University)* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1941, 1972).

Rawick, George P.; Hillegas, Jan; and Lawrence, Ken, eds., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Supplement, Series 1, Vol. 9, Mississippi Narratives Part 4* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977).

Shifflet, Crandall, ed. *John Washington's Civil War: A Slave Narrative* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

### **Secondary Works**

Ambler, Charles Henry. *Correspondence of Robert M.T. Hunter, 1826-1876*. American Historical Association Annual Report, 1916. Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: 1918).

Ambler, Charles Henry. *Sectionalism in Virginia, 1776-1861* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910).

Ash, Stephen V. *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

Ash, Stephen V., "White Virginians Under Federal Occupation, 1861-1865" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (April 1990), pp. 169-192.

Ayers, Edward. *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: War In the Heart of America, 1859-1863* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003).

Bagby, Alfred. *King and Queen County, Virginia* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1908).

Bailey, James H. *Henrico Home Front 1861-1865 A Picture of Life in Henrico County, Virginia: Based Upon Selections from the Minute Books of the Henrico County Court* (Richmond: Henrico County Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963).

Bancroft, Frederic. *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996 (originally 1931)).

Baptist, Edward E. *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).

Barnett, Jim and Burkett, H. Clark. "The Forks of the Road Slave Market at Natchez," *Journal of Mississippi History*, Sept 2001, Vol. 63, No. 3 (2001), 168-187.

Blair, William. *Virginia's Private War: Feeding Body and Soul in the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Blight, David W. "The World the Slave Traders Made: Is There a Postrevisionism in Slavery Historiography?" review of *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* by Michael Tadman, *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Mar. 1991), 37-42.

Brasher, Glenn David. *The Peninsula Campaign & the Necessity of Emancipation: African-Americans & the Fight for Freedom* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States of America* (T. Ward & Company, 1841).

Browning, Robert M., Jr. *From Cape Charles to Cape Fear: The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron During the Civil War* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1993).

Botts, John Minor. *The Great Rebellion: Its Secret History, Rise, Progress, and Disastrous Failure* (New York, 1866).

Capers, Henry D. *The Life and Times of Christopher G. Memminger* (Richmond: Everett Wadley Co., 1893).

Carmichael, Peter S. *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

Christian, William Asbury. *Lynchburg and Its People* (Lynchburg: J.P. Bell Company, 1900).

Crofts, Daniel W. *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

Daniel, W. Harrison. *Bedford County, Virginia, 1840-1860: the History of An Upper Piedmont County in the Late Antebellum Era* (Bedford: The Print Shop, 1985).

Dew, Charles B. *Bond of Iron: Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994).

Dew, Charles B. *Ironmaker to the Confederacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredegar Ironworks* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).

Deyle, Steven. *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Downs, Jim. *Sick From Freedom: African-American Illness and Suffering During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Driver, Robert J., Jr. *Lexington and Rockbridge County in the Civil War* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1989).

Engs, Robert Francis. *Freedom's First Generation: Black Hampton, Virginia, 1861-1890* (Philadelphia, 1979).

Fogel, Robert and Engerman, Stanley. "New Orleans Slave Sales Sample, 1804-1862" (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research).

Fogel, Robert and Engerman, Stanley. *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (2 vols.) (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1974).

Foner, Eric. *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970, 1995).

Freehling, William W. *The Road to Disunion Volume II: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Freudenberger, Herman and Pritchett, Jonathan B. "The Domestic United States Slave Trade: New Evidence," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol. 21, No. 3 (January 1991), 447-477.

Genovese, Eugene. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

Gerteis, Louis. *From Contraband to Freedman: Federal Policy Toward Southern Blacks, 1861-1865* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973).

Glymph, Thavolia. *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Glymph, Thavolia. "Rose's War and the Gendered Politics of a Slave Insurgency During the Civil War" *Journal of the Civil War Era* Vol. 3 No. 4 (Dec. 2013), 501-532.

Goldfield, David. *Urban Growth in the Age of Sectionalism: Virginia, 1847-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977).

Greeley, *The American Conflict: A History of the Great Rebellion in the United States of America, 1860-'64: Its Causes, Incidents, and Results: Intended to Exhibit Especially its Moral and Political Phases, With the Drift and Progress of American Opinion Respecting Human Slavery, From 1776 to the Close of the War for the Union* (Hartford, CT: O.D. Case).

Gudmestad, Robert H. *A Troublesome Commerce: The Transformation of the Interstate Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003).

Gudmestad, Robert H. "The Richmond Slave Market, 1840-1860" (M.A. thesis, University of Richmond, 1993).

Gutman, Herbert, *Slavery and the Numbers Game: A Critique of Time on the Cross* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

Hamilton, Holman. *Prologue to Conflict: The Crisis and Compromise of 1850* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1964, 2005).

Henderson, William D. *Petersburg in the Civil War: War at the Door* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1998).

Hunter, Judith A. "Abolitionism as Logical Conclusion: General James S. Wadsworth as a Case Study in Anti-Southern Sentiment and the Radicalizing Experience of the Civil War" in Orville Vernon Burton, Jerald Podair, and Jennifer L. Weber, eds., *The Struggle for Equality: Essays on the Sectional Conflict, the Civil War, and the Long Reconstruction* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

Inscoe, John. "Mountain Masters as Confederate Opportunists: The Profitability of Slavery in Western North Carolina, 1861-1865," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post Slave Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 1995), 85-100.

Johnson, Walter, ed. *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

Johnson, Walter. *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013).

Johnson, Walter. *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Jordan, Ervin L., Jr. *Black Confederates and Afro-Yankees in Civil War Virginia* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1995).

Kaye, Anthony. *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

Kotlikoff, Laurence J. "The Structure of Slave Prices in New Orleans, 1804-1862" *Economic Inquiry*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Oct. 1979), 496-518.

Lankford, Nelson. *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (New York: Viking, 2002).

Lee, Charles Robert. *The Confederate Constitutions* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1963).

Leepson, Marc. *Saving Monticello: The Levy Family's Epic Quest to Rescue the House that Jefferson Built* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002).

Lightner, David L. *Slavery and the Commerce Power: How the Struggle Against the Interstate Slave Trade Led to the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

Loderhose, Gary. "Thomas Brown of 'Buena Vista,' Hague, Virginia, 1817-1880" *Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine* Vol. 39 (1989).

Manning, Chandra. *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

Marler, Scott P. *The Merchants' Capital: New Orleans and the Political Economy of the Nineteenth-Century South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Martinez, Jaime Amanda. "'The question of bread is a very serious one:' Virginia's Wartime Economy" in William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr., eds., *Virginia At War 1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012)

Martinez, Jaime Amanda. "The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia," in Gallagher, Ayers, and Torget, eds. *Crucible of the Civil War: Virginia From Secession to Commemoration* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 106-135.

Marvel, William. *A Place Called Appomattox* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

McColley, Robert. *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia* (Urbana: Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, 1964).

Mohr, Clarence L. *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986)

Oakes, James. *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861-1865* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013).

Paarlberg, Don. *An Analysis and History of Inflation* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).

Phillips, Ulrich B. *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966 (original printing 1918).

Reid, Richard. "The 1870 United States Census and Black Underenumeration: A Test Case From North Carolina" *Histoire Sociale-Social History*, Vol. 28, No. 56 (Nov. 1995), 487-499.

Ridgeway, Michael. "A Peculiar Business: Slave Trading in Alexandria, Virginia, 1825-1861" (M.A. Thesis, Georgetown University, 1976).

Roark, James L. *Masters Without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977).

Rothman, Adam. *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

Rubin, Anne Sarah. *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

Schulman, Gayle M. "Site Of Slave Block?" *Magazine of Albemarle County History*, Vol. 58 (2000).

Schwartz, Phillip J. *Slave Laws in Virginia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996).

Smith, David G., "Race and Retaliation: The Capture of African Americans during the Gettysburg Campaign," in Peter Wallenstein and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, eds., *Virginia's Civil War* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2005).



Stampp, Kenneth M. *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956).

Stephenson, Wendell. *Isaac Franklin: Slave Trader and Planter of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1938).

Sweig, Donald. "Alexander Grigsby: A Slavebreeder of Old Centerville?" *Fairfax Chronicles*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (May/July, 1983), 1-3.

Sweig, Donald. "Northern Virginia Slavery: A Statistical and Demographic Investigation" (PhD Diss., College of William and Mary, 1982).

Tadman, Michael. *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

Takagi, Midori. "*Rearing Wolves to Our Own Destruction:*" *Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1865* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1999).

Tansey, Richard. "Bernard Kendig and the New Orleans Slave Trade," *Louisiana History*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Spring 1982), 159-178.

Thomas, Emory M. *The Confederate State of Richmond: A Biography of the Capital* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971).

Trask, Benjamin H. "A gift from God: Missionary Teachers and Freedpeople in Southeastern Virginia" in William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr., eds., *Virginia At War 1863* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009)

Tripp, Stephen Elliott. *Yankee Town, Southern City: Race and Class Relations in Civil War Lynchburg* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997).

Vaughan, Walter R. *Vaughan's 'Freedmen's Pension Bill* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971).

Vogtsberger, Margaret Ann. *The Dulanys of Welbourne: A Family in Mosby's Confederacy* (Berryville, VA: Rockbridge Publishing Company, 1995).

Wiley, Bell Irvin. *Southern Negroes, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974).

Williams, Heather Andrea. *Help Me to Find My People: The African American Search for Family Lost in Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

Wills, Brian Steel. , *The War Hits Home: The Civil War in Southeastern Virginia* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2001).

Yagyu, Tomoko. "Slave Traders and Planters in the Expanding South: Entrepreneurial Strategies, Business Networks, and Western Migration in the Atlantic World, 1787-1859" (Ph.D. Diss., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 2006).

Zaborney, John J. *Slaves For Hire: Renting Enslaved Laborers in Antebellum Virginia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012).