

ENSURING LOYALTY:  
BLACK RECRUITMENT IN CIVIL WAR KENTCKY

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JACOB KLINGER

DR. NICOLE ETCHESON – ADVISOR

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## Introduction

Scholars of the American Civil War have questioned Kentucky's loyalty to the Union. A consequence of its delayed entry into the war as well as Kentuckians' deep commitment to slavery, many have viewed Kentucky's loyalty as wholly conditional on the preservation of slavery. Though containing merit, such conclusions have understandably led to the premise that after emancipation became a federal war aim, Kentucky's loyalty to the Union waned. However, examining Kentucky's recruitment records throughout the war and comparing them to the only other similarly populated northern states of Michigan and Wisconsin not only challenges these assumptions, but asserts that the opposite is indeed true. Compared to these free states, Kentucky proportionally recruited more Union troops in a shorter amount of time. Resultantly, Kentucky exhausted its white manpower reserves at a faster rate. By 1864, a year after the Emancipation Proclamation and the legalization of black recruitment, the state could no longer meet its quota with white men as there simply were not enough left. The fact Kentucky achieved a proportional service record by the end of 1863, which compared to Michigan and Wisconsin's, emphasizes that Kentucky's loyalty to the Union did not necessarily wane because of emancipation and black recruitment. On the contrary, the state exhausted its white manpower two years before the war's end to prevent the necessity of these initiatives and preserve the stability of its institutions.

The question remains as to why Kentucky exhibited such an effort when other states did not. Unlike Michigan or Wisconsin, Kentucky's status as a slave state ultimately shaped its entire war effort. Although, only nineteen percent of Kentucky's population were slaves, the institution

nonetheless affected the state's broader economic and cultural character.<sup>1</sup> Appreciating the investment value of chattel property as well as the racial hegemony it afforded whites, slavery became a part of the state's identity and directly or indirectly affected all Kentuckians.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, when threats, such as a Confederate invasion in 1861, or federal emancipation and black recruitment in 1863, challenged the stability of the institution, white Kentuckians opted to enlist for its defense. That is partially why the state witnessed two of its major recruitment drives during these respective years. Slavery was the primary differentiator that motivated white Kentuckians to outpace the recruitment efforts of their non-slave holding counterparts in Michigan and Wisconsin.

Kentucky's effort to preserve slavery by supporting the Union represents a tempered calculation that embodies the state's broader character. During the five months of neutrality, Kentuckians constantly debated and delayed making a decision about which side to join. Weary of Southern fire-eaters as well as radical Northern abolitionists, white Kentuckians sought moderation and law. A result of their experiences in the antebellum period, this stance helped characterize the ideologically diverse state, which contained both pro-slavery and free-labor proponents, and shaped their decision as they entered the war. Ultimately, though, many Kentuckians viewed the Confederacy as unstable, evident by General Leonidas Polk's unsanctioned invasion, and unsympathetic to their desire to keep the disruptive war out of their state. These concerns cast legitimacy on the Union's promise not to interfere with slavery as the federal government had generally respected the state's sovereignty in the past. This led many

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<sup>1</sup> Luke Harlow, *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky, 1830-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 161.

<sup>2</sup> For information on slavery's impact on Kentucky's economy and role of race, see Michael Robinson, *A Union Indivisible: Secession and the Politics of Slavery in the Border South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 15-25, and Harold Tallant, *Evil Necessity: Slavery and Political Culture in Antebellum Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 218.

white Kentuckians to conclude they could depend upon the word and law of the federal government that restoring the Union, not abolition, was their objective. Consequently, Kentuckians utilized the Union as a catalyst to preserve and perpetuate slavery throughout the tumultuous war.

Kentucky's transitioning political identity during the war mirrored the state's desire to maintain stability and preserve slavery. During the first few months of the conflict, Kentucky governor Beriah Magoffin, a southern-sympathizer, attempted to maintain a stance of neutrality. Hoping to counter the unionist legislature's desire to ally to the federal government and to protect the state from civil war, Magoffin refused to commit to either faction.<sup>3</sup> However, when the state responded to a Confederate invasion by allying to the Union, the state's political character shifted and Magoffin eventually resigned from office as a result.<sup>4</sup>

After Magoffin's official term ended, Kentuckians elected Thomas Bramlette as their new governor. A unionist Democrat, Bramlette intended to represent the interests of his constituents by preserving slavery and the state's unionist ties. Unlike Magoffin, Bramlette worked well with the unionist legislature and endeavored to keep the state loyal. Furthermore, Bramlette's conservative unionism corresponded well with the state's broader political beliefs as proven when Kentucky overwhelmingly voted for unionist Democrat George B. McClellan during the 1864 presidential election.<sup>5</sup> Although Bramlette often disagreed with Lincoln and the Republican Party, especially regarding emancipation and black recruitment, he nonetheless

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<sup>3</sup> Magoffin maintained neutrality by refusing to recruit troops for Lincoln in the wake of Fort Sumter and by denouncing secession so long as Lincoln did not touch slavery. For more information see William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States: Preserving the Union* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011), 81-81.

<sup>4</sup> Kentuckians voted to have a Unionist majority legislature in June 1861 during neutrality. James Robinson stepped in as a temporary governor to complete Magoffin's remaining term which ended in September 1863. Magoffin never joined the Confederacy, even after he resigned.

<sup>5</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 257. I discuss the 1864 presidential election in better detail in Chapter 4.

remained a staunch supporter of the federal government throughout the war. Although Kentucky's political leadership shifted during the conflict, from a southern-sympathizer to a staunch unionist, the state's desire to maintain stability and preserve slavery proved a transcendent characteristic of the state.

The alliance between Kentucky and the Union would prove stronger than many contemporary historians have conceded. Focusing on 1863, with the introduction of emancipation and black recruitment, many scholars have argued that Kentucky's overall commitment to the Union diminished. Examining the yearly recruitment data of the state though, reveals that this was not the case.<sup>6</sup> When the federal government officially sanctioned black recruitment in March of 1863, Kentuckians committed their last reserves of manpower to the Union. Representing a potential threat to the institution of slavery in Kentucky, thousands of white men entered federal service to nullify the need for black soldiers. Unlike Michigan or Wisconsin, which turned to the draft and their small black populations to help fill their quotas, Kentucky managed to furnish enough white volunteers to prevent either measure. However, after three years in which armies of both sides claimed thousands of Kentucky volunteers, this effort represented the final reserves which the state could commit. While Michigan and Wisconsin maintained healthy reserves of white manpower later into the war, Kentucky had simply run out and had to allow federal authorities to recruit African Americans. This work argues that Kentucky's diminished recruiting during the final two years of the war was not a result of waning unionist loyalty. Rather, the state's declining white recruitment embodied total military exhaustion brought about by the effort to preserve and perpetuate slavery.

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<sup>6</sup> I examined Kentucky's Adjutant General Report and the 1860 Census to determine how the state's recruitment efforts ultimately compared to the enlistment records of the similarly populated states of Michigan and Wisconsin.

The argument that Kentucky exhausted its white manpower reserves to preserve slavery diverges from other scholarly work on the field. The recent work of authors such as Michael Crane Jr., Aaron Astor, Patrick Lewis, Bridget Ford, Luke Harlow, William C. Harris, and Shae Smith Cox, addressed multiple factors that contributed to the state's loyalty.<sup>7</sup> Examining such components as politics, religion, and economics, all seemed to stress the underlying influence of slavery on the state unionist loyalty. However, none directly referenced Kentucky's yearly recruitment trends. Consequently, the traditional consensus claims that Kentucky's loyalty gradually declined as emancipation and black recruitment became apparent Union objectives. In contrast, this work argues that Kentucky's unionism did not wane as a consequence of emancipation and black recruitment. Instead, these measures strengthened Kentucky's resolve to exhaust its white manpower, negate the need of black recruitment, and preserve and stabilize slavery in the state.

The notion that emancipation and black recruitment discouraged Kentucky unionism is an argument posed by many prominent scholars in this field. Crane's microhistory, "The Demise of Slavery on the Border: Federal Policy and the Union Army in Henderson, Kentucky," examines how unionist sentiment in this community waned as a result of black recruitment. Crane contends that in 1863, Henderson's efforts to organize "slave patrols" to halt the Union army's "harvest of the area's male slaves," displayed the state's discontent at serving a federal

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<sup>7</sup> Michael J. Crane Jr, "The Demise of Slavery on the Border: Federal Policy and the Union Army in Henderson, Kentucky," *Register of Kentucky State Historical Society*, 113, (Autumn 2015), 601-640; Aaron Astor, *Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation, and the Reconstruction of Kentucky and Missouri* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012); Patrick Lewis, *For Union and Slavery: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015); Bridget Ford, *Bonds of Union: Religion, Race, and Politics in a Civil War Borderland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Harlow, *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky*; Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*; Shae Smith Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis" (Master's Thesis, Oklahoma State University, 2013), 12, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.



government that no longer supported slavery.<sup>8</sup> This claim effectively underlines a devotion to slavery by implying that the community's efforts to preserve it simply encouraged them to redirect their federal recruiting efforts to favor local militias.

Similarly, Astor's *Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation, and the Reconstruction of Kentucky and Missouri* argues Kentucky's devotion to slavery encouraged many to forsake the Union after the fall of 1862. Instead of continuing to devote troops to the Union, Astor emphasizes Kentucky's rampant guerrilla fighting as an example of how the Emancipation Proclamation and black recruitment undermined white unionism in the state. Astor reasons that instead of enlisting for federal service, these white Kentuckians created slave patrols and guerrilla groups to thwart federal efforts to recruit blacks.<sup>9</sup> Again, this claim rests on the assumption that Kentucky maintained healthy reserves of manpower throughout the war but simply redirected them from the Union war effort to patrolling its slave population.

Patrick Lewis, author of *For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War*, correspondingly presents the argument that emancipation and black recruitment reduced unionism in Kentucky. Following the account of a slave-holding aristocrat who joined the Twentieth Kentucky Volunteer Infantry as a Union officer, Lewis maintained that Benjamin Buckner serves as a representative model for the rest of Kentucky. Similar to Crane and Astor, Lewis provides insightful and well-supported arguments which reasoned that the state's loyalty to the Union waned as a result of emancipation and black recruitment. Although these measures disenchanted Buckner, who ultimately resigned his commission and began associating himself with rebel sympathizers, they did not encourage him to become openly

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<sup>8</sup> Crane, "The Demise of Slavery on the Border," 637.

<sup>9</sup> Astor, *Rebels on the Border*, 124.

hostile to the Union. His regiment, which Lewis mentioned as being “more problematic” than other Kentucky regiments, fulfilled the rest of its service fighting rebel guerrillas in Kentucky.<sup>10</sup> Although Lewis includes some good analysis of Kentucky’s recruitment and how it decreased after 1864, he did not consider the potential for military exhaustion.

Whereas Crane, Astor, and Lewis focused primarily on Kentucky slavery, other scholars such as Bridget Ford measured multiple factors to comprehend the state’s loyalty. Interested more in Kentuckians’ religious, racial, and political identity, Ford reasons that longstanding regional relationships between Cincinnati, Ohio and Louisville, Kentucky, ultimately led Kentuckians to believe their best interests lay with the North and the broader Union. Stressing that Northern and Republican influences infiltrated the slave state through Louisville, making it the South’s only “epicenter for abolition,” Ford concludes this association ultimately helped garner acceptance for black recruitment in Kentucky.<sup>11</sup> However, Ford’s argument did not factor the state’s high service record to the Union army as a form of loyal resistance to abolition. Though Northern and Republican influence helped stymie resistance in Kentucky to anti-slavery sentiment, one must consider that the state’s reluctant acceptance of black recruitment may equally have come as a result of having already exhausted all other options.

Similar to Ford, Luke Harlow’s *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky, 1830-1880*, examined multiple components to gauge Kentucky’s commitment to slavery. Focusing on associations between evangelical Christianity and slavery, Harlow argues that Kentucky, although relatively moderate compared to the slave states of the Deep South, remained religiously committed to the institution.<sup>12</sup> Harlow reasoned that although Kentucky’s

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis, *For Union and Slavery*, 112.

<sup>11</sup> Ford, *Bonds of Union*, 411.

<sup>12</sup> Harlow, *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky*, 3-6.

moderate cultural markers fostered compromise and unionist sentiment, Kentuckians' religious convictions nonetheless displayed their resolve to preserve slavery. Developing an argument similar to Crane, Astor, Lewis, and Ford, Harlow emphasized slavery as the primary component of the state's unionism. Consequently, when the federal government introduced emancipation and black recruitment in 1863, Harlow contends that their religious, as well as economic devotion to slavery, ultimately encouraged many to associate with the Confederate cause after the war.

While many scholars have argued that Kentucky's loyalty tangentially decreased with emancipation and black recruitment, other historians have argued that the state remained steadfast in its commitment to the Union. William C. Harris noted how "a strong resistance arose in Kentucky" after the federal government sanctioned black recruitment.<sup>13</sup> Although Kentuckians generally detested abolition, Harris argued that the broader white population was still willing "to make the necessary sacrifices to preserve the Union."<sup>14</sup> However, Harris did not closely examine the state's fluctuating recruitment trends and instead relied primarily on public sentiment and political events to prove this point. Although well supported with evidence, a close examination of Kentucky's white troop numbers could strengthen such a claim.

Correspondingly, Shae Smith Cox's work argues that self-interest spurred Kentucky's unionism. Instead of expressed notions of patriotism, which motivated other states such as Michigan and Wisconsin, Cox suggests that Kentucky's close ties to both the North and the South encouraged a more temperate and delayed response to the war.<sup>15</sup> Concentrating on the secession crisis of 1861, Cox maintains Kentucky's equally lucrative trade relations with both

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<sup>13</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 117.

<sup>14</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 188.

<sup>15</sup> Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis," 12.

regions encouraged the state to remain neutral. Cox reasons that slavery spearheaded this desire as it served as the cornerstone of the state's economic, political, and cultural identity. Attempting to ensure the stability of this institution, Kentucky eventually sided with the Union and the Constitution which the state felt could better ensure slavery's future.

The most recent scholarship on Kentucky emphasizes slavery as the primary motivator behind the state's unionist loyalty. A mainstay of the state's cultural, political, economic, and religious identity, all of these scholars argued that the institution had a direct and indirect impact on all Kentuckians and influenced the decisions they made throughout the war. Though some of these works allude to the state's diminished white volunteerism as proof of waning loyalty, none directly analyzed recruitment. A close examination of this quantitative data reveals that Kentucky had already exhausted its white military-age males earlier in the war. Contextually, this fact is clear when one observes that by the start of 1864, the proportion of white military-age men in the military had outpaced Michigan and Wisconsin. In 1864, these two northern states had reserves of manpower that Kentucky did not. Accordingly, Kentucky's diminished recruitment efforts were not necessarily the result of waning unionism, but rather an embodiment of its exhaustive recruiting efforts to sustain the Union and preserve slavery in the state.

To prove that Kentucky had exhausted its manpower by 1863, this thesis employs a comparative methodology that uses digital tools to examine statistical data from all three states. The principle intent of this approach is to display the raw recruitment figures, provided by each state's respective Adjutant General Reports and 1860 Census Records. The free states of Michigan and Wisconsin are important to this study as their respective military-age populations,

found in the Census, compare closely to Kentucky's.<sup>16</sup> Utilizing these tools, this thesis aims to provide an in-depth analysis of Kentucky's yearly recruitment trends compared to the similarly sized states of Michigan and Wisconsin. Consequently, measuring these states' individual recruitment records help offer a basis for comparison that emphasizes Kentucky's enlistments and its close ties to slavery.

To provide a complete analysis of Kentucky's white recruitment and compare it to the efforts of Michigan and Wisconsin, this thesis covers the war chronologically. Chapter one begins by examining Kentucky slavery during the antebellum period and ends with a comparative analysis that emphasizes how the state's recruitment efforts in 1861 dwarfed those of Michigan and Wisconsin. Since the antebellum period, white Kentuckians, made up of both pro-slavery and free-labor proponents, developed an economic and cultural dependence on the institution. They sought stability, mutual cooperation, and an established national framework to preserve slavery indefinitely. Consequently, when the Confederacy invaded Kentucky in September of 1861 and threatened the stability of slavery in the state, Kentuckians' enlisted in numbers that far outpaced their counterparts in Michigan and Wisconsin. The main objective of this chapter is to emphasize how Kentucky expressed its commitment to slavery through its proportionally high federal enlistment records.

The second chapter focuses on recruitment in 1862 and how the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation affected Kentucky unionism. During this year, volunteerism in Kentucky fell considerably compared to Michigan and Wisconsin. The waning recruitment stemmed from multiple reasons, including war weariness, Confederate recruitment, the

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<sup>16</sup> Link to the digital component: [historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/](http://historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/).

beginning of military exhaustion, and to an extent, emancipation. The fighting in Kentucky too, including Confederate invasions and intense guerrilla warfare, made the entire population witness to the war and may also have encouraged young men to remain at home and protect their families. The Emancipation Proclamation also may have affected this poor turn out. Although only meant to apply to rebelling states, it still made many white Kentuckians wary about how it would affect their control over their slave population. However, unionist Kentuckians generally remained steadfast in the belief that the Federal Government would still preserve slavery so long as they remained loyal. This chapter concludes by arguing that Kentuckians reluctantly accepted the Emancipation Proclamation as a means to defeat the rebelling states and restore stability to their institutions.

Chapter three details how the federal enactment of black recruitment affected Kentucky's recruitment efforts in 1863. Following the discussion of the state's reluctant acceptance of emancipation in chapter two, this section details how white Kentuckians, though still acquiescing to the endeavor, sought to resist it by committing the last of their white manpower reserves to Union armies. Unlike Michigan or Wisconsin, which resorted to conscription and black recruitment to meet their troop quotas, Kentucky managed to meet its quota solely through volunteerism. Embodying their cherished desire to preserve and stabilize slavery, white Kentuckians seemed resolved to prevent slaves from entering the army. After considering the manpower of the state that fought for the Confederacy, the Union's 1863 recruitment encompassed the final white men that the state could offer. Consequently, this chapter seeks to prove that for the remainder of the war, Kentucky would be unable to mobilize much in the way of white soldiers.

The final chapter of this thesis focuses on black recruitment in Kentucky during the last two years of the war. After comparing Kentucky's white recruitment efforts to Michigan and Wisconsin, this section will show that Kentucky's poor white recruitment returns in 1864 and 1865 were not necessarily the result of disenchanted unionism but rather military exhaustion. While both Michigan and Wisconsin claimed healthy reserves of manpower late into the war, Kentucky had already expended its manpower. Consequently, white Kentuckians reluctantly accepted black volunteers as a means to fulfil their military obligations. This chapter emphasizes the argument that emancipation and black recruitment did not necessarily devastate unionist sentiment in the state as scholars suggest.

Slavery, and the desire to preserve it, represented the primary component that motivated Kentucky's unionism. Present from the foundation of the state in 1792 until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, the economic and racial benefits white Kentuckians garnered from the institution influenced the state's social and political character. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the roots of slavery in Kentucky to determine how it impacted its unionist sentiment and subsequent recruitment efforts. To do so, one must begin by evaluating slavery in Kentucky during the antebellum period.

## Chapter 1

### Kentucky's Alliance with Slavery during 1861

In September of 1861, Kentucky recruited more Union soldiers than at any other time during the war. Coming almost five months after the conflict officially started, the slave-holding state outpaced the recruitment records of the comparatively populated states of both Michigan and Wisconsin. However, Kentucky's enthusiasm did not solely stem from notions of patriotically defending the Union as it primarily did for Michigan and Wisconsin, but rather from a desire to ensure the internal stability of slavery. Although the state contained a strong and influential faction of free-labor ideologists, all equally enjoyed the social and racial stratification the institution afforded. The northern-inspired free-labor proponents condemned the institution as morally wrong and not as economically profitable as wage labor, but yet still feared abolition on the grounds that it promoted cultural and racial miscegenation. Some slave masters too often articulated that slavery was immoral and only economically valuable as an investment source, but were unwilling to forsake it for fears that it would disrupt the lucrative status quo. Consequently, an integrated character developed among white Kentuckians that noted the evils of slavery while simultaneously believing it to be an absolute necessity. It was an effort to preserve this valued institution which differentiated Kentuckians from their Northern neighbors. Slavery ultimately inspired Kentucky's large recruitment efforts in 1861.

Kentucky's original settlers always maintained a close association with slavery. Although a mix of slave-holders and free-labor proponents, the state's white inhabitants learned to cherish the institution during the antebellum period. Originally a part of Virginia, the state became a bastion of slavery almost as soon as the territory's first white settlers arrived. Coming primarily from Virginia as well as North Carolina, these settlers established slavery in an attempt to mirror



the economic and racial stratifications of Southern society.<sup>1</sup> However, because the state bordered Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, thousands of farmers and urban artisans also arrived from the North. These transplanted northerners similarly sought to influence the state's character by developing free-labor farms and factories.<sup>2</sup> Although both of these ideologies seemed to conflict with one another, white Kentuckians of both persuasions managed to coalesce for the sake of mutual benefit. Slave masters, influenced by free-labor proponents, often implemented the task system and allowed their slaves to contract themselves out and earn some meager wages.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, northern-born farmers and industrialists capitalized on this system whenever possible by employing these slaves for part-time work on their farms or in their factories.<sup>4</sup>

Kentucky's integrated view of slavery during the antebellum period not only helped develop the state's economy, but also its cultural character, which valued white superiority. Encompassing both slave holders and non-slave holders alike, all seemed to benefit from slavery as an institution premised on racial stratification.<sup>5</sup> Both sides feared the prospect of rapid emancipation as they generally perceived African Americans as a potential threat to white racial purity and culture. Increasingly aware of this possibility, Kentucky's legislature supported new state constitutional measures meant to ensure the stability of the institution within the state. In 1799 and 1850 respectively, the legislature voted to permanently disfranchise the state's relatively small free black, mulatto, and Native American populations and voted to make it illegal for the General Assembly to ever free slaves in Kentucky.<sup>6</sup> Whether or not white

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, *Union Indivisible*, 156.

<sup>2</sup> Gary R. Matthews, *More American than Southern: Kentucky, Slavery, and the War for an American Ideology, 1828–1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 63.

<sup>4</sup> Matthews, *More American than Southern: Kentucky, Slavery, and the War for an American Ideology*, 100-102.

<sup>5</sup> Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 218.

<sup>6</sup> Robinson, *Union Indivisible*, 25 and Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 151.

Kentuckians owned slaves, they mutually enjoyed and supported the racial and cultural segregation it afforded them.<sup>7</sup>

The relationship Kentuckians had with slavery fostered a unique border culture within the state that differentiated them from both the South and the North. Including views from pro-slavery advocates as well as free-labor proponents, white Kentuckians developed the stance that slavery was evil but necessary.<sup>8</sup> Adhering to arguments posed by free-labor proponents, pro-slavery sympathizers generally considered that the institution perverted white industriousness and economic progression. Perhaps more importantly, they detested the fact that it placed a perceived “inferior race” in close proximity to white inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> This problem only increased between 1840 and 1860, as the Deep South’s cotton boom amplified demand for labor, causing the fiscal value of slaves to escalate. Subsequently, Kentucky utilized its recent 6.7 percent slave population growth to meet that demand.<sup>10</sup> Although masters intended to remove these slaves from the state, their rising population still increased white Kentuckians’ anxieties about maintaining a white majority. Hoping to curtail the growing African American population, many white Kentuckians, including Henry Clay and Cassius Clay, turned to compensated emancipation and colonization as a potential solution. Intended to liberate and remove the slaves from the state, these measures enjoyed some limited success but largely failed by 1850 for lack of funding to compensate masters for their 210,000 slaves.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Michigan and Wisconsin Democrats seemed to similarly appreciate slavery as a means to segregate whites from blacks. For more information see Thomas E. Rodgers, “Copperheads or a Respectable Minority: Current Approaches to the Study of Civil War-Era Democrats,” *Indiana Magazine of History*, 109 (June 2013), 114-146.

<sup>8</sup> Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 100-101.

<sup>9</sup> Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 82-87.

<sup>10</sup> Cox, “Kentucky’s Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis,” 22-23.

<sup>11</sup> Tallant, *Evil Necessity*, 106.

Consequently, the fear of racial and cultural miscegenation encouraged both pro-slavery and free-labor proponents to maintain slavery as a form of control. Generally adopting this view, Kentucky diverged from the Deep South's understanding that slavery was a positive good but also from Northern Abolitionists who considered the institution a damning evil. Although the state had close cultural ties to the South and economic relations with the North, it never wholly belonged to either. Instead, this integrated approach embodied a broader border culture, observable in Delaware, Maryland, and Missouri, which encouraged Kentuckians to seek moderation between both sections to maintain the stability of slavery.

Because Kentucky's views on slavery set it apart from both the South and the North, the state developed a political stance which sought to project mutual cooperation to the increasingly divided nation. In 1836, for example, Kentucky statesman Henry Clay helped develop what became the Whig Party. Established upon the tenets of deferring to Constitutional law to settle sectional disputes, the Whig Party platform reflected Kentucky's moderate character.<sup>12</sup> Not wishing to disrupt the lucrative ideological balance in the state, the Whigs offered a stable foundation for slavery by advocating for Constitutional law and the Union which had previously lent national legitimacy to the institution. This belief remained strong in Kentucky's political identity even after the Whigs dissolved. During the 1860 election, instead of giving its electoral votes to either Southern Democrat John Breckinridge or Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln, both Kentuckians, the state voted for Constitutional Unionist John Bell.<sup>13</sup> Although one might have reasonably expected Kentucky to be a political battleground state, where pro-slavery

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<sup>12</sup> Mathews, *More American than Southern*, 83.

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the 1860 Presidential election see Robinson, *Union Indivisible*. 151; Mathews, *More American than Southern*, 189. Kentuckians gave Bell 45 percent of their vote, Breckinridge got 36 percent, Northern Democrat Stephan Douglas received 17 percent, and Lincoln got 2 percent.

advocates sided with the South and the free-labor proponents allied to the North, the state sought a nationalist option.

Kentucky's desire to remain impartial to sectional differences continued past the antebellum era to influence the state's neutrality during the opening months of the war. Fearing the radical abolitionist wing of Lincoln's Republican Party, but also wary of becoming the Confederacy's border to a Union no longer encumbered by a Fugitive Slave Law, Kentucky chose the middle ground and declared neutrality. Between Lincoln's election in 1860 to mid-April 1861, eleven Southern slave-holding states seceded from the Union. Uncertain of a Republican Administration, the new Confederacy sent delegates to the Border States in the hopes of uniting the slave-holding South against the Union. However, when the delegates arrived, the Kentucky legislature refused to hear their pleas as they did not wish to "follow the sparks" of secession.<sup>14</sup> This moderate approach applied to the Union as well. In April of 1861, Lincoln telegraphed Kentucky Governor Beriah Magoffin requesting him to raise four regiments. Magoffin refused on the premise that recruiting and deploying such troops "imperils that peace and tranquility, which...have been the paramount desire of this people."<sup>15</sup> Different from other states of the upper south, such as Virginia and Tennessee, Kentucky shared a large portion of its border with non-slaveholding states. Aware that civil war placed Kentucky on the frontline, Magoffin stated the state's neutrality "preserv[ed] the peace and amity between the neighboring Border States on both shores of the Ohio" and protected the state from the "unnatural, horrid, and

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<sup>14</sup> Robinson, *Union Indivisible*, 91-95.

<sup>15</sup> Beriah Magoffin to Abraham Lincoln, August 19, 1861, *Abraham Lincoln Papers*, Series 1 General Correspondence (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress), accessed on November 8, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mal1129200/>, and Mathews, *More American than Southern*, 223-224.

lamentable strife.”<sup>16</sup> Wanting neither Confederate nor Union armies to disrupt the stability of their state, Kentuckians maintained an official stance of neutrality.

Although neutrality generally reflected the wishes of Kentucky’s civil body, there were still strong advocates that favored one side over the other. Prior to the outbreak of war, for example, Kentucky pro-slavery men organized the State Guard to patrol the state and return runaway slaves.<sup>17</sup> However, under the guidance of Magoffin, believed to be a southern sympathizer himself, this unit grew in 1861 to over 4,000 men with the understanding that these generally “southern rights” men would defend the state from federal occupation.<sup>18</sup> Fearing such a biased force might influence the politics of the state, Kentucky’s unionist legislature established the Home Guard to counter the State Guard and to fend off any Confederate incursions.<sup>19</sup> Although a little smaller, officially including 3,004 men, Kentucky’s various Home Guard militias still represented the strong unionist sentiment that existed in the state.<sup>20</sup> The presence of such forces emphasizes that internal divisions did exist in the state and highlights the state’s dual associations with southern slavery and the Union. Magoffin expressed that the presence of both forces would hopefully make Kentucky “a successful mediator” and offer the state the means to “resist and prevent encroachment on her soil, rights, honor, and sovereignty, by either of the belligerent parties.”<sup>21</sup> By counter-balancing the influence of the opposing sides, Kentucky maintained relative mutual cooperation and stability during the war’s first six months.

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<sup>16</sup> Proclamation of Governor Beriah Magoffin, May 20, 1861, Frank Moore, ed., *Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, Documents, Narrative, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc.*, vol. 1, doc. 181 (New York: G. P. Putnam and Henry Holt, 1864), 264-65.

<sup>17</sup> Robinson, *Union Indivisible*, 160 and Mathews, *More American than Southern*, 202.

<sup>18</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 87.

<sup>19</sup> Mathews, *More American than Southern*, 225-227.

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Weisiger Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky, 1861-1866* (vol. 2, 1867), 9, I determined the number by adding all of the Home Guard (unionist sympathizers) in 1861.

<sup>21</sup> Proclamation of Governor Beriah Magoffin, May 20, 1861, *Rebellion Record*, vol. 1, doc. 181, p. 264.

Kentucky's stance of neutrality not only represented a desire to promote internal stability, but also embodied its devotion to law and an adherence to the decision of its state leaders. Intent on preserving slavery, the state had direct associations with the slave-holding Confederacy and an indirect reliance on Union laws, such as the Fugitive Slave Law, which afforded national legitimacy to the institution. Consequently, when war broke out in April of 1861, many Kentuckians wanted to observe "what kind of war bill" the "Black Republican Government at Washington" contrived before officially entering the war.<sup>22</sup> Even the state's Democratic papers, which described Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers as "unwarranted," reaffirmed they were "none the less loyal" and would not "take one step against... the Government."<sup>23</sup> Essentially mirroring Magoffin's proclamation which determined that state forces would not make any "hostile demonstrations," Kentuckians endeavored to adhere "strictly [to] self-defense alone."<sup>24</sup> Of course, some Kentuckians left the state between April and September of 1861 to join Confederate units in Tennessee or Federal troops in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Still, the broader public remained committed to neutrality.<sup>25</sup> This emphasizes that the majority of white Kentuckians adhered to the laws of their state leaders and would not themselves invoke large-scale instability by mobilizing troops within the borders of their own state.

Kentuckians also hoped their impartiality would allow them to burnish their historic role as peacemakers between northerners and southerners. This role suited Kentucky's civic ethos and was nothing new to the state. Since the antebellum period, the state had constantly endeavored to support unionist sentiment. This was evident during the 1832 nullification crisis in

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<sup>22</sup> "Letter from Frankfort," *Louisville Daily Courier*, May 17, 1861.

<sup>23</sup> Harney and Hughes, "Kentucky," *Louisville Daily Democrat*, September 29, 1861.

<sup>24</sup> "Proclamation of Governor Beriah Magoffin," May 20, 1861, *Rebellion Record*, vol. 1, doc. 181, p. 265.

<sup>25</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*, vol. 2, Lindsey reported that it was hard to calculate the equate number of Kentuckians that enlisted during neutrality. He stated that Kentuckians furnished enough troops to raise several regiments which denotes that thousands had left.

which Henry Clay set aside political differences to support President Andrew Jackson's hard line against South Carolina.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, this legacy continued into the 1850s as Henry Clay and his fellow Whigs advocated for the Compromise of 1850 to settle the issue over the westward expansion of slavery between the North and South. These "Clayite" politics encouraged moderation and seemed to continually influence Kentucky's national stance.<sup>27</sup> Even Kentucky's Democrats, arguably the most sympathetic to secession, claimed they were "ready and anxious to mediate between the belligerents." They stated that moderation allowed them the "right of friendly intercourse and trade with both sections" and to "preserve the internal peace and to secure the lives, liberty and property of the citizens of the State."<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, the state's more pro-Union advocates stated that "Kentucky, poised upon her own peerless manhood, will tread it with a firm and constant step" and be "both sober and brave...in this exciting and appalling juncture."<sup>29</sup> Kentuckians generally wanted to remain impartial during the early months of disunion and war to utilize their traditional moderate views to mediate and restore peaceful relations between the South and North.

Working against Kentucky's desire to remain neutral was its strategic access to the Ohio, Mississippi, and Tennessee Rivers, as well as the Cumberland Gap which led to the Deep South. Not wishing to lose the chance of obtaining access, both the South and the North publicly respected the state's neutrality. Reflecting Kentucky's strategic importance, the Confederacy issued clear orders meant to prevent rebel incursions into the state.<sup>30</sup> Lincoln too, understood the

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<sup>26</sup> Ford, *Bonds of Union*, 251.

<sup>27</sup> Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis," 58.

<sup>28</sup> Harney and Hughes, "Neutrality," *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 21, 1861.

<sup>29</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, "Philip Drunk and Philip Sober," *Louisville Daily Journal*, May 4, 1861. The only real difference between the two paper's views was that instead of unrestricted trade between both sections, Kentucky's unionist sympathizers believed they should not sell arms or munitions.

<sup>30</sup> Berry Craig, *Kentucky Confederates: Secession, Civil War, and the Jackson Purchase* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2014), 89-90.

importance of placating Kentucky and famously stated that “to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game.”<sup>31</sup> Similar to the Confederacy, Lincoln officially ordered federal troops not to enter the state. Such was the importance of Kentucky, that while the rest of the nation essentially had to pick a side, both the Confederacy and the Union respected Kentucky’s neutrality. However, that is not to say that both sides completely obliged Kentucky’s wishes. The Confederacy still secretly enticed thousands to enlist while the Union also secretly accepted Kentucky recruits and sent weapons to the pro-union Home Guard.<sup>32</sup> These attempts by both sides to covertly exert influence emphasizes that the state was too important to remain unused indefinitely. Consequently, on 4 September 1861, Confederate General Leonidas Polk invaded Kentucky, effectively ending the state’s neutrality.

General Polk’s invasion of Kentucky proved significant as it helped sway the state into the Union. Though not officially sanctioned by the Confederate government, Polk’s expedition sought to secure the strategic city of Columbus, obtain recruits, and to embolden Confederate sympathizers to push the state into secession.<sup>33</sup> Although the occupation was successful for a time, and eventually sanctioned by the Davis administration, Polk’s operation was largely disastrous for the rebel cause.<sup>34</sup> Not only did it give the pretext for Federal troops under General Ulysses S. Grant to enter Kentucky and occupy Paducah on 5 September, but the Confederate incursion pushed Kentucky into the Union.<sup>35</sup> On 12 September, the state adopted a resolution

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<sup>31</sup> Abraham Lincoln to Orville H. Browning, September 22, 1861, *Abraham Lincoln Papers* (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress).

<sup>32</sup> William W. Freehling, *The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 69, 72-73.

<sup>33</sup> Lowell Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 12-13; Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 107-108.

<sup>34</sup> For Jefferson Davis’s approval of the invasion after it occurred, see Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 141-42.

<sup>35</sup> Columbus was strategically important as its bluffs offered a commanding view of the Mississippi River and Bowling Green, Kentucky was important as it laid along a primary route between Nashville and Louisville.



which specified that “the rights of [their] citizens have been grossly infringed by the so-called Southern Confederate forces” and that they should mobilize their militias and request “aid [and] protection against [the Confederate] invasion.”<sup>36</sup> Although Polk successfully occupied Columbus, and later Bowling Green, unionist influence grew and after a month, the rebels withdrew to the southern portion of the state and established an illegitimate government in Russellville.<sup>37</sup>

Further compounding the issue for the Confederacy was the fact that Polk’s invasion coincided with Lincoln revoking Union General John C. Frémont’s emancipation orders in Missouri. Originally enacted on 30 August 1861, although without any authorization from the administration, Frémont declared that the slaves of rebel masters in Missouri would be “free and forever discharged” from slavery.<sup>38</sup> Deemed by Kentucky Democrats as “rushing over friends and enemies alike” and condemned by Union sympathizers who hoped that “those higher in authority than General Frémont... [would] repudiate the measure,” Kentuckians remained suspicious of Lincoln and the Union.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, Frémont’s proclamation did much to upset white Kentuckians of both persuasions who sought to preserve slavery in their state.<sup>40</sup> On 11 September, perhaps seeing an opportunity to solidify Kentucky into the Union after Polk’s invasion, Lincoln invalidated Frémont’s orders which did much to placate Kentucky’s concerns.<sup>41</sup> Facing invasion and no longer restrained by fears of abolition, Kentucky’s legitimate

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<sup>36</sup> “The Kentucky Resolutions,” *The Rebellion Record*, vol. 3, doc. 45, p. 129, accessed on December 16, 2018, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x004604349;view=1up;seq=301>. Referenced in Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> Anne E. Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky: The Lost Cause and Civil War Memory in a Border State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 17. Polk’s occupation lasted from 1861 to early 1862.

<sup>38</sup> “Frémont’s Manumission Deeds,” *The Rebellion Record*, vol. 3, doc 46, pp. 129-30. Referenced in Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 107.

<sup>39</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Daily Louisville Democrat*, September 15, 1861; Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, September 3, 1861.

<sup>40</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*. 107.

<sup>41</sup> Ford. *Bonds of Union*, 245.

government in Frankfort, on 12 September 1861, approved of General Grant's occupation of Paducah and officially ended the state's neutrality by allying with the Union.

After declaring their allegiance to the federal government, Kentuckians expressed their desire to serve the Union by condemning Polk and the unreliable Confederacy. Motivated by Polk's violation of their state's sovereignty, many Kentuckians began to "ask whether he w[ould] aid the invaders of our soil, or...strike hands with his brethren and drive them back."<sup>42</sup> Calls began to appear for "people, whether belonging to organized companies or not, [to] concentrate with all possible despatch (sic) at the various camps and other military centres (sic) in possession of the state... to break like stars through the gloom that overhangs the Republic."<sup>43</sup> The enthusiasm displayed by Kentuckians immediately after Polk's invasion embodied their antebellum desire to maintain a stable society and preserve slavery. To Kentuckians, Polk's invasion represented "an atrocious attack upon the only sovereignty they (the Confederates) pretended to revere."<sup>44</sup> The *Daily Louisville Democrat* also commented on Polk's invasion by arguing, "when Kentucky adopted her neutrality she did not consider it subject to the 'military necessities' of Tennessee, and will not allow them to remain. It is a 'military necessity' to Kentucky to drive them off."<sup>45</sup> Although the Confederacy was a self-proclaimed purveyor of states' rights, it had displayed to Kentuckians their inability to inspire strict adherence to its principles by violating Kentucky sovereignty.

Many Kentuckians, consequently, viewed the rebelling states as incapable of providing the stability necessary to maintain their ideological and economic balance. Even Democrats

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<sup>42</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, September 19, 1861.

<sup>43</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, September 19, 1861.

<sup>44</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, Osborne, "The Civil War, its Nature and End," *Louisville Daily Journal*, November 22, 1861.

<sup>45</sup>Harney and Hughes, *Daily Louisville Democrat*, September 11, 1861.

warned that Jefferson Davis had “brok[en] his word” and concluded that although they could not “control the...Federal Government,” they still had “more influence with it that they (the seceded states) h[ad] with even their Southern Confederacy.”<sup>46</sup> Conversely, that same paper argued a few days later, that while Lincoln had respected their neutrality, they felt he was “governed by a desire, while in preserving the Union, to keep the rights of the States and of the citizens secure.”<sup>47</sup> Polk’s invasion disregarded state sovereignty and threatened Kentucky slavery by introducing war. These components, coupled with their strong economic ties and perhaps even a degree of patriotism, motivated Kentuckians to commit to the Union.

A significant portion of Kentuckians though, sided with the Confederacy. Coming mainly from the western and central bluegrass regions, many in Kentucky sympathized with the Confederate cause. Venturing into Tennessee, these men quickly organized into regiments and mustered for service with the Confederacy.<sup>48</sup> However, owing to a lack of documentary evidence, it is difficult to precisely determine the number of Kentucky’s Confederates. Scholars have only attempted to estimate the state’s war-time contribution to the Confederacy, ranging from 25,000 to 40,000 troops, but have not broken this number down by year.<sup>49</sup> The reason for this may be a lack of sufficient documentation by the Confederate recruiting services during the early stages of the war. One piece of evidence of Confederate recruiting occurring in Kentucky in 1861 was the resignation of Simon Buckner and his southern-sympathizing State Guard. Wary of the loyalty of these militia men, Kentucky’s unionist legislature decided to cease funding the unit, demand they surrender their weapons, and make them take an oath of loyalty to the Union.

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<sup>46</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, September 18, 1861.

<sup>47</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, November 27, 1861.

<sup>48</sup> Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 70.

<sup>49</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 108; Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*, 20; Cox, “Kentucky’s Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis,” 18. Most of these Confederate Kentuckians joined up between 1861 and 1863.

Responding to the legislature's actions, Buckner and thousands of his fellow guardsmen joined the Confederacy during late July 1861.<sup>50</sup> Writing from Camp Boone, Tennessee, William Withers perhaps alludes to these State Guardsmen when he wrote to Confederate Secretary of War Leroy Walker. Withers claimed in July, "at least 10,000 [Kentuckians] can be enlisted in 40-60 days."<sup>51</sup> This number is conceivable, owing to the *rage militare* which encouraged enlistments, but there is insufficient complementary evidence to validate or disprove the estimate. What is certain, however, is that thousands of white Kentuckians departed for Confederate service during 1861. Although the majority of Kentuckians remained unionist, this faction of proactive Confederate sympathizers lowered the state's broader manpower reserves.

Kentucky still had thousands of men enlisting in federal service though and in order to properly organize them, the state, similar to the rest of the Union, utilized an enlistment process that generally relied on civilian and military agents to work in tandem. When the federal government issued a call for troops, the War Department assigned each state a quota based on its military-aged population. Once a state received its quota, the governor, adjutant general, and provost marshal worked together to assign each county a portion of the recruiting burden. Local leaders and military recruiters then worked together to publicize the quota, raise bounties, and begin organizing the men. Early in the war, local leaders often formed their own companies, took them to a federal recruiting depot, and mustered them into a regiment. Later in the war, and especially after the draft became effective in 1863, state and federal leaders directly recruited young men into service rather than have local leaders attempt to organize the troops themselves. Once a community recruited enough men to complete its quota, federal recruiters gathered the

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<sup>50</sup> Arndt M. Stickles, *Simon Bolivar Buckner: Borderland Knight* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 78-79.

<sup>51</sup> W.M. Withers to L.P. Walker, July 21, 1861, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Ser. I, Vol. IV (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), 374.

men into a military camp, mustered them into active service, and then either organized them into a regiment or assigned them as replacements for veteran units. Throughout the war, this was the general recruitment process which Union troops from Kentucky, Michigan, and Wisconsin experienced.

During the last four months of 1861, Kentucky enjoyed the largest recruitment surge it would have during the war. Motivated by a mutual desire to defend the state from war, preserve slavery, maintain economic ties to Northern industry, and perhaps patriotism, thousands of white Kentuckians volunteered for the Union army. According to the *Adjutant General Report*, a compilation of unit rosters and statistical military data assembled after the war, Kentucky conservatively furnished 32,756 white recruits between 12 September and 31 December 1861.<sup>52</sup> Based on its quota of 27,237, allotted them by the Federal Government in April of 1861, Kentucky furnished 5,519 men over its requirement.<sup>53</sup> Having a military-age white population in 1860 of 140,078, these Union recruits represent 23 percent of the state's available manpower.<sup>54</sup> However, this is a conservative percentage that accounts for neither the Kentuckians estimated to have joined Confederate forces, nor those who enlisted in Union regiments in other states during neutrality.<sup>55</sup> Compared to Michigan and Wisconsin, two states containing comparable white

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<sup>52</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*. Because the Report did not have all of the regiments and accompanying strength organized by year, I had to go through the entire report and add each unit to reach this number. For that reason, I cannot provide an exact page number as the data spanned hundreds of pages. However, according to the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, 1264, this number is actually on the conservative side. Washington credited the state's 1861 contribution with 35,095 men. To maintain consistency though, I have decided to use the Adjutant General Report's findings as I will rely upon them for my examination of Michigan and Wisconsin's recruiting.

<sup>53</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1264.

<sup>54</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 168-70. I determined the number by adding adult white males aged 20-30 and 30-40. This age group represents the primary source drawn upon for recruits. In an effort to maintain consistency, this approach will also determine the military-aged population of Michigan and Wisconsin.

<sup>55</sup> Because there is no definitive consensus among scholars on how many Kentuckians fought in the Confederacy, I have based this number by averaging the estimates which range from 25,000 to 40,000. Dividing the federal troops by the adjusted population after rebels left, Kentucky's percentage would have been 30 percent instead of 23.

populations to Kentucky, it is observable there was a stark contrast regarding their respective recruitment efforts.<sup>56</sup> To explain this phenomenon, it is important to examine respective motivations behind each state's enlistments.

In Michigan, patriotism and a sense of duty to preserve the Union served as the primary encouragements for enlistment in 1861. Between April and the end of December, Michigan's Adjutant General reported that the state enlisted 24,281 white men into federal service.<sup>57</sup> Out of a population of 126,312 military-age white males in 1860, this figure represents roughly 19 percent of its eligible manpower.<sup>58</sup> Exceeding the quota of 21,357 troops, the *Cass County Republican* stated, "we fight [so] that the rebellion may be crushed—that the Union may be preserved, and that the hopes of the liberty-loving... may be realized."<sup>59</sup> Stated in August of 1861, this statement reiterated that Michigan was enthusiastically recruiting for the purpose of defending the Union. Matching this spirit, the *East Saginaw Courier*, a Democratic paper, stated that "seventy thousand Democrats in the State of Michigan stand ready to-day to redeem her solemn pledge to sustain the Government."<sup>60</sup> Representing an embodiment of what James McPherson described as *rage militaire*, it seems that defending notions of country and the perceived ideals it represented, permeated the state.<sup>61</sup> Although an exaggeration, as Michigan would not furnish 70,000 troops until 1864, the *East Saginaw Courier's* claims still emphasizes a broader martial excitement which seemed to encourage many Michiganders to enlist. So long as

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<sup>56</sup> Populations determined by the 1860 Population Census.

<sup>57</sup> Jno Robertson, *Annual report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year, 1862* (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1863). vol. 3, p. 7. This figure excludes the estimated 1,453 recruited in other states.

<sup>58</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860*. I determined this figure by adding its 20-30 and 30-40 white male age groups.

<sup>59</sup> For Michigan's aggregate 1861 quota, see, United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Volume IV, 1264. Newspaper quote from Campbell and Mead, "What We Are Fighting For?" (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, August 8, 1861.

<sup>60</sup> Geo F. Lewis, "Sentiment of the State," *East Saginaw Courier*, May 16, 1861.

<sup>61</sup> McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 17-19.

the federal objective was to preserve the Union, both Republican and Democratic Michiganders could draw on a common cause and enlist.<sup>62</sup>

While patriotic devotion to the Union seemed to transcend political boundaries in Michigan, divisive issues pertaining to slavery still weighed on the state's recruitment. Although Michiganders had given Lincoln 88,481 votes during the 1860 election, or 57 percent of their total ballots, Northern Democrat Stephen Douglas still received 65,057, or 42 percent.<sup>63</sup> Douglas's platform, diverging from the Southern Democrats, emphasized the Union, but favored popular sovereignty to decide the westward expansion of slavery.<sup>64</sup> Essentially, a large contingent existed in Michigan which did not favor Lincoln nor any policies that might abolish or interfere with slavery. Similar to white Kentuckians, many Democratic Michiganders expressed concern that Lincoln could transform the war into "a crusade against African slavery."<sup>65</sup> However, Democrats contended that as long as Lincoln "conduct[ed] the war upon humane, constitutional and non-partisan principles... a united nation will strengthen his arms; but the instant he abandons this high position, he will break the spell of patriotism, which has so far saved the Republic."<sup>66</sup> Fundamentally a form of conditional loyalty, Michigan's Democrats seemed to partially align with their counterparts in Kentucky to prevent "turning loose upon our society four millions of irresponsible blacks."<sup>67</sup> Consequently, where a desire to maintain slavery

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<sup>62</sup> Martin J. Herschock, "Copperheads and Radicals: Michigan Partisan Politics during the Civil War Era, 1860-1865," *Michigan Historical Review*, 18 (no.1, 1992); 42.

<sup>63</sup> Herschock, "Copperheads and Radicals," 37n12.

<sup>64</sup> For more information, read Graham A. Peck, "Was Stephen Douglas Antislavery?" *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association*, 26, (no. 2, 2005); 18-21.

<sup>65</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, "Our Country," *Grand Haven News*, May 1, 1861.

<sup>66</sup> Geo F. Lewis, "What is the Matter," *East Saginaw Courier*, July 11, 1861.

<sup>67</sup> Geo F. Lewis, "Negro Equality," *East Saginaw Courier*, October 1, 1861.

and the racial benefits it afforded seemed to encourage Kentucky volunteerism, it may have discouraged some recruitment in Michigan during 1861.<sup>68</sup>

In Wisconsin, patriotic sentiment also encouraged Union enlistments, but unlike Michigan or even Kentucky, patriotism had a limit. In 1861, the state provided 22,625 white soldiers for federal service.<sup>69</sup> Based on their 1860 population of 121,997, these recruits represented 18 percent of the state's total manpower.<sup>70</sup> The fact that Wisconsin had a lower proportional service record than either Kentucky or Michigan is not surprising. By 26 November 1861, the state's governor, Alexander Randall, ceased all recruitment in the state after it had met its quota. Wisconsin's Adjutant General reported the state no longer needed to recruit because Wisconsin had "completed the troops of that arm of the service needed by [the] Government for the present."<sup>71</sup> Although meeting its quota of 21,753, Wisconsin still failed to provide as many troops as Kentucky or Michigan both in number and in proportion to its overall population.<sup>72</sup>

Although Wisconsin's recruitment returns may indicate the state was complacent after meeting its quota, a closer examination of the state's Democratic and Republican opinions convey that men from both parties were generally all willing to serve. Wisconsin could not have met its troop quota unless men from both political parties enlisted. Although 42 percent of Wisconsin's ballot went for Stephen Douglas, while roughly 56 percent went for Lincoln, those

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<sup>68</sup> Edward Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: The Civil War in the Heart of America, 1859-1864* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2004). Ayers similarly observed how some Pennsylvanians in Franklin County did not want to volunteer to fight a war that could ultimately free the slaves.

<sup>69</sup> Augustus Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin, with the Report from the Quartermaster General and Surgeon General, Year ending December 30th, 1865* (Madison: William J. Park & Co., 1866). Vol. II, 21.

<sup>70</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 72.

<sup>71</sup> Butler G. Noble, Lieutenant-Governor, "No Additional Regiments Needed," *Civil War Messages and Proclamations of Wisconsin War Governors*. November 26, 1861 (Madison: Wisconsin Historic Commission, 1912), accessed on December 3, 2018, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3296249;view=1up;seq=100.78>.

<sup>72</sup> I found Wisconsin's quota in United States War Department, *Official Record of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1264.



Democrats still seemed willing to volunteer for the Union.<sup>73</sup> A Democratic newspaper, the *Manitowoc Pilot*, stated that “every Democrat who has enlisted in the war possess (sic) the courage and patriotism to fight under a partizan (sic) Republican Administration to sustain the Union.”<sup>74</sup> Similarly, Republican newspapers such as the *Watertown Republican* declared, “let fifty such armies as the Federal forces now in the field be furnished...in the cause to finally make way for the triumphal car of freedom, rather than give way to the barbaric and Satanic hordes of Confederates.”<sup>75</sup> It seems that patriotic fervor transcended political boundaries and encouraged both Democrats and Republicans to volunteer.

Rufus Dawes’s post-war memoir further validates the claim that notions of patriotism motivated Wisconsin men to fight. Dawes, a self-proclaimed abolitionist from Ohio, found himself in Wisconsin when the war broke out. Intent on capitalizing on the *rage militaire* that possessed the state, Dawes managed to recruit 100 men within five days, into what would become Company K of the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.<sup>76</sup> Primarily made up of Democratic German and Irish immigrants, Dawes claimed their patriotic zeal and devotion to the Constitution earned them the title of the “unmercenary volunteers of 1861.”<sup>77</sup> However, commenting on how his personal convictions regarding abolition partially encouraged his own enlistment, Dawes noted that such arguments did not resonate among his comrades who, either from objection or indifference, did not associate their enlistment with a greater cause of

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<sup>73</sup> Kerry Trask, *Fire Within: A Civil War Narrative from Wisconsin* (The Kent State University Press, 1995), 39- 40 and Ronald Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War* (Charleston: History Press, 2017), 21-22.

<sup>74</sup> J. Crowley, “Republican Officers and Democratic Soldiers,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 16, 1861.

<sup>75</sup> J.W. Lawton and J.T Moak, “Compromise Dishonorable and Suicidal,” *Watertown Republican*, September 6, 1861.

<sup>76</sup> Rufus Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin for Wisconsin Civil War Centennial Commission, 1962), 5-7.

<sup>77</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*, 6-7.

abolition.<sup>78</sup> Dawes's account emphasizes that, despite the governor's self-imposed recruitment restrictions, men from Wisconsin were eager to volunteer. Furthermore, his ability, as an Ohio abolitionist, to find common cause with Democratic immigrants and quickly enlist them into a company, exhibits the bipartisan nature of patriotism in Wisconsin. Although political divisions existed in the state, the fervor to defend the Union and the Constitution seemed to encourage the majority of its enlistments.

Regardless of enlistment motives, the question still arises as to why Kentucky furnished proportionally more troops than either Michigan or Wisconsin. Whether it was because Democrats remained suspicious of abolitionists, a sense of complacency after filling quotas, or a combination of both, men from Michigan and Wisconsin enlisted in significantly lower numbers in comparison to Kentucky. Given that slavery was a corner stone of Kentucky's economy, culture, and social stratification, one might reasonably assume the Border State had more in common with the Confederacy. Subsequently, it is perhaps surprising the state far exceeded the minimum quota which the federal government had given them in April. Observing this, Kentuckians themselves reported that "considering the circumstances under which Kentucky is placed, she has done better than any other State in the Union... she has in the field more than her quota called for... notwithstanding she was the last to enter the field."<sup>79</sup> Whereas patriotism seemed to be the primary motivator for Michigan and Wisconsin men, self-interest to maintain stability in the state appeared as the main enlistment incentive for Kentucky in 1861.<sup>80</sup>

Confederate General Polk's invasion threatened Kentucky's societal stability which galvanized Kentuckians to enlist in large numbers. Unlike Michigan or Wisconsin, Kentucky had

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<sup>78</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*, 13-26.

<sup>79</sup> Harney and Hughes, "Letter from Daviess County," *Daily Louisville Democrat*, November 19, 1861.

<sup>80</sup> Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis," 69-71.

a palpable reason to exhibit martial enthusiasm. With Confederate troops entering the state, articles appeared which stated that the Confederacy was attempting “to lay waste the homes of our people...because they remain[ed] steadfastly true to the Union [and] the Constitution.”<sup>81</sup> Kentuckians claimed that the Confederates intended to “subjugat[e] the freemen of Kentucky to the rule of King Jefferson Davis” and “disregard...[their] rights of property, life, and liberties.”<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, rebels confiscated, or “hired” thousands of Kentucky slaves to help construct their defenses around Columbus, Kentucky as well as Forts Henry and Donelson in Tennessee.<sup>83</sup> Consequently, Kentucky’s mobilization derived from a perceived need to protect personal interests, rather than simply abstract notions of patriotism.

However, in Michigan and Wisconsin, self-interest under the mask of patriotism may also have encouraged enlistments. Similar perhaps to Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin had mutual desires to preserve their own internal stability and way of life. The difference, though, is while Kentucky associated that with slavery, Michigan and Wisconsin linked it with the Union. This is perhaps why Republicans and at least some Democrats found common cause as the Union broadly encompassed their respective interests. Secession threatened the economic and political benefits they derived from a united nation. In Michigan, for example, Democrats equated secession to “see[ing] the millions employed, now unemployed...their willing hands idle, their families struggling” while Republicans stated they wanted “a re-united and once more prosperous people.”<sup>84</sup> Although such overtures also included enunciations of duty and honor, it

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<sup>81</sup> Harney and Hughes, “Kentucky’s Duty to Herself—Let the Legislature Promptly Act,” *Daily Louisville Democrat*, September 27, 1861.

<sup>82</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, September 17 1861.

<sup>82</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, September 17 1861.

<sup>83</sup> Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 150.

<sup>84</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “Freedom of the Press,” *Grand Haven News*, August 28, 1861. Campbell and Mead. “Now or Never,” *Cass County Republican*, September 12, 1861.

seems a self-interest to maintain their economic affluence helped encourage some of the patriotic expressions that encouraged enlistments.<sup>85</sup>

Wisconsinites also seemed to utilize patriotism to mask their self-interest in preserving the Union. For example, Democratic immigrants reported that “under no circumstances would their condition be tolerable in a divided Confederacy.” Similarly, Republicans stated disunion invited “ruin” as it sets a “precedent... whereby they (the minority) may rightfully revolt when beaten at the polls.”<sup>86</sup> Similar to Michigan, Wisconsin’s Democrats and Republicans alike may have blanketed their respective interests with abstract notions of national patriotism. Fearful perhaps of how disunion might affect their personal welfare, self-interest encouraged patriotic sentiment. Although such calls may have warranted the blind enlistment of some recruits, many men in both Michigan and Wisconsin seemed to have had more tangible and inclusive reasons to enlist. Consequently, they too sought economic and cultural stability. However, because they dwelled in free-states, they associated their affluence with free-labor and the Union instead of slavery.

The desire to maintain slavery may have discouraged some Northern Democrats in Michigan and Wisconsin from volunteering. Although they did not necessarily have a direct relationship to the institution, many Northerners still enjoyed its perceived racial and cultural benefits. In newspapers from both states, Democrats proclaimed they did not want to disrupt slavery, which they viewed as a constitutional right of fellow citizens. Not willing to die for slaves, Michigan Democrats stated that the Constitution demands that “each State [should]

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<sup>85</sup> I found these quotations buried amongst interpretative patriotic overtures to defend the Constitution, honor their Revolutionary forbearers, and protect their national identity. These seemed to represent the tangible reasons behind their patriotism.

<sup>86</sup> J. Crowley, “The Adopted Citizen and the Union,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, January 11, 1861 and J.W. Lawton and J. T. Moak, “No Compromise with Traitors,” *Watertown Republican*, February 1, 1861.

regulate its own affairs without interference” and Northerners should just “mind [their] own business and let the affairs of others alone.”<sup>87</sup> Even though they did not own slaves or live in a state that supported the institution, many still viewed it as a valuable means to control and contain the African American population in the South. Wisconsin Democrats, meanwhile, wrote that slavery was necessary because it allowed whites to act as “the overseer for the future good behavior of the negro.”<sup>88</sup> From these examples, many Michigan and Wisconsin Democrats did not want to interfere with the institution because of their Constitutional interpretations and their belief that it maintained white supremacy. This may have discouraged Michigan and Wisconsin Democrats who did not want to fight in a war that could potentially advance abolition. Consequently, the same desire to preserve slavery that motivated Kentuckians may have discouraged some Northern Democrats.

Whether from abolitionist influences or because they were far from active military theatres, Michigan and Wisconsin did not recruit as many volunteers as Kentucky in 1861. Fearful that the chaos of war and the traversing of armies across their state would ultimately disrupt their slave society, Kentuckians decided to remain neutral. Already maintaining two militias with biases in favor of one side or the other, the state did not want civil war to destroy the tenuous balance established between pro-slavery and free-labor proponents during the antebellum period. Intent on preserving slavery, both for its economic flexibility as a labor source as well as an investment, and for the cultural supremacy it afforded whites, all white Kentuckians mutually enjoyed the institution’s perceived benefits. Evident from their newspaper articles, proclamations, and letters to President Lincoln, Kentuckians did not want any

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<sup>87</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “Slavery The Cause of the War!” *Grand Haven (Michigan) News*, December 18, 1861.

<sup>88</sup> J. Crowley, “Social Life in the South,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, February 15, 1861.

disruptions in their state. They merely wanted to maintain the status quo until the rest of the nation could resolve its differences.

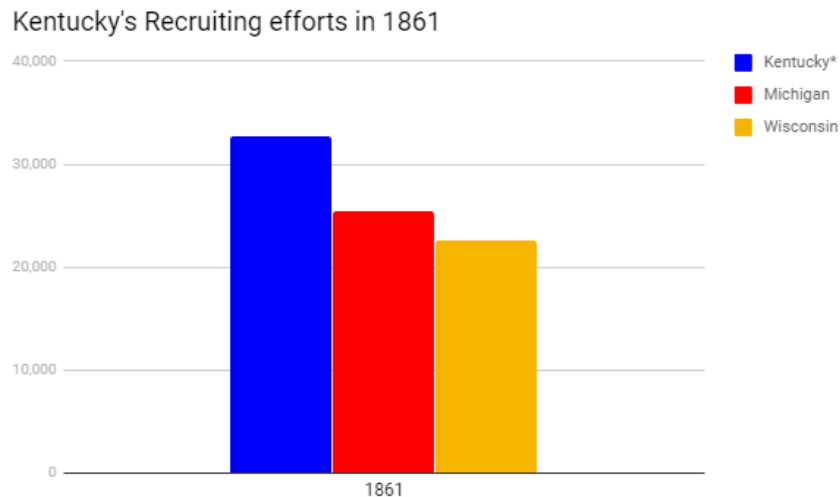
However, Polk's invasion threatened these hopes and ultimately encouraged thousands of white Kentuckians to enlist for the Union. Although thousands went to the Confederacy in 1861, the vast majority allied themselves to the federal cause. Unwilling to commit to a Confederacy which failed to control its generals and did not respect the state's neutrality, Kentuckians viewed the rebel bureaucracy and command structure as disorganized and undependable. Consequently, the state decided to ally with the federal government which, although it was secretly breaching its neutrality by recruiting and arming Kentucky unionists, had not wantonly violated neutrality. Lincoln was all too aware of the state's vital importance and issued strict orders to his commanders not to disturb the state's neutrality. Furthermore, Lincoln paid special attention to Kentucky's interests by revoking General Frémont's unauthorized order to free the slaves of rebel masters in Missouri. This, coupled with Lincoln's promise that the war's purpose was to preserve the Union and the Constitution, motivated Kentucky unionism.

During the following four months, between September and December, Kentucky enjoyed its highest recruitment record in the war. Far outpacing Michigan and Wisconsin, Kentuckians quickly mobilized and mustered 29 regiments of infantry and cavalry, three artillery batteries and an engineering company all for three-year terms in federal service.<sup>89</sup> Encompassing over 32,000 troops, Kentucky far exceeded its quota and significantly reinforced Union troops as they pushed the Confederates, and many of Kentucky's secession sympathizers, to the southern portion of the state. Intent on maintaining slavery and the economic and racial benefits it afforded, these

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<sup>89</sup> I went through the entire *Adjutant General of Kentucky's Report* to determine the date of each regiment's initial enlistment, unit type, strength, and enlistment period.

Kentuckians viewed the Union as the best catalyst to ensure the continued existence of the institution in the state. Effectively, Kentucky's huge troop surge in 1861 cemented its support for the Union.



This graph shows Kentucky's relative recruitment compared to Michigan and Wisconsin for 1861.<sup>90</sup>

Even though Kentucky was a slave state that had arguably more to lose by allying with the Union, it still furnished more troops than either Michigan or Wisconsin. Although both of these states met their respective quotas, their recruitment efforts, which spanned almost nine months, failed to compare to Kentucky's. Representing two states which voted Republican in the 1860 election and shared many economic and cultural characteristics with the rest of the northern Union, they did not directly face the same threats to their internal security and stability as Kentucky. Located in the far North and surrounded by friendly states, neither Michigan nor Wisconsin faced any serious threat of invasion. Furthermore, Michiganders and Wisconsinites

<sup>90</sup> I obtained this data from each states' respective Adjutant General Reports. For a more detailed analysis of this data see my digital component, [historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/](http://historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/).

may have also felt that after meeting their quotas, they had concluded the need to recruit any further.

The only other explanation for why Michigan and Wisconsin did not provide as many troops as Kentucky, lies in the absence of slavery. Both states were predominately white and contained very small free-black populations. Consequently, they did not necessarily view slavery as a detriment to their economic and cultural characters. Effectively, most remained indifferent to whether or not slavery continued to exist. Their sole purpose was to restore the Union under which they had previously prospered. Although Democrats in both states expressed their sympathy for slavery, both as a Constitutional right as well as a perceived means to maintain white supremacy, they did not have a direct stake in it. Instead, they expressed abstract notions such as patriotism as a means to maintain the status quo which had thus far proved beneficial. Although abhorring secession, many Democrats may have feared the prospect of how an abolitionist war would negatively affect their cherished Union and may have refused to volunteer as a consequence.

Regardless of the reasons, Kentucky furnished more troops in a shorter amount of time than their similarly populated counterparts in Michigan and Wisconsin. Motivated primarily by fears of racial amalgamation and internal strife, Kentuckians enlisted in large numbers to defend the Union, as well as slavery. However, in 1862, Kentucky faced two major issues which would further complicate these intentions: further internal instability and the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Determined to defend the Union but suspicious of emancipation, Kentucky would remain committed to the Federal government in 1862 even though its recruitment fell by half.



## Chapter 2

### The Threat of Abolition and Kentucky's Loyalties in 1862

In January of 1862, Kentuckians were optimistic about the coming campaigning season. After driving out Confederate forces and recruiting thousands of men into the federal army during the previous year, Kentuckians felt that the Union was poised to defeat the rebellion. However, as the year progressed and the war continued, white Kentuckians became distressed about how a prolonged civil war could affect their state. Concerns regarding casualties, invasion, guerrilla fighting, and especially the increasing influence of abolition, weighed heavy on the Border State. Consequently, many historians have argued that unionist Kentuckians lost interest in enduring these hardships as they feared their sacrifices were abetting abolitionism.<sup>1</sup> Ascribing Kentuckians' lower morale and faltering recruitment to the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, researchers have generally claimed that by late 1862, Kentuckians' loyalty to the Union had subsided.

Although such scholarly claims are well-supported and reasonable, they do not closely contextualize Kentucky's ability to recruit in 1862. After considering the huge recruitment surge of 1861, coupled with the men lost to Confederate recruiters, the state's quota, premised on its population in 1860, was too high. Furthermore, the state suffered from insurrectionary and conventional conflict, which encouraged many potential recruits to remain at home and protect their property instead of enlisting in federal service. Considering these factors, one could conclude that although Kentucky recruited significantly fewer troops, especially compared to Michigan or Wisconsin, war weariness and emancipation did not necessarily hinder unionist

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<sup>1</sup> Crane, "Demise of Slavery on the Border," 637.

recruitment. Rather, Kentucky's reduced volunteerism reflected the beginnings of military exhaustion.

Unlike Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin maintained large reserves of manpower they could draw upon for recruits in 1862. Unaffected by internal warfare or Confederate recruiting, these two states arguably had a more fixed population and a dependable infrastructure for recruitment. Relying heavily on state bounties and the threat of a draft, both Michigan and Wisconsin were able to provide thousands more troops than Kentucky. However, concerns over high casualties and political partisanship regarding the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, weighed on these states and negatively affected their recruitment. Even though Michigan and Wisconsin contained more eligible men than Kentucky, these concerns helped prevent both of these states from meeting their respective quotas. After comparing the proportional recruitment efforts of these three states, it is evident that despite war weariness or fears of abolition, Kentucky still remained committed to preserving slavery *and* the Union.

In early 1862, Kentuckians remained hopeful that the war would end quickly. Following the state's massive recruitment efforts during the previous year, coupled with the entry of Union troops into the state, many Kentuckians felt that the war would conclude relatively quickly. In February, commenting on the size and training of the federal government's armies, the *Louisville Daily Democrat* stated, "the re-establishment of the Union is no longer a question of doubt in the mind of the people. After trial and preparations, at length we can see the sunlight shining through the rift clouds, and lighting all the land."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, in March, after discussing Union preparations to advance on Corinth, Mississippi, General Burnside's victory at Newbern, and

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<sup>2</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, February 18, 1862.

Commodore Samuel DuPont's retaking of Fort Marion in Florida, the *Lexington Observer and Reporter* expressed optimism for the coming year. The newspaper claimed that after such successes, "the progress of the armies of the Republic is onward, and the rebellion under their vigorous and well directed blows is reeling and tottering to its fall."<sup>3</sup> Heading into the major military campaigning seasons of the spring and summer months, white Kentuckians generally seemed assured the Union would prevail.

Kentuckians' optimism though, did not translate into significant Union volunteers in 1862. The state's Adjutant General, D.W. Lindsey, placed the state's total contribution for the year at 12,717 troops.<sup>4</sup> Out of a total quota of 29,810, one can see Kentucky had fallen well below its federal requirement.<sup>5</sup> However, according to a letter written to the Adjutant General of the United States Army, Lorenzo Thomas, on 21 December 1863, John Boyle, Kentucky Adjutant General between 1863 and 1864, concluded that the state's 1862 quota had been incorrect. He argued that "the calls for troops by the General Government of 1861 and 1862," established from the 1860 Census, had not "deducted [the] 17,000 men —the number supplied from the best data at command, to have originally joined the rebel armies."<sup>6</sup> These 17,000 Kentuckians, whom Boyle calculated had left for the Confederacy between 1861 and 1862, represent the difference between Kentucky's furnished troops and its quota.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> D.C. Wickliffe, "Commodore DuPont Moving on," *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, March 24, 1862.

<sup>4</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General*, 1866. Lindsey was Kentucky's Adjutant General by the end of the war. The Adjutant General in 1863, who reported on Kentucky's recruitment for 1862, was John Boyle.

<sup>5</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 4, 1265. I calculated this number by adding its quotas under the respective calls for troops on July 2, 1862 (14,905) and August 4, 1862 (14,905).

<sup>6</sup> John Boyle to Lorenzo Thomas, December 21, 1863, *Assistant Adjutant General Letter Book*. Accessed through the *Civil War Governors of Kentucky Digital Documentary Edition*.

<sup>7</sup> Kentucky's accumulated quota (29,810) minus its furnished troops (12,717) equals a difference of 17,093.

Although Boyle's simple assertion that Kentucky's missing recruits were in Confederate forces is convenient, it is not wholly inconceivable. The federal government's use of the 1860 Census to determine quotas worked relatively well for the northern states but had no means to accurately adjust for the Border States who lost potential recruits to the South. Rebel recruitment may also have negatively affected Missouri and Maryland as they too fell short of their 1861 and 1862 quotas by 12,520 and 19,701 respectively.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, it is also possible that from April of 1861 to the end of 1862, 17,000 Kentuckians joined Confederate forces.<sup>9</sup> Given the estimate provided by Confederate officials that approximately 10,000 Kentuckians had enlisted by July of 1861, it is conceivable that a further 7,000 enlisted during August of 1861 to December of 1862. Kentucky newspapers commented on this in September by stating that "there are many of the Secesh making their way to the Confederate forces to fight against the State."<sup>10</sup> Assuming then this number is plausible, one can see that although producing 50 percent fewer federal troops in 1862, 48 percent of the state's military-age population was already in uniform, of which 32 percent were in Union armies.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, Kentucky had a smaller population to draw upon for Union recruits which the United States War Department had not considered when determining Kentucky's quota.

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<sup>8</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 4, 72-73. I calculated Missouri's 1861 and 1862 troop deficit by subtracting its aggregate quota (66,082) from its furnished troops (53,562) to get 12,520. I followed the same equation for Maryland's 1861 and 1862 recruitment by subtracting its aggregate quota (32,642) from its furnished troops (12,941) to get 19,701.

<sup>9</sup> Although no specific census for the number of Kentuckians that fought for the Confederacy exists, most agree it is between 25,000 and 40,000. This paper's settlement on the median value of 32,500 means it is possible that after almost two years, 17,000 Kentuckians had enlisted in the rebel cause. Scholarly estimates of Kentucky's Confederates provided by Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 108; Marshal, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*, 20; Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis," 18.

<sup>10</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, September 13, 1862.

<sup>11</sup> I determined this number by adding Kentucky's 1861 and 1862 Union troops (45,473) to its estimated Confederate recruits (17,000), and the state's militia in 1862 (4,860), which equals (67,333). I divided 67,333 by Kentucky white adult military-age population (140,078) which equals 48 percent.

Regardless of Kentucky's quota issues, the state still did not furnish many volunteers and a potential reason may be because high casualties and military setbacks discouraged enlistments, an issue that affected recruitment in all states. Kentuckians increasingly expressed concern that the war continued despite their personal sacrifices. After enduring a Confederate invasion, and suffering internal disruptions as armies traversed their state and thousands of their young men left to fight for both sides, Kentuckians grew anxious for peace and stability.<sup>12</sup> Viewing George B. McClellan's failure on the Peninsula and John Pope's defeat at Second Bull Run, Kentuckians stated "let's have no more surprises. We have men enough to surprise the enemy and we have had experience enough to teach us vigilance. Don't let any officer who is responsible for his own position tell us he was... surprised at all."<sup>13</sup> The federal casualties and military setbacks though posed a direct threat to Kentucky as it hampered recruitment and left the state vulnerable to another invasion. The *Daily Commonwealth* stated "if we do not fill up our regiments... our hearths will be a blackened heap of desolation, and our field the spoil of the ravisher."<sup>14</sup> Emphasizing the state was not obtaining enough recruits to thwart an impending invasion, it seemed that war weariness regarding military setbacks may have impeded volunteerism in the state and left it largely unprotected. Whereas General Polk's 1861 incursion helped motivate recruitment, it may be that after almost a year of conflict many white Kentuckians felt more inclined to remain at home to secure their personal property instead of enlist.<sup>15</sup>

During the Confederate invasion of 1862, Kentuckians largely failed to enlist into federal service as they had in 1861. The attack itself, spearheaded by two Confederate armies under the

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<sup>12</sup> Ford, *Bonds of Union*, 265.

<sup>13</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, September 11, 1862.

<sup>14</sup> Hodges, Todd and Pruetts, (Frankfort, Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, August 16, 1862.

<sup>15</sup> For more information on Kentuckians' interest to remain at home see Daniel Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 80-84.

command of Braxton Bragg and Edmund Kirby Smith, began on 29 August 1862 with the Battle of Richmond, Kentucky and concluded after the 8 October 1862 Battle of Perryville.<sup>16</sup>

Occurring in conjunction with Robert E. Lee's assault into Maryland, the South hoped to push Kentucky into the Confederacy and hopefully obtain thousands of new recruits.<sup>17</sup> During this campaign, rebel forces defeated Union troops at Richmond and Munfordville and captured the cities of Lexington and Frankfort where they illegitimately established Richard Hawes as governor.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the setbacks, Kentuckians still implored their men to volunteer. Calls appeared in the papers stating, "To Arms! To Arms... The state has been invaded by an insolent foe; her honor insulted; her peace disturbed, and her integrity imperiled.... I appeal to you, as Kentuckians...to rise in majesty of your strength, and drive the insolent invader... from your midst."<sup>19</sup> As recruitment data shows, though, such appeals did not seem to motivate Kentuckians to enlist in federal ranks as they had during the previous year. Even among the men who did volunteer as a result of the invasion, "hundreds deserted from Buell's army" and were "now at home, dressed in citizens' cloths, apparently without any intention of returning."<sup>20</sup> After the campaign ended and the emergency abated, many Kentuckians seemed more interested in remaining at home than serving for extended periods of time.

The apparent desire among Kentuckians to remain at home, though, indirectly still connected them to the Union. Although many white Kentuckians did not enlist in federal forces,

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<sup>16</sup> A. C. Quisenberry, "The Confederate Campaign in Kentucky, 1862: The Battle of Perryville," *Register of Kentucky State Historical Society*, 17 (no. 49, 1919); 31-32.

<sup>17</sup> Astor, *Rebels on the Border*, 89-90.

<sup>18</sup> Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 192-193 and Harris. *Lincoln and the Border States*, 116-117.

<sup>19</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, "A Proclamation: To the People of Kentucky," (Frankfort Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, September 1, 1862.

<sup>20</sup> Ross and Rosser, "Wholesale Desertion," (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, December 4, 1862.

they did not volunteer for Confederate service either. This is an important component as the prospect of obtaining thousands of new recruits had helped incentivize Confederate forces to enter the state in the first place.<sup>21</sup> Kentucky Democrats, arguably the most sympathetic to the Confederate cause, stated that the rebels “suffered by meddling with this State, and their manifest destiny is to suffer still more by the same policy” as Kentuckians “would be glad to be let alone by them.”<sup>22</sup> This lack of support was one of the reasons, aside from the military draw at Perryville, which ultimately encouraged Generals Bragg and Smith to vacate the state.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, one could argue that those white Kentuckians who did not enlist for the Union indirectly helped dispel the rebels by not volunteering for their armies.

The strong presence of Confederate guerrillas also may support the theory that white Kentuckians remained at home to secure their property rather than enlist in federal or even state forces. Often, retreating armies left behind “desperate bands,” who preyed upon the civilian population. Consequently, many families of serving soldiers encouraged their men to desert to protect and sustain the family.<sup>24</sup> During 1862, news of rebel insurgents appeared in many Kentucky newspaper articles. The *Louisville Daily Democrat* stated that these marauders do “an immense amount of damage” while the *Daily Commonwealth* wrote that these guerrillas “are traitors and rebels against the United States...who would murder every neighbor” and “should be hunted by blood hounds, if necessary, and shot without mercy.”<sup>25</sup> Even Governor Magoffin, a suspected southern sympathizer, condemned guerrilla action by stating in a Proclamation how “almost every neighborhood [was] threatened with civil strife, with dangerous combinations of

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<sup>21</sup> Astor, *Rebels on the Border*, 90.

<sup>22</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 21, 1862.

<sup>23</sup> Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 192.

<sup>24</sup> Ella Lonn, *Desertion during the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 121-122.

<sup>25</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 5, 1862; Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, “Clear out the State,” (Frankfort Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, August 28, 1862.

bad men, forming in different sections of the State, to frighten, rob... [and] to murder the good citizens of the Commonwealth.” Magoffin directly addressed Confederate Colonel John Hunt Morgan as having “forcibly seized and carried away a large amount of valuable property belonging to the Government and private citizens.”<sup>26</sup> It seems that federal forces within the state, and even the Home Guard, except in parts of Mercer and Boyle Counties, could not expel these guerrilla forces.<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, the Confederate Kentucky campaign, coupled with insurgent forces within the state, may have discouraged federal recruitment by convincing Kentucky men they needed to protect their homes and families.

Attempting to revitalize volunteerism, Kentucky turned to federal bounties and the threat of a state draft. By late summer and into the fall, Kentucky’s legislature passed a draft bill which granted the state authority to conscript men for military service. Leaving “few or none exempt,” state officials claimed, “there is yet time for Kentucky to fill her quota” and implored their young men to enlist and “not only get their bounty, but save themselves from the disgrace of a draft.”<sup>28</sup> Newspapers increasingly advertised how “any person enlisting in the armies of the United States... [received a] total payment in advance, \$40” with an additional “\$75 bounty paid upon the expiration of the term of service.”<sup>29</sup> Despite Kentucky’s reduced volunteerism, many of the state’s recruitment posters did not include additional state or local bounties, as had often appeared in Michigan and some Wisconsin advertisements. Although some individual units such as Colonel Woodruff’s Regiment offered an upfront “bounty of \$90,” most of Kentucky’s regiments seemed to rely solely on the federal government’s offer of \$40 with a \$75 reward at

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<sup>26</sup> Harney and Hughes, “Message of Governor Magoffin,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 16, 1862.

<sup>27</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, “Clear out the State,” (Frankfort Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, August 28, 1862.

<sup>28</sup> Harney and Hughes, “The Draft Bill,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 31, 1862.

<sup>29</sup> Millar and Adams, “What a Soldier will Receive,” (Catlettsburg, Kentucky) *Sandy Valley Advocate*, July 31, 1862; Harney and Hughes, “Military Notices,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 16, 1862.



the end of service. Adjutant General D.W. Lindsey even stated how proud Kentuckians were that they did not utilize “the mercenary purchased by [an] excessive State or local bounty, but with citizens prompted by patriotism.”<sup>30</sup> Kentucky locals did *not* need additional state or local bounties as its volunteer record show the state procured troops without having to rely on financial incentives. Considering the other factors of high casualties, military setbacks, and guerrilla fighting in the state, the lack of additional bounties may have encouraged many to stay at home to ensure financial stability for their families.

Intent on bolstering Union armies, Congress legalized African American recruitment much to the dismay of white Kentuckians. Introduced on 17 July 1862 under the Militia Act, the federal government granted authority to local commanders to utilize contraband slaves by officially freeing and inducting them into their respective commands. Although principally confined to the Union-occupied regions of the South, white Kentuckians noted the threat it posed to the institution of slavery and criticized the measure whenever possible. Commenting on General David Hunter’s organization of black combat troops in South Carolina, Kentuckians remarked how his “black brigade has fizzled” as “four hundred of them deserted and returned to their masters.”<sup>31</sup> Aside from emphasizing their perception that black soldiers were inferior to whites, many Kentuckians also claimed it was unfair to place former slaves into combat. Alluding to the war’s hardships, the *Louisville Daily Democrat* asked why Republicans would “subject the black race to an indiscriminate butchery, and defeat infallibly the cherished object—the restoration of the Union.” The article concluded by arguing “we shall make this a war for

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<sup>30</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*, VI.

<sup>31</sup> Ross and Rosser, “Negro Soldiers,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, September 4, 1862.

white men, and see if it doesn't do better."<sup>32</sup> Because Kentuckians abhorred black recruitment, they were still willing to commit their white men to serve in Union armies.

Lincoln attempted to placate the Border States' concern regarding the stability of slavery by offering compensated emancipation. Initially introduced on 16 April 1862, the plan freed the slaves in Washington D.C. by compensating masters \$300. Expanding from this relative success, Lincoln attempted to apply compensated emancipation to the rest of the Border States and allocated funding to pay loyal masters \$200 in exchange for each slave they freed.<sup>33</sup> However, fearing the prospect of a free black population, Kentuckians insisted it was better "to keep the negroes in slavery rather than let them loose" as compensated emancipation "would ruin the whole country."<sup>34</sup> Similarly other Kentuckians felt "Abolitionist[s]....would lie out of any pledge they might give" and that "no border States are deluded by it [as] they know it is a cheat."<sup>35</sup> Although compensated emancipation worked in Washington D.C., Kentucky remained suspicious of abolitionist intent and feared the possibility of a free African American population. As a result, Kentucky refused the federal government's initial attempts to purchase the freedom of its slaves.<sup>36</sup>

The final component which may have hampered Kentucky's willingness to volunteer was the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Released after the battle of Antietam on 22 September 1862, but not effective until the first of January 1863, the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation rejuvenated Kentucky's fears about an abolitionist war. A month prior to its

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<sup>32</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, October 23, 1862.

<sup>33</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 188-189.

<sup>34</sup> Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, July 17, 1862.

<sup>35</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, (Frankfort, Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, August 21, 1862.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Frances Berry, *Military Necessity and Civil Rights Policy: Black Citizenship and the Constitution, 1861-1868* (New York: Kennikat Press, 1977), 49.

release, Kentuckians expressed their anxiety that Lincoln might interfere with slavery. The *Louisville Daily Democrat* stated, “Kentucky does not expect her loyalty rewarded by a disturbance of her social condition. She only claims the right which all the States have, to fix the status of the black race within her borders.” The newspaper argued that “the free States, as well as the slaves States, claim and exercise this right... [and] that the negro has no rights that the white man is bound to respect.”<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the newspaper reasoned, “whoever is for converting this war, directly, or indirectly, into a crusade for the Abolition of Slavery, is an Abolitionist of the worst sort.”<sup>38</sup> Although the Emancipation Proclamation exempted the loyal Border States, these newspaper articles expressed the state’s concern regarding how the measure would impact Kentucky slaves.

During this time, hundreds if not thousands of Kentucky slaves fled their masters for Union lines.<sup>39</sup> Advertisements in newspapers increasingly appeared calling for the return of young male escaped slaves, and began stating that the North “will soon be flooded with the runaways.”<sup>40</sup> The frequency of such notices at this particular time, and the fact that some editors devoted whole columns to the issue, may personify how the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation encouraged many young male slaves to run away to Union camps. Although not all of the Union regiments these escaped slaves approached accepted them, those that did often employed them as military laborers.<sup>41</sup> Concerned about this matter, many locals insisted that “the army in Kentucky must be used for the return of runaway negroes” and halt their “operation of

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<sup>37</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 30, 1862.

<sup>38</sup> Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, October 2, 1862.

<sup>39</sup> Ford, *Bonds of Union*, 265.

<sup>40</sup> For examples of runaway slave advertisements see Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, *Frankfort Commonwealth*, December 23, 1862. Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, September 20, 1862; Ross and Rosser, “Laboring Men Beware!” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, October 23, 1862.

<sup>41</sup> Berry, *Military Necessity*, 77.

negro stealing.”<sup>42</sup> Such actions undermined the institution and, as these articles testify, outraged many white Kentuckians. Consequently, out of an interest to secure their property and maintain control over the African American population, many Kentuckians may have decided to protect the home front instead of enlisting.

Of those Kentuckians who were already serving, some resigned after the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, but the majority remained in uniform. When President Lincoln released his plan for emancipation, Kentucky had 42,266 Union troops in the field.<sup>43</sup> Of this number, at least 4,142 men, or nine percent, deserted.<sup>44</sup> Reported by the Adjutant General, this number is perhaps misleading as it represents the desertion record of these particular units for the entire war; not solely 1861 to 1862. Furthermore, it is impossible to determine if emancipation motivated these desertions as the military defeat at Fredericksburg may have affected Union desertion rates as well.<sup>45</sup> Although scholars have provided examples in which individuals and units threatened to mutiny because of emancipation, such as Benjamin Buckner and the 20<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Infantry, these seem to be the exception rather than the rule.

Although Buckner and many of his comrades were concerned with the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, their actions did not embody the general consensus of Kentucky’s other field units. Even if many of the state’s other soldiers felt the same, Buckner and his comrades were especially problematic compared to other Kentucky units. Because of the

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<sup>42</sup> Harney and Hughes, “Gen. Burbridge and the Nigger Question Again,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, December 16, 1862.

<sup>43</sup> I determined this number by adding Kentucky’s 1861 troops (32,756) with those who enlisted in 1862 prior to September (9,510).

<sup>44</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*. I calculated this number by adding the recapitulation of each regiment’s desertion the state organized before the Emancipation Proclamation. The Adjutant General did not record the desertion records for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry, and the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Kentucky infantry.

<sup>45</sup> Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 110-111.

regiment's protests and threats of resignation, General William S. Rosecrans reassigned Buckner's regiment from frontline service to garrison duty in Kentucky.<sup>46</sup> However, despite the reassignment, and the fact that Buckner and many of his fellow officers ultimately resigned, they still remained loyal to the Union. While back in Kentucky, and prior to leaving the service, the 20<sup>th</sup> Kentucky fought against John Hunt Morgan's raiders and worked to protect the state from other Confederate guerrillas.<sup>47</sup> Even after he resigned, Buckner claimed that he still favored the Union and abhorred secession.<sup>48</sup> Overall, most of Kentucky's troops seemed content to stay in service despite any personal objections to emancipation. There were no major reports of mutiny or mass desertion among the state's deployed troops and even those who protested generally still detested the Confederacy and secession.

Kentucky's recruitment records, coupled with the retention of most of its field troops, emphasizes that the state's unionists generally accepted the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation as a means to conclude the war more quickly. However, dissenters did exist in Kentucky as this abolitionist federal policy encouraged a surge of Confederate guerrilla activity in the state.<sup>49</sup> Although unhappy about the negative implications the Emancipation Proclamation would have, Kentuckians still expressed the belief that the Union was the best means to preserve slavery. Maysville's *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* stated that those in favor "for the Constitution as it is and the Union as it was... [are] truly loyal citizens, whether he fights Secession rebels in the field or Abolition rebels at the Ballot box."<sup>50</sup> Kentuckians appeared to cherish the stability of the

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<sup>46</sup> Lewis, *For Slavery and Union*, 112.

<sup>47</sup> Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 158.

<sup>48</sup> Lewis, *For Slavery and Union*, 112.

<sup>49</sup> Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 221-222. Owing to lack of accurate record keeping, it is difficult to measure the strength of Kentucky's Confederate guerrilla groups.

<sup>50</sup> Ross and Rosser, *Maysville Weekly Bulletin*, October 2, 1862. Ross and Rosser had two newspaper releases: the *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* and the *Maysville Weekly Bulletin*.

Union as they believed that their continued loyalty meant they still had a voice in affecting federal policy regarding slavery.

Furthermore, one could even argue that the threat of emancipation may also have encouraged unionist sentiment in the state. Kentuckians expressed that if “the struggle between the two parties now in arms should be prolonged, if the solution of their great debate should yet be delayed, evils of another kind may possibly arise.”<sup>51</sup> Fearing the prospects of an effective Emancipation Proclamation, white Kentuckians endeavored to strengthen their commitment to the Union to bring a quick conclusion to the war. During the final three months of 1862 for example, Kentucky raised 25 percent, or 3,207 men, of its total recruits for that year.<sup>52</sup> Although the state still fell short of its quota, these final three months were some of Kentucky’s most productive regarding recruitment. This fact, coupled with the argument that most of Kentucky’s field troops remained loyal to the Union, may imply that emancipation coincidentally motivated Kentucky’s pro-slavery unionism. The *Louisville Daily Democrat* stated at this time “we have more loyal men in Kentucky than there are in any free state: for we have a majority of two or three to one who will never let the Union slide by their consent.”<sup>53</sup> It seems then that Kentuckians, although unhappy about the Emancipation Proclamation, still favored the Union in the hopes of winning the war before Republicans could radicalize it any further.

Although Kentucky failed to meet its quota, the state still remained committed to the Union. By the end of 1862, Kentucky had 45,473, or 32 percent of its total eligible manpower, serving in Union ranks. Coupled with the men who left for service in Confederate armies,

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<sup>51</sup> Ross and Rosser, “Suggestion of a Difficulty,” and “The Enfranchisement of the Slaves,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, November 27, 1862.

<sup>52</sup> I determined this number by adding the troops from the 11<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (1,280), 14 Cavalry (1,296), and the 15<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (631), all of which the state organized between late September 1862 to December 1862.

<sup>53</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, December 16, 1862.

assuming the Adjutant General's estimate of 17,000 rebel Kentuckians is accurate, 48 percent of the state's military-age population was in uniform by the end of 1862.<sup>54</sup> Aside from war weariness and the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, this high-performance record may be the primary reason for the state falling so short of its quota. After considering Kentucky's recruitment data, coupled with its newspaper articles, the majority of the state still remained committed to the Union despite providing significantly lower number of troops in 1862.

Comparatively, Michigan had a larger available population in 1862 and was able to recruit slightly more troops than Kentucky. During the previous year, Michigan enlisted only 19 percent of its available manpower for the Union army, as opposed to Kentucky's 23 percent, which allowed them a better opportunity to recruit.<sup>55</sup> Subsequently, Michigan slightly outdistanced Kentucky by recruiting 15,895 troops in 1862.<sup>56</sup> Bringing its total proportional service record to 31 percent, Michigan had committed a significant portion of its manpower to the Union cause. However, after considering the state's quota of 23,372, one can see it still fell short by 7,477 men.<sup>57</sup> Unlike Kentucky, which blamed its diminished volunteerism on Confederate recruiting, Michigan had no such excuse. Instead, Adjutant General Jno. Robertson argued that "precarious" relations with the Indians, coupled with "the then disturbed state of the frontier counties" have caused communities such as "Gratiot, which months ago had furnished twelve more than its quota" to fail its recruitment requirements.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> This number also accounts for Kentucky militia force of 4,860 men.

<sup>55</sup> Kentucky's proportional percentage would actually be higher as it does not include its Confederate recruits.

<sup>56</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year, 1862* vol. 3, 12. This total does not include the estimated 4,400 that the state had not yet organized into regiments by the end of the year.

<sup>57</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1265. I determined Michigan's quota by adding its required troops under the July 2 (11,904) and August 4 (11,904) national calls.

<sup>58</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year, 1862*, 19-20.

Michigan's newspapers, though, seem to invalidate Robertson's claims that Indian troubles subverted the state's recruiting efforts in 1862. For example, the *East Saginaw Courier*, on 10 September reported on various rumors of Indian forces ranging in size from a couple hundred to over 2,000, "encamped at various points in the Saginaw Valley." Located less than 50 miles away from Gratiot County, this paper seemed to be referencing the same Native Americans that Robertson claimed had discouraged the white enlistments in that area. Commenting on this, the editors stated that there is not "one hundred 'armed Indians' together in the Saginaw Valley... nor fifty, nor twenty-five, nor ten.... They are not there." The paper went on to claim that "this is a cruel and wicked attempt of somebody to frighten the timid."<sup>59</sup> The only significant mentions of Indians in Michigan's newspapers during 1862 emphasized Minnesota and the troubles it was having with the Sioux in August.<sup>60</sup> However, it may also be possible that events in Minnesota created anxiety among Michiganders regarding their own native populations which may have encouraged men to stay home instead of enlist. Such a claim though is merely speculation. It seems that there was no real Native American threat in central Michigan that could have negatively impacted its recruitment efforts in 1862.

The main reasons for Michigan's failure to meet its quota seems to be a combination of war weariness and a self-interest to stay at home. Commonly deemed as "skimming," Michigan had already committed its most fervent and willing men into Union ranks during the opening few months of the conflict. Those who remained, mostly farmers and business owners, as opposed to laborers, often felt that they had to stay at home to ensure the success of their respective

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<sup>59</sup> Geo F. Lewis, "Those Armed Indians in Saginaw Valley—The Whole Story Cleared-Letter from the Indian Agent," *East Saginaw Courier*, September 16, 1862.

<sup>60</sup> W. H. Campbell, (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, December 4, 1862. This represent one example. I went through dozens of Michigan newspapers on the Library on Congress's newspaper database and articles dealing with Minnesota were the only ones which contemporary editors did not dismiss.



enterprises.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, they did not necessarily want to entangle themselves in a war that increasingly became more cumbersome. Newspaper articles for example, although mentioning some successes at places such as Forts Henry and Donelson and at Shiloh, still wrote that “the rebel grand army, estimated at 200,000 in all...being much the stronger party” have placed “Washington...in peril.”<sup>62</sup> Such sentiments, expressed a year after recruiting over 24,000 men, perhaps represents how some Michiganders felt increasingly frustrated about the war which may have negatively impacted their recruitment.

The preliminary Emancipation Proclamation too, though encouraging some Michiganders, did not seem to translate into many recruits. As discussed earlier, Michigan, similar to much of the country, grew increasingly weary over the high casualties and long campaigning. Consequently, when Lincoln released the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, many Michiganders expressed a “great diversity of sentiment and policy in regard to slavery.”<sup>63</sup> Some supported it primarily “as a war measure, demanded by the crisis, and destined to crush out the rebellion” and felt pleased that it encouraged England and France to maintain their “declared policy of non-intervention.”<sup>64</sup> However, others reasoned that “the emancipation scheme is the delusion of men” as African Americans “would prove hostile to us [white people].”<sup>65</sup> Support for emancipation in Michigan seemed to stem primarily from pragmatism. Those that supported the President’s preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, did so out of a belief it could potentially end the war while simultaneously keeping foreign powers uninvolved.

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<sup>61</sup>Robert E. Mitchell, "Civil War Recruiting and Recruits from Ever-Changing Labor Pools: Midland County, Michigan, as a Case Study," *Michigan Historical Review*, 35, (no. 1, 2009), 57.

<sup>62</sup>H. B. Rowson, “Review of the Situation,” and “That ‘Horrible Rumor,’” *Hillsdale Standard*, September 9, 1861.

<sup>63</sup>Hosmer and Fitch, “President’s Message,” *Lansing State Republican*, December 3, 1862.

<sup>64</sup>W. H. Campbell, “The President Sustained,” (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, December 18, 1862; Hosmer and Fitch, *Lansing State Republican*, October 15, 1862.

<sup>65</sup>Geo. F. Lewis, “A Proclamation of Emancipation,” *East Saginaw Courier*, September 30, 1862.

Emancipation did not seem to motivate many Michiganders to volunteer. Although Democrats stated that the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation “greatly rejoiced” their Republican Governor who stated, “Now I have got something to work for,” Michigan was still “tardy in gathering and fitting out” its quota.<sup>66</sup> Although many Michiganders generally approved of emancipation as a war measure, it did not seem to directly influence, either positively or negatively, the state’s recruitment.

Responding to decreased volunteerism, many Michigan communities began offering competitive bounties as a means to entice recruitment without having to revert to a draft. Beginning during the summer and extending until the end of the year, Michigan newspapers commented on the necessity of financial bounties to meet its troop requirements. The *Grand Haven News* reported that the people of Lake Shore managed to raise two companies—the “Lake Shore Tigers...and the White River Tigers”—because they were “encouraging enlistments most patriotically and liberally” by collecting money for a bounty.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, in December, the Ottawa, Michigan newspaper reported “that the quota of our town has already been furnished by volunteers” because its “citizens will have contributed, in all, for volunteers, some \$5,000.” Emphasizing the importance of bounties, the article urged other “townships in our county...yet far behind” to promote volunteerism by advertising that “no bounty will be paid drafted men.”<sup>68</sup> Such was Michigan’s attempt to raise bounties that the Adjutant General stated in his 1862 report that “the sums of money that were contributed for the support of the families of those who offered themselves as volunteers, were very large.”<sup>69</sup> Accordingly, financial bounties, coupled

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<sup>66</sup> J. and J.W. Barns, “Incidental,” *Grand Haven News*, December 24, 1862.

<sup>67</sup> J. and J.W. Barns, “Lake Shore Patriotism,” *Grand Haven New*, August 20, 1862.

<sup>68</sup> J. and J.W. Barns, “Full Quota,” *Grand Haven News*, December 17, 1862.

<sup>69</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year 1862*, 8.

with the “alarming sickness” and fear regarding a draft, primarily motivated Michigan’s recruitment efforts in 1862.<sup>70</sup>

Wisconsin, meanwhile, although furnishing more troops than either Kentucky or Michigan, similarly had issues filling its quota. In 1862, the state managed to recruit a total of 19,440 troops which increased its proportional service record to 34 percent.<sup>71</sup> Although providing 3,185 fewer troops than the previous year, the state’s federal enlistments still fared better than either Kentucky or Michigan. However, Wisconsin still failed to meet its quota of 23,808 men.<sup>72</sup> Falling short by 4,368, Wisconsin, similar to Kentucky and Michigan, struggled to motivate their military-age population to volunteer in sufficient numbers.

A primary reason for Wisconsin’s inability to garner enough volunteers, stems from its issues with raising state or local enlistment bounties. To obtain the necessary troops to avoid a state draft, many communities expressed the need to offer additional bounties but struggled to actually find people willing to contribute. In Mineral Point, for example, the newspaper stated that “men are willing to go if those who remain at home will contribute to the support of the families they leave behind.” The article then went on to argue that “we believe our State authorities, if they have the power, should increase the bounty offered to a more liberal amount” because many private citizens were “of the opinion the burden should be equally borne” as “the cry of high taxes frighten[ed] many.”<sup>73</sup>

Responding to the issue of raising financial bounties, some communities started to offer land grants instead. The city of Grand Rapids, for example, rendered “160 acres of bounty land”

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<sup>70</sup> J. and J.W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, October 29, 1862.

<sup>71</sup> Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin*, 21.

<sup>72</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 4, p. 1265.

<sup>73</sup> Geo W. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, “Can they be Raised,” *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, July 30, 1862.

in addition to the compensation offered by the federal government.<sup>74</sup> However, land bounties may have been complicated as many law firms in these communities advertised that they “attended to Soldier’s Claims for...Bounty Lands.”<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, according to the Adjutant General, by 21 August 1862 the federal “bounty paid to volunteers in these new regiments will cease” whereas the “volunteers to fill up old regiments will receive their bounties and advance pay until September first.”<sup>76</sup> Although a federal policy, this posed a significant issue in Wisconsin which struggled to obtain donations from private citizens for additional bounties.

Conflicting beliefs on how to prosecute the war divided the state’s Democrats and Republicans which helped lead to poor recruitment returns in 1862. Throughout most of 1862, the partisanship which negatively influenced the state’s recruitment in 1861, seemed to have improved slightly. In January, for example, Democrats contended that Lincoln “kicked the Platform of his party overboard” by adhering to the bipartisan objective “of putting down the rebellion and restoring the rebel States to their allegiance to the government.” Pleased that Lincoln had not sought “the abolition of their [the South’s] ‘peculiar institution,’” Wisconsin’s Democrats may have felt more inclined to volunteer.<sup>77</sup> Even after McClellan’s failed Peninsula Campaign, a Wisconsin Democrat commented that “the brave commander of the decimated army...urges that the new recruits should all be sent” and that a “great effort should be made in this direction.”<sup>78</sup> Whether or not such overtures furnished troops, it seemed that Democrats were pleased that their fears of a politicized abolitionist war did not come to fruition. Perhaps

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<sup>74</sup> J. N. Brundage and E.M. Haines, “The Difference between Volunteering and Drafting,” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, August 2, 1862.

<sup>75</sup> Geo W. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, October 1, 1862.

<sup>76</sup> Gaylord, “General Order No. 17,” Issued on August 15, 1862, Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin with Reports for the Quartermaster General and Surgeon General for the Year Ending December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1865* (Madison: William J. Park Booksellers, Binders and Stationers, 1866), 192.

<sup>77</sup> J. Crowley, “Republicanism in Wisconsin,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, January 24, 1862.

<sup>78</sup> J. Crowley, “Gen. McClellan Wants Men!” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 8, 1862.

testifying to this, the state managed to garner nineteen volunteer regiments, of the requested twenty-one, prior to President Lincoln's "radical fanaticism" of releasing his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>79</sup>

Once Lincoln announced that federal forces would free the slaves of the rebelling states as a military necessity, Wisconsin's Democrats distanced themselves from the war. Between late September and December, they expressed an unwillingness to serve a cause which "believ[ed] that a nigger is at least as good, if not better than an Irishman, German, Bohemian, or Norwegian."<sup>80</sup> They stated that "we (Democrats) have offered up hundreds of thousands of valuable lives," but still "the hope of the Union is every hour growing fainter" so long as the President "adheres to his determination to make this an abolition war."<sup>81</sup> Consequently, Democrats resisted military service. In November, riots broke out in Ozaukee County. In response, Governor Louis Harvey declared "every person interfering with, or resisting the draft, will be arrested and punished."<sup>82</sup> The resistance was so bad, the Governor threatened martial law which helped stop unruly disruptions but made Democrats feel that "a white man is now presumed to have no rights until the niggers are emancipated."<sup>83</sup> Although some Republicans may have participated in this resistance too, their reasons probably stemmed more from heavy casualties and long campaigns.<sup>84</sup> The Republicans in the state generally contended the

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<sup>79</sup> Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin*, 232-499. This page range encompasses descriptions of all of the regiments Wisconsin raised in 1862, and J. Crowley, "The President Emancipation Proclamation," *Manitowoc Pilot*, October 3, 1862.

<sup>80</sup> J. Crowley, "Republican Candidate for Senator," *Manitowoc Pilot*, October 24, 1862.

<sup>81</sup> J. Crowley, "Where will the West Go?" *Manitowoc Pilot*, December 19, 1862.

<sup>82</sup> Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Civil War Messages and Proclamations of Wisconsin War Governors* (Madison: Democrat Printing Company, 1912), 147. Governor Harvey stated this in November of 1862.

<sup>83</sup> J. Crowley, "Martial Law Declared," *Manitowoc Pilot*, October 10, 1862.

<sup>84</sup> Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 68-69.

preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was Lincoln's "constitutional right" and that it "would end the struggle now, and save the Union forever."<sup>85</sup>

It is conceivable to conclude that Wisconsin's failure to complete its quota stemmed from the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Although they provided more troops than either Kentucky or Michigan, Wisconsin's recruitment essentially stopped after September. According to its Adjutant General's Report, the state raised one volunteer regiment, the 30<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin, in October, and conscripted the 34<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin in December.<sup>86</sup> The state still had the manpower to provide the 4,368 men to balance its quota between September and December, but it seemed that many, namely Democrats, no longer wanted to serve. Although bloody battles, and military setbacks also discouraged the *rage militaire* exhibited by Wisconsinites in 1861, partisan politics hindered the state from fulfilling its quota.

An examination of the raw recruitment data of these three states emphasizes that Michigan and Wisconsin far exceeded Kentucky's furnished troops. However, after considering the ability of these respective states to fill their quotas, Kentucky was just as committed to the Union as Michigan and Wisconsin. Though Kentucky furnished fewer soldiers during 1862, its proportional service record of 32 percent was on par with Michigan's 31 percent and Wisconsin's 34 percent. Fraught with Confederate guerrillas, an invasion, and concerns regarding emancipation, Kentucky still had not forsaken its commitment to slavery or the Union.

Kentucky's comparable service record emphasizes that the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation did not devastate Kentucky unionism as scholars have argued. Although preserving

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<sup>85</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, "The Cost of Peace," (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, December 6, 1862, and Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, "A Humane View," *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, December 10, 1862.

<sup>86</sup> Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin*, 453-57 (30<sup>th</sup> Wis.), and 498-99 (43<sup>th</sup> Wis.).

slavery and maintaining stability within the state was important to white Kentuckians, they did not seem to feel so threatened by it that they entirely disassociated themselves from the Union. Instead, as its recruitment data shows, Kentucky reluctantly accepted emancipation as a means to end the war quickly with slavery still intact.<sup>87</sup> Although many Kentuckians, such as Simon Buckner and the estimated 17,000 who enlisted in Confederate forces did not support the measure, the rest of the state remained relatively content. Despite Confederate influences and the threat of emancipation, there were no mass mutinies among the troops in the field, and the state did not rise in rebellion. Heading into 1863, Kentuckians expressed their commitment to slavery and the Union by exhausting their white manpower in the hopes of nullifying black military recruitment.

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<sup>87</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 221.

### Chapter 3

#### Committed to Slavery and Union in 1863

In 1863, Kentucky enjoyed its second largest recruitment surge during the conflict. Although experiencing the early effects of military exhaustion from the year prior, the state managed to slightly outdistance its previous efforts by committing its final reserves of white manpower to Federal forces. Considering the state's available, white military-age population in 1863, and comparing its proportional service record to Michigan and Wisconsin, reveals Kentucky's exceptional efforts during this time. Despite the military setbacks, high casualties, invasions, and guerrilla fighting which negatively affected volunteerism, Kentucky managed a higher service record than Michigan and Wisconsin. Such a recruitment effort, achieved without the inducement of financial bounties or a draft, testifies to Kentucky's continued loyalty to the Union throughout 1863.

The Emancipation Proclamation and black recruitment motivated Kentucky's substantial recruitment efforts in 1863, relative to Michigan and Wisconsin. Despite the fact that Kentuckians detested these measures, they ironically helped cultivate unionist support. Intent on preserving the institution of slavery within their state and thus maintain the status quo, white Kentuckians resisted both of these measures by committing their final reserves of white manpower to the federal government in 1863. Even though Kentucky fell short of meeting its quota, the state's recruitment efforts still display its dual loyalty to slavery and the Union. Unlike recruitment in Michigan or Wisconsin, which reverted to bounties, conscription, and the enlistment of its free-African American populations, Kentucky solely relied on standard federal bounties and volunteerism. Relying on these two measures, Kentucky furnished more troops than either Michigan or Wisconsin in 1863. Hoping to protect slavery and the society it supported,



white Kentuckians sought to fill their federal quotas with white troops and negate the need of recruiting African Americans.

The argument that emancipation and black recruitment motivated instead of hindered Kentucky's unionist sentiment in 1863 diverges from the scholarly consensus. Premised on arguments of pro-slavery unionism, contemporary historians have reasoned that these measures undermined the state's unionist sentiment. However, none of these arguments present an in-depth examination of the state's proportional service record compared to other similarly sized Union states. Although white Kentuckians detested emancipation and black recruitment, their enlistment records prove they were still volunteering for Federal forces. Consequently, this data does not support the argument that these two measures caused broader Kentucky unionism to decline. Instead, Kentucky's white enlistments emphasize a reinvigorated population, intent on preserving white supremacy through federal military service. Essentially, this chapter argues that emancipation and black recruitment ensured the state's continued loyalty as displayed by its military support of the Union.

In the first couple months of 1863, Kentuckians condemned the Emancipation Proclamation and black recruitment but reaffirmed their commitment to the Union. On the first of January, the *Louisville Daily Journal* articulated that armies should not get "distracted by emancipation," but should focus on "crushing out the rebellion, and the restoration of the supremacy of the laws."<sup>1</sup> These editors reasoned once they restored the Union, the "genius of our American institutions will survive the shock it has received, and we will soon be able to hail the advent of peace...in bonds of fraternity by the necessities of mutual dependence."<sup>2</sup> This article

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<sup>1</sup> Prentice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, January 1, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Prentice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, January 1, 1863.

denotes how emancipation and black recruitment threatened slavery, while concurrently reassuring readers the laws of the Union would still protect the institution in loyal states. Similarly, the *Louisville Daily Democrat* stated how the Emancipation Proclamation was an “invitation to servile insurrection.” However, they also noted “this Administration is not the Government” and their “loyalty to the Constitution, the Union and the Flag, does not imply an approval or support of the follies of our temporary rulers.”<sup>3</sup> Even Lieutenant Governor R. T. Jacob, in a speech to the Kentucky Senate in December, reasoned Kentucky must “appeal to the people of the loyal States to bring back the policy of the war to what we conceive a constitutional basis.”<sup>4</sup> Consequently, despite their abhorrence of abolitionists and the Lincoln Administration, white Kentuckians generally still favored the established laws of the Constitution.

In 1863, Kentuckians increasingly elicited the support of the Constitution to question the legality of emancipation and black recruitment. During this year, the state’s politicians and newspapers endeavored to conceal their commitment to slavery behind appeals for state sovereignty. Alluding to this, Kentucky’s newly elected governor, Thomas Bramlette, stated in his inaugural address, “the Federal Constitution, which created the Union, harmonized the equal security of all in every right, with the unity of the government, and with the rights of the States.”<sup>5</sup> Essentially, Bramlette’s message illustrated that the Constitution preserved and protected the diverse interests of the respective states. Bramlette also reasoned the “dominant powers” must not force “immediate or gradual emancipation” and instead should work to reunite the country

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<sup>3</sup> Harney and Hughes, “Correspondence of the Louisville Daily Democrat: Outside Pressure,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, January 31, 1863.

<sup>4</sup> Harney and Hughes, “Address of Lieutenant Governor R. T. Jacob, upon Taking His Seat as Presiding Officer of the Kentucky Senate,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, December 10, 1863.

<sup>5</sup> Ross and Rosser, “Inaugural Address of Governor Thomas E. Bramlette,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, September 10, 1863.

under “its Constitution, as it was before.”<sup>6</sup> Concurrently, the *Louisville Daily Democrat* iterated how “it was an appreciation of the Union as it was that influenced Kentucky” and that “the Democrats protected...slavery because it is sheltered under the ample shield of the Constitution.”<sup>7</sup> The *Lexington Observer and Reporter* noted the recent “forfeitures, confiscations, emancipation of slaves, [and] the raising of negro armies... [as being] unconstitutional.”<sup>8</sup> Many white Kentuckians viewed emancipation as a temporary policy, not a forerunner to more abolition, and believed Conservatives could overturn it. Kentuckian’s desire to conclude the war and maintain the Constitution as it was, emphasizes their conservative unionism and commitment to preserve and perpetuate the institution of slavery.

Intending to preserve slavery, Kentuckians argued the Federal Government should rely solely on white recruits to win the war. In February, the *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* republished an article from the *Cincinnati Enquirer* about how sanctioning black recruitment made some “white regiments at Ship Island (Mississippi) ready to mutiny.” The article concluded by stating how “a few negro regiments would disorganize and destroy the whole army.”<sup>9</sup> Emphasizing the belief that it was a white man’s war, the *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* effectively condemned black recruitment as a detriment to the integrity of Federal forces already in the field. In reference to those troops, the *Louisville Daily Journal* published a letter they received from some Kentucky soldiers which condemned the president but reaffirmed their loyalty. The soldiers stated that although “the President [was not] a very great man.... he nor all the bad men in the world can

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<sup>6</sup> Ross and Rosser, “Inaugural Address,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, September 10, 1863.

<sup>7</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, December 2, 1863; Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, October 14, 1863.

<sup>8</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 15, 1863.

<sup>9</sup> Ross and Rosser, “The Fruits of Negro Soldiers,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, February 19, 1863.

drive these old Kentucky soldiers from their loyalty to their Constitutional Government.”<sup>10</sup>

White Kentuckians subsequently seemed resolved to persevere through the controversy of abolition by remaining loyal to the federal government.

White Kentuckians affirmed their commitment to the Union in 1863 by committing their final reserves of manpower to the Union cause. During this year, Kentucky furnished its second highest number of troops by enlisting 13,743 men which bolstered the state’s federal contribution to 59,216, and its Union service record to 42 percent.<sup>11</sup> Despite the taxing effects of Confederate recruitment, which placed the state’s total service record at 65 percent, Kentucky still managed to effectively enlist Federal troops.<sup>12</sup> Although the Border State still fell short of its quota of 14,471, they fared better than Michigan and Wisconsin. Considering the negative connotations associated with emancipation and black recruitment, Kentucky’s 1863 recruitment, compared to Michigan and Wisconsin, is significant as it emphasizes the state’s continued loyalty. In determining what motivated Kentuckians to achieve this Federal service record, it is important to understand the state’s association between white Union recruitment and the preservation of slavery within the state.

The federal policy of black recruitment intended to both hinder the Confederate war effort and reinforce the ability of Union armies to wage war. Black recruitment officially began in July of 1862 with the Militia Act. The Federal Government legitimized the army’s use of Confederate “contraband,” by emancipating and employing former slaves as laborers, hospital

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<sup>10</sup> Prentice, Henderson, and Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, February 10, 1863.

<sup>11</sup> Based on the Provost Marshal records published in Murdock, *One Million Men*, 352; Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*. I used the Adjutant General Report to determine Kentucky’s troops.

<sup>12</sup> I calculated this number by adding Kentucky’s total Union soldiers (59,216) to the estimated Confederate recruits by the end of 1863 (32,500) to get its total troop contribution (91,716) and divided it by its 1860 population (140,078) to get the total service record of 65 percent. The number of Confederates represents a rough estimation. Assuming that the threat of emancipation and black recruitment would have spurred the remaining Confederate sympathizers to enlist, I estimate around 32,500 Kentuckians were in Confederate service by the end of 1863.

workers, or armed guards. However, alluding to fears that the measure would upset the loyal Border States, Lincoln exempted free northern blacks and the slaves of loyal masters from service and denied African Americans active combat roles.<sup>13</sup> Lincoln hoped that limiting abolition to the pragmatic demands of the war would both destabilize the institution in the rebelling states, and allow the Union to utilize this “great available and yet unavailed of, force.”<sup>14</sup>

The perpetual demand for troops motivated the federal government to increase enlistment bounties and allow states to fill their quotas with black troops. Introduced by the Enrollment Act, all states had to register available military-aged males for a draft in the event the state failed to meet its respective quota with volunteers.<sup>15</sup> States and towns hoped to foster recruitment and avoid conscription by offering competitive bounties that often ranged upwards from \$300.<sup>16</sup> However, if these incentives failed to encourage enough white volunteers, the Enrollment Act also permitted states to fill their quotas by recruiting African Americans. Despite protests by Peace Democrats, and the fact that the North did not contain large, free-black populations, many states, including Michigan and Wisconsin, acquiesced and enrolled their African Americans as eligible recruits.<sup>17</sup> Even in the occupied South, specifically Louisiana and the South Carolina coast, the Union recruited or conscripted thousands of former slaves to augment their forces.<sup>18</sup> Effectively, the desperate need for fresh troops incentivized not only a national draft complete with a competitive bounty system, but black recruitment.

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<sup>13</sup> John David Smith, *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), 19-20.

<sup>14</sup> Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Johnson, March 26, 1863, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. vol. 6, p. 150.

<sup>15</sup> Murdock, *One Million Men*, 8-11.

<sup>16</sup> Murdock, *One Million Men*, 156-159.

<sup>17</sup> Berry, *Military Necessity*, 53.

<sup>18</sup> Berry, *Military Necessity*, 57-58.

Kentuckians argued against recruiting African Americans stating that it would only diminish and subvert their unionist resolve. Unlike emancipation, which one could interpret as intended to solely undermine the Confederacy, black recruitment could directly affect all loyal states by allowing them to fill quotas with black troops. Because of the Enrollment and Conscription Acts, federal armies had the authority to directly reinforce their commands by incorporating African Americans. Such a prospect though, weighed heavily upon the loyal Border States who depended on slavery as a mainstay of their economic and societal character. In a speech to Congress, Kentucky Representative John Crittenden stated, “it never can be expedient in this country to raise an army of negroes so long as we remain of the proud free race.” Crittenden went on to argue that the measure “unnerves the white man’s hand... [and] unnerves the white man’s heart.... [and] goes against the deep-rooted prejudices of at least one half of our people.” Considering the national recruitment shortages, Crittenden stated if the Union “retrace[ed] our steps, and ma[de] this again a national war....you will have volunteers enough.”<sup>19</sup> Crittenden’s focus on black recruitment signifies that many Kentuckians viewed the measure as a direct threat to the interests of the state. Although Crittenden’s efforts failed, his speech personifies Kentucky’s resentment towards abolition and Kentuckians’ willingness to volunteer in favor of the Constitution as it was.

Concerns regarding the effects of emancipation and black recruitment on slavery often tainted Kentuckian’s perception of significant federal victories in 1863. Examining the principle victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, many Kentuckians concentrated on the high casualties and often criticized the Union’s association with abolition. Referencing Gettysburg, the *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* lamented how the “forty thousand two hundred able-bodied white men of the

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<sup>19</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 37<sup>th</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, January 29, 1863, p. 1290.

United States mutilated and killed.... [were] verily a sacrifice to the utopian idea of Negro Equality.”<sup>20</sup> Similarly, after the fighting at Vicksburg, the *Lexington Observer and Reporter* highlighted that “about five thousand negroes were found in Vicksburg, of whom all the able bodied men were recruited for military service.”<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that these were major federal victories, white Kentuckians primarily emphasized the casualties and considered the impact it would have on their institution. Kentucky papers still noted how these were “brilliant” victories but after emancipation and black recruitment became effective, the war took on a different meaning as federal victories no longer represented a return to the Union as it had been.<sup>22</sup> Although fighting for the Union and furnishing white recruits helped preserve slavery in Kentucky, the state was nonetheless witnessing, and indirectly participating in, the destruction of slavery in the Deep South. Conceivably, this concerned many Kentuckians as it destroyed the slave markets which had previously been so profitable. Federal victories, although still representing good news, made many Kentuckians anxious about the future of slavery.

The introduction of emancipation, black recruitment, and the draft, may have created a surge in Kentucky’s Confederate recruiting as well. Owing to Kentucky’s commitment to slavery, it is conceivable to reason that the majority of those Southern sympathizers still dwelling within the state, would have responded to these measures by enlisting in Confederate armies.<sup>23</sup> However, determining the exact number of Confederate recruits is difficult owing to a lack of documentary evidence. Some Kentuckians felt betrayed. A Holmes County farmer expressed that “the gallant Puritans of Massachusetts,” who have “learned to appreciate abolition,” do so in a

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<sup>20</sup> Ross and Rosser, “A Small Army,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, August 27, 1863.

<sup>21</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 29, 1863.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, *For Slavery and Union*, 95, 102. And D. C. Wickliffe, “The Fall of Vicksburg,” *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 29, 1863.

<sup>23</sup> For more information, see Craig, *Kentucky Confederates*, 202-204.

manner “that involves no danger to [their] person.”<sup>24</sup> The *Louisville Daily Democrat* similarly referenced the “military necessity” of emancipation, black recruitment, and the draft by arguing that “if a Government must do such things to save its life, that Government ought to die. Its time has come.”<sup>25</sup> Arguably, the apprehension and suspicion many Kentuckians had of the Union after emancipation, black recruitment, and the fact the federal government could draft them, may have encouraged many to join Confederate forces.<sup>26</sup> There was a noticeable increase of Confederate guerrilla action in Kentucky during 1863 which may attest to this surge of rebel recruits.<sup>27</sup> Although speculative, it is conceivable that the bulk of Kentucky’s estimated 32,500 ardent Southern-sympathizers, would have been in Confederate service by the end of 1863.

However, Union victories in 1863 may also have positively influenced Kentucky’s recruitment. Because the Union began the year after the defeat at Fredericksburg, which newspapers ominously reported caused “about one-third more [casualties] than in any other battle of the war,” it is conceivable the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg helped stimulate enthusiasm.<sup>28</sup> Kentucky’s newspapers articulated how the South’s “greatest general, Lee, has been defeated, Vicksburg and Port Hudson taken—Bragg is still flying for life’s sake before Rosecrans, whilst the desperate raiders under Morgan have been beaten and scattered.”<sup>29</sup> These victories made many feel “Jeff. Davis’ government is evidently crumbling and cannot last much longer.”<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the *Louisville Daily Democrat* noted “the defeat of the enemy at

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<sup>24</sup> Ross and Rosser, “If Ballots were Bullets,” (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, November 19, 1863. The newspaper wrote the farmer was from Holmes County, Kentucky.

<sup>25</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, December 1, 1863.

<sup>26</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 229.

<sup>27</sup> Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 220.

<sup>28</sup> Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, December 25, 1862; Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 311.

<sup>29</sup> Pemmtice, Henderson, Osborne, *Louisville Daily Journal*, February 16, 1863.

<sup>30</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 29, 1863.



Gettysburg; his compulsory evacuation of Pennsylvania and Maryland, and his withdraw from the upper valley of the Shenandoah [is] regard[ed] as a complete success.”<sup>31</sup> These victories might have encouraged some white Kentuckians to enlist.

The primary incentive for white Kentuckian enlistment in 1863, was their intent to protect state sovereignty and slavery. To achieve this objective, white Kentuckians sought to provide enough white recruits to avoid the necessity of black recruitment, preserving the integrity of slavery within their state. Determined to promote white racial hierarchy, Kentucky’s newspapers criticized and questioned the ability of black soldiers. In one example, while discussing the “‘1<sup>st</sup> South Carolina Volunteers,’ or ‘Greeley’s Own,’” the *Weekly Reporter* in Henderson stated “the whole regiment disgraced themselves at St. Mary’s Fla ...by skedaddling from a handful of rebels.” The editor concluded, “they (black soldiers) are not fit neither can they be made fit—to carry a musket in the face of an enemy.”<sup>32</sup> The *Louisville Daily Democrat* similarly condemned the enterprise in a hypothetical conversation with a member of the 9th Illinois Colored Infantry, which had recently fared poorly in combat. The author of this colloquy commented, “if our soldiers were like you, traitors might have broken up the government without resistance.”<sup>33</sup> Both of these articles imply black soldiers were inadequate cowards and arming them was both detrimental and pointless to the Union cause. Condemning black recruitment, Kentuckians emphasized their preference for white volunteers as a means to prevent African

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<sup>31</sup> Harney and Hughes, *Louisville Daily Democrat*, November 11, 1863.

<sup>32</sup> Spidel and Staples, “Negro Valor,” (Henderson, Kentucky) *Weekly Reporter*, April 30, 1863.

<sup>33</sup> Harney and Hughes, “A Negro Philosopher,” *Louisville Daily Democrat*, November 20, 1863.

American incorporation into the war.<sup>34</sup> Kentuckians were, in effect, lobbying against black recruitment by emphasizing the superiority of white soldiers.<sup>35</sup>

Responding to Kentucky's protests, the federal government suspended the enrollment of African Americans in the Border State despite the fact that the state fell short of its troop quota. Kentucky's objections to black recruitment, spearheaded by Governor Bramlette, urgently stressed to President Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton how black recruitment in Kentucky would be detrimental to unionist sentiment.<sup>36</sup> Despite the Union's need for troops, on 22 July 1863, Lincoln authorized Stanton to obtain the necessary "colored forces, along the shores of the Mississippi (sic)" instead of enrolling Kentucky's black population.<sup>37</sup> Rumors continued to circulate within Kentucky which accused federal recruiting agents of attempting to complete Kentucky's quota by enlisting its black population. In response, Governor Bramlette again expressed to Lincoln how black recruitment would have "dire effects...upon the interest of my people" and urged that "all action [be] suspended as to Ky (sic), until I can be heard."<sup>38</sup> Kentucky's fervent recruitment of white soldiers, coupled with the potentially explosive backlash of enlisting black Kentuckians, caused the federal government to temporarily suspend black recruitment in the state during 1863.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Amy Murrell Taylor, *The Divided Family in Civil War America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 24-25.

<sup>35</sup> Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus may have neutralized physical protests against black recruitment in Kentucky as the government could imprison dissenters without having a trial. For more information on how Kentuckians reacted to Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus see Lewis, *For Slavery and Union*, 93-94.

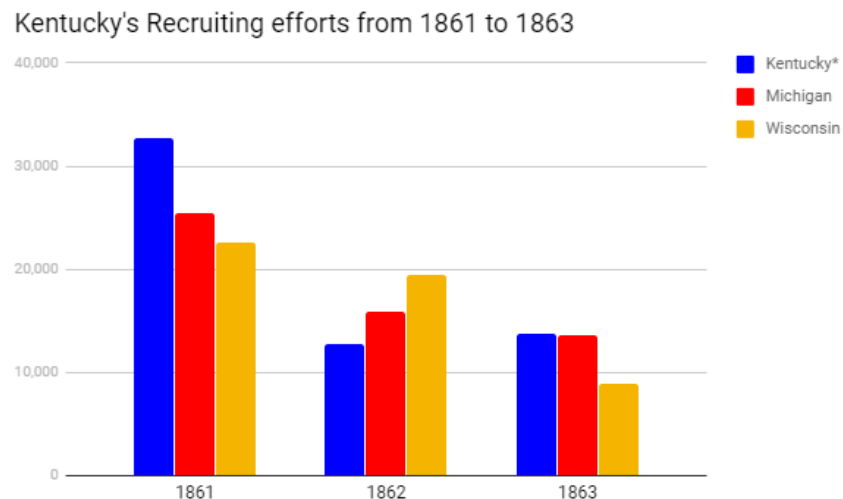
<sup>36</sup> Lewis, *For Slavery and Union*, 125.

<sup>37</sup> Abraham Lincoln to Edwin M. Stanton, July 21, 1863, "Tuesday, Recruitment of Black Soldiers," *Abraham Lincoln Papers*, Series 3, General Correspondence; Smith, *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops*, 42.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas E. Bramlette to Abraham Lincoln, October 19, 1863, "Monday, Opposes Enlistment of Black Soldiers in Kentucky," *Abraham Lincoln Papers*, Series 1, General Correspondence.

<sup>39</sup> The federal government granted Kentucky a special status by suspending black recruitment in the state as the rest of the Border States had to enroll its African Americans.

Whereas Kentucky committed its final reserves of white manpower to prevent black recruitment in 1863, Michigan and Wisconsin struggled to find volunteers to fill their ranks. Michigan and Wisconsin, both being Republican majority states, still confronted issues of political partisanship, conscription, commutation (which allowed drafted men to purchase a military deferment), and war weariness, resulting in fewer enlistments. Relying heavily on bounties —federal, state, and local— as well as the draft, Michigan and Wisconsin fell drastically short of meeting their respective quotas. To explain why Kentucky’s recruitment excelled while Michigan and Wisconsin’s enlistments diminished, it is necessary to examine both states’ respective service records.



This graph shows Kentucky’s white recruitment from 1861 to 1863. The slight rise in Kentucky’s 1863 recruiting implies the emancipation and black recruitment did not significantly harm the state’s military efforts.<sup>40</sup>

Michigan’s recruitment in 1863, emphasizes how enthusiasm to enlist was lower than in Kentucky. At first glance, it may appear that the state’s 13,567 recruits for the year, bringing its proportional service record to 43 percent, did not conspicuously differ from Kentucky’s

<sup>40</sup> I obtained this data from each states respective Adjutant General Reports. For a more detailed analysis of this data see my digital component, [historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/](http://historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/).

13,743.<sup>41</sup> However, Michigan had a quota of 19,553, meaning it lacked 5,986 troops.<sup>42</sup>

Compounding Michigan's shortcoming, 3,093 of these men were draftees.<sup>43</sup> These numbers emphasize how volunteerism in Michigan had diminished compared to Kentucky.

Michigan attempted to prevent conscription by fostering a competitive bounty system to incentivize volunteers. Bounties, present in Kentucky newspapers as well, appeared more prevalently in both Michigan newspapers and its Adjutant General's Report.<sup>44</sup> In addition to the federal and state bounties, Michigan's counties and towns heavily advertised competitive financial bonuses to reinvigorate enlistments. The *Cass County Republican* reported how a new "township bounty, in addition to the county bounty" would "dra[w] ten per cent interest... paid annually" which was "in addition to the government bounty" of \$200.<sup>45</sup> Ottawa County claimed bounties had "a happy influence on recruiting" as "every portion of our county is alive to the work of recruiting."<sup>46</sup> East Saginaw appointed five men to head a "'Central Bounty Committee,' whose duty" it was "to offer a bounty of not more than one hundred dollars to each man enlisting."<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Michigan's Adjutant General claimed that towns and communities hoping to meet "this (troop) demand without the necessity of a draft" must offer "local bounties of liberal amount."<sup>48</sup> Bounties in Michigan were so important, individual units, such as Captain

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<sup>41</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1863*, 18.

<sup>42</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1265. Michigan's quota was higher than Kentucky's because the Federal Government had deducted the additional troops Kentucky provided in 1861 from those they had to furnish in 1863.

<sup>43</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1863*, 18. I determined this number by adding the drafted men from its February quota (5,450) with the draftees from October and November (2,548) which equals its total conscripts for the year (3,093).

<sup>44</sup> Bounties were a part of the recruiting efforts in Kentucky but it appeared that they were not always a major headline in newspapers or its Adjutant General Report as they were in Michigan.

<sup>45</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Rare Chance for Recruits," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, December 17, 1863.

<sup>46</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, April 1, 1863, and J. and J. W. Barns, "Recruiting," *Grand Haven News*, December 30, 1863.

<sup>47</sup> Geo. F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, October 28, 1863.

<sup>48</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1863*, 17.

Meigs's Sharp Shooters, offered a \$42 bounty "aside from all local bounties" to further encourage enlistments.<sup>49</sup> Among Michiganders, a strong desire prevailed to use "liberality and patriotism" in order "to get in out of the draft and preserve our good name and influence among our patriotic sister states."<sup>50</sup> These articles signify how integral competitive bounties were to Michigan's recruitment efforts in 1863.

Michigan's competitive bounty system had negative side-effects as it fostered bounty jumping and desertion. For example, the *East Saginaw Courier* reported "cupidity instead of patriotism" motivated recruits and "in consequence some have enlisted merely to obtain the bounties, and have then deserted disgracefully."<sup>51</sup> However, the newspaper claimed this "evil has grown not out of the fact that a bounty is offered, but out of the want of uniformity in amount."<sup>52</sup> In Cass County, bounty jumping encouraged local officials to stipulate how "the bounty of \$100 is payable to discharged soldiers only... by reason of wounds received in battle, or... [after serving] a period of two years—or during the war if sooner ended."<sup>53</sup> Grand Haven similarly had issues with bounty jumpers. The newspaper stated "in three days, 60 out of 210 substitutes in one regiment had deserted"<sup>54</sup> Although towns may have signed enough men to fill their quota on paper, they were incapable of delivering "their men at the Headquarters... [to be] enlisted" leaving their actual troop requirement unfulfilled.<sup>55</sup>

Competitive bounties and commutation promoted class distinctions negatively affecting volunteerism. Although these measures differ slightly, as bounties came from the community and

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<sup>49</sup> H. B. Rowison, *Hillsdale Standard*, January 6, 1863.

<sup>50</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, December 9, 1863; J. and J. W. Barns, "Volunteer Bounty," *Grand Haven News*, December 16, 1863.

<sup>51</sup> Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, January 13, 1863.

<sup>52</sup> Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, January 13, 1863.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell and Mead, "War Claims: Bounties," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, May 7, 1863.

<sup>54</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, "Republican View of the Conscript," *Grand Haven News*, September 16, 1863.

<sup>55</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Circular No. 46." (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, October 22, 1863.

commutation from a drafted individual, they both filled quotas by incentivizing others to go in the stead of wealthier, more established men. Community leaders, primarily local business owners or farmers, sought to raise the necessary funds to entice “drifters” to substitute themselves in the place of the more affluent and productive.<sup>56</sup> Grand Haven hoped to “induce volunteers, as much as possible, with the non-producing classes” by offering “liberal bounties.”<sup>57</sup> Wealthy individuals could essentially purchase their way out of service. As a result, many Michiganders felt bounties and commutation were “discriminating oppressively against those who are without property and means to furnish the commutation money.”<sup>58</sup> Discontented Michiganders expressed how competitive bounties and commutation often benefitted “a separate locality, leaving other localities unaided.”<sup>59</sup> The *East Saginaw Courier* commented how “thieves and shysters... who prey upon the patriotism of others to shield themselves from their legitimate burdens” work “most unfavorably against the efforts” to meet the quota.<sup>60</sup> The argument against local bounties and commutation stemmed from disproportionate service as wealthier counties could essentially buy their way out of service by enticing potential recruits to their locales which conceivably hindered enlistments in poorer regions.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, Michigan communities who did manage to fill their quotas, did so by draining other counties’ manpower preventing them from meeting their own quotas.

Further testifying to the desperate nature of Michigan recruitment, the state enrolled its relatively small, free-black population. Unlike Kentucky, Michigan capitalized on black

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<sup>56</sup> Robert E. Mitchell, “Civil War Recruiting and Recruits from Ever-Changing Labor Pools: Midland County, Michigan, as a Case Study,” *Michigan Historical Review* 35, (no. 1, 2009), 43-44.

<sup>57</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “The Reasons Why,” *Grand Haven News*, November 11, 1863.

<sup>58</sup> John A. Kerr, “The Conscription,” *Lansing State Republican*, August 19, 1863.

<sup>59</sup> H. B. Rowson, “The Three Hundred Dollar Clause,” *Hillsdale Standard*, October 6, 1863; Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, December 16, 1863.

<sup>60</sup> Geo F. Lewis, “Volunteer Frauds,” *East Saginaw Courier*, November 18, 1863.

<sup>61</sup> Mitchell, “Civil War Recruiting and Recruits from Ever-Changing Labor Pools,” 57-58.

recruitment in July as soon as Secretary of War Edwin Stanton approved Detroit's application to raise "a Regiment of colored Infantry."<sup>62</sup> Advertisements "for the first regiment of colored infantry, now going into camp at Detroit" began to appear in Michigan newspapers. Proclaiming an "excellent opportunity for colored men," the *Cass County Republican* emphasized how black soldiers "receive[ed] the same bounty and pay as white recruits, and at the same time escape[d] the draft."<sup>63</sup> Some Democrats detested black recruitment, claiming there were "but few comparatively who can be induced to join our armies [as] the negroes will not voluntarily enlist."<sup>64</sup> Despite the protests, Michigan went ahead and implemented black recruitment. African American recruits counted as full credits, and since Michiganders struggled to find enough white volunteers, they implemented black recruitment, enlisting 489 men, despite Democratic protests.<sup>65</sup>

Patriotism did not seem to rally much support in Michigan as many placed conditions on their service. In February, the Democratic newspaper, *East Saginaw Courier* stated "there is no man so little a patriot as will not yield to it his whole support and countenance," but only "if the Administration changes its base." Referencing the "obnoxious" abolitionists, it seems the Emancipation Proclamation discouraged some Michiganders from volunteering.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the *Grand Haven News*, another Democratic newspaper, reported after emancipation there was more inclination to serve a Union cause which valued Democratic Party principles. Alluding to abolition, the editors argued "that true conservatism and genuine patriotism will overcome the fanatical spirit" and encourage "every lover of his country [to] stand by the good old democratic

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<sup>62</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year, 1863*, p. 9.

<sup>63</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Colored Recruits," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, October 15, 1863.

<sup>64</sup> Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, May 5, 1863.

<sup>65</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year, 1863*, pp. 9 and 18.

<sup>66</sup> Geo F. Lewis, "Change of Base," *East Saginaw Courier*, February 24, 1863.

party.”<sup>67</sup> It is evident from these examples, some Michigan Democrats did not want to serve a war radicalized by Republicans.

Republicans expressed conditional patriotism by claiming Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation encouraged them to serve. Even though “the Proclamation of Emancipation was long delayed...[it] will stand as one of the monuments of American greatness” for which Republicans “thank[ed] God, by the sword it (slavery) is to fall.”<sup>68</sup> The *Cass County Republican* iterated “it gladden[ed] the heart of every loyal man to know that...no slave freed under its provisions will be reduced again to servitude.”<sup>69</sup> By 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation politicized the war to the extent that formally moderate Democrats and Republicans utilized their respective political beliefs to either resist or support the war effort.

Michigan’s political partisanship affected how both parties portrayed and perceived battles. Republicans noted how federal victories had taken “away the prestage (sic) of invincibility from Lee...relieved the loyal States from the presence of an enemy on their soil.... [and] broke up utterly and forever one of the grand armies of the rebellion.”<sup>70</sup> Democrats, meanwhile, after determining Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address to be “an endorsement of all the ill-judged measures of the abolition programe (sic),” argued the military situation was not as good as the Administration proclaimed. Democrats noted how Lee’s army still existed while “Meade’s army was so weakened” it could not stop Lee from “destroy[ing] miles of railroad indispensable to our forces.”<sup>71</sup> Despite the victory at Gettysburg, Michigan Democrats remained upset about

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<sup>67</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, March 18, 1863.

<sup>68</sup> John A. Kerr, *Lansing State Republican*, May 6, 1863.

<sup>69</sup> Campbell and Mead, (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, December 17, 1863.

<sup>70</sup> H. B. Rowson, “Army Celebrations of the Fourth of July,” *Hillsdale Standard*, July 28, 1863.

<sup>71</sup> Geo F. Lewis, “A Barren Victory,” *East Saginaw Courier*, November 11, 1863.



the January Emancipation Proclamation and their perception that Lincoln influenced the war to favor Republican objectives.

Even in September, after the Union defeat at Chickamauga, divergent political allegiances created two narratives of the same battle. The *Cass County Republican* argued that while the number of “wounded are heavy,” the number actually killed was “extremely light.”<sup>72</sup> Essentially, Republican papers emphasized positive information over negative to support Lincoln and his prosecution of the war. This might explain why in early December 1863, Republican papers allowed the “very brilliant” victory of Chattanooga to overshadow the previous defeat at Chickamauga. Republicans underlined how federal troops regained “the old battle field of Chickamauga” and set to work “burying our dead...left uncovered since September 20th.”<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, Democrats focused on the high casualties at Chickamauga by stating “such figures...tell a terrific story of suffering and bloodshed.” The *East Saginaw Courier* continued by expressing hope the defeat would “lead to deep and solemn thought on the methods of bringing it (the war) to a close.”<sup>74</sup> Even after the success at Chattanooga, Democrats articulated how victories were fragile by comparing them to “bubbles, born with a breath and broken with a sigh.”<sup>75</sup> The divergent portrayal of the war may have affected the state’s recruitment in 1863, but it is hard to determine the extent to which it influenced men of both parties to volunteer. The positive and encouraging articles may have excited like-minded individuals to volunteer, while the negative articles might have dissuaded others from enlisting.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> W. H. Campbell, (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, September 24, 1863.

<sup>73</sup> W. H. Campbell, “A Waterloo Victory at Chattanooga,” and “The War in Tennessee,” (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, December 3, 1863.

<sup>74</sup> Geo F. Lewis, “A Barren Victory,” *East Saginaw Courier*, November 11, 1863.

<sup>75</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “Chattanooga,” *Grand Haven News*, October 14, 1863.

<sup>76</sup> Hershock, “Copperheads and Radicals,” 42-46.

Michigan communities had to rely on a draft as they failed to obtain sufficient volunteers. Commenting on the “few enlistments...taking place,” some Michiganders felt content “to take their chance of drawing a prize in the draft-lottery than to enlist.”<sup>77</sup> By the late fall of 1863, Michiganders were so reluctant to serve that only conscription could garner their services. Hillsdale, Michigan exemplifies the state’s declining desire to enlist in 1863. In January, the county newspaper stated how “enlistments must be hurried up... [so] the quota of Hillsdale County be filled and save a draft.” Despite the sense of urgency, Hillsdale continually struggled to obtain the necessary recruits. By October, responding to requests from community leaders, the War Department granted “Hillsdale County... a few more days to fill its quota” during which time, the newspaper claimed, “Hillsdale can if the proper efforts are put forth.” However, by November, the county still had not raised sufficient volunteers and “Hillsdale [would] be the first in the [draft] wheel.”<sup>78</sup> Although Michigan managed to raise 10,474 volunteers through bounties, commutation, black recruitment, and a draft, it still failed its quota despite having a large manpower reserve from which to draw.<sup>79</sup>

Wisconsin also struggled to obtain recruits in 1863, falling significantly under its quota. According to the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, the federal government assigned Wisconsin the job of enlisting 19,852 troops.<sup>80</sup> Of this quota, the state only managed to procure 8,904 men, bringing its proportional service record to 42 percent.<sup>81</sup> Of these recruits, 5,961 were

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<sup>77</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “The Draft,” *Grand Haven News*, October 14, 1863.

<sup>78</sup> H. B. Rowison, *Hillsdale Standard*, January 6, 1863; H. B. Rowison, “Postponement of the Draft,” *Hillsdale Standard*, October 27, 1863; H. B. Rowison, “The Draft,” *Hillsdale Standard*, November 3, 1863.

<sup>79</sup> I determined the number of volunteers by taking its furnished troops (13,567) and subtracting the draftees (3,093) to arrive at the total (10,474).

<sup>80</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Volume IV, 1265. This number was higher than Kentucky’s quota because the Federal Government deducted Kentucky’s excess troops in 1861 to reduce the number of troops they had to provide in 1863.

<sup>81</sup> Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin for the Year Ending 1863*, 21.

conscripts which meant only 2,943 men actually volunteered.<sup>82</sup> Considering this data, and comparing it against Kentucky and Michigan, it is clear Wisconsin had serious problems obtaining willing recruits in 1863.

Wisconsin's recruitment service in 1863 was so complex and rife with issues, it undermined the potentially positive effect of bounties. In a letter to Edwin Stanton, Wisconsin's Assistant Adjutant General T. M. Vincent addressed "the manner in which the recruiting service has been heretofore conducted in this state." He explained how the state had authorized second lieutenants to recruit in exchange for "a commission." However, these officers often relegated the duties of actually enlisting the troops to local citizens who, through personal "influence in their respective localities, enlisted the soldiers." A problem arose when it came time to muster in recruits as these citizen agents had not themselves received the Provost Marshal General's permission to sign recruits or promise bounties. Consequently, many of those men who signed with these unauthorized civilian agents struggled to obtain their state and federal bounties and may have refused to muster.<sup>83</sup> Wisconsin recruiting apparatus was so injurious that Gaylord asked the War Department at the end of the year, when the poor recruitment returns became evident, how "recruiting should be carried on in the future." In response, the War Department recommended Wisconsin "not to exceed three recruiting agents for each new company" to reduce the number of unauthorized recruiters.<sup>84</sup>

Wisconsin's convoluted recruiting service may not have been its only hindrance as anger relating to class discrimination may equally have disrupted volunteerism. The Enrollment Act of

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<sup>82</sup> Gaylord, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin for the Year Ending 1863*, p. 21.

<sup>83</sup> These civilian agents may also have diverted Wisconsinites to other states where they could potentially obtain higher bounties. For more information see, Murdock, *One Million Men*, 276-78.

<sup>84</sup> Gaylord, "Letter from T. M. Vincent to Edwin Stanton," *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1863*, December 21, 1864, 11-12.

1863 permitted a drafted man to pay \$300 to have an exempt substitute go in his stead. Many Northerners, especially the large German and Irish populations in Wisconsin, became discontented as they were unable to buy their way out of service.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the state's competitive bounty system hindered enlistment in some of Wisconsin's towns. In Mineral Point, townspeople lamented they could not get "a bounty sufficient to induce enlistment" as enlistees travelled to wealthier cities, such as Madison, in pursuit of more substantial compensation. The *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune* commented, "every man who goes to another place to enlist, betters the chance of those left for securing a prize when the draft comes."<sup>86</sup> Fights and protests soon broke out in many of these smaller towns, German and Irish Peace Democrats resisted the draft because they did not have the financial means to commute themselves or raise a bounty.<sup>87</sup> Effectively, many Wisconsinites did not want to serve, viewing these measures as favoring the wealthy.

Political division also appeared to be a major problem for Wisconsin's recruiting. Democrats expressed growing discontent about serving in a war headed by a Republican Administration. Owing to partisanship, many Republicans felt Democrats were not serving as they "would be glad to see all who differ from them in politics go to the war."<sup>88</sup> Greatly upset over the Emancipation Proclamation, many Democrats sensed they should "beware" of being "led by the pleadings, passions, theories and partisan interests of men in power."<sup>89</sup> Republicans often argued that "the opposition to volunteering, among a certain class of would-be political

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<sup>85</sup> Trask, *Fire Within*, 196; Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 153. Many men seeking substitutes turned to Native Americans who, although exempt from the draft, nonetheless volunteered.

<sup>86</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, "Recruits," *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, December 30, 1863.

<sup>87</sup> Trask, *Fire Within*, 187.

<sup>88</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, "Raising Volunteers," *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, December 23, 1863.

<sup>89</sup> J. Crowley, *Manitowoc Pilot*, July 10, 1863.

leaders is so strong.... but few will come forward even if the bounty is raised.”<sup>90</sup> When it came time to enroll, recruiting officers often had difficulty finding eligible men. Many, perhaps unable to pay commutation or fearful their community could not offer a sufficient bounty to avoid a draft, sought medical exemptions. Traveling to Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin, or “Coward’s Headquarters” as Republicans called it, these men sought-out the Democratic-sympathizing examining board known for deeming fit men ineligible for military service.<sup>91</sup> Wisconsin’s political partisanship may have resulted in its significantly fewer troops for 1863.<sup>92</sup>

Wisconsin’s recruiters were desperate for troops and many turned to underage boys to help meet the state’s quota. Often enthralled with notions of patriotism and battlefield excitement, underage soldiers were not solely unique to Wisconsin.<sup>93</sup> In response to the desperate nature of the state’s recruiting service in 1863, underage recruiting seemed more prevalent in Wisconsin than either Kentucky or Michigan. As early as May of 1862, the state’s Adjutant General reported, “the Department is daily importuned for the discharge of recruits claimed to be under age” and issued orders that it was “the duty of the officer to judge for himself” if a recruit was of military age.<sup>94</sup> However, underage recruitment seemed to persist as on 20 October 1863, Gaylord, with the permission of the Governor, issued General Order 19. Meant to halt officers from filling their commands through “the enlistment of minors under eighteen years of age, without the consent of the parents,” the Order called for “revocation of the

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<sup>90</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, December 23, 1863.

<sup>91</sup> John Oliver, “Draft Riots in Wisconsin during the Civil War,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 2 (no. 3, 1919), 335.

<sup>92</sup> Murdock, *One Million Men*, 155.

<sup>93</sup> Kathleen Shaw, “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier: Youth Enlistment in a Northern County,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 135 (no. 4, 2011), 424-25.

<sup>94</sup> Gaylord, “General Order No. 3,” *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1863*, May 25, 1862, 175.

appointment, and consequent loss of commission.”<sup>95</sup> Neither Kentucky nor Michigan had to issue explicit orders to their recruiters not to enlist minors.<sup>96</sup> That is not to say enlisting underage boys did not occur in those states, but the fact Wisconsin’s Adjutant General issued two orders to counter underage enlistment signifies its prominence to the state’s recruitment.

Another measure Wisconsin enacted to help bolster its quota was black recruitment. Similar to Michigan, Wisconsin began recruiting as soon as the War Department approved the state’s appeal to raise black troops.<sup>97</sup> Compared to Kentucky and Michigan, Wisconsin had the smallest, military-aged free black population with only 329 men.<sup>98</sup> Considering “the sparseness of [the] colored population in this State, there was little encouragement to any white officers to undertake the raising of even a company.”<sup>99</sup> Although Wisconsin was unable to organize any black regiments in 1863, African Americans did not remain idle as the War Department credited the state for 182 black men who volunteered in neighboring states’ regiments.<sup>100</sup>

Wisconsin’s acceptance of black recruitment did not seem to overly affect its white enlistments. Political partisanship appeared to be the primary inhibitor to the state’s recruitment. After the Emancipation Proclamation, many of Wisconsin’s Democrats expressed disinterest in volunteering for an abolitionist war. Not too surprisingly, this animosity towards black emancipation affected many Democrats’ opinion of black soldiers. Democrats commented how African American troops were “wholly inefficient...for lack of discipline,” and stated how their camps were in “bad condition” and “where the negroes assemble in camp, pestilence marks them

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<sup>95</sup> Gaylord, “General Order No. 19,” *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1863*, October 20, 1863, 467.

<sup>96</sup> Neither Kentucky nor Michigan’s Adjutant Generals mentioned issues with underage recruitment.

<sup>97</sup> Gaylord, “General Orders No. 20,” *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1863*, 467-68. Black recruitment officially began on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1863 when the War Department approved their plans.

<sup>98</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860 Census*, Ages 20-30 and 30-40, p. 530.

<sup>99</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending in 1863*, 507.

<sup>100</sup> Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 163-64.

for her own.”<sup>101</sup> However, these articles also emphasized how the perceived shortcomings of black troops were because “they are neglected at Washington” and their sufferings the result of receiving “little more attention or sympathy.”<sup>102</sup> Instead of displaying anger at having black men serve in their stead, Democratic criticism focused more on the inefficacies and perceived bad policies of the Republican Administration.

It is difficult to prove black recruitment in particular negatively affected Democratic volunteerism. Concern regarding Republican mismanagement of African American enlisting seemed the root of Democratic criticisms of black soldiers. Rufus Dawes’s memoir helps support this notion as he commented in late 1862 and early 1863, how he and many of his Democratic comrades were in favor of utilizing blacks to help win the war.<sup>103</sup> Some Democrats may have seen potential for black recruits if the War Department became more efficient at organizing and caring for these new soldiers. Many of Wisconsin’s Democrats were expressly against emancipation, but when it came to fill their troop quota, they did not all appear hostile to enlisting black troops.

Democratic dissent regarding emancipation also helped spur the peace movement in Wisconsin which undermined the state’s recruitment efforts. Upset over the Emancipation Proclamation and the draft, the Peace Democrats, known as Copperheads, also protested “the policy of arbitrary arrests, the enlistment of negro soldiers, and any other measure of the administration.”<sup>104</sup> German and Irish immigrants generally detested the Republican

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<sup>101</sup> J. Crowley, “Black Soldiers,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 21, 1863; J. Crowley, “Matters at Vicksburg,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, October 9, 1863.

<sup>102</sup> J. Crowley, “Black Soldiers,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 21, 1863; J. Crowley, “Matters at Vicksburg,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, October 9, 1863.

<sup>103</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin*, 29, 44.

<sup>104</sup> J. Crowley, “Returning to Reason,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, July 24, 1863.

Administration's power to conscript them into a bloody war to free the slaves. Between September of 1862 and early July of 1863, Wisconsin experienced "the high tide of the Copperheads."<sup>105</sup> In May of 1863, Rufus Dawes commented on how many of his comrades' enlistment terms were expiring and their regimental recruiters in Wisconsin could not find enough replacements. Dawes reasoned the primary explanation for their inability to obtain the necessary recruits was because of the "cowards back home" who were "for peace at any price."<sup>106</sup> Although the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg diminished Copperhead activity in Wisconsin, their objections to Republican rule and emancipation survived and affected the broader Democratic Party platform.<sup>107</sup> It is reasonable to consider Wisconsin's peace movement as a plausible explanation for why recruitment slackened.

Regarding Wisconsin's Republicans, emancipation and black recruitment did not significantly affect their enlistment. Although they still supported the President on the grounds that both measures were necessary war aims, it did not spur them to enlist in significant numbers. Republicans argued in the *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune* how "it is universally conceded that the negroes make capital soldiers... they have fought as well as any soldiers in the U. S. Army."<sup>108</sup> The *Dodgeville Chronicle* concurred with Lincoln's assertion that "successes could not have been achieved where it was, but for the aid of black soldiers" who through their service, left "so much less for whites to do in saving the Union."<sup>109</sup> The pragmatism of admitting black soldiers especially pleased Wisconsin's Republicans as they stated, "God speed the enterprise, and thus

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<sup>105</sup> Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 72.

<sup>106</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin*, 142, 105-106 respectively.

<sup>107</sup> Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 72.

<sup>108</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, "Gen. Paine Seriously Wounded-Interesting Particulars-Noble Conduct of Negro Troops," *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, July 8, 1863.

<sup>109</sup> R. Crosby, *Dodgeville Chronicle*, September 17, 1863.



save the lives of white men.”<sup>110</sup> Expressing reservations regarding the “rebel barbarity” of not granting black troops “treatment recognized by civilized nations,” Republicans still endeavored to recruit and deploy African American soldiers.<sup>111</sup> However, the belief African American soldiers could and should fight did not translate into white Republican recruits. Whether or not they believed black soldiers could take their place is uncertain, but turning to black soldiers did not correlate with an increase in white enlistment.

Many Republican Wisconsinites may have favored the military’s use of African Americans as a means to preserve white lives. Rufus Dawes, though an abolitionist prior to the war, noted the pragmatic value of utilizing former slaves. While in Virginia, Dawes described ordering a “colored man who came into [their] picket line” with information on enemy positions, to personally guide the unit so “that if he led them into an ambush, he would certainly be the first one killed.”<sup>112</sup> The Republican *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune* similarly contended “the necessities of this country demand than (sic) men be drafted, are black men so sacred that they shall not be made to bear their share? Are niggers better than white men?”<sup>113</sup> In November, a month after the War Department approved Wisconsin’s plans to organize black troops, Republican Wisconsinites favored the plan as “our army would now have at least 800,000 negro soldiers, and no more white men would be required to take the field.”<sup>114</sup> The perceived

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<sup>110</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, “Protection of Negro Soldiers,” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, October 22, 1863.

<sup>111</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, “Negro Troops in the South,” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, August 6, 1863.

<sup>112</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin*, 52.

<sup>113</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, “Seizing Property for Military Purposes,” *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, October 28, 1863.

<sup>114</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, “Will the People Trust Them?” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, November 26, 1863.

pragmatism of “Sambo’s right to be kilt,” expressed by these examples, emphasize that many Republican Wisconsinites favored black recruitment as it saved white men.<sup>115</sup>

Throughout 1863, Wisconsin recruiters urged men to volunteer so they could avoid the perceived shame of being a draftee. In Manitowoc, recruiting officers claimed, “volunteering is far better than being drafted and we hope many of our young men will avail themselves of the opportunity.”<sup>116</sup> Hoping to portray a benefit of volunteering, the article described how recruits could pick their branch of service whereas conscripts had no such option.<sup>117</sup> Recruiters made these overtures to convince men to enlist suggesting intense draft anxiety. In Dodgeville, a recruiter attempted to conjure optimism claiming he had “no doubt he w[ould] raise a company within a short period.”<sup>118</sup> Alluding to Wisconsin’s First Heavy Artillery, the unit this recruiter was attempting to organize, the Adjutant General later reported “for some unexplained cause, but slow progress has been made.”<sup>119</sup> Although Wisconsin recruiters attempted to portray optimism, recruitment data shows the state struggled to furnish volunteers resulting in conscription.

Studying Michigan and Wisconsin recruitment is important as it emphasizes Kentucky’s exertion to obtain white volunteers to meet its troop quota. Problems hindering Michigan and Wisconsin, including political partisanship, class distinction, and war weariness, were present in Kentucky but did not significantly obstruct its recruitment. Furthermore, neither Michigan nor Wisconsin suffered the internal divisions which encouraged armed conflict among Kentuckians.

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<sup>115</sup> S. Lover and Miles O’ Riley, “Sambos Right to Be Kilt,” (New York: Wm. Hall & Son, 1864). “Sambo’s Right to be Kilt” was a popular Union poem in 1864 which expressed the military pragmatism of black recruitment.

<sup>116</sup> J. Crowley, *Manitowoc Pilot*, December 4, 1863.

<sup>117</sup> J. Crowley, *Manitowoc Pilot*, December 4, 1863.

<sup>118</sup> R. Crosby, “Recruiting for the First Heavy Artillery,” *Dodgeville Chronicle*, June 25 1863.

<sup>119</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1863*, Vol. 1, Section 1, p. 244.

Kentucky exerted itself to furnish an adequate number of white troops to make black recruitment unnecessary within the state.

Emancipation and black recruitment did not cause Kentucky's loyalty to the Union to diminish in 1863. Despite the fact that these measures posed a direct threat to slavery, white Kentuckians generally kept faith with the Federal Government as evident by their recruitment data. Kentuckians did not draft or rely heavily on local bounties to entice volunteers which emphasizes their willingness to serve. Kentucky managed to fill 94 percent of its quota with volunteers while Michigan and Wisconsin, relying on conscription, bounties, and black recruitment, procured 69 percent and 44 percent of their respective quotas.<sup>120</sup> However, if white Kentuckians were enlisting to prevent black recruitment, the fact they failed to meet their quota, leaving the possibility for black conscription, seems to deviate from the argument.

The reason Kentucky failed to meet its 1863 quota was because the state had exhausted its white military-aged population and could not continue to meet federal troop demands. Although at first Kentucky's 42 percent Union service record, compares to Michigan's 43 percent and Wisconsin's 42 percent, the figure does not account for the manpower lost to the Confederacy. Estimating that 32,500 Kentuckians enlisted in rebel forces by the end of 1863, Kentucky's total service record was 65 percent.<sup>121</sup> This number is significant as it emphasizes how the state was committing some of its final reserves of white manpower in 1863. Over half of Kentucky's eligible population was serving and thus exempt from further service. Michigan and Wisconsin, meanwhile, did not have to contend with such significant loss to their available

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<sup>120</sup> I calculated each state's troop percentages by dividing its furnished troops by its quota. Kentucky's recruits (13,743), divided by its quota (14,471), equals 94 percent. Michigan's recruits (13,567), divided by its quota (19,553), equals 69 percent. Wisconsin's recruits (8,904), divided by its quota (19,852), equals 44 percent.

<sup>121</sup> This figure represents Kentucky's Union and Confederate recruits. Kentucky's Union service by the end of 1863 was 42 percent.

manpower. The fact Kentucky had a comparable service record to Michigan and Wisconsin, despite their population shortage, emphasizes emancipation and black recruitment did not undermine the state's unionist loyalty. On the contrary, these measures seemed to be what motivated Kentucky recruitment while Michigan and Wisconsin struggled.

The argument Kentucky remained loyal to the Union despite the Emancipation Proclamation and black recruitment counters contemporary scholarship which argues that emancipation and black recruitment caused the Border State to cease its unionist support. However, examining Kentucky's recruitment data emphasizes that was not the case. Kentucky would not have been able to have a voluntary recruitment surge in 1863 if emancipation and black recruitment hindered unionism. Examining Michigan and Wisconsin emphasizes Kentucky's loyalty as both of these states desperately resorted to conscription, bounties, and black recruitment but yet could not provide the necessary troops. Emancipation and black recruitment, though unpopular in Kentucky, encouraged unionism as Kentuckians decided to fill their quota with the remnants of their white population to protect the integrity of the institution within the state. Many white Kentuckians hoped their military service to the Union would ultimately stabilize slavery and give the institution national legitimacy and protection.

By the end of 1863, Kentucky had largely exhausted its white manpower. Although the state continued its attempts to delay invoking black recruitment by scrounging for more white troops, its available resources simply made it impossible. Continued guerrilla raids, the necessity for slave patrols, coupled with the general needs of businesses and farms, demanded many stay on the home front. Consequently, volunteerism declined and Kentucky, unable to meet its required recruitment levels, reluctantly resorted to conscription and black recruitment. Hoping

the Union would never permanently outlaw slavery, Kentuckians gradually but begrudgingly, acquiesced and allowed Federal agents to recruit their slaves for federal service in 1864.

## Chapter 4

### Kentucky's Military Exhaustion in 1864 and 1865

By 1864 and 1865, Kentucky had exhausted its white manpower. Intending to preserve slavery and maintain its economic and racial status quo, Kentucky vigorously recruited in late 1861, in response to Confederate General Polk's invasion, and in 1863 to prevent the necessity of black recruitment. Although Kentucky's recruiting efforts temporarily achieved these objectives, the state could not sustain these efforts indefinitely. Kentucky achieved a proportional service record, by the start of 1864, which Michigan and Wisconsin would not have until the conclusion of the war. Having lost thousands of potential recruits to the Confederacy, coupled with the necessity of maintaining strong state forces to fend-off guerrilla raids, Kentucky's white population no longer had the ability to meet federal troop demands in 1864 and 1865. Scholars have contended that Kentucky's reduced enlistments resulted from distaste for abolition, but this is not the case. Kentucky officials continually pressed the state's population for white recruits, including draftees, to fill the quotas and negate black recruitment. However, such white manpower did not exist in the state which, coupled with the persistent efforts of black Kentuckians to enlist, forced white Kentuckians to reluctantly accept black recruitment. Consequently, Kentuckians had to allow black recruitment and conscription to meet their quotas during the final two years of the war.

While white Kentuckians viewed black recruitment as a threat to their economic prosperity and white superiority, African Americans viewed it as an opportunity to free themselves. During these final two years, with white recruitment exhausted, thousands of black Kentuckians left slavery and enlisted in federal service. Kentucky produced the second highest number of black troops in the country, aside from Union-occupied Louisiana, which testifies to

African Americans' desire to free themselves and disprove the racial assumptions of white supremacy. Although there were reports of forced conscription, the majority of Kentucky's black recruits volunteered. While their white counterparts enlisted to preserve slavery, black Kentuckians enlisted to free themselves and dismantle the institution.

Compared to Michigan and Wisconsin, Kentucky provided significantly fewer white troops in 1864 and 1865. Owing to these state's larger manpower reserves, Michigan and Wisconsin experienced massive troop surges during these final two years. Utilizing bounties, substitution, black recruitment, and conscription, both states had developed efficient recruitment apparatuses allowing them to procure significantly higher numbers of troops than Kentucky. Furthermore, these states did not have to compete with Confederate recruiters nor did they require large state forces to protect their respective home fronts. Unlike Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin had the resources and the capability to furnish thousands of troops at this stage of the war.

Kentucky's poor white recruitment in 1864 and 1865 does not signify the state had given up on slavery or the Union. On the contrary, Kentuckians still hoped their service to the United States would preserve the institution. That is primarily why they managed to provide enough white recruits, mostly through veteran reenlistments, to delay black recruitment until April of 1864. Kentuckians generally assumed the federal government's efforts to enlist their slaves was a temporary war measure and the established laws of the Constitution would protect their long-term interests. Once the war concluded, many white Kentuckians hoped they could rebuild the institution and reestablish the state's pre-war prosperity. However, this perception changed towards the end of 1864 and throughout 1865 when the Thirteenth Amendment eradicated

slavery. Though still loyal, the sense of betrayal many Kentuckians felt as a result of the Amendment and the end of slavery, spurred pro-Confederate memory in the post-war years.

In early 1864, Kentucky continued to delay black recruitment by attempting to mobilize as many white recruits as possible. Required to raise 5,758 men by March, the state attempted to stimulate white volunteerism. In February, Governor Bramlette sought to reassure the War Department by stating, “we are ready to fill our quota from the ‘free’ white citizens of Kentucky.... [w]e shall meet the call upon us without enlisting colored men.”<sup>1</sup> In March, the *Louisville Weekly Journal* wrote, “while our State is being exhausted, let us hear no more of this senseless clamor and pitiful objurgating” regarding black recruitment. The editors wrote, “whole districts of the State have been depopulated, and others have never been protected...from marauding guerillas; we have not the population, the resources, or the able-bodied men we had in 1860.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Kentucky Congressman Brutus Clay reiterated how implementing black recruitment, “because we have not furnished our quota with the balance of the States,” was unfounded as the War Department had “not given us an opportunity” to fill the quota with white men.<sup>3</sup> Acting on this determination to prevent black recruitment, Kentucky managed to recruit 69 percent, or 6,736 white men, of its recruits for 1864 during the first three months of the year.<sup>4</sup> These men represented the final significant number of white troops for Kentucky. During the rest of the year, the state could only procure an additional 3,890 to meet its total quota of 20,383.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Crowley, “Recruiting of Negroes in Kentucky: Letter from Gov. Bramlette,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, February 5, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, March 29, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, March 1, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Volume IV, 1264-1269; Lindsey, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General for the State of Kentucky*. I figured out the muster date for each unit Kentucky recruited in 1864. I calculated the percentage by dividing the number of troops recruited during January to March 1864 (6,736) and divided by the total troops for the year (9,648) to reach the 69 percent service record.

<sup>5</sup> Lindsey, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General for the State of Kentucky*. Of these troops, 6,870 were reenlistments. Kentucky’s total quota for 1864 was 26,141 and they enlisted 9,648 white troops.



Kentucky's Confederate enlistees overtaxed the state's white manpower preventing the state from meeting its federal quota in 1864. The median value of scholarly estimates places Kentucky's Confederate recruits around 32,500 throughout the war.<sup>6</sup> Owing to insufficient Confederate recruiting data, it is difficult to determine the precise quantity and year in which these men enlisted in rebel service. Conceivably, two major events, both occurring prior to 1864, would have spurred the majority of these recruits to rally in Southern units. The first was the initial firing on Fort Sumter in 1861, and the second was the combined Emancipation Proclamation, black recruitment, and conscription in 1863. Although no Confederate recruitment data explicitly emphasizes these events as inciting support, they do arguably represent the most likely time for rebel sympathizers in the state to volunteer.<sup>7</sup> The Confederate invasions of 1861 and 1862 may have spurred rebel enlistments, owing to the proximity and relative ease of joining nearby armies.<sup>8</sup> Assuming most of Kentucky's Confederate recruits enlisted during these events, by January of 1864, 65 percent of Kentucky's white military-aged population were in uniform.<sup>9</sup> Solely counting the percentage of the white adult male population that went into federal service, after removing the Confederate recruits from the population, one arrives at 55 percent which is still higher than Michigan or Wisconsin.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 108; Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*, 20; Cox, "Kentucky's Conflict as a Border State during the Secession Crisis," 18. Scholarly estimates number Kentucky's Confederates between 25,000 and 40,000 men for the whole war. The median value is 32,500.

<sup>7</sup> The *rage militarie* of 1861 encouraged thousands of Confederate Kentuckians to volunteer while the Emancipation Proclamation, coupled with the Federal draft, may have made many join conventional or irregular rebel forces rather than face the prospect of fighting in an army that liberated slaves.

<sup>8</sup> Polk's invasion of 1861, coupled with Generals Bragg and Kirby Smith's campaigning in 1862, probably did not spur many Kentuckians to enlist as both incursions failed, owing in part to a lack of popular support.

<sup>9</sup> I determined the number by adding Kentucky's furnished Union troops by 1864 (59,216) to the estimate of those who fought for the Confederacy (32,500) which equals 91,716. Dividing this number into the state's white military age population (140,078) equates to 65 percent.

<sup>10</sup> Kentucky's union troops up until 1864 (59,216) divided by its white population minus the rebel recruits (107,578), equals 55 percent.

Kentucky attempted to persuade the War Department to reduce its quotas based on the number of men who had gone to the Confederacy. According to the *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, federal “authorities have agreed to Governor Bramlette’s idea, that the quota of Kentucky shall be reduced 25,000, the number of her fighting population that went south. The Government says that what remains to be supplied can be from the white men of the State.”<sup>11</sup> Similarly, the *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* wrote a day later, “Governor Bramlette has induced the War Department to credit Kentucky on the draft 27,000 troops who have joined the confederate army.”<sup>12</sup> The state premised these numbers on estimates since state officials had no means to accurately determine its Rebel recruits and did not seem to account for those Kentuckians serving in irregular forces within the state. The *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* did not show a reduction of the quota resulting from this request, suggesting the federal government would not allow recruitment to slacken due to unsupported estimations. The only deductions the federal government granted Kentucky was for excess credits the state provided during previous calls.<sup>13</sup>

Kentucky’s unstable home front further drained its white manpower as it necessitated that the state maintain a large militia force. Though Union soldiers garrisoned the state throughout the war, Kentucky had to organize a significant number of state troops to maintain internal stability. Facing southern sympathizers, Confederate military invasions and guerrilla bushwhackers, Kentucky organized dozens of small companies and a few regiments, amounting to 5,602 militia men, from 1861 through 1863.<sup>14</sup> These troops were meant to combat Rebel raids

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<sup>11</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, April 20, 1864.

<sup>12</sup> Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, April 21, 1864.

<sup>13</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Volume IV, 1264-1269.

<sup>14</sup> Lindsey, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General for the State of Kentucky*, 824. This number represents those Kentucky militiamen that the federal government did not muster into national service. The War Department did not count the state militia towards the service record as they were not in federal service.

which had “swept... plantations so clean that, except in a very few instances, neither negroes nor planters have been ever heard of since.”<sup>15</sup> The guerrilla fighting was so bad in Kentucky, Lincoln invoked martial law in the state on July 5, 1864.<sup>16</sup> The state’s desire to perpetuate stability and protect property from destruction or thievery, necessitated this large force. If included with Kentucky’s total furnished troops, these militia men would have made the state’s proportional service record 69 percent by the start of 1864.<sup>17</sup> According to this data, Kentucky had only 42,760 white, military-aged males left in the state to fill recruitment demands.<sup>18</sup> Though the federal government did not credit Kentucky for its militia forces, they were still vital to the state’s security and represented a legitimate strain on its manpower.<sup>19</sup>

The numbers of state troops that Kentucky had to hold in reserve, did not compare with Michigan or Wisconsin which only needed a limited number of home guardsmen. The stark contrast between Kentucky and these two states is evident in the reported numbers for each state’s militia. Michigan maintained a force of 400, whose only job was to “sustain a feeling of security” and prevent “raids by southern rebel refugees from...Canada.”<sup>20</sup> Wisconsin’s home guard meanwhile, described as an “utter failure” by the Adjutant General, boasted around 879 men whose job was to enforce the draft and occasionally patrol for Indians.<sup>21</sup> Neither Michigan nor Wisconsin had to commit serious resources to maintain their respective home guards.

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<sup>15</sup> Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, August 6, 1863.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on Kentucky’s guerrilla war and martial law see Murdock, *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North*.

<sup>17</sup> I derived this number by adding Kentucky’s Union and Confederate troops from 1861 to 1863 (91,716) to its state troops from 1861 to 1863, who did *not* muster into Federal service, (5,255) and dividing that total (96,971) into the state’s white male population (140,078) which equals 69 percent.

<sup>18</sup> I calculated Kentucky remaining population by adding all of the state’s Union, Confederate, and militia recruits raised before 1864 (97,318) from the state’s military-aged population (140,760), to get 42,760.

<sup>19</sup> Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict*, 220.

<sup>20</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General, 1864*, 207-209. I determined the number 400 by examining the state’s expense records for outfitting its home guard which the adjutant general published in this report.

<sup>21</sup> Gaylord. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin, 1865*, pp. 688, 732.

Although Kentucky had to sustain such a large number of state troops, it still met or exceeded its federal quotas up until 1864, while Michigan and Wisconsin struggled.

The war drained Kentucky's white manpower, causing the state's agricultural capabilities to diminish. Governor Bramlette commented in January, 1864 how "a large portion of our productive labor had been driven from the State, and the arm of industry was greatly paralyzed."<sup>22</sup> Kentucky's lucrative tobacco industry, valued at \$291,496,955 before the war, struggled to find workers by July, illustrating this paralysis.<sup>23</sup> The *Maysville Weekly Bulletin* reported, "Kentucky farmers are in Indiana in search of laborers to till their Tobacco crops. Extravagant wages are offered."<sup>24</sup> Although Kentucky's agricultural enterprises still remained capable of "supply[ing] all our demands," the *Louisville Weekly Journal* observed how the "withdrawal of labor tells upon this production." Despite "mechanical ingenuities... [which] have made one poor man equal to two good men" the increasing labor shortages "tell against the ability of exportation."<sup>25</sup> Although it is hard to determine Kentucky's agricultural capabilities during the final two years of the war, a labor shortage among its white men existed and appeared to affect the state's agricultural economy.

Kentucky's lost white manpower meant the state increasingly relied on slave labor to support the economy. The *Maysville Weekly Bulletin* commented on how "the merchants, the manufacturers, the mechanics, and all classes of laboring men...have been immensely benefitted by the fruits of negro slavery."<sup>26</sup> In August, the *Louisville Weekly Journal* expressed the

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<sup>22</sup> Thomas E. Bramlette, "Message of Governor T. E. Bramlette to the General Assembly of Kentucky, at their Adjourned Session of 1863-4," January 4, 1865 (Frankfort: Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives)

<sup>23</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Agricultural Report of 1860*, 62.

<sup>24</sup> Ross and Rosser, *Maysville Weekly Bulletin*, July 14, 1863.

<sup>25</sup> Geo D. Prentice ad Paul R. Shipman, "Agricultural Necessities," *Louisville Weekly Journal*, May 31, 1863.

<sup>26</sup> Ross and Rosser, "Civilization in the Free and 'Slave' States," *Maysville Weekly Bulletin*, May 26, 1864.

importance of slave labor by arguing how the state's interests "are so inextricably interwoven with the slave institution that its defense against immediate abolition was a necessity."<sup>27</sup> The prominence of slavery in 1864 contrasts with the state's formally integrated society, which relied on both free-labor and chattel property. Signifying the importance of the institution to replace the white laborers who had enlisted, Governor Bramlette reasoned, "slave labor was therefore an important item to be secured against destruction."<sup>28</sup>

Kentucky's implementation of conscription in 1864 emphasizes the state's white manpower shortage. Hoping to fill its quota with white men but fearful volunteers might be hard to obtain, Kentucky began conscription for the first time in January of 1864. Of the 9,648 white men Kentucky raised in 1864, 491 were draftees while 531 paid substitutes.<sup>29</sup> Similar to Michigan and Wisconsin, Kentucky's use of conscription sought to increase volunteerism. The Border State's recruiters often articulated, "volunteers will receive the liberal bounty and increased pay offered by the Government; the conscript will not. Volunteers select their own company and regiment---the conscript will be assigned...The volunteer will be honored...the conscript will not."<sup>30</sup> However, Kentucky's use of conscription does not imply the state no longer favored the Union. Kentucky's service record as of January 1864, shows the state had nearly exhausted its white manpower and could no longer procure enough volunteers to prevent black recruitment. Kentucky's draft represents a desperate effort to commit as many white men

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<sup>27</sup> S. S. Nicholas, ed., "The Irrepressible Conflict," *Louisville Weekly Journal*, August 2, 1864.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas E. Bramlette, "Message of Governor T. E. Bramlette to the General Assembly of Kentucky, at their Adjourned Session of 4 January 1865."

<sup>29</sup> Murdock, *One Million Men*, 352.

<sup>30</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, "Proclamation of the Governor," (Frankfort, Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, January 7, 1864.

as possible and may have been what allowed the state to furnish the white volunteers it did despite its significant manpower shortages.

Kentuckians attempted to fill their quota by relying on veteran reenlistments. According to the Adjutant General Report, 6,870 veterans reenlisted in 1864. Representing 71 percent of its troops enlisted that year, Kentucky furnished more veteran troops than either Michigan or Wisconsin. Departing from the scholarly consensus that Kentucky was no longer loyal after 1863, these veterans “reaffirmed that unfaltering loyalty, the noble characteristic of Kentucky’s sons,” by reenlisting “to restore our government to its original status.” Kentuckians were so pleased that veterans were reenlisting, the *Daily Commonwealth* reminded “Kentucky’s fair daughters” that of these soldiers, “scarcely one of them is married.” The editors said “it behooves them (women) to reward these gallant and meritorious officers with far more acceptable and richer honors than barbecues, balls, [or] showy demonstrations.”<sup>31</sup> The *Louisville Weekly Journal* expressed the importance of these returning soldiers by stating, “every available veteran soldier must be sent forward to give the *coup de grace* to the infamous conspiracy” as “a few months of sacrifice will end the war, restore peace, and permit us all to return to the avocations which employed us before” the war.<sup>32</sup> Despite fears of abolitionist influence, thousands of Kentucky’s field soldiers volunteered to help fill the quota.<sup>33</sup> Whether from patriotic sentiment, or the federal bounty of \$402 and the thirty-day furlough, Kentucky veterans turned out in significant numbers.

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<sup>31</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, “The Fourth and Sixth Kentucky Cavalry,” (Frankfort, Kentucky) *Daily Commonwealth*, January 23, 1864.

<sup>32</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, “The Governor’s Call for Troops,” *Louisville Weekly Journal*, May 24, 1864.

<sup>33</sup> Although neither the Adjutant General nor newspapers expressly mentioned bounties, Kentucky’s veteran troops would have received \$402 and the 30-day furlough from the federal government for reenlisting which may have incentivized some to volunteer.

Nevertheless though, veteran reenlistments were still unable to complete the state's quota with white men.

In April of 1864, black recruitment officially began in Kentucky. Although some enrolling and recruiting of Kentucky's African Americans occurred in January of 1864, when Colonel Richard Cunningham offered freedom as well as a bounty of \$300 to prospective black recruits, white Kentuckians protested and quickly stifled the effort.<sup>34</sup> However, towards the end of March, white enlistments began to taper off. In accordance with Governor Bramlette's assertion that "if Kentucky fails to furnish her quota of white men, then enough negroes may be taken to make up the deficiency," federal recruiters began encouraging black Kentuckians to enlist.<sup>35</sup>

General Stephen Burbridge, commander of the military district of Kentucky, issued General Order No. 34 and officially began enlisting black Kentuckians. The order allowed federal recruiters to begin enlisting or drafting "all able-bodied negro slaves and free colored persons of lawful age," but received backlash from Kentuckians who did not want the army to take their slaves.<sup>36</sup> Hoping to assuage dissatisfaction regarding black recruitment, Burbridge's orders allowed recruiting agents to give loyal slave masters a "certificate...as will enable him to receive from the Government the compensation authorized by law for such recruits." Amounting to \$300 per slave, it essentially represented a form of compensated emancipation which Kentuckians had rejected in 1862.<sup>37</sup> Owing to the controversial nature of the enterprise,

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<sup>34</sup> John David Smith, "The Recruitment of Negro Soldiers in Kentucky, 1863-1865," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 72, (no. 4 1974), 378. They protested and federal authorities ordered Cunningham to stop.

<sup>35</sup> Ross and Rosser, "The Governor of Kentucky," *Dollar Weekly Bulletin* (Maysville, Kentucky), March 31, 1864.

<sup>36</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 238-239.

<sup>37</sup> Smith, "The Recruitment of Negro Soldiers in Kentucky," 384. Compensated Emancipation was still unpopular as Kentuckians generally doubted the government would pay for their slaves.

Burbridge further stipulated that black recruits were to be “at once forwarded to the general rendezvous at Louisville; thence forwarded...outside of the State” to limit possible disturbances.<sup>38</sup> Under these provisions, black recruitment commenced in Kentucky by April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1864.<sup>39</sup>

The addition of black soldiers allowed Kentucky’s recruitment to increase from 9,648 to 29,417 men; 3,000 more than its 1864 quota demanded.<sup>40</sup> Although the state’s records were “incomplete in numbers...owing to the fact that their (black) recruitment was made wholly independent” by federal officers, it is conceivable that the difference was made up of black troops.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, 19,765 African Americans enlisted in Kentucky during 1864.<sup>42</sup> This large number of black soldiers, something Kentucky had been able to avoid for almost a year and a half, testifies to the total exhaustion of its white population. Evident through its newspapers and state proclamations, Kentucky was still adamantly against black recruiting but could no longer delay it with white volunteers.

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<sup>38</sup> United States War Department, “General Order No. 34,” *Official Record of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Volume IV, April 18, 1864, pp. 233-44.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, “The Recruitment of Negro Soldiers in Kentucky,” 378.

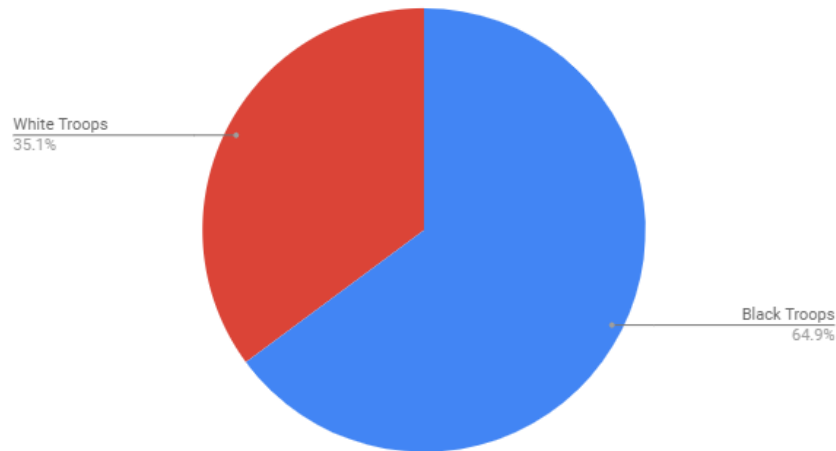
<sup>40</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, pp. 1265-67.

<sup>41</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*, IV. Talks about why the complete record of the state’s black soldiers is not in the report.

<sup>42</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, pp. 1265-67. I calculated this number by taking the total number of troops credited to Kentucky (29,417) and subtracting the number of white soldiers that Kentucky’s Adjutant General reported (9,648) which leaves an excess of 19,765. I assume this surplus of troops were African American.



Kentucky's Black Recruiting in 1864 and 1865



This graph emphasizes the importance of black recruiting in Kentucky during 1864 and 1865. After Kentucky exhausted its white manpower, black recruits made up the majority of the state's enlistments.<sup>43</sup>

When black recruitment officially began in Kentucky, thousands of African Americans enthusiastically volunteered.<sup>44</sup> The *Louisville Weekly Journal* noted how “the negro recruits” were enlisting “in the proper spirit” and “that the number is daily and rapidly increasing...[as] a squad of about seventy-five negro recruits arrived last night on the Frankfort train.”<sup>45</sup> It makes sense this Louisville newspaper was commenting on the arrival of black soldiers, as Burbridge had made the city the primary rendezvous. In Owen County, just northeast of Louisville, Major Farris enrolled “two hundred and twenty-six slaves and four-teen free men of color.”<sup>46</sup> Federal control over the black recruitment apparatus was so effective through 1864 that agents enlisted 62 percent of Kentucky's African American military-aged population, effectively exhausting it.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> I obtained this data from each states respective Adjutant General Reports and the *Official Records*. For a more detailed analysis see my digital component, [historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/](http://historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/).

<sup>44</sup> Smith, “The Recruitment of Negro Soldiers in Kentucky, 1863-1865,” 385.

<sup>45</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, July 26, 1864 and June 14, 1864.

<sup>46</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, April 5, 1864.

<sup>47</sup> I determined this number by dividing Kentucky's black troops in 1864 (19,765) by the free-black and slave population (31,835) to get a service record of 62 percent.

By 1865, Kentucky's recruitment efforts had drained its white and black military-aged populations. According to the Adjutant General Report, Kentucky furnished 3,190 white men during the first four months of 1865, falling far short of its 10,481 quota.<sup>48</sup> Subsequently, federal recruiters enlisted or conscripted 3,938 black Kentuckians for service bringing the state's total troop contribution to 7,128.<sup>49</sup> Evident by this data, Kentucky had depleted both its white manpower and its military-aged black population. The high proportion of Kentucky's black enlistments in 1864 may explain why black Kentuckians could not complete the state's 1865 quota. The diminished black enlistments helped prompt Congress in March of 1865 to not only grant freedom and a federal bounty to the recruit, but to also free their wives and children.<sup>50</sup> Affidavits from black Kentuckians serving at Camp Nelson especially testify to the importance of family. George Washington, of the 123rd United States Colored Infantry, wrote to Lincoln asking for a discharge to better provide for his family whom "a hard master" still owned.<sup>51</sup> Joseph Miller, a black soldier at Camp Nelson, asked for the army to allow his family to dwell within the confines of the base as they "had no place to go."<sup>52</sup> Conceivably, many of Kentucky's black soldiers enlisted with the hope the federal government would free and help care for their

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<sup>48</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky; Official Records War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, Section 2, p. 1002.

<sup>49</sup> I calculated Kentucky's 1865 black soldiers by taking the total number of black troops credited to Kentucky (23,703) and subtracting those were recruited in 1864 (19,765) to get 3,938.

<sup>50</sup> United States Congress, "A Resolution to Encourage Enlistments and to Promote the Efficiency of the Military Forces of the United States," *U.S. Congress, Statutes at Large*, 1863-1865, Volume XIII, 38<sup>th</sup> Congress, March 3, 1865, p. 571.

<sup>51</sup> George Washington to Mr. Abraham Lincoln, December 4, 1864, *Freedmen and Southern Society Project*, Letters Received, series 360, Colored Troops Division, Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94, National Archives. Washington served in company B, 123rd USCI.

<sup>52</sup> Affidavit of Joseph Miller, November 26, 1864, *Freedmen and Southern Society Project*, Registered Letters Received, series 3379, Tennessee Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, & Abandoned Lands, Record Group 105, National Archives.

families.<sup>53</sup> Ironically, while Kentucky's white adult male population exhausted itself to preserve slavery, their black counterparts depleted their manpower to abolish it.

Black recruitment in Kentucky was effective. Between April of 1864 and April 1865, the federal government credited Kentucky with 23,703 African American troops.<sup>54</sup> Considering the military-aged free-black and slave populations in 1860, which amounted to 31,835, the state furnished 74 percent of its black population to Union forces.<sup>55</sup> Black refugees from the Deep South may also have enlisted in Kentucky as there was a large contraband camp outside of Columbus, Kentucky. It is hard to determine how many African American migrants enlisted in Kentucky but it is conceivable that federal recruiters enticed as many as possible to join.<sup>56</sup> Coupled with the added troops from migrating African Americans, Kentucky recruited more black soldiers than any other state except for Union-occupied Louisiana.<sup>57</sup> However, this does not testify to white Kentuckians' willingness to enlist blacks. Federal dominance, coupled with constant troop needs, trumped Kentucky's reservations regarding the "abduction of slaves from their masters," explaining why the black recruiting apparatus was so efficient.<sup>58</sup>

While Kentucky had exhausted its manpower by the start of 1864, Michigan maintained a large reserve and began calling upon it during this latter stage of the war. Up until the start of

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<sup>53</sup> Berry, *Military Necessity*, 78-79.

<sup>54</sup> I added Kentucky's 1864 black troops (19,765) to their 1865 black troops (3,938) to get a total of 23,703.

<sup>55</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1265-70. I added Kentucky's free-black, military-aged male population (1,175) to their military-aged male slaves (30,660) to get the total of 31,835. To get Kentucky's African American service record, I divided their population (31,835) by their troops (23,703) to get 74 percent.

<sup>56</sup> For more information on the northward migration of former slaves during the Civil War see, Leslie Schwalm, *Emancipation's Diaspora: Race and Reconstruction in the Upper Midwest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 43-44, 57-58, 107.

<sup>57</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 242.

<sup>58</sup> It is worth noting Kentucky had no issue with obtaining credits from these black soldiers as Governor Bramlette sent agents into Tennessee to count "enlistments of Kentucky negro troops...as will enable the State to obtain proper credits." Ross and Rosser, (Maysville, Kentucky) *Dollar Weekly Bulletin*, April 21, 1864; Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, June 14, 1864.

1864, Michigan furnished a minuscule percentage of its men compared to Kentucky. By January, Michigan had offered 53,743 volunteers, or 43 percent of its eligible males, to the war.<sup>59</sup>

Compared to Kentucky's 69 percent, Michigan's manpower reserves were quite healthy as it entered 1864.<sup>60</sup> Michigan utilized these men and soon dwarfed Kentucky's white recruits by enlisting 27,616 total men that year: its highest amount during the war.<sup>61</sup> To explain this difference, one must again examine the public discourse to determine how the state, though falling slightly short of its 29,945 quota, produced so many troops.<sup>62</sup>

In 1864, Michiganders seemed invigorated as they supplied their largest number of recruits. Governor Austin Blair declared in January "recruiting has been brought back to the standard of enthusiasm of the first year of the war, and the ability of the State still to fill its quotas by the process of voluntary enlistments, has been proven beyond a doubt."<sup>63</sup> Before state officials knew the actual returns, there was already a high degree of optimism. Blair declared "this has been accomplished by the offering of liberal bounties to the volunteers" which made the Governor "convinced that no contrivance has yet been adopted which can compare in efficiency with the local bounty for procuring enlistments into the military service."<sup>64</sup>

Michigan's reliance on bounties implies patriotic fervor had largely dissipated. In Hillsdale, after talking about raising a "special township bounty" which "affords \$200, over and above Government bounties," the editors stated "liberality and patriotism go hand in hand."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*. I added the yearly totals of 1861, 1861, and 1863; Kennedy, "1860 Census," 230.

<sup>60</sup> Kentucky's proportional service record, including state militia and rebel recruits, would have been 69 percent.

<sup>61</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, p. 16. Including Michigan's white and black troops.

<sup>62</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, pp. 1265-67.

<sup>63</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Governor's Message," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican* January 28, 1864.

<sup>64</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Governor's Message," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican* January 28, 1864.

<sup>65</sup> H.B. Rowson, "Volunteer bounty in the township of Wright," *Hillsdale Standard*, August 2, 1864.

Throughout the state such sentiment was common as towns competed to offer enough money to prospective recruits. In Lansing, town officials complained about how “a recruit is at liberty to enlist where he sees fit, or where he can obtain the largest bounty” and though “this may seem to be somewhat unjust on the face of it” there was “no law to prevent it.”<sup>66</sup> Such competition for recruits, perhaps creating a financial burden for localities, helped fill the state’s quotas.<sup>67</sup>

Political partisanship still existed in Michigan but did not hinder recruitment as it may have during previous recruitment drives. Although the issue of emancipation divided many Michiganders, they mutually sought to preserve the Union. Democrats noted they had not “mistak[en] or magnify[ed] the evil of abolition influences...three years ago.”<sup>68</sup> Conservatives also expressed how they would “thank God humbly and heartily if we might but get back to that old Union of peace and prosperity” and to cease offering “freedom to him who is unprepared for it is a load of chains.”<sup>69</sup> However, Democrats still contended, “the aim and object of the democratic party is to preserve the federal union and rights of the states,” and that “we are engaged in a desperate struggle for national existence, and... no necessary sacrifice of life or property can be deemed too great.”<sup>70</sup> The *Grand Haven News* told Republicans to “make your words good by your deeds... [by] report[ing] yourselves to the nearest recruiting station.... [as] there is no longer need of abolition words, we want deeds.”<sup>71</sup> Despite Democratic opposition to abolition, they still intended to preserve the Union.<sup>72</sup> It is hard to measure exactly how many

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<sup>66</sup> John A. Kerr, *Lansing State Republican*, August 3, 1864.

<sup>67</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, 16. The state only conscripted 1,956 men, their lowest amount for a year-long period.

<sup>68</sup> Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, August 3, 1864.

<sup>69</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “The Old Union,” *Grand Haven News*, August 17, 1864.

<sup>70</sup> Geo F. Lewis, “The Platform—A Correct Copy,” *East Saginaw Courier*, September 28, 1864, and J and J. W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, October 26, 1864.

<sup>71</sup> J and J. W. Barns, “Demand for Abolitionist: Deeds, not Words,” *Grand Haven News*, August 10, 1864.

<sup>72</sup> Hershock, “Copperheads and Radicals,” 65. Hershock reasoned Democrats wanted peace but not at the expense of the Union.

Michigan Democrats enlisted in 1864, but owing to the state's recruitment data, it is reasonable to assume thousands volunteered.

Michigan's Republicans continued supporting the Lincoln Administration, as well as the war effort, by promoting volunteerism and assaulting perceived Democratic idleness. Republican Governor Austin Blair exhorted Michiganders to enlist "with the promptness and energy which has characterized our people since the war began," and to bring back "our recruiting machinery...into full operation....so that their country and its free institution may continue to exist."<sup>73</sup> Arguing the Governor's message was an embodiment of "patriotism, justice and sound policy," the *Cass County Republican* reasoned "with a patriotism and courage worthy of everlasting remembrance they (recruits) have periled everything [so] that their country and its free institutions may continue to exist."<sup>74</sup> Hoping to reprimand Democrats for their objections to serving in an abolitionist war, the *Lansing State Republican* maintained, "the simple fact is that the actions and utterances of some democrats, few, I believe, in number but prominent in position, have excited a distrust of the patriotism of the democratic party (sic)."<sup>75</sup> The *Hillsdale Standard* similarly stated, "the Copperheads can gratify their love of the Union and their hatred of the negro at the same time, by enlisting to fight for the Union and against the negroes in the rebel armies."<sup>76</sup> Campaigning for the presidential election in November, Republicans intended to build support for Lincoln's prosecution of the war while accusing Democrats of subversive inactivity. Republican and Democratic proponents continued to lash out at one another, but nonetheless maintained an element of bipartisanship allowing recruiting to continue unabated.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Governor's Message," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, January 28, 1864.

<sup>74</sup> Campbell and Mead, "Enabling the Soldiers in the Field to Vote," (Dowagiac Michigan) *Cass County Republican* January 28, 1864.

<sup>75</sup> John A. Kerr, "The Democracy and the War," *Lansing State Republican*, June 29, 1864.

<sup>76</sup> H. B. Rowson, "The Copperheads," *Hillsdale Standard*, November 1, 1864.

<sup>77</sup> Hershock, "Copperheads and Radicals," 68.

Michigan was then able to draw upon its immense reservoir of manpower to put some serious weight behind its war effort

Black recruitment, although sanctioned by the state, remained a politically divisive issue. Democrats, distraught about how black troops affected prisoner exchanges, questioned the merit of black soldiers. The *East Saginaw Courier* commented, “forty thousand of our white soldiers are dying...at Andersonville.... It is therefore, his (Lincoln’s) arbitrary caprice, and devotion to negroes, in preference to white men, which condemns to death” these prisoners.<sup>78</sup> Having made the war one to free the slaves, Democrats asked if Lincoln “would sacrifice 500,000 more white men in this negro crusade?”<sup>79</sup> Republicans countered Democratic claims against emancipation and black recruitment by reaffirming the military necessity of these measures. The *Hillsdale Standard* reiterated, “they (black soldiers) are disciplined for months before they take the field” and argued any perceived wrongness or “ferocity of the slaves is insignificant in comparison with that of their masters.”<sup>80</sup> Referring to a Union assault at New Market, Virginia, the *Lansing State Republican* devoted an article to “the colored troops, under Gen. Paine.” The editors commented that the charge of these black troops “was one of the grandest features of the operations... they never halted or faltered, though their ranks were sadly thinned, as they advanced to the successful accomplishment of their task.”<sup>81</sup> Emphasizing black troops as capable soldiers, Michigan Republicans defended black recruitment as a necessary and valuable asset to the war effort.

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<sup>78</sup> Geo F. Lewis, *East Saginaw Courier*, September 28, 1864.

<sup>79</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “Something to Think of,” *Grand Haven News*, August 3, 1864.

<sup>80</sup> H. B. Rowson, “Jeff. Davis on Servile Insurrections,” *Hillsdale Standard*, November 22, 1864.

<sup>81</sup> John A. Kerr, *Lansing State Republican*, October 5, 1864.

Despite Michigan's partisan views regarding African American soldiers, the state continued black recruitment throughout the duration of the war. However, Michigan's Adjutant General did not provide accurate information regarding the state's black troops. The "Provost Marshal's Department in this State... [had] not preserved the distinctions necessary to this classification." The report does offer an "approximate idea...of the number of colored troops sent from Michigan," which show "1,453 men were recruited for the 102d U.S. (1st Michigan) Colored Infantry."<sup>82</sup> The 1860 Census indicated Michigan had only 1,257 military-aged, free-black males.<sup>83</sup> This discrepancy does not necessarily mean Michigan's recruitment or population data was incorrect, rather population sizes may have changed due to the northward migration of former slaves.<sup>84</sup> In other words, former slaves migrating to Michigan may have swelled the state's African American population, rendering it capable of recruiting more black soldiers than the 1860 Census would indicate were available.<sup>85</sup>

Another explanation for Michigan's successful utilization of black recruitment is that it may have enlisted African Americans who dwelled in other states. Interestingly enough, in late January, Michigan recruiters asked Governor Bramlette if they could enlist Kentucky blacks for the First Michigan Colored Cavalry. Unsurprisingly, Bramlette told them "no such recruiting will be tolerated here" and "summary justice will be inflicted upon any who attempt such unlawful purpose."<sup>86</sup> It is reasonable to assert that Michigan obtained some black recruits from other states, explaining why the state recruited a regiment larger than its population could support.

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<sup>82</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan for the Year Ending 1864*, p. 36.

<sup>83</sup> United States Census Bureau, *Population of the United States in 1860*, p. 232.

<sup>84</sup> Mitchell, "Civil War Recruiting and Recruits from Ever-Changing Labor Pools," 29-31. See also Schwalm, *Emancipation's Diaspora*. 43-44.

<sup>85</sup> For more information on black migration, see Schwalm, *Emancipation's Diaspora*.

<sup>86</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, "Negro Recruiting in Kentucky," *Louisville Weekly Journal*, January 26, 1864.



Despite political disagreements regarding emancipation, Michigan's desire to fill its quota transcended partisanship and fostered black recruitment.

The primary reason for Michigan's successful recruiting efforts in 1864 stem from its established recruiting apparatus. Over the course of the war, Michigan became proficient in obtaining and offering bounties, significantly stimulating volunteerism. In early February, Michigan instituted rules "contain[ing] provisions intended to cover all formal and informal action of citizens... for the purpose of raising or offering bounties to volunteers." This Bounty Law, "provid[ed] a uniform rate of bounties...of \$100 to all volunteers...who enlist upon the quota of the township...they are enrolled."<sup>87</sup> Essentially, this provision remedied many of the issues which previously plagued the state's recruitment. Raising local bounties was still important as the *Cass County Republican* reported, "our citizens should go to work at once; meetings should be held in each town; bounties raised, and the proper efforts made to secure the credits of veteran soldiers."<sup>88</sup> Although local competitive bounties still existed, Michigan's \$100 bounty law helped equalize recruitment by allowing poorer communities a better opportunity to retain their young men.

Veteran reenlistments were instrumental to Michigan's effective recruiting system in 1864. The state's experienced field regiments, most of whom enlisted for three-year terms in 1861, were nearing the end of their enlistment contracts. Michigan, as well as the federal government, wished to preserve these veteran units by respectively offering a \$100 and \$400 reenlistment bounty, as well as a thirty-day furlough.<sup>89</sup> This financial compensation, coupled

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<sup>87</sup> Campbell and Mead, "The State Bounty Law," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican*, February 18, 1864.

<sup>88</sup> Campbell and Mead, "The Draft," (Dowagiac, Michigan) *Cass County Republican* February 1, 1864.

<sup>89</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General Report of the State of Michigan, 1864*, pp. 6-7.

with strong “ideological convictions and a determination to finish the job,” led 5,545 men, or 20 percent of Michigan’s recruits in 1864, to reenlist as Veteran Regiments.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, “every citizen [was] interested in the matter” as the state credited these veterans to the locales “where they were originally enlisted and mustered.”<sup>91</sup> Though the state and federal government offered these experienced troops bounties and furloughs, incentives many of these men did not enjoy upon their initial enlistment, patriotism primarily drove veteran troops who knew war’s “hardships” back into the service.<sup>92</sup> Subsequently, veteran troops helped fill Michigan’s quota while simultaneously giving some communities a reprieve from conscription.

Despite volunteerism and veteran reenlistments, Michigan still instituted a draft. The state had attempted to reach its quota with volunteers and both Democratic and Republican newspapers urged bipartisan volunteerism to avoid conscription. The Democratic *Grand Haven News* wrote, “the President... has ordered out five hundred thousand more troops...if they are not then ready a draft will take them. Let our citizens respond at once to the call, as it is our duty...we will unloose our purse-strings and work!”<sup>93</sup> Similarly, the Republican newspaper, the *Hillsdale Standard* wrote, “let every exertion be put forth to secure men. Remember, tat [sic] so long as recruits are offered for muster no draft will take place—as the orders are not to wait, the men will have to be forthcoming.”<sup>94</sup> Both political parties sought to avoid the draft by urging

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<sup>90</sup> McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 173. And Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General Report of the State of Michigan*, 1864, 6.

<sup>91</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, “Send in the Certificates,” *Grand Haven News*, June 1, 1864; H. B. Rowlson, “How Veterans Are Credited,” *Hillsdale Standard*, January 19, 1864.

<sup>92</sup> H. B. Rowlson, “How Veterans Are Credited,” *Hillsdale Standard*, January 19, 1864.

<sup>93</sup> J. and J. W. Barns, *Grand Haven News*, February 3, 1864.

<sup>94</sup> H. B. Rowlson, *Hillsdale Standard*, September 6, 1864.

citizens to either raise bounties or volunteer. Their efforts were not completely successful, forcing the state to conscript 1,956 men in 1864.<sup>95</sup>

Michigan's efficient recruitment practices, coupled with its manpower reserves, allowed the state to provide significantly more troops than Kentucky. Overcoming the political partisanship which had previously plagued the state's recruitment efforts, Michigan was able to mobilize more recruits in 1864 than at any other time. Despite having a draft, Michigan's Adjutant General reported, "the striking fact is... that during ten months only of the present year, the State of Michigan has furnished more than half as many men for the service as...during the whole of the first three years of the war."<sup>96</sup> Michigan's recruiting apparatus, including effective bounties and veteran reenlistments, proved successful at obtaining relatively large numbers of troops.

Extending into 1865, Michigan continued to utilize its manpower reserves by furnishing the second highest number of troops relative to Kentucky and Wisconsin. Having a quota of 10,026, Michigan recruited 9,382 men.<sup>97</sup> Although the state conscripted 1,782 of these troops, it continued a strong recruitment drive during the final months of the war.<sup>98</sup> In January, the *Hillsdale Standard* noted the necessity "of adopting at once... a thorough, vigilant and persistent system of recruiting, to fill and keep full all calls for troops...until it shall be evident no more will be required."<sup>99</sup> Michiganders felt "in a contest of exhaustion...the object of each is to so use up the energy of his antagonist so that he can fight no longer" and no one could "tell which blow

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<sup>95</sup> Robinson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, p. 16. Additionally, 356 drafted men commuted.

<sup>96</sup> Robinson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, p. 17.

<sup>97</sup> United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, p. 1002.

<sup>98</sup> Robinson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, 35. The actual number is probably smaller as Michigan's Adjutant General combined all draftees from November 1864 to April 14, 1865.

<sup>99</sup> H. B. Rowson, "Recruiting and Enlisting," *Hillsdale Standard*, January 17, 1865.

shall be the final one.”<sup>100</sup> Consequently, Michigan continued drawing upon its manpower reserves and its effective recruiting apparatus during the first four months of 1865.

Wisconsin, until the start of 1864, only provided a small number of troops compared to Kentucky. Having furnished 50,970 troops, or 42 percent of its white adult male population, Wisconsin maintained a large reserve of manpower entering 1864.<sup>101</sup> The state had struggled throughout 1863, with illegitimate recruiting officers, political divisions, corruption, and war weariness.<sup>102</sup> In 1864 though, Wisconsin committed much of its reserves by enlisting 27,312 recruits while only having to draft 1,918.<sup>103</sup> Although this did not fill its quota of 42,887, it still represents an almost 300 percent increase from the prior year and shows strong effort to mobilize its manpower reserves.<sup>104</sup>

The primary reason for Wisconsin’s recruitment surge centers on the state’s amended recruiting services. Similar to Michigan, bounties were vitally important during this stage of the war to entice volunteers.<sup>105</sup> The state had had issues granting men their promised money, owing to Wisconsin’s unsanctioned recruiters, which appeared to have weakened the state’s previous recruitment efforts. To solve this, newly elected Republican Governor, James T. Lewis, “redeem[ed] certificates issued for bounty volunteers,” allowing only state-approved recruiting

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<sup>100</sup> John A. Kerr, “The Military Progress,” *Lansing State Republican*, February 1, 1865.

<sup>101</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, p. 21. The 1865 report encompassed the years of 1861, 1862, and 1863.

<sup>102</sup> There was much mention in Wisconsin newspapers pertaining to the fact the state was no longer forming new units but rather refilling old regiments.

<sup>103</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, p. 21.

<sup>104</sup> J. Crosby, “The 500,000 Call,” *Dodgeville Chronicle*, March 17, 1864. Wisconsin’s quota was so large in 1864 because they had failed to sufficiently recruit in 1863. The *Dodgeville Chronicle* published that Henry E. Maynadier was in charge of the Enrollment Bureau. His report is in the article.

<sup>105</sup> Murdock, *One Million Men*, 5.

officers to offer bounties.<sup>106</sup> Recruitment posters, such as those presented in the *Wood County Reporter*, soon responded by advertising that government “detailed... recruiting officers” were offering bounties to recruits.<sup>107</sup> Commenting on the state’s control over enlistments, Governor Lewis issued General Orders Number 5: A and B, establishing strict guidelines for recruiting officers. Lewis stipulated “all persons holding recruiting appointments...are hereby ordered to make immediate report to this office, of the number of men enlisted for their respective organizations. Failure to report immediately, will be deemed sufficient reasons for a revocation of the appointment and consequent loss of commission.”<sup>108</sup> Such orders remedied Wisconsin’s convoluted recruiting service by making “the business of raising volunteers to fill the quota...satisfactory.”<sup>109</sup> These incentives may explain why Wisconsin enjoyed higher numbers of recruits.<sup>110</sup>

Although Wisconsinites solved their issues with the recruiting service, their underlying political and class divisions hindered volunteerism. Many Democrats responded to the state’s quota and threat of a draft by rioting in places such as Ozaukee County. This resistance may have hindered volunteerism in the state. Many Wisconsinites asserted, “when Lincoln...finally drifted into the embrace of the Abolition party and made the war a war for the purpose of revolutionizing the Government...the people became alarmed... and now demand in thunderous tones, a change of policy, and a change of rulers.”<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, referencing commutation,

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<sup>106</sup> J.N Brundage, and E.M. Haines, “Legislative,” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, January 28, 1864; Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, General Orders, No. 5 A. and General Orders, No. 5 B, pp. 705-6.

<sup>107</sup> J.N Brundage, and E.M. Haines, (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin), *Wood County Reporter*, January 21, 1864.

<sup>108</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Years 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864*, “General Orders No. 20, October 26, 1863, pp. 467-68.

<sup>109</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, “Volunteering,” *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, January 20, 1864.

<sup>110</sup> Oliver, “Draft Riots in Wisconsin during the Civil War,” 336. This success also occurred while under the authority of the Federal Government, which became the primary enforcer of the draft in late 1863.

<sup>111</sup> J. Crowley, “The Lincoln Dynast and its Pretensions,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, June 17, 1864.

Democrats expressed how “the wealthy...enjoy[ed] an advantage over others.”<sup>112</sup> Democrats, mostly German and Irish immigrants, were averse to abolition and commutation. The turmoil they created spurred the federal government to take over Wisconsin’s draft and deploy a small contingent of troops to Ozaukee County to maintain order.<sup>113</sup> Concerns regarding abolition and corruption perhaps warranted the Adjutant General to report at the end of 1864, “recruiting [had] ceased almost entirely.”<sup>114</sup> Political and economic divisions may have hindered Wisconsin’s recruitment during the latter stages of 1864, partially explaining why the state failed to meet its quota.

Republicans generally supported abolition and Lincoln’s management of the war. The *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune* addressed Democratic claims that Lincoln created “a republican war, an abolition war,” by discussing secession and Fort Sumter and asking “in what way...was the administration responsible?”<sup>115</sup> The *Wood County Reporter* stated, “if slavery was the original cause of the war, is it not our duty to continue it (the war) until...the last chain is broken, that a like conflict may not be entailed upon your posterity and mine?”<sup>116</sup> Republicans also addressed commutation and class distinctions by arguing, “with a litle [sic] patriotic effort and without any serious inconvenience to their well-filled purses” wealthy men should “furnish to the country a soldier as their immediate representative in the Union army.”<sup>117</sup> Republican Wisconsinites supported Lincoln’s implementation of emancipation as a necessary consequence of southern warmongering. Although Republicans in the *Dodgeville Chronicle*, deemed

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<sup>112</sup> J. Crowley, “Bounties,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 5, 1864.

<sup>113</sup> J. Crowley, “Bounties,” *Manitowoc Pilot*, August 5, 1864. It was when the Federal Government began running the draft and Wisconsin’s recruitment returns in 1864 improved.

<sup>114</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending, 1865*, p. 500.

<sup>115</sup> Geo F. Bliss, and ed. U. Bliss, “Who Commenced the War? *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, October 12, 1864.

<sup>116</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, October 20, 1864.

<sup>117</sup> J. N. Brundage and E. M. Haines, “Representative Recruits,” (Grand Rapids, Wisconsin) *Wood County Reporter*, July 28, 1864.

examples of racial miscegenation “as a hard lick on our party,” they still endorsed emancipation.<sup>118</sup> As evident in these articles, Republicans stalwartly supported Lincoln and sought to label their Democratic counterparts as subversive agents to the war effort.

Despite political issues on the home front, Wisconsin’s field soldiers helped bolster the state’s recruiting numbers. To help incentivize these veterans, many communities such as Dodgeville, Wisconsin, “magnanimously agreed to give our re-enlisted veterans the bounty of \$200 each.”<sup>119</sup> Coupled with the \$402 federal bounty and the thirty-day furlough all veterans received, these incentives perhaps encouraged many Wisconsinites to reenlist. Patriotism and group cohesion may also have spurred veterans, such as Rufus Dawes, to renew their service. Dawes noted in 1864, when his three-year enlistment term expired, “the inducement of pride, duty, patriotism and personal preservation” drove him and his men to “stand together till the last.”<sup>120</sup> Military experience transcended politics, motivating Dawes and 217 of the 285 survivors of the Sixth Wisconsin to reenlist and maintain the integrity of the outfit.<sup>121</sup> Apparently, “the cry of ‘Abolition War,’ raised by the home traitors, has no effect upon those who have...endured the hardships of camp life and exposed themselves to the missiles of death.”<sup>122</sup> Whatever the reason, 5,782 Wisconsinite veterans reenlisted in 1864.<sup>123</sup> Representing 21 percent of Wisconsin’s recruiting for the year, returning veterans made up a significant portion of the state’s furnished troops.

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<sup>118</sup> R. Crosby, “Miscegenation,” *Dodgeville Chronicle*, August 4, 1864.

<sup>119</sup> R. Crosby, “Town Bounty,” *Dodgeville Chronicle*, April 7, 1864.

<sup>120</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin*, 197.

<sup>121</sup> Dawes, *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin*, 235. For information on the motivations of Civil War soldiers, see McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 85, 103, and 178.

<sup>122</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, “Veteran Regiments,” *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, January 27, 1864.

<sup>123</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, p. 502.

Wisconsin also began recruiting African Americans to help fill its quota. Although the federal government had sanctioned the state to recruit blacks in October of 1863, recruiters were unable to organize enough troops to create a regiment. By 1864, Wisconsin renewed efforts to raise an African American regiment. Recruiting posters explicitly stated “recruits—white or colored” received a \$100 bounty for each year they enlisted.<sup>124</sup> These financial incentives, and a desire to serve, encouraged 250 black Wisconsinites to assemble as the Twenty-Ninth United States Colored Infantry under the command of Colonel John Bross.<sup>125</sup> Representing 75 percent of Wisconsin’s 1860 African American population, it is likely the state recruited black Southern migrants, as had occurred in Kentucky and Michigan, to bolster these numbers.<sup>126</sup> Scholars estimate that migrating African Americans from the Mississippi Valley and Missouri, increased Wisconsin’s black population to around 1,500 to 2,000 persons and the number of native black Wisconsinite soldiers was around 110 men.<sup>127</sup> Regardless, the fact Wisconsin made efforts to mobilize its relatively small, free-black population, signifies the state’s desperate attempts to meet its federal quota.

To help meet troop demands, Wisconsin’s recruiters may have begun enlisting minors for military service. Despite Adjutant General Augustus Gaylord’s 1863 orders to not enlist persons under the age of 18 without the consent of parents, Wisconsin’s recruiters may have become desperate by late summer of 1864. According to the *Dodgeville Chronicle*, General St. George

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<sup>124</sup> Geo F. Bliss and Ed. U. Bliss, “Enlistments and the Draft under the New Call,” *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, August 3, 1864.

<sup>125</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin’s Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, p. 507.

<sup>126</sup> United States Census Bureau. *Population of the United States in 1860*, p. 530. Wisconsin had a black, military-aged population of 329 men.

<sup>127</sup> Larson, *Wisconsin and the Civil War*, 162; Schwalm, *Emancipation’s Diaspora*, 45. Schwalm noted that “only fragments” of Wisconsin’s census survived and it is hard to determine the number of African Americans in the state by 1865. Schwalm uses Wisconsin’s 1870 Census to determine the state had a black population of 2,113. Because this estimate is five years after the war, I assumed the state had a smaller black population in 1864.



Cooke, the head of federal recruiting services, issued Captain J. B. Collins, in charge of Milwaukee's recruitment, "an order directing him to enlist minors with or without the consent of their parents, provided... they are physically fit to ensure the hardships of military life."<sup>128</sup> Countermanding General Gaylord's earlier mandate, the War Department may have been unimpressed with Wisconsin's recruiting service and implemented the enlistment of minors to help the state meet its quota. However, only a few newspaper articles testify to this practice and Gaylord did not provide evidence in his reports which alluded to this practice. It is difficult to prove the enlistment of minors was prevalent in Wisconsin in late 1864. The fact the state was still far from its quota suggests the practice may have occurred to procure more volunteers. Although it appears recruiting again slackened towards the end of the year, 1864 was still fruitful as the state dwarfed the efforts of white Kentuckians and matched those of Michigan.

Whatever Wisconsin's issues with recruiting were in 1864, the state solved them in 1865 by procuring more men than Kentucky and Michigan. Enlisting 12,405 men, Wisconsin managed to meet its quota of 12,356 troops.<sup>129</sup> Recruiting posters listed the officers in charge, the local, state, and government bounties, and even offered recruits "breech-loading repeating rifle[s]" which they had the opportunity "to retain...at the expiration of service."<sup>130</sup> Although the Provost Marshal General conscripted 2,465 men, recruiting seemed highly effective during the last four months of the war. The *Dodgeville Chronicle*, when describing the dismantlement of Wisconsin's recruiting apparatus at the end of the war, noted "the occupation of bounty agents is gone. There is to be no more filling of quotas, no more draft meetings, no more speeches."<sup>131</sup>

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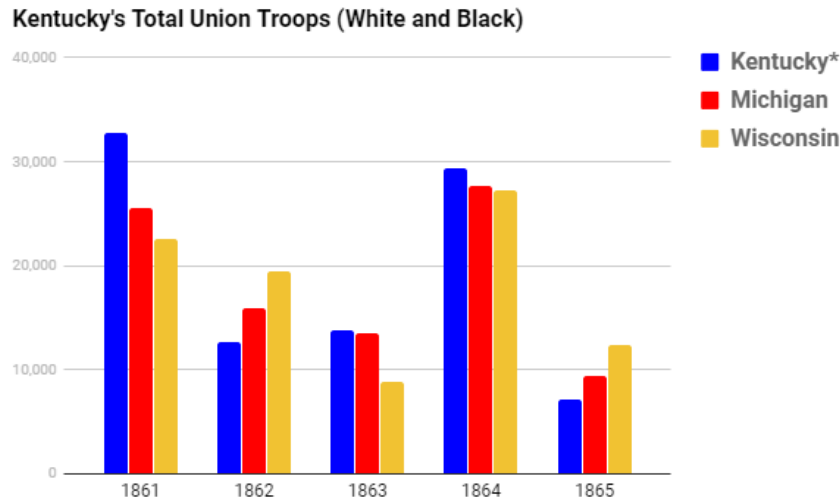
<sup>128</sup> R. Crosby, "Enlistment of Minors," *Dodgeville Chronicle*, August 11, 1864.

<sup>129</sup> Gaylord, *Wisconsin's Adjutant General Report for the Year Ending 1865*, p. 21; United States War Department, *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series III, Vol. IV, 1002.

<sup>130</sup> Geo F. Bliss, and Ed. U. Bliss, *Mineral Point Weekly Tribune*, April 5, 1865.

<sup>131</sup> R. Crosby, "Recruiting and Drafting Suspended," *Dodgeville Chronicle*, April 20, 1865.

After furnishing a total of 90,686 men, or 74 percent of its military-aged population, Wisconsin finished the war with a comparable service record to both Kentucky and Michigan.



This graph represent Kentucky's total troop contribution to the Union as compared to Michigan and Wisconsin.<sup>132</sup>

Examining Michigan and Wisconsin's recruitment efforts in 1864 and 1865 emphasizes Kentucky's continued loyalty to the federal government. Although Michigan and Wisconsin furnished higher numbers of troops during this year and a half, they had the manpower reserves to do it which Kentucky lacked. Therefore, the Emancipation Proclamation and black recruitment did not undermine the Border State's loyalty to the Union. Some Kentuckians were hostile to these measures, evident by the number of Kentuckians serving in conventional or irregular Confederate forces, but the broader state remained committed to the Union throughout most of 1864. The *Louisville Weekly Journal* noted how "the war cannot close, and peace cannot be restored, until the rebellion is crushed. There is no hope of the preservation of the Union without the strong arm, and it is therefore necessary to employ all the available strength of the

<sup>132</sup> I obtained this data from each states respective Adjutant General Reports. For a more detailed analysis of this data see my digital component, [historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/](http://historyweb.digitalhistory.bsu.edu/jklinger/ensuringloyaltykentucky/).

loyal people to accomplish what is so ardently desired.”<sup>133</sup> Although many in the state were averse to Lincoln and favored McClellan during the 1864 election, they claimed to be proud “Union men of the Commonwealth” who favored “the Union of the Constitution and the Enforcement of the Laws.”<sup>134</sup>

When the federal government began advocating for the Thirteenth Amendment during the spring of 1864, white Kentuckians remained loyal to the Union. The Amendment, proposed by Lincoln and the Republican Party, intended to permanently abolish slavery in the whole country. Conflicting with the interests of Kentuckians, they interestingly did not seem to believe the Amendment would affect long-term slavery in their state. In February, prior to the Senate vote, the *Weekly Reporter* stated, “these fanatic schemers seem to forget that their plan of operations may, at some future time, be reversed by the success of an opposing party.”<sup>135</sup> Stated prior to the presidential election of 1864, many white Kentuckians appeared confident the Democratic Party would revoke any abolitionist policy after the November election. That may be why Kentucky, one of three states George McClellan won, gave him the highest marginal vote with 64,301 in favor and 27,786 voting for Lincoln.<sup>136</sup>

During the early months of 1864, Kentuckians felt assured the broader Union did not want total emancipation. When the Senate passed the Thirteenth Amendment on April 8, 1864, Kentuckians claimed Union military authorities pressured Maryland in favor of the measure. The *Lexington Observer and Reporter* argued, “take away your bayonets, and not one man in fifty would approve your amendment or recognise (sic) your authority.”<sup>137</sup> White Kentuckians felt the

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<sup>133</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, May 24, 1864.

<sup>134</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, April 20, 1864.

<sup>135</sup> Spidel and Staples, (Henderson, Kentucky) *Weekly Reporter*, February 25, 1864.

<sup>136</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 257. New Jersey and Delaware were the only other states McClellan won.

<sup>137</sup> Spidel and Staples, *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, April 13, 1864.

House of Representatives would not support “the adoption of this amendment... because it will take from the government all power to offer terms of adjustment which the rebels can accept.”<sup>138</sup>

These expressions, in conjunction with the state’s white recruitment data through March of 1864, demonstrates that although slavery in Kentucky was under threat, many felt the institution was relatively safe. However, after they had exhausted their white manpower and began enlisting African Americans, Kentuckians became increasingly concerned about the future of slavery.

In late 1864, the federal government increasingly unsettled white Kentuckians. Despite the state’s efforts to preserve its institutions, the growing momentum behind the Thirteenth Amendment, coupled with black recruitment, made many Kentuckians feel betrayed. In early September, the *Maysville Weekly Bulletin* noted, “the Administration has been faithful indeed to the interest of the nigger, and employed all its powers in his behalf....If Lincoln is entitled to the gratitude of the black, ought he not to receive the eternal curses and maledictions of the white race?”<sup>139</sup> Increasingly, Kentucky’s objections transitioned from Lincoln’s administration to the apparatus of the federal government.<sup>140</sup> Whereas Kentuckians had previously believed their loyalty granted them representation and protection, after Lincoln’s reelection they argued “the nation outside of Kentucky will have the power to free the slaves inside of it, by constitutional amendment, without the aid of a single Kentucky vote in or out of Congress.”<sup>141</sup> With growing momentum for the Thirteenth Amendment, many Kentuckians felt the federal government was

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<sup>138</sup> Pemmitice, Henderson, Osborne, “Emancipation,” *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 9, 1864.

<sup>139</sup> Ross and Rosser, “What the Administrations Has Done for the White Man and the Nigger,” *Maysville Weekly Bulletin*, September 8, 1864.

<sup>140</sup> Harris, *Lincoln and the Border States*, 225-26.

<sup>141</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, “Last Chance,” *Louisville Weekly Journal*, December 13, 1864.

forcing them to “see and endure an utter and most injurious breaking up and overthrow of their system of labor.”<sup>142</sup>

On 31 January 1865, the House of Representatives passed the Thirteenth Amendment, effectively ending the institution many white Kentuckians had fought to preserve. Passing with the required two-thirds majority, the Amendment did not receive a single favorable vote from Kentucky.<sup>143</sup> Although Governor Bramlette beseeched his fellow Kentuckians that it was better to “accept it unconditionally than to reject it altogether,” many did not acquiesce.<sup>144</sup> In July, the *Louisville Weekly Journal* said the adoption of the Constitutional Amendment will begin by driving off white laborers, and capital will soon follow them, to some place not cursed by negro freedom.<sup>145</sup> John Combs of Versailles, Kentucky wrote a letter published by the *Lexington Observer and Reporter* which approached the issue of the Amendment under the guise of states’ rights. Combs asserted, “my opposition to the proposed amendment does not arise...in regard to the future of slavery” but rather on the premise “if the amendment is incorporated...let it be done by those who indorse...and not by those who regard it as an alarming invitation upon the great doctrines which underlie the system of government.”<sup>146</sup> The *Frankfort Commonwealth* expressed how support for the “constitutional Amendment and negro equality” has not “been held by the Union party of Kentucky. The assertion to the contrary is untrue, and none know this better than those who make it.”<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, *Louisville Weekly Journal*, December 27, 1864.

<sup>143</sup> William H. Seward to Abraham Lincoln, “Copy of 13th Amendment sent to Gov. Bramlette,” February 5, 1865, *Abraham Lincoln Papers*, Series 1 General Correspondence.

<sup>144</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, “In Senate,” *Frankfort Commonwealth*, February 10, 1865. For more information on Governor Bramlette’s views on the Thirteenth Amendment, see Lowell H. Harrison, *Kentucky Governors* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 95. Interestingly, Governor Bramlette supported the Thirteenth Amendment as, by the end of the war, he viewed slavery as a dead institution.

<sup>145</sup> Geo D. Prentice and Paul R. Shipman, “Another Air-Bag Pricked,” *Louisville Weekly Journal*, July 25, 1865.

<sup>146</sup> D. C. Wickliffe, “Interesting Letter from Col. John M. Harian,” *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, June 14, 1865.

<sup>147</sup> Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, “Facts vs Theory,” *Frankfort Commonwealth*, June 23, 1865.

Although some white Kentuckians supported the Thirteenth Amendment, such as Governor Bramlette, most did not.<sup>148</sup> The Amendment threatened Kentucky's economy and its social and racial stratification established since the antebellum period. While black Kentuckians received freedom and validation for their efforts serving the Union cause, white Kentuckians, serving on the same side, lost the institution they had hoped to preserve. It would not be until 1976 that the Kentucky Legislature officially ratified the Thirteenth Amendment.<sup>149</sup> Consequently, from the end of 1864 to the conclusion of the war, many white Kentuckians felt the Union had betrayed their interests by abolishing slavery. This sense of betrayal spurred pro-Confederate sympathies and influenced the wartime memory and society of the state during post-war Reconstruction.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Harrison, *Kentucky's Governors*, 95.

<sup>149</sup> For more information on Kentucky's ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, see "Ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments (Kentucky)," *Notable Kentucky African Americans Database*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://nkaa.uky.edu/nkaa/items/show/3003>.

<sup>150</sup> For more information on post-war Kentucky, see Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*.

## Conclusion

Slavery was the key factor in Kentucky's unionism during the American Civil War. The state's economy and society had centered on the institution of slavery since the antebellum period. White Kentuckians profited from the institution as a source of labor and economic investment while simultaneously appreciating the racial superiority the hierarchy of a slave society afforded them. When the Civil War began in April of 1861, Kentuckians chose to remain neutral as the best way to safeguard their institution from a potentially disruptive conflict. When the Confederacy threatened Kentucky's sovereignty and stability by invading in September 1861, the state officially abandoned neutrality by siding with the Union. Hoping to utilize the power of the federal government and the laws of the Constitution to protect the internal stability of the state, thousands of white Kentuckians enlisted in the federal army.

Throughout the duration of the war, the majority of Kentucky's white adult male population entered military service to defend slavery. Adding Kentucky's federal recruits with its militia, the state furnished a total of 79,069 white men to the Union cause. If one does not count the rebel recruits, the state mobilized 73 percent of its remaining white population for Union service by the end of the war.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky's service record compares to Michigan's 72 percent and Wisconsin's 74 percent, emphasizing that despite fears of abolition, Kentuckians were generally committed to the Union cause.

The majority of white Kentuckians remained loyal to the Union but some still volunteered for Confederate service. Owing to a lack of primary source evidence though,

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<sup>1</sup> I calculated this number by subtracting Kentucky's Confederates (32,500) from the states white military-aged population (140,078) to determine the remaining population of 107,578. I then divided the federal and state Union troops (79,069) by the remaining population (107,578) which equals 73 percent.

historians have only offered broad estimates of Kentucky's total number of rebel soldiers, ranging between 25,000 and 40,000. Assuming the median value of this estimate, 32,500 Kentuckians, or 23 percent of the state's white adult male population, served in conventional or guerrilla Confederate outfits throughout the war.<sup>2</sup> However, that does not necessarily imply these men enlisted at a constant rate in Confederate service during the conflict.

Perhaps similar to Kentucky's Union recruitment, the majority of Kentucky's rebels volunteered at two different periods. The first Confederate recruitment period occurred in 1861. After the initial fighting at Fort Sumter and First Bull Run, *rage militaire* encouraged thousands of Southern-sympathizing Kentuckians to enlist in Tennessee despite the state's neutrality.<sup>3</sup> Hoping to stop Rebel recruitment and enforce neutrality, Kentucky's unionist legislature stopped funding the southern-sympathizing State Guard, ordered them to surrender their arms, and give an oath of allegiance to the federal government. In response, Simon Buckner led several thousand of the State Guard, and other Kentucky Rebels, into the Confederacy during the late summer of 1861.<sup>4</sup> The second period of Kentucky's Confederate recruitment occurred in 1863. The Emancipation Proclamation, black recruitment, and the draft threatened to force white Kentuckians to serve a federal cause which sought to dismantle slavery. Kentuckians may have flocked to Confederate standards to avoid having to serve in federal service. Conceivably, these two periods spurred the majority of Kentucky's southern-sympathizers to enlist in rebel service by the end of 1863.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> I calculated this number by dividing the estimated Confederate recruits (32,500) by the total white military-aged population (140,078) which equals 23 percent.

<sup>3</sup> Kentucky's Adjutant General noted how difficult it was to calculate the number of Kentuckians who went to Tennessee but said they were organizing several regiments which indicates the number to be in the thousands.

<sup>4</sup> Stickles, *Simon Bolivar Buckner*, 78-79.

<sup>5</sup> Kentucky experienced a surge of guerrilla activity during 1863 which may be the result of increased rebel enlistments.



The two surges of Kentucky Confederate recruitment emphasize slavery as the primary motivator. Similar to their unionist counterparts who viewed the federal government as a means to protect slavery, Kentucky's rebels intended to utilize the burgeoning Confederacy as a means to preserve the institution. Consequently, it is reasonable to argue that white Kentuckians, regardless of allegiance, generally fought for the same purpose. The only factor they disagreed on was which side best served the state's interests. However, as recruitment data emphasizes, the majority of white Kentuckians remained loyal to the federal government.

Aside from Confederate recruiting, the need to maintain a large state militia further strained Kentucky's white manpower. Recruited periodically as the need arose, primarily from Confederate invasion, guerrilla activity, or runaway slaves, Kentucky devoted a total of 6,668 men to its state forces during the war.<sup>6</sup> The large force Kentucky allocated to its militia emphasizes the state's desire to maintain a semblance of protection from Confederate forces while simultaneously controlling the slave population. Neither Michigan nor Wisconsin had to commit such serious resources to their respective home guards. Michigan's 400 militia men and Wisconsin's 879 guardsmen, whose primary job was to enforce the draft and occasionally patrol for Indians, do not compare to Kentucky's large state force.<sup>7</sup> Though the federal government did not count Kentucky's militia towards the state's service record, this force is significant as it placed an additional strain on the state's depleted white male population.

Emancipation and black recruitment did not significantly reduce Kentucky unionism.

Since Kentucky's entry into the conflict, the state had maintained a comparable service record to

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<sup>6</sup> Lindsey, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky*, p. 824. Kentucky's Adjutant General credits the state for 8,357 state militia but 1,689 enlisted in federal service so I deducted them and arrived at the total of 6,668.

<sup>7</sup> Robertson, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan, 1864*, pp. 207-209. I calculated 400 by examining the state's expense records for outfitting the militia which the Adjutant General published in this report. Gaylord, *Wisconsin Adjutant General Report for the Year 1865*, p. 688 (militia numbers) and, 732.

Michigan and Wisconsin. During the final four months of 1861, Kentucky furnished 23 percent of its white manpower while Michigan and Wisconsin recruited 19 and 18 percent respectively.<sup>8</sup> In 1862 as well, Kentucky maintained a comparable service record by enlisting 32 percent of its white men compared to Michigan's 31 percent and Wisconsin's 34 percent.<sup>9</sup> During 1863, Kentucky recruited 55 percent while Michigan and Wisconsin respectively enlisted 43 and 42 percent. Throughout this year, Kentucky's Union recruitment surged to complete the state's quota without having to enlist African Americans. Kentucky's desire to prevent black recruitment continued into early 1864 when the state enlisted 69 percent of its white troops for the year between January and March. By the end of March 1864, Kentucky's total wartime service record stood at 67 percent. Kentucky's percentage is significant when one considers that Michigan and Wisconsin did not reach the comparable service record of 64 percent until nine months later at the end of 1864.<sup>10</sup> Effectively, Kentucky exhausted the remainder of its white adult male population by the end of March 1864 and could no longer prevent black recruitment which began in April. In 1863 and early 1864, after the Emancipation Proclamation, black recruitment, and the draft, Kentucky furnished its final reserves of white manpower to the Union. These statistics prove Kentucky's loyalty to the federal government in 1863 and early 1864.

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<sup>8</sup> I calculated each state's service record by dividing the furnished troops by the total population. Because Kentucky's Confederate recruits had not all departed, I used the state's full population. Kentucky: 32,756 (white troops) divided by 140,078 (military-aged population) equals 23 percent. Michigan: 24,281 (white troops) divided by 126,312 (military-aged population) equals 19 percent. Wisconsin: 22,625 (white troops) divided by 121,997 (military-aged population) equals 18 percent.

<sup>9</sup> Kentucky: 1861 and 1862 recruits (45,473) divided by 140,078 (military-aged population) equals 32 percent. Michigan: 1861 and 1862 recruits (40,176) divided by 126,312 (military-aged population) equals 31 percent. Wisconsin: 1861 and 1862 recruits (42,065) divided by 121,997 (military-aged population) equals 34 percent.

<sup>10</sup> By 1864, I reason that most of the estimated 32,500 Kentucky's Confederates had already enlisted in conventional or irregular rebel forces. I calculated Kentucky's service record by dividing the state's federal and state troops up until March of 1864 (72,471) and dividing it by its white male population minus the 32,500 the state lost to the Confederacy (107,578), which equals 67 percent. Michigan 1861-1864 troops (81,359), divided by 126,312 (military-aged population) equals 64 percent. Wisconsin 1861-1864 troops (78,282), divided by 121,997 (military-aged population) equals 64 percent.

Free from fear of abolition, Michigan and Wisconsin had no direct means to motivate recruitment aside from patriotism and bounties. Although concerns about a liberated black race migrating north for jobs discouraged many Michiganders and Wisconsinites from supporting the war, the broader state generally had no tangible link to slavery and accepted emancipation as a military necessity. Patriotic sentiment largely diminished after 1861 which seems to explain why Michigan and Wisconsin's recruitment from 1861 to 1862 fell by 34 and 14 percent respectively.<sup>11</sup> Michigan and Wisconsin used enlistment bounties and the threat of the draft to incentivize volunteering. By 1862, war weariness often overruled these temptations and significantly hindered volunteerism in both states. Despite the recruits Kentucky lost to the Confederacy, and to the state's large militia, the remaining white population volunteered to defend their stake in slavery and the society it supported. In comparison, Michiganders and Wisconsinites, unburdened by Confederate recruiting or insurgent warfare, consistently failed to meet troop quotas. Consequently, both states maintained significant, untapped manpower reserves well after Kentucky's were exhausted.

An efficient recruiting apparatus, complete with multi-tiered bounties, was the primary reason Michigan and Wisconsin procured similar numbers of recruits to Kentucky. Whereas Kentuckians managed to fill their quotas without having to significantly rely on local or state bounties, Michigan and Wisconsin's efforts relied on financial incentives to obtain volunteers. Earlier in the war, Michigan had problems with competitive local bounties, which undermined recruitment in poorer locales, and Wisconsin had issues with unofficial recruiting agents who promised bounties without state authorization. By 1864 and 1865, Michigan and Wisconsin had

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<sup>11</sup> I calculated this number by dividing the state's recruitment difference between 1861 and 1862 by the original number. Michigan: 8,386 divided by 24,281 equals 34 percent. Wisconsin 3,185 divided by 22,625 equals 14 percent. Kentucky's fell by 61 percent but this number stemmed from the state's large recruitment efforts in 1861.

solved these issues. Michigan began offering extra compensation which helped equalize bounties between locales and encouraged men to enlist in their hometown rather than in wealthier communities. Wisconsin solved its issue with unofficial recruiters by publishing the names of the state-authorized agents alongside recruitment posters to avoid any complications with the enlistment process. Once Michigan and Wisconsin solved these primary issues, the efficiency of their recruiting improved. During 1864 and 1865, Michigan enlisted 40 percent of its total recruits while Wisconsin procured 43 percent of its total men.<sup>12</sup> Patriotism still stimulated recruitment, especially of reenlisting veterans, but bounties appear to have been very influential in motivating Michiganders and Wisconsinites to serve. The recruiting apparatuses of these two states allowed them to arrive at a service record in 1865 which Kentucky had obtained in early 1864.

Kentucky's recruitment efforts, compared to those of Michigan and Wisconsin, emphasize how preserving slavery spurred the state's unionist loyalty. Despite Lincoln's Republican Administration and fear of abolition, white Kentuckians generally contended the Constitution afforded their institutions long-term protection and stability. The troop surge in 1861, meant to combat a Rebel invasion, simultaneously sought to protect the state's sovereign decision to remain neutral as the best way to protect slavery. This same motivating factor encouraged another surge of white volunteers in 1863, as emancipation and black enlistments threatened the existence of slavery. During 1863, white Kentuckians intended to maintain the integrity of the institution by filling the troop quota themselves and negating the need for black recruitment. Furthermore, Kentuckians managed to procure most of these white troops without

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<sup>12</sup> I calculated this number by adding these states' 1864 and 1865 recruits and dividing it by the total number of troops. Michigan's 1864 and 1865 recruits (36,998) divided by its total troop contribution (90,747) equals 40 percent. Wisconsin's 1864 and 1865 recruits (39,717) divided by its total troop contribution (90,686) equals 43 percent.

conscripting, demonstrating volunteerism unmatched by Michigan or Wisconsin. The desire to preserve and perpetuate slavery motivated white Kentuckians to exhaust their population by volunteering for Union service. However, Kentucky could not sustain these efforts indefinitely. By April of 1864, with white enlistments unable to fill the state's quota, the state allowed federal recruiters to mobilize black Kentuckians.

Black Kentuckians entered federal service in significant numbers. Hoping to free themselves and their families, thousands of African Americans left their masters and volunteered for Union service. Although it is hard to determine Kentucky's black population in 1864 and 1865, owing to the migratory movements of former slaves, quantitative data and newspaper accounts imply black recruitment significantly weakened slavery in the state. Respectively supplying 67 and 55 percent of Kentucky's 1864 and 1865 troop totals, black Kentuckians made up the majority of the state's recruits during the twelve months they could enlist. In total, 23,703 black Kentuckians enlisted, increasing Kentucky's total Union troop contribution to 102,425 soldiers.<sup>13</sup> To the dismay of Kentucky's white population, black Kentuckians actively dismantled slavery within the state.

Anne Marshall's examination of post-war Kentucky emphasized black recruitment as the primary reason the state subscribed to pro-Confederate memory during Reconstruction. Marshall contended black recruitment represented "the ultimate final blow" to white Kentuckians who had fought for the Union to preserve slavery and white superiority.<sup>14</sup> Maintaining 71 percent of Kentucky's white adult male population remained inactive throughout the war, Marshall claimed these men could have enlisted to prevent black recruitment, but refused owing to tepid unionism

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<sup>13</sup> I calculated this number by adding Kentucky's white, federal and state troops (78,722) to the black soldiers (23,703) to get 102,425.

<sup>14</sup> Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*, 27.

and fear of abolitionism.<sup>15</sup> Because the federal army was inducting, and more importantly, garrisoning former slaves in Kentucky, the state's white inhabitants could not escape the realization their way of life was coming to an end. Essentially, Marshall reasoned black recruitment was the decisive component which shaped Kentucky's post-war memory and identity.

However, black recruitment did not necessarily represent the end of slavery to many white Kentuckians, merely a temporary burden. Marshall's claim that Kentucky's inactive white population proves black recruitment's detrimental impact on unionism does not correspond with the state's population and recruitment data.<sup>16</sup> Federal recruitment of Kentucky's African Americans did not begin until the state had already exhausted its white population. Recruitment data and newspaper opinion testify that white Kentuckians reluctantly accepted black recruitment on the premise they could rebuild or re-establish slavery after the war ended. Although black recruitment significantly weakened Kentucky slavery as thousands of African Americans entered service and freed themselves and their families, the introduction and passage of the Thirteenth Amendment during the final eight months of the war, forbade any possible recovery of slavery by permanently outlawing the institution nationwide. While this measure validated the efforts of black Kentuckians, it contradicted the cause for which many white Kentuckians had served and sacrificed. Consequently, by the conclusion of the war, many white Kentuckians disassociated from the federal government, lending rise to pro-Confederate memory and identity.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*, 20. According to Marshall's footnote, secondary sources provided Kentucky's population and recruitment numbers.

<sup>16</sup> Marshall's estimations of Kentucky's troops numbers and total service record do not match the 1860 Census of the state's Adjutant General Reports.

<sup>17</sup> For more information on Confederate memory in post-war Kentucky, see Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky*; Harlow, *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky*.

While most historians of Civil War Kentucky emphasized the state's pro-slavery unionism, they contended the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, accompanied with the threat of black recruitment, diminished the state's loyalty. However, Kentucky's yearly recruitment suggests the opposite is true. Throughout 1863 and the first three months of 1864, Kentucky committed its final reserves of white manpower to the Union to circumvent the need to recruit African Americans.<sup>18</sup> Ironically, the threat of emancipation and black recruitment preserved Kentucky's slavery and kept the institution relatively intact for over a year as white men volunteered to fill the quota. The introduction of the Thirteenth Amendment, coupled with the dismantlement of slavery through black recruitment in April 1864, made many white Kentuckians feel the Union had betrayed their interests.

Comparing the recruitment data of these three states emphasizes slavery as the primary differentiator behind respective enlistment motivation. Examining these state's individual recruitment returns proves Kentucky furnished similar numbers of white troops despite handicaps from Confederate recruiting and internal warfare. The threat of emancipation and black recruitment did not weaken the Border State's loyalty to the Union. Instead, white Kentuckians exhausted their white population because they believed their enlistments could preserve slavery.

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<sup>18</sup> Comparing Kentucky's recruitment to Michigan and Wisconsin during the time emphasizes the Border State's strenuous efforts to obtain as many, and as early, white recruits as possible.

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