ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

The Border States

By Aaron Astor, Ph.D., Maryville College

"I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game," President Abraham Lincoln wrote to Illinois Senator Orville Browning in September 1861. He continued, "Kentucky gone, we can not hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland. These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us. We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capitol."[1] Lincoln was hardly alone in apprising the Border States as critical to the Union war effort. In many ways the Civil War can be said to have originated with conflicts emerging on the long middle border between slave and free states, which stretched westward from the Atlantic coast to the plains of Kansas. Once the Civil War began in earnest, political and military leaders on both sides coveted the region's manufacturing and agricultural riches, fast-growing cities, sizable white military-age populations, strategic rivers and railroads, and the protective shield it offered against invasion into the Northern and Southern heartlands.

There is some dispute over what exactly counts as the Border States. Traditionally they are defined as the four slaveholding states that remained loyal to the Union by the end of 1861: Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware. Several expansive definitions are plausible, however. The newly created state of West Virginia, admitted to the Union in 1863, possessed many of the same internal tensions between slavery and union as the other Border States. Kansas, the site of paramilitary conflict in the 1850s that helped accelerate the path toward larger civil war, could also be included, though its territorial legislature had abolished slavery by February 1860. Beyond these six states are Union-supporting portions of Confederate states like East Tennessee or northwestern Arkansas, and relatively Copperhead-friendly counties in the southern portions of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.[2] One could include the District of Columbia too as a slaveholding Union area, though its peculiarity as the Federal capital under the Constitution makes it difficult to compare easily to the other states. For purposes of this article, however, the focus will be on the four slaveholding Union states from 1861 plus the new state of West Virginia, created in 1863. Slavery was legal in all five of these states until late 1864, when

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[1] Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), IV:431-3, Letter to Orville H Browning, September 22, 1861.

[2] For a comprehensive review of Copperheads see White Jonathan W., "Copperheads," in *Essential Civil War Curriculum* (Blacksburg: Virginia Center for Civil War Studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, November 2015), https://www.essentialcivilwarcurriculum.com/copperheads.html, accessed October 1, 2024.

Maryland voters supported a state constitutional amendment abolishing it. Missouri and West Virginia banned slavery in early 1865, leaving Kentucky and Delaware as the last American states where slavery remained legal until ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865.

Background on the Border States

Before discussing the Civil War experience in the Border States, it is important to outline the pertinent characteristics of each. Delaware was the smallest of the Border States, both in size and population, and posed the smallest risk of defection to the Confederacy. Still, it held some important geographic divisions, with the northern portion of New Castle County connected economically and politically to the nearby city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The DuPont company produced chemicals and gunpowder in the northern city of Wilmington. The southern two counties had once produced sizable tobacco crops but had transitioned toward truck farming fruits and vegetables for large nearby urban markets in the early 19th century. Slavery nearly died out in Delaware, with fewer than 1,800 African Americans still held in bondage; over 90% of African Americans in Delaware were free in 1860. Still, the dominant Democratic Party resisted entreaties to abolish slavery in the 1830s and remained committed to the protection of the institution in law up to and throughout the Civil War.

Maryland is arguably the strangest state geographically, with the Chesapeake Bay dividing the flat eastern half of the state in half. The Eastern Shore, like neighboring Delaware, had transitioned away from tobacco and toward truck farming in the early nineteenth century, while much of the slave population attained the status of freedom. The counties west of the Chesapeake Bay were arguably the most Southern in outlook and economy. Prince Georges, Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary’s Counties still grew tobacco in 1860 on farms worked mostly by enslaved African Americans. These counties surrounded the eastern half of the District of Columbia and would figure heavily in the calculus for emancipation inside the nation’s Capital. The westernmost counties lay beyond the Blue Ridge, settled largely by non-slaveholding Pennsylvania Germans in farms and market towns enriched by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In the center of the state lay one of America’s largest cities — Baltimore — a vibrant port city and railroad hub characterized by intense, often violent, ethnic neighborhood politics. Slavery had nearly disappeared inside the city of Baltimore by 1860, but the city’s commercial ties pulled it in both Southern and Northern directions.

Moving west from Maryland was the portion of “Northwestern Virginia” that formed the new state of West Virginia in 1863. Despite its mountainous terrain, slavery persisted in the mines and salt works in the central and eastern half of the new state. The westernmost counties along the Ohio River witnessed the greatest population growth in the decades before the Civil War, thanks in large part to the steamboat traffic and B&O Railroad. Its residents chafed at the political power held by the Tidewater Virginia counties over the whole state, resulting in a series of reforms in 1850 giving more representation in Richmond. Slavery remained strongest around the salt works of Kanawha County, in Greenbrier County and in the eastern panhandle, with very little slavery in the north-central part of the future state. But politically, the voters in 1860 and in the early statehood movement were still committed to slavery’s protection as long as practicable.

Kentucky was the classic Border State, both for its geographic location at the heart of the Union and along the slave-free line, but also because of its reputation as the home of the Great Compromiser, Henry Clay. Since entering the Union in 1792, Kentucky beckoned migrants from Virginia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina as they travelled through Cumberland Gap and into the West. Many of these migrants and their children moved west to Missouri, while others crossed the Ohio River to the Old Northwest, and still others ventured southward. Occupying the geographic heartland of 1860 America, Kentucky was the birthplace of Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.

Commerce and industry along the Ohio River connected the state's economy to the Midwest as well as to the river cities of the lower South. Louisville, with immigrants from Ireland and Germany pouring into its working-class neighborhoods, competed with Cincinnati for dominance in the Ohio Valley. Kentucky's agricultural output, especially its hemp, horse and tobacco farms in the central Bluegrass region and in the southwestern part of the state, served regional and national markets. While Kentucky affirmed its commitment to slavery in the 1850s, it nevertheless tolerated a vigorous anti-slavery presence far longer than other slave states. With its strong kin and commercial ties to the Midwest, and a deep Whig Party tradition of support for tariffs, banks and internal improvements, Kentuckians expressed little desire to join any secession movement in early 1861.

No Border State was more politically convoluted than Missouri. Its demographic settlement resembled a patchwork of countervailing social and political impulses. An old French-speaking slaveholding elite in St. Louis oriented the state's early trade down the Mississippi River toward Louisiana. Kentuckians who settled in the Boonslick or Little Dixie region along the Missouri River in the central part of the state in the 1810s bolstered Missouri's case for entrance into the Union as a slave state in 1821. But Northern-born merchants and manufacturers followed suit into St. Louis in the 1830s and 1840s, while other Northern-born farmers settled the farms north of the Little Dixie heartland. In the Ozarks of southern Missouri, many mountaineers from East Tennessee set up modest farms, most of them too poor to own slaves or contribute significantly to the commercial agricultural economy. They would remain Jacksonian and later Breckinridge Democrats right up to the Civil War but would split their allegiances as the war broke out.

Meanwhile, large numbers of German immigrants migrated to Missouri in the 1840s and 1850s, creating mostly German communities just south and west of St. Louis, and heavily German neighborhoods within the city itself. Though not monolithically antislavery, most German immigrants distrusted the large slaveholding elites, who many Germans thought resembled the old Prussian Junker class that made their lives miserable in the old country. A politically powerful group of 1848 revolutionaries helped steer Missouri's German communities toward a more vigorous anti-slavery politics by the late 1850s. Free soil Democrats like Thomas Hart Benton and Republicans like Francis Preston "Frank" Blair, Jr. generated one of the strongest anti-slavery political bases within any slave state in 1860.

Still, the pro-slavery Democrats under Claiborne Fox Jackson, David Rice Atchison and Benjamin Franklin Stringfellow controlled state politics in the late 1850s. While the Bleeding

Kansas episode amplified pro-slavery thought in central and western Missouri, Governor Jackson maintained a balancing act in 1860, committing himself to the strongest pro-slavery position while backing Stephen A. Douglas for President. Missouri would be the only state to award its electors to Douglas, thanks in part to its secession-sympathizing Governor who manipulated the various moving parts of Missouri politics in his favor.

Secession Crisis and Onset of War in the Border States

The most important moment for the Border States came during the Civil War's first year when the risk of defection to the Confederacy was the greatest. After Lincoln's election in November 1860, Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson of Missouri and his allies in the state legislature initiated the process of calling a State Convention for purposes of considering secession. A statewide election of delegates in February 1861 produced a convention filled almost entirely by staunch Unionists, however, and they voted 89-1 to reject secession in March 1861.[3] Sentiment would change after the firing upon Fort Sumter and Lincoln called up 75,000 troops on April 15. Governor Jackson, unbowed by the convention result, fulminated against Lincoln's request for four Missouri regiments as "illegal, unconstitutional and revolutionary." Jackson placed his state militia, known as the Missouri State Guard (MSG), in charge of military installations. In response, Union Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon transferred arms from St. Louis across the Mississippi River to Illinois. Jackson then tried to procure secret arms from the Confederacy. When a pro-Confederate camp in St. Louis called Camp Jackson refused to stand down, Lyon sent troops in to arrest the members of the camp. While marching through the streets of the city, a mob attacked the mostly German-speaking guards who then fired back into the crowd. The so-called Camp Jackson Affair of May 10, 1861, nearly plunged the state into full-on civil war. A hasty truce organized by Brigadier General William S. Harney and MSG Major General Sterling Price prevented further bloodshed but only for a few weeks.

When Lyon got wind of more pro-Confederate attacks on military installations elsewhere in the state a few weeks later, he called Jackson and Price to the Planters House Hotel on June 11 and vowed that he would crush pro-Confederate resistance forthwith. After the famous Planters House meeting Jackson and Price set off for Jefferson City, the state capital, while General Lyon followed in hot pursuit. After the so-called Boonville Races, Jackson, Price, the MSG and much of the pro-secession legislature evacuated Jefferson City and headed for the southwest corner of the state. At this point Missouri was in a state of anarchy with no state government functioning in its capital. The Union-dominated State Convention assumed the power to declare itself the Provisional Government of Missouri with conservative Unionist Hamilton R. Gamble chosen as the Governor. Lyon then set out to capture Price and Jackson in the southwest. On August 11 at the Battle of Wilson's Creek Lyon was killed. A month later, the MSG launched a raid up to the town of Lexington in the west and besieged the town until it surrendered, but then retreated southward again, stopping in Neosho to proclaim Missouri a Confederate state before moving to northwest Arkansas for the winter. Adding to the chaos, a series of Unionist cross-border raids by

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[3] *Journal and Proceedings of the Missouri State Convention Held at Jefferson City and St. Louis, March 1861*St Louis, MO: George Knapp & Co., 1861), 46.

Kansas Jayhawkers fueled the proliferation of pro-Confederate guerrilla bands throughout the western and central parts of the state. By the end of 1861, Missouri's official elected state government was in exile, a Provisional Government now ruled the state, the top Union military officer was dead, and guerrilla war had already started to rampage its way across the state. This was only the beginning of Missouri's troubled Civil War.

President Lincoln had much more success in keeping Kentucky safely in the Union than he did Missouri. But even there the situation was precarious. Kentucky's Governor, Beriah Magoffin, was a secessionist sympathizer. But he was less prone to rash political action. Moreover, the Kentucky state legislature proved to be much more solidly pro-Union than Missouri's. By May 20, Magoffin and the legislature agreed to declare the state neutral in the conflict then engulfing the country. But by the early summer sentiment had moved more clearly in the direction of the Unionists as the immediate Fort Sumter crisis passed. Both armies secretly violated the neutrality pledge, recruiting soldiers and funding various military activities in the state. A tactical military blunder by the Confederate army would finally upset Kentucky's delicate neutrality. Confederate Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk, concerned about a possible Union naval invasion of Tennessee, ordered troops to occupy the heights of Columbus, Kentucky, overlooking the Mississippi River. Within a day a still largely unknown Union general named Colonel Ulysses Grant moved from Illinois into Paducah, Kentucky. The legislature made clear its loyalties when it demanded Polk leave the state — but not Grant. By mid-September the neutrality agreement had collapsed, and Kentucky threw in its lot with the Union. Thousands of Kentuckians joined their kinfolk living in southern Indiana, Illinois and Ohio in the Union army, while a sizable minority fled southwest toward Clarksville, Tennessee, where they formed Confederate regiments of the Orphan Brigade.[4] Meanwhile, the Confederate Army of Tennessee, now under the command of General Albert Sidney Johnston, occupied the entire southern portion of the state, from Columbus on the Mississippi to Cumberland Gap in the mountainous southeast, with Bowling Green the anchor of a pro-Confederate Kentucky. Less chaotic overall than Missouri, Kentucky nevertheless also devolved into intra-state civil war by the end of 1861.

The experience of the nascent state of West Virginia relied heavily on the successful march of Union military forces across the mountains as well as a strange legal fiction wherein a provisional or Restored Government granted the right of the people of northwestern Virginia to form the new state of West Virginia. Beginning in May 1861, Union troops under the Command of Major General George B. McClellan crossed into Wheeling on the Ohio River and immediately recognized a group of Unionists as the legitimate Restored Government of all of Virginia. By late summer 1861 the Union military claimed control of the northwestern counties, the area just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., and the strategically important Fortress Monroe in the state's southeast. But longtime advocates for the rights of those in the northwest of old Virginia immediately seized the moment to push for the dismemberment of Virginia. Because the United States Constitution requires the original state to approve any new states drawn from its territory, the Restored Government (established at Wheeling in June 1861) granted permission to begin the statehood process, after which the Restored Government decamped for Alexandria near

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[4] The Orphan Brigade consisted of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th 6th and 9th Kentucky Infantry regiments.

Washington, D.C. Union military successes in the summer of 1861 secured most of the northwestern counties of old Virginia for the new state; two Eastern Panhandle counties would be added later. By the end of 1861 the West Virginia statehood movement was in full swing, thanks to some legal creativity and continued military success from an unlikely Union hero – George McClellan.

Maryland's peculiar geography meant that its own response to the sectional conflict and emerging civil war could have immediate and massive consequences for the preservation of the Union. Indeed, just four days after Lincoln's troop callup, a deadly riot broke out in Baltimore as Union troops from Massachusetts, en route to Washington, D.C/, were marching along Pratt Street from President Street Station to Camden Station when they were met with insults and rocks from a mob. As would happen a few weeks later in St. Louis, the Union troops in Baltimore fired into the crowd, the confrontation resulting in the deaths of twelve civilians and five soldiers. Tensions between the Baltimore's Mayor, Maryland's Governor and President Lincoln nearly engulfed the state in internal civil war as happened in Missouri. Sabotage efforts to cut Washington, D.C. off from the North made the situation especially precarious as Virginia by now had seceded as well. But Lincoln placed the state under martial law and Unionists secured the loyalty of the legislature, encouraging secession sympathizers to leave for Virginia. By the end of 1861, matters had calmed down considerably in Maryland, but Federal officials remained on guard against possible insurrection.

Delaware never seriously considered secession in 1861. But the state's dominant Democratic Party politely listened to secessionist entreaties in Spring 1861. And while the northern part of the state responded positively to Lincoln's call to arms, citizens in the southern two counties dragged their feet, with a small handful even leaving the state to join Confederate regiments. Of most consequence for the Union military was securing the railroad running from Philadelphia to Washington as well as the DuPont gunpowder works in Wilmington, which ended up producing nearly half the gunpowder for the Union army throughout the Civil War.

Military Campaigns from 1862 to 1865

Albert Sidney Johnston's long line of defense across southern Kentucky faced its first challenge in October 1861 when Confederates under Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer were defeated along the Wilderness Road at Wildcat Mountain in the southeastern mountains. Despite the setback, Zollicoffer fortified Cumberland Gap, returned briefly to Tennessee and then pushed back into Kentucky a bit to the west, landing along Cumberland River near Somerset at Mill Springs. He expected to camp there for the winter, and Major General George B. Crittenden assumed control over all Confederate forces. Union Major General George H. Thomas and Brigadier General Albin F. Schoepf were each ordered to converge upon the Confederates at Mill Springs and drive Zollicoffer's men away from the Cumberland River. On January 19, 1862, Crittenden launched a pre-emptive attack on Thomas at nearby Logan's Crossroads. But after some intense fighting a brief mix-up in the smoky haze led Zollicoffer to wander into Union lines where he was promptly shot dead. Discipline soon collapsed and the Confederates were forced to abandon the field and escape southwestward into Tennessee. Along with a smaller Confederate defeat at nearby Middle Creek earlier in January, it was the beginning of the collapse of the Confederate line in southern Kentucky.

The action quickly moved to the western end of the line when General Grant and Navy Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote launched an amphibious attack on Forts Henry and Heiman on the Tennessee River. Swift Union victory at the Tennessee River forts on February 6, 1862, preceded a larger and more complex assault upon Fort Donelson on the Cumberland. Ten days later Fort Donelson, too, fell to the Union resulting in the capture of more than 12,000 Confederates and the evacuation of Nashville, Tennessee. By then, General Johnston had retreated out of Bowling Green and Columbus, Kentucky, and even out of Tennessee, moving to Corinth, Mississippi. A few weeks later Johnston would attack Grant's army at Shiloh, hoping to defeat it before reinforcements from Major General Don Carlos Buell arrived at Pittsburg Landing. Despite some initial success on April 6, Johnston was killed, and the Confederate Army of Tennessee was pushed south the morning of April 7. By the end of May, the Confederates abandoned Corinth and retreated further south to Tupelo, Mississippi. Despite the losses in Kentucky and at Shiloh, the Confederate army made an even stronger attempt for the Bluegrass State later in the summer.

After the defeat at Shiloh General Braxton Bragg took command of the Army of Tennessee, reorganized it, and led the reinvigorated force by rail down to the Gulf and back north to Chattanooga. By August 1862, Bragg had agreed with fellow Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith at Knoxville to launch a two-pronged invasion of Kentucky; Bragg sent 35,000 Confederates out of Chattanooga and Smith brought 12,000 troops north from Knoxville. The purpose of the invasion was to encourage Kentuckians to support the Confederacy, install a Confederate Governor who would add the state to the Confederacy (and draft men for the Confederate army), secure major supplies from the lush Bluegrass region, and threaten Midwestern cities like Cincinnati. After Kentucky-based Confederate cavalryman Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan led a major raid into Kentucky, Smith left Knoxville in mid-August and met immediate success, capturing Richmond, Kentucky and then occupying Lexington. Bragg's larger force left Chattanooga on August 30 and passed east of Nashville en route to Louisville. Union General Don Carlos Buell quickly returned to Louisville to stop Bragg's advance, and a major call went out for home guards to defend the city. Bragg ended up turning east before reaching Louisville. Unfortunately for him, he never connected with Smith either. On October 8 at the bloody battle of Perryville, Bragg and Buell fought mostly to a draw. Bragg finally met with Smith after the battle, but it was too late in Bragg's estimation. He had hoped large numbers of Kentuckians would join the Confederate army but that never happened. A quick ceremony in Frankfort installing Richard Hawes, Jr. as the Confederate Governor resulted in no new support. So, Bragg retreated through Cumberland Gap and back into Tennessee.

The retreat of Bragg in the fall of 1862 would mean the Confederate army never seriously threatened Kentucky again. But that did not mean an end to military activity in the Bluegrass State. John Hunt Morgan launched three invasions of his home state. Guerrilla war increased in intensity in 1863 and 1864, with many Missouri guerrillas taking refuge in the state. Wartime Unionist Governor Thomas E. Bramlette and Brigadier General Stephen G. Burbridge launched a vigorous counter-insurgency campaign against Confederate guerrillas who threatened all parts of the state.

Missouri witnessed its share of conventional military activity after 1861, with much of it coming along the Mississippi River in the far southeastern part of the state, and a significant raid by Confederate Major General Sterling Price in the summer of 1864. But most of the Civil War violence in Missouri was of a guerrilla nature. Bushwhackers, emerging from pro-Confederate territory trapped behind Union lines, antagonized and terrorized Union-supporting civilians, the Union army and various pro-Union militias. Until the summer of 1863, the heart of this violence took place along the western border with Kansas. At one point in August 1863, the sister of bushwhacker Wiliam T. "Bloody Bill" Anderson was killed as the Kansas City jail collapsed. Vowing revenge, Anderson and noted guerrilla leader William Clarke Quantrill set off for Lawrence, Kansas on the morning of August 21, 1863, and proceeded to murder every male they could find. In response, Union Brigadier General Thomas Ewing, Jr. issued Order Number 11, effectively de-populating four western Missouri counties for the rest of the war. The guerrilla conflict simply shifted toward central Missouri. Another orgy of violence occurred in September and October 1864 as Sterling Price led a long, circuitous raid from Arkansas into the heart of Missouri. At the Centralia Massacre on September 27, 1864, Bloody Bill Anderson's men killed dozens of soldiers after they had surrendered. The collapse of slavery added another dimension to the guerrilla violence by late 1864. But the Union army under Major General Samuel R. Curtis eventually tracked down and defeated Price's men at Westport near Kansas City on October 27, 1864. The Confederates began a long retreat out of Missouri, while the guerrilla war persisted right up to the end of the Civil War.

Maryland, like Kentucky, experienced two serious Confederate invasions, and a smaller raid in 1864 that threatened the nation's capital. In the first, the Army of Northern Virginia under General Robert E. Lee, crossed the Potomac River near Sharpsburg in September 1862. It was part of a larger two-pronged Confederate invasion of the Border States, with Bragg and Kirby Smith's Kentucky campaign beginning in the same month. The final result of this Maryland campaign would match that of the West, but with much more carnage. Lee's battle plans were discovered by a Union soldier before a smaller engagement at South Mountain, so General George McClellan was able to plan for the coming battle near Antietam Creek. Beginning early on the morning of September 17, 1862, McClellan attacked Lee's left flank in the middle of a corn field at full height. The second phase began later in the morning along a sunken road in the center. In the third phase of fighting in the afternoon, Major General Ambrose E. Burnside hoped to exploit Lee's weaker right flank before reinforcements could arrive from Harpers Ferry. But a chokepoint at a small bridge over Antietam Creek gave the Confederates time to save the right flank. By day's end, the battle of Antietam would prove to be the bloodiest single day of the entire war — and in all American history. McClellan was victorious enough for President Lincoln to declare the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation five days later. But McClellan's failure to pursue Lee back into Virginia let the Army of Northern Virginia survive to fight on. For that McClellan would be relieved of command, replaced by Ambrose Burnside.

After engineering two shocking defeats of the Union Army of the Potomac at Fredericksburg in December 1862 and Chancellorsville in May 1863, Lee made one more major push to the North, with Pennsylvania the destination this time. Maryland would not witness any major fighting as part of what would become the Gettysburg Campaign, but its turnpikes northward into Pennsylvania would be essential in both Confederate and Union efforts to reach the battlefield. Perhaps more interesting for Maryland was Confederate cavalry Major General J. E. B. Stuart's ride around the Union army, which meandered through the Maryland countryside and rendered him useless for Lee's campaign. All told, the trek of both armies to and from Gettysburg left much of western Maryland's farms in ruins.

Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early and 12,000 men invaded Maryland in the summer of 1864 as part of a wider effort to disrupt Union supply lines and force Grant to retreat away from the Siege of Petersburg below Richmond. Initially catching the Union army off guard, Early was seriously delayed by the actions of Major General Lewis "Lew" Wallace at Monocacy. Though Wallace was ultimately defeated there, delaying Early gave Union forces time to prepare defenses inside the District of Columbia. On July 12, 1864, Early entered the District of Columbia before being stopped at Fort Stevens. From this point on Early's men were on the run. Union General Phillip H. "Phil" Sheridan took command and proceeded to burn the farms and fields of the Shenandoah Valley, thus cutting off a major food supply source for the besieged Army of Northern Virginia at Petersburg. Though small in scale, the 1864 campaign would bring devastating results for Lee who was forced to abandon Petersburg and Richmond by the beginning of April 1865.

The nascent state of West Virginia saw most of its military action in the first months of the war. A string of Union victories at Phillippi, Rich Mountain, Carnifex Ferry and Cheat Mountain pushed the Confederacy east and into the Great Valley. The contours of the emergent state of West Virginia would be defined in large part by the military success of this early campaign. After 1861, Confederate forces launched two sizable raids to disrupt the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad – Lieutenant General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson at Romney in 1862 and Brigadier Generals William E. "Grumble" Jones and John D. Imboden in 1863. As Union troops vacated West Virginia to assist with military campaigns in Virginia, Confederates under Major General William Wing Loring managed to take the Kanawha Valley in the summer of 1862. The largest military action in the state occurred at Droop Mountain in November 1863 when Union forces under Brigadier General William W. Averell effectively ended armed Confederate resistance in the mountains west of the Shenandoah Valley. Still, guerrilla warfare continued to infest the mountainous region for the rest of the war, despite efforts by West Virginia's first Governor Arthur I. Boreman to suppress it. Because of the uncertain status of the new state, West Virginia would contribute roughly equal numbers of soldiers to each side of the war.

Delaware never experienced any actual Civil War military campaign. The DuPont Powder Works in Wilmington, however, provided nearly half of all the black powder used by the Union army during the Civil War. An island within Delaware Bay became the location for Fort Delaware, a major military prison which ultimately held more than 11,000 Confederate prisoners of war were held. 13,000 Delawareans fought for the Union while roughly 800 men left for Maryland and Virginia and fought for the Confederacy.

Emancipation in the Border States

The course of emancipation in the Border States was perhaps the most convoluted aspect of the Civil War in the region. There are a few peculiarities that applied to all five of the Border States and influenced the flow of events. First, because these states remained loyal to the Union, they were never subject to the Emancipation Proclamation. Second, with few exceptions, slavery never occupied a central place in the economies of these states the way it did with the Confederate states. But that does not mean slavery was not vigorously defended by the political class. In fact, the overarching position among whites in the Border States was conservative Unionism—a defense of both slavery and union. Third, conservative Unionism in the Border States meant that the Lincoln Administration had to tread very carefully, especially in the first year of the war. Fourth, because of the region's exemption from the Emancipation Proclamation, emancipation would be much more self-driven than elsewhere, In fact, Union army service would be the main vessel through which enslaved people could liberate themselves. Finally, support for slavery persisted throughout the war in some parts of the Border States—Kentucky especially—and collapsed elsewhere, mostly from the pressures of guerrilla warfare. There is no singular Border State emancipation story. But the experiences in one area bled over into adjacent areas; included in this phenomenon is Washington, D.C., which abolished slavery in April 1862 and thus contributed to the death of slavery in nearby southern Maryland. A brief overview of the emancipation experience in each Border State follows.

Proximity to the District of Columbia helped usher along the emancipation process in Maryland more than in any other state. Shortly after D.C. emancipation in April 1862, President Lincoln offered a compensated emancipation plan to Maryland. But it was rejected by Maryland's Congressional delegation, as would happen with the other border states. As Maryland slaveholders warned would happen, Congress's April ban on slavery in the District encouraged enslaved men, women and children from nearby Prince Georges and Charles Counties to seek refuge and freedom by fleeing to the nation's capital. Union military authorities sent mixed signals throughout, discouraging fugitives from Maryland while also providing employment at government installations. But the political winds changed in Maryland, thanks in part to restrictive loyalty oaths that prevented Confederate supporters from voting. By the end of 1863 momentum developed among the state's Unionist coalition to support emancipation. Thomas Swann, former Mayor of Baltimore, led efforts in December 1863 to secure support among the state's ruling party to put an end to slavery within the state. The enlistment of enslaved Marylanders in the Union army, beginning also in December 1863, helped destroy the system of slavery on the ground throughout 1864. A constitutional convention met in April 1864 to make permanent the disfranchisement of Confederate supporters, the readjustment of state elections to follow the lines of the free, white population (and not give extra power to slaveholding Southern or Eastern Shore counties), and to abolish slavery. After much debate the convention submitted its work to the Maryland electorate in October 1864. A closely divided electorate appeared to have rejected the new constitution until the returns from Maryland's soldiers in the Union army put ratification over the top by 375 votes.[5] Despite the close margin of victory, and the disfranchisement of over 30%

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[5] William Starr Myers, *The Maryland Constitution of 1864* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1901), Appendix.

of the electorate from 1860, Maryland's referendum represented the first popular statewide vote to abolish slavery.

Missouri's path toward abolition relied upon a state constitutional amendment in January 1865, as did Maryland's. But the path toward that result was far more complex given the exigencies of Missouri's Provisional government and the chaotic guerrilla war engulfing the state. The first indication that guerrilla war might result in emancipation came in August 1861 when Union General John C. Frémont issued an order emancipating the slaves of civilians found guilty of aiding and abetting the Confederate cause and Confederate guerrillas. Though Lincoln reversed the order (and removed Fremont from command to preserve Missouri's support for the Union), the edict had strong support among many leaders in the German immigrant community, including some like Carl Schurz who were increasingly dominant among the state's Radical Republican faction. The conservative Unionist coalition generally rejected any overtures toward emancipation until late 1863. By that point the state's increasingly ferocious guerrilla conflict, and the enlistment of African Americans in the Union army had convinced many Unionists that the institution needed to be eliminated to end the war. As much as 39% of the state's military age slave population joined the Union army, with many leaving to join regiments in neighboring Kansas and Illinois. The only question at that point was whether it would be gradual or immediate, and whether there would be compensation for slaveholders.

By late 1864, after even more horrific guerrilla depredations coinciding with Price's raid, a constitutional convention met with goals similar to that in Maryland: to disfranchise the Confederates and end slavery within the state. Unlike in Maryland, Missouri's new constitution written at a convention led by Radical Republicans Charles D. Drake and Benjamin Gratz Brown, did not need to be put up for popular referendum. It was declared in effect on January 11, 1865, just over two months after slavery officially ended in Maryland.

West Virginia's emancipation path was complicated by the simple fact that Congress could require emancipation as a condition for accession to statehood. In the early statehood days of 1861 this was not considered a priority. Nor was it something desired by most statehood advocates, many of whom were conservative, pro-slavery Unionists who thought separate statehood might even protect slavery. Members of the new state's constitutional convention at Wheeling understood by 1862 that Congress and Lincoln would only accept statehood if there was at least some movement toward emancipation. Senator Waitman T. Willey then provided such a bill in March 1863, granting future emancipation to children of slaves but it would not free anybody until 1867 at the earliest. It did not actually emancipate any slaves living in the nascent state at the time, but it was good enough for Lincoln to grant statehood on June 20, 1863. That said, the momentum against slavery continued throughout 1864 as African Americans joined the Union army and political leadership of the new state (which excluded Confederate supporters) finally abolished slavery on February 3, 1865, along with ratifying the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

Delaware and Kentucky remained as the only two Border States never to pass an emancipation order of their own. It would take ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865 to end slavery in these last two holdouts. Delaware's resistance to emancipation may appear puzzling because of the very small size of the state's slave population and the presence of an already-influential Republican Party in New Castle County. But pro-slavery Democrats vowed throughout the war that their support for the Union war effort would never equate with support for emancipation. They rejected Lincoln's overtures for compensated emancipation in 1862 and resisted any efforts to ban the system in the later years of the war.

Kentucky proved to be the most resistant to emancipation of all the Border States in the end. The state's trajectory encapsulates the paradoxical nature of Border State political identity during the Civil War. Unionists defended the Union in part because they believed, rightly as it turns out, that the friction of civil war would destroy slavery. Kentucky slaveholders resisted joining Braxton Bragg's invading Confederates in late 1862 in part because they feared that doing so would make them subject to the Emancipation Proclamation. Its dominant Unionists, whether in the Senate (Garrett Davis), Governor's Mansion (Thomas Bramlette) or even its top native-born Union Generals (Frank L. Wolford) bravely fought off Confederate attacks while demanding that slavery be allowed to continue in Kentucky. Slavery did not come to an end because of shifting internal coalitions like with Maryland and Missouri or Federal pressure like with West Virginia. It collapsed because as many as 57% of Kentucky's enslaved population joined the Union army beginning in June 1864 at Camp Nelson. More perhaps than in any other state, Kentucky's enslaved people emancipated themselves.

What began at Camp Nelson in the summer of 1864 turned into a flood, as enslaved men, women and children sought shelter at the camp and men joined USCT regiments in droves. Despite increasing violence targeting them, they eagerly abandoned their farms and, as the war concluded, sought free movement passes from Union General John M. Palmer, who commanded all Federal troops in the state. Despite vigorous opposition to ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment by nearly all major Kentucky politicians, the new Amendment brought slavery to an end on December 18, 1865.

The Border States proved to be essential to the Union war effort from start to finish, providing material and manpower advantages that made Union victory possible. As President Lincoln's prophecy suggested in September 1861, the Border States were the "whole game." Lincoln deftly managed the tense political environment, military affairs and the process of emancipation within the Border States throughout the Civil War. At the same time, the chaotic events unfolding in the Border States, especially the internal collapse of slavery and the persistence of guerrilla conflict, would reverberate for decades to come.

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