January 2012

Anti-Slavery and Church Schism among Protestants in Antebellum Central Kentucky

Lance Justin Hale
Eastern Kentucky University

ANTI-SLAVERY AND CHURCH SCHISM AMONG PROTESTANTS IN ANTEBELLUM CENTRAL KENTUCKY

By

Lance Justin Hale

Thesis Approved:

Carolyn R. DuPont
Chair, Advisory Committee

Thomas H. Appleton Jr.
Member, Advisory Committee

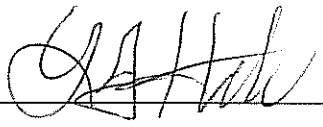
Member, Advisory Committee

Dean, Graduate School

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis/dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree at Eastern Kentucky University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library. Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of the source is made.

Permission for extensive quotation from or reproduction of this thesis may be granted by my major professor, or in her absence, by the Head of Interlibrary Services when, in the opinion of either, the proposed use of the material is for scholarly purposes. Any copying or use of the material in this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature 

Date 29 November 2012

ANTI-SLAVERY AND CHURCH SCHISM AMONG PROTESTANTS IN ANTEBELLUM CENTRAL KENTUCKY

By

LANCE JUSTIN HALE

Bachelor of Arts
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky
2005

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
December, 2012

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of the effects of anti-slavery and church schism among Protestant Christians in the Bluegrass region of antebellum Kentucky. A variety of secondary and primary sources are utilized, including books and journal articles from current scholarship, journals kept by historical actors, books, letters, and articles, written during or some years after the time under consideration, as well as publications of churches and denominations. Throughout the antebellum years, churches and denominations in the United States fractured over disagreements on slavery and theology. Pastors, such as James Pendleton and Peter Cartwright, endeavored to keep Christianity vibrant and relevant to the lives of Kentuckians in spite of the troubled cultural, political, and religious environment of the nineteenth century. They also endeavored to prevent the worst examples of northern abolitionism and southern pro-slavery agitation from becoming common in Kentucky. Through their efforts, Christianity in antebellum Kentucky was characterized by moderation on the slavery question and responsiveness to the needs of believers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

For nearly one and one-half centuries, the United States Civil War has exerted a tenacious hold on the American imagination, equaled only by the birth of the republic decades earlier. The reason for its enduring appeal is that the Civil War was so much more than a military conflict. Prior to 1861, Americans fought each other in the political, cultural, and religious arenas as they did during the war and beyond, even up to the present day. If Americans have no other characteristic, they are divisive and willing to oppose one another. In the most obvious strength of our republic, that is, the democratic political process, we also find its most painful burden.

Of the many arenas of entrenchment and opposition prior to the Civil War to choose from, this essay considers that of religion and, more specifically, religion prior to the war in the neutral border state of Kentucky. The situation of Kentucky is unique, as it occupied the crevasse between the two hemispheres of the nation that were at war with one another from 1861 to 1865. However, the crevasse was not only one of geography. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Kentucky was the crossroads joining

the old Congregational establishment of the northeast, Baptists of Virginia, the Episcopalians and Old School Presbyterians of the South, and the New Lights which had been ignited within the state in 1801 and had quickly burned over much of the young nation. As well, Kentucky was the birthplace of the Restorationist and Primitivist movements in Christianity, exemplified by the Christian Churches, Churches of Christ, and Disciples of Christ, all of which trace their beginnings to the Bluegrass region in and around Lexington. Kentucky was the keystone in the arch of antebellum American Christianity through which innovation and reaction was received and then flowed out to the rest of the nation.

Several key focus points are considered here. During the Civil War, Kentucky was a slaveholding state that remained officially neutral, in spite of pleading entreaties from both sides. The central focus of this thesis is on churches and ministers in central Kentucky in the decades prior to the Civil War. Living in a border state, Kentuckians felt strongly the pull of both anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces in the nation. Fundamental to this research is the pivotal question of whether or not the churches attempted to pull Kentuckians in either direction. In the 1840's, the three largest organized

Protestant denominations split into northern and southern factions. This study also examines how extensive was the split in Kentucky. Finally, the degree of impact the antebellum years had on Kentucky's churches in terms of mission and theology is examined.

The competitive forces of the slavery controversy and church schism coursed through Kentucky throughout the antebellum years. In Kentucky, these forces found expression, yet the prevailing social and religious culture of the state forced a moderate course. Kentuckians were independent in nature and suspicious of social and religious ideas which could upset the course of life in the state. Consequently the extremes of abolition and pro-slavery found minimal representation among believers.

Moreover, Kentuckians usually expressed their views for or against slavery in terms of what they thought best for the state as a whole. Those who were opposed to slavery would seldom admit that immediate abolition was in the best interests of either blacks or whites. They largely embraced schemes of gradual emancipation or colonization overseas for freed people. In contrast, Kentuckians who supported slavery determined that their stance was not at odds with the Bible. Many of them permitted their slaves to enjoy a surprisingly high degree of involvement in religious life

and an almost equitable role in the church that was seldom duplicated elsewhere.

Christians in the United States during the nineteenth century were quick to recognize the hand of God in every occurrence, good or bad, large or small. This overwhelming sense of Providence flowed through life, imbuing everything with significance, justice, and purpose where there otherwise might be none. Certainly, then, it makes sense that denominations, churches, and ministers were influential beyond Sunday and away from the meeting house. In his book *God's Almost Chosen Peoples*, George Rable finds that Americans in the Civil War era felt an intense connection to the divine that explained every victory or defeat in battle. Like the anti-slavery and pro-slavery Christians that preceded them, it did not matter that North and South worshipped the same God and read the same Bible.[1] Neither did the seeming paradox of two groups of American Christians slaughtering each other. Both sides prayed for victory, but when that was not forthcoming, defeat would be accepted as divine reprimand. Christianity was the chosen means for both sides to find meaning and direction in the monstrous slaughter of the war years, but it took on an

[1] George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 4.

incredible level of intensity for the South afterward, as the vanquished Confederacy struggled through reconstruction and the lingering insult of abolition triumph.

Moral values are the gauge used to score the rightness or wrongness of human behavior and events. When morals collide, in war or any other competition, the prevailing side is generally held to be "right" regardless of how compelling the other side may have been. Over time one moral value can supplant another in making this determination, in accordance with the need to find that the prevailing side in a conflict was right, or at least to remove ambiguity associated with the conflict. As Harry Stout notes in *Upon the Altar of a Nation*, a moral history of slavery would find that the Emancipation Proclamation was overwhelmingly right and good because it furthered the interest of ending slavery. But, a moral history of the Civil War calls this into question because it can be viewed as Lincoln's tacit approval for the Union Army to target civilians in the South.[2] Today, the rightness of the Emancipation Proclamation is commonly accepted as an incontrovertible fact because it meant that ending slavery in the South became part of the military objectives for the North. But an examination of the effects of the

[2] Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of a Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War* (New York: Viking Press, 2006), xvi.

Proclamation on the prosecution of the war suggests the violation of another moral value, the longstanding universal prohibition on civilian military targets, as evidenced by the wholesale destruction of civilian property and resources in the South by the Union army.

Religion and morals marched hand in hand shaping the course of thoughts, actions, and events of the nineteenth century United States. In spite of the sentimental ideals held by many people today, the nineteenth century was anything but a glorious time of universal adherence to Christianity and strict morality. The writings of the ministers in this study indicate that social ills such as alcoholism, licentiousness, and violence were as common then as they are today. Slavery was located somewhere on the continuum of sin and salvation. The problem was that of too many competing views on what part slavery occupied. The spectrum of opinion ran from a view of slavery as a most horrid sin and crime against humanity on the part of the abolitionists, to a solemn Christian duty to civilize and care for the pitiful descendants of Ham on the part of southern pro-slavery advocates and everything in between. With the benefit of a century and a half of hindsight, we can confidently say that slavery was entirely wrong in both a religious and moral sense, yet people of the nineteenth

century did not have the luxury of this vantage point far removed from the controversy. The religion and morals of anti-slavery had not yet made their final triumph.

The Civil War was a product of the collision of competing religion and morals in nineteenth-century America. As tempting as it may be, it is not the duty of the historian to apply contemporary norms of religion or morality to the history of the Civil War or any other event. The actors themselves applied norms of religion and morals to the events and their own behavior. It is the historian's task to reveal those norms. This thesis examines the norms of religion in antebellum Central Kentucky relating to slavery and church schism, and illustrates how those norms helped preserve Kentucky's neutrality and moderation in the face of the increasingly agitated social and religious situation North and South.

In the first decades of the new nineteenth century, American Christianity took on the mantle of representative democracy. As legal establishment and tax support for churches eroded into oblivion, a new popular religious ethos emerged. Church establishment now rested on the individual and collective desires of the people, who were free to worship as they pleased. In the new religious economy of Kentucky, success for ministers and

denominations was defined by how many confessions of faith, baptisms, and full meeting houses they could achieve. As Nathan Hatch notes, the American Revolution did more than wrest political control of the colonies away from the British crown and place them into the hands of elected representatives. The egalitarian current that flowed forth from the Revolution also carried with it the new nation's Christian soul and washed away the old ecclesiastical structures. This "Spirit of '76" was most evident on the frontier and in the newly settled areas, where the old social, civil, and religious structures of New England had never taken root.[3] In these electrifying times, Kentucky became the frontier of American Christianity.

[3] Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 7.

CHAPTER 2

Making a Christian Kentucky

Prior to statehood in 1792, Kentucky was already the forefront of the expanding faith. Anglican minister John Lyth held the earliest known public worship service at Boonesboro, Kentucky, in 1775. However, the Anglicans quickly faded from the national scene during the American Revolution. Eager to escape harassment by the Standing Order in the east, Baptists filled the state in the late eighteenth century and became the largest group of believers in Kentucky, and were famous for their many local associations and the strict rules by which church members were expected to live. The Methodist upstarts, as they were considered at the time, were not far behind. The circuit rider plan for church planting espoused by the bishop Francis Asbury enabled the Methodists to minister to large amounts of territory with minimal staff and resources, allowing them to become the largest organized denomination in the early decades of Kentucky, as well as in the west in general.[4]

Behind the Baptists and Methodists, but picking up their own share of Christendom in the young state, were the

[4] Lowell Harrison and James Klotter, *A New History of Kentucky* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 153.

Presbyterians and Catholics. Presbyterian minister David Rice arrived in Danville in 1783 and quickly established several congregations and the Transylvania Presbytery. Another Presbyterian, James McGready, presided over a wildly successful revival meeting at Red River in June 1800, along with fellow Presbyterian William McGee and his brother John, who was a Methodist. The Red River meeting was the seminal event of the Great Revival, a decade-long phenomenon that gripped the entire nation. Meanwhile, the Catholics created their own sphere in Bullitt and Jefferson counties. Two early priests, Stephen Badin and Charles Nerinckx, established churches in Louisville and Bardstown, as well as the monastery Sisters of Loretto. In 1808, Bardstown was selected as one of four new dioceses in the country, and in 1811 Joseph Flaget arrived as bishop of the west.[5]

Since the conclusion of disestablishment earlier in the century, American churches divided and multiplied, each promoting a salvation that was largely a product of its parishioners and their own concerns and affections. In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, Kentucky played the leading role in the creation of modern American evangelical Christianity. For instance, although they made

[5] Harrison and Klotter, 154.

impressive gains in the young state, the Presbyterians still propounded Calvinism and the Westminster Confession, which smarted in the face of the hysteria of the camp meeting crowds. The tension between the evangelical revivalists (New Lights) and the orthodox anti-revivalists (Old Lights) came to a head in 1804, when the Springfield Presbytery pulled away from the Kentucky Synod and formed the Christian Church, and again in 1810 when the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was formed.[6]

The Kentucky Synod, dominated by conservatives from the east, created the Cumberland Presbytery in 1802 to bring the faith to the growing settlements of southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee. The new presbytery was filled with revivalists, such as McGready, who ordained ministers on their ability to preach rather than on their educational credentials. This was unacceptable to the synod and, after unsuccessfully trying to bring the wayward district under control, the synod dissolved Cumberland Presbytery, with the territory annexed back into the Transylvania Presbytery. In response, in 1810 three New Light Presbyterians, Finis Ewing, Samuel King, and Samuel McAdoo, formed an independent presbytery that became the

[6] F. Garvin Davenport, *Ante-Bellum Kentucky: A Social History* (Oxford, OH: Mississippi Valley Publishers, 1943, reprint, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 122.

Cumberland Presbyterian Church. By 1820 the new denomination claimed 1,000 members in Kentucky.[7]

Meanwhile, in Bourbon County another new church movement germinated out of the Synod of Kentucky. In 1796, Barton Stone, a Marylander educated in North Carolina, was installed as pastor of the congregations at Cane Ridge and Concord. After visiting the camp meetings in Logan County in 1800, Stone found his faith increasingly at odds with the doctrines of total depravity and particular election as taught by his denomination. Encouraged by the results he witnessed in the South, Stone held his own revival practically on the doorstep of the Transylvania Presbytery at Cane Ridge from 7-12 August, 1801.

The revival was successful beyond anyone's expectations, with as many as 25,000 possibly in attendance. Presbyterian ministers Barton Stone, David Rice, and Richard McNemar were joined by the man who would become the most famous of the Methodist itinerant preachers, Peter Cartwright, and several Baptist and Methodist ministers.[8] The seemingly crazed, other worldly behavior that characterized worshippers at the early meetings in Logan County was very much in evidence at Cane Ridge, and the

[7] Davenport, 123.
[8] Louis B. Weeks, *Kentucky Presbyterians* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1983),41.

Kentucky Synod had seen enough. Stone, McNemar, and several other ministers were called before the Synod to explain themselves. Instead, the ministers withdrew from Transylvania Presbytery to form the independent Presbytery of Springfield. In 1804, after a well publicized pamphlet battle with the Presbyterians, Stone and the leaders of Springfield Presbytery withdrew from the Kentucky Synod and Presbyterianism to form the Christian Church.[9]

Probably the most significant participant of the Restorationist Movement, as it came to be called, was Alexander Campbell. The Irish-born Baptist minister and writer arrived at his divisive theology honestly; his father, Thomas Campbell, had been a Seceder minister in Scotland.[10] Similar to Barton Stone, the elder Campbell had been a Presbyterian minister and later founded his own independent church in 1809 at Brush Run, near the town of Washington in Western Pennsylvania. Calling itself the Christian Association of Washington, the new church movement eschewed infant sprinkling, formal creeds, and confessions. At that time, Campbell began referring to all of Christendom as the "Churches of Christ" in his

[9] Ibid., 46.
[10] Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell: Embracing View of the Origin, Progress, and Principles of the Religious Reform He Advocated, in Two Volumes* (Philadelphia: Standard J.B. Lippincott & Company, 1868), 1:24.

"Declaration and Address," the seminal publication of the Disciples movement.[11] This practice lined up well with the prevailing views of frontier Baptists and, in 1813, the church at Brush Run was accepted as a member of the local Redstone Baptist Association.[12]

During the first few decades of the nineteenth century, Campbell's radical, Anabaptist ideas became quite troublesome for established churches. Campbell's entire ministry was devoted to a complete restoration of Christianity as it existed among the apostles in the first century A.D., representing nothing less and nothing more. In the pages of his periodical, the *Christian Baptist*, Campbell assailed paedobaptism, creeds, ecclesiastical structure, along with everything outside of "the ancient order of things" grounded in the New Testament. Soon enough, other ministers around the nation were challenging Campbell to debates. These events gave Campbell, a skilled debater and orator, an opportunity to expound upon his theology before thousands of Christians who would not otherwise have been exposed to it.[13]

---

[11] Ibid., 252.
[12] Ibid., 438.
[13] Thomas W. Grafton, *Alexander Campbell: Leader of the Great Reformation of the Nineteenth Century* (St. Louis: Christian Publishing Company, 1897), 104-5.

That same year in Washington, Kentucky, Campbell held a debate on the topic of paedobaptism with Presbyterian minister, Rev. William McCalla. At the conclusion of the event, the Baptist ministers in attendance invited him to tour their churches.[14] Campbell obliged and spent considerable time in Lexington, preaching at David's Fork and other churches.[15] Campbell returned the next year to discover that his views, as expounded in the *Christian Baptist*, continued making steady progress among the Baptists of the state. Consequently, a Baptist minister, "Raccoon" John Smith, felt the cracks forming in Baptist Calvinism at this time, but could not find a suitable replacement.[16] Upon meeting Campbell in person at Flemingsburg, hearing him speak, and spending time with him, Smith was fully convinced of the sufficiency of the Bible as the rule of faith and practice, an idea that soon took hold with many Christians throughout the state.[17]

Campbell's *Christian Baptist* and the ideals it contained was very influential among the Baptists in central and eastern Kentucky. Although the periodical was not well received by denominational heads, especially after the eighth issue that mocked the "born again" experience

[14] Ibid., 112.
[15] Richardson, 2:91.
[16] Ibid., 2:107.
[17] Ibid., 2:112.

most of them embraced to a greater or lesser degree, primitive Christianity was making steady progress in Kentucky. In 1826, Campbell wrote his own translation of the New Testament, entitled *The Living Oracles.* The *Oracles* had an immense, if somewhat infamous, impact on Baptists and other Christians. With the goal of creating a plain English translation of the New Testament on which to base his primitivist views, Campbell translated "baptism" as "immersion," which necessarily excluded infant sprinkling. John Smith found both the *Christian Baptist* and the *Oracles* indispensable in his ministry, and began modeling his delivery of the sacraments around the language Campbell used. When serving the Eucharist, Smith offered communicants a solid loaf of bread from which to tear a piece, which he felt more true to the way of the first-century church.[18]

With Smith elected as moderator of the North District Association in 1824, many other ministers and parishioners began grumbling about his "innovation," which he expounded upon in sermons to the annual conferences. In 1826, Smith's congregation at Bethel dissolved, with some parishioners going to the Regular Baptists and others to different Separate congregations. Spencer Creek, another congregation

[18] John Sparks, *Raccoon John Smith, Frontier Kentucky's Most Famous Preacher* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 237.

watched over by Smith, changed its Separate Baptist constitution to declare that the Bible was its only creed and the New Testament its only constitution, all done according to the precepts laid out in the *Christian Baptist*.[19] By this time Smith's career headed in a direction different from the North District. In 1826, Smith lost his bid for re-election as moderator, and at the 1827 conference the churches of Mount Tabor, Salem, and Lulbegrud loudly complained of the use of the *Oracles*.[20]

From 1827 to 1832, John Smith labored tirelessly to spread the word of Campbellite reform. He commonly preached twice a day in addition to the congregations he served on weekends. His wife, Nancy Smith, had to hire extra farmhands and slaves just to pay the interest on the mortgage of their farm and to keep the family fed. Smith continued to preach the "Disciples" (as the Campbellites were becoming called) message, and it gradually bore fruit. From 1829 onward, Baptist associations throughout the upper South and Midwest expelled Campbellite congregations and formed state Baptist conventions, as did Kentucky in 1832. On 24 April 1831, the first Disciples congregation formed in Kentucky, when the Baptist congregation at Millersburg split into separate Baptist and Disciples congregations.

[19] Ibid., 238.
[20] Sparks, 240.

As well, Smith organized a small congregation near Monticello at that time.[21]

As the end of 1831 approached, several Disciples churches and Christian churches of Barton Stone's earlier movement united, including the congregation at Millersburg. Representatives from both sides met on 31 December at High Street Christian Church in Lexington to discuss unity. With the ingredients for a successful union in place, Stone and Campbell engaged in a lengthy correspondence for several years ironing out differences among their two confessions. Upon meeting Smith, Stone remarked that "I have not one objection to the ground laid down by him as the true scriptural basis for union among the people of God; and I am willing to give him, now and here, my hand."[22] The two ministers exchanged a handshake, and the process begun by Stone at Springfield Presbytery nearly thirty years earlier was culminated with the creation of the Disciples of Christ. The rewards of their work were great. At the time of the union the two groups had a combined membership of fifteen to twenty thousand, making the Disciples of Christ the fourth-largest church denomination in Kentucky.[23]

---

[21] Ibid., 305.
[22] Richard L. Harrison, *From Camp Meeting to Church: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky* (Lexington, KY: Christian Board of Publication, 1992), 59.
[23] Ibid., 62.

On the topic of slavery and emancipation, Kentucky was unusual regarding the degree of relative freedom its inhabitants enjoyed in discussing these issues. Even abolitionists, for the most part, did not have to fear imprisonment, beatings, banishment, or murder as they did in the lower south. In fact, Cassius Clay probably could not have operated as freely as he did in any slave state except Kentucky. While the anti-slavery sentiment existed in Kentucky prior to statehood, the majority of delegates to the state constitutional convention of 1792 were wealthy slaveholders, two-thirds of whom owned at least five slaves. Among them were seven ministers representing the three largest Protestant groups in Kentucky: Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist. Though hopelessly outnumbered, these ministers all shared some degree of anti-slavery feelings. Led by the tenacious Presbyterian David Rice, the ministers managed to persuade nine other delegates to vote against Article Nine, which guaranteed the propertied status of slaves.[24] The vote, however, was not successful.

The constitutional recognition of slavery did nothing to quell the agitation by both pro- and anti-slavery Kentuckians. *The Kentucky Gazette* newspaper, a Lexington publication, documented this controversy from the 1790's

[24] Harrison and Klotter, 63.

until the end of slavery. The 7 March, 1799, edition illustrated a common anti-slavery view of the time. "A Voter in Fayette" vigorously denied that he was a supporter of immediate emancipation, listing the common myths of licentiousness and indolence about black people of the time as reasons why emancipation was a poor choice. Instead he proposed that slaves be gradually emancipated by being permitted to earn their freedom by working for a period of years.[25] In response, "A Slave Holder" wrote that the anti-slavery stirrings were evidence of the need to restrict suffrage to citizens who owned land or slaves. Without such a restriction, the writer feared his property would be legislated away by "the new-fangled doctrines of our noisy emancipators." [26] Although Kentucky and the nation as a whole were quite young, the front page of *The Kentucky Gazette* foretold the shape of things to come.

Baptist Christians were already well established in Kentucky prior to statehood in 1792. In 1781, their numbers received a significant boost when some 550 Separate Baptists arrived from Virginia to Crab Orchard, Kentucky. Known as the Traveling Church, the group was shepherded by two ministers, Lewis and Elijah Craig. Virginia law still

[25] A Voter in Fayette (pseud.), "To the Citizens of Fayette County" *The Kentucky Gazette* (Lexington), 7 March 1799, front page.
[26] A Slave Holder (pseud.), "To the Committee Which is to Meet at Bryan's Station" ibid.

required licensing of ministers and collected taxes for the Anglican church. Lewis Craig and some of his followers were jailed for several months in 1768 for violating these laws.[27] As a result, Craig and his congregation left Virginia in search of religious freedom.

As if to foreshadow the close connection between southern Baptists and slavery, the Traveling Church included many slaves. The Craig family owned a slave preacher named Uncle Peter Duerett. Upon settling in Kentucky, Duerett became a member of Boone's Creek Baptist Church, pastored by his master, Joseph Craig. Duerett prospered in this new state, and eventually purchased freedom for himself and his wife. Duerett would go on to found the First African Baptist Church in Lexington, which counted 300 members at his death in 1823.[28] The church would go on to become the largest congregation in Kentucky, white or black, with some 2,223 members when it divided in 1861.[29]

While white Baptists in Kentucky were largely tolerant of slavery, their church was remarkably inclusive of black Kentuckians and permitted them more equity than was given in other aspects of life. This was due to the significant

---

[27] George W. Ranck, *The Travelling Church: An Account of the Baptist Exodus from Virginia to Kentucky in 1781 under the leadership of Rev. Lewis Craig and Capt. William Ellis* (Copyright 1910 by Mrs. George W. Ranck, no publishing information given), 9.
[28] Ibid., 23.
[29] Harrison and Klotter, 157.

role of the Baptist church as a source of social regulation. More so than other Protestant confessions, Baptist churches and associations decided questions of proper Christian conduct for their members and enforced violations. Prior to the nineteenth century the Elkhorn Baptist Association in Lexington was already making decisions which governed the lives of its members. In addition to the usual questions of church governance and sacrament (foot washing, church membership, pastor's pay), the association held court on social and political matters. In 1795, the question of whether church members could operate distilleries was "Answer'd Not Inconsistant" with scripture.[30]

Through its position as a source of social governance, the Baptist Church also regulated the practice of slavery and race relations among its members. Slaves were admitted to church membership, although worship was segregated, with slaves occupying the rear of the church or the balcony. The first mention of a slave church member outside of Boonesboro was in 1786, when the church at Bryan's Station conferred membership on a male slave named Robin. The church at Bryan's Station also determined that it was proper for slaves who had been sold away from their spouses

[30] Randy Smith, *The Meeting House on David's Fork: A History of David's Fork Baptist Church, 1801-2001* (Winchester, KY: Rees Printing Company, 2001), 13.

to remarry, and that masters could compel their slaves to attend worship by any means other than corporal punishment. In 1791, the Elkhorn Association considered whether the practice of slavery itself was consistent with Christianity. While many Baptists spoke out against the practice, including some who owned slaves, a consensus found that the institution was not at odds with Christianity.[31]

Like the Presbyterians, Baptists suffered from confessional divisions long before the slavery question split the church regionally. Over the decades, there have been many churches and confessions that called themselves Baptist. In antebellum times, Baptists tended to divide themselves into "Regular" and "Separate" churches and associations. As with the Presbyterian Old Lights and New Lights, there were varying rates of adherence to one side or the other. Some Regular Baptists were as staunchly Calvinist as any Old School Presbyterian, while some of their Separate counterparts were so anti-confessional as to be considered Arminian.[32]

Baptists in Kentucky made efforts at unification early on. For most of the antebellum years in Kentucky, the Methodist Episcopal Church was the largest single

[31] Ibid., 16.
[32] Albert Henry Newman, *A History of Baptist Churches in the United States* (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1898), 335.

denomination in the state; however, Baptist Christians, organized into several associations, outnumbered them. As the Baptist church grew, so did the opportunities for disunion. It may easily be considered that the early efforts at Baptist unity in Kentucky, as well as the ensuing disputes resulting in denominational cleavage, foreshadowed the national church schisms that would follow in the 1830's and 1840's. Moreover, during the first decade of the nineteenth century, a dispute over a transaction of slaves between two Kentucky Baptists would put an end to the first effort toward Baptist unity.

The Regular Baptists had constituted themselves as the regional Elkhorn, Bracken, and Green River Associations in 1785. The Separate Baptists, whose strength lay in the south central and southeastern parts of Kentucky, formed the South Kentucky Association in 1787. In 1793, Baptists from both sides formed the Association of United Baptists at Tate's Creek, though this was a small, short-lived endeavor. Still, the desire for unity grew, as Separate and Regular Baptist churches and Christians existed and lived side by side throughout central Kentucky.

In 1801, on the eve of the Great Revival, a more permanent, statewide assembly was formed when representatives of the Elkhorn and South Kentucky

Associations met at the Old Providence meeting house on Howard's Creek in Clark County. The delegates created a simple creed containing the tenets of Baptist belief (in particular, that the Bible is the only rule of faith and the practice and necessity of receiving the believer's baptism for communion) which was speedily ratified with little concern. Although the union was formalized only between the Elkhorn and South Kentucky Associations, the creed received wide acceptance by Baptists throughout the state. During this time, many Baptist Christians and churches began referring to themselves as *United Baptists*, indicating the new spirit of cooperation that prevailed among them in the early years of the nineteenth century. [33]

Yet, the newly enacted fellowship of United Baptists would enjoy but a few years of success. In 1805, two members of Town Fork church in Lexington entered into a transaction for two slaves. Jacob Creath, the pastor, traded a slave plus a promissory note to church member Thomas Lewis for his slave. The slave received by Creath died before the debt was paid, and Creath then refused to honor his note. The dispute was brought before the church for settlement. The church ruled in favor of the pastor, Elder Thomas Dudley, saying, "inasmuch as Brother Lewis is

[33] J.H. Spencer, *A History of Kentucky Baptists, in Two Volumes* (Cincinnati: 1885), 1:545-546.

rich, and Brother Creath poor, the latter shall be excused from paying the note."[34]

This dispute between the two Baptists was not at all put to rest by the ruling. Rather, in the years following, a serious feud emerged in the Elkhorn Baptist Association between Creath's and Redding's supporters. Elijah Craig allied himself with the latter and published an angry pamphlet entitled, "A Portait of Jacob Creath". In 1807, the association took up the case, and the delegates assembled (who may have been selected by the church at Town Fork) unanimously ruled in Creath's favor. In response, the church at Bryant's charged the church at Town Fork with disorder, of which Town Fork was likewise acquitted by the association.[35]

For the next three years, a significant minority of delegates from churches offended by the acquittal of Creath and Town Fork were absent from the annual meetings of the Elkhorn Association. Finally, in August 1810, several members of the anti-Creath churches met at Bryant's on the same day that the larger Elkhorn Association was meeting at Clear Creek. There, they constituted themselves as the "New Elkhorn Association." In spite of the pleas and overtures from the larger association, the disaffected members held

[34] Ibid., 1:550.
[35] Ibid., 1:551.

fast, indicating that it was best for all involved to remain separate. They did agree to use the name of Licking Baptist Association, however.[36]

The social regulation of the institution of slavery, and of slaves and whites, was universal in central Kentucky Protestant churches, although the local Baptist associations seem to have more closely governed it. All churches imposed discipline on their members. Black parishioners were not excused from discipline, which implied that slaves knew right from wrong and were capable of taking responsibility for their own actions. At the Lulbegrud congregation of Boone's Creek, a black member was excluded in 1820 for failing to get a letter of dismissal and playing ball. Jane, a slave woman who belonged to a Mr.French, was excluded for refusing to live with Simm, her husband. Simm himself was excluded for arguing with his wife.[37]

Interestingly, slaves also played a role in the internal politics of church life. In 1821, a slave named Warrick applied for baptism and membership at the Providence congregation, also in Clark County. Long-time pastor Robert Elkin voiced the lone objection to the

[36] Ibid., 1:552-553.
[37] S.J. Conkwright, *History of the Churches of the Boone's Creek Baptist Association* (Winchester, KY: 1923), 71.

membership, but his flock overruled him. It was unusual enough that Elkin so firmly opposed Warrick's joining the church. Yet, even more uncommon was the congregational response to quickly and publicly set Elkin's opposition aside, especially over the membership of a black person. It can be assumed that the congregation decided to take the reins from 76- year old Elkin for reasons that did not make it into the church's records. A few months later, at the church business meeting, Elkin again voiced his objection to Warrick's membership. Once again, the congregation overruled Elkins, and the occasion proved to be the end of his long career among the Separate Baptists of Central Kentucky.[38]

Indeed, this system of religious social regulation allowed slaves to enjoy a surprisingly high degree of parity with whites. Slave church members voted in business meetings and even became ordained ministers. Josiah Henson, the real-life inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was ordained by the Methodist Episcopal Church after he was brought to Kentucky. Many of these slave preachers had freestanding churches of their own, as did George DuPuy, pastor of the black congregation of Pleasant

[38] Sparks, 199.

Green Baptist Church in Lexington.[39] The church offered enslaved Kentuckians an opportunity to achieve a social status and community standing that was rarely available from other avenues. Elisha Green, owned by Maysville storekeeper John Dobbins, was ordained by his master's congregation in 1845 after his natural preaching abilities were noticed. Green preached to black and white audiences throughout northern and central Kentucky, eventually becoming pastor of the African Baptist Church in Paris.[40]

The church could also protect slaves from the worst effects of slavery. In 1847, Reverend Lewis Craig died. His property, including minister George DuPuy, was put up for sale. There was a strong likelihood that DuPuy would be sold out of state to the Deep South, where life as a slave was arguably much worse than in Kentucky. His congregation at Pleasant Green appealed to the parent white church for help, and a deal was struck whereby the white deacons purchased DePuy and the black congregation paid the deacons a weekly installment for him.[41]

---

[39] John Boles, *Religion in Antebellum Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1976), 88.
[40] Ibid., 92.
[41] Ibid., 89.

CHAPTER 3

Three Anti-Slavery Ministers in Kentucky

The Presbyterian Church in Kentucky had more than its share of anti-slavery agitation. It is noteworthy that, more than a decade after the departure of Stone, his former congregations at Concord and Cane Ridge were still creating trouble for the Kentucky Synod. In 1817, the Rev. John Rankin of Tennessee accepted the pulpit of the two congregations on an interim basis. He was passing through Kentucky, determined to leave his native state for Ohio, where no slavery existed. A broken wagon axle caused Rankin and his family to stop near Lexington. Rankin was frustrated that the man who boarded them for a few days was an unbeliever and only accommodated them in the hope of being paid. In Lexington, Rankin preached at the church of a Rev. Blythe. Traveling on to Paris, Rankin met John Lyle, a former minister at Cane Ridge, who asked him to become the pastor at Concord. Rankin was resistant to settling in a slave state, but because his horse was lame, he agreed to stay until spring.[42]

[42] John Rankin, "The Life of John Rankin, as Written by Himself in his Eightieth Year" [ca. 1872], printed manuscript, Aberdeen Public Library, Aberdeen, OH, 12.

In the time since Barton Stone, half of the congregation at Concord had become Arian Baptists and successfully sued Transylvania Presbytery for half of the meeting house. Rankin chafed at their "errors" in baptism by immersion and rejection of the doctrine of atonement, yet was persuaded of their goodness by the congregation's commitment to the cause of anti-slavery. He consented to become their pastor and served for four years. Rankin noted in his diary that the anti-slavery cause was alive and well in Kentucky, and parishioners of Concord had joined an "abolition society auxiliary to a state society."[43] The state was settled largely by Baptists from Virginia, and that denomination held the majority of its Christians. Because so many slaveholders were Baptists, the Presbyterians managed to have an unusually large share of anti-slavery preachers and congregations. Rankin believed he knew all the Presbyterian ministers in the state, as they met in the same synod.[44]

In spite of his misgivings over the profusion of New Lights in central Kentucky, Rankin enjoyed a successful career there. He preached in all the counties from Fayette northward to Mason and Bracken along the Ohio River. He also held successful revivals, albeit in a well-mannered

[43] Ibid., 13.
[44] Ibid., 15.

Presbyterian fashion. In contrast to the chaotic affairs that had characterized the events of the Great Revival a decade earlier, Rankin instructed the audience at length on how one was expected to behave during worship:

> I often introduced the exercises by stating that on such occasions it sometimes happened that a class of people attended, who were brought up in ignorance, and of course did not know how to behave at religious meetings. I did not know if there were any such present; but if there were they could be seen either walking round in view or sitting on logs, laughing and talking instead of hearing the Word. I also stated the manner in which people ought to behave at public worship and that people who were polite and well bred, would so behave during divine service. Such remarks had a strong tendency to secure good behavior.[45]

Rankin stated that he made himself known as an abolitionist and was never mistreated. Evidently, the anti-slavery feeling among the New Lights and other Presbyterians in the region bridged the theological gulf between them. Rankin and his family even roomed for a time with one of them, a Mr. Joseph Mitchell of Carlisle.[46] In spite of the irritating theological errors of the New Lights, and Kentucky's position as a slave state, central

[45] Rankin, 16.
[46] Ibid., 17.

Kentucky was evidently more pious than Ripley, Ohio, where Rankin made his next move in 1822. Rankin found this village across the Ohio River within view of Maysville to be "badly infested with infidelity, Universalism, and whiskey retailers, exceedingly immoral; drinking, profane swearing, frolicking and dancing were commonalities."[47]

Although Rankin made his home and pastorate in Ohio, he continued his anti-slavery efforts in Kentucky. When his brother, Thomas, reported buying a slave in Virginia, Rankin wrote a series of letters rebuking him. The letters were then published in Ripley, in a paper called *The Castigator* (!). Rankin makes no mention of what sort of publication *The Castigator* was, other than that his letters were printed in it, and he assisted the editor in getting them bound in book form. Rankin reported that the book was sold in Maysville with no apparent trouble, although someone set fire to the four hundred copies sent to Cincinnati. Although Rankin could not afford to replace the burned books, they caught the attention of William Lloyd Garrison who published all the letters in *The Liberator.*[48]

While in Ripley, Rankin helped a number of slaves escape from Kentucky to freedom. One of the first slaves he aided was a woman whose husband living in Ohio helped her

[47] Ibid., 18.
[48] Ibid., 33.

escape across the Ohio River. The woman's master came in pursuit. Unusually enough he was a Presbyterian minister named Forsythe from Cynthiana, Kentucky.[49] Rankin did not mention previously in his diary that one of his fellow ministers held slaves only one county over from his pastorate at Concord. It is possible that Forsythe arrived after Rankin left, as no dates are mentioned. Forsythe pursued the woman as far north as the Ohio River, but afraid of violence in Ohio, abandoned the pursuit.[50]

Rankin actively aided escaped Kentucky slaves until the end of slavery. The Society of Friends operated numerous Underground Railroad stations in the area, and often solicited Rankin's help in securing the slaves' safe passage through the area. Rankin's experience in Ohio illustrates the fear of abolition so often held by people in free states and is in sharp contrast to his experience in central Kentucky, where, despite being slavery territory, a certain amount of anti-slavery feeling was common and largely tolerated. Rankin was a very active member of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society and promulgated the then uncommon belief that racial differences among peoples were the product of geography and climate rather than God's favor and disfavor. In an 1838 address to the Society he said,

[49] Ibid., 39.
[50] Ibid., 40.

> The color, hair, and features of the African race are not marks of Heaven's displeasure, as many have ignorantly supposed, but the result of natural causes. Hence, to indulge prejudice against colored people is extremely unreasonable.[51]

The towns of southern Ohio were sharply divided over the issue. In Putnam and Chillicothe, mobs followed Rankin and his companions, throwing rotten eggs and threatening violence. In West Union, the local Presbyterian minister offered him no help, and the town grew so strongly against the anti-slavery cause that, once during a meeting of the Ripley Presbytery, the visiting ministers' horses' manes and tails were shaved. By contrast, Rankin was well received in Felicity, Goshen, and Ripley, and was able to form anti-slavery societies in those towns. Rankin noted that the Methodists and Baptists received him kindly and allowed him to use their meeting houses when his fellow Presbyterians would not, although the Baptists in Batavia would not allow him to take communion with them.[52]

Meanwhile, the famous Methodist itinerant preacher, Peter Cartwright, was making a name for himself in Kentucky. Born in Virginia in 1785, Cartwright and his family removed to Kentucky in 1791, where he would spend the next thirty

[51] John Rankin, "An Address to the Churches on Prejudice against People of Color", in *Report of the Third Anniversary of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society* (Cincinnati: Samuel Alley, 1838), 35.
[52] Ibid., 43.

three years. The budding minister made his confession of faith at the Cane Ridge Revival in 1801. One of the most effective ministers ever seen in the Commonwealth, Cartwright was a man of stern theological convictions. Even before he was ordained, Cartwright referred to Calvinism as a "horrid idea",[53] and Universalism a "blasphemous doctrine".[54] The New Lights (and, perhaps by extension Barton Stone) were described as nothing more than a "trash trap" and Shakerism a "foolish error".[55]

As the Western Conference, which included Kentucky and Tennessee, continued its meteoric rise in membership and influence, it was confronted more and more with the problem of slaveholding Christians. In a move that would determine the typical, moderate course of denominational polity on the issue for the next thirty years, the conference passed a rule that attempted to maintain communion with slaveholders and their charges, while distancing itself from the odious slave trade. The rule stated that church members who bought or sold slaves could be called up before the local quarterly conference to answer as to what motivated them to purchase or sell slaves. If the member's

[53] Peter Cartwright, *The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher*, ed. W.P. Strickland (Cincinnati, OH: Cranston and Curts, 1856), 29.
[54] Ibid., 30.
[55] Ibid., 32.

motives were found to be "a case of mercy or humanity," they would be maintained on the rolls; if done for profit, the member was to be expelled. The rule stated nothing about members who owned slaves, but were not found engaging in the trade. Thus, it can be inferred that the conference was willing to tolerate the mere ownership of slaves, at least for the time being.[56]

Regardless of the official position of his conference on the issue, Cartwright was highly unsympathetic to slavery and the increasing slavery tolerance found in his denomination. In 1816, while stationed in the Green River district, Cartwright attended the second general conference in Baltimore. At the conference, he reported that all the ministers from slave states preached on the evil of slavery, and none justified it. Radical abolitionism was too young at this point to cause much damage, though it soon would. Writing from the vantage point of 1856, Cartwright lamented how so many of his fellow ministers were comfortable with their slaveholding parishioners, married among them, and soon also invested in slaves. Naturally, they soon enough attempted to justify their own participation in slavery on legal and Biblical grounds.

---

[56] Peter Cartwright, *Fifty Years as a Presiding Elder,* ed. W.S. Hooper (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1871), 54.

At the same time, other ministers, largely in the north, took up the cause of immediate abolition, and harnessed themselves and their ministry to it. In 1844, these disparate impulses would split the Methodist Episcopal Church into Northern and Southern communions. Similar to many of his fellow Kentuckians, Cartwright felt that colonization represented the best hope for eliminating slavery. A keen observer of history and the spirit of the nation, Cartwright noted:

> I will have to here repeat what I have stated elsewhere in this narrative, that I verily believe if the Methodist preachers had gone on as in old times, bearing a testimony against the moral evil of slavery, and kept clear of it politically and never messed with it themselves, and formed no free-soil or abolition societies, and given all their money and the productions of their pens in favor of the colonization organizations, that long before this time many of the slave states would have been free states; and in my opinion this the only effectual way to get clear of slavery. If agitation must succeed agitation, strife succeed strife, compromise succeed compromise, it will end in a dissolution of this blessed Union, civil war will follow, and rivers of human blood stain the soil of our happy country.[57]

In 1824, Cartwright sold his farm and moved to Pleasant Plains, Illinois. In addition to his duties as a

[57] Cartwright, *The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*, 157-158.

presiding elder, Cartwright served two terms in the Illinois legislature as a Democrat, and in 1846 ran unsuccessfully against Abraham Lincoln for a seat in the House of Representatives. During the campaign, Cartwright chided Lincoln for his lack of church membership. In the 1844 General Conference, Cartwright spoke at length against permitting southern ministers to retain their slaves and the Plan of Separation. As with many other southern ministers, he came to be a slave owner by inheritance but had still managed to free them. Referring to this circumstance and the claimed inability of the ministers to avoid it, Cartwright stated,

> "Why, my dear sir, this is all humbuggery, and nothing else. It was once my misfortune to become by heirship the owner of slaves. I could have pleaded with truth, and certainty of sympathetic responses, the disabilities of the law; but no, sir, I did not do so; I shouldered my responsibility like Caesar's wife, beyond suspicion. I took them to my state, set them free, gave them land, and built them a house, and they made more money than I ever did by my preaching… I stand at this day security for more than two hundred negroes whom I helped set free."[58]

Although Baptist churches in Kentucky found slavery consistent with scripture and served to regulate the

[58] Phillip Melancthon Watters, *Peter Cartwright* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1910), 109-110.

institution, they were not untouched by anti-slavery sentiment. The case of Baptist minister, James M. Pendleton, illustrates best the common form that anti-slavery activism took in Kentucky, a form which Pendleton himself called *emancipationism*. Born in Spottsylvania County, Virginia, on 20 November 1811, James Pendleton and his family moved to Christian County, Kentucky in 1812, settling near Hopkinsville. The new residents brought with them three "servants". Pendleton wrote that in those days no one found anything wrong with slavery.[59]

Licensed to preach in 1830, at the age of eighteen, Pendleton was ordained at Hopkinsville on 2 November 1833. After some traveling to Louisville and Cincinnati to visit other ministers and to attend the Kentucky Baptist Conventions and the Western Baptist Conventions, Pendleton was called in 1836 to take the pastorate of the church in Bowling Green. Pendleton held this position from 1837 to 1857, earning the handsome salary of four hundred dollars a year, and noted that he was the first professional Baptist minister in Southern Kentucky, all others having to support themselves through teaching school or farming.[60]

---

[59] James Madison Pendleton, *Reminiscences of a Long Life* (Louisville, KY: Press Baptist Book Concern, 1891), 13.
[60] Ibid., 48.

In 1844, the position of Baptists on slavery, which had been somewhat settled in Kentucky, became a national question. In April of that year, Pendleton traveled to Philadelphia to attend the Triennial Convention for Foreign Missions. At the meeting of the Home Mission Society, the question of whether slaveholders should be appointed as missionaries was introduced. A raucous debate ensued, and President Heman Lincoln found it quite difficult to maintain order. Pendleton notes that Dr. Nathaniel Colver of Boston was the chief speaker on the side of the abolitionists and was "exceedingly discourteous and rough in his remarks". The southern delegates were ably represented by Richard Fuller of South Carolina, whom Pendleton described as "logical and eloquent". [61] A large number of Quakers were in attendance, although it is not mentioned if they participated or were eligible to do so.

In the end, the society voted one hundred thirty-one to sixty-one in favor of allowing slaveholders into the mission field.[62] Pendleton does not mention what percentages of attendees were from states where slavery was legal or illegal. It is quite likely that a majority of ministers, regardless of their personal opinions on slavery, did not want the Home Mission Society to become polarized on the

[61] Ibid., 76.
[62] Ibid., 77.

issue. By 1845, the three largest Protestant denominations in the United States were rent into Northern and Southern confessions, a development that deeply troubled many Christians north and south. Considering that it is unlikely the meeting was filled up overwhelmingly with either abolitionists or hardcore slavery apologists, the decision to permit slaveholders into the mission field may have been an expedient one.

In 1849, Henry Clay circulated a plan of gradual emancipation which he hoped the Kentucky Constitutional Convention would adopt. The plan called for slaves born after a certain date to be freed at specified ages: males at twenty-eight and females at twenty-one. Pendleton felt this approach was too conservative and visited Clay in Lexington to discuss it. Clay believed that only a very modest emancipatory plan could succeed in light of how strong the proslavery cause had become. Clay was correct. The proslavery contingent, led by the strongly pro-slavery Garrett Davis, provided that the new constitution of 1850 included an article ensuring the absolute right of property in slaves.[63] Georgetown College President, Dr. Malcolm, was a friend of Pendleton and a former emancipationist delegate to the convention. Afterward some of the trustees of the

[63] Harrison and Klotter, 117.

college asked Dr. Malcolm to resign. He did, and thereafter left Kentucky. Saddened by this turn of events, Pendleton wrote,

> My spirit sank within me, and I saw no hope for the African race in Kentucky, or anywhere else without the interposition of some Providential judgment. The thought did not enter my mind that a terrible civil war would secure liberty for every slave in the United States.[64]

Pendleton was a diehard defender of Biblical inerrancy and claimed that the form of slavery which existed in the United States was radically different from that in the Bible and, therefore, was scripturally indefensible. Pendleton noted that Abraham had permitted his slaves to take up arms and was ready to accept Ishmael, his son born to a slave concubine, as his heir until the birth of his own son Isaac. Both of these acts would have been nightmarishly unthinkable to modern slaveholders. Pendleton concluded that the problem with modern slavery was its defenders unquestioningly assumed that a Biblical blessing of one distinct form of the practice automatically extended to another. In an 1849 letter to a colleague, Pendleton stated:

> For example, they would say something like this: The

[64] Ibid., 94.

> slavery which sacredly regards the marriage union, cherishes the relation between parents and children, and provides for the instruction of the slave, is not sinful. Therefore the system of slavery in Kentucky, *which does none of these things*, is not sinful. Is this logic? Is it not rather a burlesque on logic?[65]

However, Pendleton did find that slavery practice in Kentucky tended to spare slaves the worst treatments and conditions that were found further south. Slave marriages were not broken up without consequence for the master's reputation, and Pendleton observed laborers in the north at work in severe weather, and knew by experience that slaves in Kentucky and Tennessee would be exempted from laboring in such extreme conditions. While many slave owners did care about the welfare of the slaves, they doubted that emancipation would be to their benefit. In any event, manumission of slaves in Kentucky had been deemed illegal since 1850. Pendleton remarked that black people embraced Christianity with zeal, and stated that they were "as pious Christians as I ever saw anywhere".[66]

The peace of Appomattox would not come before slavery and secession had touched James Pendleton in a very personal way. Indeed, the minister felt the full impact of

---

[65] James Pendleton, *Letters to W.C. Buck, in Review of his Articles on Slavery* (Louisville, n.p., 1849), 3.
[66] Ibid., 127.

the war in the same way as countless other Kentuckians. In 1860, his son, John Malcolm Pendleton, joined the Confederate army. Known quite well as the emancipationist professor of theology in Murfreesboro, a newspaper published that Pendleton bespoke a curse on his son, claiming that he would be killed in battle. Pendleton denied the charge and remarked that "the different views held by my son and me made no difference in our relations of love" and "there was not an unkind word in any of our letters."[67]

The younger Pendleton served under General Bragg and was killed during the battle of Perryville on 8 October 1862. There is no doubt that James Pendleton was distraught over his son's sacrifice for the cause of secession, as were other Kentuckians who lost loved ones fighting for the side opposite their own. Emphasizing the shared, overarching thread of Christianity which connected himself to his son, and the north and south, Pendleton wrote,

> It is a mournful satisfaction, however, that my son the day he was killed sent a message to his mother by one of his comrades. The message was this: "Tell my mother, if I die, that I have died trusting in the same savior in whom I have trusted.[68]

[67] Pendleton, *Reminiscences of a Long Life*, 67.
[68] Ibid., 68.

In 1857, James Pendleton was called to become the professor of theology at Union University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Pendleton had no formal theological training, yet were so impressed with his preaching ability and piety, that the trustees insisted he accept the position. His reputation as an emancipationist preceded him, with several prominent southern Baptists publicly calling him an abolitionist and demanding that the university ask for his resignation. In his autobiography, Pendleton carefully corrected the error:

> I suppose he made no distinction between an "Abolitionist" and an "Emancipationist". The latter was in favor of doing away with slavery *gradually*, according to State Constitution and law; the former believed slavery to be a sin *in itself*, calling for immediate abolition without regard to consequences.[69]

As a well-known Baptist minister in southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee, Pendleton experienced an ideal vantage point to observe the secession controversy firsthand. He was not a man to suffer political motivations, yet could also not insulate himself from the times in which he lived. In his autobiography, Pendleton succinctly argues the case for the union. Article VI of the Constitution plainly states that the laws and treaties made in the

[69] Ibid., 112-113.

presence thereof (by Congress) are the supreme law of the land, and every state shall be bound by them. Thus, no individual state or group of states could act contrary to the Constitution and Congress. Under the republican system of government in the United States, the majority of the people rule. The majority is free to form a new constitution or government at its pleasure. Therefore, as Pendleton saw it, the right of revolution or secession is something of an absurdity unless a minority of the people ruled, which, of course, is not the case in a republic.[70]

Willingly or not, Pendleton was also on the receiving end of secessionists' entreaties. His fellow ministers, Dayton and Graves of Tennessee, were ardent believers in the right of states to secede from the Union, individually or en bloc. They visited with Pendleton individually, and made the case for the righteousness of the confederate cause and its eventual success. Graves felt that Pendleton's "influence and usefulness" would increase if he supported the cause of secession, and was ruined if he did not. Pendleton told his exasperated friends that he could not support the Confederate government, but if it prevailed, then he would submit to its authority or leave its bounds.[71]

[70] Ibid., 120.
[71] Ibid., 119.

Being a Union man in a Confederate town and state did not make for an easy life. There was talk in Murfreesboro of lynching Pendleton, and reportedly someone suggested that the minister would make a good target to the famed Confederate cavalry man, John Hunt Morgan of Lexington, Kentucky. It was no little relief to Pendleton when Union forces commanded by another Kentuckian, General Ormsby Mitchell, rode into town in 1862, wresting it from the Confederacy. Shortly after, Union troops appropriated the fence rails and crops from Pendleton's farm for military use, and the minister left Tennessee. Pendleton and his family traveled through Kentucky and settled in Hamilton, Ohio. The minister considered the Civil War to be a great tragedy through which God accomplished the great good of ending slavery. In the beginning, the war was fought between the supporters and foes of secession, and ended as the conclusive extermination of slavery.[72]

Having come from Virginia, the Pendletons were a slave-owning family. As a boy, James Pendleton's household included some slaves. When his mother died in 1863, the emancipationist Baptist minister inherited a female slave. Pendleton remarks that Kentucky had a law prohibiting the manumission of slaves in the state, and was not sure that

[72] Ibid., 125.

the slave would be any better because of it. For two years Pendleton hired her out, giving the slave the wages she earned, plus ten percent. In 1865, the young woman became free due to the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. Pendleton describes himself as "not a slaveholder *morally* but *legally*," coming into possession of the woman by inheritance.[73] With the end of slavery, Pendleton remarked that black Christianity had flourished. Evidence for this included a book entitled *The Negro Pulpit*, containing sermons written by former slaves of which the minister believed "no white preacher need be ashamed."[74]

The careers of these three ministers clearly indicate an anti-slavery ethos which existed among many Kentucky Christians. Cartwright and Pendleton showed a willingness to preach against the institution and take action to eventually bring it to an end, without resorting to abolitionism. The fact that the two refused to go this far is due to their dedication to Christianity and their respective denominations, rather than a lack of support for the cause of anti-slavery. These men were ministers first and emancipationists second. Rankin, on the other hand, was very active as an abolitionist in Kentucky and Ohio. In addition to preaching and writing against slavery, Rankin

[73] Ibid., 128.
[74] Ibid., 128.

helped many slaves escape northward on the Underground Railroad and formed anti-slavery societies in the two states. Rankin was exceedingly willing to ignore the "errors" of New Lights and other denominations for the abolitionist cause and his autobiography has many examples of his cooperation with them in Kentucky and Ohio.

CHAPTER 4

Kentucky Christians for Colonization

The church schisms of the 1830's and 40's were a harbinger of the political and cultural schism in the nation which would intensify into the American Civil War in 1861. After 1845, the Northern and Southern churches hardened their positions on slavery and secession. Many, if not most, ministers regarded the North-South split as an unpleasant necessity and a distraction from the essential business of the church. Yet, the flash flood of enmity engulfing the secular life of the United States poured through the religious as well. The churches at first restricted their sectional contention to slavery but eventually found themselves unable to resist the forces cutting the rest of the nation in two. During these crucial decades the Great Compromiser Henry Clay worked tirelessly to hold together the frustrated union. As the nation fragmented over politics and religion, Christians in Kentucky found and supported a middle accommodation between abolition and pro-slavery in the form of colonization.

It can be certainly inferred that a mild spirit of anti-slavery conviction pervaded Christianity in Kentucky. The writings and publications examined here reveal a

persistent discomfort with the institution, even among slaveholding Christians. All the ministers in this study were members of slaveholding families. With the exception of John Rankin, all of them owned slaves at some point in their lives and spent a large part of their ministerial career in Kentucky with many slaveholders in their congregations. The ministers were well aware of the hazards of embracing abolitionism and their writings reveal they did not place faith in it. Instead the ministers embraced ideals of gradual emancipation, which reflected the common sentiment of Kentuckians. The favored expression of anti-slavery in Kentucky was colonization, returning freed slaves to colonies set up for this purpose in Africa. Colonization held a double appeal to Kentuckians: it was seen as a means of relieving the state of an increasing free black population and it encouraged voluntary emancipation by slaveholders, who did not want to contribute members to that population. Kentucky churches, including the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, found colonization attractive as both a means of redressing the injuries of the slave trade and furthering evangelization efforts in Africa. In 1829, five colonization societies in

Kentucky were joined together into the Kentucky State Colonization Society.[75]

Presbyterian minister Robert J. Breckinridge could well be described as the most outspoken Kentucky minister in favor of colonization. The son of statesman John Breckinridge, he was an attorney by trade and represented Fayette County in the Kentucky General Assembly from 1825 to 1828. His friends described him in letters as the "Clay candidate" in a district filled with "Jackson candidates."[76] Breckinridge's opposition to mail service on Sundays and support of "gradual emancipation without offending the constitution" probably cost him his seat in the General Assembly.[77] In 1832, Breckinridge went to Princeton to study divinity and became pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Baltimore from 1832 to 1845. He also served as president of Jefferson College in Pennsylvania from 1845 to 1847. In 1847 Breckinridge returned to Lexington and remarried, his first wife having died in 1844. Breckinridge would go on to serve as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Lexington, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Professor of Danville Theological Seminary before his death in 1871.

---

[75] Asa Earl Martin, *The Anti-Slavery Movement in Kentucky Prior to 1850* (Louisville, KY: Standard Printing Company, 1918), 53.
[76] Harry Bodley, Letter to William Bodley, 5 August 1830. Bodley Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY.
[77] Thomas Bodley, Letter to William Bodley, 8 September 1830. Bodley Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY.

Breckinridge was likely the strongest advocate in Kentucky for colonization of freed slaves and was an active member of the Kentucky Colonization Society throughout its existence. In a speech before the Kentucky Colonization Society, Breckinridge found the case for modern colonization efforts grounded in Biblical history. As was common in the nineteenth century, and unlike John Rankin, he believed that all peoples of African descent traced their lineage to Noah's son Ham. These descendants of Ham had produced Egypt, Ethiopia, and other great kingdoms on the continent, which were then trampled under by foreign conquerors, scattering African peoples throughout the continent and the world as slaves.[78] European traders began importing slaves to the New World in the sixteenth century, and their numbers grew to two million by the present day. Breckinridge noted that slavery had always provoked the conscience of many people and, as such, slave importations to the United States had been prohibited in 1808. All the Northern states had either concluded plans of gradual emancipation or had never permitted slavery within their borders.[79]

---

[78] Robert J. Breckinridge, *Address Delivered before the Kentucky Colonization Society at Frankfort on the 6th day of January, 1831* (Frankfort, KY: A.G. Hodges, 1831), 7.
[79] Breckinridge, 9.

In addition to slaves, an increasing number of free blacks now lived in the United States, both former slaves and those who were born free. They had, "… become a subject of general anxiety; in some of the states laws were passed annexing the condition of banishment to emancipation."[80] The obvious solution, as Breckinridge saw it, was colonization in Africa, a process already begun by the American Colonization Society. The American colony at Liberia was a means of removing freedmen to their rightful home and furthering evangelization. The evil of slavery could be best redressed by returning the freedmen to Africa civilized and Christian:

> "Behold the overruling providence of God! America, the freest, the wisest, the most practical of nations, is pouring back her streams of liberty and knowledge, upon the most degraded of them all. Behold the noble retribution! She received slaves—she returns freemen! They came savages—they return home with the fruits of civilization. "[81]

Breckinridge advocated that Kentucky should take a gradual approach to emancipation by passing a law freeing children born to slaves and taxpayer support for recolonization of freedmen in Africa. In 1833, the Kentucky Synod voted to avoid taking an official stand on the increasingly treacherous issue of emancipation. In response,

[80] Breckinridge, 10.
[81] Ibid., 14.

Breckinridge stood up and uttered his famous quote "God has left you, and I also will now leave you, and have no more correspondence with you." Two years later the synod did act on the question, approving a plan of education and gradual emancipation for slaves based on age. However, the synod in typical ponderous fashion never implemented the plan, leaving antislavery Presbyterians to continue without their help.[82]

In addition to the ministers, attorney and future Liberty Party presidential candidate James Birney was a powerful advocate of anti-slavery in the Presbyterian church. Born in Danville in 1792, Birney attended services at David Rice's Danville congregation as a youth. As with many other Kentuckians, Birney became a slaveholder by inheritance when he received some slaves as a wedding gift. After spending the years 1818 to 1832 as a planter and state representative in Alabama, Birney returned to his hometown to begin an anti-slavery career in earnest.[83]

After briefly serving as a vice president of the Kentucky Colonization Society in 1834, Birney emancipated his slaves and began writing for the abolitionist cause. Birney had experienced a profound change in his thinking on

[82] Harrison, 55.
[83] William Birney, *James G. Birney and His Times* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1890), 130.

anti-slavery and in that year wrote his famous pamphlet, the "Letter of James G. Birney, Esq." In the letter, Birney announced his resignation from the society on the grounds that their efforts had thusfar proven inadequate and colonization was at best a means for free blacks to remove themselves from a nation which would deprive them of their civil rights and only permit them a substandard existence. Unless the government, citizenry, and churches decided to embrace the colonization movement; slavery would be as unaffected by it "as mid-ocean by the discharge of a pop gun on the beach." [84]

Birney had decided that colonization efforts served to perpetuate both slavery and prejudice against free blacks. He asserted that colonization appealed to white slaveholders because it did not require them to believe that slavery was sinful or take action against it. Colonization also offered to churches the false promise of Christianizing Africa, as if somehow the degraded condition of black people in the United States had specially prepared them to do so. Birney argued that the burgeoning slave trade in full view of the national capitol, unaffected by sixteen years of colonization efforts, was proof of the

[84] James G. Birney, "Letter of James G. Birney, Esq." (Mercer County , KY: 1834), 7-8.

failure of colonization.[85] The primary effect exerted on slavery by colonization was not the 900 or so (by Birney's count) freedmen so far removed to Liberia but rather the enactment of a universal myth that free blacks could not live successfully in the United States. Because white people overwhelmingly believed the myth, they would not support emancipation of slaves except in very limited circumstances.[86]

In Birney's mind the only possible solution was abolition of slavery. He noted that Kentucky's black population, the majority enslaved, had increased at a rate surpassing the white population although the oceanic slave trade had ended and colonization efforts had been ongoing for seventeen years.[87] Ending slavery was the only possible solution in accordance with both God's word and the United States Constitution. Birney ends his letter with the disclaimer that he was not a member of any anti-slavery organization or acquainted with the Northern abolition movement. Living in Kentucky he was surely aware of the odious reputation of the abolition movement and wanted to ensure he was not counted among them, although this seems difficult given Birney's newfound opinions.

---

[85] Ibid., 15.
[86] Ibid., 19.
[87] Ibid., 44.

Birney also addressed his denomination on what he believed would be the proper stance of the Presbyterian Church on slavery. In his essay, "To the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky", Birney took pro-slavery churchmen to task for their assertion that modern slavery was Biblically sanctioned. Using arguments similar to those of James Pendleton, Birney found that such an institution could not possibly be consistent with Christianity due to its means of operation and the effects that it produced. Among those enslaved, it created stupidity and hopelessness, and among the slaveholders it produced laziness and violence. Slavery precluded both parties from a relationship with the Lord, but "rather spares them for the sentence of the damned than for the invitation of the blessed." [88]

Using examples from the Bible and his considerable legal skill, Birney maintained that the modern institution of slavery was the same as its various Biblical forms in name only, and that modern apologists of slavery mistakenly assumed that whenever the word "servant" was used it referred to perpetual slavery. Jesus did not condemn slavery in the Gospels. However, he also did not speak against gambling, gladiator matches, and other sins of the

[88] James G. Birney, "To the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky" (Mercer County, KY: 1834), 1-2.

Roman world because he primarily spoke to a Jewish audience. Paul's instruction for slaves to obey their masters was merely advice that they should *bear it patiently* and *pray for their persecutors* (italics in original). It did not amount to a blessing of the condition imposed upon them. [89]

Birney concludes his essay with a challenge to the synod of Kentucky. If the Presbyterians were to free their slaves today other denominations would follow suit: "If it were to prevail among Presbyterians alone, how long could the other denominations hold their fellow men in bondage? Not twelve months, as I honestly believe."[90] Yet here was a problem that Birney, having spent much of his life at this point out of Kentucky, likely failed to consider. Kentucky was conservative in religion and culture. Churches and denominations in Kentucky tolerated, even encouraged, a certain amount of anti-slavery feeling, but this did not extend to wholesale abolition. Slavery was familiar and commonplace, and most Kentuckians at this time did not see its immediate end to be good for blacks or whites. Kentucky Christians had already shown their proclivity to divide over missions, revivals, and theology; if such a plan succeeded, why would they not then divide the denominations over slavery?

[89] Ibid., 5.
[90] James Birney, 23.

Birney continued his abolitionist writing and speaking and in 1835 organized the Kentucky Anti-Slavery society at Danville.[91] The "Letter" was widely read and earned him a speaking engagement in Cincinnati at the inaugural meeting of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society in April of that year. At the convention Birney shared the stage with Presbyterian ministers Samuel Crother and John Rankin.[92] Yet his success would be truncated by the hardening of the Southern position on slavery during that decade and from the reaction by his fellow Kentuckians. When he returned home from Cincinnati, Birney found his hometown in panic over his perceived radicalism. He had planned to begin publication of an anti-slavery newspaper, the *Philanthropist*, in August, but for two months was unable to find a willing printer.[93] In the fall, Birney moved to Cincinnati and, while he did find a willing printer for the *Philanthropist*, the Cincinnati papers were no more kind to him than his opponents in Kentucky. One Cincinnati paper indicated: "We deem this new effort an *insult to our slave holding neighbors* and an attempt to *browbeat public opinion* in this quarter."[94]

---

[91] William Birney, 156.
[92] Ibid., 168.
[93] Ibid., 183.
[94] "Abolition Paper" *Cincinnati Whig* (21 December 1835), in Birney, 209.

In 1838 Henry Clay was unanimously elected to the presidency of the American Colonization Society, which had been the subject of criticism by people on both sides of the slavery issue. In his first speech as president of the society, Clay took great pains to point out that neither abolition, nor perpetuation of slavery were among its aims and never had been. Using the same skill to draw compromise that he exercised in Congress, Clay asserted that questions of the future of slavery were strictly the province of the states. The society's designs applied only to free black people who themselves consented. Complaints about the small number of emigrants the society had successfully resettled were irrelevant, the society had never made any claims of large numbers. The society also understood that the majority of black people in the United States would remain there. Only free black people who consented would be resettled and those numbers would be determined by the amount of funding available. Slaves were, of course, not eligible for resettlement.[95]

William Bodley of Louisville, a friend of Breckinridge, had the same sentiments. In his 1852 address before the Kentucky Colonization Society Bodley held that earlier plans for colonization had attracted little support because

[95] Henry Clay, *Address to the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the American Colonization Society* (Washington, D.C: C. Alexander, 1838), 18.

they were bound to plans of emancipation. By avoiding the thorny subject of slavery the colonization movement could attract support from people with differing opinions.[96] A judge by trade, Bodley did characterize the free black population in the United States in racist terms. He asserted that black people in Africa were barbarians of the worst sort, and slavery in the United States had improved and civilized them to the proportional degree that their ancestors had been enslaved. Former slaves who had been voluntarily manumitted were "the least industrious, sober, provident, and virtuous, of all the divisions of our people." [97]

In spite of his extraordinarily unkind assessment of free blacks, Bodley was keen to frame the society's work with the language of Christian mission. Like other colonization advocates he found that Africa was blessed by the arrival of former slaves. Churches now stood where the stockades of slave traders once did and schools of Christian instruction replaced the temples of pagan worship. Such language coming from a man of harsh sentiments is a testament to the influence of Christianity on the colonization movement, six of the thirty three vice

[96] William Bodley, *Address of Judge Bodley* in *Annual Meeting of the Kentucky State Colonization Society* (Frankfort, KY: A.G. Hodges, 1852), 5.
[97] Ibid., 10-11.

presidents of the society were ministers as was its overseas agent. In Bodley's eyes the glory of Liberia was the diametric opposite to the miserable condition of free blacks in America, and was a blessing of the almighty to such a despised people:

> The language we speak is a tongue of eloquence to aspiring man; the republican institutions we enjoy promote reform wherever they are practiced; and the Christian religion we profess is the chief redeeming agent amongst all mankind. Liberia, in her language, laws, and religion, derived from us, unites them all; and the moral regeneration of the dark continent is her manifest mission, and will be the crowning glory of American Colonization.[98]

The Kentucky Colonization Society was in operation for three decades. During this time it sent only 658 emigrants to Liberia, yet its impact on Liberia and the United States was larger than this number would suggest. In the nineteenth century two men born in Kentucky would serve as president of the little nation, Alfred Russell and William Coleman. The Kentucky society also established a town along the St. Paul river called Clay-Ashland in honor of Henry Clay and his estate, the region surrounding it is commonly called Kentucky. In a larger sense, the Kentucky Colonization Society and its cause also shaped the course

[98] Ibid., 19.

of the slavery debate in Kentucky. Colonization of free black people was an idea with wide appeal in the state. The cause of colonization kept Kentucky on a moderate course by presenting Christians and statesmen with an alternative to the divergent and increasingly treacherous paths of abolition and pro-slavery which were gaining strength North and South.

CHAPTER 5

Church Schism in Kentucky

An over arching theme throughout the history of the Commonwealth of Kentucky is its position as the keystone between the northern and southern states of our nation. The position of Kentucky is more than geography or political boundary. The state also forms a keystone between two American peoples, two historical memories, and two streams of religious consciousness. During the final decade before the Civil War, Kentucky Christians would experience conflicted loyalties. Of course, there are many examples of Kentuckians who strongly supported one side or the other. The state provided many troops and officers to the North and South. However, the concern here is the response of central Kentucky churches and believers to the forces of slavery and secession coursing through the nation at the time.

The decade of the 1840's would not close until the three largest Protestant denominations had divided into respective Northern and Southern organizations. The split, ostensibly over the question of whether slaveholders could fully participate in missions and ministry, was in reality more complex and rooted in the conflict between the

theologically liberal, reform minded Northeast and the theologically conservative, even reactionary, marketplace of evangelical Christianity that flourished in the South and the West. In essence, two new Christianities had emerged in the United States. The liberal reform Christianity of the North was primarily concerned with life here on Earth and so supported a variety of reform movements, including anti-slavery. The conservative evangelical Christianity of the South was concerned with the hereafter, winning souls and filling pews was its mission. The question of slaveholders in the church would be the wedge which finally divided the two.

Although secessionist authorities, churches, and mobs did a very thorough job of crushing dissent, a difference of opinion was found even in the Deep South. Many southerners did not find their loyalties crossed by supporting slavery and the Union. In 1850, that foremost defender of the south, Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, warned of disastrous consequences for the nation as a whole if the Union was permitted to be broken apart in the same fashion as the churches. In the two decades leading up to 1860, many southern church leaders looked with dread on their own denominations' discord as a harbinger of things to come for the nation as a whole. In

1845, the newspaper, *Alabama Baptist*, and the South Carolina Baptist Convention pleaded for Christians to remain united, claiming that if the bonds of Christianity could not hold a nation together, then nothing could.[99]

The denominations had already endured schisms and wished for unity, at least on a regional basis. In addition to the breakaway Cumberland Presbytery and Christian movement from the Presbyterian Church, the Methodists saw the creation of the anti-slavery Wesleyan Church in 1843. The Baptists quickly divided upon their arrival in Kentucky over Calvinism, missions, and revival. As slavery was legal and mostly tolerated within the state, and abolitionism was increasingly brash and ostracized, it seemed the safest course would be to join the southern branch. By 1845 the Baptist and Methodist denominations in Kentucky had officially repudiated the abolitionist stirrings which the northern synods were increasingly finding themselves possessed with and joined the southern branches of the faith.[100] Governor and statesman James Morehead, himself anti-slavery, in 1838 proclaimed in speech that "the wild spirit of fanaticism has done much to retard the work of

[99] David Chesebrough, *Clergy Dissent in the Old South, 1830-1865* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 5.
[100] Lowell Harrison, *The Antislavery Movement in Kentucky* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1978), 55.

emancipation and rivet the fetters of slavery in Kentucky".[101]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, would find itself well appointed in Kentucky. The sentiment that the church should recuse itself from the political and social issue of slavery was already popular within the Kentucky conference before 1844. All of the Kentucky delegates to the 1844 Convention voted in favor of the Plan of Separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and when the Kentucky Conference met in session at Bowling Green that fall, the delegates overwhelmingly passed resolutions condemning the treatment of Bishop Andrew and calling for the new southern denomination to meet in convention the next year. The organizing conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met at Louisville from 1-20 May 1845. Meeting at the Fourth Street Church in Louisville, the convention elected Kentucky Conference members Thomas Ralston and Thomas Summers to speaker pro tem and secretary, respectively.[102]

The convention ran smoothly during the nineteen days, and another Kentucky Conference member, Henry Bascom, was appointed to write the report of the Committee on

---

[101] Ibid. , 54.
[102] Roy H. Short, *Methodism in Kentucky* (Louisville: The Commissions on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, 1979), 12.

Organization. The document plainly reflected its Kentucky authorship. It was mild in tone as far as disagreement with the Northern branch of the faith over ministers who held slaves was concerned. The report agreed with the North insofar as the fact that the Methodist Episcopal Church had always prohibited ministers from engaging in the slave trade, and required manumission of any slaves they possessed. Yet, the essential disagreement was over the ownership of slaves in states where emancipation was illegal. The Northern church insisted that these ministers break the law to retain their appointments. Interestingly, the report also separated the act of buying and selling human beings from the slave trade, insisting that such acts did not necessarily amount to slavery if done out of humanity rather than the profit motive.[103] In a manner similar to the Southern Presbyterians at the time, references were also made to the sacred duty of slaveholding Christians to teach the faith to their slaves. Such language reflects the common notions of the time of a "mild" form of slavery which existed in Kentucky and other upper South states, and was considered less brutal and dehumanizing than the large scale plantation slavery of the

[103] The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Report of the Committee on Organization Presented to the Convention of Delegates from the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South and South-Western States* (Louisville, KY: Prentice and Weissinger, 1845), 8.

deep South. It also reflects popular ideals of slavery as a mutually beneficial circumstance for both master and slave.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did quite well in Kentucky by any measure. All of the Kentucky delegates at the General Conference of 1844 voted for separation. When the question was put to members of the Kentucky Conference in 1845, delegates voted in favor of it 76 to 6.[104] The next year, the state was divided into two conferences. The Louisville Conference fell west of Harrod's creek at the Ohio River, and the Kentucky Conference fell to the east of it and included part of western Virginia and, unusually, a congregation in Cincinnati. The two conferences constituted the main operation of the Wesleyan tradition in Kentucky and were its largest single denominational organization. In 1855, the church counted 25,417 ministers and members in the Louisville Conference and 24,202 in the Kentucky Conference.[105]

Yet, not all Methodists in Kentucky desired membership in the Southern church. The church at Augusta was the lone congregation to vote against joining them, as well as a breakaway group from the church at Maysville. By 1848, the

[104] Short, 13.
[105] Charles F. Deems, ed., *Annals of Southern Methodism for 1856* (Nashville, TN: Stevenson & Owen, 1856), 70.

church in the North was having second thoughts about the Plan of Separation, and the General Conference met in Pittsburgh that year and repealed the plan by a substantial margin.[106] This meant that the Northern church now considered itself free to operate below the Ohio River in direct competition with the Southern church. And compete it did, adding 13 churches by 1849, including Lexington and Winchester. Organized at first under the Ohio Conference, in 1853 the Methodist Episcopal Church added Kentucky to its list of conferences.[107] The conference report for 1855 shows the upstart conference small but growing, with two districts. The Maysville district, encompassing northern and central Kentucky, was fairly successful, reporting 2,098 communicants. The Green River district, which lay in the south and southwest, claimed 746.[108]

Now living and preaching in Illinois, Peter Cartwright came out foursquare against the division of the Methodist Episcopal church on the grounds that there could not be both anti-slavery and pro-slavery Christianity. He believed that earnest gospel ministry freed far more slaves and turned more former slaveholders against the institution than radical abolitionism ever did:

---

[106] Alexander, 54.
[107] Short, 25.
[108] The Methodist Episcopal Church, *Minutes of the Annual Conferences for the year 1856* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1856), 173.

> We have gone to slaveholders in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri in a peaceful Christian way; and while we never ceased to bear an honest testimony against the moral evil of slavery (but did not meddle with it politically) we successfully persuaded many of these slaves and slaveholders to turn to God and obtain religion; and we got hundreds and thousands of these poor slaves set free.[109]

The Baptists seemed less disrupted by the schisms of the 1840's than were the Methodists. Unlike the latter, the Baptist churches were independently established, organized into local associations, and not under episcopal supervision. The Triennial Convention had much less influence on them, and, of course, had almost no influence on the anti-mission "hard-shell" Baptists. This study demonstrates thus far that Baptist Christians did not consider their church life dependent upon the edicts handed down from a national denomination. Rather the churches and associations received their mission and direction from the ministers and parishioners themselves. In reality, Kentucky Baptists attempted to create a denomination several times already, first with the United Baptists of 1793 and 1801 and then with attempts in 1823 and 1832 to form a state

[109] Cartwright, *The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright,* 430.

convention. They finally succeeded in 1837 with the formation of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

The Baptists always seemed to have more self-imposed obstacles placed in their way than other groups of Christians. Personal disputes (as in the the case of Lewis and Creath), arguments over creeds, arguments over missions; Kentucky Baptists were nothing, if not contentious. Additionally complicating the situation was the fact that the Baptists were the least likely denomination to have educated, professional ministers. The ministers' hands were filled with their basic duties. Most of them simply did not have time to concern themselves with affairs beyond their local churches and associations. J.H. Spencer describes well the situation of Baptist ministry at this time, when he states:

> This state of affairs had a bad effect on the preachers themselves, in many respects. They had no time to study. Often did the preacher plow with the only horse he possessed, five days in the week, and Saturday morning till 10'o clock, then ride the jaded animal to meeting, enter the pulpit, physically and mentally wearied and worried, and attempt to preach to the people assembled, without having spent one hour in preparing for the solemn duty. The author remembers distinctly to have heard a preacher, who was "pastor of four churches", say that he was a poor man, had a large family, and was compelled to work so hard that

> he did not have an opportunity to read a chapter in his Bible once in two months. The sermons delivered under such circumstances could only be made up of such things as could most readily be called to mind, on the occasion, and too often consisted in an oft repeated tirade against Arminianism, missionary and Bible societies, Sunday schools and educated preachers, and that, too, spoken in a tone and manner, indicating contempt and derision, rather than spiritual unction.[110]

The organizing of the permanent General Association of Kentucky Baptists in 1837 was the catalyst that finally caused Kentucky Baptists to compete as an effective denomination against the others. Unlike prior attempts, the convention that was held 20 October 20 1837 included a fair number of representatives from churches throughout the state. Prominent ministers, including James Pendleton and W.C. Buck, were present. The association also passed resolutions which called for, among other things, supporting ministers by salary, founding of seminaries, and support for missions. Although Baptists from most regions of the state were fairly represented at this convention, only nine of the forty-three Baptist associations in the state joined the General Association at this time. The enemies of missions refused to be pacified, and prevented

[110] Spencer, 1:660-661.

many churches and associations from joining, particularly in the southeastern region.[111] Nonetheless, the association and its aims continued to grow in strength and influence, and the Kentucky and Foreign Bible Society, an auxiliary to the American and Foreign Bible Society, was formed the next year.

The national church schisms of 1844-1845 seemingly caused less disruption among the Baptists in Kentucky than with the Methodists, but it certainly was not without controversy. The General Association joined with the American Baptist Home Mission Society of the Triennial Convention in 1843. After the schism of 1845, the association left that body and joined the Southern Baptist Convention. The association had initially given cautious support to the creation of the Western Baptist Theological Institute at Covington in 1840. In 1845, Rev. R.E. Pattison of Massachusetts, a member of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions of the Triennial Convention, was installed as president of the college. This could not have come at a worse time. The Alabama resolutions were then under consideration by the Board and their response caused many Kentucky Baptists to suspect that the institute's New England president was an abolitionist. He refused to

[111] Ibid., 1:671.

clarify his position on the slavery question. Therefore, the General Association removed its support for the institute in October of that year.[112] In 1848, Dr. Pattison was forced out, having attempted to move the institute to Cincinnati. Consequently, the General Association renewed its support. However, by 1855, the northern and southern factions within the institute found they could no longer endeavor together, and the property of the Institute was divided and sold.[113]

James Pendleton seemed more at ease than Cartwright with the north-south split of his denomination. In his book, *Distinctive Principles of Baptists*, Pendleton found the traditional independence of each Baptist congregation to be a source of strength that other denominations did not have. The Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Lutherans were (and are) all governed by bishops, conferences, presbyteries, and synods. These governing bodies provided "…only an indirect recognition of the body of the members as the source of the power." On the other hand, the congregational polity of most Baptist congregations ensured that the pastor and deacons could do nothing without its approval, and indeed owed the very existence of their office to the congregations they served. An independent

[112] Ibid., 1:685.
[113] Ibid., 1:686.

Baptist church could not be compelled to do anything contrary to its wishes by a bishop, conference, or denomination.[114]

Pendleton is silent about the split of the Baptist churches into northern and southern conferences. Given his sincere anti-slavery, pro-union beliefs, it is highly unlikely that Pendleton approved of this development. He probably had an uneasy peace with the split, as each congregation could vote for itself whether to remain with the Kentucky General Conference, which the overwhelming majority did. Pendleton held the same admiration for the independent character of Baptist churches as he held for the United States itself, even though, like the states themselves, they made decisions for which he did not agree. Pendleton indicates that, "…it must not be forgotten that every local congregation of baptized believers united in church worship and work is as complete a church as ever existed, and is perfectly competent to do whatever a church can of right do. It is as complete as if it were the only church in the world."[115]

By the time of the schisms among the Methodists and Baptists in 1844-45, Presbyterians in Kentucky had already

[114] James M. Pendleton, *Distinctive Principles of Baptists* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1882), 214.
[115] Ibid., 186.

participated in the national New School-Old School schism of their church in 1838. Referring to the schism in an address to the Old School General Assembly of 1842, Robert Breckinridge remarked,

> But the fate of our church was staked on questions far more momentous than any relating merely to her outward organization. Infidel theories of moral and mental philosophy, shallow views of the doctrines of grace and salvation, false principles of action, wild impulses and methods, had sprung up afresh in the land. And while all the Christian denominations were, in their turn, troubled with heresies and disorders from which it was hoped the church, having tried and rejected most of them before, was finally delivered; the Presbyterian Church became, from many causes, the battle field on which was decided, once more, a contest between the religion of heaven and that of earth.[116]

The Kentucky delegates at that conference chose to remain within the Old School branch. Breckinridge took the lead in ensuring that Kentucky Synod remained with the Old School. From 1830-34, the New School faction controlled the General Assembly. In the latter year, Breckinridge penned the Act and Testimony, a paper outlining the errors of the New School faction. It garnered 2,075 signatures, including

[116] Robert Breckinridge, *The Calling of the Church of Christ: A discourse to Illustrate the posture and Duty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (Philadelphia: William S. Martien, 1842), 14.

ninety-seven from Kentucky. Kentucky Synod adopted the paper in full, as did Philadelphia Synod.[117] After the events at the General Assembly in 1837-38, the ministers and elders of Kentucky Synod met at Paris on 12 October 1838. There, the delegates unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the Old School General Assembly which met at Philadelphia that year as the only true General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.[118]

The relatively few New School ministers in Kentucky did not bite their tongues for long. That winter, several Central Kentucky ministers signed a letter protesting the actions of Kentucky Synod at Paris. The letter invited interested parties to meet at Versailles in March 1839. They met from 17-19 March, and decided to meet again for the purpose of expressing their views to the public. This caused members of the congregation at Versailles to complain of their actions, and several of the ministers were suspended, among them the hot-tempered Jacob Stiles. The ministers appealed to the synod and largely received an acquittal, with the exception of the suspension. Stiles, continued to preach and pursue his schismatic activities, and was finally placed on trial before the synod at

[117] Robert Davidson, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky with a Preliminary Sketch of the Churches in the Valley of Virginia* (Lexington, KY: Charles R. Marshall, 1847), 348.
[118] Ibid., 350.

Versailles in November 1840. He was found guilty of all charges, and therewith walked out the door of the Versailles church, never to return.[119] In the winter of 1840, Stiles and his friends from the Versailles convention met at Lexington in a Methodist church building for the purpose of enacting a new synod. Calling themselves the Synod of Kentucky, they began their work with fewer than fifty ministers and parishioners. By 1847, the little synod claimed three presbyteries and nine hundred fifty four communicants.[120]

In 1853 the New School assembly, which was more theologically liberal than the Old School, called on its Southern presbyteries to report their progress in eliminating slavery from their congregations. Elders of the Presbytery of Lexington, Kentucky rebuked the assembly, saying that they owned slaves by choice and this was none of their concern. The assembly refused to back down from their mandate, and that same year six New School synods in the South, consisting of some 15,000 members, left the national assembly to form the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church.[121] Ironically enough, Lexington Presbytery was excluded when the United Synod decided to

[119] Ibid., 360.
[120] Ibid., 361.
[121] Thompson, 136.

join the Presbyterian Church in the United States during the war, they had to apply for readmission to the assembly which they had originally walked away from.[122]

The Presbyterian Church in Kentucky did not endure a denominational split over slavery in the 1840's as their Baptist and Methodist counterparts did, nevertheless the controversy surrounding the issue did have its effect. The Synod of Kentucky attempted to enact a plan of gradual emancipation in 1834 with little success. In 1845, the General Assembly meeting in Cincinnati passed a series of resolutions which inferred that the church would not act on any subject upon which Christ and the apostles had not acted. The resolutions, penned by Kentuckian, Nathan L. Rice, served to prevent the North-South schism of Old School Presbyterians until the Civil War.[123] In the years following the war, neutral border states began discovering their Southern sympathies, in politics, culture, and religion. Remembering harsh treatment by Union commanders and resentment from their Presbyterian brethren in the North, the Old School Presbyterians of the Upper South and the border states switched their allegiance to the

[122] Ibid., 156.
[123] Ibid., 341.

Presbyterian Church in the United States, as did Kentucky in 1868.[124]

[124] Ibid., 171.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

A constant theme of this work has been Kentucky's role as the keystone in the arch between the disparate forces in antebellum Christianity. The churches of the Commonwealth, and the hearts and minds of its believers, were the places impacted by these forces. A transactional relationship existed between Christians in Kentucky and those in the rest of the nation. This relationship was, and is, a constant exchange of religious ideas between Kentucky and the rest of nation, and between Kentucky Christians.

By the summer of 1845, American Protestants had separated themselves into competing confessions within existing denominational identities. These competing confessions were a product of the emerging marketplace environment of Christianity in the United States, a process that had begun concurrently with the American Revolution. The old legal church establishments of the East had become defunct, and they had never existed in the West. In the absence of legal establishment and entrenched religious norms, the three denominations considered here effectively took on a consumer driven model of denominational life. The ability of synods and councils to control the churches and

parishioners was now held in check by the ministers and believers themselves, who alone decided whether the pews and pulpits would be filled.

As the first state admitted to the union outside of New England and the coastal South, Kentucky was, for much of the period considered here, the westward edge of non-native American civilization. This condition of being relatively unsettled, in terms of land and people, drew religious innovators of all kinds into Kentucky during the entire antebellum period. From Virginia Baptists seeking religious freedom, to New Lights and revivalists pursuing a rebirth of worship, to Shakers looking to create a waiting harvest of souls for the Lord's quick return, to Alexander Campbell's efforts to recreate the first century church—all of them came to Kentucky and made their own contribution to the "antebellum spiritual hothouse," as Jon Butler described the cacophonic situation of the time.

Likewise, conservative and reactionary forces made their home here, too. Old School Presbyterians chafed at those who defected from their ranks to call themselves simply "Christians". Even worse were those who practiced theological innovation to the point of no longer being Calvinist, yet still insisted they were Presbyterian. Rural Baptists, led by plowman preachers, insisted on their right

to own slaves and distill whiskey, and denounced missions and benevolent societies. Even so, the usual form of conservatism found among Kentuckians applied to believers of all stripes. Kentuckians generally approached new ideas with caution, especially if those notions called for wholesale changes to be made in religion and life. Innovations, such as anti-slavery and missions, were adopted in a modified, gradual form, and usually did not prevent Kentucky Christians from fellowshipping with one another.

A consistent strength of Christianity in Kentucky is the phenomenon of the reflective church. Basically stated, a successful church is vital and important in the lives of its participants, because it meets their needs and offers them sustenance which they cannot get anywhere else. Kentucky never had legal establishment of churches, nor did it have an old tradition of socially respectable religion to draw on, as was found in the East at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Many people moved into Kentucky carrying either a spiritual vacuum or a belief system that did not fit in with their previous situation. In their new state, early Kentuckians found themselves charged with creating a religious paradigm. In this free-for-all environment, the only measure of success for religion

amounted to how many people participated in it. A plethora of different Christian traditions emerged in Kentucky to serve the needs of as many different people.

The forces of Northern abolition and Southern pro-slavery also made their sojourn to Kentucky, but neither managed to persuade most inhabitants. Some Kentuckians embraced them in their undiluted form, but it was far more common to profess a moderate disposition on the issue. A large contingent of anti-slavery Kentuckians inhabited the state's churches. For the most part they lived peaceably with their slaveholding neighbors, and looked to a day when slavery would be quietly brought to an end through gradual emancipation or colonization. Kentucky was a state where slaveholding was legal, but it did not have industrial scale slaveholding and its attendant horrors, which pre-empted the creation of either firebrand abolitionists or career slavery apologists. Slavery was a concern to Kentuckians of all Christian persuasions, yet it seldom provoked the kind of vitriol effect found outside the state.

The importance of Kentucky as a moderating force in the exchange of religious and social ideas between North and South in the antebellum years cannot be overstated. Geography separated Kentucky from the liberal elites of the Northeast and the reactionary culture of slavery in the

Deep South. Kentucky was more tolerant of divergent views than other states, as the experiences of John Rankin and James Pendleton show. More importantly, the populace of Kentucky was comprised of peoples who left older parts of the union seeking a new life away from the stifling religious and social environment they previously experienced. Most Kentuckians probably considered extreme views on any topic with trepidation. Kentucky produced a number of ministers and statesmen who served as a moderator between North and South, particularly Henry Clay and James Pendleton. Had the other states taken notice of the course set by Kentucky, our history may have been much different.

As the North and South picked up speed in the 1840's and 1850's and headed towards a collision in 1861, Kentucky found itself facing both directions, yet moving towards neither. The churches reflected the state's inhabitants, and did not want to choose sides. Unfortunately, sides were chosen for them, as too many Kentucky ministers owned slaves, making it difficult to continue operating under the auspices of the northern branches of the Baptist and Methodist churches. The Presbyterians witnessed the New Lights thin their ranks, and decided to cast their lot with the Old School, which also placed them in close kinship to the majority of the Presbyterians of the South. The North-

South schism also signaled the beginning of Kentucky's increasing alienation from the North and self-identification as a Southern state, a process firmly cemented after the Civil War.

The lives of the parishioners, ministers, churches, and denominations show that the cause of Christianity was alive, popular, and vital to Kentuckians in the antebellum years. Certainly, many people devoted their lives to it and made great contributions to Christianity and to Kentucky, in general. The importance of Christianity in this study relates to how it impacted life away from the meeting house. If merely a Sunday morning ritual to provide a respite from the toils of life, then the churches would be characterized by a sameness of belief and activity, and its written history would be quite brief. However, quite the opposite is true. Christianity offered Kentuckians a chance to strive for a better life in this world, as well as the next. The many disputes and schisms Kentucky Christians engaged in with each other, and their essentially independent and moderate character, show how seriously they took this opportunity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, Gross. *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in the United* States. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904.

Birney, James G. "Letter of James G. Birney, Esq." Mercer County , KY: 1834.

Birney, James G. "To the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky." Mercer County, Kentucky: 1834.

Birney, William. *James G. Birney and His Times.* New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1890.

Bodley, William. *Address of Judge Bodley* in *Annual Meeting of the Kentucky State Colonization Society.* Frankfort, Kentucky: A.G. Hodges, 1852.

Bodley, Harry. Letter to William Bodley, 5 August 1830. Bodley Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

Bodley, Thomas. Letter to William Bodley, 8 September 1830. Bodley Family Papers, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

Boles, John. *Religion in Antebellum Kentucky.* Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1976.

Breckinridge, Robert J. *Address Delivered before the Kentucky Colonization Society at Frankfort on the 6th day of January, 1831.* Frankfort, Kentucky: A.G. Hodges, 1831.

Breckinridge, Robert J. *The Calling of the Church of Christ: A Discourse to Illustrate the Posture and Duty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: William S. Martien, 1842.

Cartwright, Peter. *The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher*. Edited by W.P. Strickland. Cincinnati, Ohio: Cranston & Curts, 1856.

Cartwright, Peter. *Fifty Years as a Presiding Elder.* Edited by W.S. Hooper. Cincinnati, Ohio: Hitchcock and Walden, 1871.

Chesebrough, David. *Clergy Dissent in the Old South, 1830-1865.* Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996.

Clay, Henry. *Address to the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the American Colonization Society.* Washington, D.C: C. Alexander, 1838.

Conkwright, S.J. *History of the Churches of the Boone's Creek Baptist Association.* Winchester, Kentucky: 1923.

Davenport, F. Garvin. *Ante-Bellum Kentucky: A Social History.* Oxford, Ohio: Mississippi Valley Publishers, 1943, reprint, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983.

Davidson, Robert. *History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky with a Preliminary Sketch of the Churches in the Valley of Virginia.* Lexington, Kentucky: Charles R. Marshall, 1847.

Deems, Charles F., ed. *Annals of Southern Methodism for 1856.* Nashville, TN: Stevenson & Owen, 1856.

Grafton, Thomas W. *Alexander Campbell: Leader of the Great Reformation of the Nineteenth Century.* St. Louis, Missouri: Christian Publishing Company, 1897.

Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989.

Harrison, Lowell. *The Antislavery Movement in Kentucky.* Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1978.

Harrison, Lowell, and James Klotter. *A New History of Kentucky.* Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1997.

Harrison, Richard L. *From Camp Meeting to Church: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky.* Lexington, Kentucky: Christian Board of Publication, 1992.

The Kentucky Gazette (Lexington, Kentucky), 7 March 1799.

The Methodist Episcopal Church. *Minutes of the Annual Conferences for the Year 1856.* New York: Carlton & Porter, 1856.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South. *Report of the Committee on Organization Presented to the Convention of Delegates from the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South and South-Western States.* Louisville, KY: Prentice and Weissinger, 1845.

Newman, Albert Henry. *A History of Baptist Churches in the United States.* New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1898.

Pendleton, James Madison. *Letters to W.C. Buck, in Review of his Articles on Slavery.* (Louisville, Kentucky: n.p., 1849.

Pendleton, James Madison. *Distinctive Principles of Baptists.* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: American Baptist Publication Society, 1882.

Pendleton, James Madison. *Reminiscences of a Long Life.* Louisville, Kentucky: Press Baptist Book Concern, 1891.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America with an Appendix, Vol. XVI.* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1861.

Rable, George C. *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the Civil War.* Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Ranck, George W. *The Travelling Church: An Account of the Baptist Exodus from Virginia to Kentucky in 1781 Under the Leadership of Rev. Lewis Craig and Capt. William Ellis.* Copyright 1910 by Mrs. George W. Ranck, no publishing information given.

Rankin, John. "An Address to the Churches on Prejudice against People of Color". The Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, *Report of the Third Anniversary of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, Held in Granville, Licking County, Ohio, on the 30th of May 1838.* Cincinnati, Ohio: Samuel A. Alley, 1838.

Rankin, John. *The Life of John Rankin, as Written by Himself in His Eightieth Year" [ca. 1872].* Aberdeen, Ohio: Aberdeen Public Library, bound manuscript.

Richardson, Robert. *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell: Embracing View of the Origin, Progress, and Principles of the Religious Reform He Advocated, in Two Volumes.* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: J.B. Lippincott & Company, 1868.

Short, Roy Hunter. *Methodism in Kentucky.* Louisville: The Commissions on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, 1979.

Smith, Randy. *The Meeting House on David's Fork: A History of David's Fork Baptist Church, 1801-2001.* Winchester, Kentucky: Rees Printing Company, 2001.

Sparks, John. *Raccoon John Smith, Frontier Kentucky's Most Famous Preacher.* Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2005.

Spencer, J.H. *A History of Kentucky Baptists, in Two Volumes.* Cincinnati: 1885.

Stout, Harry S. *Upon the Altar of a Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War.* New York: Viking Press, 2006.

Taylor, John. *Thoughts on Missions*. Frankfort, Kentucky: 1820.

Thompson, Robert Ellis. *A History of the Presbyterian Churches in the United* States. New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1895.

Watters, Phillip Melancthon. *Peter Cartwright.* New York: Eaton and Mains, 1910.

Weeks, Louis B. *Kentucky Presbyterians.* Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press, 198