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TENOR OF OUR TIMES

Volume III, Spring 2014



INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT CHURCH OF THE GREAT CHURCH

COVER

Memorials of Cambridge, vol. 1, published 1847.

TENOR OF OUR TIMES

Volume III, Spring 2014

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RAYMOND L. MUNCY SCHOLARSHIP

An Academic Scholarship for Undergraduate Students of History

The Raymond L. Muncy Scholarship is a one-time financial award for those undergraduate students at Harding University majoring in History who demonstrate exceptional scholarship, research, and Christian character. The scholarship was created to honor the late Raymond L. Muncy, Chairman of the Department of History and Social Sciences from 1965-1993. His teaching, mentoring, and scholarship modeled the best in Christian education. Applied toward tuition, the award is granted over the span of a single academic year. The award is presented annually at the Department of History and Social Sciences Banquet.

Megan Sherk's "A Challenge of Faith: Why the Black Death Changed Europe's View on the Church" and Esther Samuelson's "The Ranks of Israel: Warfare During the Reign of Saul" have been awarded the 2013 Raymond L. Muncy Scholarship.

TREASURES NEW AND OLD: OXFORD, JOHN WYCLIF, AND THE REFORMATION

By Esther Samuelson

In an 1832 letter to his nephew, a new student at Oxford, retired Oxford professor Edward Berens reminded him of all the advantages of attending university, including the presence of other scholars to guide him, the abundance of public lectures, and the many books available to him. Oxford, Berens noted, was an opportunity not to be wasted.¹ This was just as true in the 1300s as it was in the 1800s. The University of Oxford was not just a school, but an academic community, and a generator of new ideas. If Oxford was a garden, scholars and scholarship were its fruit. Oxford played a key role in medieval scholarship and the dawn of the Renaissance. In particular, Oxford was the academic home of John Wyclif, the so-called “Morning Star of the Reformation.”² Much like Martin Luther needed the printing press, Wyclif needed Oxford, and he could not have contributed his scholarship and ideas about reform to academia without the academic resources and community of Oxford.

Oxford existed in some form or another for a long time before definitive records can reveal. In 1490, John Rous ascribed its founding to Alfred the Great, “at his own expense,” and several other scholars agree. Another, citing Juvenal, credited an ancient British monarch, Arviragus, with its founding, around 70 A. D. Another history dated it even further back, reporting that when the legendary Brutus of Troy invaded the island of Great Britain, “certain Philosophers...chose a suitable place of habitation,” namely Oxford.³ However it began, the town of Oxford was home to an important and respected set of academics by the 1100s. In 1190, one source reported that Oxford was “abounding in men skilled in mystic eloquence...bringing forth from their treasures things new and old.”⁴ In 1214, Pope Innocent III

¹ Edward Berens, “Letter V: Improvement of Time,” in *Advice to a Young Man Upon First Going to Oxford* (London: Pearl Necklace Books, 2013, Kindle edition).

² Like many medieval figures, John Wyclif’s name has multiple variations. This paper will use “Wyclif,” the spelling used in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. In direct quotes, the spelling used in individual sources has been preserved.

³ University of Oxford, “Founding Fathers,” in *The Oxford Book of Oxford* (New York: Oxford University Press), 3-5.

⁴ “The First Reporter,” in *The Oxford Book of Oxford*, 5.

issued a charter of liberties to the university to resolve a conflict between the local community and the scholars, and in 1227 Henry III formally granted Oxford privileges as a university.⁵ By the time of Innocent's charter, however, Oxford must have already be functioning as a thriving academic center, since there existed a scholarly community to be in conflict with the local town. Henry did not grant Oxford privileges so much as he legitimized the ones it was already exercising. When Oxford began is less important, however, than what Oxford became, and what it allowed scholars such as Wyclif and others to do.

Like Oxford's, Wyclif's origin and early life are murky and only vaguely known. There are few sources before his importance was already established. There was a family belonging to the minor gentry of the name Wyclif, but there was no definitive link with John Wyclif himself except the surname and the logic that since John Wyclif attended a university and lived the life of a scholar, he likely came from a family with a comfortable amount of money. Similarly, there was a William de Wycklyffe, another fellow at Balliol, one of the colleges of Oxford, but still no indication of whether John Wyclif was related to William de Wycklyffe beyond the similar surnames.⁶ The first certain record of Wyclif's career is his position as a fellow at Merton, another college of Oxford, between 1355 and 1357.⁷ Sadly, before that time biographical details or details of his career are educated guesses at best and tentative speculation at worst. From the known requirements to hold a fellowship at the time, he had studied at Oxford between four and six years prior to that, so it is safe to assume that Wyclif came to Oxford between 1349 and 1351.⁸ He must have completed a means test to demonstrate his mastery of his education, which was a requirement to hold a fellowship.⁹ All of these, however, are educated guesses based on other records and not from specific sources on Wyclif himself.

⁵ Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: An Institutional and Intellectual History* (Huntington, New York: R. E. Krieger Publishing Co., 1975), 78; 82.

⁶ John Adam Robson, *Wyclif and the Oxford Schools: The Relation of the "Summa de ente" to Scholastic Debates at Oxford in the Later Fourteenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 10; 14. Since Wyclif's own name has a multitude of spelling variations, the difference in spelling is not necessarily significant.

⁷ Robson, 10.

⁸ Robson, 14.

⁹ V. H. H. Green, *Religion at Oxford and Cambridge* (London, SCM Press, 1964), 54.

Even after that first relatively definitive record of Wyclif's life, details are sparse. He was a Master of Balliol in 1360, lived in the town of Fillingham for about two years, returned to Oxford in 1363, and received the Wardenship of Canterbury College.¹⁰ The college was restructured shortly afterwards, and in 1368 Wyclif took a position in the rectory of Ludgershall in Buckinghamshire. He remained there until April 1374, when he received the rectory of Lutterworth, Leicestershire, which was his final home.¹¹ He held that position through the peak of his career, after his dismissal from Oxford, up until his death in 1384. Throughout his life and no matter where he lived, he continued to be a prolific, opinionated, and widely-read scholar.

There are more certain sources on Wyclif's later career. In 1372, John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, took him into service. Lancaster was the son of Edward III, and younger brother of the Black Prince. When Edward suffered a stroke in 1376, Lancaster unofficially assumed the regency for his young nephew, heir to the throne.¹² Wyclif wrote arguments supporting the Duke of Lancaster's policies, which began to limit Church power within England. Although his role in the political power struggle between the English government and the Catholic Church was minor at best, it was an important step in his career and his fame. Additionally, Wyclif's service to Lancaster meant the Duke kept him relatively protected from potential blowback from those within England.¹³ Those outside of England, meanwhile, were too preoccupied with the Great Schism, which lasted from 1378 to 1417, to be concerned about an English scholar with relatively little political power.¹⁴

Many have rightly celebrated the printing press for how it revolutionized the spread of information and allowed Martin Luther to spark the Protestant Reformation. Wyclif did not have the printing press. Wyclif had Oxford, and the scholarly resources there allowed for the germination and spread of his ideas in much the same way that the printing press had spread Luther's. Wyclif's Oxford was an excellent place for new ideas and discussion, and it was growing. There were six colleges of Oxford University

¹⁰ Robson, 13-15.

¹¹ *DNB*, s. v. "Wyclif, John."

¹² Simon Jenkins, *A Short History of England: The Glorious Story of a Rowdy Nation* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 98, 100.

¹³ Green, 59.

¹⁴ Roland H. Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 14; Richard C. Trexler, "Rome on the Eve of the Great Schism," *Speculum* 42 no. 3 (July 1967): 489.

in the 1370s, including Balliol, Merton, and others. This number grew in 1379, closer to the end of Wyclif's career, with the establishment of the seventh college, St. Mary's.¹⁵ Wyclif's Oxford was academically wealthy, and that was increasing with every year.

Although pre-Reformation Oxford was a Catholic university in the same way that every pre-Reformation institution was Catholic, the university governed itself more or less autonomously. In a perhaps unconscious echo of papal election, the masters of the university chose their chancellor from among themselves.¹⁶ When the university clashed with the town, not infrequently, appeals went to the king of England and not the pope. To the frustration of the townspeople, the king usually decided in favor of the university.¹⁷ Indeed, the whole of the fourteenth century saw successive expansions in the rights of the university and the "almost...irresistible" authority of the chancellor.¹⁸ The chancellor eventually had authority over any trial involving a clerk, student, or master of the university, which was even more authority than ecclesiastical courts at the time.¹⁹ Oxford's authority and independence were crucial to its prestige and power as a center of learning. Thanks to English orneriness and mistrust of the papacy, scholars at Oxford did not have to concern themselves very much with whether or not they lined up with Catholic orthodoxy. In contrast, the University of Paris, closer to Rome both geographically and politically, was more regulated by the papacy.²⁰

Medieval universities began to move away from the *trivium*—grammar, rhetoric, and logic—and *quadrivium*—geometry, astronomy, arithmetic, and music—in favor of philosophy and the dialectic. Theology retained its preeminence in value, though not in numbers, as one had to have special papal dispensation to teach it, theoretically ensuring uniform, quality theology.²¹ Convinced that the secret wisdom of the past had been lost, scholars began a renewed, enthusiastic study of classical texts in Greek and

¹⁵ Green, 54.

¹⁶ Leff, 81-82.

¹⁷ Leff, 85.

¹⁸ Sir Charles Mallet, "A Short History of the University of Oxford," in *Handbook to the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 4.

¹⁹ Leff, 83-93.

²⁰ Leff, 119.

²¹ Leff, 118-120. In practice, of course, it obviously did not achieve this.

Latin, even as they began to use the vernacular for their own scholarship instead of Latin.²²

Oxford had a host of great scholars in succession, and a close relationship with the University of Paris meant scholars could transmit ideas to and from the Continent, resulting in academic flourishing and diversity even before Wyclif.²³ None of the other scholars had the printing press either. Prior to the printing press, scholarship had to be done by independently wealthy nobles, or an individual with their patronage, at a monastery, or, as in the case of Wyclif and countless others, at a university, since a sizeable library was often prohibitively expensive. Scholarship at a university provided for more academic diversity than an individual scholar or single patron. Moreover, Oxford was the second location in England to establish a printing press, in 1478.²⁴ Before the printing press, universities like Oxford were crucial to creating meaningful scholarship, and they quickly adopted the innovation once it became available.

Wyclif was not the only scholar at Oxford to disagree with certain teachings of the Church, especially what later scholars called Nominalism. William of Ockham, himself a previous professor of Oxford, wrote that God was the only necessary entity, while everything else, from the physical world to human minds to souls, was “contingent and unnecessary;” that is, nothing existed in itself apart from God.²⁵ Wyclif subscribed to Aristotelian logic, was strongly realist in his ideology, and believed the existence of all things to be eternal.²⁶ Thomas Bradwardine expressed a sentiment similar to John Calvin’s teaching of total depravity, which leaned toward predestination, but Richard FitzRalph and Walter Burley supported Augustinian notions of free will. Thomas Buckingham tested several positions before likewise defending Augustinianism.²⁷ Wyclif was not an isolated case of scholarly reform at Oxford, but was part of an academic community which fostered new ideas

²² William Harrison Woodward, *Studies in Education During the Age of the Renaissance* (New York: Russel & Russel, Inc., 1965), 7.

²³ Leff, 271.

²⁴ Greg Prickman, *The Atlas of Early Printing*, interactive map, atlas.lib.uiowa.edu (accessed November 21, 2013).

²⁵ Cas Oorthuys, *Term in Oxford* (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), 11; *DNB*, s. v. “Ockham, William.”

²⁶ Robert Vaughan, “Facts and Observations Concerning the Life of Wycliffe,” in *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe* (London: Society of Blackburn and Pardon, 1845), v; Robson, 141; Robson, 219.

²⁷ Green, 57.

and the questioning of old ideas. Universities “made learning professional.”²⁸ The academic community and resources of Oxford was essential both to the genesis and dissemination of Wyclif’s ideas.

Other scholars at Oxford included Robert Grosseteste, the university’s first chancellor.²⁹ He translated and wrote commentaries on several of Aristotle’s works, such as *Nicomachean Ethics* in the mid-thirteenth century. In addition to logic, he wrote on natural science, mathematics, and physics. Roger Bacon was also associated with Oxford around that time, although he never achieved a doctorate or master’s there. Still, he wrote extensively on varied subjects, viewing all human academic pursuits as a way to pursue knowledge of God. His scientific bent was not shared by all his colleagues, but his academic contributions were important nonetheless.³⁰ Another famous Oxford scholar was Duns Scotus, who lived and wrote a little later than Grosseteste and Bacon. Like Ockham, Duns Scotus was a founding influence in the later philosophical school of Nominalism.³¹ All of these scholars, famous in their own day and in the modern age, were part of the academically fertile ground of Oxford, without which Wyclif could not have been the reformer he was.

Because teaching at Oxford strongly emphasized exercises in formal logic, starting with a premise and creating syllogisms, the learning environment allowed for ample debate and free flow of ideas.³² Far from being a restricted, dogmatic environment, university life allowed scholars the resources and the academic community necessary to generate and develop original ideas.³³ This did not guarantee safety or quality, of course. Not every scholar at Oxford was a Wyclif, not every treatise was a *Summa de Ente*. Sometimes ideas which were too new or too original attracted institutional ire, exemplified in Wyclif’s eventual dismissal from Oxford and the Catholic Church’s posthumous declaration Wyclif was a heretic. Institutional learning was a two-edged sword; just as an institution could create a garden for the cultivation of learning, it could weed out the ideas that threatened its orthodoxy. Yet an institution which could rule learning could also create an academic community that a lone scholar could not match. The Catholic

²⁸ Leff, 117.

²⁹ “The Grete Clerk,” in *Oxford Book of Oxford*, 8.

³⁰ Green, 31-34.

³¹ Green, 38-39; *DNB*, s. v. “Ockham, William.”

³² Green, 56.

³³ Green, 65.

Church produced scholars, and many reformers, including Wyclif and other lay reformers, came from within the Church.

Religion in the British Isles prior to the Reformation and the establishment of the Anglican Church unsurprisingly shared many characteristics with religion on the Continent. There were accusations of corrupt and uneducated priests, and a population which only dimly understood their religious rituals; however, the population was generally consistent in their attendance, and believed in the rituals even if they did not understand them.³⁴ England and the Continent were also similar in that reform usually began with individuals who had some sort of education, whether primarily theological or secular. Objection to a doctrine or ritual requires an understanding of that doctrine or ritual, meaning that the average person was unlikely to oppose church teaching. The majority of the population was “unreflective” about their faith.³⁵ This was not due to any inherent lack of curiosity or skepticism, but because the average person did not have access to an education which inclined them to question and philosophize about reality and doctrine.

Wyclif, on the other hand, had the advantage of an unmatched education. With a doctorate in theology, the resources of a university at his disposal, and the patronage of a prince, he was in prime position to start questioning and arguing against official Catholic doctrine, and question he did. He harshly criticized the many monastic orders on their theology and their very existence, condemned the doctrine of transubstantiation, viciously disparaged the practice of indulgences, and objected to papal authority. He argued all of this primarily from Scripture, with only the occasional appeal to practicality.³⁶

Wyclif did not just criticize the Church for its wealth and corruption. He also wrote extensively on what he considered to be theological traps and vices of the Church. He criticized friars and orders of clergy for trying to establish religions more perfect than the one established by Christ himself. It was apostasy, he maintained.³⁷ Friars attempted to establish a new, more

³⁴ Steve Bruce, “The Pervasive World-View: Religion in Pre-Modern Britain,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 48 no. 4 (December 1997), 674-675.

³⁵ Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost—Further Explored* (London: Routledge, 2000), 71.

³⁶ Vaughan, vii.

³⁷ Wyclif, “Against the Orders of Friars,” in *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe: With Selections and Translations From His Manuscripts and Latin Works* (London: Society of Blackburn and Pardon, 1845), 219-220.

perfect order of religion, but Wyclif rejected the notion that this was at all possible. The establishment of new orders was based on an underlying assumption that men could create a new, more perfect and more holy doctrine than the one that was already being taught. Since the existing Church had been established by Christ himself, for men to create a more holy order necessarily implied that they could create something more holy than God had created. To do so was to place man above God, which was plainly heretical.

Beyond Wyclif's objection to the mere establishment of holy orders, he objected to their practices and theologies. He called begging a "foul error," arguing that God had ordained work first as man's holy office, then as penance for the first sin.³⁸ Irrevocable oaths, like those taken by priests and friars, also placed man's authority above God's, which was blasphemy. If a person had converted to a false religion, no human authority could or should prevent him from leaving. To stay in such a religion was to accept damnation, which was yet another wrongdoing on the part of an already corrupt organization. The permanently binding oaths trapping an individual in a false religion were another sin on top of the lies of the order.³⁹

Wyclif's teaching met with enthusiastic acceptance among many of the people of England, especially among the poorer, less educated Englishmen.⁴⁰ Opponents disparagingly called Wyclif's followers "Lollards," possibly corrupted from Dutch for "mutterer."⁴¹ Insulting though it was, they embraced the name without any apparent resistance. His followers grew abundant at Oxford and elsewhere. One historian irritably wrote that at Oxford, one could not "meet five people talking together but three of them [were] Lollards."⁴²

In the late 1370s, Pope Gregory XI finally composed a bull against Wyclif, "Professor of the Sacred Scriptures (would that he were not also Master of Errors)," declaring that he was preaching errors and lies, and leading persons astray. Wyclif was "vomiting up" heretical ideas in a "detestable madness," and Gregory ordered the University of Oxford to arrest

³⁸ Wyclif, "Against the Orders of Friars," 224.

³⁹ Wyclif, "Against the Orders of Friars," 222.

⁴⁰ Robson, 138.

⁴¹ Jenkins, 96.

⁴² Charles W. Stubbs, *The Story of Cambridge* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.,

Wyclif and send him to the Archbishop of Canterbury or London.⁴³ Attached was a list of Wyclif's offending teachings, with instructions that they be "bundled and burned."⁴⁴ Wyclif was still under the not-insignificant protection of the Duke of Lancaster, who was disinclined to listen to the papacy even when it was holding its own, and Gregory's death in 1378 precipitated the Great Schism, as well as preventing Gregory from taking further action against Wyclif.⁴⁵ Wyclif remained in England, unarrested, though the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 followed shortly thereafter, and Wyclif retired from Oxford.

Wyclif's response did not call Gregory detestable in so many words or accuse him of vomiting madness, but he was no less sharp. He defended his writing, responding that Christ and the apostles on earth had refused worldly honor, and the men of the cloth ought to leave worldly honor to worldly princes. He claimed he would "with good will go to the pope," but said that he had already been called by God where he was and could not refuse, echoing Acts 4:19.⁴⁶

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was the final controversy in Wyclif's living career. It used Wyclif's work as one of the keystones of their rebellion.⁴⁷ Although it was sometimes called Wat Tyler's Rebellion the first instigator was not Tyler, but the equally radical former priest John Ball, who believed that the rights of poor English serfs had to be taken by force because their lords and the clergy would never willingly give them. "When Adam delved and Eve span," Ball's pithy and pious slogan went, "Who then was the gentleman?"⁴⁸ Ball's inflammatory rhetoric and the rebels' ideologies coincided somewhat with Wyclif's writing, Ball being a "scholar of Wickliff."⁴⁹ Wyclif's writing did not endorse the use of force and was not the cause of the rebellion, however, since Ball had been a radical "long before"

⁴³ Gregory XI, "The Condemnation of Wycliffe," ed. Paul Halsall, in *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval* (accessed November 19, 2013).

⁴⁴ Robson, 219.

⁴⁵ Green, 61; Zophy, 35.

⁴⁶ John Wyclif, "Reply of John Wycliffe to his Summons by the Pope," ed. Paul Halsall, *Internet History Sourcebook: Medieval* (accessed November 19, 2013).

⁴⁷ Jonathan W. Zophy, *A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe: Dances over Fire and Water* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), 33.

⁴⁸ John Adam Robertson, *John Wycliffe: Morning Star of the Reformation* (Basingstok: Marshall, 1984), 40; Jenkins, 100.

⁴⁹ Lister M. Matheson, "The Peasants' Revolt through Five Centuries of Rumor and Reporting: Richard Fox, John Stow, and Their Successors," *Studies in Philology* 95 no. 2 (Spring 1998), 137.

Wyclif had the fame to have had any influence on him.⁵⁰ Although many contemporaries blamed Wyclif, he was a reformer, not a revolutionary; he was sympathetic, but not a supporter.⁵¹ He “deplored” violence, and believed that one’s Christian duty to society persisted regardless of social injustice.⁵² Additionally, Wyclif had been in service to John of Gaunt for nearly ten years by 1381, and did not seem to have any reason to oppose or threaten Lancaster’s regency or the reign of Lancaster’s nephew, Richard II. Lancaster was Wyclif’s faithful protector, and Wyclif did not turn on him at any time.⁵³

The Peasants’ Revolt peaked in June of 1381, when the rebels managed to effectively take over the city of London for two days. They sacked the Duke of Lancaster’s residence, the Savoy Palace. Worse, the rebels murdered Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, among others. Though still young, Richard II reacted with poise and confidence, meeting the rebels and granting their demands, although the concessions were soon retracted and the leaders, such as John Ball, executed (Wat Tyler had died over the course of the rebellion in London).⁵⁴ Despite Wyclif’s lack of personal involvement, his ideological association and sympathy with the rebels was enough for many to regard him with suspicion, and he lost the protection he had enjoyed from the Duke of Lancaster. The new Archbishop of Canterbury, William Courtenay, convened a synod to determine Wyclif’s culpability. An earthquake hit when the synod convened, which Courtenay and others at the synod took as confirmation of their suspicions of Wyclif. Disgraced and dismissed from the university, Wyclif left Oxford to live out the remainder of his life in Lutterworth.⁵⁵

The title “Morning Star of the Reformation,” though perhaps overly florid, gives an indication of the importance of Wyclif. Despite Gregory’s reprimand, the papacy was unable to address Wyclif’s writings as a threat to itself until after Wyclif had died, and left it to Richard II and John of Gaunt to deal with the turmoil following Wyclif’s writings. The inability of the papacy to calm the waters stirred by reformers was a key element of the Protestant

⁵⁰ Robertson, 41.

⁵¹ M. E. Aston, “Lollardy and Sedition 1381-1431,” *Past & Present* 17 (April 1960), 3.

⁵² Robertson, 41, 45.

⁵³ Stubbs, 137.

⁵⁴ Jenkins, 101-102; Matheson, 128.

⁵⁵ Robertson, 54.

Treasures New and Old

Reformation, and it began with Wyclif, who in turn began with Oxford. If Wyclif was the morning star, then Oxford was the sky in which he rose.

**THIS BOY'S DREADFUL TRAGEDY:
EMMETT TILL AS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE CIVIL RIGHTS
MOVEMENT**

By Jackson House

*"Twas down in Mississippi not so long ago
When a young boy from Chicago town stepped through a Southern
door
This boy's dreadful tragedy I can still remember well
The color of his skin was black and his name was Emmett Till"
The Death of Emmett Till - Bob Dylan*

When Emmett Till's body was pulled from the Tallahatchie River, it was beyond recognition. The Sheriff of Tallahatchie County, H.C. Strider testified that "the skin had slipped...it had slipped on the entire body. The fingernails were gone from the left hand...and [on] the entire body, the skin was slipping or it had completely gone off it." He went on to say, "the tongue was extending...about two and a half or three inches. And the left eyeball was almost out, enough to almost fall out... [The odor of the body] was so bad that we couldn't examine the body until the undertaker got there."¹ This description captures the gruesome nature of Emmett Till's murder which led to great publicity of both his funeral and the trial of the killers. The tragic story of Till's murder shocked and haunted the nation. The acquittal of the murderers lit a fire of indignation under the black community, and because of his age and innocence, was effectively used a rallying point for the struggle of Civil Rights.

Emmett Till's story began in Chicago, where he was born to children of the so-called "Great Migration" out of the South. When he was fourteen-years-old, Emmett, or 'Bo' as he was called by his family, was allowed to travel south during his summer vacation to visit his cousins in Money, Mississippi. He arrived at 7:25pm on August 21, 1955 in Winona, Mississippi, where he was picked up at the depot by his cousin by Maurice

¹ Sheriff H.C. Strider Testimony. Emmett Till Trial Transcript, Sept. 1955, p. 285-286.

This Boy's Dreadful Tragedy

Wright, the eldest son of Mose Wright. They travelled the 30 miles to the Wright residence, which was a sharecropper's house outside of Money.²

Emmett Till lived his last seven days in the Mississippi delta as the guest of a sharecropper on a plantation where the fields were white with cotton when he arrived. His first few days were spent in the fields, where he and his cousins worked hard during the day and played hard at night. However, it was the events of Wednesday August 24th that changed Till's life. On that day, he and his cousins drove into town to Bryant's Grocery and Meat Market to buy candy. What exactly transpired in the store that evening has been a subject of controversy, and the conflicting accounts persisted well past the trial of the murderers.

On the front porch of Bryant's Grocery and Meat Market there was a group of local kids playing checkers when Till and his group arrived. Till was accompanied a group of six cousins and friends, ages 12 to 19.³ While some kids were on the porch, others were coming in and out of the store purchasing bubblegum or candy. Some accounts assert that Till was acting on a dare when he went into the store. William Bradford Huie wrote that, "He (Till) showed the boys a picture of a white girl in his wallet; and to their jeers of disbelief, he boasted of his success with her. 'You talkin' mighty big, Bo,' one youth said. 'There's a pretty little white woman in the store...let's see you go in and get a date with her?'"⁴ Wheeler Parker, Till's cousin, agreed in a 1955 interview that "One of the other boys told Emmett there was a pretty lady in the store and that he should go in and see her."⁵

Another cousin, Curtis Jones, said in a 1985 interview published in the *Clarion Ledger* that "the boys had dared him. He was trying to show them that he wasn't afraid. He wasn't the type that scared easily."⁶ Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till-Mobley also said that he had a picture of a white woman

² Mamie Till-Mobley and Christopher Benson. *Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America*. (New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2003), 106.

³ Devery S. Anderson "A Wallet, A White Woman, and A Whistle: Fact and Fiction in Emmett Till's Encounter in Money, Mississippi" *Southern Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (Summer 2008), 10.

⁴ Huie, William Bradford. "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi." *Look Magazine*. (January 24, 1956: 46-50), 46.

⁵ *Chicago Tribune*. Chicago, Illinois. (August 30, 1955)

⁶ *Clarion Ledger*. Jackson, Mississippi. (August 25, 1985)

in his wallet, but that it was a picture of the actress Hedy Lamarr, and it had come with the wallet.⁷

Regardless of the conflicting accounts about what prompted Emmett Till to enter the store on that day, he did, and it was the encounter in the store and the events that followed that ultimately sealed his place in history. However, the reports about what happened while Till was in the store also conflicted, the woman who was on the receiving end of his advances, Carolyn Bryant testified during the trial, and many of those who were present that evening also published their account of the events in the years that followed.

Wheeler Parker said in a September 1, 1955 interview that, "I never went into the store. But when I heard there was trouble, I sent one of the other boys in to get Emmett."⁸ Devery Anderson relayed Carolyn Bryant's version of Till's actions toward her according to her testimony in court.

She claims that when she held out her hand for Till to pay for his purchase, he grabbed it firmly and asked, "How about a date, baby? She jerked her hand free, turned to go to the back of the store, and Till caught her by the cash register, placing his hands on her waist. "What's the matter, baby? Can't you take it? You needn't be afraid of me." Till bragged that he had been "with white women before." Then, said Bryant "this other nigger came in the store and got him by the arm...then he told him to come on and let's go."⁹

The simplest version of the events was that Till went into the store alone to buy some bubble gum. At some point, he did something that scared or angered Carolyn Bryant enough that she went out to get a gun from under the seat of her car.¹⁰ Most sources agree that at this point Emmett Till either said "goodbye" or gave the infamous 'wolf whistle.' His mother stated that she taught him to whistle to alleviate a stutter that he had as a child. She contended that he only whistled because he was trying to say "bubblegum" to

⁷ Till-Mobley and Benson, 102.

⁸ *Chicago American*. Chicago, Illinois (1 September 1, 1955)

⁹ Anderson, 16.

¹⁰ Simeon Wright. *Simeon's Story: An Eyewitness Account of the Kidnapping of Emmett Till*. (Chicago, Illinois: Lawrence Hill Books: 2002), 51.

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one of his friends.¹¹ Regardless of the extent of the encounter between Bryant and Till, the group then left the store immediately and returned to Mose Wright's house outside of Money and things returned to normal for a few days.

The ultimate consequence of the events was that Emmett Till was kidnapped, beaten, shot, and thrown into the Tallahatchie river, where his body was held underwater for three days by a 90 pound gin fan that was bound to his throat by barbed wire.¹² Philip Kolin wrote that, "historically, we may never know exactly what Emmett Louis Till said or did inside Bryant's grocery store in Money, Mississippi on Wednesday, 24 August 1955, but we can chart the tremendous impact his death has had on the collective memory of civil rights activism."¹³ The impact was seen immediately in the wide media coverage the case received, not least of which his murderers' nationally published confession in 1956.

Two Sides to Every Story

Besides the murder itself, the most important piece of the Emmett Till story was that the two half-brothers, J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, were acquitted of their crimes. In their nationally published confession, they justified their actions by claiming that Till made repeated advances towards Bryant's wife Carolyn. However, Till's fatal mistake was not in the act itself; it was the fact that he was black and she was white, and the killers frankly acknowledged this.

This confession, published only five months after the murder took place, was in *Look* magazine and was entitled "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi." A reporter named William Bradford Huie went to Milam and Bryant's defense attorneys and requested to interview the defendants. He reasoned that since they could not be tried again for murder and a grand jury had declined to indict them for kidnapping that they would be willing to confess what actually transpired.

The men's story, which was primarily told by Milam, laid the blame at the feet of Emmett Till, claiming that he had squeezed the hand of Carolyn Bryant and proceeded to grab her by the waist and say to her, "You needn't be afraid o' me, baby. I been with white girls before." Huie, in his

¹¹ Mobley-Till and Benson, 122.

¹² Stephen J. Whitfield, *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 22.

¹³ Philip C. Kolin "The Legacy of Emmett Till." *Southern Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (Summer 2008), 6.

commentary of the men's recollections, said, "Roy Bryant knew in his environment, in the opinion of most white people around him to have done nothing would have marked him for a coward and a fool."¹⁴ Milam stated further that the two men intended only to threaten and whip Till, but eventually his obstinacy put their anger over the edge. Milam said that Till was not afraid of them and even said "I'm as good as you are. I've 'had' white women." Apparently this was the breaking point, Milam confessed to Huie that, "when a nigger gets close to mentioning sex with a white woman, he's tired o' livin'. I'm likely to kill him."¹⁵

Almost immediately after Huie's infamous article was released, it was contested by both blacks and whites. Southern newspapers complained that it was slanderous to say that the killing was approved by the State of Mississippi, while Northern newspapers challenged some details of his article. Most significantly, the *Chicago Defender* published the statements of Mamie Bradley Till, Emmett's mother, who said that Emmett "would never brag about women he had...They [Bryant and Milam] just wanted to kill him because he was a Negro, and Negroes to them are just like dogs to be shot down."¹⁶

Simeon Wright released a book in 2010 entitled *Simeon's Story: An Eyewitness Account of the Kidnapping of Emmett Till* in which he claimed

¹⁴ Bertram Wyatt-Brown wrote that "insistence upon valor was especially evident in moments of crisis, when outside forces threatened Southern integrity" (Bertram Wyatt-Brown, 43.) The outside force threatening Southern integrity at this time was the force of national press, and the thing being threatened was not so much integrity, but a way of life. Reader's Digest published a retrospective on October 3, 1955, that stated of Sumner, the town where the murderers were tried and acquitted, "never became part of the New South - never wanted to. Its roots remained deep in the delta. The people liked it that way...Segregation wasn't an issue; it was a way of life." (Reader's Digest October 3, 1955) Wyatt-Brown went on to say that "Southern whites were just as ready to take matters into their own hands when revenge for familial loss was required in their relations with each other. A crime of passion in response to a family wrong was often greeted with acquittal. If the law intervened at all, the penalty was often slight." (Wyatt-Brown. 43.) The position of women in Southern society was especially significant to this situation. The man, who was the head of the household, had the duty to defend his family's honor, which began with his wife. Wilbur J. Cash wrote in his work *Mind of the South*, that the "concept of honor, of something inviolable and precious in the ego, to be protected against stain at every cost and imposing definite standards of conduct" (75). Wyatt-Brown continues, "nothing could arouse such fury in traditional societies as an insult hurled against a woman of a man's household...fierce retaliation was therefore mandatory when a daughter, wife, or mother had been dishonored" (53).

¹⁵ Huie, William Bradford. "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi." *Look Magazine*.

(January 24, 1956: 46-50), 46., 46-50.

¹⁶ "Son No Braggart, Says Mrs. Bradley," *Chicago Defender*, 21 January 1956, 1.

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that Emmett did nothing wrong while he was in the store. It is important to note the contrast in Wright's account and the account published by Huie in 1956. In Huie's account the killers conveyed the events in a way that made Emmett Till look like a flagrant violator of Southern customs. On the other hand, Wright recounted the events in a way that emphasized Emmett Till's innocence and ignorance of Southern customs. He asserts that Till did nothing while he was in the store, and only after they had exited the store did he whistle at Mrs. Bryant. But that he only did this to get a rise out of the other teenagers. Only as they were all running away "did it slowly dawn on him that he had done something wrong."¹⁷

Besides the murder itself, the most important piece of the Emmett Till story was that the two half-brothers, J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, were acquitted of murder, a crime that they freely confessed when protected from double jeopardy. Their justification for their actions was that Till made repeated advances towards Bryant's wife Carolyn. At the very least Emmett did whistle at her, and at the very most he grabbed her forcibly by the waist. However, Till's fatal mistake was not in the act itself; it was the fact that he was black and she was white, and the killers frankly acknowledged this.

Therefore, the Emmett Till case has a great deal of importance because of its centrality to the American story of Civil Rights. It was the first time since the Civil War that national attention was so intensely focused on the hypocrisy of Southern racism. The murder came on the heels of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and would be swiftly followed by the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Little Rock Central High School Crisis.

The story of Emmett Till is not a question of innocence or guilt, nor is it a question of right or wrong. Those things have been clearly established in the immense body of scholarship on the case. It is clear that Emmett Till was innocent and his killers were guilty, even if the State of Mississippi's justice system did not confirm this. People have questioned how two men who had children and families of their own, somehow felt justified in murdering a boy based on allegations that he had made inappropriate remarks to a white woman. Such a negative display of human behavior perpetrated by these men can only be examined in its context, specifically that of the Southern United States in the 1950s, and more specifically the racial climate of Mississippi. Therefore, before the

¹⁷ Wright, 51.

Till case can be discussed further, the racial and social climate that brought about the murder of Emmett Till must be examined more closely.

The reasons that Emmett Till was murdered were not new in 1955; in fact, they had long been part of the Southern Mind.¹⁸ Miscegenation was seen as the greatest evil by many Southerners and according to Milam's, Bryant's, and a large part of the South's deeply held values, the murder was justified. That is, these men were fulfilling what they saw as a duty to society, something they believed was both ethically and morally imperative in order for society to continue to function as they thought that it should.¹⁹ The corrupted logical justification for the murder aside, the public arena in which the trial and acquittal took place made people question the ease by which such a murder could be 'justified' in the Southern mind. Whether this was an isolated event in a backwater, part of Mississippi or not, soon the whole South was thrown into this struggle.

Lynching Theory and the Case of Emmett Till

Lynching was used more often on those who were accused of sexual crimes than any other crime. A famous example of this was the lynching of Fred Alexander in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1901 when he was accused of the rape and murder of a young white woman. Christopher Lovett argues, "that this gruesome lynching mobilized the black community and led African Americans to use all available means to end the vigilante justice that intimidated the state's black citizenry."²⁰ The Emmett Till murder was similar in many ways to this lynching. Till was accused of sexually motivated crimes, and the black community responded to the unjust 'justice' dealt by the white community.

Despite these similarities, there have always been two sides in the debate on whether Emmett Till's murder was technically a lynching: from the very beginning the NAACP asserted that it was a lynching, while the Governor of Mississippi contended that it was not. The details of the case were characteristic of many lynchings, and the definition of lynching enumerated in 1940 stated that "there must be legal evidence that a person

¹⁸ Wilbur J. Cash. *The Mind of the South* (1941; repr., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1946) Cash argues that the Old South did not die with the death of the Confederacy, some aspects of it carried on long after. It is these aspects that are so important to the story of 20th century of race relations.

¹⁹ Huie, 46-50.

²⁰ Christopher C. Lovett "A Public Burning: Race, Sex, and Lynching of Fred Alexander" *Kansas History* 33, no. 2: 94-115. World History Collection, EBSCOhost (accessed August 29, 2013).

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had been killed, and that he met his death illegally at the hands of a group acting under the pretext of service to justice, race, or tradition.”²¹ The Till case exhibited many of these classical characteristics of lynching, but the discussion over the technicalities of the case can easily distract historians from the more difficult questions that must be addressed. Even if the murder was not technically a lynching, talking about it as such makes discussion and comparison to other lynchings much easier. Furthermore, the black community’s insistence that it was a lynching was a central element to their use of the case as a rallying point for Civil Rights action.

In one of the most significant works on lynching, *Festival of Violence*, Tolnay and Beck assert that the two primary ways to study lynchings have been “either the case study method or the comparative method.”²² Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages: the case study method allows for in-depth analysis of a single event, but often the broad scope of the institution as a whole is overlooked.²³

The institution of lynching could nearly be pursued into the infinite regress of history, but most historians denote the ‘Lynching Era’ as 1880-1930, which is roughly the end of Reconstruction to the beginning of the Great Depression. The Till case falls fifteen years after the end of the ‘Lynching Era’ but because it bears many of the characteristics of a classic lynching it is often studied as such. Historians have proposed several models to explain lynching, which include but are not limited to: Social Threat, Popular Justice, and Competition. Aspects of the Till case are apparent in all three categories, but it does not fall neatly into one.

The underlying assumption of Social Threat theory is that the “majority group enjoys greater access to power and resources and takes whatever steps necessary to perpetuate its advantage over the minority.” Furthermore, “When the perceived threat from the minority group increases, the intensity of the majority group’s repression of the minority will also

²¹ Fitzhugh W. Brundage. *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 17. Brundage cites the quote from: “Definition of Lynching,” Jan. 17, 1931-Nov. 6, 1941, file 9, reel 2, ASWPL Papers, AUL; and Linda O. McMurray, *Recoding of Black Experience: A Biography of Monroe Nathan Work* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985) 124-127.

²² Stewart E. Tolnay and E.M. Beck. *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), ix.

²³ *Festival of Violence and Lynching in the New South* examine the trends of lynching through a specific period of time, which the authors do for 1882-1930 and 1880-1930 respectively. The authors of these works use the comparative method very effectively.

increase.”²⁴ Hubert Blalock asserted that the three categories upon which minority groups can infringe are “economic, political, and status.”²⁵ Emmett Till, as a fourteen-year-old boy, was never accused of being an economic or political threat to Carolyn Bryant, or anyone else for that matter. It was only the social threat that black men posed to white men that made his alleged actions towards Carolyn Bryant wrong. An insult is only insulting if it is from a threatening party; if Bryant and Milam did not feel as least subconsciously threatened by Emmett Till, then they could have dismissed his childish actions.

The Popular Justice model is based on the commonality of nearly all the lynching reports that claimed that it was the result of an alleged crime. Tolnay and Beck argued that “the bulk of lynchings were sparked by behavior that violated uncodified caste rules of conduct, and therefore were unlikely to be adequately punished by the formal justice system.”²⁶ The reasons that were given by J.W. Milam in *Look* magazine for the murder of Emmett Till were, in fact, behaviors that ‘violated uncodified caste rules of conduct.’ Therefore, the Emmett Till murder could have easily fallen into this category of lynching if the murder itself had been perpetrated by a larger number of people. Although the murder was essentially condoned by the community, it was done *ex post facto*. Therefore, although there was the façade of justice built by the murderers in their statements in *Look* magazine, the Till case does not fit the traditional Popular Justice model.

The competition model is related closely to the social threat model. Tolnay and Beck even follow Blalock’s three criteria of areas of competition: economic, political, and status. The authors cite a Census Bureau statistic on the drastic increase in the number of white tenant farmers and slight increase in black tenant farmers to argue that, “sizable numbers of southern white farmers found themselves in the same direct economic position as blacks.”²⁷ Southerners then had to compensate for their economic kinship to blacks by asserting themselves through physical violence. Due to reconstruction policies that culminated in the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, blacks enjoyed enfranchisement and thus more political power until Southern whites were able to wrestle back control

²⁴ Stewart E. Tolnay and E.M. Beck, 57.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 57. Blalock, 1967.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

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through punitive voting laws following the end of Reconstruction in 1877. However, in areas “where the black vote could not be purchased or neutralized through fraud, whites sometimes resorted to violent intimidation.”²⁸ The importance of status, largely defined in racial terms, as an impetus for violence became more important when blacks and whites lived in similar economic circumstances. There were less tangible ways to measure the differences between blacks and whites, therefore, “without a clear economic claim to superiority, the caste division became even more important as a source of status differentiation.”²⁹ The boundary of sex was, in many ways, a last line of defense for white supremacy. The death of Emmett Till was a prime example of this; these two men were, in their minds, protecting the sanctity of Carolyn Bryant by punishing her insulter.

Popular Response from 1955

In 1955, Mississippi was not a traditional society in the traditional sense of the word, but there was some remaining sentiment. One of the *United Press* reporters covering the case wrote that “It was a simple case that an all-white-male jury wasn’t going to convict two of their neighbors for killing a black.”³⁰ This implied that because these men acted on behalf of their family, the men on the jury would have done the same thing. The white men who had been selected for this jury on this trial consisted of “ten farmers, an insurance salesman and a laborer.”³¹ The defense attorney, Joseph Wilson Kellum, famously told the jury that their forefathers would ‘turn over in their graves’ if they convicted Bryant and Milam. Although it had been nearly one-hundred years since ‘their forefathers’ had fought and died for the Confederacy, an appeal to this portion of Southern consciousness was apparently effective.

Indeed, there were white people who thought the actions of Bryant and Milam were justified. In a letter to prosecuting attorney Gerald Chatham, J.S. Connelly said that “Mrs. Bryant’s husband and his kinsmen are her natural protectors from insult and injury.”³² These men deserve honor,

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 67.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁰ Tom Brennan. “Emmett Till: More than a Murder: World watched drama unfold in rural county courtroom” *The Clarion Ledger*: Jackson Daily News August 25, 1985., 6

³¹ John R. Tisdale. “Different Assignments, Different Perspectives: How Reporters Reconstruct the Emmett Till Civil Rights Murder Trial.” *The Oral History Review* (Winter 2002; 29, 1.), page 48.

³²Historians who have dealt with lynching narratives also dealt with the foundational social perspective from which these narratives were written. Susan Jean wrote that, “Any effort

not blame for doing their duty.” He went on to say that if these men were proven guilty, the harshest punishment they could possibly deserve would be a “verdict of Justifiable Homicide.”³³ Another letter to Gerald Chatham, from an anonymous “Southerner in Chicago,” said that, “It’s good to know that the Southerners still try to protect their women. The niggers up here have nothing else but rape and crime in their minds. They’ve raped little girls from 2, 7, 17, and women to 65.”³⁴ These are but two examples of the distorted views held by white Southerners when it came to race and sex. Even H.C. Strider, the sheriff of Tallahatchie County said that, “We never have any trouble until some of our southern niggers go up North and the NAACP talks to them and they come back here.”³⁵

Jean Lutes astutely observed that the difficulty with the historicity of lynching coverage was that “lynching stories were emotionally laden and politically complex, structured by an ongoing, often explicit, struggle between detachment and intimacy, and they were always more than simply source material.”³⁶ Whether it was racist white southerners reporting the events or progressive black reporters, due to the extreme emotional power of lynching, each group had a strong message they wanted to convey. Perhaps the white newspaper wanted to vilify the black man who was lynched or the black newspaper wanted to vilify those who had done the lynching. Lutes went on to say that, “They reproduced the violence by writing about it, investing it with even more significance and power...” Lutes was writing about the white reporters who covered lynchings but black reporters did the same thing to the opposite effect. They portrayed the violence so that a broader audience could experience it and know the true ugliness of racism. Likewise, the murder of a fourteen-year-old boy

to tackle the assumptions embedded in...white accounts of lynching should make no claims...to exonerate all lynching victims of having committed a crime...such an attempt would [be] showing as little concern for the truth as the original depictions.” Some observers and reporters of the Till case thought that Emmett Till was out-of-line for whistling at Mrs. Bryant. However, Emmett Till did nothing that warranted his death, when his actions are viewed from any other context other than the American South.

³³ Letter from September 11, 1955 from J.S. Connelly (Morehouse Gin Company, Morehouse Missouri) to Mr. Ger ald Chatham, Hernando, MS.

³⁴ Postcard postmarked September 8, 1955, Chicago, Illinois to Dist. Attorney Gerald Chatham, Hernando, Mississippi.

³⁵ The Untold Story of Emmett Louis Till directed by Keith Beauchamp (2005)

³⁶ Lutes, Jean M. “Lynching Coverage and the American Reporter-Novelist” *American Literary History* 19, no. 2: 456-481. *Humanities International Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed August 29, 2013).

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evoked strong emotions in individuals regardless of race. The coverage by both black and white newspapers showed the inherent emotional power of the Emmett Till case.

Newspaper and Periodical Coverage

The Emmett Till case was widely covered from the moment that the story emerged from Money, Mississippi. Local, regional, and national newspapers all sent reporters to the area and followed the story because it was headline news for both blacks and whites. *The New York Times* was one of the first national newspapers to cover the story, doing so even before the jury reached a verdict. In a September 2, 1955, article entitled "Mississippi To Sift Negro Boy's Slaying" it was asserted that Till only "allegedly had whistled at a white woman." They even quoted the Governor of Mississippi, Hugh White, who at the time expressed his faith in the courts to do justice, while maintaining that it was not a lynching, but a "straight-out murder."³⁷

This article was followed up by another, twenty-two days later, as a response to the verdict in the trial. It was simply titled, "Mississippi Jury Acquits 2 Accused in Youth's Killing." The author asserted "the race relations aspect...was injected strongly into the summations of the jury." He goes on to argue that the sympathy felt towards the defendants was the result of the national scrutiny brought onto Mississippi by the case.³⁸

The *Chicago Defender*, on the other hand, reported the case as a lynching and called upon the Eisenhower administration for the passage of an anti-lynching law lest the "blood of Bo Till...be on its hands." Furthermore, the *Chicago Defender* said that Governor Hugh White was "splitting hairs" by calling it a murder and not a lynching, saying that the fact that he was being punished for something and the deed was done by more than one person made it a lynching.³⁹

The *Baltimore Afro-American* initially reported the murder as an "act of mob violence" language that conjured up images of lynch mobs in the minds of the readership of the newspaper, even though the Till murder was only perpetrated by two men. However, they also called the crime a

³⁷ *New York Times* Sep 2 1955 "Mississippi To Sift Negro Boy's Slaying."

³⁸ *New York Times* Sep 24 1955 "Mississippi Jury Acquits 2 Accused in Youth's Killing"

³⁹ *Chicago Defender* 9/10/55 "Nation Shocked, Vow Action in Lynching of Chicago Youth."

lynching and compared it to two other lynchings that had taken place in the same year.⁴⁰

The coverage in all three of these newspapers illustrates the broad coverage of the Till case. The national attention of the black community was focused on Mississippi, and the attention of white Northerners was focused on the South. The group that did not want attention was white Southerners. They were the only ones who had anything to lose. The black community had everything to gain, and they used the murder of the Emmett Till as an example of the worst manifestation of Southern racism.

The case was also covered in local newspapers and the killing was treated as brutal and senseless by all. The *Greenwood Commonwealth* reported that, "The citizens of this area are determined that the guilty parties shall be punished to the full extent of the law." Likewise, the *Vicksburg Post* and the *Greenville Delta Democrat-Times* both condemned the killing, saying "The ghastly and wholly unprovoked murder...cannot be condoned, nor should there be anything less than swift and determined prosecution of those guilt of the heinous crime," who went on to say, "We have met no Mississippian who was other than revolted by the senseless brutality. The people who are guilty of this savage crime should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law." Even the *Clarksdale Press Register*, which Hugh Whitaker pointed out was "published about twenty miles from Sumner," reported that, "Those who kidnapped and murdered Till have dealt the reputation of the South and Mississippi a savage blow. It is a blow from which we can recover only by accepting this violent and insane challenge to our laws and by prosecuting vigorously the individuals responsible for the crime."⁴¹

In October, the month after the trial, almost every major newspaper or magazine had something to say about the events. Before the murder of Emmett Till, lynchings had been common but they were often shrouded in mystery and the perpetrators were never brought to trial. The fact that the killers were brought to trial and exonerated gave the Till case an unprecedented level of notoriety. Life magazine published an article entitled

⁴⁰ African American Newspapers portrayed the racial element of this case very clearly from the beginning and were often critical of the Governor White denotation of the event as a "straight-out murder."

⁴¹ Hugh Stephen Whitaker, "A Case Study in Southern Justice: The Emmett Till Case." The editorials cited were reprinted in the September 4, 1955 edition of the Memphis Commercial-Appeal.

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“Emmett Till’s Day in Court” in which the author asserted that “the prosecution was against the whole mass of Mississippi prejudice...the undertones of racial hatred in the case came out when the defense suggested that the whole thing was a plot by outsiders to help destroy ‘the southern way of life.’” *Reader’s Digest* also decried the situation in Mississippi saying, “the town (Sumner) never became part of the New South--never wanted to. Its root remained deep in the delta...Segregation wasn’t an issue; it was a way of life.”⁴² In an October 1955 editorial entitled “Mississippi Barbarism,” *Crisis* asserted that “the white people of Mississippi are directly responsible for this hideous crime...the white minds of Mississippi are poisoned with every imaginable lie and slander about Negroes and the NAACP.”

In September, the month after the murder and of the trial, the coverage was focused on the events themselves. However, each group had an angle by which they were covering the events. National newspapers were critical of the situation in the South. In October, after the killers had been acquitted, the criticism of Mississippi and of the South was even stronger. During this time, there also were accounts that claimed to give the true story of what happened on the night of the kidnapping and murder because there was much speculation about what took place.

Impact on African-American Society

In his article “A Wallet, A White Woman, and A Whistle,” Devery S. Anderson makes the point that those who argue that Emmett Till did not “engage in a harmless, childish act, such as talking fresh to a girl, whistling, or even asking for a date, play into the idea that the southern caste system was legitimate.” Till only suffered the fate that he did because he was black; not denying his questionable actions strengthens the fact that he “challenged an abhorrent caste system in a very real way.”⁴³ Anderson’s argument that Till’s actions, whatever they may have been, should not be ignored because they make him a “tragic character”

Harvey Young, in his article “A New Fear Known to Me: Emmett Till’s Influence and the Black Panther Party,” writes about the extended coverage that the Till case received nationally in black newspapers. He argues that it was an important factor in the development of organizations such as the Black Panthers, which “anchored itself not only in the witnessing of racial violence, such as Emmett Till’s murder, by black youth but also the

⁴² *Reader’s Digest* “Mississippi: The Place, The Acquittal” 10/3/55

⁴³ Anderson, 19.

concerted efforts of members of Till's generation to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies."⁴⁴ Instead of being retrospectively focused and examining what led to the murder of Emmett Till, Young looks from the Till case forward and recognizes the impact that it had on black society.

The Emmett Till case's impact on the Civil Rights movement fits in with a 1984 study by Lewis M. Killian, which argues, "while organization and rational planning are key variables, social movement theory must take into account spontaneity and emergence and the forces which generate them."⁴⁵ Killian's work is focused on the Civil Rights movement as a whole, but the Emmett Till case is a prime example of his thesis. It was an event that took place suddenly and without warning, but carried significant implications that played into the national context of Civil Rights struggle. The study of the grass-roots events that inspired the national Civil Rights scene has been often neglected in favor of a top-down study focused on leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr.⁴⁶

From the moment that the images of Till's bloated body were published in JET magazine, the black community was keenly aware of the level of atrocity that had taken place. Till's mother, Mamie Till Bradley, insisted on having an open casket trial, "so that all the world can see what they did to my boy."⁴⁷ The power of image was known from the very beginning in this case. Harvey Young argues that it was "Bradley's concerted efforts not only to display her son's bloated and misshapen corpse but also her maternal grief for the world to see" that ultimately solidified its exceptional place in the Civil Rights struggle.⁴⁸ An article from the September 10, 1955 issue of *New York Amsterdam News* estimated that 50,000 viewed the body of Emmett Till in all of its grotesque deformity that resulted from the beating and the time spent under the water. Furthermore, as Michael Randolph Oby stated in his master's thesis, this allowed black

⁴⁴ Harvey Young. "A New Fear Known to Me: Emmett Till's Influence and the Black Panther Party."

Southern Historical Quarterly (45, no. 4: 22-47), 43.

⁴⁵ Lewis M. Killian. "Organization, Rationality and Spontaneity in the Civil Rights Movement" *American Sociological Review*, Vol 49, No. 6 (Dec., 1984). pp 770-783.

⁴⁶ Patterns of American History page 307ff

⁴⁷ *JET magazine* September 22, 1955

⁴⁸ Young, 27.

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journalists a chance to photograph the body and distribute these pictures to more people than Till-Bradley could have ever imagined.⁴⁹

Amy Louise Wood focused her work on the role of photography and depictions of lynching as propagation of the mob's actions as "socially acceptable and responsible action." The depictions of lynching were used to reinforce the message of the mob's actions to a broader audience. The lynch mob usually posed with the victim, and posed in such a way as to firmly suggest a juxtaposition of the solidarity of white society and the image of the black victim "as captive and defiled, visual embodiments of their ideal position in the white supremacist imagination."⁵⁰ In Southern culture, these images were meant to show the weakness of blacks and the strength and solidarity of the white community. The Till case differed in that the images were used by the black community to communicate the callousness of the white community juxtaposed with the innocence and helplessness of Emmett Till. Ironically, the black community was essentially saying the same thing that had always been said of images of lynching, but because the black community was saying it, it ultimately had a different meaning. It had a stronger meaning that they wanted these pictures of their own shown, and were able to point a these pictures and show that something was wrong.⁵¹

The distribution of the pictures of Emmett Till was a way for "viewers to experience...the brutal 'justice' of the lynching."⁵² But instead of these pictures bearing a meaning that reinforced the solidarity of the white community as they had in the past, they reinforced the solidarity of the black community. On an unprecedented level, the black community outside of the South was able to see what was happening to blacks within the South.

Furthermore, Clenora Hudson-Weems argued that the murder of Emmett Till "was the epitome of the ugliness and hatred of racism. It made people uncomfortable, but it made people act. If you want to move a people, kill their children...I believe that Emmett Till was the straw that

⁴⁹ Michael Randolph Oby. "Black Press Coverage of the Emmett Till Lynching as a Catalyst to the Civil Rights Movement" (master's thesis: Georgia State University, 2007), 15.

⁵⁰ Amy Louise Wood. "Lynching Photography and the Visual Reproduction of White Supremacy" *American Nineteenth Century History* 6, no. 3: 373-399. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed August 29, 2013).

⁵¹ In his seminal 1965 album *Highway 61 Revisited*, Bob Dylan also made reference to the power of images associated with lynching. The closing track of the album was a 11 minute ballad entitled *Desolation Row*, of which the opening line is "They're selling postcards of the hanging..." Further illustrated the permeation of lynching images in American art, which is an extension of American consciousness.

⁵² Wood, 379.

broke the camel's back, that his death sparked the flame."⁵³ Till's age, innocence, and his unfamiliarity and newness to the South combined to make him what Hudson-Weems calls a "Sacrificial Lamb of the Civil Rights Movement."⁵⁴

In a booklet entitled "Time Bomb," published February 1956 in Mississippi, Olive Arnold Adams argued that the "catalytic agent was supplied by the May 17, 1954 decision of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, which rightfully declared that racial segregation in public schools [is] unconstitutional."⁵⁵ This event was undoubtedly influential on much of the Civil Rights movement, paving the way for more powerful legislation to be passed that helped to establish racial equality before the law. However, the Emmett Till case affected people on a more personal level. The murder of a fourteen-year-old boy naturally turns up richer emotional soil in the hearts of black men than a decision issued by nine white men in Washington, D.C.

Fredrick Harris argued that although the Till case "has been overshadowed by...accounts of the importance of the Brown decision and the Montgomery bus boycott, it had real political meaning for many African-Americans who transformed their collective anger into collective action as Till's murder became a symbol of defiance against white supremacy."⁵⁶ First of all, the black community was able to use the Emmett Till case so effectively due to its proximity to the Brown v. Board of Education decision. With the doctrine of "Separate but Equal" overturned, the white community was forced to come to grips with the new status of black people. The murder of Emmett Till and the acquittal of his killers showed that there were still social taboos in place that could not simply be overcome by a judge's ruling. Second, Till's age showed the callousness of Southern racism, that two men could feel justified in killing a fourteen-year-old boy. Thirdly, the position of Emmett Till as an outsider to the

⁵³ Clenora Hudson-Weems. "Resurrecting Emmett Till: The Catalyst of the Modern Civil Rights Movement" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Nov., 1998), pp 179-188.

⁵⁴ Hudson-Weems is a professor of English at the University of Missouri. In 1994, she published a book entitled *Emmett Till: The Sacrificial Lamb of the Civil Rights Movement*."

⁵⁵ Olive Arnold Adams. *Time Bomb: Mississippi Exposed and the Full Story of Emmett Till*. February 1956.

⁵⁶ Fredrick C. Harris "It Takes a Tragedy to Arouse Them: Collective Memory and Collective Action during the Civil Rights Movement" *Social Movement Studies* 5, no. 1: 19-43. SocINDEX with Full Text, EBSCOhost (accessed August 29, 2013).

This Boy's Dreadful Tragedy

South and how effortlessly ignorant his breaking of these social taboos was, showed how out of line these customs were with the rest of the nation.

Clenora Hudson-Weems also wrote that it was not “Rosa Parks’ refusal to surrender her bus seat...that sparked the riots, boycotts and social upheaval of the 1960s. Hudson has a different picture vividly in mind about the beginning of the civil rights movement. That picture is of Emmett Till in his coffin, battered and bloated.”⁵⁷ Undoubtedly, the image of a murdered child was much more powerful than a woman who refused to give up her bus seat.

Till was by no means the first person to be murdered in the South, nor was he the first person whose body was seen by large numbers of people either inside or outside of the black community. There was power in the fact that Emmett Till was only fourteen years old and that he was not from the South. However, the real power was what took place after he died, his mother demanded that his body be brought back to Chicago. Once he was in Chicago, there was a funeral held where thousands of people viewed his bloated and disfigured body. In addition to the people who saw the body on display there in Chicago, *Jet* magazine published pictures of his body nationally, and many of the black community all over the nation saw his body. The image was published on a full page of the the September 15, 1955 of *Jet* Magazine, and it was juxtaposed with pictures of Emmett Till’s early life. These images were seen by millions. Harvey Young argued that Emmett Till’s death “triggered the imaginations of blacknyouth - prompting them not to think of future utopias but present-day threats...former NAACP President Julian Bond...noted that the Chicago teenager’s murder ‘created a great vulnerability and fear of all things southern in my teenaged mind.’”⁵⁸

After the acquittal, there were protests held in Emmett Till’s name as far away as New York. Mamie Till-Bradley was the featured speaker at one such meeting, which was advertised by the headline, “Hear the Mississippi Story!! From the Lips and the Heart of Emmett Till’s Mother and Mrs. Ruby Hurley, NAACP Southern Director who come direct from the Trial.”⁵⁹ There was also a meeting in Chicago, documented by *Jet* magazine where Willie Reed spoke and, “urged northern Negroes to quit shouting and

⁵⁷ Clenora Hudson-Weems. “Resurrecting Emmett Till: The Catalyst of the Modern Civil Rights Movement” *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Nov., 1998), 183.

⁵⁸ Young, 26.

⁵⁹ “Here the Mississippi Story,” *New York Amsterdam News*, Oct 1, 1955, 9.

begin working to help their people in the South.”⁶⁰ Michael Randolph Oby argued that,

In the months that followed Till’s brutal lynching and before the Rosa Parks incident, the black papers printed numerous articles which not only expressed the outrage of the black community but also preserved the history of the incident. The stream of articles insisted on the action and tied the boy’s death to the need for greater liberty for blacks in America.⁶¹

Not only was the Till murder, trial, and acquittal covered extensively in black newspapers, it was accompanied by a call to action. In a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Defender*, Fred Poindexter wrote that, “In a state like Mississippi...we must add one other trait to our character and that is courage and a willingness to fight and even die for these rights.” Not only did the Emmett Till case bring about a heightened awareness for the black community, it inspired people like Fred Poindexter to encourage others to “Fight for Rights.”⁶²

The *New York Times* reported a protest in Harlem in which, “Ten thousand persons at a Harlem Rally were urged yesterday to go to the ballot boxes, to exhort their political precinct captains, and if need be, to march on Washington to bring an end to racism and lynching in the United States.”⁶³ Once again, these people were dissatisfied with the verdict of the Till case, and they were encouraged to action. There was also an NAACP rally in Chicago reported by the *New York Times* in which, “The reign of terror now going on in Mississippi: the lynch-murder of 14 year-old, Chicago-born Emmett Louis Till in Mississippi and the subsequent acquittal of those charged with his death” were protested by many.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *Jet Magazine*, Oct. 6, 1955, 4.

⁶¹ Randolph, 28.

⁶² Poindexter, Fred. “Fight for Rights” *Chicago Defender*, November 19, 1955: ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Chicago Defender* (national edition).

⁶³ “10,000 In Harlem Protest Verdict,” *New York Times*, September 26, 1955, 10.

⁶⁴ “Till Trial Protested,” *New York Times*, October 8, 1955, p. 7.

Artistic Response to Emmett Till

Emmett Till's story resonated deep in the American consciousness, and was expressed in various artistic forms in the months and years the followed. Langston Hughes wrote a poem entitled "The Money, Mississippi Blues" in October, and Aaron Kramer wrote "Blues for Emmett Till" in November of 1955.⁶⁵ Phillip Kolin wrote that these pieces "challenged listeners to think about racial injustice in Eisenhower's America."⁶⁶ One of the more famous examples of this was Bob Dylan's song "The Death of Emmett Till," recorded during his 1962 sessions when he was recording the album "Freewheelin' Bob Dylan." Dylan performed this song extensively both in his concerts and in special events such as an appearance on "Billy Faier Radio Show in New York in October 1962."⁶⁷ The nearly five-minute, seven-stanza ballad was a pseudo-historical account at best, but historicity was not Dylan's goal. Stephen J. Whitfield asserts that "the chief moral that Dylan seemed to derive from the lynching was its inherent injustice, which a heightened ethical sensitivity might remedy."⁶⁸ Dylan exhorts his listeners to "speak out against this...crime so unjust" and challenges them that, "if all of us folks that thinks alike/if we gave all we could give/We could make this great land of ours a greater place to live."⁶⁹ Like many of the African-American newspapers that had reported the events in 1955, Dylan's lamentation, seven years after the injustice, was still accompanied by a call to action.

Although he never intended to be, Emmett Till was a tragic hero. The horror of his murder was displayed for the entire nation to see. People, specifically African-Americans, were able to see the dehumanizing effects of racism in Mississippi, where a fourteen-year-old boy could be tortured and murdered and denied justice. The extensive coverage of the case in African-American newspapers helped to plant the image of Emmett Till

⁶⁵ Both of these pieces were also set to music. Jobe Huntley composed the music for "The Money, Mississippi Blues" and Clyde R. Appleton composed the music for "Blues for Emmett Till" Kolin, 118.

⁶⁶ Kolin, Philip C. "Haunting America: Emmett Till in Music and Song." *Southern Cultures* 15, no. 3: 115-138. Humanities International Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed August 29, 2013), 119.

⁶⁷ Kolin, 119.

⁶⁸ Whitfield, 99.

⁶⁹ Bob Dylan "The Death of Emmett Till" Copyright © 1963, 1968 by Warner Bros. Inc.; renewed 1991, 1996 by Special Rider Music.

deep in the American consciousness. This concrete conscious manifestation of racism inspired subsequent generations to act and set into motion the Civil Rights Movement. In the months and years that followed the death of Emmett Till, Rosa Parks helped to instigate the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and Little Rock Central High School was integrated. There were also lunch counter sit-ins, Freedom Rides, integration of Mississippi universities, a March on Washington, and finally, ten years after Emmett Till was murdered, the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Emmett Till was indeed 'the straw that broke the camel's back,' and that camel was never again able to stand again.

SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER

By Caroline Reed

The directive was clear: “You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces.”¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower believed strongly in the importance of compromise and teamwork when leading an army. As Supreme Allied Commander in World War II, Eisenhower strove to follow his philosophy of cooperation during the planning for D-Day and beyond in Operation Overlord.

Eisenhower believed deeply in a team philosophy when working with the army, especially if one was a commander of some kind. To Eisenhower, “any action which hurt the creation of an effective team was contemptible.”² He had come to this philosophy under the influence of his mentor, Fox Conner.³ Comparing war to football, Ike believed that both required hard work, cooperation, and leadership qualities to be successful.⁴

When George Patton first introduced Eisenhower to Fox Conner he started a friendship and mentorship that influenced the rest of Eisenhower’s career. From their first meeting both men impressed with each other. Conner was impressed by the answers Ike gave him to his military questions, and in turn Ike was impressed that Conner asked them.⁵ In 1922, Eisenhower was transferred to Panama under the command of Conner.

During Ike’s time in Panama, Conner taught him a great many things about military history, maps, international politics, and Ike himself as a soldier. Eisenhower was never fascinated with military history until Conner introduced it to him in a way that was more interesting and thought provoking than the rote memorization required at West Point.⁶ From then on, Ike devoured books about military history and theory. He studied maps

¹ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 490.

² Kerry Irish, “Dwight Eisenhower and Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines: There Must Be a Day of Reckoning,” *Journal of Military History* 74, no. 4 (July/August 2013): 452.

³ *Ibid.*, 453.

⁴ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1987), 31.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁶ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1987), 210.

extensively and constantly worked with Conner to create routes and battle plans in case the Panama Canal was attacked.⁷ Conner taught Eisenhower “to submit everything in the form of a five-paragraph field order.”⁸ This taught Eisenhower how to explain battle plans and tactics thoroughly. In short, Conner taught Eisenhower important aspects of being a soldier that could only be learned through experience and he taught it in a way that captured Ike’s attention.

Most importantly though, were Conner’s ideas about the international situation of the time. Conner was convinced, just by reading the Treaty of Versailles that another big war was upon them.⁹ He stressed to Eisenhower the inevitability of this fact: “Conner’s experience in France in the First World War had convinced him that without strong leadership the Allies might again become what he called ‘their own worst enemies.’”¹⁰ Conner did not want the United States to have to ally herself with other nations in another great war. However, he recognized the necessity of an alliance so he stressed to Eisenhower that it had to be done differently than in World War I.¹¹ Cooperation between the Allied powers would be key in another major war and it required a commander who knew how to accomplish that. Eisenhower became the strong leader that Conner foresaw to be the savior of the Allied cause.¹²

While Eisenhower did not give full credit to Conner for the way he conducted himself as Supreme Allied Commander, he did acknowledge that, aside from his parents, Conner was the most influential person in his life.¹³ However, once World War II began, Ike almost certainly recognized Conner’s amazing foresight and the truth of his words. Conner taught him so much about war during their stay in Panama that Ike would have been foolish to ignore him.

Ike worked on his ability to cooperate with difficult people and overcome difficult situations during his time in the Philippines. In 1935

⁷ Ibid., 211.

⁸ Ibid., 209.

⁹ Ibid., 212.

¹⁰ Ibid., 213.

¹¹ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 169.

¹² Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1987), 213.

¹³ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 169.

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Eisenhower was sent to work under General Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines. The United States was trying to get the Filipino Army ready for independence. MacArthur, Eisenhower, and the rest of their staff went to the Philippines to aid in this effort. The impossibility of the job they attempted to do and the frustrations that MacArthur created for everyone, especially Eisenhower, served to prepare Ike for the enormous task of leading D-Day.¹⁴ Eisenhower had already worked under MacArthur in the United States, but in many ways it was even more difficult to do in the Philippines. MacArthur was a hard person to work for in general. The relationship between Eisenhower and MacArthur was a rocky one but it worked.¹⁵ Both men had big egos and big tempers, and Eisenhower was not afraid to stand up to him, despite the fact that MacArthur was his senior officer.¹⁶ Ike continuously had to mediate between MacArthur and the President of the Philippines, Manuel Quezon, because there were constant misunderstandings. Life was better and easier whenever MacArthur and Quezon cooperated.¹⁷ In the Philippines Eisenhower learned how to deal with difficult and sometimes egotistical leaders as well as how to resolve disputes, both of which were helpful skills during his days as Allied Commander.

Immediately before his promotion, General Eisenhower was the Allied Commander in the Mediterranean region of the war, so he had experience on the ground as well as experience working with Allied forces. Interestingly enough, Eisenhower's appointment as Supreme Allied Commander seemed to be almost an afterthought by Franklin Roosevelt. Once it was decided that a British general would not lead Overlord, all eyes moved to which commander FDR would choose.¹⁸ Most assumed George Marshall would be chosen; Eisenhower was not even under consideration in the fall of 1943. However, as time went on, FDR felt more keenly the need to keep Marshall in the United States as Chief of Staff because he excelled at his job.¹⁹ On December 7, 1943 FDR met Eisenhower and without introduction gave him command of Overlord. FDR himself said that "Eisenhower is the best politician among the military men."²⁰ Indeed, Winston Churchill and

¹⁴ Ibid., 240.

¹⁵ Ibid., 239.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002),

461.

¹⁹ Ibid., 466.

²⁰ Ibid., 467.

Eisenhower, despite their many arguments, had a better relationship and understanding of one another than Churchill and Marshall did.²¹ This good relationship between the two men proved to be important, as D-Day planning got under way.

Almost immediately after his appointment as Supreme Allied Commander, Eisenhower began suggesting men to be his fellow commanders. He knew he needed men he could trust and who valued Allied cooperation. According to D'Este, "Eisenhower placed his personal stamp of approval on every division commander or higher.... No officer was selected whom he did not know personally."²² As early as 1943, Eisenhower wanted Omar Bradley as the American army group commander and either Harold Alexander or Bernard Montgomery as the overall ground commander. He was confident in Bradley's ability and he knew that either Alexander or Montgomery, though British, trusted Bradley.²³ In other words, they would work well together. Eisenhower seemed very optimistic about the team working for him when he wrote to Field Marshal William Birdwood that "happily, both countries have given to me, as immediate subordinates, leaders of proven worth... working along with these men are British and American leaders" whose only thought was of duty.²⁴ In the days ahead it was extremely important that the officers had the ability to work together during the best of times so that when the situation became very stressful, their disagreements might not be so harsh.

As the commander of an Allied force, Eisenhower had the daunting task of dealing with Churchill's big personality. However, because of his experience with MacArthur the task must have been easier for Ike. In fact, Churchill and Eisenhower had a good relationship and understanding of one another.²⁵ Their disagreements were nearly always resolved. As the military commander, Eisenhower stood his ground when he disagreed with the Prime Minister. Eisenhower even charmed Charles de Gaulle. Ike and de Gaulle had a rough relationship but Ike made a little headway to kindness by

²¹ *Ibid.*, 468.

²² Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 468.

²³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1970), 3:1610.

²⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1970), 3:1680.

²⁵ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 468.

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flattering de Gaulle about his military wisdom.²⁶ In one letter, Eisenhower gave credit to de Gaulle for the elimination of some misunderstandings between the Free French and Americans.²⁷ Their relationship was never perfect but they made things work for the sake of the war.

Ike's easy-going manner extended to his fellow soldiers and commanders. Eisenhower was an excellent commander in that he "seemed able to ask an appropriate question or produce a suitable comment that established an immediate bond" with soldiers.²⁸ He was popular with his own American troops and with the British troops as well. He was keen to make sure that every soldier emulated the respect that he showed for men on both sides. In a letter to Maxwell Taylor, Ike was clearly disappointed that he had to deal with misconduct from American soldiers towards British soldiers and anxious that it not happen again.²⁹ Ike expected his fellow commanders and soldiers to follow the same line of cooperation and alliance that he did. Ike's naval aide, Harry Butcher, said in one of his speeches to SHAEF commanders, that Eisenhower "emphasized that in an Allied Command such as this he expects thoughts and words which indicate nationality to be erased."³⁰

One man on whom Eisenhower had to rely more than others was Bernard Montgomery. As Field Marshall, he was one of Ike's right hand men in Operation Overlord. Although Montgomery also considered cooperation to be important, he often left that aspect to Eisenhower. Montgomery was so strong and confident in himself that it was difficult for him to get along with his allies.³¹ He believed that it was important to be close to his men but his personal qualities and supreme confidence made appeasement difficult for him.³² Eisenhower's self-control and ability to appease allowed the two men to maintain a good working relationship.³³

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 522.

²⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1970), 3:1637.

²⁸ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 514.

²⁹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1970), 3:1682-1683.

³⁰ Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower: The Personal Diary of Captain Harry C. Butcher, USNR, Naval Aide to General Eisenhower, 1942 to 1945* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), 472.

³¹ R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 145.

³² R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 145.

³³ *Ibid.*

From his earlier Allied operations during the war, Eisenhower recognized the need for a staff that integrated ground, air, naval, and logistics.³⁴ Operation Overlord was a major coordination between two countries so everything in the planning, down to the last detail, had to work together like a well-oiled machine. With that in mind, Ike insisted on a single headquarters for those commanders and officers participating in Overlord.³⁵ He wanted his commanders in each area to see themselves as occupying both the role of the staff worker who helped develop plans and of the executor of those plans on the ground, air, or water.³⁶ He wanted to have a single, overall ground commander to lead both British and American forces and also coordinate with their respective air forces.³⁷ He actually saw separate British and American commanders as “destructive of the essential coordination between ground and air forces.”³⁸

COSSAC, or the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander, formed before Eisenhower joined as the official Commander. COSSAC did not have much direction before Eisenhower. Their main accomplishment was the choice of Normandy as the landing site. However, that in and of itself was “one of the best examples of Anglo-American cooperation of the entire war” because they finally untangled months and months of planning.³⁹ Eisenhower agreed with the invasion site but also recommended that they widen the invasion and make it more of a frontal assault than a pincer.⁴⁰ It would be easier to capture the beach and subsequent towns if the assault were bigger, faster, and stronger in number.

In Ambrose’s words, “a successful Overlord meant, in practice, getting ashore and staying.”⁴¹ There were many, many issues to work out in the coming operation. The operation would be the biggest undertaking of any

³⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 221.

³⁵ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 484.

³⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 221.

³⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1970), 3:1610.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:1609.

³⁹ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 470.

⁴⁰ R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 145.

⁴¹ Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 329.

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Ally in the war. However, there were three main factors on which the operation relied. First, the Allies needed to be able to supply the soldiers on the ground. Second, they needed to keep the Germans from a sufficient build-up of arms that would stop them. Finally, of course, the Germans could not know what was coming.⁴²

The first of these factors was a huge naval undertaking the likes of which served as a perfect example of Alfred Thayer Mahan's theories about sea power.⁴³ The problem of this huge undertaking was not how to get the ships organized and to the right location. As Richard Overy points out, that "was a task for which British and American seamanship was well equipped."⁴⁴ Rather, the main problem was that there was no place for the ships to anchor. Eisenhower said that the solution was "a project so unique as to be classed by many scoffers as completely fantastic."⁴⁵ The Allies essentially created their own harbor on D-Day out of old ships that they sunk off the coast. Also constructed were pieces called a "mulberries" that allowed vehicles and equipment to drive off the ships and onto the beach.⁴⁶

One of the biggest points of contention was the proposed Transportation Plan that aimed to destroy French communications in order to keep the Germans from a build-up of arms in France.⁴⁷ Even though Eisenhower sought to use the air force only to destroy key communication points and rail lines rather than population centers, many politicians, including Churchill, were horrified by the possible loss of civilian life.⁴⁸ Eisenhower understood the importance of preserving civilian life, yet as a military commander he also understood that in war the ends must justify the means. In fact, he was often frustrated by the fact that many people did not recognize that the decisions he had to make were often difficult and risky.⁴⁹ During his time as assistant army chief of staff, Ike's secretary said of him that "every problem was carefully analyzed" and that he had an ability "to

⁴² R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 146.

⁴³ R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 147.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 234.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁴⁷ R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995): 148.

⁴⁸ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 232.

⁴⁹ Rick Atkinson, "The Road to D-Day," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 4 (July/August 2013).

arrive at quick and confident decisions.”⁵⁰ This decision was no different. Once they received the ‘okay’ for the plan, Ike and his staff proved they made the right choice. The casualty numbers were not nearly as high as everyone thought they would be.⁵¹ While the effects on the railways were minimal, the air force did much damage to the “bridges and tunnels connecting the invasion area with the east.”⁵² The value of this plan was justified by the damage it did to the communications and transportation of the Germans, especially where the invasion area was concerned.

The third key piece to the plan of Overlord was called “Bodyguard.” Instead of trying to completely disguise the build-up of arms for Overlord, Allied intelligence decided to convince the Germans that an attack was going to happen in a completely different spot and time.⁵³ The Allies wished to convince the Germans that an attack would happen at Calais and in Scandinavia. To do this they created an entire fake army called FUSAG complete with dummy camps, fake supply depots, and rubber tanks in the southeast of England.⁵⁴ The deception effort required much cooperation on the part of United States and British Allied intelligence. They had to make sure they were sending out similar signals, and all politicians, commanders, and soldiers involved had to keep Overlord a complete secret while following along with the deception in a convincing way. The plan was such a risky gamble that even Eisenhower had a difficult time believing that it would work. He merely hoped that it would “tie down one or two German divisions” for maybe a few days.⁵⁵

Another major disagreement that occurred during the planning stage was about how much to rely on the air force. The landing on Utah Beach was essential to gaining Cherbourg, but it could not be taken without the air force. Because the beach was impossible to land on, the staff planned to drop United States paratroopers onto the beach.⁵⁶ Many people, such as Air Marshall Trafford Leigh-Mallory were feared the possible losses that the anti-

⁵⁰ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1987), 344-345.

⁵¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 233.

⁵² R. J. Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 149.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁵⁵ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002), 506.

⁵⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 240.

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aircraft around the beach would cause to the air force. Leigh-Mallory was adamant that the Utah landings were a huge waste of life.⁵⁷ Ike contended that the whole operation could not happen without the Utah landing and the Utah landing could not happen without this airborne assault.⁵⁸ His decision was actually popular with the airborne commanders because it showed that Ike had confidence in them to carry out their duties. The attack was carried out as planned, and the airborne operations were a success with fewer losses than expected.⁵⁹ Leigh-Mallory regretted doubting Eisenhower's decision and told him so in an apology letter sent on June 7.⁶⁰ Just as he did with the Transportation Plan, Eisenhower proved his ability to make confident decisions that made him worthy of his title Supreme Commander.

Carlo D'Este says, "No commander in military history faced a more daunting task than the one [Eisenhower] did in 1944", because "he was charged with welding together the largest force ever assembled."⁶¹ Overlord was an Allied operation that called for nothing less than the destruction of the German army. In order to succeed, Eisenhower put his earlier experiences with compromise and teamwork in the army into practice. Because of Eisenhower's efforts as Supreme Allied Commander, Operation Overlord became one of the most successful allied operations in history.

516. ⁵⁷ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002),

247. ⁵⁸ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948),

512. ⁵⁹ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002),

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 530.

506. ⁶¹ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2002),

THE SIXTH MISSISSIPPI INFANTRY REGIMENT: COURAGEOUS CITIZEN SOLDIERS

By John L. Frizzell

During the United States' Civil War, the country was rent divisively into two separate nations: the United States of America and the Confederate States of America. The states that did not secede from the United States battled to preserve the Union, while the seceded states fought hard to preserve their new found independence. The plight of the seceded Confederacy, commonly known as "the lost cause," came with potentially disastrous end results. If the Confederacy were defeated, all of its citizens could be labeled as traitors and put to death, causing Confederate soldiers to fight hard to ensure their freedom. One regiment in particular, the Sixth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, performed great acts of valor, once charging the enemy repeatedly until the Sixth itself was in such a shambles that it was forced to retire from the field. From its first engagement at Shiloh to its dissolution at Citronelle, the Sixth Mississippi's service was marked by a tradition of great courage and devotion.

Two and a half years prior to Mississippi's secession from the Union, citizens of Brandon, Mississippi gathered inside the Rankin County Court House on the morning of October 16, 1858, to discuss for the very first time as a community the need for a "Volunteer Military Company" – a militia.¹ By the 25th day of the same month, sixty men were able to proudly call themselves members of the Rankin Guards, one of the first of many militia units formed in the South just prior to the Civil War.² In February of 1861, just one month after Mississippi's secession from the Union, the Rankin Guards were rechristened the Rankin Greys under the direction of their commanding officer, Captain J. J. Thornton.³ The next year, on August 24, at Grenada, Mississippi, the Rankin Greys were mustered into the Sixth Mississippi Infantry along with nine other companies formed from nearby counties, whose paths to formation would likely have been similar to that of

¹ H. Grady Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees: A History of the "Bloody Sixth" Mississippi Infantry*, C.S.A. (Jackson, MS: Chickasaw Bayou Press, 1981), 1-2.

² *Ibid.*, 4.

³ Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees*, 7.

the Rankin Greys, for a twelve-month period of service.⁴ Shortly thereafter, Captain Thornton of the Rankin Greys was elected to the position of Colonel of the regiment by the men of the Sixth.⁵

The election of J. J. Thornton, doctor of medicine, as the colonel of the Sixth reveals a small piece of the character of the men in his regiment. In 1861, Rankin County had elected Thornton as a representative and sent him to the Constitutional Convention to argue against secession.⁶ As history has revealed, Thornton and his contemporaries were defeated by the secessionists; however, every representative at the convention still signed his name to the Ordinance of Secession – every member save one. Dr. Thornton refused to sign the document, later explaining that, “his constituents elected him to vote and work against secession, and the fame of the Caesars or Alexander could not induce him to forfeit the trust imposed on him.”⁷ This story was likely circulated throughout the camp of the Sixth prior to the election for Colonel. What could have resulted in ignominy for Thornton had instead resulted in an act of trust: the troopers of the Sixth placed their lives in Thornton’s hands and gave him the colonelship.

It was Thornton who, under the orders of Major General Leonidas Polk, led the Sixth Mississippi from Union City to Bowling Green, where it became a part of the Army of Central Kentucky.⁸ On October 28, 1861, under Special Order No. 51, the Sixth Mississippi was placed in the first division commanded by Major General Hardee, and General Albert Sydney Johnston took command of this entire army corps.⁹ Of this division, the Sixth was placed in the Second Brigade which was led by Colonel Patrick R. Cleburne.¹⁰ While serving in Kentucky, the Sixth was stricken with typhoid fever and measles reducing the regiment from its original 601 soldiers to around 150 effective men.¹¹ A regiment of this size was practically useless, necessitating the Sixth’s reassignment to a well-populated area sympathetic to

⁴ Dunbar Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi, 1803-1898* (Jackson, MS: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1988), 170-172.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁶ Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees*, 6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸ United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 129 vols. (Washington: Government Print Off, 1880-1901), serial 1, vol. 4, 452. Hereafter cited as *OR*. All references are to serial 1 unless otherwise noted.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 484.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 484.

¹¹ Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 172-173.

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the Confederacy's cause to replenish the regiment's ranks; no place suited this purpose better than Corinth, Mississippi. Corinth sat on the junction of the Memphis and Charleston railroad and the Mobile and Ohio railroad, making Corinth a bustling community from which to organize and dispatch troops. H. Grady Howell Jr. vividly painted the scene when he described how the Sixth's "surviving, shivering elements trudged slowly through ankle-deep mud into Corinth."¹² The Sixth sorely needed new recruits, and while the regiment made itself busy revitalizing its companies, armies from all over the Confederacy rode the railroads into Corinth.

By the end of March 1862, the 40,000 Confederate troops massed at Corinth were placed under the command of General A. S. Johnston and christened the Army of Mississippi.¹³ The Sixth Mississippi was still serving in General Hardee's division in Colonel Cleburne's brigade, and would soon march to do battle against General Ulysses S. Grant's forces encamped near Pittsburg Landing. In a matter of days, the Sixth Mississippi would finally experience their first engagement and "see the elephant" at the battle of Shiloh, April 6-7, 1862.¹⁴

Three days prior to the battle, on April 3, General Order No. 8 ordered the Army of the Mississippi to march towards Pittsburg Landing to defeat General Grant's Army of the Tennessee before reinforcements, General Buell's Army of the Ohio, could arrive to assist him.¹⁵ General Johnston intended for his army to be in place and ready to attack by the following day, April 4.¹⁶ The twenty-five mile march to Pittsburg Landing from Corinth was a reasonable enough expectation, had the army been better organized and had it not been for the bad weather. By the evening of the 4th, the traveling army, already behind schedule, met heavy rains which rendered the country roads difficult to negotiate.¹⁷ By April 6, the stage was finally set and the battle ready to begin. Despite the delays to the Confederate march, the Union troops would shortly awake to the unexpected sound of Confederate gunfire. Union Brigadier General William H. L. Wallace visited

¹² Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees*, 73.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁴ "Seeing the elephant" is an expression used by soldiers during the Civil War to refer to participation in battle.

¹⁵ Shiloh National Military Park Commission, *The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged* (Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), 66.

¹⁶ Civil War Trust, "Shiloh," Civil War Trust, <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/shiloh.html?tab=facts> (accessed November 23, 2013).

¹⁷ Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees*, 76.

General Sherman on the night of April 5, the eve of the Battle of Shiloh, and reported “everything quiet and the general [Sherman] in fine Spirits.”¹⁸ Sherman himself had written Grant earlier that same day saying, “I have no doubt that nothing will occur today more than some picket firing. . . . I do not apprehend anything like an attack on our position.”¹⁹

The Third Corps, under General Hardee, was assigned the left flank of the Confederate battle line with the newly appointed Brigadier General Cleburne’s division taking up position on the far left of the line, opposite Sherman’s corps encampments.²⁰ Cleburne records the order of his division’s battle line in his report to General Hardee as such: “Twenty-third Tennessee on the right, Sixth Mississippi next, Fifth Tennessee next, Twenty-fourth Tennessee on the left, Fifteenth Arkansas deployed as the skirmishers in front of the line, with their reserve near the left, and the second Tennessee *en echelon* 500 yards in the rear of my left flank.”²¹

The morning of April 6, the battle line advanced in this formation near 6:30 a.m. and engaged the enemy by 8:00 a.m.²² During the advance, the line encountered an “impassable morass” that split the line in two, effectively separating the Sixth Mississippi and the Twenty-third Tennessee from the rest of the brigade.²³ The Sixth and the Twenty-third then charged the height, occupied by Union forces and fortified with a breastwork made of logs and bales of hay, alone.²⁴ Trigg’s battery, which had up until this point been travelling with Cleburne’s division, was now rendered useless by the thick leaves obstructing its line of sight, and turned back, leaving the Sixth and the Twenty-third to take the height without the aid of artillery.²⁵

The two regiments charged bravely into the camp of the enemy (the Fifty-third Ohio), but were sent reeling back in retreat by the withering fire

¹⁸ Wiley Sword, “The Battle of Shiloh: Surprise in Tennessee,” Civil War Trust, <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/shiloh/shiloh-history-articles/shilohsword.html> (accessed November 23, 2013).

¹⁹ James Lee McDonough, *Shiloh – in Hell before Night* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 57.

²⁰ *OR*, x, part 1, 580.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 580.

²² Shiloh National Military Park Commission, *The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged* (Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), 71.

²³ *OR*, x, part 1, 581.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 581.

²⁵ *OR*, x, part 1, 580.

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they encountered.²⁶ Though the attack surprised Sherman's men, they nonetheless gave a good account for themselves. Cleburne records that the Twenty-third, having been driven back "was with great difficulty rallied about 100 yards in the rear."²⁷ The Sixth however, charged again and again unaided.²⁸ Despite the Sixth's unflagging courage, it eventually had to retreat "in disorder over its own dead and dying", of which there were many.²⁹

Of the 425 men who took the field with the Sixth, 300 were listed as casualties including the field commanders Colonel Thornton and Major Thornton.³⁰ Sixty of the men still standing from the Sixth regiment reformed and advanced with General Cleburne, along with half of the reformed Twenty-third Tennessee and the Eighth Arkansas, through the enemy's encampment.³¹ The Sixth Mississippi was soon after ordered to the rear and saw no more action in the battle that day or the next.³²

James Lee McDonough, author of *Shiloh – in Hell before Night*, describes the Sixth going into the battle of Shiloh as "a ragtag regiment whose men were dressed and equipped with little or no regard for uniformity."³³ The Sixth had indeed gone into the battle of Shiloh as raw recruits, but they had left it as soldiers; they had "seen the elephant." General Cleburne remarked on the men of the Sixth's performance at Shiloh saying, "It would be useless to enlarge upon the courage and devotion of the Sixth Mississippi. The Facts as recorded speak louder than any words of mine."³⁴ And so a tradition of courage and devotion in the Sixth began that would continue throughout the war.

On April 26 of the same year, the Sixth reported 165 effective men serving under Brigadier General Marmaduke in the Fourth Brigade of Hardee's Third Corps in the Army of the Mississippi at Corinth.³⁵ The Sixth was on a slow path to recovery with only 40 of its men cleared for active service since the engagement at Shiloh. Due to its depleted strength, Special

²⁶ Shiloh National Military Park Commission, *The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged* (Washington Government Printing Office, 1909), 71.

²⁷ *OR*, x, part 1, 581.

²⁸ *OR*, x, part 1, 581.

²⁹ *OR*, x, part 1, 581.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 581.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 582.

³² *Ibid.*, 582.

³³ James Lee McDonough, *Shiloh – in Hell before Night* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 12.

³⁴ *OR*, x, part 1, 581.

³⁵ *OR*, x, part 2, 452-453.

Orders No. 41, under General Beauregard's authority, transferred the Sixth to General Breckinridge in the reserve corps of the Army of the Mississippi, now under the command of General Braxton Bragg, effective April 26.³⁶ General Cleburne reported that by the end of the first day of battle at Shiloh, all of the Sixth's field officers and most of its company officers were incapacitated.³⁷ This dearth of leadership in the regiment led Beauregard to order the election of new officers on May 8, resulting in J. J. Thornton's re-election.³⁸ Thornton, however, resigned on May 25, resulting in Major Lowry's election to the office of Colonel.³⁹

Following the election of its officers, the Sixth and the rest of Breckinridge's command left Corinth and moved to support Vicksburg throughout the month of June and most of July.⁴⁰ By October 3, the Sixth had returned to Corinth to take part in the battle that occurred there, serving under Brigadier General Bowen's Third Brigade in Major General Lovell's army of the District of the Mississippi.⁴¹ The Battle of Corinth raged October 3-5, during which the Confederate army attempted to roust the Union troops from the city. The Sixth Mississippi was held in reserve until October 4 when the whole brigade was ordered to advance on a Union redoubt.⁴² Bowen's superiors informed him that there were only three guns in position at the redoubt, but once the redoubt began to fire its artillery upon the brigade, Bowen decided the numerical strength of the battery more closely resembled twenty pieces, causing Bowen's brigade to withdraw to the rear.⁴³ The Confederate army withdrew from Corinth on October 5, with Bowen's division acting as the rear guard.⁴⁴ The Union forces successfully held Corinth against the Confederate onslaught.

By January 9, 1863, the Sixth Mississippi was stationed at Grenada, Mississippi.⁴⁵ On or around April 17, the Sixth was ordered from Jackson to Grand Gulf, Mississippi, where it once again served under Bowen.⁴⁶ While serving in the second brigade of Bowen's division under Brigadier General

³⁶ *OR*, x, part 2, 548, 550, 642.

³⁷ *OR*, x, part 1, 582.

³⁸ Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 173.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁴¹ *OR*, xvii, part 1, 365, 411.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 412.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 412.

⁴⁴ *OR*, xvii, part 1, 413.

⁴⁵ *OR*, xvii, part 2, 829.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 829.

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Martin E. Green, the Sixth fought with distinction in the Battle of Port Gibson. General Green, referring to the Sixth Mississippi and two other regiments that were new to his command, wrote, “They fought most gallantly and did honor to the States they represent, and will do to rely upon in any emergency.”⁴⁷ Green also records that General Bowen himself led a “gallant” charge with the Sixth Mississippi and the Twenty-third Alabama in front of the enemy’s battery under a heavy fire.⁴⁸ Even Bowen himself records this charge in his report on the battle, commending the Sixth for its noble response to his command to charge the battery. Of the recently elected Colonel Lowry, Green reported that he “deserves the highest commendation for his coolness and promptness in executing every order.”⁴⁹ It is clear from this report that the Sixth was indeed continuing the tradition of courage and devotion in battle that it began at Shiloh.

The Sixth was later included in a relief army under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston that marched from Jackson to the aid of Vicksburg while it was under siege.⁵⁰ The army reached Brownsville by July 1, 1863, but when Vicksburg surrendered on July 4, the army returned to Jackson with General Sherman close on their heels.⁵¹ The Confederate army arrived at Jackson on July 7, and Sherman, arriving on the 9th, placed the city under siege.⁵² The Confederate forces at Jackson withstood the siege until it evacuated to Morton on the night of July 16.⁵³

At this point in the war, the noose slowly closing around the Confederacy began to feel uncomfortably tight. For this reason, on March 20, 1864, Lieutenant General Polk issued Special Orders No. 80, placing Colonel Lowry in charge of an expedition to force any deserters back into the army.⁵⁴ The purpose of this expedition was not to mete out punishment onto deserters of the Confederate army, but to swell the ranks of the diminishing army by forcing men back into it. Polk received reports throughout the expedition and was well pleased by the results.⁵⁵ Victoria E. Bynam, author of *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War*, reveals the

⁴⁷ *OR*, xxiv, part 1, 672, 674.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 674.

⁴⁹ *OR*, xxiv, part 1, 664.

⁵⁰ Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 175.

⁵¹ Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 175.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 175.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁵⁴ *OR*, xxxii, part 3, 662.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 820.

secret to Lowry's success, stating that "Deserters who were captured by Colonel Lowry's men escaped execution by enlisting in or returning to the Confederate Army."⁵⁶

The Sixth, upon finishing its expedition against deserters, served in Brigadier General Adams' brigade of Lieutenant General Loring's division of the Army of Mississippi.⁵⁷ Brigadier General Featherston commended the Sixth for handsomely repelling two charges while acting as Adams' skirmish line near Marietta, Georgia on June 27, 1864, and for acting "with great coolness, courage, and determination during the same engagement."⁵⁸

Shortly thereafter, the Sixth made its way to Franklin, Tennessee. Now a part of the Army of Tennessee but still serving in General Adams' brigade, the Sixth participated in the Battle of Franklin with the Confederate forces under the command of General John Bell Hood.⁵⁹ When Adams died in battle while charging the enemy's line, Colonel Lowry took command of the brigade.⁶⁰ After the Confederate defeat at Franklin, the rest of the actions of the Sixth were inconsequential. Any action after this point could at best only prolong the inevitable: the dissolution of the Confederate States of America.

Following the defeat at Franklin, the Sixth also participated in the Battle of Kinston on March 10, and the Battle of Bentonville on March 19-21. On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Court House and the Army of Northern Virginia was effectively disbanded, tolling the death knell for the Confederacy. If Robert E. Lee, debatably the greatest general of the South, had been forced to surrender, what hope did the remaining Army of the Confederacy have?

On April 9, the army serving under General Joseph Johnston was reorganized and the remaining members of the Sixth Mississippi were combined with the remnants of the Fifteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-third Mississippi to form the Fifteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Graham, serving in the brigade of recently promoted

⁵⁶ Victoria E. Bynam, *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest War* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 124, <http://books.google.com/books?id=QKvVMFHlo6IC&dq=the+free+state+of+jones> (accessed November 23, 2013).

⁵⁷ *OR*, xxxviii, part 3, 659.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 879-880.

⁵⁹ Howell Jr., *Going to Meet the Yankees*, 242.

⁶⁰ Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 177.

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Brigadier General Robert Lowry.⁶¹ Grady Howell Jr. explains in his book, *Going to Meet the Yankees: A History of the Bloody Sixth*, that the remaining members of the Sixth left the confederate army in two factions: one group surrendered as members of the Fifteenth Mississippi with General Johnston at the close of April. The other group fled to the South to continue the fight with General Taylor, and surrendered at Citronelle, Alabama on May 4, 1865.

The Sixth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, active throughout the entirety of the war, acquitted itself with honor. General Johnston, in his farewell address to the Army of Tennessee, of which the members of the Sixth were a part, though serving in the Fifteenth Mississippi, wrote in General Orders No. 22, “You will return to your homes with the admiration of our people, won by the courage and noble devotion you have displayed in this long war.”⁶² And so, the Sixth, one of the last regiments of the Confederacy to surrender, brought its tradition of courage and devotion, present throughout the war, to a close.

⁶¹ *OR*, ilvii, part 1, 1061, 1063.

⁶² *OR*, ilvii, part 1, 1061.

SPYING ON AMERICA

By Courtney Hatfield B.A.

It is a well-known fact that the Soviet Union and the United States of America shared little trust with each other during the Cold War. In fact, the lack of trust between these two countries almost led to nuclear disaster. However, the depths of that mistrust have only recently been revealed. With the releases of Alexander Vassiliev's notes on old Soviet Union Secret Police records and the Venona transcripts has come the shocking revelation of just how severely Josef Stalin mistrusted America. Before the Soviet Union and the United States were on hostile terms, before the Cold War began, and even before the start of World War II, the Soviet Union had spies in America. When the Communist Party gained popularity in the United States in the early twentieth century, the Soviet Union created networks of spies, informants, couriers, and American sources to inform Moscow of any intelligence gathered on the American government. These documents have shown the American public how extensively the Soviet Union was able to infiltrate nearly every avenue of information in the United States government and even aspects of daily life. The Soviets sent spies to America, who worked their way into government jobs and recruited members of the Communist Party of America (and even regular citizens who were sympathetic to the Soviet Union or unsympathetic towards America) to pass along information to their headquarters in Moscow.¹

There were many key people and organizations that played important roles in the undercover world from 1935 to 1989. Although America recognizes the names of many discovered spies, such as Whittaker Chambers, Alger Hiss, and the Rosenbergs, much of that undercover world is still unknown today. However, America knows that particularly from 1935 to the 1950s, the Soviet Union and its secret police used many espionage and intelligence gathering tactics to undermine the security and knowledge of the United States.

Near the end of World War II, the entire world was in disarray. Countries were trying to emerge from the depths of their war-wrecked societies and reunite, and it was obvious that Germany was near the end of its

¹ The Communist Party of America will henceforth be referred to as the CPUSA.

controlling reign. The Soviet Union had been involved in espionage within Germany during the war to anticipate the German moves and protect the Eastern Front. In fact, Stalin had his spies in all countries that he counted as his rivals because

Stalin realized that once Germany and Japan were defeated, the world would be left with only three powers able to protect their influence across the globe: the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States. With that in mind, Stalin's intelligence agencies shifted their focus toward America.²

Immediately, the Soviets began spying more heavily on the Americans. Josef Stalin was determined to break into every part of the government possible to gain access to any information he could use to stay ahead of the United States. At this point in time, he began to call America "the Main Adversary," a rather hostile term for a supposed ally.³ Stalin's specific instructions stated that the KGB was to coordinate the gathering of all pertinent "secret information" from the State Department "and other intelligence or counterintelligence bodies—but especially the White House."⁴

Much to the dismay of the American government, there was little the United States could do to counter the espionage. According to Kristie Macrakis, the very nature of the "Soviet Union's closed society prevented

² John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 20.

³ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin. *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 175.

⁴ Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America—the Stalin Era* (New York: Random House, 1999) 160. According to Haynes and Klehr, the United States originally had no idea that the Soviet Union was anything more than an ally in the war. During the latter years of the war, the War Department's Military Intelligence Division picked up "vague rumors of secret German-Soviet peace negotiations." Unsure of their ability to withstand such an intense fight, these government officials ordered that Soviet diplomatic telegraphs going to and from Moscow should be intercepted, decrypted, and searched for any proof of this rumor. Unfortunately, by the time the messages had been decoded, the war was finished and there was no evidence verifying this theory. But, once these messages were deciphered, there was legitimate proof that the Soviet Union had begun to spy on America. In a nutshell, the decryption of correspondence was the goal of the Venona Project. The Venona Project would come in handy throughout the entirety of the Cold War, especially in the arrest and conviction of the Rosenberg Ring. Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 8.

Western spies from gaining easy access to secret information,” (such as lists of Soviet spies, the information they had discovered or wished to discover, and their tactics) “whereas the United States’ open society made it a soft espionage target.”⁵ The Soviets also concentrated solely on using humans as espionage agents instead of technology. The intense fear of being caught with a camera containing incriminating evidence kept the spies on their toes. Most Soviet spies were required to commit information to memory to prevent such a dangerous situation in the event that they were caught.

In addition to these more conventional espionage tactics, there were spies who intentionally allowed themselves to be caught, “neutralizing [the CIA’s Soviet-Eastern European Division] and tying it up in knots with double agents who fed it disinformation.”⁶ This “disinformation” could be anything that was remotely false or misleading enough to shift the focus of Americans who were investigating these accusations.⁷ Between those who lied to the American government about the Soviet Union’s intelligence agents and those who actually defected and gave the government good information, the United States had no idea who to believe. Each “defector” was as credible as the next, and each was capable of lying in a convincing manner. Finally, the Soviet Union was able to convert prominent members of the American society to their espionage, which included high ranking government officials, children of important officials, and members of the CPUSA who worked in the government. Among the American citizens, “by the mid-1950s...there was a wide-spread consensus on three points: that Soviet espionage was serious, that American Communists assisted the Soviets, and that several senior government officials had betrayed the United States.”⁸

The most important players in the Cold War espionage attempts of the Soviet Union were the members of the Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (KGB), or the Committee for State Security. Without the Secret Police of Russia working to organize the clandestine missions into the United States, none of the espionage would have occurred in the first place.⁹

⁵ Kristie Macrakis, “Technophilic Hubris and Espionage Styles During the Cold War,” *Isis* 101, no. 2 (June 2010): 379.

⁶ Macrakis, “Technophilic Hubris,” 383.

⁷ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 38.

⁸ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 14.

⁹ For clarification, there were many intelligence agencies in the Soviet Union. The NKVD, or Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del, preceded the KGB. The GRU (military intelligence) and the Naval GRU (naval military intelligence) also had their own missions into

With any country, including the United States, the KGB strove to influence “the policies of another government, [disrupt] relations between other nations, and [discredit or weaken] governmental and non-governmental opponents [which involved] attempts to deceive the target...and to distort the target’s perceptions of reality.”¹⁰ The KGB divided its agents into two categories: the “legal” agents and the “illegal” agents. The legal agents consisted of people who were actually allowed to be in the United States. Typically, these agents were journalists or diplomats recognized by America. Illegal agents, on the other hand, were those who were either smuggled into the country for the purpose of espionage or American citizens recruited and actively committing treason.¹¹ The KGB sent these agents into America to run the underground spy networks across the country. It is disquieting to ponder these KGB agents that could pass themselves off as American citizens, complete with a full comprehension of the English language and untraceable American accents. Typically, there was one “station chief” for each city where there was major espionage work. The station chiefs controlled what each station was permitted to do, including who they were allowed to recruit and how they gathered their information. The KGB even gave money to those it recruited. For example, when underground spy William Dodd (the brother of Soviet spy Martha Dodd and the son of the American diplomat to Germany) was running for Congress, he received \$1,000 from the KGB for his campaign fund. In short, the KGB provided money for endeavors that might lead to the spread of Communism.¹²

The KGB also tasked itself with protecting members, at least until it became too inconvenient. When American sources were identified as spies, the KGB often made plans for them to escape the country. In doing so, the KGB was keeping its own interests at heart, which usually meant protecting its agents from being caught.¹³ However, this also meant that the easiest way to protect their own interests would be to kill its spies or defectors. For

the United States. However, due to record confusion and the constant evolution of the KGB itself, many of these espionage missions are not classified as specifically belonging to one group. The KGB was over all of these intelligence groups. Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, the term “KGB” will be used when discussing any intelligence agencies in the Soviet Union.

¹⁰ Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey’s International Defense Publishers, 1984), 2.

¹¹ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 4.

¹² Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 66-68.

¹³ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 67.

example, Whittaker Chambers believed beyond a doubt that he would be killed after he defected and took measures against it. In the case of Elizabeth Bentley, a famous Soviet spy who gave the Soviet Union serious trouble, there were several plans discussed for eliminating her, including faking her suicide, arranging for her to be in a car accident, shooting her, or slipping her a “slow-acting poison.”¹⁴ On a larger scale, Stalin ordered the purges during the late 1930s to eliminate spies whom he believed had become too sympathetic towards the West. Hundreds of men and women in the KGB, both in the Soviet Union and in America, were called to Moscow “to face arrest, interrogation, torture, and often death.”¹⁵ This halted many operations in the United States as the leaders were taken from America.

One of the main reasons the KGB was able to infiltrate the United States was the participation of the CPUSA. Without the far-reaching help of the CPUSA, the Soviets would have been much less successful in their offensive espionage tactics. According to historians of the Soviet Union, the CPUSA “created ‘illegal’ departments charged with protecting the party’s internal security, preserving its ability to function in the event of government repression, [and] infiltrating non-Communist organizations for political purposes” during the Red Scare.¹⁶ The CPUSA was quite paranoid about its rights being taken away, so one of its main objectives of infiltration was to “influence policy” within the government, which could allow the members of the Communist Party more freedom.¹⁷ Although these underground networks did not start out participating in espionage activities, the fact that they were “underground” made it very easy for them to shift into an espionage role. In fact, before the release of Alexander Vassiliev’s notes, no one had realized how much the CPUSA was involved in espionage and treasonous acts.

Through the CPUSA, many small-time government workers were recruited to pass information from their offices to a courier who would then pass the information to Moscow. This information ranged from copied official documents to anything they had heard in the office that could be useful. Often, the members of the CPUSA who worked in government jobs were frustrated with themselves for selling out and working for a government

¹⁴ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 108.

¹⁵ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 153.

¹⁶ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 59.

¹⁷ Whittaker Chambers, “How Alger Hiss Gave Our Secrets to Russia,” *Saturday Evening Post*, March 1, 1952, 97.

they did not believe in.¹⁸ These men and women had easy access to more information than one would expect them to have at their low-level government positions. Historian Stephen T. Usdin theorizes that passing along the information “allowed them to reconcile their jobs and beliefs, and the considerable risk reaffirmed their dedication to the Soviet Union and allowed them to feel they were contributing directly to its survival.”¹⁹ Dedicated members of the CPUSA allowed themselves to be entirely consumed by their work for the Soviet Union, regardless of personal danger. Members gave up their rights to family life, friends, even their jobs when they joined the espionage movement. Whatever the party needed, the member had to be willing to give.

Among the most-coveted sources recruited by the CPUSA were journalists. The KGB prized these sources because of their easy ability to “assist the KGB’s activities, either by providing information or by working to discredit anti-Communists.”²⁰ Journalists were already tasked with discovering information, so their jobs allowed them to effortlessly accumulate knowledge and pass it along to Moscow. The CPUSA was able to recruit several journalists to the Soviet cause, whether by openly asking them to help the KGB or by befriending the journalists, secretly using them, and covertly passing along the information they gathered from them.

In addition to using CPUSA members to act as couriers, sources, and spies in government institutions, the CPUSA also produced and distributed fake American passports to its members involved in espionage work and to the KGB agents in the United States. Because America was (and still is) a racially and culturally diverse nation, it was very easy to pass off citizens of the Soviet Union as newly naturalized American residents, whether they had a Russian accent or not. Besides that benefit, American passports were more accepted at national borders, allowing those carrying fake passports to easily move from country to country.²¹

The man most responsible for the distribution of passports was Jacob Golos. He was the man “who coordinated an underground Communist

¹⁸ One of these die-hard members of the CPUSA included Julius Rosenberg, one of the most famous Soviet spies in America.

¹⁹ Stephen T. Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed: Industrial-Scale Conventional and Nuclear Espionage,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 99.

²⁰ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 236.

²¹ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 79.

network involving dozens of Washington and New York Sources.”²² Golos was also on the “CPUSA’s Control Committee, a small group responsible for imposing party discipline and rooting out and expelling individuals who were not sufficiently subservient to Moscow’s policies.”²³ A dedicated Soviet agent, Golos created a fake company called World Tourist, which funded many Communist activities and allowed Soviet spies to enter the United States fairly easily. To help with secretarial work, Golos hired Elizabeth Bentley. Eventually, despite being married, Golos fell in love with Bentley, who then took on a more prominent role in the espionage rings he controlled.

Elizabeth Bentley should have been the poster child of the American people. Her ancestors included people who had arrived in America on the *Mayflower*, men who had fought in the Revolutionary War, and Roger Sherman, who had signed the Declaration of Independence.²⁴ There are few people who have such an “American” background, yet Elizabeth Bentley betrayed her country and committed numerous acts of treason.

As the relationship between Golos and Bentley grew, Bentley became more involved in Golos’s operation. When he died of a heart attack, Bentley took over his assignment and acted as a courier and a handler.²⁵ During the course of her work, in which she learned the names and actions of many sources and agents, Bentley became more and more careless, even having meetings with sources and agents at her house.²⁶ Bentley reported that she was lonely after her lover’s death and eventually entered into a long-term relationship with Peter Heller, who was likely an undercover FBI agent.²⁷ When the KGB relieved Bentley of many of her duties and reduced her to a mere courier, Bentley snapped and decided to defect, exposing many important undercover KGB agents in America.²⁸

As a result of her defection, many spy rings and intelligence-gathering groups were forced to disband completely and avoid anyone who could be linked to Communism or the Soviet Union at all. While some of these groups were able to begin work again within two or three years, others were unable to begin work again at all. By giving the government the name

²² Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 84.

²³ Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed,” 100.

²⁴ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 88.

²⁵ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 93.

²⁶ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 100.

²⁷ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 100.

²⁸ Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 104.

of important handlers, leaders, and organizers, Bentley effectively put a halt to the Soviet Union's intelligence movement in the United States, from which it was never effectively able to recover. Her defection statement was later corroborated by the testimony of Whittaker Chambers.

The story of Alger Hiss and Whittaker Chambers is one that is full of controversy and confusion. The account of the Chambers-Hiss case is unique in that the public knows so many intimate details surrounding the trial and their lives. It gives the world an insight into the life of a spy that one would usually not be privy to. Hiss was a prominent man with an aspiring future. He graduated from John Hopkins University and Harvard Law School. Hiss then became the protégé of Felix Frankfurter, who was eventually a Supreme Court Justice. After working in Frankfurter's office, Hiss became a clerk for Oliver Wendell Holmes, an Associate Justice. By the early 1930s, Hiss had worked his way into the Roosevelt inner-circle, and by 1936 he was an important member of the State Department. Hiss also traveled with President Roosevelt to the Yalta conference and played a role in the beginning stages of the creation of the United Nations. Finally, in 1947, Hiss was made the President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.²⁹ Before any accusations were made against him, Alger Hiss was nearly unlimited in his potential to succeed. Unfortunately, he was attracted to an underground world of secrets and treason, which led to his political and social downfall.

After being accused of spying for the Soviet Union, Hiss spent the rest of his life trying to prove his innocence. In fact, many advocates attested his alleged innocence and pushed for his recognition as a wrongly accused man. Maxwell Geiser, a literary critic and a friend of Alger Hiss, reviewed Whittaker Chambers's testimony in an attempt to save Hiss's name.³⁰ Another young man, Jeff Kisseloff, quit college to join Hiss's legal team. To this day, Kisseloff maintains Hiss's innocence (despite evidence to the contrary) and calls him "the best companion and role model" he ever had.³¹ Although Hiss was not alive when the Venona documents were made public, he very likely rolled over in his grave when the public found out that his

²⁹ James Thomas Gay, "1948: The Alger Hiss Spy Case," *American History* 33, no. 2 (June 1998): 26-27.

³⁰ Maxwell Geiser, "Maxwell Geiser on Alger Hiss," New York University Libraries, <https://files.nyu.edu/th15/public/aboutus.html> (accessed April 1, 2014).

³¹ Jeff Kisseloff, "Working for—and with--Alger Hiss," New York University Libraries, <https://files.nyu.edu/th15/public/kisselof.html> (accessed April 1, 2014).

defense was composed entirely of lies. In hindsight, it is now painfully obvious how well Hiss fooled his peers and the American government.

The nearly perfect opposite of Hiss, Whittaker Chambers was a man with a tragic early life. Chambers's parents were unhappy in their marriage, and he saved his brother, Richard, an alcoholic, from suicide twice before Richard successfully killed himself in his third attempt.³² Chambers attended Columbia University, but was either asked to leave when he wrote a "blasphemous play," or decided to drop out of his own accord to pursue a wandering lifestyle in New York. After this, Chambers was fired from his job as a librarian for the New York Public Library for stealing books. By 1925, Chambers had become a member of the CPUSA and began work on the *Daily Worker*, a Communist newspaper.³³ It is therefore not surprising that Chambers also became involved in an underground group in 1932 after his career as a Communist took off. Following his involvement in Soviet espionage, Chambers suddenly had a change of heart and left the Communist Party entirely in 1938.³⁴ Looking at their backgrounds, it is easy to see how the committees in charge of the Chambers-Hiss case initially sided with Alger Hiss. Hiss was one of their own; he had worked with the American government his entire career, while Chambers did the opposite. However, once presented with the facts, it is clear that Chambers' accusations against Hiss were true.

According to Chambers, party officials asked him to become a member of the Ware Group, an underground espionage ring led by Jozsef Peters and Harold Ware.³⁵ After visiting Russia, the Communist International gave Ware \$25,000 to invest in the underground, and the Ware Group was born. The Ware Group was under the supervision of Peters, the head of all underground groups of the CPUSA. The Ware Group was especially useful to Peters because of its successful members who were placed in valuable positions in the government and had the ability to frequently "influence

³² Whittaker Chambers, "I Was the Witness: Part 2," *Saturday Evening Post*, February 16, 1952, 68.

³³ Gay, "The Alger Hiss Spy Case" 27. According to Chambers, during this time, the CPUSA grew as the hundreds of students involved in the Communist Party graduated from college. This is the generation that grew up to create the underground espionage rings, including people like Alger Hiss and David Greenglass. Chambers, "I Was the Witness: Part 2," 21.

³⁴ Gay, "The Alger Hiss Spy Case" 27.

³⁵ Ware was a seemingly ordinary man, but he was the son of Ella Reeve Bloor, the "official 'mother' of the American Communist Party." Whether he truly had a choice in becoming a Communist with the reputation of his mother preceding him is debatable. Whittaker Chambers, "I Was the Witness: Part 3," *Saturday Evening Post*, February 23, 1952, 23.

policy at several levels.”³⁶ Among the members of the Ware Group was Alger Hiss, a particularly prominent and promising element. Peters took rising and successful members of various groups and put them in the “special apparatus,” a group Chambers would eventually lead and control. To the members of the group, Chambers was known simply as “Karl.”³⁷

As Chambers worked with the group, he became especially close to Alger Hiss and his wife, Priscilla. Chambers frequently visited with the Hisses socially, and the two families maintained a personal relationship throughout Chambers’s involvement with Communism. Hiss even allowed Chambers and his family to live in his old apartment after the Hiss family moved out, which he did until the lease ran out. Chambers also played a key role in Hiss’s career as his overseer in the Ware Group. When Hiss was offered the opportunity to join the staff of the Solicitor General of the United States, Peters and Chambers met together and agreed that it was in the CPUSA’s best interest that Hiss take the job. This action was repeated when Hiss became the assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State.

When Alger Hiss took on these new jobs, he had access to an innumerable amount of top-secret documents and paperwork. He began to take this paperwork home, take pictures of it, and pass the pictures to Chambers, who would then give the pictures over to the Communist Party. This routine changed slightly when Russian Colonel Boris Bykov from Moscow, a Soviet agent, started to supervise the Ware Group. Due to his intense paranoia, Bykov was terrified of any agents being caught with pictures. Bykov instead had Hiss bring home documents or handwritten notes, which his wife would type on their family typewriter and turn over to Chambers.³⁸ However, after doing this for several years, Chambers began to lose interest in the Party’s work.³⁹

³⁶ Chambers, “I was the Witness: Part 3,” 23.

³⁷ Chambers, “I was the Witness: Part 3,” 48.

³⁸ Chambers, “How Alger Hiss Gave Our Secrets to Russia,” 22.

³⁹ There is speculation as to why Chambers actually left the CPUSA and its underground spying network. While it is true that Chambers had become disenchanted with the ideology of the Communist Party, there are other determining factors that led to his severing of ties. The primary reason Chambers left was most likely the purges conducted in the mid 1930s. In fact, Chambers was ordered “to travel to Moscow, supposedly to brief military intelligence officials.” Like many other agents in America, Chambers ignored the summons, hoping to avoid arrest, imprisonment, or even death. Secondly, Chambers had the example of one of his own friends, John Sherman, who defected in the latter portion of 1937. Chambers used Sherman’s model to prepare his own defection. Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 45.

In April of 1938, Chambers did not report to a meeting scheduled with Colonel Bykov to deliver material he had collected from Hiss and Harry Dexter White.⁴⁰ He had been preparing for this day since 1937. By the time Bykov was aware that Chambers was not coming to the meeting, Chambers had secretly moved his entire family to a different house. After staying below the radar for several months, Chambers began to fear for his life. He slowly began to make friends in his new life and branch out in his community. In Chambers's mind, if he became more than a "faceless man in hiding," it would be harder for the KGB to kill him.⁴¹ Later that same year, Chambers met with the Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Jr. and gave up the names of Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White, Noel Field, Laurence Duggan, and several other prominent government workers. However, this information was not actually taken seriously until it came to trial several years later in 1948.⁴²

When Chambers was subpoenaed to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee, he refrained from calling Hiss a spy. He did, however, declare that Hiss was an active Communist, which Hiss refuted immediately. On August 5, 1948, Hiss was shown a picture of Chambers and, stating he did not know him, claimed, "If this is a picture of Mr. Chambers, he is not particularly unusual looking. He looks like a lot of people. I might even mistake him for the Chairman of this committee."⁴³ Despite this, HUAC, pushed by committee member Richard Nixon, decided to determine if Hiss and Chambers actually knew each other.

Chambers was asked many questions about Hiss's character, habits, hobbies, and family. While testifying, Chambers recalled that Hiss and his wife were avid bird watchers, and that one time they had seen a rare

⁴⁰ Harry Dexter White, a member of the Treasury Department, was a key member of the Ware Group as well. He frequently handed over Treasury documents to the CPUSA, and every week he made sure to bring home a handwritten summary of every document he had seen in his office, but had not had time to copy in full. Although he is an important figure in the Cold War, he died shortly before the Hiss case began and before he could be accused of treason. However, during the Hiss trial, Chambers let into evidence handwritten notes from White. If he had lived, his story would be much the same as that of Alger Hiss. Chambers, "How Alger Hiss Gave Our Secrets to Russia," 22.

⁴¹ Therefore, in 1939, Chambers became a writer for *Time* and put his life as a courier and a spy behind him until a friend finally convinced him to go forward and expose members of the Ware Group who were working in the government. Chambers, "How Alger Hiss Gave Our Secrets to Russia," 97.

⁴² Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood*, 48.

⁴³ Whittaker Chambers, "Why Did Hiss Think He Could Get Away With It?" *Saturday Evening Post*, March 8, 1952, 86.

prothonotary warbler. Hiss, when later asked if he was a bird watcher, also admitted to seeing a prothonotary warbler. He had no way of knowing that this was the beginning of the end for his career and creditability. In the many eyewitness articles that he wrote for the *Saturday Evening Post*, Chambers explained how Hiss continued to lie throughout the hearings and eventually became so entangled in his lies that he exposed himself as a Communist and a spy. Over the course of the trial, Hiss was shown Whittaker Chambers's picture many more times. He gradually became less confident in his testimony, claiming at first that Chambers was not "completely unfamiliar," then admitting that he could be a man with bad teeth whom he knew as George Crosley.⁴⁴ At this point, Nixon arranged to have Chambers and Hiss meet face-to-face so that Chambers could be positively identified. After much stalling and attempts to dodge questions, Hiss finally agreed that he had known Chambers in the 1930s.⁴⁵

In the famous August 25th trial, Hiss was torn apart when he was caught in the lies about his old Ford Roadster. According to Chambers, Hiss signed the car over to the CPUSA. Hiss vehemently refuted this and stated that he had sold the car to Crosley. However, evidence was produced showing that Hiss had, in fact, signed the car away. The committee and the audience then began to lean towards Chambers. In a moment of desperation, Hiss released as evidence the mere idea that Chambers had been admitted into a mental hospital. Although this was in no way true, the suggestion that Chambers could be insane was enough to start a vicious campaign of rumors that damaged Chambers' reputation.⁴⁶

The truth finally emerged with the bizarre entrance of the Pumpkin Papers and the typewriter used to recreate documents Hiss brought home from work. In an effort to maintain a "life insurance" after he left the CPUSA, Chambers had hidden secret government documents and undeveloped microfilm implicating several senior officials, including Hiss

⁴⁴ Whittaker Chambers, "How Hiss Got Trapped in His Own Lies," *Saturday Evening Post*, March 15, 1952, 26, 100.

⁴⁵ Whittaker Chambers, "The Last Warning—and the Film in the Pumpkin," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 5, 1952, 32. However, in recognizing that he knew Chambers, Hiss added to this statement a threat against Chambers. If Chambers once again stated in public that Hiss was a Communist, Hiss would bring a libel suit against Chambers. To Chambers, this was a message that came directly from the CPUSA and the KGB: if Chambers did not drop his testimony, the KGB would be forced to bring consequences against him.

⁴⁶ Whittaker Chambers, "Hiss is Cornered and Fights Back," *Saturday Evening Post*, March 29, 1952, 36-37 and 127-130.

and White. Chambers had put them in a hollowed out pumpkin in the pumpkin patch at his farm for safekeeping in the event that the KGB searched his house. In addition, the typewriter used to type documents given to Chambers was found, after Hiss had lied about its origins. The typewriter was tested, and the lettering it produced matched the lettering of the files already in evidence. Because the act was after the expiration of the statute of limitations, Hiss was only charged with perjury. Although he spent the rest of his life trying to prove his innocence, the majority of the American public did not believe him. The “espionage offensive had not only uncovered American secrets, it had also undermined the mutual trust that American officials had for each other.”⁴⁷ In short, the American public was in shock over the events of this trial. No one knew whom they could trust, especially when even the government was vulnerable to infiltration.

Even with the chaos caused by the Chambers-Hiss case, there was one espionage trial that truly tore America apart. When the Rosenbergs went to trial, were convicted of espionage and treason, and sentenced to death, the entire world erupted. Screaming advocates pleaded for their release and claimed their innocence while stunned government officials realized how deeply their beloved country had been infiltrated. In hindsight, it is apparent that both Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were spies for the Soviet Union. Although the extent of their treason was not known in the 1950s, the world now has access to the account of their crimes.

While Julius Rosenberg was attending the City College of New York in the 1930s, he accumulated a group of friends devoted to the Communist Party. This was not rare among college students at the time, but Rosenberg stood by his Communist convictions even after most people denounced the party when the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany formed an alliance pact in 1939. Despite his political beliefs, and because of the “limited employment options for young men with Jewish-sounding names,” Rosenberg joined the military as an inspector.⁴⁸ Even though he had a low-level job, Rosenberg had access to nearly everything in the military factory.

⁴⁷ Haynes and Klehr, *Venona*, 13.

⁴⁸ Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed,” 98.

This job put him in an important position for Soviet intelligence, which he officially began in 1941.⁴⁹

Once the KGB knew that Rosenberg was reliable, they entrusted him with recruiting specific targets that could benefit the Enormoz Project.⁵⁰ This included Russell McNutt, who covertly passed on blueprints and other information about the Manhattan Project, and David Greenglass, the brother of Ethel Rosenberg, who worked with the Army at Los Alamos on the Manhattan Project as well. Ruth Greenglass, the twenty-one year old wife of David, was recruited to convince her husband to pass on secrets to the Soviet Union. Both of the Greenglasses were ardent Communists and were eager to help.

Ultimately, it was David Greenglass who most severely damaged the nation. The information that he collected for the KGB expedited the Soviet attempt to create the atomic bomb, increasing the tensions of the Cold War. In total, the Rosenberg Ring, under Julius's control,

stole detailed information about techniques for manufacturing some of the most advanced military technology developed by U.S. industry since World War II, a period when the USSR's struggle for survival prevented its engineers from keeping pace with progress among its allies and enemies in computing, electronics, aviation, and a host of other technologies.⁵¹

They also gave the technology of jet engines and airborne radar equipment to the KGB. On top of this, Rosenberg collected key pieces of technology

⁴⁹ Rosenberg recruited men whom he believed were sympathetic to the cause and had easy access to materials that could prove useful to the Soviets. William Mutterperl, an engineer in the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, Joel Barr, an engineer at the Signal Corps, and Michael Sidrovich, another engineer, were all among his early recruits. Golos originally took charge of Rosenberg and the spies he had recruited during his time working for the military. Initially, Golos told the men they were collecting information for the CPUSA; however, Golos also suspected that Rosenberg and his men knew all along that they were spying for the Soviet Union and committing treason.

Usdin, "The Rosenberg Ring Revealed," 101-102.

⁵⁰ This was the code-name given to the Soviet Union's decently successful attempt to infiltrate the Manhattan Project, the building of an atomic bomb. Gregg Herken, "Target Enormoz: Soviet Nuclear Espionage on the West Coast of the United States, 1942-1950," 68.

⁵¹ Usdin, "The Rosenberg Ring Revealed," 113-114.

himself in addition to recruiting and encouraging these men to spy for the Soviets. This information was then “used against U.S. soldiers during the hottest conflicts of the Cold War, in Korea and Vietnam.”⁵²

The security and arrogance the Rosenberg Ring had acquired came crashing down when the Venona Project cracked the code on several messages discussing members of Rosenberg’s underground network. In 1950, the KGB began to make plans with the Rosenberg and the Greenglass families to flee the country. Rosenberg confirmed that both families would be ready to leave for Mexico on June 15th. However, in an ironic twist of fate, David Greenglass was arrested that very afternoon before anyone could leave. That night, he confessed to espionage, named Rosenberg, and agreed to testify against him in an effort to protect his wife, who had acted as a courier. Two days later, Julius Rosenberg was arrested.⁵³

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Morton Sobell (a member of the Ring), and David Greenglass were all indicted in February of 1951. During their trial, Greenglass testified against everyone, stating that Rosenberg had recruited him and that Ethel knew everything that had happened. The prosecutors coerced “the Atomic Energy Commission...to declassify some top atomic secrets so that the Government might point out the value of the information allegedly stolen by the defendants.”⁵⁴ Because their crimes were committed during wartime, capital punishment was a possible sentence for the Rosenbergs. At the end of the trial Morton Sobell was sentenced to thirty years in jail, David Greenglass was sentenced to fifteen years in jail, Ruth Greenglass was never brought to trial and the Rosenbergs were sentenced to death and executed on June 19, 1953.⁵⁵

During this time period, the Red Scare, or the fear of Communism, was prominent, and people had no idea whom to trust. The government feverishly attempted to rid itself of secret Communists, and citizens turned in their neighbors. But, despite these efforts, the Soviets still gained access to military secrets, the inner workings of the Manhattan Project, and the

⁵² Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed,” 121.

⁵³ Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed,” 91-143.

⁵⁴ “Spy Trial to Hear 3 Atom Scientists: Groves, Oppenheimer, and Urey Among 96 Witnesses on the Government’s List,” *New York Times*, March 1, 1951.

⁵⁵ Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed,” 91-143.

American government.⁵⁶ During this age of paranoia and uneasy tension, no one could blindly believe that he was not in some way connected to someone involved in Soviet espionage. The new next-door neighbors could very well be the ring-leaders of an underground network. The Soviet Union knew how to obtain the information it wanted. Its intelligence team knew that “no government can function with officials dedicated to its destruction posted high and low in its foreign or any other service.”⁵⁷ Although these events barely scratch the surface of the extent of the damage caused by the Soviet Union’s intelligence agencies, it is obvious that the Soviet infiltration of America severely afflicted the relationship between the two countries and created a rift that led to one of the tensest times in the history of our nation.

⁵⁶ The Manhattan Project was a research project that created the atomic bomb during World War II. At this point in time, the project was highly confidential and shared only between America, the United Kingdom, and Canada. The Soviets were interested in the project and wanted to keep up with weapons development in America, so they planted spies in the research team to gather information.

⁵⁷ Chambers, “How Alger Hiss Gave Our Secrets to Russia,” 23.

THE STABILITY OF HENRY VII

By B. Davis Barnhill

The Renaissance in Europe, as a topic of study, is one of the most contested and disputed. Not only do scholars disagree on a timeframe in which the Renaissance took place, but many scholars would even argue that parts of what is considered to be the “Renaissance,” did not happen the way it was previously believed to, or even that the “Renaissance” as an idea, did not happen at all. Among the most contested issues under the vast topic of the Renaissance are its effects on, and the participation of, England. The interaction between the movement of the Renaissance and the people of England was very different than anywhere else in Europe. For most places, when the ideas of the Renaissance arrived, a period of rapid change followed. This was not the case with England. Instead of a nation waiting to accept new ideas and worldviews with open arms, when the wave of the Renaissance swept through the European continent and arrived on the edges of Northern France to gaze across the English Channel, what was found was a nation so preoccupied with its own internal strife that it was almost impermeable to new ideas. Until the conclusion of the fifteenth century, England was seen by the rest of Europe as a kingdom of people stuck in the previous age, unable, or perhaps even unwilling, to move forward. However, with the conclusion of the Hundred Years War, the Wars of the Roses, and the emergence of the Tudor dynasty, an important milestone was reached in the creation of the English nation.¹ Ultimately, what brought England into the era of the Renaissance was a deliberate effort, on the part of the king, to reach a standard of stability throughout his kingdom. This stability was sought-after using a variety of means. The threat and reality of war necessitated the adoption of Renaissance era military tactics from the European continent in order to gain an advantage on the battlefield. Once military victory was achieved, it was imperative to secure the throne from usurpers, and to strengthen the delicate political climate. While the first two steps were extremely necessary in the process toward stability, no lasting and nation-wide security could be achieved without an immediate effort to repair and

¹ Hans Kohn, “The Genesis and Character of English Nationalism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1, no. 1 (Jan., 1940): 70.

strengthen the economy, and to reach out and form new and enduring diplomatic ties. Without doubt, the king who bore the most responsibility for the striving toward, and ultimately achieving stability, was Henry VII.

One of the key wartime tactics that became a marker for warfare during the Renaissance was the use of mercenaries. By the fourteenth century, mercenary companies were the major factor in Italian warfare. Companies formed around a skilled commander and then sold their services to republics, princes, popes, or others who wished to use military force for their own ends.² By the time of the Wars of the Roses in the second half of the fifteenth century, the use of mercenaries was common all throughout Europe. The practice was used for possibly the first time by the English at the Battle of Mortimer's Cross in 1461. Another example of the use of mercenaries in the Wars of the Roses was at the Second Battle of St. Albans, where the Yorkist commander, Richard, Duke of Warwick, marched with over 500 Burgundian troops to support his English archers. Finally, at the Battle of Bosworth Field on the 22 of August 1485, Henry Tudor led, in addition to his Scottish mercenaries, a group of 1500 French troops comprised of both mercenaries and men sent by Henry's supporters in France.

Shortly following the end of the Hundred Years War, the prolonged conflict with France that helped define England during the Medieval Period, England plummeted into political and domestic turmoil in the form of the Wars of the Roses. To best understand the lack of stability in this time, a brief overview of the basic milestones is appropriate. In 1422, Henry V died and was succeeded by his infant son, Henry VI. While he grew up he was assisted in ruling by a series of ineffectual regents. Eventually, when he was 30 years old, Henry VI went mad. At that point, the stronger, more capable man, Richard Duke of York, was installed as Henry's regent as well as his heir as long as Henry did not have a son of his own. However, Henry VI had a son, who superseded Richard in the line of succession. Soon after the birth of Prince Edward, Queen Margaret grew suspicious of Richard and had him driven from England by her men.³ Richard fled to Ireland where he began to gain support to overthrow the mentally-unstable Henry VI. After five years of uneasiness, plotting, and mustering of support, Henry VI's troops met

² Michael Edward Mallet, and William Caferro, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2009), 25.

³ Painter, *A History of the Middle Ages*, 379-380.

The Stability of Henry VII

Richard, Duke of York and his army in battle. Richard was slain during the fighting at the Battle of Wakefield, along with one of his sons. However, Edward, Richard's heir who was, "by far the ablest captain of his day, with a keen eye for strategy as well as tactics," survived.⁴ Within a year of his father's death, Edward met the Lancastrians at the Battle of Towton on March 29, 1461. Towton was the bloodiest battle ever fought on English soil, and Edward won a decisive victory that day. Edward captured and held Henry prisoner, but his wife, Margaret of Anjou, escaped. Edward then entered the city of London, and his ally, the Earl of Warwick had Edward declared King on March 27th.⁵ Almost 10 years later, Margaret, refusing to give up, defeated Edward's army in battle and forced him to flee into hiding. After the victory, Margaret made an alliance with Richard, Earl of Warwick.⁶ For a period of about seven months in the winter of 1470, the Earl of Warwick, Margaret, and others, were able to successfully depose Edward in favor of Henry VI. However, by the end of the seven months Edward once again regained his throne. Through a series of victories, he was able to defeat all of the remaining Lancastrian support he faced. He drove off Margaret, killed her son Edward, and imprisoned Henry back in the Tower where he died.⁷

In 1483 Edward IV died a peaceful death, leaving behind two sons who were too young to rule, and numerous daughters. The most natural candidate for the Regency of England was Edward's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester.⁸ What happened next concerning the Monarchy over the next two years is highly disputed. Edward's two sons were taken and kept in the Tower of London for, according to those who took them, their safe keeping. They were never seen again. Richard Duke of Gloucester, regent and uncle to Edward's sons, became Richard III after a parliamentary decree ruling that the boys were illegitimate. There is much debate on the degree of Richard's involvement in the plot against the boys. Richard no doubt felt that he had served his brother loyally and therefore deserved a chance to rule outright, not just as regent for Edward's son. However, they were also the sons of his beloved brother and King. Later, during the Tudor period, there was much written about Richard III that blamed him for the deaths of the boys.⁹

⁴ Ibid, 380-381.

⁵ Trevor Royle, *The Road to Bosworth Field*, 275-276.

⁶ Sidney Painter, *A History of the Middle Ages*, 381.

⁷ Trevor Royle, *The Road to Bosworth Field*, 351.

⁸ Ibid, 381.

⁹ Trevor Royle, *The Road to Bosworth Field*, 381.

When Richard took the throne in 1483, he almost certainly did not expect that his chief rival for the crown would be a man who was, at the time, in prison, named Henry Tudor. Due to the complicated nature of the genealogy amongst the Houses of York and Lancaster, what Richard surely did not realize was that in claiming the Throne for himself, he inadvertently created his own downfall by improving the quality of Henry's claim as well.¹⁰ Around Christmas, 1483, Henry received a huge stepping stone on his path to being king. Francis, Duke of Brittany endorsed Henry for the throne of England.¹¹ About that time, Richard began to become more and more uneasy about the security of his claim. He therefore had a special meeting with both houses of parliament in which he encouraged them all to take an oath of loyalty to his succession. While some of the Members of Parliament did so, it was quickly rendered irrelevant as both Richard's son and wife soon died, leaving him with no heirs.¹² By 1485 it was clear to both Richard and Henry that conflict between the two was imminent. On August 1st, Henry and 4,000 men sailed out of the Seine toward England.¹³ Throughout the build up to the conflict, it became clear that at Bosworth Field, there was to be not two armies, but three. Lord Stanley controlled an independent army out of Wales. Stanley had made secret arrangements to aid Henry, but shortly before the battle took place, Richard took Lord Stanley's eldest son hostage in an attempt to make sure that Lord Stanley did not betray him. This forced Lord Stanley and his troops to be very careful about when they chose to act.¹⁴ Shortly after the battle began on 22 August, Richard decided to take his own body guard and attack Henry personally. Henry valiantly withstood Richards attack for longer than his men thought was possible. As it began to seem as if Richard and his men might kill Henry, Lord Stanley decided to act. He and his men galloped down from their hill and cut Richard and his men down. It is said that someone found Richard's crown on the ground, and that Lord Stanley used it to crown Henry VII on the battlefield. Whether or not that story is true, the results of the battle remained the same. Henry won the throne, and became the first Tudor monarch.¹⁵

¹⁰ S.B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (New Haven: Yale, 1999), 19.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 35.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁴ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 45.

¹⁵ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 49.

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The political climate in which Henry VII assumed the throne was one of immense chaos. While in hindsight, it can be seen that Henry would not lose his throne to a usurper, to Henry and his contemporaries this was a very real possibility. Therefore, Henry spent a large portion of his reign dedicated to the security of his crown and the stabilization of his kingdom. It was through this stability that Henry was able to facilitate the emergence of the Renaissance in England; for the stability that Henry provided was itself a Renaissance idea. One of the characteristics of the Renaissance was, “The consolidation of princely government and the decline of rivals to monarchy”.¹⁶ The great Renaissance historian Jacob Burckhardt in, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, reinforced this point when, in his section on, “The State as a Work of Art,” he quoted what he labeled as Petrarch’s, “ideal picture of a prince of the fourteenth century.” He quoted Petrarch as saying that it was best for the subjects to love the prince. He then cautioned the prince not to be harsh with his citizens, but rather to act as their father. However, Petrarch went on to clarify, “By citizens, of course, I mean those who love the existing order; for those who daily desire change are rebels and traitors, and against such a stern justice may take its course.”¹⁷ The actions of Henry VII in regards to the consolidation and protection of his power were very similar to those of the most iconic Renaissance princes of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. In fact, both Henry and the early Renaissance princes emerged out of similar situations. The ruling class of fourteenth century Italy arose from a narrowing of the base of power in a city, along with a rise in factional violence.¹⁸ In a similar way, Henry emerged from a narrowing of power due to the loss of such a large percentage of the nobility in the Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses. Likewise, Henry also saw a growth in factional violence as a result of this narrowing of power. The Wars of the Roses tore the nation of England apart. Therefore, when Henry VII took power in 1485, he immediately began work to make sure that internal conflict would not throw the nation into upheaval again.

¹⁶ Denys Hay, “Introduction,” In *The New Cambridge Modern History: Volume I the Renaissance 1493-1520*, ed. G.R. Potter (Cambridge: University Press, 1957), 5.

¹⁷ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 8.

¹⁸ Michael Mallett “Politics and Society 1200-1600,” In *The Oxford History of Italy*, ed. George Holmes (Oxford: University Press, 1997), 63.

Henry's first major task as a victor on the battlefield at Bosworth was to send to the castle in Yorkshire where his bride-to-be Elizabeth of York was waiting. He also took into custody, the young Edward, Earl of Warwick as a prisoner. Edward was the ten year old nephew, and once heir of Richard III. Upon his arrival in London, he was locked away in the Tower for the rest of his life.¹⁹ Henry held his first parliament in early November of 1485. There Henry's primary business was to go about securing his rule. He had parliament declare his title, reverse some of the attainders issued by Richard, and issue new attainders for the purpose of capturing traitors.²⁰ Henry then asked Parliament to do something unconventional for the purpose of securing his title. He had Parliament set the day of the beginning of his reign to the day before the Battle of Bosworth Field, on the 21st of August, so that everyone who fought against him would be considered guilty of treason.²¹ This meant that with immediate effect, Richard and 28 others were declared guilty of treason before parliament.²² When less than a year after the beginning of his reign, Viscount Lovel, Humphrey Stafford and Thomas Stafford, who were all in sanctuary, broke it so that they could escape and cause insurrection, Henry went so far as to change the law so that sanctuary no longer protected in cases of treason.²³ In 1487, a young man by the name of Lambert Simnel, with Yorkist backers claimed to be the imprisoned Earl of Warwick and fled to Ireland. The plot worked so well that Simnel was even crowned Edward VI that May in Dublin.²⁴ However, when the party returned to England to try and gather domestic support, Henry's forces massacred them. The priest, Richard Simons, who tutored Simnel, was given life imprisonment for his part in the plot. However, the boy, Lambert Simnel, was given a job working in the King's kitchen. Everyone else associated with the rebellion was put to death.²⁵ Showing the seriousness that Henry took the matter of rebellion against his title, he asked for, and received, a papal bull of excommunication for the Irish bishops who had participated in the illegal coronation of Lambert Simnel.²⁶ Henry wanted his nation and all of Europe to know that he would not allow himself to become another victim of the unstable political system

¹⁹ James Gairdner, *Henry the Seventh* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1920), 31.

²⁰ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 61.

²¹ Gairdner, *Henry the Seventh*, 37.

²² Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 63.

²³ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 71.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 75.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 77.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 79.

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that had been the standard in England until his reign. His actions proved this when, in early 1495, he tried for treason, and then beheaded, Sir William Stanley, the same man who saved Henry's life at Bosworth Field. His reign was plagued by constant pretenders claiming to be various Yorkist heirs, especially the Princes who were never seen again after entering the Tower, so Henry tried to put an end to the illegitimate claims. In 1500, the sons of the Duke of Suffolk, Henry's nephews, were involved in a plot to take Henry's throne. Among those executed for the plot was Sir James Tyrell, but not before he confessed to knowing for a fact that the Princes in the tower were indeed dead. Even if this confession was coerced out of Tyrell by Henry's men, it still made it more difficult for anyone to claim to be a son of Edward IV. This was exactly what Henry wanted.²⁷ It was not until 1506 that Henry VII could feel reasonably secure from the threat of Yorkist claimants.²⁸

Another key aspect of the Renaissance that Henry VII embodied very well was the idea that out of the Renaissance came, "a pattern of international relationships based on dynasticism."²⁹ Throughout his reign, Henry sought to not only secure his own throne, and the recognition of the Tudor dynasty in Europe,³⁰ but to bind the monarchy of England to the Tudor house forever. This can be seen by his promise to marry Elizabeth of York, as well as his immediate retrieval of her following the conclusion of the Battle of Bosworth Field.³¹ It is clear Henry sought first to make sure that there needed to be no more war by joining the two families in marriage. No family or group of people was as successful at the use of dynasticism as a tool to forge new international relationships, as well as to gain power, than the Hapsburgs of central Europe. While, the marriage of Margaret Tudor to James IV of Scotland was different in scale when compared to those of the Hapsburgs, it was not different in kind.³² Originally, Henry offered the idea of a marriage between James and his daughter as a way to get James to stop supporting the pretender, Richard Warbeck, in 1496.³³ Eventually, after a few skirmishes along the border between England and Scotland, James saw that the best interests of Scotland did not lie with Warbeck, and he therefore

²⁷ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 93.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 94.

²⁹ Hay, *The New Cambridge Modern History*, 5.

³⁰ Lewis Einstein, *The Italian Renaissance in England* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1902), 41.

³¹ Gairdner, *Henry the Seventh*, 31.

³² *Ibid*, 10.

³³ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 89.

decided to kick Warbeck out of the country. A peace treaty was signed in September 1497,³⁴ with the marriage agreement following in January 1502. In August 1503, James IV married Margaret and tied together the monarchies of England and Scotland.³⁵ However, it is not a marriage with Scotland that Henry VII is the most famous for arranging. Instead, it is the marriage of his eldest son Arthur to Catherine of Aragon. The two were married on the 14th of November, 1501, but tragically, Arthur died on the 2nd of April, 1502. This left Henry VII with only one male heir left, his son Henry, on whom to pin his hopes for a dynasty.³⁶

With the stability of the head of state secured, it was possible, for the first time in over one hundred years, for the King of England to devote a significant amount of time to the question of economics in the nation. Henry did not have to treat the economy as a second thought, but could instead focus on changing the existing policy to improve the quality of life in his kingdom. To see the impact of Henry VII's economic policies on England, it helps to first consider the economic policies under the preceding Lancastrians.³⁷ During the reign of Henry VI, it was not uncommon for European merchant vessels to stop in London. While the presence of foreign traders seeking to do business in the capital would be a favorable event in most kingdoms throughout Europe, the presence of these traders often only incited local violence surrounding foreign involvement in England. In fact, this feeling was so rooted in the minds of the people of London that, when riots broke out in January of 1455 following the arrival of a group of Venetian traders, the government of Henry VI began to warn merchants not to come to the city.³⁸ The resulting decline in goods coming into the city led to widespread shortages and inflated prices. Prices for corn rose so high that it even became more cost effective to purchase grains from York and Lincoln and ship them into London, than to buy the previously cheaper, and now scarce, goods brought in by the few foreign merchants who still risked the potential violence of the city.³⁹ When Henry VI was defeated and dethroned, he left

³⁴ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 90.

³⁵ Gairdner, *Henry the Seventh*, 56.

³⁶ Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 93.

³⁷ Jesse H. Flemming, *England Under the Lancastrians* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1921), 243.

³⁸ Flemming, *England Under the Lancastrians*, 247.

³⁹ Flemming, *England Under the Lancastrians*, 250.

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England in a state of a “debilitating period of recession.”⁴⁰ It was into this economic situation that Henry VII assumed the throne. However, unlike his Lancastrian and Yorkist predecessors, Henry VII concluded his reign a wealthy king.⁴¹ One of Henry’s first acts in Parliament was to return the lands that had been distributed to the nobility during the reigns of previous kings. Most importantly, Henry immediately brought the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster back under the control of the Crown. This action yielded a considerable amount of income for the King.⁴² While on the throne, his economic policies brought his kingdom out of poverty and into prosperity. During his reign, Henry VII tripled the income, and established a balanced budget.⁴³ This stability made the emerging middle class of England by far the most loyal to Henry throughout his reign.⁴⁴

The emergence of the Renaissance in England occurred in a unique manner. The instability of the political and military situations in the nation left it simply too pre-occupied to embrace the ideas of the Renaissance for many years. It was through a gradual adoption of Renaissance tools and ideas that allowed for stability to come to England; and it was for that stability that Henry VII worked so tirelessly. It was the use of Renaissance military ideas that aided in the faster resolution of the factional violence. Henry’s relentless pursuit to consolidate the power in his kingdom with himself alone provided peace and stability that his contemporaries had not known in their lives. His dedication to the formation of diplomatic relationships through the use of dynasticism, not only as a power grab, but as a tool for peace as well, sought to ensure that his house and legacy would continue long after he did. Henry’s change of economic policies allowed for a stronger and more prosperous nation that could fully enjoy the ideas and expressions of the Renaissance. While he had no way of planning for the events that the future of his kingdom or house would hold, Henry VII’s impact on England allowed for the emergence of a nation that, no longer held back by internal conflicts, could begin to lead the world in innovation.

⁴⁰ Hay, *The New Cambridge Modern History*, 6.

⁴¹ G.R. Elton, *England under the Tudors* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1959), 46.

⁴² Chrimes, *Henry VII*, 63.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 53.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 43.

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In Memoriam:
Raymond L. Muncy