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The Bridge Burnings and Union Uprising of 1861

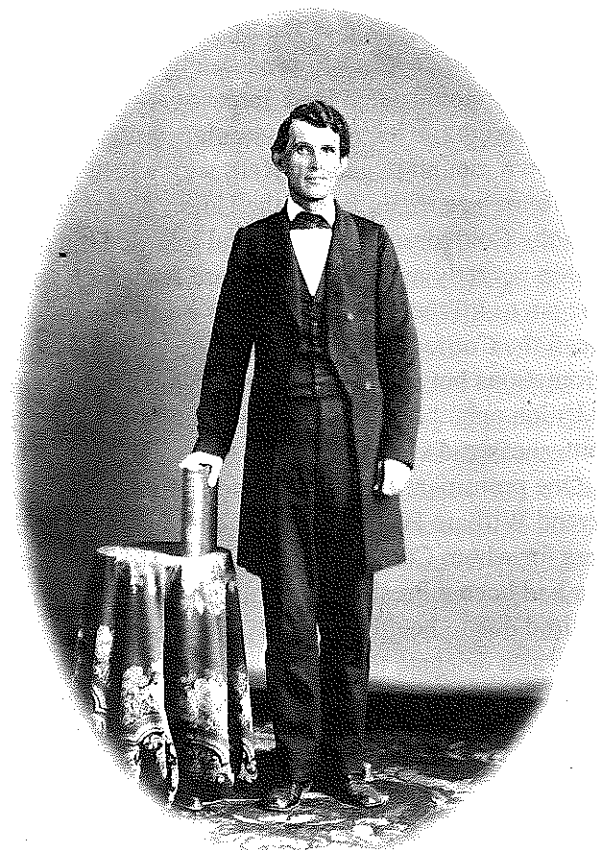
by Dorothy Kelly

The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies calls it the "Revolt of the Unionists in East Tennessee," but the fiery image of the destruction of railroad bridges throughout East Tennessee gives the episode the more widely known title of the Bridge Burnings. An area of overwhelming Union sentiment and bisected by a crucial railroad, East Tennessee posed a major problem for the newly formed Confederate government. The important railroad was one of only two that connected Virginia with the Deep South and carried supplies, troops, and material for the war effort.

On November 8, 1861, exactly five months from the date Tennessee voted to secede, Union sympathizers carried out a plan to burn nine major bridges along a 270-mile stretch of railroad from Bristol, Tennessee, to Bridgeport, Alabama. The Federal Army had agreed to march across the Kentucky border into East Tennessee, capture the railroad, and liberate the loyal people of East Tennessee. The Bridge Burners carried out their plans for the destruction of the bridges and began to assemble to support the expected Federal force. The Army, however, had a change of plans and did not move into East Tennessee. The burning of the bridges so alarmed the Confederate government that it set in motion a campaign of suppression, persecution, imprisonment, and death for suspected Unionists.

Unlike Middle and West Tennessee, East Tennessee was strongly opposed to secession. There were several reasons for their differing point of view. Until the coming of the railroads in the mid-1850s East Tennessee had been somewhat isolated by its difficult, mountainous roads. This resulted in less commerce and contact with the Deep South than the remainder of the state. Its small-farm economy did not require intensive labor, so few slaves were needed. The citizens also had a fierce pride in their fathers and grandfathers who fought for their country in battles such as King's Mountain, South Carolina, where the East Tennessee "Overmountain Men" played a pivotal role in the British defeat.

When the secession of Tennessee seemed imminent, a Unionist convention was held at Knoxville in May 1861, with 469 representatives attending from 26 East Tennessee counties. After adopting a statement of opposition to Tennessee's separation from the Union, the



The Reverend William Blount Carter of Elizabethton was instrumental in formulating the plan to burn nine bridges along the East Tennessee rail line in November 1861. Photograph from the collection of the East Tennessee Historical Society

convention adjourned, planning to meet again after the state referendum. The June vote in East Tennessee was against secession 2 to 1, while the remainder of the state voted for separation. At the second convention, held in Greeneville, the representatives adopted a "Declaration

As a child Dorothy (Dot) Kelly learned about the Civil War in East Tennessee from her grandmother. Since discovering that she had both Union and Confederate ancestors, it has been her passion. The Knoxville native is the author of several articles and has spoken to numerous historical societies, Civil War roundtables, and civic organizations. She also is active in Civil War battlefield preservation and has served as president, newsletter editor, and program chair for the local Knoxville Civil War Roundtable.

of Grievances” and insisted that the State Legislature permit East Tennessee to withdraw and form a new state. Of course, Tennessee was not willing to lose one-third of its territory and the vital rail link to Virginia.¹

Although Confederate troops occupied East Tennessee, the government hoped a policy of leniency would change the attitude of the loyalists. The situation began to deteriorate almost immediately, however, as disaffected Unionists fled East Tennessee, traveling at night through unfrequented mountain paths and little-known mountain gaps to Kentucky where they joined Tennessee regiments of the Union Army. Even though the Confederates blocked and guarded the gaps, recruiters secretly made their way into East Tennessee and began to fill their ranks. Clashes occurred between the Confederate troops and the Unionists; confrontations between Confederate sympathizers and their Union neighbors soon became common, exposing the bitterness and viciousness of a true civil war.

One prominent East Tennessee Unionist was Reverend William Blount Carter, a descendant of early settlers for whom Carter County was named. Reverend Carter had been a Presbyterian minister in Rogersville but retired due to health problems. The outspoken Carter was a delegate to the Greeneville Convention. In the late summer of 1861, Carter left East Tennessee making his way to Kentucky where his brother James P. T. Carter was enlisting East Tennesseans in the Federal army. James had been a delegate to the Knoxville Convention and shortly would become colonel of the 2nd East TN Mounted Infantry. Older brother, Samuel P. Carter, a graduate of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, had been a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, when he was recalled from duty and assigned to the Army in Southeast Kentucky where he was given the task of enlisting his fellow East Tennesseans and organizing units of the Tennessee refugees. He was soon promoted to brigadier general.²

There is no record of the date Reverend Carter first conceived his plan to burn the railroad bridges in East Tennessee. Knoxville newspaper editor William G. “Parson” Brownlow had called for the destruction of the railroad in his paper on several occasions. While in Kentucky, Carter secured a meeting with Brigadier General William T. Sherman, Brigadier General George H. Thomas (commanding at Camp Dick Robinson in south-central Kentucky), and brother, Acting Brigadier General Samuel Carter. Reverend Carter’s plan called for the destruction of communications and the major railroad bridges on the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad from Bristol to Knoxville, on the East Tennessee & Georgia from Knoxville to Chattanooga,

two bridges on the Western & Atlantic near Chattanooga and the bridge at Bridgeport, Alabama on the Memphis & Charleston. The nine bridges would be burned by civilians living in the vicinity of the bridges. At the time of the destruction, the Union Army would move into East Tennessee and liberate the loyal population. The Army would be reinforced by armed Unionists and the Confederacy would be deprived of both the potential manpower and the vital railroad connection to the south and west. While General Sherman had some reservations, Reverend Carter’s plan appealed to General Thomas, and Carter was soon on his way to present his plan in Washington.³

A meeting was arranged with President Abraham Lincoln and General George B. McClellan, Commander of the Federal armies. President Lincoln was keenly aware of the loyalty and the suffering of the people of the region. On several occasions he had urged that the army in Kentucky invade and liberate East Tennessee. His approval for Carter’s plan was enthusiastic.

McClellan also approved the plan, promising to keep the Confederates busy in Virginia so that they could not send additional troops west. Carter was given \$2,500 to use for the expenses of the bridgeburners. Lincoln issued a quasi-order stating that the army in Kentucky was to plan an invasion in conjunction with the bridge burnings.⁴

The successful Carter returned to Camp Dick Robinson and met with General Thomas to finalize plans and select a date—Friday, November 8. Thomas was to move southward and be near the Kentucky-Tennessee border ready to march at the time of the bridge attacks. Two officers from the region were assigned to assist with the plan: Captain David Fry of Greene County and Captain William Cross of Scott County.⁵

In mid-October Carter left Kentucky, moving to a point near Kingston, Tennessee, about midway between Bristol and Chattanooga. Captain Fry was sent northward to coordinate the actions against the upper bridges. For the protection of those involved, Carter left no account of his actions during this time, but he chose key men who agreed to select the participants and supervise the destruction of the bridges. As the Unionists made their preparations, unfortunately, General Sherman changed his mind. Thomas had advanced as far as London, Kentucky, but with his limited manpower, Sherman decided that he could not commit General Thomas’ troops to East Tennessee. The invasion was cancelled, and there was no time to reach Carter and his scattered forces to warn them. They were on their own.⁶

The first bridge scheduled for the torch was the massive Memphis & Charleston Bridge over the Tennessee River at **Bridgeport, Alabama**. The men charged with burning this bridge traveled over 80 miles only to discover their target well protected by Confederate soldiers camped all along the banks of the Tennessee. R. B. Rogan and James D. Keener were unable to get within striking distance of the bridge and made the long, frustrating trip home, their plans thwarted.⁷

W. H. Crowder and W. T. Cate, on the other hand, had no difficulty in burning both the bridges across **Chickamauga Creek** near Chattanooga. The two Western & Atlantic Railroad bridges were in close proximity; Cate and Crowder made quick work of them, returning the twenty miles home undetected.⁸

During the burning of the Chickamauga bridges, Crowder lost his saddle blanket—a small price to pay for their success. The blanket, however, was marked with Crowder's name. Early the next morning the blanket was being displayed in Chattanooga, and a price was put on his head. Crowder was barely able to escape as soldiers descended on his house to arrest him. For the next three months he suffered in the rain and cold, hiding in the area while making arrangements for his family before leaving for safety in Kentucky. Once there, he joined the Union Army. Shortly after his departure, Crowder's wife and six small children were driven from their home, and their house was turned into a Confederate recruiting camp.

In just a few days, Crowder's partner, W. T. Cate, also came under suspicion and was forced from his home. Cate had several close calls as the Confederate soldiers combed the hills and gorges. At one point the Confederates caught sight of him and opened fire, but he managed to escape unscathed. After several months of hunger, frostbite, and danger, Cate was forced to leave his consumptive wife and three small children and make his way to Kentucky, where he, too, joined the Union Army.⁹

The next bridge scheduled to be burned, the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad Bridge across the **Hiwassee**, proved to be more of a challenge than the two Chickamauga bridges. On the north end of the covered bridge stood the community of Calhoun and on the south, the village of Charleston. To attack this "splendid piece of architecture," the conspirators must pass through one of these communities. William Stone was the designated leader of the assault on this bridge, but he changed his mind the day before the planned attack, persuading A. M. Cate to take on the task. Cate agreed, believing that it "would bring relief to the

Union-loving people of East Tennessee."

Cate was joined in the attempt by his brother Thomas L. Cate, Adam Thomas, Jesse Cleveland, and Cleveland's son, Eli. Area resident John McPherson agreed to have the telegraph wire cut near the bridge. Approaching Charleston around 11 p.m., the Union men had reason to doubt their chances for success; in fact, they wondered if authorities had discovered the plot. The town was full of citizens and rebel soldiers, but the plotters soon realized they were "all in a perfect state of revelry."

By one a.m. the town was finally quiet and the men stealthily moved along the railroad toward the bridge. They had determined to kill the bridge guard if necessary, but discovered the lone watchman asleep in the guardhouse at the end of the bridge. While he slept, A. M. Cate and the elder Cleveland watched to make sure he did not waken to give the alarm as the others used pine torches and turpentine to fire the long, covered bridge. A. M. Cate reported that it was "boarded up the sides, covered and pitched upon the top and very dry." The fire "seemed to run all over the top like electricity, and before we were out of sight looked like the whole current of water could not be made to quench the flame."¹⁰

The Hiwassee Bridge conspirators soon found themselves suspects. Ironically, William Stone, who withdrew from the plot, was the first arrested and was sent to prison in Tuscaloosa and Mobile, Alabama, where he contracted disease and died. A. M. Cate managed to evade the Confederates and lived in the hills and caves for several months before leaving the area for Kentucky and the Union Army. John McPherson, Jessie Cleveland, Adam Thomas and Thomas Cate all were arrested, their homes searched and robbed. Their first stop was the Knoxville jail—dirty and over-crowded, filled with men charged with bridge burning or just for "talking Union talk." A few of the bridgeburners escaped, but most soon found themselves en route to prison in Tuscaloosa without benefit of trial.¹¹

The fiery success of the Bridge Burners at the Hiwassee Bridge was not repeated at the formidable and costly **Loudon Bridge** across the Tennessee. Second in importance only to the span at Bridgeport, this bridge built upon ten stone piers was 900 feet long and about 60 feet high; it was the most expensive on the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. In all probability, the Unionists charged with burning this bridge, like the Unionists at Bridgeport, discovered the Confederate force stationed there was too strong and were forced to abandon the attempt.



Railroad bridge at Strawberry Plains, 1864. Lone sentry James Keelan suffered grievous wounds and lost his hand in the scuffle but prevented the destruction of the bridge on the night of November 8, 1861. From the Library of Congress

Many years later, Knoxville attorney Oliver P. Temple spent several years researching the Bridge Burnings, including talking with Reverend Carter. Carter refused to reveal the names of the men assigned to burn the Loudon Bridge since the men and their families still preferred to remain anonymous. Some evidence suggests Captain William Cross directed this effort. The Loudon Bridge continued to serve for two more years until burned by the retreating Confederates when Major General Ambrose E. Burnside and the Federal Army entered Tennessee in late August 1863.¹²

Fifteen miles east of Knoxville, a group of Sevier Countians rode through the frosty darkness toward the bridge across the Holston River at the village of **Strawberry Plains**. The prospective arsonists were led by William C. Pickens, a former sheriff and son of Colonel Samuel Pickens, a state senator. Other members were Daniel M. Ray, James Montgomery, Abe Smith, B. F. Franklin, White Underdown, William Montgomery, Elijah Gamble, and several others, all committed to destroying the bridge in preparation for the Union Army's advance into the region.

The Unionists left two or three men to hold their horses and proceeded on foot to the east (Strawberry Plains) end of the impressive, 40 foot high, 1,600 foot long bridge. Like the bridge at Loudon, it was the most important bridge on its line, the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad.¹³

The Unionists evidently did not expect the bridge to be guarded. Earlier, the Confederacy had assigned a detail of soldiers to guard the bridge, but the supposed threat had passed and the soldiers were withdrawn. The bridge was now guarded by only one man at each end, both employees of the ET & VA Railroad. On

the night of November 8, the 35 year-old, slightly built James Keelan occupied his usual post: a small box or "bunk" under the east end of the bridge, built under the cross beams. Keelan's job was to prevent unauthorized persons from crossing the bridge, check after each train to make sure no sparks endangered the wooden structure, and thwart just such plans as were being attempted on that night. The red-headed, red-bearded Keelan was armed with a musket, a single-shot pistol and a foot-long homemade knife.

The Unionists stopped near the end of the bridge, and William Pickens climbed up on the shoulder to place a torch among the wooden supports. Too late, Keelan discovered that he did not have room to raise his musket in the small bunk. As Pickens struck the match to light the torch, Keelan fired his single-shot pistol hitting Pickens who fell from the support to the ground. The match flame died immediately and confusion reigned in the blackness. In the melee Pickens received knife wounds from one of the group who believed he was attacking the bridge guard. Others, realizing Keelan was still in his box, began to climb on the bridge supports attempting to shoot or stab him.

The plucky Keelan was not easily overpowered. From his box three feet off the ground, he kicked those attempting to climb up to him and struck with his knife at those reaching his shelter. He managed to wound several with his knife, while using his rifle to deflect some of the blows. Keelan's defense was remarkable, but at least two of the Unionists' bullets found their mark, and blood streamed from numerous knife wounds. His left hand was hacked through and dangled only by a piece of flesh. He was struck across the head with such force it left a six-inch gash and cracked his skull. Blood flowed across his face. Finally, dizziness overtook the obstinate guard, and he collapsed in his box.¹⁴

The attackers, assuming he was dead, turned to their assignment, the firing of the bridge. The zealous loyalists discovered, however, that the only matches in the group had been in the possession of Pickens and were lost when he fell. It was suggested that they get matches or fire from one of the houses nearby, but they realized they would be recognized. Their attempt had failed.

Though wounded, Pickens mounted behind one of the riders, and the men made their way to the home of Daniel Keener several miles away. Dr. James H. Ellis of Trundles' Cross Roads was summoned to take care of Pickens who had been shot in the thigh and suffered several knife wounds. After spending the next day at Keener's home the men secreted Pickens on a



James Keelan

sled, covered him with corn fodder and took him into the mountains to recuperate. The men were hidden from authorities by the loyal people in Wear's Valley. When the Union Army failed to liberate East Tennessee, many of the raiders made their way to Kentucky and joined the army; Pickens and Ray became colonels, the two Montgomerys

became captains, and others served as lieutenants.¹⁵

The attackers were gone. James Keelan slid off his box to the ground, too injured to climb down or even attempt to break his fall. By force of an indomitable will, he slowly rose and staggered toward help. He bypassed the Stringfield home because he didn't want to "frighten two lone women." Barely on his feet, he made his way to a neighboring house where he aroused the owner, William Elmore. Seeing Keelan with blood running down his face, his body slashed and gory, Elmore exclaimed "Jim, you've been drunk or asleep and let the train run over you!" The ghastly figure replied, "No Billy; they have killed me, but I've saved the bridge." Elmore immediately sent for Dr. Robert Sneed who lived nearby. As the doctor treated Keelan, he examined his severed left hand, and suggested he needed to make a clean cut at the wrist joint, which was safer and would provide a shorter healing time. Keelan was adamant that the bones below the wrist be left so that he could use the stub to hold up his gun.

His severed hand was buried in the nearby Stringfield Cemetery. "Mr. Keelan's hand is buried in our grave yard," wrote Mary Stringfield to her sister Melinda. Another sister, Sarah Stringfield Butler,

"made a neat little shroud—twas placed in a box and tis in the corner at the foot of father's grave. Twas the greatest respect we could show him."¹⁶

The story of the attack on the railroads reached newspapers throughout the South and soon the heroic deeds of the courageous Keelan made him a Confederate hero. The East Tennessee & Virginia Board of Directors voted him a pension of \$25 per month for a year and

\$15 a month for life, in addition to his salary. Friends and patrons purchased a ninety acre farm for Keelan and his family. Amazingly, Keelan healed swiftly—at least physically. His trial at the bridge, however, had done more than physical damage: he lost that great courage which had made him invincible on the night of the attempted bridge burning. He now feared his life was in danger. For a year he traveled with Major W. W. Stringfield's command in the army, but eventually, his health broken, he relocated to a small farm in the Bristol area where he spent the rest of his life.¹⁷

The Strawberry Plains Bridge continued to transport trainloads of troops and supplies for another year and a half. In June 1863, Colonel (later Brigadier General) William P. Sanders and 1,300 Union cavalymen swept into Confederate-held East Tennessee, destroying bridges, telegraph wire, and railroad track. On the evening of June 20, Sanders' men completed the mission of the bridgeburners and fired the massive bridge. It would be burned three more times during the war, as Union and Confederate forces swept back and forth, fighting for control of East Tennessee and its vital railroads.¹⁸

The Lick Creek Railroad Bridge, fifteen miles west of Greeneville, was the next target of the Loyalists. For an in depth account see Donahue Bible's article, "The Hangings of the Greene County Bridge Burners," on page 130 in this issue.

In the county named for Reverend Carter's ancestors, the railroad bridge across the Watauga River at **Carter's Depot** was scheduled for the torch. However, like the Bridgeport and Loudon Bridges, it survived the night because the bridge was well guarded by Captain David McClellan and 250 Confederates. Leading the effort to destroy the bridge was Daniel Stover, son-in-law of Andrew Johnson. Johnson was still serving in the U. S. Senate in spite of the secession of his state. Stover and his large band of Unionists realized they and their arms were no match for the Confederates and moved on to their second and more vulnerable target.¹⁹

Stover's other assignment was the critical bridge over the Holston River at **Union Depot** (now Bluff City) in Sullivan County. Here the party found only two guards who, realizing they were out-numbered, surrendered. The burning bridge lit the night sky as the difficult question of the fate of the two bridge guards was decided. Some were in favor of killing the guards; others might have had no problem with killing an enemy in battle, but did not want to kill a defenseless prisoner. The Unionists finally decided to take a chance on the word of the guards and, after securing a promise



Mary Stringfield Ray
Courtesy of Emily
Kennedy Baker

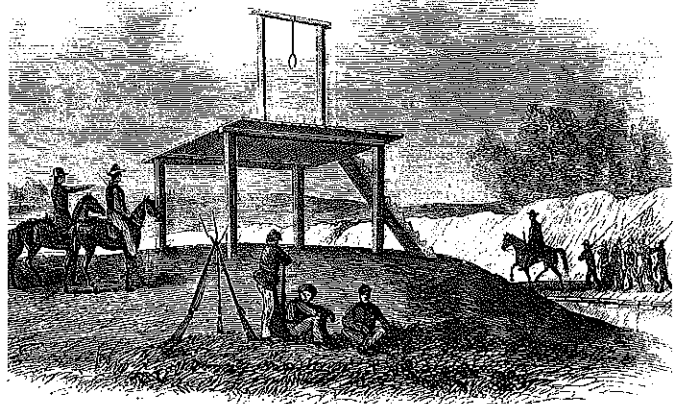
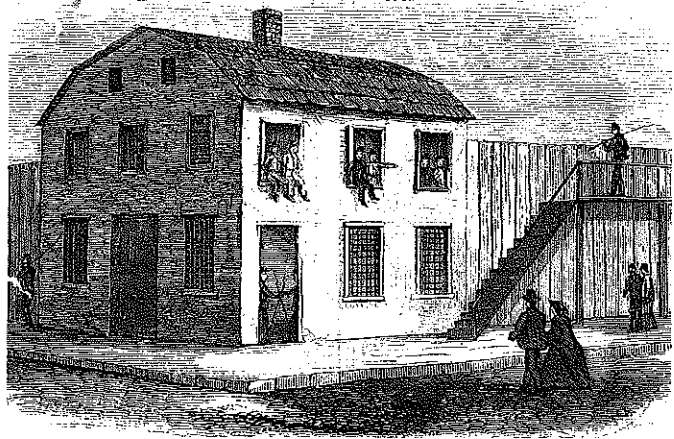
not to reveal the names of the bridge burners, they released the guards unharmed.

The triumphant Bridge Burners returned home to prepare for the arrival of the liberating Union Army. As had been feared, however, the guards immediately reported the burning of the Holston River Bridge and the identities of all the men they had recognized. Many of the men were forced to leave the area quickly to avoid imprisonment. Stover soon departed for Kentucky where he became the Colonel of the 4th TN Infantry. In December 1862, General S. P. Carter led cavalry into upper East Tennessee to destroy railroads and bridges. At the Holston River Bridge, troopers piled dry wood inside the bridge and General Carter's orderly, G. O. Collins, was given the honor of lighting the fire. Collins had been unjustly accused of burning the bridge a year earlier. He "applied the torch to the railroad bridge," and crowed triumphantly, "I was accused of burning a bridge here once before, if you'll watch me you will see that I am guilty this time."²⁰

* * * * *

From the Tennessee border on the north to beyond its southern edge, fear reigned as five of the nine bridges scheduled for destruction had gone up in flames. Messages from terrified citizens, frantic railroad presidents, and surprised military soon alerted the Confederate government in Richmond to the disastrous destruction. Colonel W. B. Wood, commanding at Knoxville, telegraphed the government, "The whole country is now in a state of Rebellion," and reported numerous armed Unionists assembling. The Confederate response to the burning of these important bridges and the severing of communications was swift and violent. The time for leniency in East Tennessee was past. The traitors must learn that insurrection would not be tolerated. Repercussions from the events of November 8 would affect not only the perpetrators but their families, their neighbors, and the whole region.²¹

Unaware that General Thomas' army had been recalled, armed Unionists were now gathering to assist the Federal army which should be crossing the Kentucky-Tennessee border on its way to relieve the loyal population. Unionists numbering 1,500 were reported to be assembled near the unscathed Watauga Bridge, 1,000 were said to be near the Strawberry Plains Bridge, 1,500 in Hamilton County, and a new camp already containing 300 in Sevier County just 10 miles from Knoxville. The commanding major at Loudon reported the Union feeling as "exceedingly bitter," and that the people were "actually



The jail and gallows at Knoxville, sketched by a newspaper artist in 1863. The jail housed prisoners from both sides, and both Confederates and Unionists suffered on these gallows. Three of the five Lick Creek Bridge burners from Greene County were hanged here in 1861.

manufacturing Union flags" to welcome the expected forces. Troops were sent to East Tennessee from as far away as Pensacola to put down the uprising and capture the "bands of traitors."

Skirmishes between the Lincolnites and the growing number of Confederate troops soon forced the armed unionists into hiding in the wild, isolated mountains. Continued raids of their camps and vindictive atrocities on families and non-combatants eventually forced many of them to make their way through the wilderness into Kentucky. A newspaper article states that citizens of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana recalled years later "the ragged, suffering condition" of the loyal Tennesseans when they reached the north. "You look like a Tennessee refugee" became the phrase to describe someone friendless, ill kept, and destitute.²²

Colonel Wood placed Knoxville under martial law and disarmed Union citizens there and throughout the region. Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate secretary of

war, instructed Wood, "All such as can be identified as having been engaged in bridge burning are to be tried summarily by drum-head court-martial, and if found guilty, executed on the spot by hanging...all such as have not been so engaged are to be treated as prisoners of war, and sent ...to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, there to be kept imprisoned."

Wholesale arrests were made, sometimes with no proof other than known Union sympathies. The jail at Knoxville was soon overflowing with citizens. Of the hundreds arrested, five of the Potterstown Bridge Burners of the Lick Creek Bridge in Greene County were hanged: two in Greeneville and three in Knoxville. One other was tried and condemned but had his sentence suspended by President Davis. Hundreds

of others, without benefit of trial, were loaded on trains and sent to the prison in Tuscaloosa, where many sickened and died.²³

For the loyal people of East Tennessee, the cost of the bridge burnings far outweighed the benefits. Instead of liberation, it brought them oppression, persecution, unbelievable suffering, and death. Many of the innocent were caught up in the whirlwind of devastation. The bridges were soon rebuilt, and Confederate men and material were once again shipped to the armies on the railroads of East Tennessee. It would be almost two years before the Union Army finally made good on its promise to liberate East Tennessee. Unfortunately, many of the most devoted citizens were not there to welcome them.

Endnotes:

¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series 1, Vol. 4*, Washington, D. C., 1880-1901, p. 230 (hereafter *OR*); Thomas W. Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee*, 1888 (Reprint, 1998, The Overmountain Press, Johnson City, TN) pp. 106, 114-18; Oliver P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, 1899 (Reprint, 1972, Burmar Books, Blountville and Knoxville) pp. 218, 341; Thomas B. Alexander, *Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee*, Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, 1956, p. 85.

² Humes, *Loyal Mountaineers*, pp. 109, 115; Temple, *East Tennessee*, pp. 362, 370, 372. Samuel P. Carter was later promoted to major general. After the war he returned to the Navy where he rose to the rank of rear admiral.

³ Steve Humphrey, "That D_____d Brownlow," *Being a Saucy & Malicious Description of Fighting Parson William Ganaway Brownlow, etc.*, Appalachian Consortium Press, Boone, NC, 1978, p. 239; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 370.

⁴ Temple, *East Tennessee*, pp. 370-71.

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 377-79.

⁶ *OR, S 1, V 4*, p. 320; Petition of A. M. Cate to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, 1871, pp. 1, 2.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 2; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 380.

⁸ Cate Petition, pp. 1-2; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 380; *OR, S 1, V 4*, p. 233; Annual Report of the Superintendent and Treasurer of the Western & Atlantic Railroad, October 1, 1861-September 30, 1862, p. 4.

⁹ Cate Petition, pp. 2, 12.

¹⁰ Cate Petition, pp. 2-4, 10; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 380; O. P. Temple, *Notable Men of Tennessee, From 1833 to 1875*, New York, 1912, pp. 85-6.

¹¹ Cate Petition, pp. 5-6, 9-11; National Archives, Record Group 109, Confederate War Records.

¹² Orlando M. Poe, *Occupation and Defense of Knoxville*, 1889 (Reprint, 1963, East Tennessee Historical Society), p. 6; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 381.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 381; Humes, *Loyal Mountaineers*, p. 146.

¹⁴ Letter from Mary Stringfield to sister, Strawberry Plains, November 23, 1861, original in the collection of Stringfield descendant Emily Kennedy Baker, Nashville; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 382; Radford Gatlin, *The Parentage, Birth, Nativity and Exploits of the Immortal Hero James Keelan, Who Defended Successfully the Bridge at Strawberry Plains, and Alone, Put to Flight Fifteen Lincolmites on the Night of the Eighth of November, A.D., 1861*, Atlanta, 1862, (Reprint, 1932, Stubble Printing Co., Knoxville), pp. 6-9.

¹⁵ Temple, *East Tennessee*, pp. 382-83.

¹⁶ Stringfield letter, "Heroic Deed of James Keelan," *Confederate Veteran* 3, no. 5 (1895): pp. 187-89.

¹⁷ *Ibid*; Stringfield letter.

¹⁸ *OR S 1, V 23, pt. 1*, p. 390.

¹⁹ *Ibid, V 4*, pp. 235-6; Temple, *East Tennessee*, pp. 384-5.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 385.

²¹ *OR S 1, V 4*, pp. 231-7.

²² *Ibid*, pp. 233-7, 242; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 385; Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection of the Knox County Public Library, Ducloux Scrapbook, newspaper article, p. 4, col. 1, n.p., n.d.

²³ *OR S 1, V 4*, pp. 237, 247-8, *S 1, V 7*, p. 701; Cate Petition, pp. 5-6; Temple, *East Tennessee*, p. 386-7, 391-2.