

ALTAR ERECTED AGAINST ALTAR:
THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS SCHISMS IN MISSOURI ON THE EVE OF THE
CIVIL WAR.

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts

By
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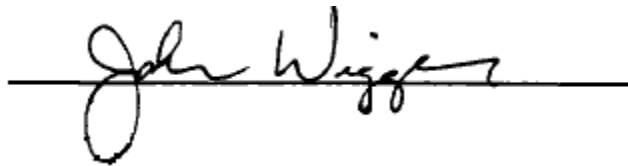
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THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS SCHISMS
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Presented by Lucas Volkman

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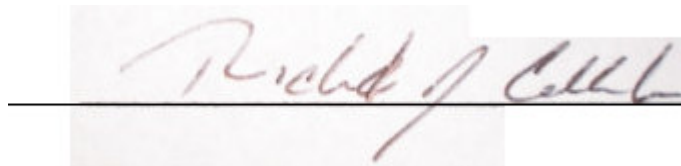
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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Wigger", is written over a horizontal line.

John Wigger

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark M. Carroll", is written over a horizontal line.

Mark M. Carroll

A handwritten signature in red ink, reading "Richard Callahan", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is partially obscured by a white rectangular box.

Richard Callahan

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Introduction

The Rev. James Penn was “one of the oldest and one of the best men in the itinerant ministry” of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) in Missouri.¹ He labored tirelessly for many years to promote the Gospel in northeast Missouri and even had four sons join the Methodist ministry. Despite this tireless service, in August of 1863 while he held services on the Sabbath, a man stood up in his congregation disrupting the other members that were kneeling in prayer. His name was Rev. Moody, of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), the northern counterpart of Penn’s MECS. Moody began to read in a very loud voice, shouting from Galatians 3:1 “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?”²

Penn’s flock began to rise abruptly, ending any chance of finishing the prayer. But that was not the worst of things, Moody was not alone. He had brought fifteen men, all armed and seeking to drive Penn and his congregation out of their church. They succeeded, forcing the service’s conclusion not in the confines of a house of worship but in the middle of the street. The next Sunday would only bring a repeat of the previous week’s events, with the services of the MECS in Williamstown, MO also forced outdoors.³

¹ Leftwich, William M. *Martyrdom in Missouri: A History of Religious Proscription, the Seizure of Churches, and the Persecution of Ministers of the Gospel in the State of Missouri during the late Civil War and under the "Test Oath" of the New Constitution*. Saint Louis : Southwestern Book & Pub. Co., 1870. v1 Pg 292.

² Leftwich v1 294. The Biblical translation of the passage is The King James Version.

³ Leftwich v1 293.

Moody and his supporters did not return for some time. However, some Sundays later Penn arrived at church only to see Union flags placed around his pulpit, guarded by armed men. Undeterred he and his congregation began their service, despite the Union flags. Unfortunately, “a lot of wicked women raised a fight and fought like savages.”⁴ These MEC supporters forced Penn to once again leave his church. Soon he was compelled to cease preaching in Williamstown. Moody had succeeded in his endeavor. When asked by Penn why he acted as he did, he simply replied “Because I can.”⁵

Things would only worsen for Penn; he would be forced out of two other churches and briefly incarcerated in Keokuk, Iowa by Federal authorities. These same Federal authorities would never raise their hand against Moody or his supporters. Moody’s expulsion of Penn and his MECS congregation from the building that was legally theirs would go unpunished. Moody was right, he could do whatever he pleased.⁶

In chapter three of his letter to the Galatians, Paul chastised the Galatians for loosing their faith in Christ and his death for their sins. More than likely, Moody shouted this passage for other reasons than to simply to proclaim this truth of Christ’s death. He desired to chastise the MECS congregation for something else, their acceptance of slavery and support for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

On these issues the MEC and MECS were divided, two halves of what was once one denomination split over slavery in 1844. How did these events come to take place, a religious schism and conflict that spilled over into the political arena? The Methodists

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Leftwich 294.

⁶ Ibid.

were not alone in this schism, other churches split as well.

Religion played a central role in the Civil War and its sectional crisis, though one that has not been completely examined. As a result of their widespread influence both culturally and politically during the antebellum period, the schisms that occurred in the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches helped lead to an increase in sectional tensions. These schisms had a national political impact as they helped to bring about the Civil War. Moreover, the initial severity of the schism and polarization that it caused around the slavery issue would serve to cause greater polarization and conflict during the sectional crisis and the war. The schisms and the resulting religious turmoil were one of the many causes for the Civil War (though by no means the only one).

Within the larger hierarchy of religion, evangelicals were a powerful group in antebellum America, wielding power that could influence political and cultural aspects of their nation. This influence forced the local government and citizenry to be drawn into these conflicts. The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians were the largest of the Evangelical groups, giving them a great deal of influence in Missouri as they did in the rest of the country. Thus, looking at the three largest Evangelical denominations in Missouri will prove to be a useful test case.

Many of the struggles that eventually led to the war between the states dealt with slavery. One of the watershed events in this struggle for the major Evangelical denominations were the schisms that occurred over slavery in the 1830s/40s. In the mid-1840s both the Baptist and Methodist churches split into northern and southern sections over slavery. The Presbyterian church would not undergo a schism over slavery directly

until 1861, when the southern churches formed the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. However, a division with implications over slavery would occur for them in the antebellum period.

In 1837 several Synods of the Presbyterian Church in the USA were expelled on the basis of their theology. In turn, these Synods, deemed the New School (NS), formed their own General Assembly, while the remaining Synods became known as the Old School (OS). Although not a schism over slavery per say, the expulsion of the New School Synods ensured that the vast majority of the abolitionists remained in the mostly northern NS. Therefore, the OS, which claimed the vast majority of the South (as well as a good portion of the North) was freed of the abolitionists that forced the Baptists and Methodists to break apart almost a decade later.

Within Missouri, there were religious ramifications from the schisms that helped exacerbate the onset of the war. Each of the three denominations took a different path during the period surrounding and after their schism that played a role in exacerbating the political events in Missouri during this period. Furthermore, these issues in turn did have ramifications on the national political stage. The importance of studying the role that religion played in Missouri is furthered by the fact that it has largely been ignored up to this point beyond the scope of smaller denominational studies.

In all three of the churches, conflict within the previously unified churches helped to bring about disunion. They undid an important bond of Missouri unity in different ways. As it will be demonstrated, the schisms and how they took place distinguished how the three denominations acted during this period. The Methodists, who experienced the

most turbulent and clear-cut schism over slavery, in turn experienced the greatest conflicts prior to and during the war. They did the most to exacerbate the sectional crisis and ultimately the war itself. They acted upon the political events more so than the events acted upon them. Through a variety of ways they drew the citizenry of Missouri into the conflicts of their schism, aggravating the sectional crisis and the war.

On the other hand, the Baptists and Presbyterians, who did not have such a severe or definite split over slavery, experienced lesser conflict during this period than the Methodists. Both also underwent further divisions based around these issues during the war. Political events tended to act on them more so than they acted upon the events of the crisis and war itself. The Presbyterian schism over theology divided the pro and anti-slavery members of their church, but in a less severe way than the Methodists were divided. The Baptist schism, while over slavery, was much cleaner and easily accomplished than that of the Methodists. As a result, their influence was lesser than that of the Methodists, but important nonetheless.

If their schisms had taken place as did that of the Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Baptists would have had a greater impact in the events leading up to and including the Civil War. In the end, all three denominations played some role in these events and exacerbating the war. These roles were simply different.

Numerous historians have offered explanations as to the causes of the American Civil War. However, until recently, religious causes for the Civil War have not come to the forefront. Prior to the 1960s it can be argued that there were few meaningful mainstream works on religious history in general, and as a result, little on the role of

religion in the Civil War. However, there were exceptions, with a fair number of works having been largely published by respective churches, including the three denominations that will be examined in this paper. A brief explanation of the historiographic origins of the recent work on religious history is necessary for an understanding of the origins of the arguments made within this thesis.

Publications on behalf of both of the major branches of the Methodist church can be seen as examples of this phenomenon. William Warren Sweet's *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War*, published in 1912 by the Methodist Book Concern, argues that the MEC played a significant role in the Civil War. Essentially Sweet's argument comes down to the fact that the various people of importance in the MEC helped the Union cause in a variety of ways. For example, they helped recruit or supply the Union armies.⁷ In another work published later in his career, *The Story of Religion in America*, Sweet argues that there is a good deal of evidence to support the idea that churches played an important role in the final break between the North and South after Lincoln's election by agitating their members politically either that the South should secede or that the North should fight them.⁸

Other works, such as *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*, by Hunter Dickinson Farish, restate brief arguments that are

⁷ Sweet, William Warren. *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War*. Cincinnati, Methodist Book Concern Press, 1912. Pp 9-12.

⁸ Sweet, William Warren. *The Story of Religion in America*, rev. ed. New York, Harper and Brothers 1950. pg 312.

similar to Sweet's.⁹ Also, similar denominational works dealing solely with Missouri are present as well. Some were published more recently, but they all essentially deal with the same arguments that Sweet and Farish discuss and will be referred to throughout the paper.

These themes continue with respect to the Baptists. In his *A History of the Baptists*, Robert G. Torbet describes the events that led to the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and a split from the American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS). Torbet asserts that the initial schism in 1845 was caused in part because a majority of those involved with the ABHMS hailed from the North. Therefore, despite having the majority of the members in the ABHMS, those in the southern Baptist churches were forced to choose between remaining in an anti-slavery organization or forming their own, they chose the latter. Although he says little of southern churches, Torbet explains that during the war the majority of the northern churches wholeheartedly supported the Union cause with their members and ministers. Their people were present throughout all stages of the war. Meanwhile in certain border states, such as Kentucky there are numerous conflicts between pro and anti-slavery forces within the Baptist churches.¹⁰

Fortunately, William Wright Barnes presents more information on what went on within the South in his *The Southern Baptist Convention*. According to Barnes, the churches of the South were virtually unanimous in their desire to separate from the ABHMS, except for those from states that could not send delegates to the convention that

⁹ Farish, Hunter Dickenson. *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*. Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938. Pp.14-5.

¹⁰ Torbet, Robert G. *A History of the Baptists*. Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950. Pp. 304-13.

formed the SBC (of which Missouri was one).¹¹ Similar to the northern Baptists that Torbet discusses, the members of the SBC attempted to support the Confederate cause during the war, despite the numerous obstacles that were put in place against them. SBC churches were often seized by northern supporters relying on Federal military power.¹²

Although more recent than some of the other works examined to this point, Ernest Trice Thompson's multi-volume *Presbyterians in the South* was the leading work on the southern Presbyterians in its day. Thompson examines the intricacies of the Presbyterian churches of the South. Throughout the work it is obvious that Thompson sees his subjects as playing a significant role in the politics of their day. Thompson contends that slavery had a large-scale influence in the church of the South. However, he also confirms that slavery only played a minor role in the schism of 1837. Granted it did help to solidify the southern support for the OS, but it did not cause the division.¹³

There were some works supporting a role for religion with the Civil War not published by denominational presses. A reprint of an address given to the American Antiquarian Club in 1936, *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War*, by George I. Rockwood, is one such example. Rockwood essentially argues that the rhetoric of men such as Lincoln proves that there was a religious aspect to the war.¹⁴ As evident from a scathing review from W. B. Hesseltine, arguments such as Rockwood's were not even

¹¹ Barnes, William Wright. *The Southern Baptist Convention*. Broadman Press: Nashville, TN, 1954. Pp. 26-32.

¹² Barnes 48-52.

¹³ Thompson, Ernest Trice. *Presbyterians in the South: Volume One: 1607-1861*. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963, Pp. 394, 530-5.

¹⁴ Rockwood, George I. *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War*. Worcester Press: Private Print, 1936. Pp. 3-5.

considered by most historians until the 1960s.¹⁵ Works like Rockwood's, which was not that sophisticated, were the exception, not the rule.

It is the 1980s the number of books on the significance of religion and the Civil War really takes off and subsequently the works of primary importance to this thesis begin to be published. A primary example of this phenomenon was C. C. Goen's 1985 work, *Broken Churches, Broken Nation*. It argued that evangelical Christianity was a major bond of unity in the United States in the nineteenth century, with its chief institutional form being the large, national popular denominations such as the Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists. With the failure of these churches to resolve conflicts over slavery resulting in their subsequent schism, the first major break between the North and South occurred. According to Goen, with this primary bond of national unity broken, the crisis of the Union was both presaged and provoked.¹⁶

With the publication of Richard Carwardine's *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* in 1993, these historiographic trends continued to expand. Carwardine's thesis was that evangelical religion played a crucial role in the origins of the Civil War. For Carwardine, religion and culture were merging in the years leading up to the war. Thus, the religious thought of the period had a profound influence on the politics of era, including the events leading to secession. Although he does not attribute the war solely to religion, he nonetheless puts forth a thesis that offers a new interpretation of the

¹⁵ Hesseltine, W. B. "Review of *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War* by George I. Rockwood" *The New England Quarterly* Vol. 10, No. 3 (Sep., 1937). Pg. 608.

¹⁶ Goen, C. C. *Broken Churches, Broken Nation*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985. Pp. 12-3.

events leading to the Civil War.¹⁷

Another work that deals with similar ideas is Mark Noll's *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Noll's work deals with a much larger timeframe than Carwardine's work, allowing him to show the extent of how religion since the time of the Revolution has become incorporated into American culture. In other words, similar to Carwardine, religious ideas were influential in cultural and political areas. Comparable to what Rockwood did in the 1930s, Noll holds that religion can be seen as important in the speeches in works of prominent politicians, such as Lincoln. Also crucial was the role that theology played during this period with its basis in the Bible.¹⁸ Furthermore, Noll's book is also an example of how other historians, religious or otherwise, have portrayed religion as important in the sectional crisis within their works.

Each of these works holds that the schisms that occurred in the major denominations in the antebellum period influenced how religion and politics interacted prior to the Civil War. This thesis will expand upon the discussion of these works and test the arguments for the state of Missouri.

¹⁷ Carwardine, Richard. *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. Pp. xvi-xx.

¹⁸ Noll, Mark A. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp. 16-7.

Chapter One:

Unity Broken

Evangelicalism had a widespread influence on Missouri. The major denominations possessed a cultural and political significance in Missouri, where they were indeed a unifying force throughout the state as they were nationally. The schisms harmed this unity with their break between North and South. Without this pre-1830s unity and overall influence, the schisms would not have had the effect that they did.

In 1850 the population of Missouri increased to 682,044.¹⁹ Likewise, the population of the two MEC churches was at 38,194 or 5.6 percent of the population. There were 42,286 Baptists in Missouri for 6.2 percent of the population and about 20,460 Presbyterians or about three percent of the population in Missouri.²⁰ In total, the members of the three largest Evangelical churches in Missouri made up 14.8 percent of the population. With the Methodists and Baptists, the members that were children were more than likely not included in the totals, which in all likelihood would at least double the number of religious adherents.²¹

Evangelicals were an important segment of the population in Missouri.

¹⁹ United States Census Bureau.

²⁰ Finke, Roger & Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997. Pg 286.

²¹ No source examined for this paper from either of the denominations seemed to indicate children were included in the roles of members, supporting this ascertain.

Nevertheless, the actual members of these denominations only made up a small, but significant fraction of the Missouri population. Therefore, at this point Evangelicals can only be seen as a significant minority. Historians have evaluated the significance of the evangelical presence in several ways. For example, in his *Religion in the Old South*, Donald G. Matthews presents similar numbers in the southern states that he examines. Nonetheless, he concludes that these numbers do not represent the total number of people that the Evangelicals had influence over, giving them impact beyond the raw statistics of the population.

Matthews ascertains that the number of people that attended the various types of meetings, revivals, and services were always much greater than the actual recorded membership. Family members that were not actual church members would have attended services (both adults and children) and would have been influenced by those in the church who were closely related to them. Furthermore, there were those who attended but did not wish full membership. Other historians, such as Nathan Hatch and C. C. Goen agree with this idea. Unfortunately, it is impossible to figure out the exact number of people who attended services and may have been influenced by the Evangelicals, but this number in all likelihood was a majority of the population.²²

Nevertheless, there are those that would disagree with Hatch and Matthews, but only about the timing of Evangelical growth during the Early Republic. Christine

²² Goen 12-3, Hatch, Nathan. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989. Pp 13-5, and Matthews, Donald G. *Religion and the Old South*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977. Pp. 68-70.

Heyrman makes such an argument in her work *Southern Cross*. However, Heyrman's Evangelicals simply took longer to achieve a position of dominance in the South than Hatch's or Matthews' did. She agrees that by the period in question Evangelicals were an important force in the South.²³ As a result, only an abbreviated discussion on this topic is really required for this work. All the major sources agree that Evangelicalism was widespread and influential by the late 1830s.

The Evangelicals of this period recognized their influence in the state of Missouri. The dean of the OS Presbyterians in St. Louis, Rev. William S. Potts D. D., boldly proclaimed that "We profess to be a Christian people, and our city a Christian community."²⁴ He continues to decry that "if I should declare to-day from this pulpit that we were a city of infidels, I would be immediately be charged with grossly slandering both the people and the municipal government."²⁵ St. Louis was a Christian city, one with significant Evangelical influence, to suggest otherwise would be erroneous. It is clear from these statements that Potts holds the Evangelical churches to have a great deal of prestige in St. Louis. He goes on to explain that pestilence, such as the cholera epidemic that was ravaging St. Louis when he preached, could only be stopped by the citizens living up to this designation and demonstrating the unity it entails. Several notable Presbyterian elders of St. Louis agreed with Potts and believed "that the publication of

²³ Heyrman, Christine Leigh *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997. Pg 5-8.

²⁴ Potts, William S. *A Sermon, Preached in the Second Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, August 3, 1849, The Day of National Fast*. St. Louis: Keith and Woods, 1849, Pg 6.

²⁵ Ibid. The grammatical error is with the quote.

these discourses would greatly contribute to the public good.”²⁶

The MECS minister C. B. Parsons D. D. agreed with the sentiments of Potts in a sermon he preached in the First Methodist Episcopal Church, South in St. Louis. He too boldly proclaims the United States “As a political Colossus, in the first instance, it plants its foot upon either land, and holds out to all people the light of liberty and equality; while evangelism, in the second, as a diamond set in gold, sparkles in the illumination, and sanctifies the blessed gift.”²⁷ For him, national well-being and Evangelicalism go hand in hand. The liberty enjoyed by Americans was sanctified by Evangelicalism. Without the Church the United States would be hurt in its efforts to expand according to Parsons.

Many decades later the Baptists of Missouri reached the same conclusions when looking back on the seventy-five years of their General Association (the state-wide Baptist organization of Missouri). In the preface to its official history they hope future Baptists “will bring the work of the next century with a full knowledge of what it has cost to lay this great foundation...”²⁸ In other words the success of the Baptists in Missouri was considered expansive. Furthermore, to counteract the perception that the Missouri Baptists were shafted in some of the national Baptist histories, W. Pope Yeaman recorded for the Baptists in this work their desire “to intimate to the world that Missouri and her

²⁶ Potts 1.

²⁷ Parsons, C. B. “The Divinity of the Church.” Smithson, William T, editor. *The Methodist Pulpit South*. Washington DC: William T. Smithson, Publisher, 1859. Pg 52.

²⁸ Yeaman, W. Pope. *A History of the Missouri Baptist General Association*. Columbia, Mo: Press of E. W. Stephens, 1899. Pg. x. This work was published in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Missouri Baptist General Association.

people are not in the rear of the progression of progress.”²⁹ National progress was evident in Missouri according to the Baptist leadership of Missouri.

The three Evangelical churches in Missouri each thought of themselves as crucial to the well-being of the state and therefore the nation. The members of the respective congregations believed what they heard Sunday after Sunday from their ministers. In their influence and unity these individual denominations also provided secular unity. These three churches were an important part of the culture of Missouri in the antebellum period and were therefore a unifying force in the state. Without this unity and widespread significance, their influence on the politics and people of Missouri would have been impossible. When their unity breaks down, problems will begin for Missourians as well.

Although these three major denominations provided this great unifying force both nationally and in Missouri, this accord was not to endure. Conflicts over slavery would prove the undoing of this unity in the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist churches starting in the 1830s. Nonetheless, these schisms would not occur in the same manner. The severity of these initial splits would in turn influence the degree of the later conflicts over slavery in each church and the events leading to the Civil War itself.

The schisms that occurred in the Baptist and Methodist churches were clearly over slavery. However, the division that occurred in the Presbyterian church was theological in nature. The OS Presbyterian Church would have ridded itself of the NS synods regardless of the developing concerns on slavery on both sides. Although there was a secondary

²⁹ Yeaman xvi.

concern of slavery in many of the southern synods that would remain with the OS, in the end it did not cause the schism of 1837. The separation of the slaveholders and abolitionists was only a happy bonus for the OS.³⁰

Nevertheless, the fact that the majority of the members that tended toward abolitionism were expelled with the NS synods makes this schism one in which different segments of a denomination split into a pro and anti-slavery factions. Slavery moderates made up most of the northern OS in the 1830s. Granted there would be some pro-slavery men in the few southern NS synods. On the other hand, there were no anti-slavery men in the OS.³¹ The only difference in this schism was that it was not directly over slavery like the Baptist and Methodist schisms. Both segments were separated in all three churches.

By no means were the events of the 1830s and 40s the beginning of the differences that would lead to these schisms. Problems had been brewing decades earlier in all three churches, such as the theological problems that would lead to the undoing of the Presbyterians. Their origin was in the 1801 Act of Union passed due to a lack of resources in the Presbyterian and Congregational churches to evangelize on the frontier. After the Act was passed, Presbyterians and Congregationalists outside of New England began to cooperate in their evangelistic activities on the frontier. However, the former

³⁰ Marsden, George. *The Evangelical Mind and the NS Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970. Pp 98-9.

³¹ Matthews 163.

Congregationalists' (those who became the core of the NS) views on the nature of man and his role in history differed significantly. More specifically, this problem was over how a man could move from a unregenerate (unsaved) to a regenerate (saved) state.

Those in the conservative OS held that Adam's guilt was transmitted to humanity mitigating the ability of an individual to respond positively to God during the conversion process. As a result, a passive view tended to develop in the relation of individuals to social status and institutions. On the other hand, the NS adherents rejected this passivity. They held that one could alter these institutions and their status. Adam's fall did not transmit sin to humanity, individuals were only responsible for their own sins. Furthermore, there was a sense of positive activity in the conversion process and a search for perfection in one's life that developed as well (though the adherents to the NS Theology still believed that man lost his inclination to do good through the fall of Adam). Both groups were not able to maintain their unity in their evangelistic efforts for long, they regarded this problem as too important to ignore. It led to an increasing amount of conflict through the 1830s.³²

By 1831, those in the OS had had enough, believing that they had to win control of the General Assembly to end the errors of their fellow Presbyterians. Nonetheless, at every General Assembly since 1831 the OS had been outvoted by the NS. During every meeting of the General Assembly the OS had been forced to endure teachings which they regarded as erroneous. In 1835, after a series of special conventions prior to the Assembly itself, they were able to ensure that they had a majority of the votes. However, they were

³² Ibid.

only able to win a temporary victory there against the NS as they further prepared their arguments for the upcoming Assembly in 1836.³³

At the meeting of the General Assembly in Pittsburgh the OS believed that it would finally be able to consolidate its victories and expel the NS from the Assembly. On the opening day they were able to elect their candidate as the moderator of the Assembly. Nevertheless, the delegates from Illinois and Missouri arrived and soon after reversed the trend in favor of the NS. The programs of the OS enacted in the last year were quickly annulled.³⁴

The next year, the OS again held a variety of pre-Assembly conventions in order to verify that they indeed had a majority of the delegates. With their majority assured, they once again proceeded with the expulsion of the NS synods. Their success would result in a schism that persisted until 1870.³⁵ On May 18, 1837, the General Assembly opened its meeting in Philadelphia with a sermon preached on the text of I Corinthians 1: 10-11, ironically warning against divisions in the church. However, it would only be division that would occur over the next several days.³⁶

The first resolution that was voted upon was an abrogation of the Plan of Union of 1801 between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Being that the OS delegates

³³ Marsden 60-1, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1829-1837*.

Philadelphia. Pg 287-96.

³⁴ Ibid, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 351-2, 354-8.

³⁵ Marsden 61-3, 228.

³⁶ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Pg. 412.

held a majority, the resolution obviously passed.³⁷ Shortly thereafter the resolution was recorded in the official minutes ruling that the Act of Union was “an unconstitutional act on the part of the Assembly...”³⁸ With this abrogation, the synods that would soon make up the NS could legally be expelled.

The next order of business was to cite certain Synods to be in error in order to achieve their expulsion from the General Assembly. Passing more or less on the lines of each section, a resolution was adopted that stated “that the proper steps be now taken, to cite the bar of the next Assembly, such inferior judicatories as are charged with common fame with irregularities.”³⁹ A committee (referred to as the Committee on the State of the Church) was appointed to examine which Synods fell under this resolution.⁴⁰

However, this committee was composed of members of both the Old and New Schools. Whereas it was possible, at least in theory, for the committee to determine that there were no errors in doctrine on the part of any of the subordinate Synods, it would not be the case. Division was already in the air and it would be impossible for this committee to arrive at any unified conclusion. As a result, when the committee reported four days later it had not come to a unified conclusion. Its chairman, Dr. Alexander, asked the committee to be discharged. Thus, “both portions of the committee then made separate reports, accompanied by various papers...”⁴¹

³⁷ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 420-1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 425

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 430.

After both sides made their reports a resolution was brought forth to table any further reports from either section of the committee and allow the General Assembly to vote on any Synod it chose to under the previous resolution. It passed and motions were soon offered to begin the process of expelling the NS Synods. By the end of the General Assembly a few days later, the Synods of Utica, Geneva, and Genesee (all in New York) and the Ohio Synod of the Western Reserve were all expelled.⁴² More Synods would join them in the proceeding years.

As it was explained before, these expelled Synods and the others that would soon join them in the NS contained a great deal of the abolitionists in the Presbyterian Church. Nonetheless, this separation would have never have taken place if it was not for OS adherents cooperating in both the North and the South. One of the primary reasons that the OS failed to win a majority in 1836 was the fact that the South was divided (thirty-six for the OS and twenty-six for the New).⁴³ In 1837 only nine delegates from the South (out of fifty-nine) voted for the NS. The NS would have narrowly won in 1837 if the South had not voted with the OS.

One of the ways in which the OS was able to ensure this southern support was to avoid making any condemnation of slavery during the Assembly (most of the OS leaders seeking to expel the NS were northerners).⁴⁴ During the General Assembly of 1837 the issue of slavery comes up only once, early on as the Plan of Union was being voted down.

⁴² Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 437-40.

⁴³ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Pg. 367.

⁴⁴ Marsden 99.

The minutes explain that “a petition on the subject of slavery was presented and referred to the Committee on Bills and Overtures.”⁴⁵ Being that this subject never came up again in the minutes, it is obvious that there would be no attempt in the OS (or NS) to call for the abolition of slavery, they would simply table it in committee so as not to risk offending their much needed OS brethren of the South.

Nevertheless, the fact that there was a large portion of northerners with the OS does create a problem since it is likely that there were many abolitionists that remained in the OS. Especially with the North dominating the OS their ideas might dominate as well. However, one must keep in mind that in some ways the northern OS adherents would allow the South to remain as supporters of slavery in order to in turn ensure their loyalty. Thus, the OS General Assembly would take no action on slavery till the Civil War broke out and most of the southern synods departed with the Confederacy. Moreover, the NS would be in the vast minority in the South, not even being able to keep synods in every state.

The question remains on how the delegates from Missouri voted in 1837. As indicated above, they were part of the southern delegates that voted with the NS faction in 1836. In 1837 the three Missouri delegates continued this support for the NS. Being that most of Missouri would eventually end up in the OS camp, what took place with these votes? As did most other Missourians, these delegates most likely did not regard the theological disputes between the Old and New Schools as important enough to divide the

⁴⁵ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 424.

church, as Missouri's actions after the General Assembly show. Being that Missouri Presbyterians would attempt to hold off the schism till 1841, this is most likely the reason. Unfortunately the records of the three men that attended are unavailable, limiting further speculation.

According to the resolutions of the 1838 General Assembly, "churches and members of churches, as well as Presbyteries, shall be at full liberty to decide to which of said Assemblies [Old or NS] they will be attached."⁴⁶ Thus, in the upcoming years votes were taken by individual churches to determine which Assembly, Old or New, the particular institution would be attached to. As a result, other Synods soon joined the expelled Synods at the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., NS. Furthermore, they attempted to include multiple other Presbyteries and Synods that had not officially left the OS, including Missouri, which did send some delegates.⁴⁷

Here is where the divisiveness of this schism comes to light most clearly. Immediately after the NS opening ceremonies were through, the Moderator of the NS General Assembly, Rev William Patton, declared that the resolutions of the previous year's General Assembly were "intended to deprive certain Presbyteries of the right to be represented in the General Assembly."⁴⁸ Therefore, he offered the following resolutions which held

⁴⁶ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 433.

⁴⁷ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (NS), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1838-40*. New York: Scatcherd and Adams, Printers. Pg. 644.

⁴⁸ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. NS 635.

That such attempts on the part of the General Assembly of 1837 and their Clerks. To direct and control the organization of the General Assembly of 1838, are unconstitutional, and in derogation of its just rights as the general representative judicatory of the whole Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.⁴⁹

Using the same language that the OS had used a year before to nullify the Plan of Union, the NS fired back at what they held to be an equally illegal action.

This language in the proceedings of the NS Assembly wore a response to the cruel welcome that the excluded Synods received when they attempted to rejoin the General Assembly a few days earlier, which was now totally controlled by the OS. Several NS men attempted to get their names on the roles of the Assembly. After failing in that endeavor, one of the commissioners from the Synod of Geneva, Rev. Miles P. Squier attempted to demand his seat. In response, the moderator arose and told him that “We do not know you.”⁵⁰ There were Missouri delegates at that Assembly as well, albeit different men.⁵¹ Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the schism was intended to be permanent and quite hostile to the NS.

On the other hand, there was still no schism in Missouri. As it is apparent from the voting tallies at the General Assemblies, Missourian Presbyterians did not wish the schism to take place. They did not feel that the theology of the schism was worth the quarrel. Thus, they chose to vote against the expulsions and the schism it would cause. Furthermore, there was a prevailing attitude of orthodoxy among the Presbyterians of the

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1838-50*. Philadelphia. Pg 419-24, Marsden 64-6.

⁵¹ Ibid.

state. That is, all Presbyterians in Missouri held orthodox views and thus there was no need to purge members that were unorthodox, as the OS had done to the NS.⁵²

The pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, Rev. Artemas Bullard summed up the early sediments of the Missouri Synod towards the schism with the following statement, “Let’s stop this at the River.”⁵³ Ministers who would end up on opposite sides of the conflict confirm the widespread support for Bullard’s goal. The Rev. John Leighton, who was a member of the OS after the schism, thought that the controversy need not tamper with the work of evangelism. The Union of 1801 did not need to be abrogated. He explained in retrospect that

Those stirring men found theological debate altogether compatible with their pioneer work in the churches, and, were it proper, the names of many might be cited, who were noted both in controversy and in evangelism.⁵⁴

Compared to the discussion on the authority of the Bible that was taking place during the 1880s, Leighton believed those quibbles to be minor.⁵⁵ The Rev. Timothy Hill, a minister that soon was aligned with the NS, essentially agreed with Leighton. He asserts that “had the question [of the schism] been left to the interests and wishes of the church [in Missouri]... there would have been no division.”⁵⁶ Thus, as we can see both sides of the

⁵² Hall, Joseph H. *Presbyterian Conflict and Resolution on the Missouri Frontier*. Lewiston/Queenston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press: 1987, Pg 107-8.

⁵³ Hill, Timothy, “History of the NS Synod of Missouri.” *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882, Pg. 54.

⁵⁴ Leighton, John. “Primitive Presbyterianism in Missouri,” *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882, Pg 65.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Hill, “History,” Pg 54.

division, at least initially, wished to avoid the schism.

Missouri delegates initially were claimed by both General Assemblies. In some cases delegates were sent to both Assemblies. Nevertheless, despite these heroic efforts by the Presbyterians of Missouri, it soon became evident that they would have to choose between a set of intolerable actions, either become independent or align with one of the two national bodies. Furthermore, the specter of slavery loomed large. Many saw the possibility of the NS support for abolition as alarming, which helped drive them to the OS. In the end the majority of the Presbyterians in Missouri elected to remain with the OS. Those that did not agree with these votes were forced to form NS presbyteries, which occurred along with the formation of a NS Synod.⁵⁷

Generally a fight would then ensue for the church records, and therefore the ability to claim to be the legitimate Presbyterian machinery in Missouri.⁵⁸ An example can be seen in the St. Charles Presbytery, the first to split in October of 1840. After the Presbytery voted to remain with the OS, the moderator, Dr Ezra S. Ely, who formed the NS Presbytery of St. Charles, ordered the clerk, Allan Gallaher to gather the records of the Presbytery Assembly. Thus

Gallaher with one sweep of his arm Gathered all books...holding them tightly in his arms and with a great hickory staff in his hands and a countenance fierce enough for a fight followed by Dr. Ely, accompanied by such as sympathized with them...⁵⁹

In the St. Louis Presbytery, the OS gained control of the records as was the case in the

⁵⁷ Hall 103-5.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Hill *Historical Outlines*, Pg. 22.

Missouri Presbytery and with most of the local churches that split with a majority remaining in the OS.

However, the division did not stop at the Presbytery or Synod level. Each individual church also had to make its choice to either remain aligned to the OS or join the NS. One of the older churches in eastern Missouri, the Dardenne Presbyterian Church, near O'Fallon, had to make this choice. At a session presided over by Hiram Chamberlain, one of the Missouri commissioners at the 1837 General Assembly, it was recorded in their records;

that we are willing upon the basis of the Assembly of 1837 and 1838 to adhere to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. After which the Ays and Nays were individually taken when those present all were willing to adhere with only one exception, which remains a doubtful case.⁶⁰

However, not every church ended up being as unanimous in its support. In 1840 the First Presbyterian Church of St. Charles (also moderated by Chamberlain) voted by a two-thirds majority, as did its Presbytery, to remain in the OS. The NS in turn was forced to form a new church, known as Constitution Church, with its minority of members.⁶¹

Bellevue Presbyterian Church, in Caledonia, also in eastern Missouri, experienced issues related to the schism as well. The church, in remaining with the OS had the problem of its pastor desiring to join the NS. Nevertheless, this man would eventually recant and remain with his church, causing a great deal of relief among his congregation.⁶²

⁶⁰ Watson, Elizabeth Audrain. *Heritage and Promise: A Story of The Dardenne Presbyterian Church and Its Community*. Chicago: Adams Press, 1977. Pg 56.

⁶¹ Watson 57-8.

⁶² Barrett, T. C. *History of Bellevue Presbyterian Church. A Sermon Preached by Rev. T.C. Barrett in the*

This was not the case in many of the Presbyterian Churches in Missouri as the schism came, not everyone would be so willing to maintain unity.

Divisiveness soon ensued on the Missouri level, divisiveness that was already taking place on the national level. The Presbyterian schism in Missouri was as severe locally as it was nationally. Moreover, its effects would be felt for some years to come. Those that were either abolitionists or against slavery in a lesser way ended up in the NS. As was the case nationally, those that were in line theologically with the NS were also those most vehemently opposed to slavery. None of these men remained with the OS, though there were some pro-slavery men with them. Nationally, the NS General Assembly condemned slavery while some of its members in the southern states grumbled. The OS remained neutral on the issue. Everyone else, and in fact the majority of Missouri's Presbyterians were in the OS. These views on slavery would eventually prove destructive in both schools as the 1850s closed and the Civil War began, as neither would remain unified.

Conflict ensued between the schools to some extent, but not to the extent as with the Methodists (it would influence the culture of Missouri to some degree as well). Nevertheless, what separates this schism from that in the MEC is the fact that slavery was

Presbyterian Church in Caledonia, Mo., August 5th, 1877. From Psalm XLVIII: 12, 13. Potosi, MO:

"Independent" print, 1877. Pg 9.

not in the forefront. Slavery played a role in the Presbyterian schism, with the majority of slaveholders split from the non-slaveholders, but it did not play the central role as it did in the Methodist schism. These differences influenced how the churches dealt with sectional issues during the next decades.

Although they were the first of the major Evangelical denominations to splinter in the antebellum period, unfortunately the Presbyterians would not be the last. The MEC broke up with the central issue being slavery. For authors such as Carwardine and Goen, the split illustrates the merging of religion and culture. Each side attempted to justify their views on slavery using the Bible, thus leading to the schism.⁶³ Previously, the traditions established by John Wesley held that the most effective way to combat slavery was through preaching and discipline, rather than through political means. Although these traditions took hold briefly in the late colonial period, they were soon abandoned in favor of winning additional converts and prestige in slaveholding areas in the South (they were fairly successful in this endeavor).⁶⁴

Nevertheless, prior to the 1840s northern Methodists attempted to get the General Conference of the MEC to condemn slavery through a variety of political means, which frustrated the southern Methodists. At the same time many northerners were frustrated over what they viewed as the pro-slavery position of their brethren in the South. In the end only a series of compromises were achieved. Various loopholes in the *Discipline*

⁶³ Carwardine 159-66, Goen 78-90.

⁶⁴ Matthews 76-80.

would be sought for any potential slaveholders in the clergy. These loopholes were debated at almost every General Conference leading up to the schism. Conservatives on both sides sought to end the debate and the “fanaticism” they saw as hurting the efforts of the church by silencing vehement anti-slavery members. In 1843, several anti-slavery Methodists, upset by the silencing of many of their colleagues left the MEC and formed the Wesleyan Methodist Church.⁶⁵

Many in the North did not want to continue to heed the conservatives and risk further defections. The ranks of those in the North that wanted to do something about slavery in the South had swelled by 1844. That year, at the General Conference, the northern members of the MEC wished to remove a Georgian bishop, James O. Andrew, who became a slaveholder through his marriage. In a schism that lasted until 1939, the southern members of the MEC split from the northern church and formed the MECS.⁶⁶

Bishop Andrew’s case was meant as a test-case by some of the anti-slavery northern Methodists. They wished to force Bishop Andrew’s removal or resignation in an attempt to achieve a condemnation of slaveholding within the clergy. There would be no loopholes sought for Andrew by the North. The southern delegates would have none of this plan and would undertake any action to ensure that Bishop Andrew would be able to continue in his office.

The General Conference opened in New York City on May 1st. By the second day

⁶⁵ Carwardine 159.

⁶⁶ Johnson, Curtis D. *Redeeming America: Evangelicals and the Road to Civil War*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993. Pp 149-50.

of the conference on May the 2nd the seeds of disunion were sown with “the report of Bishop Andrew having married a slaveholding lady.”⁶⁷ This report was made before any of the actual business of the conference commenced indicating the direction in which the conference would soon go. However, it was still hoped by many that Bishop Andrew would be spared by some sort of technicality in the *Discipline* as had many of the previous ministers connected with slavery. Unfortunately, Luther Lee, who recorded the *Debates* explained that there was “more sensation among certain men in this region [the North, more specifically New England], about his connection with slavery.”⁶⁸

Over the next days a litany of anti-slavery petitions were presented. The proceedings sum these bills up by saying that “The bad influence of the system of slavery, in the interests of the Northern church, especially in the hands of the recent seeders [sic], was made a prominent ground of complaint.”⁶⁹ Furthermore, the petitioners insisted “that every slaveholder is necessarily a sinner and ought to execute a deed of emancipation regardless of the circumstances.”⁷⁰ These positions were obviously unacceptable for the South. To maintain unity a committee on slavery was proposed, and after a great deal of discussion it was formed, with one delegate from each Annual Conference.⁷¹ In the end it

⁶⁷ Lee, Luther. *The Debates of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, May 1844: To Which is Added a Review of the Proceedings of Said Conference*. New York: O. Scott, publisher, 1845. Pg 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Lee 12.

⁷⁰ Lee 12.

⁷¹ Lee 12-6, 20-2.

would not prevent a schism as it was rather ineffective throughout the conference.

In a foreshadowing of the Andrew case, an appeal was brought forth on behalf of William A. Smith, an itinerant minister of the Baltimore Annual Conference. He had married a slaveholder and by the laws of Maryland had become the owner of those slaves, which he refused to manumit. The Baltimore Conference had suspended him from the ministry. After four days of fierce debate, the delegates voted on the 11th of May. With the exception of the Baltimore Conference, which chose to uphold its original suspension, all but two of the delegates from slaveholding states voted to overturn the suspension. One of these delegates was James M. Jamison of Missouri, the other being from Texas.⁷² The Missouri delegates had listened to the previous speeches on the Smith matter and had chosen, save one, to vote against his suspension. According to Lee, the South took the vote as “calm as summer’s evenings be; but it was the calmness that precedes the whirlwind of passion, and the earthquake of power.”⁷³ Ironically, Lee reports that Bishop Andrew “had absented himself at the moment [of the vote].”⁷⁴

A great deal more debate on slavery, and occasional other matters, proceeded in the conference for the next few days. The hope that there would be some sort of resolution passed to end the question of slavery and prevent a division became more grim by the day. Nonetheless a committee on the pacification of the slavery question was formed. After more debate, a speech was made by a northerner who sorrowed that despite

⁷² Lee 66-8.

⁷³ Lee 68.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

its potential formation there was still “a dark cloud has come over us, so dark that I have no hope, unless God interpose by his good providence.”⁷⁵ The fact that many in the Conference were moved to tears by this speech did nothing to change the direction things were headed. It soon became evident that the case of Bishop Andrew would have to be examined. It was brought up on May the 20th, and referred to a committee, that reported the next day.⁷⁶

The committee reported that Andrew had received slaves from three different women. His wife, an old lady in his congregation that had willed him her slaves, and his former wife’s mother. By a combination of Georgia law and an agreement with the old lady, he could not emancipate any of the slaves despite his claim that he both incurred no profit from their services and desired to emancipate at least a few of them.⁷⁷ As a result of the confirmation of Bishop Andrew as a slaveholder, the following day, Rev. Griffith of the Baltimore Conference presented a resolution that as a result of Methodist law “that Bishop Andrew be respectfully and affectionately requested to resign.”⁷⁸ What followed the motion was a lengthy (most General Conferences usually were winding down by this point), intense and sometimes vicious debate (at least by what was said of Andrew) that would lead to the schism of the Methodist Church in the United States.

After two days of heated debate, an alternate resolution on Bishop Andrew was

⁷⁵ Lee 79.

⁷⁶ Lee 78-80, 103-4.

⁷⁷ Lee 105.

⁷⁸ Lee 112.

brought forth by James B. Finley who was from Ohio. He moved “that Bishop Andrew be requested to desist from exercising the office of general superintendent until he shall be free from his connection with slavery.”⁷⁹ Andrew would temporarily end his active ministry while the issue of slavery was considered. This motion was tabled, to be considered later by the delegates if they so chose. Finley’s hope for some sort of temporary reprieve failed. Some northerners thought it was not enough and virtually all the southerners thought it to be unacceptable that one of their men be asked to desist in his work.

The debate would continue for days. At points it had been brought up that if slavery were allowed to remain that the New England conferences, similar to the Wesleyan Methodists, might leave the church instead of those in the South. The Rev. Pierce, of Georgia, summed up the sentiments of many in the South on the possible secession of New England Methodists when he proclaimed:

What is New England that she should demand so much at our hands?
She has been a thorn in the flesh for the last twenty years-the messenger
of Satan to buffet us. If she will not desist from her course of agitation,
it would be a blessing to the church if she succeeded.⁸⁰

Division would not be prevented if the General Conference ruled against slavery, it would only occur in the South. He begged his fellow ministers to “pause, brethren, I entreat you, pause before you take a step so fatal to the interests of the southern church.”⁸¹

Dr. J. T. Peck was one of the many who argued on the behalf of the northern

⁷⁹ Lee 131.

⁸⁰ Lee 145.

⁸¹ Lee 146.

churches. As to whether the North or South was responsible for the impasse, Peck argued that the “whole history proves that the aggression has been on the part of the South.”⁸² Furthermore, he could not “bear to think of...what has been more than intimated from both the North and the South, that civil division may follow as one of the consequences of the proposed measure.”⁸³ That is, no one wanted a schism, but it was clear at this point in the debate that one was almost unavoidable. He concludes by declaring that he saw “at once before my mind a division of the civil union and our republic broken up.”⁸⁴ Dire consequences indeed, Peck fears if the unity provided by the Methodists was destroyed. Its dissolution may result in national peril.

The debate would go on for days afterward, no doubt tiring the delegates. In the end, the bishops would offer a compromise that would have in effect tabled the discussion of Andrew’s case till the next General Conference in 1848, giving time to resolve the matter and allowing the delegates to return home. Nevertheless, the next day, June 1st, one of the northern bishops, Elijah Hedding, asked to have his name removed from the letter, dooming any last minute attempt at a compromise. He explains in his speech that “facts had come to his knowledge,”⁸⁵ prompting his change of heart. Many in the Conference speculated that Hedding did not want to risk a northern schism, thus forcing him to take his name off of the letter to ensure that the South would be forced to

⁸² Lee 160.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Lee 278.

leave the church instead of the North.⁸⁶

With Hedding's recantation, the bishops' proposal to table the motion narrowly failed, setting up the vote on Bishop Andrew's case. The delegates chose to accept the wording of Finley's resolution in a weak attempt at compromise, ordering Andrew to "desist" from his office. In what passed along the same lines as the Smith case, the resolution carried. Missouri's delegates chose to heed the words of the South. Only Rev. Jamison voted against the measure in the Missouri delegation (though it should be noted that Jamison was one of the very few ministers to leave Missouri rather than join the MECS the next year).

The southern churches, seeing that slaveholding would no longer be allowed within all the Methodist clergy, were forced to leave the church, which the North would allow them to do. Thus, the rest of the conference (save a vote on a new bishop and his ordination) was spent determining how a Plan of Separation would be finalized. Votes were taken on a variety of measures with the property being divided and border groups, down to individual churches, were permitted to choose which side they wanted to be on. Furthermore, the southern churches were to meet in Louisville the next year to actually form the new southern church.

These measures passed rather easily, with the opposition dwindling after every vote. The proceedings around the votes, brief and tame compared to the rest of the conference, were in all likelihood representative of the state of exhaustion many of the

⁸⁶ Bray, Robert. *Peter Cartwright, Legendary Frontier Preacher*. Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 2005. Pg 185.

delegates were in. The General Conference had gone on for weeks longer than expected and many wanted to begin their long journeys home. Unfortunately, the northern annual conferences would not accept this ascension to southern demands to leave the church, leading to numerous problems. Nevertheless, the Methodist church had officially split.

According to the biography of the Rev. William Patton, who was a delegate to the General Conference, the Missouri Annual Conference which met in St Louis in September brought forward the resolutions from the southern delegations. The Plan of Separation was referred to a committee (of which Patton was a member) which considered the matter for six days before bringing forth its report. The entire Missouri Conference adapted its report.⁸⁷

The committee concluded that the Missouri Conference had previously looked “with painful apprehension and disapproval, upon the agitation of slavery and abolition subject in our General Conference, and now behold...the disastrous results which it has brought about.”⁸⁸ Furthermore, the committee denounced the General Conference’s opinion in the matter of Bishop Andrew. It concluded that “we are compelled to pronounce the proceedings of the late General Conference against Bishop Andrew, extra-judicial and oppressive.”⁸⁹ Finally, the committee chose to recommend to the entire

⁸⁷ McAnally, D.R., *Life and Times of Rev. William Patton and Annals of the Missouri Conference*. St. Louis: Printed at the Methodist Book Depository, 1858. Pg 220.

⁸⁸ McAnally 221.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Annual Conference “that we approve the holding of a convention of delegates from the Conferences in the slaveholding States...”⁹⁰ and that this delegation from Missouri be allowed to vote for the establishment of “a co-ordinate branch of the M.E. Church” if it would “be found to be indispensable (and consequently unavoidable).”⁹¹ There was fleeting hope that the northerners would come to their senses and accede to the southern demands, allowing the church to remain unified.

Never does the Annual Conference of Missouri openly seek a separation from the northern church. Throughout this process they seek to only use division as a last resort. Nevertheless, it is became clearer that division had become necessary and thus must be undertaken. In continuing the direction the delegates to the General Conference in New York took, the majority of the Missouri Annual Conference demanded to move towards a schism if the northern church would not stand down from its abolitionist posture. Abolition could not become the law of the church for Missourian Methodists. Despite the desire to maintain unity, it could not be maintained at the cost of allowing abolition to become the rule of the church.

As the southerners had planned after the General Conference of the MEC deteriorated in New York, a group comprising all of the southern states, including Missouri, convened at Louisville in 1845. Throughout the conference at Louisville, the eight Missouri delegates were unanimous in their support for the formation of the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ McAnally 222.

MECS.⁹² One of the delegates, Jesse Green, who's speech unfortunately was not recorded in the *Debates*, spoke in favor of splitting from the North and forming the MECS. Lee records that "he claimed to understand the sediments of the people; and he did believe that the interests of Methodism in that region [Missouri] required the separation."⁹³

Another example can be seen from two of the other delegates, Andrew Monroe and Patton, who both made speeches in favor of forming the MECS. Although their speeches were not recorded (neither in the proceedings nor in Patton's biography), the *Debates* from the conference recorded a summary of their remarks by saying that they "showed their warm adherence to the South and assured the convention that, though they had been somewhat disturbed by internal divisions, in the end their people would go *en masse* with their Southern brethren."⁹⁴ Furthermore, Monroe attempted, unsuccessfully, to have the new MECS publishing house built in St. Louis.⁹⁵ These examples illustrate how the Missouri delegation fully supported the separation from the MEC and in turn the fact that they believed the membership back home in Missouri agreed with their assessment. There were some dissenters back in Missouri, an issue that will be addressed later in the paper, but they were a very small minority.

The letters and journal of the Rev. Jacob Lanius of the MECS can help to illustrate the conflict around the initial split. Briefly, Lanius served in various parts of

⁹² Lee 435, 449

⁹³ Lee 435.

⁹⁴ Lee 431.

⁹⁵ Lee 438, 446.

Missouri after arriving in this state from Virginia from 1831 to his death in 1851. In his tenure in the MEC and then in the MECS when it broke off, he rose to the position of presiding elder by the late 1840s.⁹⁶ Using both his journal and numerous letters written to him by many of the church officials in the state, the impact of the split becomes evident. However, it should be noted that we do not have any of the letters Lanius wrote, only those written to him.

According to the papers of Lanius that survive, he did not attend any of the General Conferences. However, he did correspond with Andrew Monroe. Overall, the two letters from Monroe to Lanius written in 1845 are very positive toward the formation of the MECS. Monroe confirms the fact that the Missouri delegation at Louisville was unanimous in the various proposals that were being presented at the conference. Numerous times Monroe says that he is looking forward to being a part of the MECS.⁹⁷ This optimism does not seem to fade in the next letter that Monroe sends to Lanius a few months later.⁹⁸

Despite the fact that we do not have Lanius' original letters to Monroe, it can still be gathered from what Monroe writes that both of these men had the same general view on the split. It is obvious then that both men were in strong support of it. From what Monroe writes, it seems that it was viewed as an necessity that the MECS be formed. It is

⁹⁶ Missouri East Conference, United Methodist Church, Papers, 1850-1977. Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri- Columbia. Collection 3595, folder 1.

⁹⁷ Monroe to Lanius, May 17, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

⁹⁸ Monroe to Lanius, November 18, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

as if there was little thought on whether to leave the MEC. Monroe confirms the unanimous support of the Missouri delegates, further upholding this idea.

As it would be expected, the issue of forming the MECS would have to be brought before the Annual Conference in the State of Missouri. This occurred in 1845, in Columbia. A minister that eventually remained within the MEC, Rev. Lorenzo Waugh, details the events that took place in his *Autobiography of Lorenzo Waugh*. Waugh, born in 1808, had ministered in Missouri since 1835 and had found the events leading up to the schism quite distressing.⁹⁹ He says that during the Annual Conference “it was plain to be seen that the absorbing question was the intended transfer of the M. E. church into a new organization with the term ‘South’ appended as its special designation.”¹⁰⁰

The presider at this Annual Conference was Bishop Joshua Soule, one of the bishops that had left the MEC with the southern churches.¹⁰¹ Waugh holds that Soule came to Missouri with the firm intention to ensure that the Annual Conference would officially join the movement towards the MECS. As to those that were present at the Conference, the “leading ministers in Missouri were in sympathy with the movement and aided the Bishop, and...they got a majority vote for the new M. E. Church South.”¹⁰²

This Annual Conference chose to undertake a vote in order to accept or reject the

⁹⁹ Waugh, Lorenzo. *Autobiography of Lorenzo Waugh*. 5th edition. San Francisco: Methodist Book Concern, 1896. Pp 13, 93, 156.

¹⁰⁰ Waugh 156.

¹⁰¹ Lee 383, Waugh 156.

¹⁰² Ibid.

resolutions put forth under the Plan of Separation at the Louisville Convention. By a vote of eighty-four to thirteen it was decided

that, as a Conference claiming all the rights, powers and privileges of an Annual Conference, we adhere to the M. E. Church, South and that all of our proceedings, journals and records of any kind hereafter be in the name and style of the M. E. Church, South.¹⁰³

Therefore, the Missouri Annual Conference would be affiliated with the southern branch of the Methodist Church.

Prior to the conference at Louisville there were numerous churches that desired unity to be maintained in the MEC. Multiple Quarterly Conferences had expressed apprehension over a possible schism when word of the 1844 General Conference had reached them.¹⁰⁴ However, virtually all of these Quarterly Conferences chose to form the MECS with their Annual Conference. One of these quarterly conferences, New Madrid (in southeastern Missouri), simply voted to join the MECS as their minutes record. Another, the Danville Quarterly Conference, in eastern Missouri, voted to remain as well.¹⁰⁵ Once the events at Louisville had taken place, these conferences, like their ministers at the Annual Conference, saw that unity was untenable, thus they were willing to split.

With the Missouri Conference officially going South, Waugh and the other twelve ministers who opposed the schism with the North were outvoted and had to either

¹⁰³ McAnally 235.

¹⁰⁴ Winter, Hauser, "The Division in Missouri Methodism in 1845," published in Missouri Historical Review, v37, October 1942. Pg 47-8. This was Winter's MA Thesis from the University of Missouri.

¹⁰⁵ *New Madrid Quarterly Conference Minutes*, v. 1307, *Methodism in Southwest Montgomery County*, c3595, f177; Western.

attempt to continue their ministry under duress or leave the state (which some did, such as Rev. Jamison).¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the Annual Conference decided “that any members voting in the minority...shall be allowed, without the blame of any kind, to attach himself to either branch of the Church...”¹⁰⁷ Initially, this was the case, the dissenting ministers were allowed to leave unmolested, but Waugh’s statement foreshadowed what was to come. As it will soon be seen, there were numerous ministers that had to undergo this struggle, the Annual Conference would not tolerate those who wished to remain in Missouri from the MEC.

The Methodist schism was as divisive as the Presbyterian schism. However, what separates the two in terms of severity is the fact that the basis of the MEC schism was slavery, whereas it was only a minor issue in the Presbyterian church. The theological split in the Presbyterians in the end yielded results similar to the Baptists. The fierce conflicts between the two branches of the Methodist Church from the schism through the Civil War will not be replicated in either of the two other denominations. While the divisions the Presbyterians and Baptists would not be final, the two halves of the MEC would not divide any further.

The repudiation of the Plan of Separation by the northern annual conferences would allow both sides to justify work on the other side of the border. Conflict, with the hardening of their positions on slavery would result. These outcomes would allow for the

¹⁰⁶ Waugh 156, and McAnally 236, 239.

¹⁰⁷ McAnally 235.

unanimity of each General Conference. With the resulting polarization over slavery the conflict deteriorated very quickly into severe clashes. North and South had split in the Methodist church, stressing sectional unity. Both the people and government of Missouri soon became embroiled in this conflict. The nature of the schism was the cause of this phenomenon. With the different schisms in the other two churches, these clashes would not be replicated in their severity.

The schism in the Baptist church, although over slavery, was not as severe as either of the other two major Evangelical denominations. One would assume that the Baptists, with their autonomous local churches, would not undergo any sort of schism. That is, each church could simply agree to disagree on the subject of slavery since there was no overarching denominational structure as in the Methodists and Presbyterian churches. Nevertheless, problems developed with the Baptists. Individual churches, while maintaining their sovereignty, cooperated in a variety of associations. There were county/regional and state associations that many churches participated in, which was the case in Missouri as well. However, the most unifying force among national Baptists was their missionary efforts, which existed in the form of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society (ABHMS). Prior to the 1840s, both northern and southern churches worked together successfully in this society. Nonetheless, the tensions of slavery that were affecting the other denominations would affect the Baptists as well.¹⁰⁸

Although the North dominated the ABHMS ideologically (despite the larger

¹⁰⁸ Matthews 162.

numbers of the South) northern moderates had more or less succeeded in holding off any confrontation on the slavery issue until 1844. In that year the corresponding secretary of the ABHMS had been attempting to get Jesse Busyhead, a slaveholder, to resign his role in the society. Busyhead died before the issue was resolved.¹⁰⁹ Getting wind of this issue, Baptists in the Alabama State Convention sought to test the will of the Executive Board of the ABHMS. They sent a letter to the Board of the ABHMS in November of 1844 asking for the “explicit avowal that slave-holders are eligible, and entitled, equally with non-slaveholders, to all the privileges and immunities of their several unions.”¹¹⁰ Furthermore, they asked “whether the Board would or would not appoint a slaveholder as a missionary.”¹¹¹ Combined with the attempted appointment of Rev. James Reeve of Georgia, a slaveholder, the Alabama Baptist Convention sought with the aforementioned letter to see the Board’s commitment to abolition and their view on slavery. They hoped to finally succeed in getting a slaveholder appointed.¹¹²

Prior to this letter, the Board of the ABHMS had been attempting to walk a middle-line, continuing to embrace the slaveholding conventions but refusing to appoint any slaveholding missionaries to appease many in the North. These sediments can be seen in the response to the Alabama Baptists by the Board of the ABHMS. It states that “We need not say, that slaveholders, as well as non-slaveholders, are unquestionably entitled to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Mode, Peter G., editor. *Source Book and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History*. Menasha, WI, George Banta Publishing Company. Pg 589.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Carwardine 169.

all the privileges and immunities which the Constitution of the Baptist General Convention permits, and grants to its members.”¹¹³ However, they continue to hold their line on not appointing slaveholders when they replied that if “any one should offer himself as a missionary, having slaves, and should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him.”¹¹⁴

Combined with the rejection of Reeve as a missionary, many southern Baptists held that this response demanded action on their part. The Board was not going to change its position on slavery as the southern Baptists hoped. Many feared they would never be able to counteract the northern influence in the ABHMS despite their advantage in rank and file members. Furthermore, the southern conventions knew it was only a matter of time before northerners would force the entire ABHMS to condemn slavery. In their view, they could no longer remain a part of the ABHMS as it would soon officially condemn slavery.

The churches of Virginia led the charge to form a new convention. In March of 1845 they sent a letter to Baptists throughout the United States. In it, they said that “We wish not to have a merely *sectional* Convention...we separate, not because we reside in the South, but because they have adapted an unconstitutional and unscriptural principle to govern future course.”¹¹⁵ Thus, the Virginians wished national participation in a new

¹¹³ Mode 591.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Taylor, George B. *The Life and Times of James B. Taylor*. Philadelphia, The Bible and Publication Society, 1872. Pp 151-2. Please note that James B. Taylor was the President of the Virginia Baptist Association.

convention for those that did not view “that holding slaves is, under all circumstances, incompatible with the office of the Christian ministry.”¹¹⁶

Despite this call there were many that wished to wait for a vote of the entire national convention of the ABHMS, hoping that they would not take the position of the Board. Moreover, there were many that wished to wait in holding the actual convention, since many states, such as Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri did not have chance to appoint delegates. These men wanted to ensure that these states could attend. Nevertheless, the urge to form a new convention was so strong that the other conventions/associations did not wait. In May of 1845 members from the southern state assemblies met in Augusta, Georgia with the intent to form a new national Baptist association that would accept slavery, unlike the ABHMS. They formed the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), severing ties with the ABHMS.¹¹⁷

The Missouri Baptist General Association did not have the opportunity to send delegates to Augusta. Therefore they were not present at the SBC’s formation in 1845. They did not speak or hear any of the speeches firsthand. However, at the 1846 state meeting, in Lexington, the Baptists in the state of Missouri would make the choice to which convention they would continue with. One of the committees that had been formed at the beginning of the meeting was to look at the possibility of becoming affiliated with the SBC or remaining with the ABHMS.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Barnes 26-8.

Elder S. W. Lynd D.D., the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in St Louis, who was the chair of the committee, gave its report. He began by explaining “that this Association is under obligations of gratitude to the American Baptist Home Missionary Society...”¹¹⁸ Although

the circumstances which have produced division between the North and South have been beyond our control, and the division itself in many aspects, to be deeply regretted, yet we cannot but hope, that, in the providence of God, it will result in a wider diffusion of the blessings of the Missionary effort.¹¹⁹

In the end, Lynd’s committee determined that “this association will better harmonize with the views and the enterprise of the Southern Baptist Convention.”¹²⁰ When the committee’s motion to join the SBC was put to a vote, it passed, unanimously.¹²¹

There was no debate inherent in whether or not to join the SBC within the Missouri Baptist General Association. The resolution passed without dissent and there was no mention, nor any records of subordinate assemblies or churches taking issue with this change. Problems that the Presbyterians and Methodists had with dissenters were completely avoided. When writing about the 1846 Assembly some years later in his *History of the Missouri General Baptist Association*, W. Pope Yeaman confirms this sense of unanimity. He simply mentions that Lynd brought up the matter, restates the

¹¹⁸ Missouri Baptist General Association. *Minutes of the Missouri Baptist General Association, 1844-1866*. St. Louis, MO: Continental Printing Co. Pg 11.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Minutes 12

¹²¹ Ibid.

minutes and concludes with mention of the vote.¹²²

However, he concludes this brief section of his work by mentioning that the “‘division between north and the south’ may seem strange [for the contemporary 1890s reader], inasmuch as they speak of a time many years before the war of the states.”¹²³ Yeaman then proceeds to retell the story of the schism. The fabric of evangelical unity was still broken by this schism, no matter how mild it was compared to the other two. With this break, national unity was further strained.

As the letter from the Virginia Baptists explained, they wanted a new missionary society that would include both sections of the country along with slavery. Although they really did not succeed with the former goal in the way they intended, many in the South that were apprehensive about slavery, the minority that supported the Union during the war, did not mind being affiliated with the SBC. Membership in the SBC did not force acceptance of slavery upon its members as did membership in the MEC. In the SBC, one simply had to accept that missionaries could hold slaves. Except for the most vehement abolitionists, of which there were few in the South or Missouri, those that did not truly support slavery could be members of a SBC affiliated organization.

Thus in Missouri, no one really cared that intently about this change, they simply wanted to use the resources of the SBC to spread the Gospel. However, like the Presbyterians, this “big tent” organization would not be able to hold up through the war, despite the lack of strife in the antebellum period. This result was due to the schism.

¹²² Yeaman Pg 79-80.

¹²³ Yeaman 317

What Yeaman's statement tells us is that at least in retrospect, the division in the Baptist church played some role in terms of the eventual war between the North and the South, despite its lack of severity.

As we will soon see, the resulting turmoil over these schisms had a direct effect on the conflict over slavery in these denominations in the proceeding years. The ramifications to the schisms only become fully apparent when their results are examined. All three of the major evangelical churches in the United States were divided by 1845. The fabric of unity that they provided was now broken and there would be political consequences to be had. These consequences in moving the nation toward war become evident in the years after the schism. Though, there would be different degrees of influence, with the Methodists having the most due to the condition of their schism.

The nature of the schism in turn determined how the churches prospered during the antebellum period and their official views on slavery. None of these schisms took place in the same way, leading to different results, although the Baptists and Presbyterians had some similarities with each other. This process continued to manifest itself into the war period, as each of the three denominations would take different paths during this bloody conflict.

Chapter Two:

Altar Erected Against Altar

“Contrary to the expectations of many, and certainly contrary to the wishes of both preachers and people in the South, the separation of 1844 did not take place as peaceably as it might, and no doubt ought to have done.”¹²⁴ These words written by the biographer of the Rev. William Patton little more than a decade after the events of that year could not have been more correct. Almost immediately after the schism of 1844 and the subsequent formation of the MECS the next year, conflict broke out among the members of the Methodist church which polarized the membership into northern and southern factions.

These conflicts within the Methodist church would not be replicated in the same degree in the Baptist and Presbyterian churches. This was due to the lesser degree of severity in their schisms. Thus, before the sectional crisis in Missouri became severe in nature, the Methodists were already undergoing a complete conflict as a result of their schism. In many ways they helped to lead the onset of the crisis (though religion was by no means the only reason that problems occurred) through their instigation of conflict with one another. The MEC was northern based, the MECS southern based. Granted there were political issues that acted on the Methodists, but they were not as extensive as those that acted upon their brethren only a few years later.

It would only be later that the Presbyterians and Baptists would experience greater

¹²⁴ McAnally 228.

tensions, after the crisis had begun to heat up and the Civil War broke out. These political events largely acted on those two churches (and the Methodists too, but to a lesser extent), causing the conflicts that these churches would undergo. Unlike the Methodists, the nature of their schisms would provide for future divisions. All three of the actual schisms had political consequences as the individual churches separated the North from the South on the religious stage. As the nation entered armed conflict in 1861, these battles only intensified. Each side would attempt to embody what it saw as the values of its section. Although Missouri was a slave state, it was still a border one as well, thus both northern and southern sympathizers would be participants in its conflicts. Nevertheless, it is the severity of the schism that led to greater intensity in the conflict among the Methodists.

After 1845 it was thought by members in both sections of the Methodist church that any conflict, especially one over slavery, between the formerly unified churches was over. The schism solved this problem forever many naively hoped. On the other hand, in order to implement this split, some method had to be obtained to physically divide the church. Unfortunately, the General Conference authors of the before-mentioned Plan of Separation simply wished to draw a 1200-mile line through all of the MEC border conferences. This plan did not take into account areas in the various border-states that embraced both slaveholding and non-slaveholding areas. Certain conferences/churches were allowed to vote on which side they would remain, but in practice these choices were often made for them.

The unity of numerous congregations and conferences would be severed in that

there was a significant minority that voted against remaining in one church or the other. Ministers such as Lorenzo Waugh illustrate this problem in Missouri. As a result of this flawed plan, conflicts between the MEC and the MECS ensued. Each side, until the Civil War, accused the other of violating the Plan. Moreover, as time wore on, each church would attempt to proselytize the members of the other church in these border areas as the conflicts worsened. Granted unanimity in regions farther North or South than Missouri might well have been the case (or even some portions of the state), but those places were not Missouri.¹²⁵

Rev. David Rice McAnally, in his biography of Rev. Patton disagrees with Carwardine when he claims that “There was throughout the South a unanimity unprecedented, perhaps in the history of ecclesiastical organizations. They were literally, on this subject, of one mind and heart.”¹²⁶ Obviously, things were not that well cut in the South or in the North for that matter. One of the leading preachers of the North, Peter Cartwright explains in his autobiography that from his vantage point in Illinois “a great number, from the confusion and dissatisfaction that arose in the Church from this rupture” left the Church and still more “perhaps were lost forever.”¹²⁷ Although things might not have been as bleak as Cartwright indicated, the schism was not without its conflicts. These issues could not have been prevented even if the South had been left

¹²⁵ Carwardine, Richard J. “Methodists, Politics, and the Coming of the American Civil War.” *In Methodism and the Shaping of the American Culture*. Edited by Nathan O. Hatch and John H. Wigger. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2001.

¹²⁶ McAnally 228.

¹²⁷ Cartwright, Peter. *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1856. Pg 286.

alone, as many southern Methodists suggested. The border would not allow it.

During the General Conference of 1844, the Plan of Separation that was passed essentially allowed the South to form its own church with the rights to the annual conferences within the South and entitled it to a share of the property. The majority of the northern ministers voted in favor of simply letting the South leave, and their numbers increased throughout the individual votes that made up the Plan taken during the General Conference. It was assumed each side would continue the work of Methodism in their own region, almost ignoring the other. While there was a brief respite in the harshness of the schism in order to let the South leave, as will soon become evident, it would not last long. Obviously, if the MEC was to legally attempt any proselytization of the South, they had to repudiate these votes and the fact that they simply let the MECS form by declaring the Plan of Separation unconstitutional.

Many argued in the northern conferences that the General Conference did not have the authority to divide the Church and allow the southerners to leave without any more of a fight. Nor, in fact could they be allowed to leave with their share of the MEC assets. Unlike the southern conferences, the northern ones did not stand to gain property or funds from the schism, as they would only lose money and property.

Cartwright describes one of these votes that took place in the Illinois Annual Conference in the fall of 1844. He had been one of the few delegates to consistently vote in favor of not allowing the southern churches to leave throughout the entirety of the voting. His co-delegates from Illinois had voted to let the South leave. Nonetheless, when the Illinois Annual Conference met that fall it voted with Cartwright and chose the route of non-concurrence with the General Conference. Thus, Cartwright explains that “after

we had debated the subject fully, the vote was taken, and there was a handsome majority in favor of non-concurrence.”¹²⁸ In the end, most of the northern annual conferences agreed with Illinois.¹²⁹ In these votes, which can be seen as both a continuance and a referendum on the schism, the conflict became more vicious, with ill-effects for both sides.

What were the causes of this almost immediate repudiation of the Plan of Separation? Most likely, after the weeks of debate in the General Conference, the delegates were simply tired and allowed the South leave. The decreasing number of votes against that course of action during the 1844 Conference would seem to indicate as much. Thus, the property could not be divided adequately in the brief time the votes took place. When the annual conferences had a chance to consider the matter, they realized that the initial division was not be acceptable and moved to nullify the Plan. The MECS, facing a loss of property and MEC ministers in their territory acted in the best way to preserve its interest, and fought the MEC on these matters. The Plan of Separation was abrogated almost as quickly as it was passed.

During the General Conference of the MEC in 1848, held in Pittsburgh, what remained of the Plan of Separation was declared null and void. Although the MEC for the most part was unable to reclaim any of its property (appeals in federal court up to the Supreme Court eventually failed), they were, at least in their view, legally justified under the ecclesiastical law of their church to begin proselytizing in the South. Separate MEC

¹²⁸ Cartwright 278.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

annual conferences were soon formed in the South.¹³⁰ Obviously there were profound implications to these actions.

As would be expected, the northern conferences sent in missionaries to the territory of the South to back up their formation of conferences. Many of these problems began to occur prior to 1848 and the repudiation of the Plan of Separation by the North. Others in southern states were dissatisfied with the schism. The letters to Rev. Jacob Lanius, a Presiding Elder along the Illinois border, illustrate some of these problems.

Other letters from Andrew Monroe indicate that the MEC did not waste any time in attempting to thwart the efforts of the MECS in Missouri. In May of 1845 he wrote to Rev. Lanius that a Rev. Dr. Charles Elliot will in all likelihood come to Missouri from the North. From the tone that Monroe takes in this letter, it is obvious that Elliot was a learned man that he did not want evangelizing in Missouri.¹³¹ Elliot, one of the leading men of the national Methodist church would soon establish a permanent residence in Missouri. His importance as an adversary of the MECS in Missouri is also confirmed when McAnally declares that “he became one of the most bitter denouncers of the whole movement, and no paper contained more severe things against the South than the one under his control.”¹³² Elliot was editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* of Cincinnati. Moreover, when he came to Missouri he edited the *Central Christian Advocate*, the MEC

¹³⁰ Cartwright 279, McAnally 231.

¹³¹ Monroe to Lanius, May 17, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

¹³² McAnally 229.

newspaper in St. Louis.¹³³

In March of 1846 Lanius received a reply to one of his letters from Greer W. Owens, from the Jackson, Missouri station on the Bloomfield Circuit (in southeastern Missouri). In his letter, Owens described how two ministers; Nelson Henry and W. P. Nichols were in error when they used their influence against the MECS. Moreover, Owens confirms in his letter what Lanius said in his previous correspondence that these men “engaged in actions against the M. E. Church, South and...need to be disciplined.”¹³⁴

In the *Annals of Methodism in Missouri* Nichols remains as a member of the MECS and dies in 1856. In the end, it seems he fell into line.¹³⁵ The *Annals* report that “Henry was a northern man. His sympathies were with the northern wing of the church, and, being on the border he adhered with that side.”¹³⁶ Henry would ask and receive a transfer to the MEC. As a result of his influence he took with him many members of congregations in and around the Cape Girardeau area. According to the *Annals*, those areas became an “arena of division, contention, and strife.”¹³⁷

Thus when Owens continues to describe to Lanius that numerous members of the congregations in his area are upset in that they were not consulted when the churches

¹³³ Carwardine, *Methodists*... 332.

¹³⁴ Owens to Lanius, March 18, 1846. Western, c3595, f. 14.

¹³⁵ Woodard, W. S. *Annals of Methodism in Missouri, Containing an outline of the ministerial life of more than One Thousand Preachers, and Sketches of more than Three Hundred*. Columbia, MO: E. W. Stephens, Publisher and Binder, 1893. Pg xviii.

¹³⁶ Woodard 110.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

split, their actions become apparent. These men and women chose to adhere to the MEC, especially when they had a talented minister such as Henry on their side. Owens concludes by mentioning that there have been some attempts by the MEC to proselytize the members of the MECS in his area, an expected outcome with Henry's defection and their proximity to the border.¹³⁸

These themes can also be seen in a letter from Rev. Jesse Sutton to Rev. Lanius a few months later. In his letter Sutton stated that charges in a church conference were levied against a Jarrat Ingram for actions against the MECS, though the specifics are not mentioned. This man seems to be an example of someone that disagreed with the new southern church. As a result, he was punished for voicing his disapproval according to Sutton.¹³⁹

Problems over the actual physical border arose more frequently after 1848 when the MEC General Conference in Pittsburgh condemned the Plan of Separation. Andrew Monroe again wrote to Lanius that year asking him "what actions are our brethren in the M. E. Church contemplating?"¹⁴⁰ He goes on to indicate that the other church was attempting to nullify what he terms as the Plan of Division. Monroe then vaguely mentions additional border problems that the flaws in the Plan of Separation caused.¹⁴¹

This evidence indicates that there was a fair amount of discord in certain areas of

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Sutton to Lanius, June 10, 1846. Western, c3595, f. 14

¹⁴⁰ Monroe to Lanius, May 22, 1848. Western, c3595, f. 4

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

Missouri between both the northern and southern churches. These problems only worsened with time. In 1850 a Rev. I. A. Light wrote Lanius about a northern preacher that arrived in Shelbyville (in Northeast Missouri) in an attempt to organize a northern church. Light stated that this minister was determined to organize this new MEC church even “if he has to run the risk of martyrdom.”¹⁴²

More striking were the “dishonorable devices” that this minister used to advance his cause. Light asserts that the preacher was attempting to present his discipline as a sort of middle ground. That is, this MEC minister wished to avoid forcing potential converts to choose between slavery and abolition and was doing rather well as Light describes. Therefore, he was seeking Lanius’ help in exposing the abolitionist character of the MEC and thus weaken its appeal. He then hoped to be able to effectively fight the efforts of the MEC preacher in Shelbyville.¹⁴³

A letter from R. H. Jordan sent to Lanius the next month tells of a similar problem in Louisiana, MO, which is in the northeast portion of the state along the Mississippi river. Although this letter does not contain the detail that the letter from Light does, we can see that the MEC preachers in Louisiana were using a pamphlet that was being circulated from St. Louis. From the tone of this letter it seems that the MEC was again having some success in gaining members. However, in his request for Lanius to send Revs. Caples and Marvin, there seems to be optimism that the threat from the MEC can

¹⁴² Light to Lanius, June 15, 1850. Western, c3595, f. 17.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

be eliminated.¹⁴⁴

Unfortunately, since Lanius died the next year, the letters to him stop. As a result, the eventual outcomes of the events in both Shelbyville and Louisiana in the 1850s are unknown. Putting these letters in the context of the sources that survive from other MECS ministers of the time, a more in depth analysis will be obtained. Fortunately, the Revs Caples and Marvin, mentioned towards the end of Jordan's letter, leave a fair amount of information as well.

Regrettably, McAnally presents no instances of pre-war conflict in his work the *Life of Marvin*. His focus is more on the latter part of his life, when Marvin became a bishop. However, in the biography of Caples, Marvin gives us an example of the border conflict between the two churches. While describing a revival that both he and Caples participated in, Marvin recounts crossing the border into Illinois in order to evangelize those in the MEC jurisdiction. Marvin explains that in 1849 and 1850 he was instructed by his presiding elder, Lanius, to set up a stop in Quincy, Illinois along his circuit. Lanius, Marvin said, held that the MEC violated the separation plan, therefore, it was acceptable to proselytize people within their jurisdiction. From the account that he gives, Marvin believed, along with Caples, that he experienced a relatively good amount of success in this endeavor. He recounts that "my congregations were large and serious from the first."¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Caples soon joined to help him in the establishment of a church in

¹⁴⁴ Jordan to Lanius, July 13, 1850. Western, c3595, f 17.

¹⁴⁵ Marvin, Enoch Mather. *The Life of Rev. William Goff Caples of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*. St. Louis, Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1870. Pg 86.

Quincy.¹⁴⁶

There is no doubt that this account of their success in Quincy is accurate, at least in the short-term. In 1850 the General Conference of the MECS was held in St. Louis. At that conference the border of the Missouri Annual Conference was changed to include Quincy.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the observations of Peter Cartwright, upon being appointed the presiding elder of the Quincy conference in Illinois, confirm that the MECS may have had a large number of people to proselytize. He explains that “there was no district parsonage and accommodations near its center.”¹⁴⁸ This issue most likely stemmed from the fact that, according to Cartwright, “Methodism...had gone to seed, and was dying out, and, to use our backwoods language, some of the prominent and leading members of the flock had become buttering rams...”¹⁴⁹ The lack of initial conflict reported in Quincy itself can be seen as a result of this floundering of Methodism in that area of the state. Nevertheless, the MECS in Missouri was not that successful in their work in Quincy. Their mission there according to McAnally in his biography of Patton “wrought no particular permanent good, either to the Missouri Conference or the people of that city.”¹⁵⁰

As McAnally explains in his biography of Marvin, some of Caples’ opinions presented by Marvin were actually his (which does not trouble McAnally), but this biography does still tell a lot about Caples.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ McAnally, DR. *The Life and Labors of Rev. E. M. Marvin, DD, LLD One of the Bishops of the M. E. Church, South*. St. Louis, Logan D. Dameron, Agent, Advocate Publishing House, 1878. Pp. 253-4.

¹⁴⁸ Cartwright 301.

¹⁴⁹ Cartwright 302.

¹⁵⁰ McAnally 254.

This example and those cited in the letters to Lanius essentially confirm the general ideas put forth by Carwardine. That is, as a result of the split between the churches, many of the border areas, such as Missouri, were subject to both sides attempting to set up churches in areas controlled by the other side. In essence, what is seen here are the conflicts between members of the northern and southern branches of the Methodism in Missouri.

The issue of slavery, which played a decisive role in the division of the two churches in the first place, is important here. Opposing views on slavery play some role in all of the examples here. Culture and religion can be seen as merging in that each side is using their particular view to proselytize in the cases presented here. It is clear that the words of Rev. McAnally, in his biography of Patton, describe the situation perfectly: “The agitation was kept up until preachers were sent across the line, altar erected against altar, circuits formed within circuits, which, in many places, produced no little commotion and strife.”¹⁵¹

Virtually all of the Methodists in Missouri previously aligned with the MEC joined the new southern church when the split occurred. The records of Lorenzo Waugh and the case of Rev. Nelson Henry indicate that there were still a few MEC supporters in Missouri. However, the fact that the overwhelming majority of Methodists were still members of the MECS in Missouri at the time of the reunification in 1939 did not help the availability of the records on the MEC.

¹⁵¹ McAnally *Marvin* 231.

Waugh attempted to continue his ministry in Missouri after the Missouri church joined the MECS in 1845. He would only leave the state in 1851, moving west to California when his health and that of his wife failed.¹⁵² Initially after the schism Waugh returned to his post on the Mill Creek Circuit. However, at the second quarterly conference, the presiding elder from the MECS “announced that I [Waugh] must be put off from the circuit and my place supplied with a preacher who did belong to the M. E. Church South.”¹⁵³ He was expelled from the MECS in 1846 for his stance on the schism.¹⁵⁴ Thus, Waugh was forced to leave his post and afterwards he attempted to minister to what was left of the MEC adherents in Missouri.¹⁵⁵ He faced numerous problems in this ministry. According to his autobiography, “at the close of 1846 we had no conference of the old M. E. Church in Missouri...” and there were only “a few of the former M. E. Church preachers in the state.”¹⁵⁶ It would not be until late in 1848, after the abrogation of the Plan of Separation, that a Conference was established in Missouri for the MEC.¹⁵⁷

Since Waugh left the state soon after the conference’s establishment, we can look to *Southwestern Methodists: A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southwest from 1844-1864*, by the Rev. Dr. Charles Elliot to continue the description of

¹⁵² Waugh 176.

¹⁵³ Waugh 158.

¹⁵⁴ Woodard 187.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Waugh 166.

¹⁵⁷ Waugh 168.

the plight of the MEC in MECS dominated Missouri. Although this work is about other southwestern states as well, Elliot spends a significant amount of time on Missouri after the establishment of the MEC Conference. As would be expected, Elliot takes an approach that is decidedly pro-northern, since he was a member of the MEC.

The first time that Elliot mentions the MEC in Missouri is around 1849, the year in which the membership went up to 3,463 members.¹⁵⁸ This number is small if compared with the approximately 35,000 members the MECS had in 1850. Furthermore, the fact that these numbers include Arkansas (at least a third were in that state), which was only made a separate conference in 1852, gives a true indication how few MEC members were present in Missouri.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Elliot writes optimistically of these numbers and suggests that the MEC was doing better in Missouri than in numerous other states where the MECS dominated.

In 1851 he first mentions a conflict between the two branches of the Methodist church. Rev. Mark Robertson, who had been stationed in Batesville (southern Missouri) two years earlier, was “mobbed at his station.”¹⁶⁰ Although Robertson’s plight illustrates that there were conflicts between the churches, a more telling example is the tale of Rev. Charles Holliday Kelly. In 1853 he was stationed in Chambersburg (northern Missouri). In February of that year he was apprehended by supporters of the MECS and taken to a

¹⁵⁸ Elliot, Rev. Charles. *Southwestern Methodists: A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southwest from 1844-1864*. Cincinnati: Poe and Hitchcock, 1868. Pg. 27.

¹⁵⁹ Elliot 30.

¹⁶⁰ Elliot 27, 9.

prison in Iowa. As a result of the time of year and his lack of protective clothing, he eventually died in Iowa of exposure.¹⁶¹ The Kelly incident further illustrates the extremes that the two churches would go through to achieve their aims. The possible martyrdom of the northern minister that Light mentions no longer seems that farfetched. The charge that Kelly was arrested upon was escaping from the Iowa State Prison. The charge was clearly false, since the escapee was Charles F. Kelly, a different man. The man who apprehended Rev. Kelly, who called himself Trabue and pretended to be a Marshal, almost surely knew this fact. He was using this escape as an excuse to harm Rev. Kelly, a member of the hated MEC.¹⁶² Trabue succeeded in this goal with Kelly's death.

By no means do the instances of conflict stop there. In 1855 a Rev. W. H. Wiley, of the Harrisonville Circuit in Cass County (western Missouri), was stopped by a band of MECS supporters. He was then accused by this band of helping various slaves to run away.¹⁶³ Here we see another example of how the issue of slavery was used to galvanize support against the MEC. Later that year, John A. Tuggle, another MEC minister was accused of fomenting trouble among the slaves. Unlike Wiley, he was accused by a group of MECS officials who also had help from several Baptists in their interrogation.¹⁶⁴ Also, according to Elliot, in an incident with larger implications, in 1855, Platte County (also in western Missouri) expelled the MEC.¹⁶⁵ The citizens despised the MEC for its abolitionist

¹⁶¹ Elliot 32-3.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Elliot 46-7.

¹⁶⁴ Elliot 47-8.

¹⁶⁵ Elliot 76.

views and expelled them to avoid dealing with them.

The following year Elliot states that the pro-slavery military raids in Missouri against the MEC increased in various places.¹⁶⁶ In 1858 another example of the ever-changing border between the two churches can be seen in Elliot's writing. Elliot describes how the MECS moved the border between the churches into northern territory in order to restrict the MEC territory (proven by the actions they took with Quincy earlier in the decade). Essentially, they claimed various border areas in Iowa and Illinois that were within MEC conferences. Again, the further deepening of the conflict between the churches can be seen here from the MEC perspective.¹⁶⁷

A different example of the aligning of forces in Missouri against the MEC can be seen in 1859. That year the Jefferson City Land Company offered 25,000 dollars in stocks and bonds to any church that would be willing to help build a university in the Jefferson City area. As a result, the MEC tried to gain a charter in an attempt to open a school. However, Elliot says that they failed since the state of Missouri would not grant a charter.¹⁶⁸ The Missouri State House of Representatives Journal records that the measure was introduced on the fourth of November in the Missouri House and shortly amended. The legislature overwhelmingly chose to table the measure by a vote of ninety-five to sixteen, with twelve members absent. The legislature would not act, refusing to let the

¹⁶⁶ Elliot 83-4.

¹⁶⁷ Elliot 113-4.

¹⁶⁸ Elliot 136.

MEC build a school.¹⁶⁹ This example demonstrates the pro-southern MECS had a great deal of control and sympathy in the state government. The fact that the halls of the State Legislature were refused to a preacher of the MEC in 1860 further supports this idea.¹⁷⁰ As a result, we can see that the MEC was drastically restricted in what it could accomplish.

Waugh gives additional examples of persecution against MEC ministers as well. His friend Anthony Bewly was falsely accused (he does not specify as to what) and then hanged. Another minister, Benjamin Holland, was stabbed to death. As for Waugh, he says that “This same desperate class of men plotted to mob me, and had I not a true Virginia friend on hand...they would have mobbed me, and probably taken my life also.”¹⁷¹ These are just some of the examples of the violent acts taken against the MEC by supporters of the MECS.

Additional examples of the conflicts between the MEC and MECS from the perspective of the former church are evident in the experiences of the German Conference in Missouri. Their story is included in the records on the current United Methodist Church in a translation of “The Old Grey Book,” which gives an account of the founding and history of the German Methodists in Missouri. Although this history is largely written to glorify these Methodists, it does provide some historical examples that are useful in

¹⁶⁹ *Missouri House of Representatives Journal*, Nineteenth General Assembly, (Adj. Session), Pp 110 & 169.

¹⁷⁰ *Missouri Statesman*, March 16, 1860.

¹⁷¹ Waugh 161-2.

this paper. The entirety of the information presented on the German MEC conflict with the MECS comes to us from J.A. Muller. Unfortunately he was a very old man when this testimony was taken down. As a result, the details of what he says maybe incorrect in places.¹⁷²

One of the few groups not to join the MECS in 1844 were a group of fourteen German ministers in St. Louis, with support from their bishop, George Morris, who remained with the MEC.¹⁷³ The Missouri Annual Conference did not protest their adherence to the MEC and expected it due to their views on slavery (German opposition to slavery was almost universal in Missouri).¹⁷⁴ There were attempts by the MECS to preach to the Germans after the schism, but they went without success. These men and their congregations became attached to the Illinois Conference of the MEC following the schism. Only in 1864 would the congregations that these men represented be established as a separate German Conference.¹⁷⁵ While not a huge church in terms of membership, there was nonetheless a high percentage of the MEC membership in the German branch. A figure of several thousand given by J. A. Muller, though exaggerated with a large percentage on non-members, proves this point.

Muller's relevant discussion starts with tensions increasing in Kansas and in Nebraska after 1854. Although numerous people had misgivings, several ministers and

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

¹⁷⁴ McAnally 239.

¹⁷⁵ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

others in the MEC were attempting to persuade abolitionists to come farther west into Kansas. To that effect a mission was started in Leavenworth, Kansas. Muller continues his discussion up until the Civil War by stating that there were numerous other hindrances to the efforts of the German MEC to evangelize in Missouri, especially in the Kansas area. Nevertheless, Muller explains that “the missions were making good progress in gaining souls.”¹⁷⁶ By 1860 additional districts were being established in Kansas.¹⁷⁷

The role of slavery in this conflict can easily be determined. The MECS members were obviously pro-slavery, while their counterparts in the MEC were not. J. A. Muller explains in his testimony that those that left what would soon be the Missouri Conference of the MECS were unanimous in their objections toward slavery. The persecution that they experienced was the result of this opposition to slavery.¹⁷⁸ Dr. Elliot also proclaims his objections to slavery and contends that “to be a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in these regions...was the greatest crime known by the pro-slavery men of the South-West, as membership in that church was synonymous with *negro thief*, incendiary, insurrectionist, and the like.”¹⁷⁹

Peter Cartwright also abhors slavery. He held that “every reasonable man must depreciate its [slavery’s] existence.”¹⁸⁰ However, Cartwright, a native of a slave state, was

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Elliot 3.

¹⁸⁰ Cartwright 275.

one of the few moderates in the matter, and not a fervent abolitionist. He sought to ensure the eventual conversion of the slaveholders. He asks “Do we induce sinners to reform, repent, and be converted, by abusing them.. And saying it is impossible for persons guilty of such dirty crimes to become Christians? No, we warn them, in a Christian spirit and temper, to flee the wrath to come...”¹⁸¹ Cartwright obviously wants an end to slavery, and believes that it is the duty of all to hope for this end, but he will not be militant in the manner that he seeks to go about it, unlike many of his colleagues in the North.

The MECS viewed their northern counterparts as abolitionists subverting slavery in Missouri. The leading MECS paper of the day, *The St. Louis Christian Advocate*, illustrated this viewpoint. It explained that “1. There is no abatement of the abolition feeling in the Church North, nor is there likely to be any. 2. Men laboring in Slave states, in connection with the [MEC] Church...must be more or less liable to the charge of abolitionism.”¹⁸² The influence of the MECS in Missouri is seen when the government and the citizens come to agree with this view, for the editorial in the *Advocate* continues to explain that “the public mind will look upon them [MEC] in their relations, and form, to some extent, its judgment of them by the company they keep.”¹⁸³ Their abolitionist companions underscored the fact that they were abolitionists as well.

The ministers of the MECS could not agree with the *Advocate* more. In his

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² *St. Louis Christian Advocate*. St. Louis: W. Patton, D. R. McAnally, et al for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. August 12, 1852. Pg 12.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

biography of Caples, Marvin says that Caples held two things to be true with regards to slavery. The first was that the Bible did not prohibit it, “but clearly in the Old Testament authorized it and the New allowed it.”¹⁸⁴ Marvin further condemns the arguments of Biblical support in favor of abolition by saying “What then, must be the audacity of the man who professes to accept the Bible as the *word of God*...and impeaches the Holy Ghost in His teaching on the subject?”¹⁸⁵ Caples does not stop there, he condemns the abolition movement, calling it “the deadliest sin in modern society.”¹⁸⁶ Marvin most likely held these views as well. These lines illustrate that there was no love lost by many of the members of the MECS on behalf of the abolition movement.

This argument from Caples that the Bible supports slavery is similar to points that were made in Noll’s work, *America’s God*. Essentially Noll states that Biblical arguments, such as those used by Caples, were the norm. Thus, each side used these arguments (the opposite ones in the case of the MEC) to further place their congregations on the respective side of the issue. Therefore, the nation became further polarized, these examples from Missouri being no different.¹⁸⁷ The importance of slavery in this conflict is seen in multiple examples from each of the two churches. Slavery is playing a crucial role in the proselytizing on either side.

The largely unanimous desire to form the MECS that Monroe discusses with

¹⁸⁴ Marvin 254. The original grammar of this quote was erroneous.

¹⁸⁵ Marvin 254-5.

¹⁸⁶ Marvin 255.

¹⁸⁷ Noll 388-9.

Lanius originated from these ideas. Furthermore, these Biblical arguments were further strengthened by the fact that without the northern church, there was no impetus to moderate their pro-slavery themes (and vice versa with the North). Even those that can be seen as moderate, such as Cartwright, wanted the elimination of slavery. With every one of the sources presented here from the MECS expressing ideas that would be pro-slavery, pro-southern, and pro-MECS, there is no doubt that they would fight the MEC until the last man. The ministers and members of the MECS were backing up their pro-southern ideas, such as slavery, with religion. They were as a result becoming polarized from their northern brethren. This polarization started before the larger national sectional crisis got into full swing and thus helped to drive it as it heated up.

As alluded to before, 1854 was the year when the sectional crisis began to heat up in Missouri. In that year the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed and the border war between Kansas and Missouri would soon start up. This period in the 1850s was a time of political transition, as the economic issues of the previous decade were becoming out of style and the ideas of slavery and nativism had yet to take hold. The full-fledged conflicts between the MEC and the MECS were normally atypical for Missouri prior to 1854.¹⁸⁸

The conflicts between the MEC and the MECS were eventually agitated by the larger conflicts of the sectional crisis in the 1850s. As things got worse in Missouri as the war got closer, the conflict within the Methodist church worsened as well. However, it is

¹⁸⁸ Etcheson, Nicole. *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004. Pp. 12-5, 22.

clear from the description of the events leading up to this that the Methodists began fighting prior to the sectional crisis fully heating up. Northern Methodists took on Southern Methodists before such events as the border war began. It is clear from their language that each side saw itself as a participant in a full-fledged sectional conflict. Thus, the fight between the Methodists helped to increase the larger sectional conflict.

The Methodists were a force for major ideological separation and sectional unity in antebellum Missouri. Any occurrence that took place in their church would be significant politically as well. Many believed and hoped that a clean schism would result in minimum of political consequences. For example, in a speech to the 1845 convention at Louisville, the Rev. Dr. William Winans made one of the initial speeches in favor of forming the MECS. He discusses what he views as the national implications of the schism in this speech by proclaiming:

Many feared that the separation contemplated would tend to sever the political union of these United States. If so it assumes a very important aspect. Yet if I believed it would, still I would vote just as I shall, for with me principle outweighs expediency. I would vote for division of the Church if it would divide the union of the states.¹⁸⁹

However he goes on to say that he does not believe that the formation of the MECS will cause national division. Rather he states that “I verily believe that we shall strengthen the union of these United States by dividing.”¹⁹⁰ For Winans, “the influence of abolitionism on church and state”¹⁹¹ has made this division necessary. Granted, Winans was not a Missouri delegate, though his speech would have been heard by all of those present from

¹⁸⁹ Lee 401.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

Missouri and heeded when they voted to form the MECS. What is most telling is the fact that Winans would have undertaken the schism even if it would have national consequences, which it eventually did. Political unity did not matter if the right to hold slaves had to be sacrificed.

Obviously, those in the MECS did not take heed of Bishop Soule's speech during the General Conference of 1844 that the nation was watching to see if the MEC could remain unified. Soule at least had some fear of national political ramifications if the MEC split. Others in the northern church soon realized that is what had happened as this issue continued to merit discussion several years later. On a more local level, Waugh gives us a poem, published in Jefferson City, Missouri around 1850 in response to the schism, which he says "will give a clear touch of my views at that time."¹⁹² It proclaims that:

The Preachers of the church called "South,"
A mighty stir have made of late;
In practice they, if not by mouth,
Have cried, "dissolve this Union great."¹⁹³

In the end, Peter Cartwright agrees with Waugh in that anyone who attempted to discount the ramifications of the schism was really only undertaking an exercise in wishful thinking. He laments a few years before the start of the war:

What an awful thought! These were the fearful, legitimate results of schism; and indeed, this dreadful rupture in the Methodist Church spread terror over almost every other branch of the Church of Christ; and really, disguise it as we may, it shook the pillars of our American government to the center, and many of our ablest statesmen were alarmed, and looked upon it as the entering wedge to political disunion, and a fearful step toward the downfall of our happy republic; and...

¹⁹² Waugh 171

¹⁹³ Ibid.

that all the horrors of civil war will break upon us shortly.¹⁹⁴

Cartwright obviously saw a connection between the possible dissolution of the union and the schism. For him, the political effects of the schism were obvious. Cartwright's words in 1856 were indeed prophetic, to the extent that the schism in the Methodist church had an effect politically.

Non-Methodist politicians closely followed the schism, as Henry Clay demonstrates. Responding to a letter from a friend, Dr W. A. Booth in April of 1845, Clay comments on the schism in the MEC, which he kept up on. Clay writes of his deep regret of hearing “of the danger of a division of the Church, in consequence of a difference of opinion existing on the delicate and unhappy subject of slavery.”¹⁹⁵ Clay deplores the possibility of this schism being consummated “both on the account of the Church itself and in its political tendency.”¹⁹⁶ However, Clay's words a bit later in the letter are more telling in that he firmly believes that “scarcely any public occurrence has happened for a long time that gave me so much real concern and pain as the menaced separation of the Church, by a line throwing all the Free States on one side, and all the Slave States on the other.”¹⁹⁷

Clay does not believe that the breakup of the union was imminent as a result of this event, only more likely. With the breakup of the Methodist Church the nation was

¹⁹⁴ Cartwright 286-7.

¹⁹⁵ Colton, Calvin, editor. *The Private Correspondence of Henry Clay*, Volume 4. New York: A. S. Barnes and Co, 1856. Pg 525.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

beginning to descend down a slippery slope to civil war. Seeing the impact of the schism on those who are not members of the MEC, such as Clay (who was not a member of any denomination at this point in his life) one cannot help but appreciate the extent of the effects of the schism on the larger political landscape. Finally, Clay did not keep these comments only between himself and Booth, but made them in other letters and newspapers as C. C. Goen explains.¹⁹⁸

Noting how both the Methodist and Baptist churches had split, the Missouri Presbyterian (OS) minister, Rev. Nathan Lewis Rice, commented that “the importance of this subject is greatly enhanced by its bearings upon our civil Union.”¹⁹⁹ Rice feared that a continued conflict between both sides (especially if the abolitionists continued to press their case) would lead to larger national political problems. He concluded by explaining that “the day is at hand when the northern and southern States will form two distinct and hostile governments.”²⁰⁰ Although he would be quick to blame the war on abolition, Rice predicted that the furthering of the religious conflict over slavery would eventually lead to larger problems and a war between the states. Obviously, he was correct.

The impact the schism and the subsequent events had on the entire population of Missouri is evident by those that aided the MECS in their suppression of the MEC. The

¹⁹⁸ Goen 100-1.

¹⁹⁹ Blanchard, Rev. J. and Rev. N. L. Rice, DD. *A Debate on Slavery: Held in The City of Cincinnati, on the First Second, Third, and Sixth Days of October, 1845, Upon the Question: Is Slaveholding itself Sinful, and the Relation between Master and Slave, a Sinful Relation?* Cincinnati: William H Moore and Co, Publishers, 1846. Pg 34.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

conflict drew other people into it and forced them to take sides, further polarizing them along with the respective churches while extending the sectional conflict. Not everyone in these instances were members of the MECS. By standing up with the MECS and declaring with the MECS that the MEC must not be allowed to continue its ministry in the state, non-Methodists were participating in this conflict.

The mobs that formed, despite their instigation from the MECS, contained non-Methodists as well. Platte county in expelling the MEC further represents non-Methodists participating in these conflicts as does the General Assembly in denying the MEC their university. The state and local governments were participating in this conflict as well. It was the whole state, not just the MECS that held a poor view of the MEC according to Elliot. The previous examples throughout this chapter bear forth this fact. Those not directly involved with Evangelical churches and the government would continue to participate through the war in these conflicts.

The schism in the Methodist Church and the events after it had a profound impact on the political events of Missouri. These events predated the sectional crisis and in numerous ways are an earlier example of a crisis between the North and the South. It was the initial events surrounding the schism that perpetuated these later events, in both the secular and religious spheres that surrounded the Methodists. Although there was a lull in the conflict immediately after the split, the events of the General Conference of 1844 were vicious indeed and their apparent polarization over slavery would serve to cause battles soon after.

The schisms in the other two churches examined in this thesis were nowhere near

as vicious over the topic of slavery in the antebellum period. In the two branches of the Presbyterian church the severity of these conflicts are not as apparent. The Old and New Schools did not engage in acts of hatred against one another with the same fervency over slavery that the Methodists did, though they still had issues over slavery. These problems would cause both further division in the NS just prior to the war and future problems in the OS during the war.

Prior to the schism there were some major difficulties in the church over abolitionism. Missourians fought the abolitionists with different views on slavery. Well-known is the case of the Presbyterian minister Elijah Lovejoy, who was murdered by a mob in 1837 after he fled Missouri to Alton, IL. Lovejoy had started the *St Louis Observer* in 1833, shortly after completing college at Princeton. Although his paper survived for two years, its office was destroyed by a mob in 1835, forcing him to flee to Illinois. There he continued his work in abolitionist societies till his murder. Nevertheless, his fellow Missouri Presbyterians would write that “To this man exact justice has never been done. He was no wild fanatic recklessly causing death, but an earnest, conscientious man...”²⁰¹ He was “a martyr for liberty.”²⁰² All did not think that way of Lovejoy, for these were NS Presbyterians that praised him being some of the most anti-slavery men of their denomination.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Hill, Rev. Timothy. *Historical Outlines of the Presbyterian Church in Missouri*. Kansas City, MO: Van Horn and Abel Printers, 1871. Pg 19.

²⁰² Hill 54.

²⁰³ Hill 54, Thompson 348.

Another case, that happened immediately prior to the schism, transpired at Marion College. This school, one of the first universities granted an official charter in Missouri, was founded in 1832 in rural Marion County (in the eastern part of the state). The Rev. David Nelson MD was its founder, who had emancipated his slaves shortly after his conversion. He had “reached the conclusion that slavery was essentially wrong, and that its continuance was a perpetual menace to the religious and social life of the southern states.”²⁰⁴ The university soon “rose to prominence and bid fair to a source of great good...”²⁰⁵

Nevertheless, it soon became obvious to those living around the college and the other Presbyterians in Missouri that Dr. Nelson and the other faculty members were fervent abolitionists. Therefore, they were driven out of the county and left the state out of fear for their lives in 1835. In the end, it was said by Missouri Presbyterians that Nelson’s “southern birth, his thorough acquaintance with southern people, and his great personal popularity, were not sufficient to shield him from the mad, increasing fury of the mob. Such is the spirit of slavery always.”²⁰⁶ His views were so repugnant to Missourians and many of his fellow Presbyterians that he had to be driven from the state.

Rev. William Potts would take over the presidency that year, a man who was by no means an abolitionist and had no desires to eliminate slavery within Missouri. With

²⁰⁴ Marks, J. J. “Some Personal Remembrances of Rev. David Nelson,” in *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882. Pg 75.

²⁰⁵ Hill 54.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

the college under his charge, he proclaimed that “We start in our own present labor, with a desire to benefit our fellow-citizens, and to be useful to the world.”²⁰⁷ Potts and the rest of the Presbyterian church hoped the manual labor school could continue to prosper and educate those in Missouri in the Presbyterian spirit without abolition within its walls. However, the former was not to be the case.

Unfortunately, the plight of an unidentified student writing in 1840 was typical of what happened there as a result of the economic panics of the late 1830s. He writes earlier in the year “I wished very much to have visited Nashville during the vacation, but a variety of hindrances prevented me...the College could not advance, or rather pay what would be necessary for my expenses.”²⁰⁸ For whatever reason the school owed him money and could not pay him. He in turn was running short of money and his plight was not aided by the numerous other economic difficulties that he complained of in his letter. Larger economic issues were running their course and soon the college would experience these problems as well. These problems for Marion’s students and for the school itself forced the school’s closure.²⁰⁹

What these two examples show us is that there were struggles over slavery within the Presbyterian Church prior to the schism. Both sides undertook actions in order to further their views on the struggle for slavery. Again, ordinary citizens of Missouri were

²⁰⁷ Potts, Rev. William S. *The Inaugural Address of Rev. William S. Potts, President of Marion College*. St. Louis: Printed by R. M. Treadway, 1835. Pg 15.

²⁰⁸ Letter 1840 May 2, Marion College, MO to Mr. Woods, Tennessee State Library and Archives. Document s1163. This letter was unsigned and no author could be determined by the archives.

²⁰⁹ Thompson 273.

also involved in these two controversies illustrating how the problems within the Presbyterian Church had an affect on Missourians as a whole. The larger population of the state cannot be discounted here, since they also supported slavery. Moreover, those that wished to suppress the actions of the abolitionists in the Evangelical churches did not mind the extra help from those outside their churches.

The fight to influence individual congregations and churches would ensue in the days after the schism of the Presbyterian Church in Missouri. There were many theological reasons that the OS and NS would conflict, with literature being exchanged on both sides to further the cause of either school.

In 1842 the OS sent out a pamphlet to its congregations attempting to fight what it believed was an attempt to “deceive the churches situated in remote parts of the State,” by a previously issued pamphlet.²¹⁰ This pamphlet attempted to fight the OS by holding that ““we cannot attach ourselves to the party now known as the Old School Assembly.””²¹¹ Although the pamphlet being responded too claimed to be neutral on the issue of the schism, many of the positions it articulated seemed to the authors to be poorly disguised NS positions.²¹² They explain, touting an obvious OS position which sums up many of their arguments, that “ It will be obvious to every person that this arrangement [1801 Plan

²¹⁰ Jones, Isaac et al. *Review of “A Declaration of Sentiments made by the Synod of Missouri.”* St. Louis: Native American Bulletin, 1842. Pg 3.

²¹¹ Jones 4.

²¹² Jones 5-6.

of Union] opened a wide door for the introduction of error and misrule in the Presbyterian Church.”²¹³

Nonetheless, it is on the position of slavery where the pamphlet gets interesting. According to Rev. Jones and his co-authors, the pamphlet that they are writing against holds that the OS is “claiming and exercising the right to agitate the church upon the subject [of slavery].”²¹⁴ Obviously, those authors know that the subject of slavery can raise a great deal of problems for the OS and by making this claim they hopefully can in turn gain (or retain) additional members in Missouri. However, this accusation cannot be further from the truth according to the OS writers for “the only action of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery has been a refusal to act at all!”²¹⁵

Indeed, this statement is an accurate portrayal of the view of the OS on slavery, nationally and in Missouri. Unlike the MECS, the OS General Assembly never explicitly proclaimed its support for slavery. It retained an ambivalent stance on the issue throughout the antebellum period. Being that its membership consisted of crucial segments in both the North and the South, this position is not surprising. The schism did not completely polarize its members like the Methodists. A strong stance in either direction would perpetuate a further schism.

The abolitionists that existed in the NS (or MEC) were not present in the OS at this point in time to force the question on the issue of slavery. Only after the war broke

²¹³ Jones 9.

²¹⁴ Jones 11.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

out would a stronger stance on slavery and the Union be taken by the OS General Assembly. The outbreak of the war led many in the North to take a stronger stance against slavery, moderates became more radical. Also eliminating many of the impediments to the new northern position was that the OS Synods in the Confederacy had already formed their own separate General Assembly. As we will see in the next chapter, only border synods, such as Missouri, were left to take issue with the North's new stances. Missourians could no longer follow the lead of their General Assembly once the war broke out.

Previously in Missouri, most of the sources imply that the Synod was happy with maintaining the stance of its General Assembly. There were no significant problems over slavery within it so there was no reason to define an actual stance. All the fervent anti-slavery men were in the NS Synod. As it will be demonstrated, there were those that would seek conflict with the NS over slavery, defining a position for many in the OS.

Jones and his fellow writers do explain where the "agitators for abolition" come from in the Missourian Presbyterian Church, from the NS. Indeed, this has not been the first pamphlet on the schism or slavery, northerners have published from Hannibal among other places. In the conclusion, the question is asked "And where do we find the agitation on this subject of slavery? Are they not the leaders, clerical and lay, in the New School Assembly?"²¹⁶ Although they do not accuse the Missouri Synod directly, they show that the NS and its subsidiaries (such as the Missouri Synod) are abolitionist in nature and should be avoided. Painting the NS as abolitionists was sufficient for many in the OS,

²¹⁶ Ibid.

they need not go any further in their views on slavery by defining their own. These views only had to be manifested in their relations with the NS, a point that will become clearer shortly.

As expected, the stance of the NS on slavery would not be as ambivalent as the OS's. In the twenty years after the schism each General Assembly passed some sort of resolution condemning the institution of slavery and urging its subordinate bodies to do everything in their power to end it.²¹⁷ The General Assembly of 1857 declared that it "has, from the beginning, maintained an attitude of decided opposition to the institution of Slavery."²¹⁸ The pressure upon the synods in slaveholding states was tremendous, both from slaveholding members and those in the larger political body of the state watching the synods.

In Missouri, neither the OS or NS adherents would explicitly condemn or support slavery. Many in the Missouri NS desired the end of slavery, but others did not. Their schism was based on the theological issues, not slavery, thus no mandatory position was needed. The larger OS General Assembly supported this declaration by its Synod in their silence on the issue. This was not the case in the NS, but until 1857 action was not needed on its part on the slavery issue. Like the OS, nationally (or at the very least

²¹⁷ Marsden 188.

²¹⁸ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (NS). From A. D. 1838 To A. D. 1858, Inclusive.* Reprinted: Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School work, 1894. Pg 573.

regionally in the South) there were many within its confines that supported slavery or at least did not believe in interfering with it. Unlike the OS, those that supported its abolition or viewed that allowing slavery within the church as seriously sinful were an important force in the NS Synod, the majority in fact. Clashes between the New and Old Schools could not easily occur as it would in the Methodist church since there was too much ambiguity within its membership.

The lack of a substantial view on slavery from the OS did not prevent some within it from preaching a defined position on slavery. Many in the South and in Missouri did so. Formerly stationed in Cincinnati, the Rev. Nathan Lewis Rice, D. D. of St. Louis was representative of those that held a positive conception on the institution of slavery. In 1845 he held a debate with a fellow OS Presbyterian, Rev. Jonathan Blanchard. Many of Rice's positions and those who were pro-slavery within the OS can be seen in this lengthy debate.

Rice was not a slaveholder. He defined his position as being "opposed to slavery" and he said that "I deplore the evils connected with it."²¹⁹ Nevertheless, that fact did not make him an abolitionist or anything close to it. He maintained in seeing how the master and slave relate "that circumstances have existed, and do now exist, which justify the relation for the time being."²²⁰ Rice did not condone the denouncing of the slaveholder as many others, such as his opponent in the debate, Rev. Blanchard, wanted. There were

²¹⁹ Blanchard and Rice 33.

²²⁰ Blanchard and Rice 34.

economic reasons to allow slavery to continue, despite his desire for the gradual emancipation of slaves and their colonization in places such as Liberia. He feared that slaves immediately manumitted in mass would come to dominate the governments of the South when granted equal rights with whites.²²¹ For, “the entire administration of the government in those States would be placed in the hands of degraded men, wholly ignorant of the principles of law and government.”²²²

As long as the mass colonization could not take place and/or the evils of slavery could be seen as tolerable, men such as Rice had no desire to end the institution of slavery. Those who held slaves were not sinful in Rice’s eyes. To condemn them and uphold the doctrines of abolition would force Christians to “refuse to hold Christian fellowship with slave-holders”²²³ separating the church in the North from that of the South. Both of these consequences were abhorrent according to Rice and should be avoided. He contends that abolitionism would lead to these problems in the future, and thus in his “mind it is clear that it is not Christianity at all.”²²⁴

The attitudes of Rev. Rice and those in the OS that followed his thinking deplore abolitionism. Although he seeks the gradual abolition of slavery, he really provides no mechanism for this gradual end and is fine with it continuing in the South as long as it appears as necessary. Like many of his Methodist contemporaries, he sees abolition as a

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Blanchard and Rice 33.

²²³ Blanchard and Rice 34.

²²⁴ Ibid.

great problem and threat to the well-being of both the church and the government. It must be fought if at all possible in order to eliminate its threat.

Rev. Blanchard, an abolitionist was in Ohio, not Missouri. There, without the slave society of Missouri acting upon the OS, he could be a fervent abolitionist and still be in the Ohio OS. Although there were many in the OS who opposed slavery, men who will be discussed in the next chapter where they have more relevancy, they never were as fervent as men in the NS.

Nonetheless, cases can be seen of members of the NS in Missouri and their views on slavery. The continued case of Rev. David Nelson illustrates one of these cases and how those in the Missourian NS synod (or rather at this point those who would become members of that Synod) in many cases held abolitionist views. In 1836, after he fled the state of Missouri for Quincy, Illinois, Dr. Nelson returned to Greenfield, Missouri to preach regularly to a congregation of willing listeners. During one of these sermons, a prominent member of the congregation, a Mr. Muldrow arose and proceeded to hand Rev. Nelson a letter to read which expressed the sentiment that Missouri could only rise to prominence as a free state. However, a wealthy slaveholder in the congregation, a Dr. Bozley “denounced the writer as an unprincipled schemer and the enemy of the State.”²²⁵ They soon came to blows and Bozley was seriously wounded by Muldrow’s knife.

Fortunately, the seriousness of Bozley’s wound temporarily prevented more bloodshed. However, “during that day all the friends of slavery flew to arms. Many expressed the determination that Dr. N[elson] should never leave the State a living

²²⁵ Marks 78.

man.”²²⁶ After a great deal of pleading, Rev. Nelson’s family was able to convince him to avoid the mob by returning to safety in Illinois. He left Missouri and was eventually able to reach Quincy.

Nevertheless, the day after he arrived in Quincy after a perilous journey, a band of armed men arrived there and demanded that the mayor surrender Dr. Nelson to their charge as a murderer (Bozley had died at this point). However, some prominent locals and supporters of Nelson came to the mayor and pleaded with him. Although the Missourians explained the details of the charge and subsequently swore to these charges, they presented no written proof of the crimes levied against Nelson. Thus, Nelson’s supporters argued to the mayor that ““You know that this charge is utterly false. These men are murderers, for Dr. N[elson] once in their hands they will assassinate him at the first moment possible...we most solemnly assure you that if you surrender Dr. N[elson], and he is shot or hung, his fate awaits you...”²²⁷

After hearing this plea from Nelson’s supporters, the mayor “turned pale and shook with fear...”²²⁸ for he knew he must refuse the demand of the mob, which he did. This seemingly close encounter with death did not deter Nelson from returning to Missouri. That June, he and his wife attempted to visit a sick acquaintance that was dying in the vicinity of Marion College. Upon passing through Palmyra in route to the college, they were recognized by the townspeople of Palmyra. At that instance “the passing of the

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Marks 79.

²²⁸ Ibid.

Doctor through the town was followed by the wildest excitement-bells rang, men gathered, gesticulated, and made show of pistols and knives in the street.”²²⁹ Dr. Nelson was not a welcomed man in many parts of Missouri, his arrival warranted a great deal of excitement. He had become a polarizing figure due to his connection with abolition, and the townspeople acted accordingly. He would be forced to once again leave the state, but his wife continued to Marion College.²³⁰

Nelson continued his work and attempt to preach in Missouri once again. In 1838, numerous citizens of Hannibal requested that he preach at a campground west of the city. Unfortunately for Dr. Nelson and his supporters in Hannibal, “those who had driven the Doctor from the State were determined that such a meeting not be held...They filled the land with their threats, publications and hand-bills.”²³¹ Nonetheless, Dr.. Nelson’s supporters were just as active in those regards. Nelson was able to preach at the campground, but at “the place where the Doctor was to preach, not fewer than five hundred guns were borne.”²³² Fortunately, during this engagement there was no further violence.

The possibility of violence and controversy that followed the Rev. Dr. Nelson continued to follow him throughout his days as he continued to preach and work in Illinois and on occasion in Missouri. Even when he ended up with the NS Presbyterians

²²⁹ Marks 80.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Marks 81.

²³² Ibid.

in Illinois he did not stop his efforts. There would be no desire to halt his abolition work within the Illinois or Missouri NS congregations. In the end, Nelson did not meet his end by the actions of a mob vehemently opposed to his philosophies. He died of complications of epilepsy during the hot summer of 1844 and was missed by many who held the same views that he was persecuted for.²³³

Further instances of battles against abolitionists can be seen in conflicts between the OS and the NS. Artemas Bullard received a letter from Frederick Starr, a NS minister in Weston, which is in Platte County. There he was threatened with hanging and eventually expelled for teaching slaves.²³⁴ For, as the pamphlet from the 1830s shows, the OS would continue to paint the NS as composed of abolitionists. As did the MECS, the OS Presbyterians did show their influence upon the state of Missouri in that they received outside help in undertaking their desired destruction of the NS. Starr and Nelson's cases emphasize this fact.

Overall, not every man or woman in the NS held abolitionist views or even acted upon these views as Dr. Nelson often did. Those that did often underwent the types of persecution that Nelson received from the OS and other concerned citizens. These issues based around slavery continued in the Presbyterian Church through the 1850s, but nowhere near the extent that they did in the Methodist Church. With the gray area on views of slaveholding within the branches of the Presbyterian Church, strife as in the Methodist

²³³ Marks 82-3.

²³⁴ F. Starr to A. Bullard, Aug. 25, 1854, Bullard Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society; from Carwardine, Pp. 246, 410.

Church was not possible. There were those in the NS that would object to those that held the views that Dr. Nelson did. These objections did not eliminate the violence, they only minimized it.

In 1857, things changed in Missouri in this regard. The NS experienced a minor schism of sorts on this issue of abolition. Prior to the General Assembly, the Presbytery of Lexington (VA) served notice that many of its members held slaves out of principle and by their own choosing. They had become fed up with the position taken yearly by the General Assembly and wanted to therefore prompt some sort of action on the part of the General Assembly.

By this point, the sectional crisis had really heated up and the idea of slaveholders within a largely abolitionist church was becoming more and more unworkable. Unlike the Methodists, much larger issues of sectional strife were being pressed upon them. The North and the South were falling further apart and the majority of those in the NS saw no reason to keep the few southern slaveholders as members, each side had grown apart from the another. The Methodists, on the other hand, had already undergone their schism over slavery with the MEC and the MECS holding opposite views on slavery as a result, no further divisions were needed within their ranks.

Thus, the whole General Assembly was forced to come to terms with Lexington's statements on slavery. In a vote that passed the mostly northern General Assembly overwhelmingly, the action of the Presbytery of Lexington was condemned. The General Assembly chose "to disapprove and earnestly condemn the position, which has thus been assumed by the Presbytery of Lexington, South, as one which is opposed to the

established convections of the Presbyterian Church...and we do hereby call on that Presbytery to review and rectify their position”²³⁵ Many of those who voted against this condemnation of both the institution of slavery and the Presbytery of Lexington’s view on it were from southern synods. Four of the six Missouri delegates were among these commissioners that voted against this resolution.²³⁶

These synods soon offered a protest that was considered over the next two days, with many of the same names of those who voted against the original resolution appearing on this protest. In the end, as it would be expected, the committee that was appointed to review the position upheld the previous vote.²³⁷ The various Synods in the slaveholding states now had to choose to remain in the NS General Assembly or pursue some alternate course. In the end, many ended up leaving the General Assembly. Some would remain independent, while all would have a significant portion of their membership joining the OS.²³⁸ For, as it was noted at the end of the century, there was a “constant trend on the part of those in the NS...to leave that body and enter the Old [School]”²³⁹ As a result, the NS would be able to pursue a more abolitionist course owing to the mostly northern nature of their membership.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*. 575.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*. 576, 580-1.

²³⁸ *Hill Historical Outlines* 27.

²³⁹ Hill, Timothy, “Presbyterians in Missouri” *Meeting of the Synod of Missouri held in Maryville, October 23rd, 1900*. Synod of Missouri Publications, 1900. Pg 11.

²⁴⁰ Marsden 188-9.

Missouri was one of the Synods that left the NS General Assembly. There were many in the Missouri Synod that did not wish an abolitionist stance taken in their religion. They joined the NS out of a concern for its theology, not its view on slaveholding. However, there were others, such as Timothy Hill and Thomas H. Tatlow, who voted for the censure of the Lexington Presbytery that did not mind this course of action. Despite their influence, the Missouri Synod chose to leave the NS and to continue as an independent Synod, with most of its membership temporarily intact. Also crucial in their decision was the fact that the American Home Missionary Society did allow the Missouri Home Missionary Society, its subsidiary, to appoint slaveholding missionaries.²⁴¹

Until 1859, the Missouri Synod continued to exist as an independent synod. In 1860 what was left of it rejoined the General Assembly. The lack of delegates at the General Assemblies in this period testifies to this fact.²⁴² In this brief period the Missouri Synod had attempted to join the United Synod of the South. This group was comprised of the southern NS synods that left the General Assembly. The Missouri Synod was never fully united with the United Synod, allowing its eventual reunification with the General Assembly. The failure to unite with the United Synod and the impracticality of remaining independent forced the reunification with the General Assembly.²⁴³ When it did finally rejoin the General Assembly, it was the only NS Synod left in a slaveholding states,

²⁴¹ Hill *Historical Outlines* 27.

²⁴² *Minutes, N S General Assembly*, 598.

²⁴³ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

granted, with decreased membership.²⁴⁴

What eventually allowed this reunification was not the fact that the Missouri Synods was able to rectify its status as being in a slaveholding state with the NS, but the fact that many of those that had a problem with the abolitionist views of the NS. They left the Missouri Synod and joined the OS, leaving fewer people in the NS synod.²⁴⁵ In 1861 there would be 921 reported members in the churches of the New School Synod in Missouri (it should be noted that some of the numbers in the Presbytery of St Louis were incomplete and the Presbytery of Kansas was in the Synod of Missouri).²⁴⁶ Prior to the temporary split in 1857, there were 2,190 adherents in the Synod of Missouri. Thus, there was a forty-one percent decrease in the population of the NS Synod throughout the state, with a majority now concentrated in St. Louis.²⁴⁷

Numerous ministers followed the members of their congregations out of the NS and into the Old. Examples can be seen in the case of the NS church in Palmyra and the Revs. John Leighton and Allan Gallaher who were reported to have left for the OS when it reunited with the NS General Assembly.²⁴⁸ Gallaher, the man who swept up the records of the St. Charles Presbytery as it split in 1840 no longer felt the same way about the OS.

²⁴⁴ Hill 59.

²⁴⁵ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

²⁴⁶ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (NS) 1861*. New York: Presbyterian Publication Committee, 1861. Pg 623-4.

²⁴⁷ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*, 590.

²⁴⁸ Cochran, Rev. Dr. W. P. "Historical Sketch of the Synod of Missouri." *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882. Pg 40.

The theological differences paled in comparison to the NS view on slavery.

There was a “feeling that the work of the New School in Missouri was done and there was no further use of an attempt of perpetuating it here.”²⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the NS Synod of Missouri endured, despite all of these problems, and things began to slowly improve in the last few years prior to the war. Like the MEC, they had some support in Missouri, despite their small numbers.

At the meeting of the Synod in the year before the war, Dr Hill explains that “all things were in apparent harmony, the brethren and the churches were at peace with each other and anticipated good in the future.”²⁵⁰ There were some small problems, but nothing to the extent of the problems that the MEC faced. Despite the largely abolitionist character of the NS synod in Missouri, the problems that we see with ministers such as Nelson and Starr seem to die down. No one writing about this period either inside or outside of the Presbyterian Church has no large examples of conflict with the NS as Elliot presented with the MEC after 1859.

Sectional tensions did not die down, but there are multiple reasons for this lack of problems. The main site of political conflict in Missouri at this point was the border with Kansas. The majority of the NS Presbyterians were in St. Louis, a place of lesser conflict. This distribution was not the case with the MEC. Lincoln carried St. Louis county in 1860, there were enough anti-slavery people in St. Louis to keep the NS relatively safe. The size of the NS Synod, very small compared to the rest of the churches discussed here

²⁴⁹ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

²⁵⁰ Hill 59.

(even the MEC) might have also played a part. Smaller churches usually mean that there are fewer records kept. Furthermore, the ambiguous nature of the OS toward slavery, unlike the MECS, would not have easily led to any widespread problems, though they could still occur in theory.

Finally, it is possible that in many places the NS churches were ignored or that their ministers were able to better integrate themselves in their communities, thus minimizing the chances for action taken against them prior to the war. Many of these men were not coming into Missouri from out of state like some of the MEC ministers.²⁵¹ If there were conflicts relating to the NS Synod, no records seemed to have survived.

Violence continued with the new makeup of the NS Synod in Missouri. The initial schism did not produce major issues over slavery till later in time as the sectional crisis was heating up, a complete difference from the Methodists. The political atmosphere of the late 1850s was what allowed the NS General Assembly to end slaveholding within its jurisdiction, unlike the Methodists. The lines of theology that had divided the schools in the 1830s were becoming less important, which eventually led to reunification after the war. The NS had become almost completely pro-abolition in character. Those that did not desire this viewpoint returned to the OS, who maintained an all-encompassing viewpoint nationally.²⁵²

Nevertheless, like the Methodists, the schism in the Presbyterian Church had a political effect. Non-Presbyterians participated in the internal conflicts. The virtual

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Marsden 100-2.

expulsion of the NS Synods that were in favor of slavery had the same effect as the breakup of the Baptist and Methodist churches on the political unity of America and Missouri. The Presbyterians definitely played a role in the sectional crisis, as they would the war itself, it was just a lesser role than the Methodists at this time.

The Baptists of Missouri were different from the Presbyterians and Methodists of Missouri in a variety of ways. First and foremost they had no corresponding body in Missouri that was aligned with the North as did the other two churches. No large associations split off from the Missouri General Baptist Association when it chose to align itself with the SBC. Thus, the amount of conflict produced over their schism over slavery was less than the other two churches presented in this study prior to the war. Nevertheless, this issue alone did not prevent them from experiencing turmoil over slavery, either during the war itself or the years leading up to the war. Like the Presbyterians, they would play a role in the politics of the sectional crisis in Missouri, but a lesser role than the Methodists.

Throughout the antebellum period, the main concern of the Baptists in Missouri was the missionizing of various regions of the state that had not been reached to that point. The SBC helped to accomplish this goal in a variety of ways, mainly in terms of allocating resources that the state did not have internally. The 1850 Missouri convention, hoped that “Missouri, being one of the recently settled and destitute States, would be the recipient of a liberal portion of the benefactions of our brethren in the older and more

favorable States.”²⁵³

Ensuring that all the churches in Missouri would have ministers was a major problem according to the minutes of the Missouri Baptist General Association and whatever means necessary would have to be undertaken to fulfill that goal. Fortunately, the SBC also presented an opportunity to do this without excluding slaveholders. Although Missouri would not get everything that its Baptists hoped for, the subsequent conventions clearly show that the Missouri Baptist General Association received a great deal of aid and was able to remedy some of its problems prior to the war.

Thus, in 1851 when the SBC organized the Southern Bible Board the Missouri Baptists went along without any dissent. It was generally accepted that it was needed to promulgate the Gospel in Missouri and to “secure harmony among the Churches of the South...”²⁵⁴ The board, needed in order to ensure that slaveholders could participate without worry of any problems from the northern churches, was held by the Missouri Baptists as “imperiously demanded by the circumstances of the times, and that it was a wise, prudent, and conservative movement.”²⁵⁵ Obviously set against problems with abolitionists, the board was formed and its status as a “conservative movement” ran against any “agitation” from abolitionist-minded Baptists.

What was established by the SBC obviously met most of the demands of the Missouri Baptists; there is nothing to the contrary recorded in the minutes prior to the

²⁵³ General Assoc. Minutes 1850, 9.

²⁵⁴ General Assoc. Minutes 1851, 9.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

war. The lack of severity in the schism did not cause the problems that were quickly apparent in the Methodist Church or that would develop in the Presbyterian Church. Until the war, there was no need for the Baptists in Missouri, aligned with the SBC to fight those employed in the service of the North and vice versa. The Missouri Baptists mention no attempts that were made by those aligned with the ABHMS to raise issues in Missouri. While problems occurred elsewhere,²⁵⁶ there were no major issues in a state such as Missouri that already had an established Baptist mechanism, even if it was not as great as some of the older states. A variety of Missouri Baptist sources from this period confirm this idea.²⁵⁷

The independence of Baptist congregations did prevent some of the problems of a schism in that individual congregations in Missouri were not forced out of the churches or compelled to choose sides. The independence in Baptist congregations allowed this unanimity with the Missouri Baptists. There were disputes in Missouri, but they primarily dealt with the anti-mission controversy and other problems of what was referred to as church governance. Although the majority of the Baptists in Missouri were pro-slavery in some regards (the slave society²⁵⁸ of Missouri made this the dominant mindset in the

²⁵⁶ Carwardine 248. He mentions ABHMS incursions into several southern areas in the 1850s but gives no specific examples.

²⁵⁷ *The Western Watchman*, St. Louis, MO: Keith and Woods. (Monthly: 1847-59); and *Missouri Baptist*, St. Louis, MO. (Monthly: 1857-61). Neither of these papers have any mention of problems besides vague mentions of the incursions that Carwardine briefly discusses.

²⁵⁸ Refers to the concept of the larger political/cultural Missouri society organized to perpetuate the institution of slavery.

state), one could at least in theory maintain anti-slavery or even abolitionist views as long as they did not attempt to force these beliefs on other Baptists. The schism was so Baptist missionaries could be slaveholders if they desired, that is what it did in Missouri. Since no more on the issue was needed, there was less internal fighting than with the Methodists or Presbyterians.

These occurrences did not divorce the political tensions from the Baptist schism. As it was seen with the quote from Rev. Rice, there was some apprehension over the schism, despite its lack of severity. The apprehensions men such as Henry Clay felt over the Methodist schism could easily be transferred to the Baptists. It split the North from the South and would do nothing to alleviate the sectional tensions that had already begun to be felt in the mid 1840s. There would be political repercussions, especially with the onset of the war. But, it must be kept in mind that the lesser degree of harshness in the schism and the previously discussed repercussions would allow things to play out quite differently for the Baptists in Missouri.

Nonetheless, especially as the sectional crisis became more frenzied, there were issues with Baptists and slavery. Examples of issues with slavery can be found in their records. As the account retold by Rev. Elliot illustrates, Baptists participated in the persecution of the MEC along with the MECS. There is no doubt that there were other small, similar occurrences in the 1850s in Missouri. However, although free from the strife of the significance that it existed in Methodist church there would be problems that the Baptists experienced.

In his history of Missouri Baptists, W. Pope Yeaman explains that “A Faithful

History of the General Association can not be written without a truthful narrative of the secular movements and agitations that powerfully influenced social and religious conditions.”²⁵⁹ What is important here is that Yeaman attributes all of the pain experienced by the churches of Missouri during the latter sectional crisis and especially with the war to the influence of outside political events upon the Baptists, a notion not found to that extent with the Methodists. He is minimizing the role of the Baptist church in Missouri in its politics. While there are additional testimonies and examples that could be no doubt brought up to verify this conclusion, it is nonetheless clear that Yeaman is correct in his statement.

Although the controversies over Kansas were of a crucial importance in the politics of Missouri, the church did not further these controversies, but some of its members may have participated. Yeaman confirms that the meetings of the General Association in Missouri were fairly routine during the period, but he points out an alarming trend of a decrease of results in mission work via the funds that were invested in it. Though not commented upon at the time by the General Association, for Yeaman it becomes clear that the border war with Kansas was having an ill-effect upon the efforts of the Baptists of Missouri. Those churches close to Kansas experienced the most problems and the greatest decrease in results per the amount of money that was contributed. Things would only worsen during the Civil War.²⁶⁰

In many cases, the individual accounts of Baptist ministers confirm what Yeaman

²⁵⁹ Yeaman 111.

²⁶⁰ Yeaman 118-20.

avows. Elder William Russell Wiggington, of Boone County is fairly typical in this regard. Most of his problems deal with the lack of men to minister in the churches of Boone County and other minor problems that would be expected of anyone acting as pastor to a congregation. Although he mentions in his autobiography that his father was a slaveholder, there is nothing more about slavery and only a vague reference to of the political crisis surrounding Kansas and the Civil War. Many other Baptist accounts read the same.²⁶¹

Rev. Jonathan B. Fuller on the other hand was not stationed in the central part of Missouri. After converting and being ordained in November of 1860, he served as pastor of the La Grange (on the Mississippi River, by Quincy, Illinois) Baptist church for two years and of the church in Louisiana, Missouri in the first half of the war. In his journal and records, there is no real mention of sectional conflict over slavery within the church as the Methodists experienced in that town. All of his issues deal with the war itself. Though, as it will be seen in the next chapter, politics did come into his preaching, as with many other Baptists. Fuller was a fervent Unionist and an anti-slavery man. He did not attempt to hide his feelings with his preaching.²⁶²

Unlike Fuller, there would be those in Missouri that favored slavery (or at least its

²⁶¹ Wiggington, W. R. *Life and Labors of Elder W R Wiggington: An Autobiography*. No publisher/date. Pp. 2, 12-3, 19.

²⁶² "Journal of Jonathan B. Fuller for the Pastoral Year in Louisiana, Missouri, 1863," Folder 1, *Jonathan B Fuller Papers*, Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri-Kansas City; for the biographical information on Fuller, see the MA Thesis presented by Gray, Larry G. *Sheppard in a Divided Land: The Life and Times of The Reverend Jonathan B. Fuller, 1840-1928*, UMKC, 1996.

preservation) and during the war favored the South. One of these men, Rev. Robert Samuel Duncan, can be seen as representative for these Baptists. Although not a slaveholder himself from what can be gathered from his autobiography, Elder Duncan was by no means an abolitionist and felt compelled to write during the war that the state of Missouri “rightly belonged to the South,” as an illustration of his political preferences during the war.²⁶³ As a result, the war, in his own words, “was the most inconvenient period of my life, by far.”²⁶⁴ Duncan, who would write *A History of the Baptists in Missouri* after the war, the primary historical record of the Missouri Baptists, illustrates cases of numerous ministers that felt similarly to him and to Fuller during the sectional crisis and the period leading up to the war.²⁶⁵

However, there were different takes on the sectional crisis among Missouri Baptists. While virtually all ministers had some sort of political leanings, others expressed them more explicitly and wished that their church might take a more active role in politics, despite any potential drawbacks. These sentiments seemed to be expressed by Dr. Stephen Fisk in his memoir of Rev. William Hurley in 1857. In praising his friend at his death, Fisk proclaims that “perhaps at the present crisis, the death of no man in our

²⁶³ Duncan, R. S. *Autobiography of R. S. Duncan*. Kansas City, MO: The Western Baptist Publishing Company, 1910. Pg 77.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Duncan, R. S. *A History of the Baptists in Missouri: An Account of the Organization and Growth of Baptist Churches and Associations; Biographical Sketches of Ministers of the Gospel and Other Prominent Members of the Denomination; The Founding of Baptist Institutions, Periodicals, ETC*. St. Louis: Scammell and Company, 1882.

denomination in Missouri, would have been so deeply deplored.”²⁶⁶ Fisk laments the loss of the political influence that Hurley exerted on all who were around him both religiously and secularly.²⁶⁷

The diverse viewpoints that can be seen in the Presbyterians and Methodists is also apparent from the story of the Baptists in Missouri during the period leading up to the war. However, the unique nature of the Baptist denomination and their schism led to a different set of results. Conflicts over slavery in their churches were decidedly less than the churches of their fellow Christians in Missouri. Nevertheless, problems did occur, only to worsen during the war. Furthermore, divergent views on slavery were present in the Baptists as well, but they could co-exist under the Baptist structure. Their schism, like that of the Methodists, did not help matters during the sectional crisis by driving the North from the South, but it did not produce the same results as the Methodists. Only during the war will the full brunt of the Baptist cultural/political influence on Missouri be felt. Their influence on driving tensions between the North and South apart before that point is considerably less than either of the other two denominations.

Each of the three denominations examined played a role in the coming of the Civil War in Missouri, but each played a different role. Each used their influence to bring both

²⁶⁶ Fisk, Stephen, MD. *Memoir of Rev. William Hurley, also His Funeral Sermon*. St. Louis: William Crowell, 1857. Pg 59.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*.

the government and the people of Missouri into their battles. The nature and severity of the initial schism combined with other factors in their denominations determined the outcome of events both nationally and in Missouri as the nation headed toward war. The Methodists, with the most pronounced schism experienced the most problems. Their membership was far more polarized between pro and anti-slavery ideologies than the other two denominations. Thus, they would also influence the sectional conflict to the greatest degree.

The Presbyterians, while just as harsh in their schism, separated over theological issues, only later did these problems translate into serious problems over slavery. They had some influence in agitating the sectional conflict, but not as much as the Methodists did. On the other hand, the Baptists experienced a schism over slavery, but one that was less severe. Owing to the lack of any significant northern sympathizing mechanism in Missouri and the fact that the independent nature of Baptist congregations allowed those not in favor of slavery to accept the Missouri Baptist General Association as a subsidiary of the pro-slavery SBC, large-scale conflicts did not occur. The Baptists could generally get along with one another until the war. The Presbyterians and Baptists prove that the statement of Rev. Elliot was true in that being a member of the MEC was the worst thing possible in the eyes of pro-slavery Missourians.

Chapter Three:

Broken Churches and a Broken Nation

In the election of 1860, Missourians split their votes between the Democrat, Stephen A Douglas and the Constitutional Unionist, John C. Bell. Douglas' narrow victory, 35.5 to 35.4 percent demonstrated that Missourians wanted "conservative" candidates that would maintain both the union and slavery. Lincoln and the southern Democrat, John C. Breckinridge, received 18.8 and ten percent of the vote respectively. Both received only sporadic support because they were seen as too radical for Missouri. Most Missourians did not want a civil war, which was feared if the latter two men won, and overwhelmingly wanted to keep slavery alive in their state.²⁶⁸

However, the Missouri Democrats had nominated a variety of radical pro-slavery and secessionist-leaning men for state-wide offices. Despite their views in this area, they ran on the Douglas-Democratic ticket in order to ensure election. Thus, when war broke out, these men, led by Gov. Claiborne Jackson, sought to produce Missouri's secession from the Union. He called for a convention on this issue to be held in February of 1861. As would be expected from the results of the 1860 election, the vast majority of the delegates elected were those in favor of remaining in the Union.²⁶⁹ Thus, the February

²⁶⁸ Gilmore, Donald L. *Civil War on the Missouri-Kansas Border*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006. Pg 105-6.

²⁶⁹ Gilmore 107-8.

convention concluded “that at present there is no adequate cause to impel Missouri to dissolve her connection with the Federal Union.”²⁷⁰ Missouri would not leave the Union. While there was significant support to leave, especially when the North sought to put down the rebellion, this was not enough support to produce her secession.

Nonetheless, Claiborne and his supporters were undeterred in their efforts to sever Missouri’s ties with the Union. He ordered the formation of the Missouri State Guard, under Sterling Price, to defeat possible Union military incursions into the state. Federal forces, composed largely of loyal Germans under Nathaniel Lyon were able to secure most of the state for the Union, forcing Claiborne and his secessionist government to flee Jefferson City. Claiborne’s government was soon repudiated by the same convention that he had set up for Missouri’s secession (the convention met again in July for this purpose instead of the originally planned December meeting).²⁷¹ Though soon recognized by Richmond, the pro-southern rump government would be forced to flee from the federal forces throughout the war and eventually ended up in Arkansas and Texas as the war went increasingly poorly for the South.

Despite setbacks at Wilson’s Creek (north of Springfield) and Lexington, by the end of 1861 most of Missouri (except the southwestern portion of the state) would be in Union hands. Price’s forces continued to threaten St. Louis, but after his (and the larger Confederate Army of the West’s) defeat at Pea Ridge in northern Arkansas in early 1862,

²⁷⁰ *Journal of the Missouri State Convention, Held at Jefferson City, July, 1861*. St. Louis: George Knapp and Co., 1861. Pg 20.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

the larger threat to Missouri was lessened. Price continued to threaten parts of the state to a lesser extent cumulating in his defeat at the battle of Westport (by Kansas City) in 1864.²⁷²

Unfortunately for Missourians, the onset of war allowed people in both Missouri and Kansas to seize the initiative to use violence to revenge old grievances.²⁷³ The Presbyterian minister, George Miller, sums up such sediments when he recalls a conversation with a young man. His companion explains “with evident bitterness, ‘*I am glad war is coming; we want a chance at Kansas,*’” but Miller answers him, ““Does it not occur to you that it would also *give Kansas a chance at Missouri?*””²⁷⁴ He had no answer. Miller’s comments foreshadowed what was to come. Combined with the larger war in the West, many parts of Missouri were thrown into chaos.

Battles within each of Missouri churches only increased. However, conflicts between the civil authorities and these churches also were on the increase, with religion in Missouri as a whole being adversely effected by the war. Here, the full effects of the governmental/popular participation in the struggles over slavery within the denominations are apparent. Here, popular participation reaches its height. While some sought to use religion as a justification to prevent or end the war, others used it as a pretense to fight. In

²⁷² Gilmore 109-12.

²⁷³ Etcheson 219.

²⁷⁴ Miller, Rev. George, *Missouri’s Memorable Decade, 1860-1870* Columbia, MO: Press of E. W. Stephens, 1898. Pg 41.

the end, the churches in Missouri experienced an enormous amount of devastation as a result of the war, with numerous churches ceasing to exist as their members and clergy went off to war, or were forced to flee. Through the war, we can clearly see the larger political events acting on the churches to further conflict and hostilities. Nevertheless, the war can also be seen as the logical outcome to the struggle over slavery within the formerly unified churches.

Nonetheless, neither of the three denominations experienced the war in the same way. While all experienced problems, the different schisms and paths of development that each undertook in the years leading up to the war led to a different experience of the war. Each church had a unique political make-up and a general trend (though there was the occasional exception), due to the experience of the initial schism. The NS Presbyterians and the MEC were fairly consistent in their support of the Union and desire to rid the nation of slavery. The OS Synod of the Presbyterian Church and Baptists of Missouri, while generally pro-slavery and at least a little sympathetic to the South had large percentages of their members that were pro-Union. It was only in the MECS that these pro-Union members did not exist to any significant degree. This was a product of the schisms.

The schism of the Methodist church had a profound impact politically. This impact would not stop during the war, with a large number of the ministers and their congregants participating in it. In Missouri, with the vast majority of the members in the southern-sympathizing MECS, the majority of the Methodists in Missouri can be documented as southern sympathizers. Those in the MEC, who officially supported the

Union during the war were in the minority in Missouri, but were present nonetheless.

With the severity of the schism over the Methodist church, the membership and their ministers were far more likely to take the respective church teaching on slavery to heart, and support the Confederacy or the Union. Without the other side to restrict their views, another product of the schism, many became quite radical in the ideals that they fought for.

As war broke out in Missouri those that supported the Confederacy soon became vocal in their support. In his *Life of Caples*, Marvin writes that Rev. Caples was a denouncer of abolition and a therefore a firm supporter of the Confederacy. According to Marvin, for Caples “the fact that Abolitionism bred disrespect for the Bible was to him cause of anxiety.”²⁷⁵ Thus, those that upheld abolitionism were in fact rejecting the word of God in his outlook. Furthermore, Caples felt that the Constitution was based upon the precepts of the Bible, so as a result, to deny the institution of slavery was paramount to denying the word of God. For that reason Marvin says that Caples supported the South when Lincoln was elected in 1860.²⁷⁶ Caples believed that with Lincoln’s election “the occasion justified revolution.”²⁷⁷

Caples put his beliefs into practice once the war broke out. In 1861 as General Price won at Wilson’s Creek and was poised to capture Lexington, Caples felt that it was prudent to minister to his flock (many of whom had joined the Missouri State Guard) in

²⁷⁵ Marvin 258.

²⁷⁶ Marvin 258-9.

²⁷⁷ Marvin 260.

Price's pro-Confederate camps, since that is where a majority of the congregation was now. Thus, he continued to show his support for the Confederate cause by becoming a chaplain in the army.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, when Price's fortunes turned, Caples was forced to retreat with him out of Missouri. Later, while in Arkansas, after the battle of Pea Ridge, Caples attempted to return home in order to see his family and procure winter clothing for the army. However, he was captured by the Union army and sent to a prison in St. Louis.²⁷⁹

Although he was only there for about six weeks, Marvin does not miss an opportunity to describe what he considered the deplorable conditions of the prison. Marvin, being both pro-southern and stationed in St. Louis at the time, definitely had the first-hand experience that allowed him to bring forth his views on the matter while recounting Caples' experiences.²⁸⁰

Once Caples was released from prison he was forced to take an oath of loyalty to the Union. Thus, unless he broke his oath, he could no longer help the Confederate army and he was further restricted in what he could preach. According to Marvin, this predicament placed a great deal of stress on Caples. He desired to continue spreading what he thought were Biblical truths, but then again he did not want to get into further trouble with the federal authorities and risk possible harm to his family (his daughter Catherine was also ill at this time). Nevertheless, Marvin explains that Caples eventually

²⁷⁸ Marvin 263-5.

²⁷⁹ Marvin 270-1.

²⁸⁰ Marvin 272-4.

resumed his ministry in spite of these risks.²⁸¹

Other Methodists in Missouri would feel the same way as Caples toward slavery and the South. They too acted on these strong feelings, also incurring the wrath of the federal government. Rev. David Rice McAnally, who wrote multiple biographies for the MECS and served as the editor of its official paper, the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, was one of these men. In July of 1861, a pro-union mob formed and in his words

threatened to destroy my dwelling house and church because I had publically baptized a child whose parents chose to name it Harry Beauregard [after the Confederate general], which mob desisted from their purpose only a few short hours before that purpose was to have been accomplished, and then not until one of the principle men had been told that there were no less than thirty or forty men who would, at the risk of their lives, hold him personally responsible for all harm that might befall me from the mob.²⁸²

Fortunately, his supporters had saved him, but they were not be able to save him from federal troops that would ransack his house later that month, looking for evidence that he was aiding the South in their war effort. What they found during their search of his personal papers they took, but nothing was there that they could use against him.

A man who's "name and face were familiar to the people of the city" of St. Louis quickly gained further displeasure in the eyes of the Union authorities by the manner in which he ran his paper.²⁸³ The *Advocate* would be suppressed, denying the MECS its newspaper and an important organ in its mission. McAnally was printing pro-southern

²⁸¹ Marvin 278-81.

²⁸² Lewis 82.

²⁸³ Hyde, William and Howard L. Conard. *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, A Compendium of History and Biography for Ready Reference*. New York: The Southern History Company, 1899. Pg 1385.

editorials in his paper, which could not be tolerated by the Union authorities.²⁸⁴ A few years after the war, Rev. W. H. Lewis laments that many who “hail with pleasure the weekly visitation of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate!*” and find within it “many sound and instructive religious lessons” would be without their paper.²⁸⁵ For, with its suppression, McAnally would be thrown into prison charged with violating the articles of war by giving news that might have aided the enemy.²⁸⁶

Eventually, after his arrest, McAnally was put on trial before the provost marshal’s court. On the first day of his trial, “The Judge Advocate threw on the table a number of copies of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, with certain articles therein marked.”²⁸⁷ His pro-southern editorials would now be used against him. Combined with the witnesses brought against him, these were to be the primary foundations of the evidence that sought to convict McAnally. Nevertheless, McAnally’s defense and counter-witnesses proved effective enough that despite his conviction, no serious penalty was handed out against him. He was “remanded to the care of the provost-marshal, who, upon [his] verbal pledge ‘not to give aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States, nor to leave the County of St. Louis, and to report myself at the office whenever required,’ allowed [him] to go.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ It should be noted that copies of his paper from this era have survived sporadically and the issues in question, from 1861 and early 1862 have not survived in the collections the author has access too.

²⁸⁵ Lewis 75.

²⁸⁶ Hyde and Conard 1386.

²⁸⁷ Lewis 79.

²⁸⁸ Lewis 79-80.

Nevertheless, in 1863 the federal authorities, not satisfied with their failure to imprison McAnally and thus to end his preaching, attempted to have him banished to the South. As in 1862, McAnally was saved from any actual punishment when an order came at the last second allowing him to avoid the steamship for the South.²⁸⁹ Despite his pro-slavery views and his obvious sympathies for the South, McAnally was careful and did little more to support their cause for independence. Thus, the Union army officials in St. Louis could never find any evidence to condemn him as a traitor to the Union cause and levy a harsher penalty against him. Though under duress and a thorn in the side of the same officials, McAnally could never be expelled or jailed on a permanent basis.

Nonetheless, his case was typical of many southern Methodists in Missouri. They may not have joined pro-Confederate forces in some fashion as did Caples, but they deplored the war and most vocally supported the Confederacy in a variety of ways. They almost certainly would not have minded if the state of Missouri had joined the Confederacy. Revs. Lewis and William Leftwich give countless examples of these MECS ministers undergoing persecution during the war for both of their works are exceedingly detailed in their description of the plight of the MECS. There are men in their works that supported the South in some manner during the war, some more actively aiding the Confederacy, some acting similar to McAnally.

From what Marvin records in his biography of Caples, he too was a supporter of the South during the Civil War. According to McAnally in his biography of Marvin, in April of 1862 the General Conference of the MECS was to be held in New Orleans,

²⁸⁹ Lewis 80-1.

Louisiana. Marvin was one of the two delegates from Missouri that crossed Union lines in order to reach the conference. However, the conference was cancelled before he got there, leaving him behind Confederate lines. Choosing not to risk capture by returning to St. Louis, where he was stationed at the time, Marvin remained in the South and ministered in various capacities in the army. He did so until he received permission from Lincoln to cross the lines back into Missouri in 1865 as the war was coming to a close.²⁹⁰

Of Marvin's views toward the southern cause, McAnally writes that "it is not sought to be disguised, that his reason and heart were with the Southern cause. Indeed, to the day of his death, his opinions and feelings on this subject were deepened but never changed..."²⁹¹ The idea of his views being unchanged can be certainly testified to in the biography of Caples. Furthermore, the idea of southern support being linked heavily to religion is crucial here for Marvin as well. Like Caples, he believed that the Bible dictated support of the southern cause due to its principles.²⁹² Here another example can be seen of a member of the MECS that supported the southern cause. Like Caples, with those opinions being expressed in a post-war biography where a mollification of these views was likely, the fervency of their pro-southern views are maintained.

The elimination of any possible abolitionist men from their ranks as a result of the schism allowed the MECS to continue on this course. No one was attempting to limit their support for slavery or in many instances the Confederate cause. As explained before,

²⁹⁰ McAnally *Marvin* 178-81; 187-90.

²⁹¹ McAnally *Marvin* 181.

²⁹² McAnally *Marvin* 178-81

religion and politics continue to merge as they had in the antebellum period. With the onset of the war, southern Methodists in Missouri only had all the more reason to act out their religious views on the political stage. The merging of politics and religion that Noll and Carwardine describe in their works is very apparent here in Missouri.

For this theory to work, the same must hold true with the MEC in that they support the Union during the war. Confirmation is quickly provided by Rev. Elliot in a letter that he wrote to Simon Cameron, the Secretary of War in 1861. In it he asserts that “there is no more loyal people in the Union than the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”²⁹³

Furthermore he proves the point that the schism allowed each resulting church to go in its separate and polarized way on slavery and the Union when he explains that “Had the Southern Methodists been retained in our Church with their pro-slavery principles...the Methodist Episcopal Church would not have been the great barrier to secession in the State it has proved to be, during the war.”²⁹⁴ MEC members were loyal to the Union and Elliot provides many examples to prove these points. However, as a result of this loyalty, they would experience more persecution in the days after the 1860 election and the opening days of the war before Missouri had been largely secured for the Union. For this reason Elliot wrote Secretary Cameron in April of 1865.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ Elliot 244-5.

²⁹⁴ Elliot 243.

²⁹⁵ Elliot 288.

Problems abounded for the MEC. During May of 1861 Elliot writes that “the religious services of our Church in Missouri were quite suspended, outside of St. Louis. Most of our preachers were either compelled to leave the State or confine themselves to one single place.”²⁹⁶ In many ways it may be said that things worsened with the initial onset of war for the MEC. In his paper, Elliot publishes a letter from a layman, E. G. Evans. In this letter he explains that “All persecutions that we have endured can be traced to that new religion called Southern Methodism,”²⁹⁷ confirming Elliot’s previous ascertain.

Furthermore, Elliot furnishes the case of a Mr. Weller, a member who was compelled to leave St. Louis, one of the safer regions for the MEC.²⁹⁸ The fact that the Annual Conference of the MEC was moved from Jefferson City to St. Louis for its protection in 1861 shows that there was at least the threat of violence, especially since the federal army had not taken full control of that area of the state yet.²⁹⁹

Additional MEC examples from the German Methodists show their unconditional condemnation of slavery continued into the war with their support for the Union (it should be noted that German votes made up a great deal of Lincoln’s support in 1860).³⁰⁰ However, like the rest of the MEC, significant problems would remain as a result of this support for the Union, which J. A. Muller says “every German [in the MEC] was loyal

²⁹⁶ Elliot 267.

²⁹⁷ *Central Christian Advocate*, St. Louis, MO: C. Elliot, J. Brooks, et al. (weekly) May 15, 1861, pg 78.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Elliot 243.

³⁰⁰ Gilmore 105-6.

too.”³⁰¹ Three of the German MEC presiding elders; Fessil, Steinly, and Hendel had their horses stolen by rebels and had subsequent problems reaching their appointments. Rev. Widmann, who’s residence was in Lexington (in west-central Missouri and a battle site when this instance occurred), was forced to flee for his life and was then captured twice by the rebels. Furthermore, J. P. Miller and Peter Hehner of Booneville and Liberty respectively (both towns in west-central Missouri as well), were also forced to take flight. Finally Muller gives the example of a camp meeting in Eudora (south-west Missouri) that was broken up in August of 1863. Quantell’s guerilla band arrived and proceeded to end this meeting before leaving to sack Lawrence, Kansas.³⁰²

In another issue of his *Central Christian Advocate*, Elliot writes that the MECS “is now kicking hard for secession. The common talk is that it is ‘a unit for secession...’”³⁰³ He then goes on to detail secessionist speeches made in various Missouri counties. Elliot continues to shed light on the matter with his discussion that holds “Most of the Southern Methodist preachers and many of their members were co-laborers with the General [Price] in this treasonable work” of attempting to conquer Missouri for the Confederacy.³⁰⁴ The future MEC minister and current Union soldier S. G. Bundy complained of the “talk of secession by the ministers of the M. E. Church, South,” throughout the war in his autobiography.³⁰⁵ It was clear that the MEC saw their southern

³⁰¹ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ *Central Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1861, pg 56.

³⁰⁴ Elliot 353.

³⁰⁵ Bundy, S. G. *Autobiography of S. G. Bundy*. Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri-

counterparts as traitors to the Union cause.

Things would improve for the MEC in Missouri. Elliot is able to describe what was a turn of events in the testimony of the Rev. S. S. Wood who is relieved when he says that “before the arrival of the troops at Rolla there was an activity exerted by Jackson and his dupes which, had not the Government interposed, would have run out or have so intimidated all Union men...”³⁰⁶ With the Union gaining control of most of Missouri, things were a great deal better for the MEC in Missouri. Granted there would be problems later on, as we can see with the German Methodist incident in 1863. No longer would they suffer the large-scale wrath of the government of Missouri with strong-Unionists in its charge. The mobs and the government would increase their role in the MEC’s disputes with the MECS, but they would now help the MEC.

To ensure their Unionists credentials, while in their Annual Conference in 1862, the MEC asked the provost marshal of St. Louis to come and administer an oath of loyalty to the Union for those in attendance. This oath was not forced upon them, they requested it unlike their fellow Evangelicals in many cases during the war.³⁰⁷ With their loyalty confirmed, Elliot claims that there were those that soon arrived asking to join the MEC.

By May of 1862, “Many loyal persons of the Southern Methodist Church were

Columbia, Collection 2985. Pg 23.

³⁰⁶ Elliot 295.

³⁰⁷ Elliot 370.

waiting anxiously for the services of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”³⁰⁸ For example, the congregation of the MECS church in Louisiana, MO deserted the MECS and petitioned for a loyal MEC minister.³⁰⁹ Seeing both its proximity to Illinois and the fact that the MEC minister had a great deal of success, this request is not surprising.

Unfortunately for the MEC they botched their attempt to take legal possession of the church building in Louisiana as the MECS would fight back. The MECS supporters did not completely desert their church in its times of troubles. As W. H. Lewis explains the building had been built by the MECS after the schism, thus giving the MEC no legal right to it. However, despite this fact, the MEC won the initial judgment in the lower court in 1862. Though, the fact that “Thomas J. C. Fagg, then Judge of the Louisiana Court of Common Pleas, was council for the M. E. Church (North) in his own court,” most likely played a crucial role, no longer could the MECS count on the government for protection.³¹⁰ Nevertheless, this injustice was overturned on appeal by the Missouri State Supreme Court, albeit in 1866, which ordered the return of the possession of the church building to the MECS trustees.³¹¹

This example of the church in Louisiana is typical of what went on in Missouri during the war. The MEC tried to move in on the MECS and the MECS fought back, with eventual success, despite the federal authorities in Missouri and increasing numbers of

³⁰⁸ Elliot 390.

³⁰⁹ Elliot 412-3.

³¹⁰ Lewis 63.

³¹¹ State Archives of Missouri, *Supreme Court Case Files*. Box 271, folder 14.

outside people as well during the war. Lewis agrees with Elliot's discussion in explaining that "The Northern Methodists put into practical operation a very extensive system of Church seizure in all parts of Missouri...embracing the entire territory of the State."³¹² The MEC attempted to seize any MECS church it could get its hands on, while the MECS fought back using whatever methods it could. Churches that Elliot gives as examples, such as Booneville, were eventually won back by the MECS as Rev. Lewis explains.³¹³

Another example is given of the church in Potosi (in southeastern Missouri). A minister affiliated with the MEC came in when the station was vacant and claimed to be neutral in his affiliation. Nevertheless it soon became apparent that he was a northern sympathizer determined to take possession of the church. However, after the war ended the MECS presiding elder of the circuit, Rev. Solvin, was again able to make his rounds to Potosi and announced there "that the house belonged to them, [MECS] and henceforth they intended to hold and possess the same."³¹⁴

In the end, some members defected to the MEC from the MECS. However, most remained loyal to the MECS. They were able to maintain their initial loyalty to slavery and the South, but less vocally than before. The most convincing fact to support this argument is that nowhere do we find large numbers of people joining the MEC during the war period. There are some defections, but only a few. Elliot among others would have

³¹² Lewis 231.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Lewis 231.

been sure to mention otherwise.³¹⁵ Any MECS members that were supporters of the Union in the later years of the war were usually supporters in name only. Like Caples and Marvin, they simply took loyalty oaths to avoid prison and/or protect their families.

More numerous are those instances of persecution levied by the MEC against the MECS after 1861. Lincoln's second Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, issued a proclamation written by MEC Bishop Edward Raymond Ames allowing for the MEC to seize (and the army was to cooperate in this endeavor) any churches run by disloyal ministers of the MECS.³¹⁶ In 1870 MECS minister William Leftwich published *Martyrdom in Missouri*, describing the religious persecution in Missouri during the Civil War, and bringing to light in his view many of the instances of persecutions levied against the MECS. In his introduction Leftwich elucidates that Missouri was the only state in which religious persecution was legal during the Civil War and those that were the persecutors were in turn shielded from the law.³¹⁷ Leftwich was critical of those he views as persecuting other churches.

According to Leftwich, the MEC newspapers did not miss an opportunity to denounce their southern counterparts. To prove this point, Leftwich uses multiple examples from Elliot's paper *The Central Christian Advocate*.³¹⁸ Furthermore, there are

³¹⁵ Farish 382.

³¹⁶ Jones 40.

³¹⁷ Leftwich v1 4-5.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

numerous examples of persecution of the MECS on the behalf of the MEC. Multiple examples of MEC members expelling the MECS from the MECS church buildings can be seen in Leftwich's account.³¹⁹ Also, there are two instances of the MECS not being able to hold their conferences in the locations that they desired in 1864. A conference in Hannibal (on the Mississippi River) had to be moved to Glasgow (in central Missouri). Also, a conference originally slated for St. Louis had to be moved to Arrow Rock (in west central Missouri).³²⁰

These last examples give further credence to what Marvin writes about the conferences being moved towards the end of the war in his biography of Caples. For everyone attempting to go to a conference (either quarterly or annual) faced a journey fraught with numerous difficulties. Since these men at one point had virtually all been southern supporters and only loyal to the Union in name, they were marked men in Marvin's view.³²¹ As a result, the MECS was unable to hold its Annual Conferences in both 1862 and 1863. Caples was one of the few men that attended the one held in 1864, shortly before his death.

In the end, examples could be given that illustrate that some in the MECS were not as sympathetic for the southern cause as they were made out to be by the MEC or Rev. Caples himself. Lewis and Leftwich, writing after the war, wished to bring forth this

³¹⁹ Leftwich 150-7.

³²⁰ Leftwich v1 158-9.

³²¹ Marvin 176-7.

idea. Though, looking at the instances of men imprisoned or driven from their posts who refused to acknowledge the Union or take some sort of oath diminish their arguments. Writing pro-southern literature was still not the safest thing to do in Missouri after the war, especially since they were writing during Reconstruction. After 1861, widespread vocal support of the Confederacy was difficult to maintain in many parts of Missouri. McAnally's publishing almost got him separated from his family by being expelled to the Confederacy. Those in the MECS had to maintain some semblance of loyalty if they were to have any hope in continuing their ministries during the war or afterwards.

Unfortunately, what took place in Missouri for the Methodists of both sides was misery. They could not continue their work in many cases. The example of one MECS quarterly conference in New Madrid is telling. Just two years before the war they proclaimed that their Sunday school was "in a most gratifying state of prosperity."³²² However, by their meeting in July of 1861, "people's minds were drawn away" with the coming of the war and they would not meet again until 1865.³²³ Similar examples took place in many of the other quarterly conferences in Missouri, MEC and MECS. By the end of the war, it was apparent that the churches of the circuit were in disarray with their flock experiencing the problems that come with a lack of religious instruction in such a period of crisis. The records that remain of the MECS all indicate the same thing.

There were many after the war that would attempt to sum up what had occurred. At the MECS St. Louis Annual Conference of 1866, the unnamed preacher of a sermon at

³²² Western c3308 v 1307.

³²³ Ibid.

that Conference asks when coming to the war period in his history of his church in Missouri: “And what shall I say? What pen can describe, what pencil can paint, or what tongue could tell the scenes through which we have passed since the close of 1860! Our day and Sunday schools were nearly all broken up. Some of our houses of worship were forcibly wrested from us and seized in the name of the Lord.”³²⁴ He, like most of his listeners hoped that this chaos could be exchanged for some good now that the war had ended.

Chaos indeed was the result of the conflicts that had taken place since and as the result of the schism in the Methodist Church. The result of the “altar erected against altar” that Patton’s biographer writes of in the 1850s was the Civil War that Cartwright and many others feared. A war that some foolishly dismissed as impossible during the initial period of the schism but took place still.

Without one another to moderate their views on slavery and eventually the Union, each segment of the Methodist Church in Missouri went off on the direction of extremism helping in many ways to precipitate a war between the states. As a result of the initial schism, in the Methodist church in Missouri, a Methodist was either against slavery or a member of the MECS. Those who held that slavery was at the very least a necessary evil were forced to leave with the MECS. Thus, as the war came, their religion encouraged

³²⁴ “Sermon-Preached Before the St. Louis Annual Conference, assembled at Lexington, Missouri, September 19, 1866” from Horn, G. W, editor. *Sermons by Missouri Methodist Preachers Representing The Missouri, St. Louis and the West St. Louis Conferences of the M. E. Church, South*. St. Louis: Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1874.

and even forced them into varying degrees of support for the Confederacy. Those, for whom the opposite was true in 1845 remained in the MEC and became stringent Unionists during the war. The popular and governmental participation in these conflicts increased with the war, as it can be seen from the multiple examples presented here.

Thus, the severity of the schism over slavery set into motion events that ended with the utter destruction of many facets of Missourian Methodism. The nation was led on the path to war. Although not the sole cause for the war, the schism only worsened already developing problems and its result is apparent. Fortunately, the Methodist Church was able to pick itself up from the ashes in the years after the war and renew itself again.

The problems in proclaiming the Gospel during the war in Missouri were no different for the Baptists of Missouri. Like their fellow Evangelicals, in many parts of the State the Baptists would face difficult issues in attempting to further their denomination. Churches were closed in numerous counties, ministers could not exercise their ministry, congregations could not worship. Outside and governmental participation in the problems of the Baptists would become apparent during the war. With the nation and the state divided between those who supported the Union and those that supported the Confederacy, many individual congregations were no different. Thus, the words of R. S. Duncan ring true when he proclaims that “the war was paralyzing to the religious interests of Missouri, as well as destructive of life and property.”³²⁵ They could not escape the horrors that their fellow Evangelicals in the Methodist church would experience.

³²⁵ Duncan 77.

The Baptists, unlike the Methodists, did not have to deal with an organized northern Baptist wing in Missouri during the war, only as the war ended did the ABHMS attempt incursions into the state. The later divisions in the Missouri Baptist church would occur after the war. Without the fear of organized repression from northern Baptists, their problems were somewhat diminished. Though, as it will be clear shortly, that did not stop the federal government from using its military might to interfere with the Baptists and their mission to the people of Missouri. Eventually the same order that allowed the MEC to seize the churches of the MECS was extended to the Baptists of Missouri.³²⁶ Loyalty to the Union was expressed more often within the confines of the Missouri Baptist General Association than through its southern counterpart in the MECS. But this loyalty eventually led to divisions within the Baptists of Missouri. The Baptists of Missouri could not endure with half for slavery and half for freedom.

With the outbreak of the war, the General Association was forced to deal with the same problems that befell the New Madrid Quarterly Conference of the MECS. At the conference of 1861 it was bemoaned that “The political crisis and consequent financial prostration of our whole country, forced upon the Publication Society the necessity of suspending for a time, the *Missouri Baptist*, and still forbid its re-issue.”³²⁷ Unfortunately, this would be the case for the duration of the war. Wartime limitations would greatly contract the ability of the Association to do what it could during the pre-war period.

³²⁶ Jones 40-1.

³²⁷ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1861*, Pg 7.

Things would only worsen the next year. A circular letter put out after the conference lamented “ O how greatly are these suffering! Some of our district Associations have ceased to meet; our General Association was, last year and this, almost a failure.”³²⁸ The authors were correct in their assertions, little business took place at the meeting in 1862, far less than was the case in 1861. The war was taking its toll and continued to do so on the Baptists of Missouri throughout the war period.

Nonetheless, while not seeming to have the problems that plagued the MECS or the lack of that the Annual Conference of the MEC experienced, the Baptists existed during the war period. The nature of their schism allowed for a middle-road of sorts. They tolerated and supported slavery among their members, but in many cases they did not overtly support the South, with many of their members being Unionists. While in the end there was a higher percentage of support for the South during the war within the Baptists than that of Missourians who supported Breckenridge in 1860, in many ways they mirror Missourians as a whole in that election. They desired conservative leaders that upheld slavery and did not rock the boat.

Thus, throughout the war, the General Association did not take sides during the war, the makeup of their membership prohibited it. The Baptists held that there was “no equivocal position on the relations sustained by the Churches to the State. ...they have likewise held, that the State has no right to interfere with the freedom of conscience, the relation of the ministry to their congregations...”³²⁹ Any theoretical attempt by the

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1865*, Pg 13.

government to suppress other churches, as they did with the Methodists, even to benefit the Baptists in Missouri would have been frowned upon. Their membership was diverse, and this middle-line had to be walked.

Even the smaller Baptist associations possessed a diverse membership when it came to positions taken during the war. For example, the writer of the Polk County Baptist Association's history in 1897 mourns the division of supporters between the North and the South within the Missouri Baptists forcing the "members of the same church who had sworn before God and ratified the same in their baptism...to imbrue their hands in blood, and often with fiendish delight."³³⁰ The biography section of this history is fraught with examples of ministers that supported either side during the war. In the end, one would have to ascertain that the Polk County Association was almost evenly split between the North and the South during the war. Examples in Duncan's *History of the Missouri Baptists* (he went through each of the regional/county associations) agree with Polk County. In some jurisdictions there were more of one side's supporters than the other, but the Baptists of Missouri were deeply divided during the war.

Nevertheless, in the words of William Leftwich, many of these ministers had "to share largely in the persecutions and trials of their less fortunate Southern Methodist brethren and not a few of the Presbyterian ministers were implicated in the same way, and

³³⁰ Haines, J. W. *The History of the Polk County Baptist Association*. Bolivar, Mo: The Bolivar Herald, 1897. Pg 12.

had to suffer for being in Missouri.”³³¹ As Leftwich subsequently demonstrates, there were numerous instances of persecution that the southern Baptists would suffer. Things were far from optimal for the southern-sympathizing Baptists of Missouri.

Like those in the MECS, the federal authorities would go after Baptists as well. The Rev. James Fewel, who served as the pastor of a church in Henry County was apprehended by the authorities for being a southern sympathizer. He was then taken to Sedalia to the east and then to St. Louis “where he lay in prison more than a month, and until death came to his relief.”³³² This death, due to the poor treatment of his captors was more often than not the treatment that many of the Baptists and other southern-sympathizing Missourians experienced at the hands of the federal authorities. Those that might cause problems in this manner could not be tolerated by the federal authorities.

Equally disturbing is the case of Rev. Nathaniel Wollard, an elderly pastor in Dallas County (north-east of Springfield). Elder Wollard “expressed himself in opposition to the ‘abolitionists,’ as he called the Union men, and in sympathy with the South.”³³³ In September of 1863 a company of militia rode out to his house, with the intention of drawing him outside and then to shoot him, feigning that he had escaped. Wollard realized something of their plan and he resisted. When the militia men figured this out “one of the militia raised his pistol and shot him, the ball taking effect in the face

³³¹ Leftwich v1 158.

³³² Leftwich v1 169.

³³³ Leftwich v1 388.

and inflicting a mortal wound.”³³⁴ While Wollard lay dying, the militia burned and looted his house. Finally, seeing that he still hung onto his life, another man shot him in the forehead, instantly finishing their work. For his southern sympathies, Wollard’s family was made both fatherless and homeless.³³⁵

There are numerous other examples of Baptists in Missouri of southern leanings that experienced pain during the war. Some years later, as he stood over a monument to the Confederate dead, Rev. W. J. Patrick proclaimed: “...the history, the honor was preserved. The bodies of these missionaries have been broken, they have gone into their graves, but their works were not buried with their bodies. They live. Their works, under God, are a part of our palisades.”³³⁶ As with the Southern Methodists after the war, there was some hope, they had not died in vain in their attempts to spread their Gospel.

Missouri Baptists that supported the Union would suffer difficulties as well. Despite his support for the Union, the Rev. James E. Hughes experienced difficulties during the war. Hughes wrote that “During the war I was a loyal man, and was so considered by all.”³³⁷ Despite his dislike of Lincoln’s administration, he retained this loyalty to the Union and spoke in favor of it at the beginning of the war. However, when required to take the “Test Oath” as the war closed, Hughes refused out of principle. Thus,

³³⁴ Leftwich v1 389-90.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Patrick, Rev. W. J. “The Missionaries from 1834 to 1884.” from *Semi-Centennial Memorial Missouri Baptist General Association. Containing Sermons, Addresses, Etc., in Commemoration of its Fiftieth Anniversary*. Columbia, MO: The Herald Printing Establishment, 1885. Pg. 52.

³³⁷ Leftwich v2 372.

he explains “At this period of my ministerial life, and in January, of the year 1866, I was arrested and tried for preaching the Gospel of Christ.”³³⁸ In the end, Hughes was allowed to pay a fine and he was not imprisoned, according to the records he provided with his testimony. His case illustrates that for many Baptist Union-sympathizers the war was not any easier than it was on their southern-sympathizing counterparts.

Fortunately for Rev. Jonathan Fuller, he would not be jailed during the war for his Unionist beliefs. However, he would have to negotiate the divisions in his congregation at the First Baptist Church of Kansas City. Numerous problems would develop over his tenure that he would have to mollify. One example involved his choir director, a fellow Unionist, who wanted to begin the service one Sunday by signing *My Country 'Tis of Thee*. Obviously the Confederate sympathizers in his congregation were vehement in their opposition to this hymn. But, the other Union sympathizers took issue with it not being sung. In the end, Fuller relied on the advice of one of the prominent laymen of the congregation, a man referred to as Brother Rogers. He would not play the hymn, but this man, described by Fuller as the “blackest” of the radical Republicans (strange usage by Fuller, being that this was usually a derogatory term), was able to calm their fellow Union supporters.³³⁹

Unlike Rev. Fuller, the Baptists on a whole experienced persecution as well. Especially troubling at the General Association of 1862 was the arrival of Union soldiers during the meeting. After surrounding the meeting house, they compelled all of the

³³⁸ Leftwich v2 373.

³³⁹ Jonathan Fuller to William Fuller, June 20, 1864, Fuller Papers, folder 11.

attendees to exit and form three groups. One, for those that supported the Union; another for those in favor of the South, but who had taken oaths to the Union and a third for those who had not. The latter groups were then marched off to Marshall and the provost-marshal's office there. The witness to this story, the Rev. A. P. Williams, though no doubt troubled by the forced exile of a large portion of the attendees, was troubled by one additional fact. He exclaims that "there were Baptists among the troops! Did not angels weep when they witnessed such a spectacle? Baptists assisting in arresting their own brethren when assembled in General Association doing the work of the Lord! The Judgment! O the Judgment day!"³⁴⁰ The large degree of unanimity among the Baptists of Missouri would not last forever. By the war's end, there would be all out division in the church.

An 1864 order of Secretary Stanton, similar to the one with regard to the Methodists, allowed the ABHMS to seize any churches with disloyal ministers currently occupying their pulpits. Rev. Williams' testimony describes the initial stages of these takeovers. While they were not as bad as what took place with the Methodists, they happened nonetheless. The Baptists of Missouri were further restricted in their ministries.

Some northern Baptists began to filter into Missouri. The Rev. S. W. Marston who came from Illinois to Missouri as the war closed was by no doubt one of these men. After his initial time in Missouri, the ABHMS would send him to minister to the freedmen of the South, showing no doubt where he stood on critical issues before and

³⁴⁰ Leftwich 365-6.

during the war.³⁴¹ Though, more often than not, the Union supporters during the war were those that undertook these acts against their fellow Baptists.³⁴²

Nonetheless, it would be the Test Oath, passed in the Missouri State Constitution of 1865 that caused further divisions between the Baptists of Missouri, as it did in the other churches. This Constitution, passed by popular vote in June, held in Article 2, section 3, that anyone serving in a variety of institutions must take an oath of loyalty swearing that they had not participated in the Civil War on the side of the South. It should be noted, that the voters of Missouri in this case were a minority of the population, since to vote one had to first take an oath of having not supported the Confederacy during the war, which many could not take.³⁴³ One of these such institutions were the churches of Missouri. Problems for men, such as Hughes would occur in that they refused to take the oath on grounds that it violated a host of rights and the separation of church and state. Further problems took place for those in addition who could not take the oath knowing that they were lying when they swore to it.

There would be some that would take the Oath. Many could in good conscious, such as the Annual Conference of the MEC. Others could not or would not. Thus, when looking back upon the Test Oath some years later, Rev. R. S. Duncan would remark,

³⁴¹ *Semi-Centennial Memorial Missouri Baptist General Association. Containing Sermons, Addresses, Etc., in Commemoration of its Fiftieth Anniversary.* Columbia, MO: The Herald Printing Establishment, 1885. Pg 189.

³⁴² Leftwich 363-4, Duncan *History* 456-8.

³⁴³ Gilmore 284.

“This feature of the Missouri Constitution was especially oppressive, and greatly alarmed the thoughtful friends of Christianity, and none more so than the Baptists.”³⁴⁴ Although eventually thrown out on appeal from the U. S. Supreme Court,³⁴⁵ for the few years leading up to that decision there were problems for the Baptists of Missouri despite the cessation of conflict. At the meeting of the General Association in 1865, shortly after it took effect, the Test Oath was condemned, using some of the same words that had been used not to take sides during the war. Thus, the Association could not “therefore but express our sorrow that the new constitution of the state of Missouri requires of our ministers a certain oath before they can lawfully discharge the duties of their sacred office.”³⁴⁶ They then proceeded to give multiple reasons why they condemned the Test Oath.

Numerous examples of men arrested for their refusal are given. Rev. B. F. Kenny, was a sixty-one year old clergyman arrested for preaching without having taken the Oath. Duncan describes Kenny as being “arrested at his home, after sunset, notwithstanding his age and his protest against the brutality, [he] was compelled to ride ten miles to Gallatin in the dark.”³⁴⁷ This case is really not too dissimilar to the MEC minister C. H. Kelly in 1855. The “radical” Union-supporting Grand Jury of Daviess County (in north-

³⁴⁴ Duncan 167.

³⁴⁵ Duncan 169-74. Fr. John A. Cummings, a Catholic Priest from Louisiana, MO refused the oath. After his conviction, his case was forwarded up the judicial hierarchy until the US Supreme Court overturned the conviction on Jan. 14, 1867.

³⁴⁶ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1865*, Pg 13

³⁴⁷ Duncan *History* 927.

central Missouri) then brought him up on charges.

Other examples can be given, many of them comparing the proceedings to the “Star Chamber” of Henry VII. Like the Star Chamber, men who charges were brought against for violating the Test Oath stood little chance of receiving a fair trial. Baptists would be split as a result of these problems. Rev. Fuller in Kansas City describes a schism in his own congregation in 1866. He and most of the former Union supporters left to form their own congregation. The problems, most likely caused by the Oath, were too much to keep his divided flock together.

Things would only worsen for the Baptists of Missouri. Their General Association in turn divided itself between those who had taken the Oath and those who had not. Those that had taken the oath attempted to claim the churches of those that refused the it. After much effort, they were not that successful in that endeavor, as A. P. Williams recounts.³⁴⁸ While in the end the Missouri Baptists were able to mend their fences over the Test Oath, as it was struck down almost as quickly as it passed, this reunification was not completed quickly and the pre-war unity would never really be obtained again.

These eventual legacy of the history of the Missouri Baptists during the war can be seen as a result of the schism in 1845. By creating a consensus that neither the Methodists or Presbyterians enjoyed, it would only by a matter of time till things fell apart. The nature of the Baptist schism had helped edge the nation into war as did the Methodists. What it did not do was guarantee that there would be no further divisions.

³⁴⁸ Leftwich v2 367-9.

The Baptists would pay the price for the lack of hostilities in the antebellum period. The mechanism that allowed for supporters of both the North and the South to remain united in the General Association would not stand up against the rigors imposed by the Test Oath. Division over this question, and essentially those of the war would ensue. Cut off from the SBC as a result of the war, there would be little help until after the war from their mother body in preventing the problems of division.

The Presbyterians of Missouri, now almost totally united into the OS, experienced a similar problem. With the OS Synod, there was a diverse body of members composed into one body of Presbyterians. The lack of a coherent statement on slavery in the antebellum period, due to the nature of their schism, while holding the northern and southern portions together, would lead to trouble as the war broke out. The synods in the Confederacy would form their own General Assembly, The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. This move, though quite logical on their part, allowed the remainder of the OS in the North to declare their absolute support for the Union while compelling the subordinate bodies to do the same and condemn slavery as well. None of these actions sat well with the Presbyterians of Missouri. Many Missourians and Presbyterians as well were opposed to the federal side during the war, virtually all were opposed to anything being said against slavery.

Like their Baptist brethren, the OS Presbyterians would be forced to undergo a test of faith of whether or not to remain united with the OS General Assembly. Like their NS counterparts a few years earlier, they now faced being in a General Assembly that condemned slavery, an unacceptable position. Like the NS and the Baptists a few years in

the future, the Presbyterians would break apart in Missouri.

When it met in Philadelphia in 1861, the northern OS General Assembly passed multiple resolutions in favor of the Union. The Spring Resolutions, as they were called, required subordinate Presbyterian bodies to profess their undivided support for the Union. The commissioners in Philadelphia declared their “obligation, to promote and perpetuate, so far in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions...”³⁴⁹ Furthermore, as to the Constitution of the United States, the General Assembly sought to “profess our unabated loyalty” to it.³⁵⁰ With the other Spring Resolutions, the stage was set for conflict within the Presbyterian Church.

Problems ensued immediately, but only escalated after the war. However, at that General Assembly, a resolution of protest would be passed. Although their leader was Dr. Charles Hodge, a Princeton Seminary Professor who was by no means a southern sympathizer (he opposed it on legal grounds), most of the fifty-seven that signed this protest were from states with slavery. The Missouri commissioners were unanimous in their support of this protest. They proclaimed in the protest that “we deny the right of the General Assembly to decide the political question, to what Government the allegiance of

³⁴⁹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (Old School), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1861* Philadelphia.

Pg 45.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

Presbyterians, as citizens, is due.”³⁵¹ In passing these regulations the General Assembly had “violated the Constitution of the Church and usurped the prerogative of its Divine Master.”³⁵²

The mostly southern dissenters had set forth their views. However, due to the chaos of the war, nothing further was done until 1865. Until the war closed, it was generally understood that as long as one voiced their opinions quietly, they would not face repercussions from the General Assembly. Many individual ministers in Missouri did just that and avoided having to accept doctrines of which they were personally opposed.³⁵³

In December of 1861 commissioners from the ten synods in the recently formed Confederate States Of America met to form a new General Assembly. These were the Synods that were absent at the OS General Assembly earlier that year. They formed The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. The unity that had been lauded of the OS General Assembly only a year earlier had broken down, resulting in the northern and southern churches not being reconciled until 1983. With the nation torn in two, the OS Presbyterian Church was as well. While any Presbyterians were welcomed to join the new southern church without letters of dismissal from the North, in practice only

³⁵¹ PC in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes 1861* Pg 52.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Williams, David Riddle *James H. Brookes: A Memoir, Published for Dr. Brookes' family*. St. Louis: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1897. Pp 102-3.

those in the states that had left the Union would do so until the war ended.³⁵⁴ It was the standing order of the General Assembly that all subordinate presbyteries were “authorised [sic] to receive Ministers coming from the Presbyterian Church in the United States, on their giving satisfactory evidence of their good standing...without requiring a certificate of dismissal.”³⁵⁵

When the war broke out in 1861, many Missouri OS churches were divided over slavery and their support for the Union. The Synods and Presbyteries did not divide until the end of the war. Granted, the fact that most of them could not meet during the war might have had something to do with this temporary unity. For, in the words of Rev. George Miller “religion surrenders to war” during the 1860s.³⁵⁶ Many churches would not meet during the war and those that could were often a shadow of themselves.

Like the Baptists, many OS churches experienced problems over the different opinions of their members with regards to the war. As with multiple Presbyterian congregations, the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia had no pastor from 1861-2. No minister could be provided that was acceptable to the entire congregation according to the church records. The church elders resigned one by one as well, each proclaiming that they were not acceptable to the congregation. Their resignations were not accepted to preserve

³⁵⁴ Thompson v2 13-5.

³⁵⁵ Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, General Assembly. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, 1862*. Atlanta: Steam Power Press Chronicle and Sentinel, 1862. Pg 9.

³⁵⁶ Miller 64.

some semblance of unity.

Only in 1862 were they able to secure a preacher, Rev. Dr. Fisher, the Latin professor from Westminster College, who preached every two weeks. However, showing his ability to unite a torn congregation, Fisher obtained the services of Rev. Robert W. Landis, a Union chaplain and Dr. S. S. Lewis who was described as “the strongest southerner in the country” to minister together at a communion service.³⁵⁷ The church endured until the end of the war due to Fisher’s efforts.³⁵⁸

On the other hand, the Dardenne Presbyterian Church, a mostly southern-sympathizing congregation with some Unionists, had its church mysteriously burned in 1862. Only a few days earlier Union soldiers had entered the church for the Sunday service, leaving many to wonder if they had something to do with the destruction of the church building. Only in 1867 would a joint effort with the MECS result in a new church’s construction.³⁵⁹

Rev. George Miller details much of the war along the Kansas Missouri border in his *Missouri’s Memorable Decade*. Miller was the minister in Pleasant Hill, in Cass County along the Kansas border. He sums up the sentiments of his congregation and the county at large in that “southern pride and sympathy ran deeper with the vast majority... the hostile feeling grew and deepened from Lincoln's election, until by June 1, men were

³⁵⁷ *Addresses Delivered at the Centennial Celebration of the Founding of the First Presbyterian Church*. Columbia, MO: October 17, 1928. Pg 25.

³⁵⁸ Ibid. 24-5, *First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, Missouri, Records, 1833-1935*, Western Historical Manuscripts, (C2308). f2, pg 12.

³⁵⁹ Watson 90-2.

seen every where rushing into confederate camps.”³⁶⁰ Miller, on the other hand, was a Unionist, a fact that he was not shy about expressing. By 1862 his ministry had ended in Cass County. His congregation had grown tired of him and the disorganization of the church prevented another minister from being stationed there.³⁶¹

Like the Baptists, the OS Presbyterians found themselves in a Synod that contained a large number of Union and Confederate sympathizers. Conflict and division down to the church level was the inevitable conclusion. Thus, the congregations we see presented here underwent problems as the war broke out, prohibiting the exercise of Presbyterianism in many parts of Missouri. Furthermore, with the chaos of war, numerous churches and the presbyteries had their operations cease during the 1860s. Governmental and popular forces would participate in these efforts from time to time, as they did with Miller.

On the other hand, virtually all of the members of the NS were Union supporters, a mirror image of their General Assembly. The NS held that the Union must be preserved and that slavery be eradicated as well. For them, it was the duty of Christians to uphold the Union.³⁶² The NS in Missouri clearly held this view, but they still experienced some problems during the war.

Although they would have been supported by the Federal authorities like the

³⁶⁰ Miller 62.

³⁶¹ Miller 82.

³⁶² Marsden 199-200.

MEC, the NS Synod in Missouri was unable to meet in 1861 or 1862. In 1863, they met in Kansas for that state was still a part of their Synod until 1864. The same chaos that struck the other churches in Missouri played a role with the NS. They could not meet due to the upheaval caused by the war in Missouri. Again, the availability of records on the NS were scarce, but their Unionism can still be verified. Throughout the war the few remaining Presbyterians in the NS Synod of Missouri would continue in this support and emerge from the war fairly intact (their Synod was already split prior to the war after all). By the end of the 1860s they were in favor of the reunification between the New and Old Schools.³⁶³

Like the Methodists and the Baptists, the Presbyterians also experienced violence during the war. Miller laments that one of the elders that he went to the last meeting of his Lafayette Presbytery in April of 1861, Elder John Caldwell, a southern-sympathizer, was killed by Kansas men near Westport in 1863.³⁶⁴ Miller himself narrowly avoided death during the war. When he was still in Cass County in the beginning of the war, he says that “As a matter of prudence, on certain occasions, I would sleep in the woods and fields.”³⁶⁵ For there were many in Cass County that did not like his views on the war. He was referred to as a “Lincolnist” by many in his congregation and in the community.³⁶⁶

³⁶³ Hill 59-60, Miller 42.

³⁶⁴ Hill 61.

³⁶⁵ Miller 67.

³⁶⁶ Miller 65.

Only with his move to Kansas City in 1863, a city with more Union supporters in it among its Presbyterians, did his problems lessen.

Leftwich, in his *Martyrdom in Missouri* mentions that there were several in the Presbyterian Church that underwent persecution during the war. The Presbyterians were no different than any of the other denominations in Missouri in his view.³⁶⁷ Unfortunately he regrets not having spent more time on the Presbyterian Church for he was prohibited due to publishing constraints.³⁶⁸

Nonetheless, he presents some additional examples of violence perpetuated against the OS Presbyterians. Leftwich gives the example of Rev. William Cleaveland. Cleaveland, a Baptist, hoped to gain a pass out of Lewis County (in northwest Missouri) in the early days of the war. A detachment from Price's army was to invade the county in a matter of days and Cleaveland did not want to remain in the county for fear of his family. Due to his southern leanings, Cleaveland was forced to remain in the county and had to seek permission to leave. The federal commander in the county, Col. J. T. K. Hayward was a OS Presbyterian elder. Hayward, refused to hear Cleaveland's pleas to flee Lewis County, presenting an example of northern persecution by Presbyterians levied against southerners. In this case it was a multi-denominational occurrence.³⁶⁹

The prominent OS minister, Robert P. Farris, can be seen as representative of the persecution suffered by the OS as well. Being that he was pastor of the church in St.

³⁶⁷ Leftwich v1 176.

³⁶⁸ Leftwich v1 436.

³⁶⁹ Leftwich v1 304.

Charles, there were many in the federal administration along with their supporters that desired his removal from this influential position. Thus, “they sought to manufactured much cheap and cowardly abuse, which was heaped upon him without stint. They called him “secesh” “rebel,” “traitor,” “disloyal,” and many similar epithets.”³⁷⁰ In addition he was accused of publicly praying for Jefferson Davis and the success of the Confederacy.

The provost marshal of the area eventually ordered him to take an oath of loyalty and pay a two-thousand dollar fine for his prayers for the Confederacy and his general lack of support for the Union. After ignoring the request for the oath and the fine, Farris was arrested some weeks later along with another OS minister, Rev. Tyson Dines. He was then taken to prison in St. Louis until his trial.

During the trial in front of the provost marshal’s court Farris presented numerous witnesses on his behalf, but “Not a single question was addressed to any of them. But Merrill [the provost-marshal], saying that Dr. Farris had made out against himself a clear case of “general disloyalty,” sentenced him to be confined in a military prison during the war.”³⁷¹ His sentence was soon commuted to banishment north of Missouri, in Chicago. However, Farris wrote President Lincoln and asked that he could be pardoned. Included in his request were the testimonies of numerous Union men to his character. In the end, “The speedy result was the issue of a ‘General Order’ covering all such cases [of those brought up with similar charges as Farris], and Mr. Lincoln's assurance, in his own hand

³⁷⁰ Leftwich v2 86.

³⁷¹ Leftwich v2 87.

writing, that I would be released under said order.”³⁷² Farris would be able to continue his ministry. Although he faced some other problems throughout the war, he was a free man and could return to his post in St. Charles.³⁷³

In 1864, the Presbytery of St. Louis (which was fairly pro-southern) met with only a slight quorum. In order to meet, they had to take what was referred to as the Rosecrans Church Order, a military oath to the Union (named after the Union general in Missouri that proclaimed the oath). Most of the few men in attendance took the oath and allowed the meeting to largely be run by the military in that the proposals put forth were designed to support the war effort, condemn slavery, and support oaths to the Union. Rev. Farris and Rev. S. S. Watson, refused the oath and were subsequently arrested. This action was by no means condemned by all once the military was gone and free speech was once again possible. Union supporters were quite happy by what went on at the meeting.³⁷⁴

As the war came to a close, the Presbyterians experienced some problems with the successor to the military oaths, the Test Oath. Many could not take it in good faith, others refused it. Still some, like those that were critical of Farris and Watson for their refusal to take the Rosecrans oath, supported it. Two prominent Presbyterian laymen, George P. Strong and Charles D. Drake were, according to Leftwich, “active members of the

³⁷² Leftwich v2 88.

³⁷³ Leftwich v2 85-9.

³⁷⁴ Leftwich v2 90-2, *True Loyalty and Independence of the Church*. St. Louis: 1865. Pg 26-7.

Constitutional Convention, were active and bold defenders of their own work.”³⁷⁵ Strong in their pro-Union beliefs, they are typical of the minority in the Presbyterian Church that upheld these views. They attempted to force everyone else in Missouri, especially those that preached from the pulpit, to acknowledge their pro-Union views through the Test Oath.³⁷⁶

In the end, what caused numerous problems for the OS Presbyterians of Missouri was not the Test Oath. It was the OS General Assembly of 1861. The protest that began soon after it proclaimed its doctrine of loyalty to the Union for its members did not subside as a result of the war. Although the fact many of the Presbyteries and the Synod of Missouri did not meet during the war prevented a widespread condemnation for a while, things fell apart once the war came to a close.

As the war was coming to a close in 1865, the General Assembly began to change its stance towards those that were against the Spring Resolutions of 1861. According to Rev. James H. Brookes of St. Louis, who was one of the leading ministers to oppose the General Assembly nationally, “every minister was now required not only to accept the deliverance, but to co-operate actively in the execution of every doctrinal and ecclesiastical decree.”³⁷⁷ This position was unacceptable for many in the Missouri OS and it led to a division within the Synod.

The ministers of the OS that did not support the General Assembly in this view

³⁷⁵ Leftwich v2 326.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Williams 103.

point could no longer be silent. In 1865, as a protest of the pro-Union actions of each of the General Assemblies from 1861-5, the *Declaration and Testimony* was drawn up. Originally written by a group led by Rev. Samuel R. Wilson of Kentucky and first adapted by the Presbytery of Louisville in 1865, the Missouri OS Presbyterians led the charge getting its grievances heard by the General Assembly. Rev. Brookes became one of the primary leaders in this effort.³⁷⁸

Referring to directly to the OS General Assembly, the *Declaration* itself begins by declaring “For several years past that Church in this country has been departing farther and farther from both the spirit and the plain letter of her commission to “preach the Gospel to every creature” and her charter as a “kingdom not of this world.”³⁷⁹ Numerous grievances were spelled out in the *Declaration and Testimony*. All of these grievances dealt with the acts of the previous General Assemblies that began with the Spring Resolutions and continued throughout the war. The *Declaration* held that these actions were beyond the legal jurisdiction of the Assembly. Thus, “that the action of the Assembly in the premises does *not only decide the political question referred to*, but makes that decision *a test of membership in our Church, is no less clear.*”³⁸⁰

The somewhat harsh language throughout the document only served to incur the wrath of the General Assembly when it met the next year in St. Louis. Many wanted to

³⁷⁸ Williams 102-3, 105.

³⁷⁹ Grasty, John S. *Memoir of Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters, D. D.* St. Louis: Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1871. Pg 304.

³⁸⁰ Grasty 307.

disband the Louisville Presbytery which was the only one that signed the document as a whole to this point. Eventually, a substitute resolution was passed, the Gurley *Ipsa Facto* Resolution. It held that any presbytery which had signers of *Declaration* as members could be disbanded.³⁸¹

In one last battle of the Civil War among Missouri Presbyterians, the OS Synod of Missouri would be divided. Many, who had already signed or would sign the *Declaration*, would not remain with the General Assembly. They would form a Synod that would remain independent for the next decade. Many, like Rev. Brookes gladly severed relations with their mother body. Like many of the other churchmen examined within this work, they could not accept what the General Assembly now viewed as doctrine.³⁸²

Other men, such as George Miller, did not desire this separation from the General Assembly. He was the only member of his Presbytery of Lafayette to not sign the *Declaration*. Miller was expelled as a result of his action which he felt as justifiable in the circumstances. He was not loyal to the South in any way during the war and saw no desire to continue with mostly southern men. He would support the General Assembly.³⁸³

He and the other members of the OS in Missouri formed their own Synod, still aligned with the General Assembly. They were in the minority, but from help with the NS Synod in Missouri, the new Synod endured. Both groups were composed of members that

³⁸¹ PC in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes 1866* Pp 345-7, 348-9.

³⁸² Williams 106-7. It should be noted that the Independent Synod was declared by the State Courts as the legal successor to the Missouri Synod as was therefore entitled to the records.

³⁸³ Miller 127-8, 132.

heavily supported the Union during the war and opposed slavery in many instances as well. Along with the ever narrowing theological differences that separated them, politically they were both fairly succinct, and could cooperate well together. Thus, as the 1860s closed and the New and Old Schools reunified, both of these Synods would as well. Once the theological issues were resolved, there was almost nothing separating these groups politically or otherwise that would prevent their reunification.

The Independent OS Synod contained many members that were both southern sympathizers during the war and ministers for men that fought for the Confederacy during the war. However, Brookes and the other leaders sought to perform “the greatest good to the greatest number of their beloved Church...they cheerfully signed a statement which practically cut them (ecclesiastically) aloof from many dear friends in the South.”³⁸⁴ The statement did not condemn the South in any way. It simply said that they were “determined to know neither North nor South in the Church of God.”³⁸⁵ This statement was not anti-southern, but used to show unity, unity that would not be popular in the immediate aftermath of the war. Southern sympathizers according to Brooke’s biographer wanted a document to the General Assembly that supported their views in light of the *Declaration*.³⁸⁶

Although this statement was not what many of the members of the Independent Synod desired, it was required in order to achieve reunification with the General

³⁸⁴ Williams 104.

³⁸⁵ Williams 105.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

Assembly. The largely northern General Assembly could not see the Missourians as being southern-sympathizers. In time, this strategy worked as wounds from the war began to heal. Typical of what took place in the early 1870s, the New Yorker Rev. S. S. Laws addressed the Synod in 1872. There he put the blame for the break solely on the General Assembly.³⁸⁷ Shortly after he visited Missouri, others in the General Assembly saw the error of their ways and began to attempt to get the Missouri Synod to rejoin the General Assembly.

While Brookes would argue vehemently to rejoin the northern General Assembly in the years to come, the majority of the Presbyterians in the independent Synod joined the southern General Assembly. It was thought by many in Missouri they had more in common with the South. This action left the Presbyterians of Missouri divided as Brookes and his few supporters joined the North.³⁸⁸

Like the Baptists, the lack of severity in the schism itself and subsequent events leading up to the Civil War had a profound effect during the war. There was enough of a diversity of opinions over the war itself and the issue of slavery to cause a split in their Synod. Those supporting the *Declaration and Testimony* formed an independent synod, leaving the minority that did not agree with them to continue their union with the General Assembly. If the schism between the Old and New Schools had been over slavery, these

³⁸⁷ Laws, Rev. S. S. A Letter By the Rev. S. S. Laws, LL. D., to the Synod of Missouri (O.S.) Which Met at Columbia, Missouri, October 8, 1872. New York: S. Angell, Book and Pamphlet Printer, 1873. Pp. 10-2.

³⁸⁸ Thompson v2 192-4.

problems during the war most likely would not have occurred. Support for the Union and slavery could not be resolved, so separation ensued. The Presbyterians would have been like the Methodists in both their support for one side or the other and increased influence during the sectional crisis.

Nonetheless, one thing that continued to take place with the Presbyterians, as with the other two denominations, was that the violence used against them continued to occur. Groups of citizens formed that detested those Presbyterian ministers that were on the opposite side during the war. For the large number of Presbyterians that supported the South in one way or another during the war, they experienced persecution by the Federal authorities. In the end, like the Methodists and Baptists, there would be a great deal of work for the Presbyterians to accomplish in order to rebuild after the war.

Each of the three denominations had a different experience during the war. This unique experience was the result of the nature of their schism and the resulting events of the sectional crisis. Although there would be similarities during the war period, each of the separate churches within the three denominations would emerge from the war differently. In the end, the war that no one really desired left the churches of Missouri in shambles in large portions of the state, forcing them to spend years recovering.

Conclusion

It took many decades for the wounds from the schisms and the resulting strife from the Civil War to heal. The unity experienced before the schisms could never be replicated in many of the churches affected by it. The clashes that took place within the formally unified churches prior to the war help bring about national disunion. Things could not be rebuilt easily, and in some instances the process lasted into the twentieth century. The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians were not alone in the problems that they faced after the war. Even with the issue of slavery resolved, national unity would take time to rebuild, Evangelical unity would be no different.

The Presbyterians were the first to break apart in the 1830s. Their schism was over theology, not slavery, but their abolitionists and slaveholders were divided into separate churches with this theological division. Eventually, the Old and New Schools fought among themselves in Missouri over problems resulting from their schism. The Methodists fought in the same way as well, but between the MEC and MECS. However, their clashes were far more numerous and violent than those among the Presbyterians. Unlike the Presbyterians, the Methodist schism was over slavery directly.

The Methodists' break over slavery divided the church into northern and southern sections that had polar opposite views on slavery. The Presbyterian schism, while leaving the abolitionists and slaveholders in the New and Old Schools respectively, was less binding with respect to slavery than the Methodist schism. There were still a very small number of slaveholders within the NS and an equally small number within the OS that held anti-slavery views. Thus, their conflicts were not as severe and tended to move along

with the larger sectional crisis. The Methodists on the other hand presaged and brought about the national crisis in many ways through their internal clashes.

The third denomination, the Baptists, like the Methodists, split over slavery. However, due to the independent nature of their churches, unlike the other two denominations, their schism was cleaner. The General Association of Missouri was unanimous in their adherence to the newly formed SBC. Thus, there was no mechanism for the ABHMS to work within Missouri unlike the other two denominations. Baptist clashes in Missouri were almost non-existent, owing to the nature of this schism. They, like the Presbyterians, largely moved along with the political events of the sectional crisis. Yes, their schism was over slavery, but not in the manner that the MEC's was.

National unity was undermined by these schisms. Divisions between North and South did nothing to help it. The events after the schism continued to harm the fabric of national unity. With its conflicts that presaged the Border War over Kansas and the more serious events of the sectional crisis of the 1850s, the Methodist schism caused the further disintegration of national unity. The other two denominations did this to some extent, but not to the point of the Methodists. For the Presbyterians and the Baptists, events acted upon them to a greater extent than the Methodists.

The influence of the evangelicals in America and likewise in Missouri enabled these schisms to have the effect on the larger political and cultural scale that they did. The people of Missouri were soon drawn into the conflicts, and oftentimes supported the pro-slavery wings of the churches. The Missouri government did the same. Religion and culture began to merge during this period and divided churches could only sooner or later beget a divided country.

Once the war broke out, things would only worsen. With the chaos of war, many facets of church life would be disrupted. Sadder still was the worsening of the conflicts within the churches. Thus, an the increase of popular participation in these conflicts took place. Unfortunately for the southern supporters, the government increased its role as well, now supporting the Union as expected with the status of Missouri during the war. The end result of the schisms were now apparent for those in Missouri. What many had feared or foolishly discounted had taken place, the Civil War.

For the Presbyterians and Baptists, the nature of their schisms resulted in further divisions. The NS Synod was purged of its few slaveholders immediately prior to the war. The OS Synod, as a result of its General Assembly's support of the Union and desire that its subordinate Presbyterians support it as well, split. Those that thought these laws just and/or supported the Union remained loyal. However, most Presbyterians in Missouri, especially those that supported the South, could not. After the war the OS Synod divided. The Baptists would do the same thing in Missouri as a result of the Test Oath.

If they had undergone their schisms as the Methodists did, the Baptists and Presbyterians would not have suffered the same fate during the war. Moreover, they would have had a greater influence on the events of the sectional crisis. Granted, structures and movements that prevented anything that completely mirrored the Methodists in either church stood in the way of this happening. Avoiding the problems that the Methodists suffered during the 1840s and 1850s was most likely a positive thing. In the end, despite these differences, each of the three denominations presented here had some sort of impact on the events leading to the Civil War and the war itself. The schisms insured both an impact and a different one at that.

Finally, a criticism could be brought up that the ministers examined in this paper were already predisposed to the North or South prior to their arrival in Missouri, nullifying the argument that the schisms could have had any significant political implications. In turn, the influence of the churches can be further seen if they changed their views while in Missouri. In some cases, this was so, many were predisposed toward either region. In others, the ministers in question were born in and lived in northern states before their arrival in Missouri and ended up on the side of the South. For others, the opposite was true.

Some of the MECS men were of northern origins. Even though he was not ever stationed in Missouri, Bishop Soule was originally from Maine and ended up in the South later in his career. Rev. Caples was born in Jeromeville in Wayne County, Ohio emigrating to Missouri when he was a young man.³⁸⁹ Bishop Marvin was born in Missouri. However, his father emigrated to Missouri when he was a young man from Massachusetts. Furthermore, the Marvin family had been in New England for some time according to McAnally. Previously they had intermarried with the line of Increase and Cotton Mather.³⁹⁰

The Presbyterian minister Rice, who had argued so vehemently for slavery, was stationed in Ohio when he made those arguments. So was Rev. Brookes for a time, the

³⁸⁹ Marvin 7-8.

³⁹⁰ McAally *Marvin* 23-5.

man who abhorred the Spring Resolutions.³⁹¹ They are a sample of the many examples of northerners to support slavery and the Confederacy during the war.

Anti-slavery and Union supporters have already been shown as southerners by birth. MEC supporters, such as the Methodist Peter Cartwright, were born in slave states. Presbyterian minister George Miller, a Union supporter during the war was a proud southerner. The abolitionist Dr. David Nelson was born in the South as well. Unlike their counterparts that stayed as southern-loyalists through the war, they detested slavery and supported the Union.

In the end, as a result of these men and the others like them that are not listed, the predisposition to one region or the other was broken upon arrival in Missouri. Many, because of the influence of the churches that they were in, among other reasons, grew loyal to the South and the views it represented. Although many were predisposed to a certain region before their arrival in Missouri, others were not, showing the influence that their churches had on them.

The men that were discussed here were all sincere in their faith. Each sought to further what they believed was the true Gospel in whatever way that they could. However, in the end they not only succeeded in spreading the Gospel, but spreading sectionalism as well. The goal that they had of linking the political and cultural aspects of America with religion succeeded in numerous ways. That success led in part to the Civil War. Their defense of the pro-northern or pro-southern side first led to the split of their respective

³⁹¹ Williams 67.

churches. Conflict ensued, and eventually war broke out. As authors such as Carwardine Noll, and Goen also testify to, this process was crucial in the coming of the Civil War. What this paper is attempting to show is the fact that Missouri was no different. Being a border state, these regrettable conflicts are further brought to the center-stage. By no means should their significance be ignored.

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Introduction

The Rev. James Penn was “one of the oldest and one of the best men in the itinerant ministry” of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) in Missouri.¹ He labored tirelessly for many years to promote the Gospel in northeast Missouri and even had four sons join the Methodist ministry. Despite this tireless service, in August of 1863 while he held services on the Sabbath, a man stood up in his congregation disrupting the other members that were kneeling in prayer. His name was Rev. Moody, of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), the northern counterpart of Penn’s MECS. Moody began to read in a very loud voice, shouting from Galatians 3:1 “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?”²

Penn’s flock began to rise abruptly, ending any chance of finishing the prayer. But that was not the worst of things, Moody was not alone. He had brought fifteen men, all armed and seeking to drive Penn and his congregation out of their church. They succeeded, forcing the service’s conclusion not in the confines of a house of worship but in the middle of the street. The next Sunday would only bring a repeat of the previous week’s events, with the services of the MECS in Williamstown, MO also forced outdoors.³

¹ Leftwich, William M. *Martyrdom in Missouri: A History of Religious Proscription, the Seizure of Churches, and the Persecution of Ministers of the Gospel in the State of Missouri during the late Civil War and under the "Test Oath" of the New Constitution*. Saint Louis : Southwestern Book & Pub. Co., 1870. v1 Pg 292.

² Leftwich v1 294. The Biblical translation of the passage is The King James Version.

³ Leftwich v1 293.

Moody and his supporters did not return for some time. However, some Sundays later Penn arrived at church only to see Union flags placed around his pulpit, guarded by armed men. Undeterred he and his congregation began their service, despite the Union flags. Unfortunately, “a lot of wicked women raised a fight and fought like savages.”⁴ These MEC supporters forced Penn to once again leave his church. Soon he was compelled to cease preaching in Williamstown. Moody had succeeded in his endeavor. When asked by Penn why he acted as he did, he simply replied “Because I can.”⁵

Things would only worsen for Penn; he would be forced out of two other churches and briefly incarcerated in Keokuk, Iowa by Federal authorities. These same Federal authorities would never raise their hand against Moody or his supporters. Moody’s expulsion of Penn and his MECS congregation from the building that was legally theirs would go unpunished. Moody was right, he could do whatever he pleased.⁶

In chapter three of his letter to the Galatians, Paul chastised the Galatians for loosing their faith in Christ and his death for their sins. More than likely, Moody shouted this passage for other reasons than to simply to proclaim this truth of Christ’s death. He desired to chastise the MECS congregation for something else, their acceptance of slavery and support for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

On these issues the MEC and MECS were divided, two halves of what was once one denomination split over slavery in 1844. How did these events come to take place, a religious schism and conflict that spilled over into the political arena? The Methodists

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Leftwich 294.

⁶ Ibid.

were not alone in this schism, other churches split as well.

Religion played a central role in the Civil War and its sectional crisis, though one that has not been completely examined. As a result of their widespread influence both culturally and politically during the antebellum period, the schisms that occurred in the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches helped lead to an increase in sectional tensions. These schisms had a national political impact as they helped to bring about the Civil War. Moreover, the initial severity of the schism and polarization that it caused around the slavery issue would serve to cause greater polarization and conflict during the sectional crisis and the war. The schisms and the resulting religious turmoil were one of the many causes for the Civil War (though by no means the only one).

Within the larger hierarchy of religion, evangelicals were a powerful group in antebellum America, wielding power that could influence political and cultural aspects of their nation. This influence forced the local government and citizenry to be drawn into these conflicts. The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians were the largest of the Evangelical groups, giving them a great deal of influence in Missouri as they did in the rest of the country. Thus, looking at the three largest Evangelical denominations in Missouri will prove to be a useful test case.

Many of the struggles that eventually led to the war between the states dealt with slavery. One of the watershed events in this struggle for the major Evangelical denominations were the schisms that occurred over slavery in the 1830s/40s. In the mid-1840s both the Baptist and Methodist churches split into northern and southern sections over slavery. The Presbyterian church would not undergo a schism over slavery directly

until 1861, when the southern churches formed the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. However, a division with implications over slavery would occur for them in the antebellum period.

In 1837 several Synods of the Presbyterian Church in the USA were expelled on the basis of their theology. In turn, these Synods, deemed the New School (NS), formed their own General Assembly, while the remaining Synods became known as the Old School (OS). Although not a schism over slavery per say, the expulsion of the New School Synods ensured that the vast majority of the abolitionists remained in the mostly northern NS. Therefore, the OS, which claimed the vast majority of the South (as well as a good portion of the North) was freed of the abolitionists that forced the Baptists and Methodists to break apart almost a decade later.

Within Missouri, there were religious ramifications from the schisms that helped exacerbate the onset of the war. Each of the three denominations took a different path during the period surrounding and after their schism that played a role in exacerbating the political events in Missouri during this period. Furthermore, these issues in turn did have ramifications on the national political stage. The importance of studying the role that religion played in Missouri is furthered by the fact that it has largely been ignored up to this point beyond the scope of smaller denominational studies.

In all three of the churches, conflict within the previously unified churches helped to bring about disunion. They undid an important bond of Missouri unity in different ways. As it will be demonstrated, the schisms and how they took place distinguished how the three denominations acted during this period. The Methodists, who experienced the

most turbulent and clear-cut schism over slavery, in turn experienced the greatest conflicts prior to and during the war. They did the most to exacerbate the sectional crisis and ultimately the war itself. They acted upon the political events more so than the events acted upon them. Through a variety of ways they drew the citizenry of Missouri into the conflicts of their schism, aggravating the sectional crisis and the war.

On the other hand, the Baptists and Presbyterians, who did not have such a severe or definite split over slavery, experienced lesser conflict during this period than the Methodists. Both also underwent further divisions based around these issues during the war. Political events tended to act on them more so than they acted upon the events of the crisis and war itself. The Presbyterian schism over theology divided the pro and anti-slavery members of their church, but in a less severe way than the Methodists were divided. The Baptist schism, while over slavery, was much cleaner and easily accomplished than that of the Methodists. As a result, their influence was lesser than that of the Methodists, but important nonetheless.

If their schisms had taken place as did that of the Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Baptists would have had a greater impact in the events leading up to and including the Civil War. In the end, all three denominations played some role in these events and exacerbating the war. These roles were simply different.

Numerous historians have offered explanations as to the causes of the American Civil War. However, until recently, religious causes for the Civil War have not come to the forefront. Prior to the 1960s it can be argued that there were few meaningful mainstream works on religious history in general, and as a result, little on the role of

religion in the Civil War. However, there were exceptions, with a fair number of works having been largely published by respective churches, including the three denominations that will be examined in this paper. A brief explanation of the historiographic origins of the recent work on religious history is necessary for an understanding of the origins of the arguments made within this thesis.

Publications on behalf of both of the major branches of the Methodist church can be seen as examples of this phenomenon. William Warren Sweet's *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War*, published in 1912 by the Methodist Book Concern, argues that the MEC played a significant role in the Civil War. Essentially Sweet's argument comes down to the fact that the various people of importance in the MEC helped the Union cause in a variety of ways. For example, they helped recruit or supply the Union armies.⁷ In another work published later in his career, *The Story of Religion in America*, Sweet argues that there is a good deal of evidence to support the idea that churches played an important role in the final break between the North and South after Lincoln's election by agitating their members politically either that the South should secede or that the North should fight them.⁸

Other works, such as *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*, by Hunter Dickinson Farish, restate brief arguments that are

⁷ Sweet, William Warren. *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War*. Cincinnati, Methodist Book Concern Press, 1912. Pp 9-12.

⁸ Sweet, William Warren. *The Story of Religion in America*, rev. ed. New York, Harper and Brothers 1950. pg 312.

similar to Sweet's.⁹ Also, similar denominational works dealing solely with Missouri are present as well. Some were published more recently, but they all essentially deal with the same arguments that Sweet and Farish discuss and will be referred to throughout the paper.

These themes continue with respect to the Baptists. In his *A History of the Baptists*, Robert G. Torbet describes the events that led to the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and a split from the American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS). Torbet asserts that the initial schism in 1845 was caused in part because a majority of those involved with the ABHMS hailed from the North. Therefore, despite having the majority of the members in the ABHMS, those in the southern Baptist churches were forced to choose between remaining in an anti-slavery organization or forming their own, they chose the latter. Although he says little of southern churches, Torbet explains that during the war the majority of the northern churches wholeheartedly supported the Union cause with their members and ministers. Their people were present throughout all stages of the war. Meanwhile in certain border states, such as Kentucky there are numerous conflicts between pro and anti-slavery forces within the Baptist churches.¹⁰

Fortunately, William Wright Barnes presents more information on what went on within the South in his *The Southern Baptist Convention*. According to Barnes, the churches of the South were virtually unanimous in their desire to separate from the ABHMS, except for those from states that could not send delegates to the convention that

⁹ Farish, Hunter Dickenson. *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*. Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938. Pp.14-5.

¹⁰ Torbet, Robert G. *A History of the Baptists*. Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950. Pp. 304-13.

formed the SBC (of which Missouri was one).¹¹ Similar to the northern Baptists that Torbet discusses, the members of the SBC attempted to support the Confederate cause during the war, despite the numerous obstacles that were put in place against them. SBC churches were often seized by northern supporters relying on Federal military power.¹²

Although more recent than some of the other works examined to this point, Ernest Trice Thompson's multi-volume *Presbyterians in the South* was the leading work on the southern Presbyterians in its day. Thompson examines the intricacies of the Presbyterian churches of the South. Throughout the work it is obvious that Thompson sees his subjects as playing a significant role in the politics of their day. Thompson contends that slavery had a large-scale influence in the church of the South. However, he also confirms that slavery only played a minor role in the schism of 1837. Granted it did help to solidify the southern support for the OS, but it did not cause the division.¹³

There were some works supporting a role for religion with the Civil War not published by denominational presses. A reprint of an address given to the American Antiquarian Club in 1936, *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War*, by George I. Rockwood, is one such example. Rockwood essentially argues that the rhetoric of men such as Lincoln proves that there was a religious aspect to the war.¹⁴ As evident from a scathing review from W. B. Hesseltine, arguments such as Rockwood's were not even

¹¹ Barnes, William Wright. *The Southern Baptist Convention*. Broadman Press: Nashville, TN, 1954. Pp. 26-32.

¹² Barnes 48-52.

¹³ Thompson, Ernest Trice. *Presbyterians in the South: Volume One: 1607-1861*. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963, Pp. 394, 530-5.

¹⁴ Rockwood, George I. *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War*. Worcester Press: Private Print, 1936. Pp. 3-5.

considered by most historians until the 1960s.¹⁵ Works like Rockwood's, which was not that sophisticated, were the exception, not the rule.

It is the 1980s the number of books on the significance of religion and the Civil War really takes off and subsequently the works of primary importance to this thesis begin to be published. A primary example of this phenomenon was C. C. Goen's 1985 work, *Broken Churches, Broken Nation*. It argued that evangelical Christianity was a major bond of unity in the United States in the nineteenth century, with its chief institutional form being the large, national popular denominations such as the Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists. With the failure of these churches to resolve conflicts over slavery resulting in their subsequent schism, the first major break between the North and South occurred. According to Goen, with this primary bond of national unity broken, the crisis of the Union was both presaged and provoked.¹⁶

With the publication of Richard Carwardine's *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* in 1993, these historiographic trends continued to expand. Carwardine's thesis was that evangelical religion played a crucial role in the origins of the Civil War. For Carwardine, religion and culture were merging in the years leading up to the war. Thus, the religious thought of the period had a profound influence on the politics of era, including the events leading to secession. Although he does not attribute the war solely to religion, he nonetheless puts forth a thesis that offers a new interpretation of the

¹⁵ Hesseltine, W. B. "Review of *Cheever, Lincoln and the Causes of the Civil War* by George I. Rockwood" *The New England Quarterly* Vol. 10, No. 3 (Sep., 1937). Pg. 608.

¹⁶ Goen, C. C. *Broken Churches, Broken Nation*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985. Pp. 12-3.

events leading to the Civil War.¹⁷

Another work that deals with similar ideas is Mark Noll's *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Noll's work deals with a much larger timeframe than Carwardine's work, allowing him to show the extent of how religion since the time of the Revolution has become incorporated into American culture. In other words, similar to Carwardine, religious ideas were influential in cultural and political areas. Comparable to what Rockwood did in the 1930s, Noll holds that religion can be seen as important in the speeches in works of prominent politicians, such as Lincoln. Also crucial was the role that theology played during this period with its basis in the Bible.¹⁸ Furthermore, Noll's book is also an example of how other historians, religious or otherwise, have portrayed religion as important in the sectional crisis within their works.

Each of these works holds that the schisms that occurred in the major denominations in the antebellum period influenced how religion and politics interacted prior to the Civil War. This thesis will expand upon the discussion of these works and test the arguments for the state of Missouri.

¹⁷ Carwardine, Richard. *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. Pp. xvi-xx.

¹⁸ Noll, Mark A. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp. 16-7.

Chapter One:

Unity Broken

Evangelicalism had a widespread influence on Missouri. The major denominations possessed a cultural and political significance in Missouri, where they were indeed a unifying force throughout the state as they were nationally. The schisms harmed this unity with their break between North and South. Without this pre-1830s unity and overall influence, the schisms would not have had the effect that they did.

In 1850 the population of Missouri increased to 682,044.¹⁹ Likewise, the population of the two MEC churches was at 38,194 or 5.6 percent of the population. There were 42,286 Baptists in Missouri for 6.2 percent of the population and about 20,460 Presbyterians or about three percent of the population in Missouri.²⁰ In total, the members of the three largest Evangelical churches in Missouri made up 14.8 percent of the population. With the Methodists and Baptists, the members that were children were more than likely not included in the totals, which in all likelihood would at least double the number of religious adherents.²¹

Evangelicals were an important segment of the population in Missouri.

¹⁹ United States Census Bureau.

²⁰ Finke, Roger & Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997. Pg 286.

²¹ No source examined for this paper from either of the denominations seemed to indicate children were included in the roles of members, supporting this ascertain.

Nevertheless, the actual members of these denominations only made up a small, but significant fraction of the Missouri population. Therefore, at this point Evangelicals can only be seen as a significant minority. Historians have evaluated the significance of the evangelical presence in several ways. For example, in his *Religion in the Old South*, Donald G. Matthews presents similar numbers in the southern states that he examines. Nonetheless, he concludes that these numbers do not represent the total number of people that the Evangelicals had influence over, giving them impact beyond the raw statistics of the population.

Matthews ascertains that the number of people that attended the various types of meetings, revivals, and services were always much greater than the actual recorded membership. Family members that were not actual church members would have attended services (both adults and children) and would have been influenced by those in the church who were closely related to them. Furthermore, there were those who attended but did not wish full membership. Other historians, such as Nathan Hatch and C. C. Goen agree with this idea. Unfortunately, it is impossible to figure out the exact number of people who attended services and may have been influenced by the Evangelicals, but this number in all likelihood was a majority of the population.²²

Nevertheless, there are those that would disagree with Hatch and Matthews, but only about the timing of Evangelical growth during the Early Republic. Christine

²² Goen 12-3, Hatch, Nathan. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989. Pp 13-5, and Matthews, Donald G. *Religion and the Old South*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977. Pp. 68-70.

Heyrman makes such an argument in her work *Southern Cross*. However, Heyrman's Evangelicals simply took longer to achieve a position of dominance in the South than Hatch's or Matthews' did. She agrees that by the period in question Evangelicals were an important force in the South.²³ As a result, only an abbreviated discussion on this topic is really required for this work. All the major sources agree that Evangelicalism was widespread and influential by the late 1830s.

The Evangelicals of this period recognized their influence in the state of Missouri. The dean of the OS Presbyterians in St. Louis, Rev. William S. Potts D. D., boldly proclaimed that "We profess to be a Christian people, and our city a Christian community."²⁴ He continues to decry that "if I should declare to-day from this pulpit that we were a city of infidels, I would be immediately be charged with grossly slandering both the people and the municipal government."²⁵ St. Louis was a Christian city, one with significant Evangelical influence, to suggest otherwise would be erroneous. It is clear from these statements that Potts holds the Evangelical churches to have a great deal of prestige in St. Louis. He goes on to explain that pestilence, such as the cholera epidemic that was ravaging St. Louis when he preached, could only be stopped by the citizens living up to this designation and demonstrating the unity it entails. Several notable Presbyterian elders of St. Louis agreed with Potts and believed "that the publication of

²³ Heyrman, Christine Leigh *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997. Pg 5-8.

²⁴ Potts, William S. *A Sermon, Preached in the Second Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, August 3, 1849, The Day of National Fast*. St. Louis: Keith and Woods, 1849, Pg 6.

²⁵ Ibid. The grammatical error is with the quote.

these discourses would greatly contribute to the public good.”²⁶

The MECS minister C. B. Parsons D. D. agreed with the sentiments of Potts in a sermon he preached in the First Methodist Episcopal Church, South in St. Louis. He too boldly proclaims the United States “As a political Colossus, in the first instance, it plants its foot upon either land, and holds out to all people the light of liberty and equality; while evangelism, in the second, as a diamond set in gold, sparkles in the illumination, and sanctifies the blessed gift.”²⁷ For him, national well-being and Evangelicalism go hand in hand. The liberty enjoyed by Americans was sanctified by Evangelicalism. Without the Church the United States would be hurt in its efforts to expand according to Parsons.

Many decades later the Baptists of Missouri reached the same conclusions when looking back on the seventy-five years of their General Association (the state-wide Baptist organization of Missouri). In the preface to its official history they hope future Baptists “will bring the work of the next century with a full knowledge of what it has cost to lay this great foundation...”²⁸ In other words the success of the Baptists in Missouri was considered expansive. Furthermore, to counteract the perception that the Missouri Baptists were shafted in some of the national Baptist histories, W. Pope Yeaman recorded for the Baptists in this work their desire “to intimate to the world that Missouri and her

²⁶ Potts 1.

²⁷ Parsons, C. B. “The Divinity of the Church.” Smithson, William T, editor. *The Methodist Pulpit South*. Washington DC: William T. Smithson, Publisher, 1859. Pg 52.

²⁸ Yeaman, W. Pope. *A History of the Missouri Baptist General Association*. Columbia, Mo: Press of E. W. Stephens, 1899. Pg. x. This work was published in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Missouri Baptist General Association.

people are not in the rear of the progression of progress.”²⁹ National progress was evident in Missouri according to the Baptist leadership of Missouri.

The three Evangelical churches in Missouri each thought of themselves as crucial to the well-being of the state and therefore the nation. The members of the respective congregations believed what they heard Sunday after Sunday from their ministers. In their influence and unity these individual denominations also provided secular unity. These three churches were an important part of the culture of Missouri in the antebellum period and were therefore a unifying force in the state. Without this unity and widespread significance, their influence on the politics and people of Missouri would have been impossible. When their unity breaks down, problems will begin for Missourians as well.

Although these three major denominations provided this great unifying force both nationally and in Missouri, this accord was not to endure. Conflicts over slavery would prove the undoing of this unity in the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist churches starting in the 1830s. Nonetheless, these schisms would not occur in the same manner. The severity of these initial splits would in turn influence the degree of the later conflicts over slavery in each church and the events leading to the Civil War itself.

The schisms that occurred in the Baptist and Methodist churches were clearly over slavery. However, the division that occurred in the Presbyterian church was theological in nature. The OS Presbyterian Church would have ridded itself of the NS synods regardless of the developing concerns on slavery on both sides. Although there was a secondary

²⁹ Yeaman xvi.

concern of slavery in many of the southern synods that would remain with the OS, in the end it did not cause the schism of 1837. The separation of the slaveholders and abolitionists was only a happy bonus for the OS.³⁰

Nevertheless, the fact that the majority of the members that tended toward abolitionism were expelled with the NS synods makes this schism one in which different segments of a denomination split into a pro and anti-slavery factions. Slavery moderates made up most of the northern OS in the 1830s. Granted there would be some pro-slavery men in the few southern NS synods. On the other hand, there were no anti-slavery men in the OS.³¹ The only difference in this schism was that it was not directly over slavery like the Baptist and Methodist schisms. Both segments were separated in all three churches.

By no means were the events of the 1830s and 40s the beginning of the differences that would lead to these schisms. Problems had been brewing decades earlier in all three churches, such as the theological problems that would lead to the undoing of the Presbyterians. Their origin was in the 1801 Act of Union passed due to a lack of resources in the Presbyterian and Congregational churches to evangelize on the frontier. After the Act was passed, Presbyterians and Congregationalists outside of New England began to cooperate in their evangelistic activities on the frontier. However, the former

³⁰ Marsden, George. *The Evangelical Mind and the NS Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970. Pp 98-9.

³¹ Matthews 163.

Congregationalists' (those who became the core of the NS) views on the nature of man and his role in history differed significantly. More specifically, this problem was over how a man could move from a unregenerate (unsaved) to a regenerate (saved) state.

Those in the conservative OS held that Adam's guilt was transmitted to humanity mitigating the ability of an individual to respond positively to God during the conversion process. As a result, a passive view tended to develop in the relation of individuals to social status and institutions. On the other hand, the NS adherents rejected this passivity. They held that one could alter these institutions and their status. Adam's fall did not transmit sin to humanity, individuals were only responsible for their own sins. Furthermore, there was a sense of positive activity in the conversion process and a search for perfection in one's life that developed as well (though the adherents to the NS Theology still believed that man lost his inclination to do good through the fall of Adam). Both groups were not able to maintain their unity in their evangelistic efforts for long, they regarded this problem as too important to ignore. It led to an increasing amount of conflict through the 1830s.³²

By 1831, those in the OS had had enough, believing that they had to win control of the General Assembly to end the errors of their fellow Presbyterians. Nonetheless, at every General Assembly since 1831 the OS had been outvoted by the NS. During every meeting of the General Assembly the OS had been forced to endure teachings which they regarded as erroneous. In 1835, after a series of special conventions prior to the Assembly itself, they were able to ensure that they had a majority of the votes. However, they were

³² Ibid.

only able to win a temporary victory there against the NS as they further prepared their arguments for the upcoming Assembly in 1836.³³

At the meeting of the General Assembly in Pittsburgh the OS believed that it would finally be able to consolidate its victories and expel the NS from the Assembly. On the opening day they were able to elect their candidate as the moderator of the Assembly. Nevertheless, the delegates from Illinois and Missouri arrived and soon after reversed the trend in favor of the NS. The programs of the OS enacted in the last year were quickly annulled.³⁴

The next year, the OS again held a variety of pre-Assembly conventions in order to verify that they indeed had a majority of the delegates. With their majority assured, they once again proceeded with the expulsion of the NS synods. Their success would result in a schism that persisted until 1870.³⁵ On May 18, 1837, the General Assembly opened its meeting in Philadelphia with a sermon preached on the text of I Corinthians 1: 10-11, ironically warning against divisions in the church. However, it would only be division that would occur over the next several days.³⁶

The first resolution that was voted upon was an abrogation of the Plan of Union of 1801 between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Being that the OS delegates

³³ Marsden 60-1, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1829-1837*.

Philadelphia. Pg 287-96.

³⁴ Ibid, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 351-2, 354-8.

³⁵ Marsden 61-3, 228.

³⁶ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Pg. 412.

held a majority, the resolution obviously passed.³⁷ Shortly thereafter the resolution was recorded in the official minutes ruling that the Act of Union was “an unconstitutional act on the part of the Assembly...”³⁸ With this abrogation, the synods that would soon make up the NS could legally be expelled.

The next order of business was to cite certain Synods to be in error in order to achieve their expulsion from the General Assembly. Passing more or less on the lines of each section, a resolution was adopted that stated “that the proper steps be now taken, to cite the bar of the next Assembly, such inferior judicatories as are charged with common fame with irregularities.”³⁹ A committee (referred to as the Committee on the State of the Church) was appointed to examine which Synods fell under this resolution.⁴⁰

However, this committee was composed of members of both the Old and New Schools. Whereas it was possible, at least in theory, for the committee to determine that there were no errors in doctrine on the part of any of the subordinate Synods, it would not be the case. Division was already in the air and it would be impossible for this committee to arrive at any unified conclusion. As a result, when the committee reported four days later it had not come to a unified conclusion. Its chairman, Dr. Alexander, asked the committee to be discharged. Thus, “both portions of the committee then made separate reports, accompanied by various papers...”⁴¹

³⁷ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 420-1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 425

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 430.

After both sides made their reports a resolution was brought forth to table any further reports from either section of the committee and allow the General Assembly to vote on any Synod it chose to under the previous resolution. It passed and motions were soon offered to begin the process of expelling the NS Synods. By the end of the General Assembly a few days later, the Synods of Utica, Geneva, and Genesee (all in New York) and the Ohio Synod of the Western Reserve were all expelled.⁴² More Synods would join them in the proceeding years.

As it was explained before, these expelled Synods and the others that would soon join them in the NS contained a great deal of the abolitionists in the Presbyterian Church. Nonetheless, this separation would have never have taken place if it was not for OS adherents cooperating in both the North and the South. One of the primary reasons that the OS failed to win a majority in 1836 was the fact that the South was divided (thirty-six for the OS and twenty-six for the New).⁴³ In 1837 only nine delegates from the South (out of fifty-nine) voted for the NS. The NS would have narrowly won in 1837 if the South had not voted with the OS.

One of the ways in which the OS was able to ensure this southern support was to avoid making any condemnation of slavery during the Assembly (most of the OS leaders seeking to expel the NS were northerners).⁴⁴ During the General Assembly of 1837 the issue of slavery comes up only once, early on as the Plan of Union was being voted down.

⁴² Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 437-40.

⁴³ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Pg. 367.

⁴⁴ Marsden 99.

The minutes explain that “a petition on the subject of slavery was presented and referred to the Committee on Bills and Overtures.”⁴⁵ Being that this subject never came up again in the minutes, it is obvious that there would be no attempt in the OS (or NS) to call for the abolition of slavery, they would simply table it in committee so as not to risk offending their much needed OS brethren of the South.

Nevertheless, the fact that there was a large portion of northerners with the OS does create a problem since it is likely that there were many abolitionists that remained in the OS. Especially with the North dominating the OS their ideas might dominate as well. However, one must keep in mind that in some ways the northern OS adherents would allow the South to remain as supporters of slavery in order to in turn ensure their loyalty. Thus, the OS General Assembly would take no action on slavery till the Civil War broke out and most of the southern synods departed with the Confederacy. Moreover, the NS would be in the vast minority in the South, not even being able to keep synods in every state.

The question remains on how the delegates from Missouri voted in 1837. As indicated above, they were part of the southern delegates that voted with the NS faction in 1836. In 1837 the three Missouri delegates continued this support for the NS. Being that most of Missouri would eventually end up in the OS camp, what took place with these votes? As did most other Missourians, these delegates most likely did not regard the theological disputes between the Old and New Schools as important enough to divide the

⁴⁵ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 424.

church, as Missouri's actions after the General Assembly show. Being that Missouri Presbyterians would attempt to hold off the schism till 1841, this is most likely the reason. Unfortunately the records of the three men that attended are unavailable, limiting further speculation.

According to the resolutions of the 1838 General Assembly, "churches and members of churches, as well as Presbyteries, shall be at full liberty to decide to which of said Assemblies [Old or NS] they will be attached."⁴⁶ Thus, in the upcoming years votes were taken by individual churches to determine which Assembly, Old or New, the particular institution would be attached to. As a result, other Synods soon joined the expelled Synods at the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., NS. Furthermore, they attempted to include multiple other Presbyteries and Synods that had not officially left the OS, including Missouri, which did send some delegates.⁴⁷

Here is where the divisiveness of this schism comes to light most clearly. Immediately after the NS opening ceremonies were through, the Moderator of the NS General Assembly, Rev William Patton, declared that the resolutions of the previous year's General Assembly were "intended to deprive certain Presbyteries of the right to be represented in the General Assembly."⁴⁸ Therefore, he offered the following resolutions which held

⁴⁶ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 433.

⁴⁷ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (NS), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1838-40*. New York: Scatcherd and Adams, Printers. Pg. 644.

⁴⁸ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. NS 635.

That such attempts on the part of the General Assembly of 1837 and their Clerks. To direct and control the organization of the General Assembly of 1838, are unconstitutional, and in derogation of its just rights as the general representative judicatory of the whole Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.⁴⁹

Using the same language that the OS had used a year before to nullify the Plan of Union, the NS fired back at what they held to be an equally illegal action.

This language in the proceedings of the NS Assembly wore a response to the cruel welcome that the excluded Synods received when they attempted to rejoin the General Assembly a few days earlier, which was now totally controlled by the OS. Several NS men attempted to get their names on the roles of the Assembly. After failing in that endeavor, one of the commissioners from the Synod of Geneva, Rev. Miles P. Squier attempted to demand his seat. In response, the moderator arose and told him that “We do not know you.”⁵⁰ There were Missouri delegates at that Assembly as well, albeit different men.⁵¹ Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the schism was intended to be permanent and quite hostile to the NS.

On the other hand, there was still no schism in Missouri. As it is apparent from the voting tallies at the General Assemblies, Missourian Presbyterians did not wish the schism to take place. They did not feel that the theology of the schism was worth the quarrel. Thus, they chose to vote against the expulsions and the schism it would cause. Furthermore, there was a prevailing attitude of orthodoxy among the Presbyterians of the

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1838-50*. Philadelphia. Pg 419-24, Marsden 64-6.

⁵¹ Ibid.

state. That is, all Presbyterians in Missouri held orthodox views and thus there was no need to purge members that were unorthodox, as the OS had done to the NS.⁵²

The pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, Rev. Artemas Bullard summed up the early sediments of the Missouri Synod towards the schism with the following statement, “Let’s stop this at the River.”⁵³ Ministers who would end up on opposite sides of the conflict confirm the widespread support for Bullard’s goal. The Rev. John Leighton, who was a member of the OS after the schism, thought that the controversy need not tamper with the work of evangelism. The Union of 1801 did not need to be abrogated. He explained in retrospect that

Those stirring men found theological debate altogether compatible with their pioneer work in the churches, and, were it proper, the names of many might be cited, who were noted both in controversy and in evangelism.⁵⁴

Compared to the discussion on the authority of the Bible that was taking place during the 1880s, Leighton believed those quibbles to be minor.⁵⁵ The Rev. Timothy Hill, a minister that soon was aligned with the NS, essentially agreed with Leighton. He asserts that “had the question [of the schism] been left to the interests and wishes of the church [in Missouri]... there would have been no division.”⁵⁶ Thus, as we can see both sides of the

⁵² Hall, Joseph H. *Presbyterian Conflict and Resolution on the Missouri Frontier*. Lewiston/Queenston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press: 1987, Pg 107-8.

⁵³ Hill, Timothy, “History of the NS Synod of Missouri.” *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882, Pg. 54.

⁵⁴ Leighton, John. “Primitive Presbyterianism in Missouri,” *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882, Pg 65.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Hill, “History,” Pg 54.

division, at least initially, wished to avoid the schism.

Missouri delegates initially were claimed by both General Assemblies. In some cases delegates were sent to both Assemblies. Nevertheless, despite these heroic efforts by the Presbyterians of Missouri, it soon became evident that they would have to choose between a set of intolerable actions, either become independent or align with one of the two national bodies. Furthermore, the specter of slavery loomed large. Many saw the possibility of the NS support for abolition as alarming, which helped drive them to the OS. In the end the majority of the Presbyterians in Missouri elected to remain with the OS. Those that did not agree with these votes were forced to form NS presbyteries, which occurred along with the formation of a NS Synod.⁵⁷

Generally a fight would then ensue for the church records, and therefore the ability to claim to be the legitimate Presbyterian machinery in Missouri.⁵⁸ An example can be seen in the St. Charles Presbytery, the first to split in October of 1840. After the Presbytery voted to remain with the OS, the moderator, Dr Ezra S. Ely, who formed the NS Presbytery of St. Charles, ordered the clerk, Allan Gallaher to gather the records of the Presbytery Assembly. Thus

Gallaher with one sweep of his arm Gathered all books...holding them tightly in his arms and with a great hickory staff in his hands and a countenance fierce enough for a fight followed by Dr. Ely, accompanied by such as sympathized with them...⁵⁹

In the St. Louis Presbytery, the OS gained control of the records as was the case in the

⁵⁷ Hall 103-5.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Hill *Historical Outlines*, Pg. 22.

Missouri Presbytery and with most of the local churches that split with a majority remaining in the OS.

However, the division did not stop at the Presbytery or Synod level. Each individual church also had to make its choice to either remain aligned to the OS or join the NS. One of the older churches in eastern Missouri, the Dardenne Presbyterian Church, near O'Fallon, had to make this choice. At a session presided over by Hiram Chamberlain, one of the Missouri commissioners at the 1837 General Assembly, it was recorded in their records;

that we are willing upon the basis of the Assembly of 1837 and 1838 to adhere to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. After which the Ays and Nays were individually taken when those present all were willing to adhere with only one exception, which remains a doubtful case.⁶⁰

However, not every church ended up being as unanimous in its support. In 1840 the First Presbyterian Church of St. Charles (also moderated by Chamberlain) voted by a two-thirds majority, as did its Presbytery, to remain in the OS. The NS in turn was forced to form a new church, known as Constitution Church, with its minority of members.⁶¹

Bellevue Presbyterian Church, in Caledonia, also in eastern Missouri, experienced issues related to the schism as well. The church, in remaining with the OS had the problem of its pastor desiring to join the NS. Nevertheless, this man would eventually recant and remain with his church, causing a great deal of relief among his congregation.⁶²

⁶⁰ Watson, Elizabeth Audrain. *Heritage and Promise: A Story of The Dardenne Presbyterian Church and Its Community*. Chicago: Adams Press, 1977. Pg 56.

⁶¹ Watson 57-8.

⁶² Barrett, T. C. *History of Bellevue Presbyterian Church. A Sermon Preached by Rev. T.C. Barrett in the*

This was not the case in many of the Presbyterian Churches in Missouri as the schism came, not everyone would be so willing to maintain unity.

Divisiveness soon ensued on the Missouri level, divisiveness that was already taking place on the national level. The Presbyterian schism in Missouri was as severe locally as it was nationally. Moreover, its effects would be felt for some years to come. Those that were either abolitionists or against slavery in a lesser way ended up in the NS. As was the case nationally, those that were in line theologically with the NS were also those most vehemently opposed to slavery. None of these men remained with the OS, though there were some pro-slavery men with them. Nationally, the NS General Assembly condemned slavery while some of its members in the southern states grumbled. The OS remained neutral on the issue. Everyone else, and in fact the majority of Missouri's Presbyterians were in the OS. These views on slavery would eventually prove destructive in both schools as the 1850s closed and the Civil War began, as neither would remain unified.

Conflict ensued between the schools to some extent, but not to the extent as with the Methodists (it would influence the culture of Missouri to some degree as well). Nevertheless, what separates this schism from that in the MEC is the fact that slavery was

Presbyterian Church in Caledonia, Mo., August 5th, 1877. From Psalm XLVIII: 12, 13. Potosi, MO:

"Independent" print, 1877. Pg 9.

not in the forefront. Slavery played a role in the Presbyterian schism, with the majority of slaveholders split from the non-slaveholders, but it did not play the central role as it did in the Methodist schism. These differences influenced how the churches dealt with sectional issues during the next decades.

Although they were the first of the major Evangelical denominations to splinter in the antebellum period, unfortunately the Presbyterians would not be the last. The MEC broke up with the central issue being slavery. For authors such as Carwardine and Goen, the split illustrates the merging of religion and culture. Each side attempted to justify their views on slavery using the Bible, thus leading to the schism.⁶³ Previously, the traditions established by John Wesley held that the most effective way to combat slavery was through preaching and discipline, rather than through political means. Although these traditions took hold briefly in the late colonial period, they were soon abandoned in favor of winning additional converts and prestige in slaveholding areas in the South (they were fairly successful in this endeavor).⁶⁴

Nevertheless, prior to the 1840s northern Methodists attempted to get the General Conference of the MEC to condemn slavery through a variety of political means, which frustrated the southern Methodists. At the same time many northerners were frustrated over what they viewed as the pro-slavery position of their brethren in the South. In the end only a series of compromises were achieved. Various loopholes in the *Discipline*

⁶³ Carwardine 159-66, Goen 78-90.

⁶⁴ Matthews 76-80.

would be sought for any potential slaveholders in the clergy. These loopholes were debated at almost every General Conference leading up to the schism. Conservatives on both sides sought to end the debate and the “fanaticism” they saw as hurting the efforts of the church by silencing vehement anti-slavery members. In 1843, several anti-slavery Methodists, upset by the silencing of many of their colleagues left the MEC and formed the Wesleyan Methodist Church.⁶⁵

Many in the North did not want to continue to heed the conservatives and risk further defections. The ranks of those in the North that wanted to do something about slavery in the South had swelled by 1844. That year, at the General Conference, the northern members of the MEC wished to remove a Georgian bishop, James O. Andrew, who became a slaveholder through his marriage. In a schism that lasted until 1939, the southern members of the MEC split from the northern church and formed the MECS.⁶⁶

Bishop Andrew’s case was meant as a test-case by some of the anti-slavery northern Methodists. They wished to force Bishop Andrew’s removal or resignation in an attempt to achieve a condemnation of slaveholding within the clergy. There would be no loopholes sought for Andrew by the North. The southern delegates would have none of this plan and would undertake any action to ensure that Bishop Andrew would be able to continue in his office.

The General Conference opened in New York City on May 1st. By the second day

⁶⁵ Carwardine 159.

⁶⁶ Johnson, Curtis D. *Redeeming America: Evangelicals and the Road to Civil War*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993. Pp 149-50.

of the conference on May the 2nd the seeds of disunion were sown with “the report of Bishop Andrew having married a slaveholding lady.”⁶⁷ This report was made before any of the actual business of the conference commenced indicating the direction in which the conference would soon go. However, it was still hoped by many that Bishop Andrew would be spared by some sort of technicality in the *Discipline* as had many of the previous ministers connected with slavery. Unfortunately, Luther Lee, who recorded the *Debates* explained that there was “more sensation among certain men in this region [the North, more specifically New England], about his connection with slavery.”⁶⁸

Over the next days a litany of anti-slavery petitions were presented. The proceedings sum these bills up by saying that “The bad influence of the system of slavery, in the interests of the Northern church, especially in the hands of the recent seeders [sic], was made a prominent ground of complaint.”⁶⁹ Furthermore, the petitioners insisted “that every slaveholder is necessarily a sinner and ought to execute a deed of emancipation regardless of the circumstances.”⁷⁰ These positions were obviously unacceptable for the South. To maintain unity a committee on slavery was proposed, and after a great deal of discussion it was formed, with one delegate from each Annual Conference.⁷¹ In the end it

⁶⁷ Lee, Luther. *The Debates of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, May 1844: To Which is Added a Review of the Proceedings of Said Conference*. New York: O. Scott, publisher, 1845. Pg 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Lee 12.

⁷⁰ Lee 12.

⁷¹ Lee 12-6, 20-2.

would not prevent a schism as it was rather ineffective throughout the conference.

In a foreshadowing of the Andrew case, an appeal was brought forth on behalf of William A. Smith, an itinerant minister of the Baltimore Annual Conference. He had married a slaveholder and by the laws of Maryland had become the owner of those slaves, which he refused to manumit. The Baltimore Conference had suspended him from the ministry. After four days of fierce debate, the delegates voted on the 11th of May. With the exception of the Baltimore Conference, which chose to uphold its original suspension, all but two of the delegates from slaveholding states voted to overturn the suspension. One of these delegates was James M. Jamison of Missouri, the other being from Texas.⁷² The Missouri delegates had listened to the previous speeches on the Smith matter and had chosen, save one, to vote against his suspension. According to Lee, the South took the vote as “calm as summer’s evenings be; but it was the calmness that precedes the whirlwind of passion, and the earthquake of power.”⁷³ Ironically, Lee reports that Bishop Andrew “had absented himself at the moment [of the vote].”⁷⁴

A great deal more debate on slavery, and occasional other matters, proceeded in the conference for the next few days. The hope that there would be some sort of resolution passed to end the question of slavery and prevent a division became more grim by the day. Nonetheless a committee on the pacification of the slavery question was formed. After more debate, a speech was made by a northerner who sorrowed that despite

⁷² Lee 66-8.

⁷³ Lee 68.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

its potential formation there was still “a dark cloud has come over us, so dark that I have no hope, unless God interpose by his good providence.”⁷⁵ The fact that many in the Conference were moved to tears by this speech did nothing to change the direction things were headed. It soon became evident that the case of Bishop Andrew would have to be examined. It was brought up on May the 20th, and referred to a committee, that reported the next day.⁷⁶

The committee reported that Andrew had received slaves from three different women. His wife, an old lady in his congregation that had willed him her slaves, and his former wife’s mother. By a combination of Georgia law and an agreement with the old lady, he could not emancipate any of the slaves despite his claim that he both incurred no profit from their services and desired to emancipate at least a few of them.⁷⁷ As a result of the confirmation of Bishop Andrew as a slaveholder, the following day, Rev. Griffith of the Baltimore Conference presented a resolution that as a result of Methodist law “that Bishop Andrew be respectfully and affectionately requested to resign.”⁷⁸ What followed the motion was a lengthy (most General Conferences usually were winding down by this point), intense and sometimes vicious debate (at least by what was said of Andrew) that would lead to the schism of the Methodist Church in the United States.

After two days of heated debate, an alternate resolution on Bishop Andrew was

⁷⁵ Lee 79.

⁷⁶ Lee 78-80, 103-4.

⁷⁷ Lee 105.

⁷⁸ Lee 112.

brought forth by James B. Finley who was from Ohio. He moved “that Bishop Andrew be requested to desist from exercising the office of general superintendent until he shall be free from his connection with slavery.”⁷⁹ Andrew would temporarily end his active ministry while the issue of slavery was considered. This motion was tabled, to be considered later by the delegates if they so chose. Finley’s hope for some sort of temporary reprieve failed. Some northerners thought it was not enough and virtually all the southerners thought it to be unacceptable that one of their men be asked to desist in his work.

The debate would continue for days. At points it had been brought up that if slavery were allowed to remain that the New England conferences, similar to the Wesleyan Methodists, might leave the church instead of those in the South. The Rev. Pierce, of Georgia, summed up the sentiments of many in the South on the possible secession of New England Methodists when he proclaimed:

What is New England that she should demand so much at our hands?
She has been a thorn in the flesh for the last twenty years-the messenger
of Satan to buffet us. If she will not desist from her course of agitation,
it would be a blessing to the church if she succeeded.⁸⁰

Division would not be prevented if the General Conference ruled against slavery, it would only occur in the South. He begged his fellow ministers to “pause, brethren, I entreat you, pause before you take a step so fatal to the interests of the southern church.”⁸¹

Dr. J. T. Peck was one of the many who argued on the behalf of the northern

⁷⁹ Lee 131.

⁸⁰ Lee 145.

⁸¹ Lee 146.

churches. As to whether the North or South was responsible for the impasse, Peck argued that the “whole history proves that the aggression has been on the part of the South.”⁸² Furthermore, he could not “bear to think of...what has been more than intimated from both the North and the South, that civil division may follow as one of the consequences of the proposed measure.”⁸³ That is, no one wanted a schism, but it was clear at this point in the debate that one was almost unavoidable. He concludes by declaring that he saw “at once before my mind a division of the civil union and our republic broken up.”⁸⁴ Dire consequences indeed, Peck fears if the unity provided by the Methodists was destroyed. Its dissolution may result in national peril.

The debate would go on for days afterward, no doubt tiring the delegates. In the end, the bishops would offer a compromise that would have in effect tabled the discussion of Andrew’s case till the next General Conference in 1848, giving time to resolve the matter and allowing the delegates to return home. Nevertheless, the next day, June 1st, one of the northern bishops, Elijah Hedding, asked to have his name removed from the letter, dooming any last minute attempt at a compromise. He explains in his speech that “facts had come to his knowledge,”⁸⁵ prompting his change of heart. Many in the Conference speculated that Hedding did not want to risk a northern schism, thus forcing him to take his name off of the letter to ensure that the South would be forced to

⁸² Lee 160.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Lee 278.

leave the church instead of the North.⁸⁶

With Hedding's recantation, the bishops' proposal to table the motion narrowly failed, setting up the vote on Bishop Andrew's case. The delegates chose to accept the wording of Finley's resolution in a weak attempt at compromise, ordering Andrew to "desist" from his office. In what passed along the same lines as the Smith case, the resolution carried. Missouri's delegates chose to heed the words of the South. Only Rev. Jamison voted against the measure in the Missouri delegation (though it should be noted that Jamison was one of the very few ministers to leave Missouri rather than join the MECS the next year).

The southern churches, seeing that slaveholding would no longer be allowed within all the Methodist clergy, were forced to leave the church, which the North would allow them to do. Thus, the rest of the conference (save a vote on a new bishop and his ordination) was spent determining how a Plan of Separation would be finalized. Votes were taken on a variety of measures with the property being divided and border groups, down to individual churches, were permitted to choose which side they wanted to be on. Furthermore, the southern churches were to meet in Louisville the next year to actually form the new southern church.

These measures passed rather easily, with the opposition dwindling after every vote. The proceedings around the votes, brief and tame compared to the rest of the conference, were in all likelihood representative of the state of exhaustion many of the

⁸⁶ Bray, Robert. *Peter Cartwright, Legendary Frontier Preacher*. Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 2005. Pg 185.

delegates were in. The General Conference had gone on for weeks longer than expected and many wanted to begin their long journeys home. Unfortunately, the northern annual conferences would not accept this ascension to southern demands to leave the church, leading to numerous problems. Nevertheless, the Methodist church had officially split.

According to the biography of the Rev. William Patton, who was a delegate to the General Conference, the Missouri Annual Conference which met in St Louis in September brought forward the resolutions from the southern delegations. The Plan of Separation was referred to a committee (of which Patton was a member) which considered the matter for six days before bringing forth its report. The entire Missouri Conference adapted its report.⁸⁷

The committee concluded that the Missouri Conference had previously looked “with painful apprehension and disapproval, upon the agitation of slavery and abolition subject in our General Conference, and now behold...the disastrous results which it has brought about.”⁸⁸ Furthermore, the committee denounced the General Conference’s opinion in the matter of Bishop Andrew. It concluded that “we are compelled to pronounce the proceedings of the late General Conference against Bishop Andrew, extra-judicial and oppressive.”⁸⁹ Finally, the committee chose to recommend to the entire

⁸⁷ McAnally, D.R., *Life and Times of Rev. William Patton and Annals of the Missouri Conference*. St. Louis: Printed at the Methodist Book Depository, 1858. Pg 220.

⁸⁸ McAnally 221.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Annual Conference “that we approve the holding of a convention of delegates from the Conferences in the slaveholding States...”⁹⁰ and that this delegation from Missouri be allowed to vote for the establishment of “a co-ordinate branch of the M.E. Church” if it would “be found to be indispensable (and consequently unavoidable).”⁹¹ There was fleeting hope that the northerners would come to their senses and accede to the southern demands, allowing the church to remain unified.

Never does the Annual Conference of Missouri openly seek a separation from the northern church. Throughout this process they seek to only use division as a last resort. Nevertheless, it is became clearer that division had become necessary and thus must be undertaken. In continuing the direction the delegates to the General Conference in New York took, the majority of the Missouri Annual Conference demanded to move towards a schism if the northern church would not stand down from its abolitionist posture. Abolition could not become the law of the church for Missourian Methodists. Despite the desire to maintain unity, it could not be maintained at the cost of allowing abolition to become the rule of the church.

As the southerners had planned after the General Conference of the MEC deteriorated in New York, a group comprising all of the southern states, including Missouri, convened at Louisville in 1845. Throughout the conference at Louisville, the eight Missouri delegates were unanimous in their support for the formation of the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ McAnally 222.

MECS.⁹² One of the delegates, Jesse Green, who's speech unfortunately was not recorded in the *Debates*, spoke in favor of splitting from the North and forming the MECS. Lee records that "he claimed to understand the sediments of the people; and he did believe that the interests of Methodism in that region [Missouri] required the separation."⁹³

Another example can be seen from two of the other delegates, Andrew Monroe and Patton, who both made speeches in favor of forming the MECS. Although their speeches were not recorded (neither in the proceedings nor in Patton's biography), the *Debates* from the conference recorded a summary of their remarks by saying that they "showed their warm adherence to the South and assured the convention that, though they had been somewhat disturbed by internal divisions, in the end their people would go *en masse* with their Southern brethren."⁹⁴ Furthermore, Monroe attempted, unsuccessfully, to have the new MECS publishing house built in St. Louis.⁹⁵ These examples illustrate how the Missouri delegation fully supported the separation from the MEC and in turn the fact that they believed the membership back home in Missouri agreed with their assessment. There were some dissenters back in Missouri, an issue that will be addressed later in the paper, but they were a very small minority.

The letters and journal of the Rev. Jacob Lanius of the MECS can help to illustrate the conflict around the initial split. Briefly, Lanius served in various parts of

⁹² Lee 435, 449

⁹³ Lee 435.

⁹⁴ Lee 431.

⁹⁵ Lee 438, 446.

Missouri after arriving in this state from Virginia from 1831 to his death in 1851. In his tenure in the MEC and then in the MECS when it broke off, he rose to the position of presiding elder by the late 1840s.⁹⁶ Using both his journal and numerous letters written to him by many of the church officials in the state, the impact of the split becomes evident. However, it should be noted that we do not have any of the letters Lanius wrote, only those written to him.

According to the papers of Lanius that survive, he did not attend any of the General Conferences. However, he did correspond with Andrew Monroe. Overall, the two letters from Monroe to Lanius written in 1845 are very positive toward the formation of the MECS. Monroe confirms the fact that the Missouri delegation at Louisville was unanimous in the various proposals that were being presented at the conference. Numerous times Monroe says that he is looking forward to being a part of the MECS.⁹⁷ This optimism does not seem to fade in the next letter that Monroe sends to Lanius a few months later.⁹⁸

Despite the fact that we do not have Lanius' original letters to Monroe, it can still be gathered from what Monroe writes that both of these men had the same general view on the split. It is obvious then that both men were in strong support of it. From what Monroe writes, it seems that it was viewed as an necessity that the MECS be formed. It is

⁹⁶ Missouri East Conference, United Methodist Church, Papers, 1850-1977. Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri- Columbia. Collection 3595, folder 1.

⁹⁷ Monroe to Lanius, May 17, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

⁹⁸ Monroe to Lanius, November 18, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

as if there was little thought on whether to leave the MEC. Monroe confirms the unanimous support of the Missouri delegates, further upholding this idea.

As it would be expected, the issue of forming the MECS would have to be brought before the Annual Conference in the State of Missouri. This occurred in 1845, in Columbia. A minister that eventually remained within the MEC, Rev. Lorenzo Waugh, details the events that took place in his *Autobiography of Lorenzo Waugh*. Waugh, born in 1808, had ministered in Missouri since 1835 and had found the events leading up to the schism quite distressing.⁹⁹ He says that during the Annual Conference “it was plain to be seen that the absorbing question was the intended transfer of the M. E. church into a new organization with the term ‘South’ appended as its special designation.”¹⁰⁰

The presider at this Annual Conference was Bishop Joshua Soule, one of the bishops that had left the MEC with the southern churches.¹⁰¹ Waugh holds that Soule came to Missouri with the firm intention to ensure that the Annual Conference would officially join the movement towards the MECS. As to those that were present at the Conference, the “leading ministers in Missouri were in sympathy with the movement and aided the Bishop, and...they got a majority vote for the new M. E. Church South.”¹⁰²

This Annual Conference chose to undertake a vote in order to accept or reject the

⁹⁹ Waugh, Lorenzo. *Autobiography of Lorenzo Waugh*. 5th edition. San Francisco: Methodist Book Concern, 1896. Pp 13, 93, 156.

¹⁰⁰ Waugh 156.

¹⁰¹ Lee 383, Waugh 156.

¹⁰² Ibid.

resolutions put forth under the Plan of Separation at the Louisville Convention. By a vote of eighty-four to thirteen it was decided

that, as a Conference claiming all the rights, powers and privileges of an Annual Conference, we adhere to the M. E. Church, South and that all of our proceedings, journals and records of any kind hereafter be in the name and style of the M. E. Church, South.¹⁰³

Therefore, the Missouri Annual Conference would be affiliated with the southern branch of the Methodist Church.

Prior to the conference at Louisville there were numerous churches that desired unity to be maintained in the MEC. Multiple Quarterly Conferences had expressed apprehension over a possible schism when word of the 1844 General Conference had reached them.¹⁰⁴ However, virtually all of these Quarterly Conferences chose to form the MECS with their Annual Conference. One of these quarterly conferences, New Madrid (in southeastern Missouri), simply voted to join the MECS as their minutes record. Another, the Danville Quarterly Conference, in eastern Missouri, voted to remain as well.¹⁰⁵ Once the events at Louisville had taken place, these conferences, like their ministers at the Annual Conference, saw that unity was untenable, thus they were willing to split.

With the Missouri Conference officially going South, Waugh and the other twelve ministers who opposed the schism with the North were outvoted and had to either

¹⁰³ McAnally 235.

¹⁰⁴ Winter, Hauser, "The Division in Missouri Methodism in 1845," published in Missouri Historical Review, v37, October 1942. Pg 47-8. This was Winter's MA Thesis from the University of Missouri.

¹⁰⁵ *New Madrid Quarterly Conference Minutes*, v. 1307, *Methodism in Southwest Montgomery County*, c3595, f177; Western.

attempt to continue their ministry under duress or leave the state (which some did, such as Rev. Jamison).¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the Annual Conference decided “that any members voting in the minority...shall be allowed, without the blame of any kind, to attach himself to either branch of the Church...”¹⁰⁷ Initially, this was the case, the dissenting ministers were allowed to leave unmolested, but Waugh’s statement foreshadowed what was to come. As it will soon be seen, there were numerous ministers that had to undergo this struggle, the Annual Conference would not tolerate those who wished to remain in Missouri from the MEC.

The Methodist schism was as divisive as the Presbyterian schism. However, what separates the two in terms of severity is the fact that the basis of the MEC schism was slavery, whereas it was only a minor issue in the Presbyterian church. The theological split in the Presbyterians in the end yielded results similar to the Baptists. The fierce conflicts between the two branches of the Methodist Church from the schism through the Civil War will not be replicated in either of the two other denominations. While the divisions the Presbyterians and Baptists would not be final, the two halves of the MEC would not divide any further.

The repudiation of the Plan of Separation by the northern annual conferences would allow both sides to justify work on the other side of the border. Conflict, with the hardening of their positions on slavery would result. These outcomes would allow for the

¹⁰⁶ Waugh 156, and McAnally 236, 239.

¹⁰⁷ McAnally 235.

unanimity of each General Conference. With the resulting polarization over slavery the conflict deteriorated very quickly into severe clashes. North and South had split in the Methodist church, stressing sectional unity. Both the people and government of Missouri soon became embroiled in this conflict. The nature of the schism was the cause of this phenomenon. With the different schisms in the other two churches, these clashes would not be replicated in their severity.

The schism in the Baptist church, although over slavery, was not as severe as either of the other two major Evangelical denominations. One would assume that the Baptists, with their autonomous local churches, would not undergo any sort of schism. That is, each church could simply agree to disagree on the subject of slavery since there was no overarching denominational structure as in the Methodists and Presbyterian churches. Nevertheless, problems developed with the Baptists. Individual churches, while maintaining their sovereignty, cooperated in a variety of associations. There were county/regional and state associations that many churches participated in, which was the case in Missouri as well. However, the most unifying force among national Baptists was their missionary efforts, which existed in the form of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society (ABHMS). Prior to the 1840s, both northern and southern churches worked together successfully in this society. Nonetheless, the tensions of slavery that were affecting the other denominations would affect the Baptists as well.¹⁰⁸

Although the North dominated the ABHMS ideologically (despite the larger

¹⁰⁸ Matthews 162.

numbers of the South) northern moderates had more or less succeeded in holding off any confrontation on the slavery issue until 1844. In that year the corresponding secretary of the ABHMS had been attempting to get Jesse Busyhead, a slaveholder, to resign his role in the society. Busyhead died before the issue was resolved.¹⁰⁹ Getting wind of this issue, Baptists in the Alabama State Convention sought to test the will of the Executive Board of the ABHMS. They sent a letter to the Board of the ABHMS in November of 1844 asking for the “explicit avowal that slave-holders are eligible, and entitled, equally with non-slaveholders, to all the privileges and immunities of their several unions.”¹¹⁰ Furthermore, they asked “whether the Board would or would not appoint a slaveholder as a missionary.”¹¹¹ Combined with the attempted appointment of Rev. James Reeve of Georgia, a slaveholder, the Alabama Baptist Convention sought with the aforementioned letter to see the Board’s commitment to abolition and their view on slavery. They hoped to finally succeed in getting a slaveholder appointed.¹¹²

Prior to this letter, the Board of the ABHMS had been attempting to walk a middle-line, continuing to embrace the slaveholding conventions but refusing to appoint any slaveholding missionaries to appease many in the North. These sediments can be seen in the response to the Alabama Baptists by the Board of the ABHMS. It states that “We need not say, that slaveholders, as well as non-slaveholders, are unquestionably entitled to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Mode, Peter G., editor. *Source Book and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History*. Menasha, WI, George Banta Publishing Company. Pg 589.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Carwardine 169.

all the privileges and immunities which the Constitution of the Baptist General Convention permits, and grants to its members.”¹¹³ However, they continue to hold their line on not appointing slaveholders when they replied that if “any one should offer himself as a missionary, having slaves, and should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him.”¹¹⁴

Combined with the rejection of Reeve as a missionary, many southern Baptists held that this response demanded action on their part. The Board was not going to change its position on slavery as the southern Baptists hoped. Many feared they would never be able to counteract the northern influence in the ABHMS despite their advantage in rank and file members. Furthermore, the southern conventions knew it was only a matter of time before northerners would force the entire ABHMS to condemn slavery. In their view, they could no longer remain a part of the ABHMS as it would soon officially condemn slavery.

The churches of Virginia led the charge to form a new convention. In March of 1845 they sent a letter to Baptists throughout the United States. In it, they said that “We wish not to have a merely *sectional* Convention...we separate, not because we reside in the South, but because they have adapted an unconstitutional and unscriptural principle to govern future course.”¹¹⁵ Thus, the Virginians wished national participation in a new

¹¹³ Mode 591.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Taylor, George B. *The Life and Times of James B. Taylor*. Philadelphia, The Bible and Publication Society, 1872. Pp 151-2. Please note that James B. Taylor was the President of the Virginia Baptist Association.

convention for those that did not view “that holding slaves is, under all circumstances, incompatible with the office of the Christian ministry.”¹¹⁶

Despite this call there were many that wished to wait for a vote of the entire national convention of the ABHMS, hoping that they would not take the position of the Board. Moreover, there were many that wished to wait in holding the actual convention, since many states, such as Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri did not have chance to appoint delegates. These men wanted to ensure that these states could attend. Nevertheless, the urge to form a new convention was so strong that the other conventions/associations did not wait. In May of 1845 members from the southern state assemblies met in Augusta, Georgia with the intent to form a new national Baptist association that would accept slavery, unlike the ABHMS. They formed the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), severing ties with the ABHMS.¹¹⁷

The Missouri Baptist General Association did not have the opportunity to send delegates to Augusta. Therefore they were not present at the SBC’s formation in 1845. They did not speak or hear any of the speeches firsthand. However, at the 1846 state meeting, in Lexington, the Baptists in the state of Missouri would make the choice to which convention they would continue with. One of the committees that had been formed at the beginning of the meeting was to look at the possibility of becoming affiliated with the SBC or remaining with the ABHMS.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Barnes 26-8.

Elder S. W. Lynd D.D., the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in St Louis, who was the chair of the committee, gave its report. He began by explaining “that this Association is under obligations of gratitude to the American Baptist Home Missionary Society...”¹¹⁸ Although

the circumstances which have produced division between the North and South have been beyond our control, and the division itself in many aspects, to be deeply regretted, yet we cannot but hope, that, in the providence of God, it will result in a wider diffusion of the blessings of the Missionary effort.¹¹⁹

In the end, Lynd’s committee determined that “this association will better harmonize with the views and the enterprise of the Southern Baptist Convention.”¹²⁰ When the committee’s motion to join the SBC was put to a vote, it passed, unanimously.¹²¹

There was no debate inherent in whether or not to join the SBC within the Missouri Baptist General Association. The resolution passed without dissent and there was no mention, nor any records of subordinate assemblies or churches taking issue with this change. Problems that the Presbyterians and Methodists had with dissenters were completely avoided. When writing about the 1846 Assembly some years later in his *History of the Missouri General Baptist Association*, W. Pope Yeaman confirms this sense of unanimity. He simply mentions that Lynd brought up the matter, restates the

¹¹⁸ Missouri Baptist General Association. *Minutes of the Missouri Baptist General Association, 1844-1866*. St. Louis, MO: Continental Printing Co. Pg 11.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Minutes 12

¹²¹ Ibid.

minutes and concludes with mention of the vote.¹²²

However, he concludes this brief section of his work by mentioning that the “‘division between north and the south’ may seem strange [for the contemporary 1890s reader], inasmuch as they speak of a time many years before the war of the states.”¹²³

Yeaman then proceeds to retell the story of the schism. The fabric of evangelical unity was still broken by this schism, no matter how mild it was compared to the other two. With this break, national unity was further strained.

As the letter from the Virginia Baptists explained, they wanted a new missionary society that would include both sections of the country along with slavery. Although they really did not succeed with the former goal in the way they intended, many in the South that were apprehensive about slavery, the minority that supported the Union during the war, did not mind being affiliated with the SBC. Membership in the SBC did not force acceptance of slavery upon its members as did membership in the MEC. In the SBC, one simply had to accept that missionaries could hold slaves. Except for the most vehement abolitionists, of which there were few in the South or Missouri, those that did not truly support slavery could be members of a SBC affiliated organization.

Thus in Missouri, no one really cared that intently about this change, they simply wanted to use the resources of the SBC to spread the Gospel. However, like the Presbyterians, this “big tent” organization would not be able to hold up through the war, despite the lack of strife in the antebellum period. This result was due to the schism.

¹²² Yeaman Pg 79-80.

¹²³ Yeaman 317

What Yeaman's statement tells us is that at least in retrospect, the division in the Baptist church played some role in terms of the eventual war between the North and the South, despite its lack of severity.

As we will soon see, the resulting turmoil over these schisms had a direct effect on the conflict over slavery in these denominations in the proceeding years. The ramifications to the schisms only become fully apparent when their results are examined. All three of the major evangelical churches in the United States were divided by 1845. The fabric of unity that they provided was now broken and there would be political consequences to be had. These consequences in moving the nation toward war become evident in the years after the schism. Though, there would be different degrees of influence, with the Methodists having the most due to the condition of their schism.

The nature of the schism in turn determined how the churches prospered during the antebellum period and their official views on slavery. None of these schisms took place in the same way, leading to different results, although the Baptists and Presbyterians had some similarities with each other. This process continued to manifest itself into the war period, as each of the three denominations would take different paths during this bloody conflict.

Chapter Two:

Altar Erected Against Altar

“Contrary to the expectations of many, and certainly contrary to the wishes of both preachers and people in the South, the separation of 1844 did not take place as peaceably as it might, and no doubt ought to have done.”¹²⁴ These words written by the biographer of the Rev. William Patton little more than a decade after the events of that year could not have been more correct. Almost immediately after the schism of 1844 and the subsequent formation of the MECS the next year, conflict broke out among the members of the Methodist church which polarized the membership into northern and southern factions.

These conflicts within the Methodist church would not be replicated in the same degree in the Baptist and Presbyterian churches. This was due to the lesser degree of severity in their schisms. Thus, before the sectional crisis in Missouri became severe in nature, the Methodists were already undergoing a complete conflict as a result of their schism. In many ways they helped to lead the onset of the crisis (though religion was by no means the only reason that problems occurred) through their instigation of conflict with one another. The MEC was northern based, the MECS southern based. Granted there were political issues that acted on the Methodists, but they were not as extensive as those that acted upon their brethren only a few years later.

It would only be later that the Presbyterians and Baptists would experience greater

¹²⁴ McAnally 228.

tensions, after the crisis had begun to heat up and the Civil War broke out. These political events largely acted on those two churches (and the Methodists too, but to a lesser extent), causing the conflicts that these churches would undergo. Unlike the Methodists, the nature of their schisms would provide for future divisions. All three of the actual schisms had political consequences as the individual churches separated the North from the South on the religious stage. As the nation entered armed conflict in 1861, these battles only intensified. Each side would attempt to embody what it saw as the values of its section. Although Missouri was a slave state, it was still a border one as well, thus both northern and southern sympathizers would be participants in its conflicts. Nevertheless, it is the severity of the schism that led to greater intensity in the conflict among the Methodists.

After 1845 it was thought by members in both sections of the Methodist church that any conflict, especially one over slavery, between the formerly unified churches was over. The schism solved this problem forever many naively hoped. On the other hand, in order to implement this split, some method had to be obtained to physically divide the church. Unfortunately, the General Conference authors of the before-mentioned Plan of Separation simply wished to draw a 1200-mile line through all of the MEC border conferences. This plan did not take into account areas in the various border-states that embraced both slaveholding and non-slaveholding areas. Certain conferences/churches were allowed to vote on which side they would remain, but in practice these choices were often made for them.

The unity of numerous congregations and conferences would be severed in that

there was a significant minority that voted against remaining in one church or the other. Ministers such as Lorenzo Waugh illustrate this problem in Missouri. As a result of this flawed plan, conflicts between the MEC and the MECS ensued. Each side, until the Civil War, accused the other of violating the Plan. Moreover, as time wore on, each church would attempt to proselytize the members of the other church in these border areas as the conflicts worsened. Granted unanimity in regions farther North or South than Missouri might well have been the case (or even some portions of the state), but those places were not Missouri.¹²⁵

Rev. David Rice McAnally, in his biography of Rev. Patton disagrees with Carwardine when he claims that “There was throughout the South a unanimity unprecedented, perhaps in the history of ecclesiastical organizations. They were literally, on this subject, of one mind and heart.”¹²⁶ Obviously, things were not that well cut in the South or in the North for that matter. One of the leading preachers of the North, Peter Cartwright explains in his autobiography that from his vantage point in Illinois “a great number, from the confusion and dissatisfaction that arose in the Church from this rupture” left the Church and still more “perhaps were lost forever.”¹²⁷ Although things might not have been as bleak as Cartwright indicated, the schism was not without its conflicts. These issues could not have been prevented even if the South had been left

¹²⁵ Carwardine, Richard J. “Methodists, Politics, and the Coming of the American Civil War.” *In Methodism and the Shaping of the American Culture*. Edited by Nathan O. Hatch and John H. Wigger. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2001.

¹²⁶ McAnally 228.

¹²⁷ Cartwright, Peter. *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1856. Pg 286.

alone, as many southern Methodists suggested. The border would not allow it.

During the General Conference of 1844, the Plan of Separation that was passed essentially allowed the South to form its own church with the rights to the annual conferences within the South and entitled it to a share of the property. The majority of the northern ministers voted in favor of simply letting the South leave, and their numbers increased throughout the individual votes that made up the Plan taken during the General Conference. It was assumed each side would continue the work of Methodism in their own region, almost ignoring the other. While there was a brief respite in the harshness of the schism in order to let the South leave, as will soon become evident, it would not last long. Obviously, if the MEC was to legally attempt any proselytization of the South, they had to repudiate these votes and the fact that they simply let the MECS form by declaring the Plan of Separation unconstitutional.

Many argued in the northern conferences that the General Conference did not have the authority to divide the Church and allow the southerners to leave without any more of a fight. Nor, in fact could they be allowed to leave with their share of the MEC assets. Unlike the southern conferences, the northern ones did not stand to gain property or funds from the schism, as they would only lose money and property.

Cartwright describes one of these votes that took place in the Illinois Annual Conference in the fall of 1844. He had been one of the few delegates to consistently vote in favor of not allowing the southern churches to leave throughout the entirety of the voting. His co-delegates from Illinois had voted to let the South leave. Nonetheless, when the Illinois Annual Conference met that fall it voted with Cartwright and chose the route of non-concurrence with the General Conference. Thus, Cartwright explains that “after

we had debated the subject fully, the vote was taken, and there was a handsome majority in favor of non-concurrence.”¹²⁸ In the end, most of the northern annual conferences agreed with Illinois.¹²⁹ In these votes, which can be seen as both a continuance and a referendum on the schism, the conflict became more vicious, with ill-effects for both sides.

What were the causes of this almost immediate repudiation of the Plan of Separation? Most likely, after the weeks of debate in the General Conference, the delegates were simply tired and allowed the South leave. The decreasing number of votes against that course of action during the 1844 Conference would seem to indicate as much. Thus, the property could not be divided adequately in the brief time the votes took place. When the annual conferences had a chance to consider the matter, they realized that the initial division was not be acceptable and moved to nullify the Plan. The MECS, facing a loss of property and MEC ministers in their territory acted in the best way to preserve its interest, and fought the MEC on these matters. The Plan of Separation was abrogated almost as quickly as it was passed.

During the General Conference of the MEC in 1848, held in Pittsburgh, what remained of the Plan of Separation was declared null and void. Although the MEC for the most part was unable to reclaim any of its property (appeals in federal court up to the Supreme Court eventually failed), they were, at least in their view, legally justified under the ecclesiastical law of their church to begin proselytizing in the South. Separate MEC

¹²⁸ Cartwright 278.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

annual conferences were soon formed in the South.¹³⁰ Obviously there were profound implications to these actions.

As would be expected, the northern conferences sent in missionaries to the territory of the South to back up their formation of conferences. Many of these problems began to occur prior to 1848 and the repudiation of the Plan of Separation by the North. Others in southern states were dissatisfied with the schism. The letters to Rev. Jacob Lanius, a Presiding Elder along the Illinois border, illustrate some of these problems.

Other letters from Andrew Monroe indicate that the MEC did not waste any time in attempting to thwart the efforts of the MECS in Missouri. In May of 1845 he wrote to Rev. Lanius that a Rev. Dr. Charles Elliot will in all likelihood come to Missouri from the North. From the tone that Monroe takes in this letter, it is obvious that Elliot was a learned man that he did not want evangelizing in Missouri.¹³¹ Elliot, one of the leading men of the national Methodist church would soon establish a permanent residence in Missouri. His importance as an adversary of the MECS in Missouri is also confirmed when McAnally declares that “he became one of the most bitter denouncers of the whole movement, and no paper contained more severe things against the South than the one under his control.”¹³² Elliot was editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* of Cincinnati. Moreover, when he came to Missouri he edited the *Central Christian Advocate*, the MEC

¹³⁰ Cartwright 279, McAnally 231.

¹³¹ Monroe to Lanius, May 17, 1845. Western, c3595, f. 4.

¹³² McAnally 229.

newspaper in St. Louis.¹³³

In March of 1846 Lanius received a reply to one of his letters from Greer W. Owens, from the Jackson, Missouri station on the Bloomfield Circuit (in southeastern Missouri). In his letter, Owens described how two ministers; Nelson Henry and W. P. Nichols were in error when they used their influence against the MECS. Moreover, Owens confirms in his letter what Lanius said in his previous correspondence that these men “engaged in actions against the M. E. Church, South and...need to be disciplined.”¹³⁴

In the *Annals of Methodism in Missouri* Nichols remains as a member of the MECS and dies in 1856. In the end, it seems he fell into line.¹³⁵ The *Annals* report that “Henry was a northern man. His sympathies were with the northern wing of the church, and, being on the border he adhered with that side.”¹³⁶ Henry would ask and receive a transfer to the MEC. As a result of his influence he took with him many members of congregations in and around the Cape Girardeau area. According to the *Annals*, those areas became an “arena of division, contention, and strife.”¹³⁷

Thus when Owens continues to describe to Lanius that numerous members of the congregations in his area are upset in that they were not consulted when the churches

¹³³ Carwardine, *Methodists*... 332.

¹³⁴ Owens to Lanius, March 18, 1846. Western, c3595, f. 14.

¹³⁵ Woodard, W. S. *Annals of Methodism in Missouri, Containing an outline of the ministerial life of more than One Thousand Preachers, and Sketches of more than Three Hundred*. Columbia, MO: E. W. Stephens, Publisher and Binder, 1893. Pg xviii.

¹³⁶ Woodard 110.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

split, their actions become apparent. These men and women chose to adhere to the MEC, especially when they had a talented minister such as Henry on their side. Owens concludes by mentioning that there have been some attempts by the MEC to proselytize the members of the MECS in his area, an expected outcome with Henry's defection and their proximity to the border.¹³⁸

These themes can also be seen in a letter from Rev. Jesse Sutton to Rev. Lanius a few months later. In his letter Sutton stated that charges in a church conference were levied against a Jarrat Ingram for actions against the MECS, though the specifics are not mentioned. This man seems to be an example of someone that disagreed with the new southern church. As a result, he was punished for voicing his disapproval according to Sutton.¹³⁹

Problems over the actual physical border arose more frequently after 1848 when the MEC General Conference in Pittsburgh condemned the Plan of Separation. Andrew Monroe again wrote to Lanius that year asking him "what actions are our brethren in the M. E. Church contemplating?"¹⁴⁰ He goes on to indicate that the other church was attempting to nullify what he terms as the Plan of Division. Monroe then vaguely mentions additional border problems that the flaws in the Plan of Separation caused.¹⁴¹

This evidence indicates that there was a fair amount of discord in certain areas of

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Sutton to Lanius, June 10, 1846. Western, c3595, f. 14

¹⁴⁰ Monroe to Lanius, May 22, 1848. Western, c3595, f. 4

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

Missouri between both the northern and southern churches. These problems only worsened with time. In 1850 a Rev. I. A. Light wrote Lanius about a northern preacher that arrived in Shelbyville (in Northeast Missouri) in an attempt to organize a northern church. Light stated that this minister was determined to organize this new MEC church even “if he has to run the risk of martyrdom.”¹⁴²

More striking were the “dishonorable devices” that this minister used to advance his cause. Light asserts that the preacher was attempting to present his discipline as a sort of middle ground. That is, this MEC minister wished to avoid forcing potential converts to choose between slavery and abolition and was doing rather well as Light describes. Therefore, he was seeking Lanius’ help in exposing the abolitionist character of the MEC and thus weaken its appeal. He then hoped to be able to effectively fight the efforts of the MEC preacher in Shelbyville.¹⁴³

A letter from R. H. Jordan sent to Lanius the next month tells of a similar problem in Louisiana, MO, which is in the northeast portion of the state along the Mississippi river. Although this letter does not contain the detail that the letter from Light does, we can see that the MEC preachers in Louisiana were using a pamphlet that was being circulated from St. Louis. From the tone of this letter it seems that the MEC was again having some success in gaining members. However, in his request for Lanius to send Revs. Caples and Marvin, there seems to be optimism that the threat from the MEC can

¹⁴² Light to Lanius, June 15, 1850. Western, c3595, f. 17.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

be eliminated.¹⁴⁴

Unfortunately, since Lanius died the next year, the letters to him stop. As a result, the eventual outcomes of the events in both Shelbyville and Louisiana in the 1850s are unknown. Putting these letters in the context of the sources that survive from other MECS ministers of the time, a more in depth analysis will be obtained. Fortunately, the Revs Caples and Marvin, mentioned towards the end of Jordan's letter, leave a fair amount of information as well.

Regrettably, McAnally presents no instances of pre-war conflict in his work the *Life of Marvin*. His focus is more on the latter part of his life, when Marvin became a bishop. However, in the biography of Caples, Marvin gives us an example of the border conflict between the two churches. While describing a revival that both he and Caples participated in, Marvin recounts crossing the border into Illinois in order to evangelize those in the MEC jurisdiction. Marvin explains that in 1849 and 1850 he was instructed by his presiding elder, Lanius, to set up a stop in Quincy, Illinois along his circuit. Lanius, Marvin said, held that the MEC violated the separation plan, therefore, it was acceptable to proselytize people within their jurisdiction. From the account that he gives, Marvin believed, along with Caples, that he experienced a relatively good amount of success in this endeavor. He recounts that "my congregations were large and serious from the first."¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Caples soon joined to help him in the establishment of a church in

¹⁴⁴ Jordan to Lanius, July 13, 1850. Western, c3595, f 17.

¹⁴⁵ Marvin, Enoch Mather. *The Life of Rev. William Goff Caples of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*. St. Louis, Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1870. Pg 86.

Quincy.¹⁴⁶

There is no doubt that this account of their success in Quincy is accurate, at least in the short-term. In 1850 the General Conference of the MECS was held in St. Louis. At that conference the border of the Missouri Annual Conference was changed to include Quincy.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the observations of Peter Cartwright, upon being appointed the presiding elder of the Quincy conference in Illinois, confirm that the MECS may have had a large number of people to proselytize. He explains that “there was no district parsonage and accommodations near its center.”¹⁴⁸ This issue most likely stemmed from the fact that, according to Cartwright, “Methodism...had gone to seed, and was dying out, and, to use our backwoods language, some of the prominent and leading members of the flock had become buttering rams...”¹⁴⁹ The lack of initial conflict reported in Quincy itself can be seen as a result of this floundering of Methodism in that area of the state. Nevertheless, the MECS in Missouri was not that successful in their work in Quincy. Their mission there according to McAnally in his biography of Patton “wrought no particular permanent good, either to the Missouri Conference or the people of that city.”¹⁵⁰

As McAnally explains in his biography of Marvin, some of Caples’ opinions presented by Marvin were actually his (which does not trouble McAnally), but this biography does still tell a lot about Caples.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ McAnally, DR. *The Life and Labors of Rev. E. M. Marvin, DD, LLD One of the Bishops of the M. E. Church, South*. St. Louis, Logan D. Dameron, Agent, Advocate Publishing House, 1878. Pp. 253-4.

¹⁴⁸ Cartwright 301.

¹⁴⁹ Cartwright 302.

¹⁵⁰ McAnally 254.

This example and those cited in the letters to Lanius essentially confirm the general ideas put forth by Carwardine. That is, as a result of the split between the churches, many of the border areas, such as Missouri, were subject to both sides attempting to set up churches in areas controlled by the other side. In essence, what is seen here are the conflicts between members of the northern and southern branches of the Methodism in Missouri.

The issue of slavery, which played a decisive role in the division of the two churches in the first place, is important here. Opposing views on slavery play some role in all of the examples here. Culture and religion can be seen as merging in that each side is using their particular view to proselytize in the cases presented here. It is clear that the words of Rev. McAnally, in his biography of Patton, describe the situation perfectly: “The agitation was kept up until preachers were sent across the line, altar erected against altar, circuits formed within circuits, which, in many places, produced no little commotion and strife.”¹⁵¹

Virtually all of the Methodists in Missouri previously aligned with the MEC joined the new southern church when the split occurred. The records of Lorenzo Waugh and the case of Rev. Nelson Henry indicate that there were still a few MEC supporters in Missouri. However, the fact that the overwhelming majority of Methodists were still members of the MECS in Missouri at the time of the reunification in 1939 did not help the availability of the records on the MEC.

¹⁵¹ McAnally *Marvin* 231.

Waugh attempted to continue his ministry in Missouri after the Missouri church joined the MECS in 1845. He would only leave the state in 1851, moving west to California when his health and that of his wife failed.¹⁵² Initially after the schism Waugh returned to his post on the Mill Creek Circuit. However, at the second quarterly conference, the presiding elder from the MECS “announced that I [Waugh] must be put off from the circuit and my place supplied with a preacher who did belong to the M. E. Church South.”¹⁵³ He was expelled from the MECS in 1846 for his stance on the schism.¹⁵⁴ Thus, Waugh was forced to leave his post and afterwards he attempted to minister to what was left of the MEC adherents in Missouri.¹⁵⁵ He faced numerous problems in this ministry. According to his autobiography, “at the close of 1846 we had no conference of the old M. E. Church in Missouri...” and there were only “a few of the former M. E. Church preachers in the state.”¹⁵⁶ It would not be until late in 1848, after the abrogation of the Plan of Separation, that a Conference was established in Missouri for the MEC.¹⁵⁷

Since Waugh left the state soon after the conference’s establishment, we can look to *Southwestern Methodists: A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southwest from 1844-1864*, by the Rev. Dr. Charles Elliot to continue the description of

¹⁵² Waugh 176.

¹⁵³ Waugh 158.

¹⁵⁴ Woodard 187.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Waugh 166.

¹⁵⁷ Waugh 168.

the plight of the MEC in MECS dominated Missouri. Although this work is about other southwestern states as well, Elliot spends a significant amount of time on Missouri after the establishment of the MEC Conference. As would be expected, Elliot takes an approach that is decidedly pro-northern, since he was a member of the MEC.

The first time that Elliot mentions the MEC in Missouri is around 1849, the year in which the membership went up to 3,463 members.¹⁵⁸ This number is small if compared with the approximately 35,000 members the MECS had in 1850. Furthermore, the fact that these numbers include Arkansas (at least a third were in that state), which was only made a separate conference in 1852, gives a true indication how few MEC members were present in Missouri.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Elliot writes optimistically of these numbers and suggests that the MEC was doing better in Missouri than in numerous other states where the MECS dominated.

In 1851 he first mentions a conflict between the two branches of the Methodist church. Rev. Mark Robertson, who had been stationed in Batesville (southern Missouri) two years earlier, was “mobbed at his station.”¹⁶⁰ Although Robertson’s plight illustrates that there were conflicts between the churches, a more telling example is the tale of Rev. Charles Holliday Kelly. In 1853 he was stationed in Chambersburg (northern Missouri). In February of that year he was apprehended by supporters of the MECS and taken to a

¹⁵⁸ Elliot, Rev. Charles. *Southwestern Methodists: A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southwest from 1844-1864*. Cincinnati: Poe and Hitchcock, 1868. Pg. 27.

¹⁵⁹ Elliot 30.

¹⁶⁰ Elliot 27, 9.

prison in Iowa. As a result of the time of year and his lack of protective clothing, he eventually died in Iowa of exposure.¹⁶¹ The Kelly incident further illustrates the extremes that the two churches would go through to achieve their aims. The possible martyrdom of the northern minister that Light mentions no longer seems that farfetched. The charge that Kelly was arrested upon was escaping from the Iowa State Prison. The charge was clearly false, since the escapee was Charles F. Kelly, a different man. The man who apprehended Rev. Kelly, who called himself Trabue and pretended to be a Marshal, almost surely knew this fact. He was using this escape as an excuse to harm Rev. Kelly, a member of the hated MEC.¹⁶² Trabue succeeded in this goal with Kelly's death.

By no means do the instances of conflict stop there. In 1855 a Rev. W. H. Wiley, of the Harrisonville Circuit in Cass County (western Missouri), was stopped by a band of MECS supporters. He was then accused by this band of helping various slaves to run away.¹⁶³ Here we see another example of how the issue of slavery was used to galvanize support against the MEC. Later that year, John A. Tuggle, another MEC minister was accused of fomenting trouble among the slaves. Unlike Wiley, he was accused by a group of MECS officials who also had help from several Baptists in their interrogation.¹⁶⁴ Also, according to Elliot, in an incident with larger implications, in 1855, Platte County (also in western Missouri) expelled the MEC.¹⁶⁵ The citizens despised the MEC for its abolitionist

¹⁶¹ Elliot 32-3.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Elliot 46-7.

¹⁶⁴ Elliot 47-8.

¹⁶⁵ Elliot 76.

views and expelled them to avoid dealing with them.

The following year Elliot states that the pro-slavery military raids in Missouri against the MEC increased in various places.¹⁶⁶ In 1858 another example of the ever-changing border between the two churches can be seen in Elliot's writing. Elliot describes how the MECS moved the border between the churches into northern territory in order to restrict the MEC territory (proven by the actions they took with Quincy earlier in the decade). Essentially, they claimed various border areas in Iowa and Illinois that were within MEC conferences. Again, the further deepening of the conflict between the churches can be seen here from the MEC perspective.¹⁶⁷

A different example of the aligning of forces in Missouri against the MEC can be seen in 1859. That year the Jefferson City Land Company offered 25,000 dollars in stocks and bonds to any church that would be willing to help build a university in the Jefferson City area. As a result, the MEC tried to gain a charter in an attempt to open a school. However, Elliot says that they failed since the state of Missouri would not grant a charter.¹⁶⁸ The Missouri State House of Representatives Journal records that the measure was introduced on the fourth of November in the Missouri House and shortly amended. The legislature overwhelmingly chose to table the measure by a vote of ninety-five to sixteen, with twelve members absent. The legislature would not act, refusing to let the

¹⁶⁶ Elliot 83-4.

¹⁶⁷ Elliot 113-4.

¹⁶⁸ Elliot 136.

MEC build a school.¹⁶⁹ This example demonstrates the pro-southern MECS had a great deal of control and sympathy in the state government. The fact that the halls of the State Legislature were refused to a preacher of the MEC in 1860 further supports this idea.¹⁷⁰ As a result, we can see that the MEC was drastically restricted in what it could accomplish.

Waugh gives additional examples of persecution against MEC ministers as well. His friend Anthony Bewly was falsely accused (he does not specify as to what) and then hanged. Another minister, Benjamin Holland, was stabbed to death. As for Waugh, he says that “This same desperate class of men plotted to mob me, and had I not a true Virginia friend on hand...they would have mobbed me, and probably taken my life also.”¹⁷¹ These are just some of the examples of the violent acts taken against the MEC by supporters of the MECS.

Additional examples of the conflicts between the MEC and MECS from the perspective of the former church are evident in the experiences of the German Conference in Missouri. Their story is included in the records on the current United Methodist Church in a translation of “The Old Grey Book,” which gives an account of the founding and history of the German Methodists in Missouri. Although this history is largely written to glorify these Methodists, it does provide some historical examples that are useful in

¹⁶⁹ *Missouri House of Representatives Journal*, Nineteenth General Assembly, (Adj. Session), Pp 110 & 169.

¹⁷⁰ *Missouri Statesman*, March 16, 1860.

¹⁷¹ Waugh 161-2.

this paper. The entirety of the information presented on the German MEC conflict with the MECS comes to us from J.A. Muller. Unfortunately he was a very old man when this testimony was taken down. As a result, the details of what he says maybe incorrect in places.¹⁷²

One of the few groups not to join the MECS in 1844 were a group of fourteen German ministers in St. Louis, with support from their bishop, George Morris, who remained with the MEC.¹⁷³ The Missouri Annual Conference did not protest their adherence to the MEC and expected it due to their views on slavery (German opposition to slavery was almost universal in Missouri).¹⁷⁴ There were attempts by the MECS to preach to the Germans after the schism, but they went without success. These men and their congregations became attached to the Illinois Conference of the MEC following the schism. Only in 1864 would the congregations that these men represented be established as a separate German Conference.¹⁷⁵ While not a huge church in terms of membership, there was nonetheless a high percentage of the MEC membership in the German branch. A figure of several thousand given by J. A. Muller, though exaggerated with a large percentage on non-members, proves this point.

Muller's relevant discussion starts with tensions increasing in Kansas and in Nebraska after 1854. Although numerous people had misgivings, several ministers and

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

¹⁷⁴ McAnally 239.

¹⁷⁵ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

others in the MEC were attempting to persuade abolitionists to come farther west into Kansas. To that effect a mission was started in Leavenworth, Kansas. Muller continues his discussion up until the Civil War by stating that there were numerous other hindrances to the efforts of the German MEC to evangelize in Missouri, especially in the Kansas area. Nevertheless, Muller explains that “the missions were making good progress in gaining souls.”¹⁷⁶ By 1860 additional districts were being established in Kansas.¹⁷⁷

The role of slavery in this conflict can easily be determined. The MECS members were obviously pro-slavery, while their counterparts in the MEC were not. J. A. Muller explains in his testimony that those that left what would soon be the Missouri Conference of the MECS were unanimous in their objections toward slavery. The persecution that they experienced was the result of this opposition to slavery.¹⁷⁸ Dr. Elliot also proclaims his objections to slavery and contends that “to be a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in these regions...was the greatest crime known by the pro-slavery men of the South-West, as membership in that church was synonymous with *negro thief*, incendiary, insurrectionist, and the like.”¹⁷⁹

Peter Cartwright also abhors slavery. He held that “every reasonable man must depreciate its [slavery’s] existence.”¹⁸⁰ However, Cartwright, a native of a slave state, was

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Elliot 3.

¹⁸⁰ Cartwright 275.

one of the few moderates in the matter, and not a fervent abolitionist. He sought to ensure the eventual conversion of the slaveholders. He asks “Do we induce sinners to reform, repent, and be converted, by abusing them.. And saying it is impossible for persons guilty of such dirty crimes to become Christians? No, we warn them, in a Christian spirit and temper, to flee the wrath to come...”¹⁸¹ Cartwright obviously wants an end to slavery, and believes that it is the duty of all to hope for this end, but he will not be militant in the manner that he seeks to go about it, unlike many of his colleagues in the North.

The MECS viewed their northern counterparts as abolitionists subverting slavery in Missouri. The leading MECS paper of the day, *The St. Louis Christian Advocate*, illustrated this viewpoint. It explained that “1. There is no abatement of the abolition feeling in the Church North, nor is there likely to be any. 2. Men laboring in Slave states, in connection with the [MEC] Church...must be more or less liable to the charge of abolitionism.”¹⁸² The influence of the MECS in Missouri is seen when the government and the citizens come to agree with this view, for the editorial in the *Advocate* continues to explain that “the public mind will look upon them [MEC] in their relations, and form, to some extent, its judgment of them by the company they keep.”¹⁸³ Their abolitionist companions underscored the fact that they were abolitionists as well.

The ministers of the MECS could not agree with the *Advocate* more. In his

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² *St. Louis Christian Advocate*. St. Louis: W. Patton, D. R. McAnally, et al for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. August 12, 1852. Pg 12.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

biography of Caples, Marvin says that Caples held two things to be true with regards to slavery. The first was that the Bible did not prohibit it, “but clearly in the Old Testament authorized it and the New allowed it.”¹⁸⁴ Marvin further condemns the arguments of Biblical support in favor of abolition by saying “What then, must be the audacity of the man who professes to accept the Bible as the *word of God*...and impeaches the Holy Ghost in His teaching on the subject?”¹⁸⁵ Caples does not stop there, he condemns the abolition movement, calling it “the deadliest sin in modern society.”¹⁸⁶ Marvin most likely held these views as well. These lines illustrate that there was no love lost by many of the members of the MECS on behalf of the abolition movement.

This argument from Caples that the Bible supports slavery is similar to points that were made in Noll’s work, *America’s God*. Essentially Noll states that Biblical arguments, such as those used by Caples, were the norm. Thus, each side used these arguments (the opposite ones in the case of the MEC) to further place their congregations on the respective side of the issue. Therefore, the nation became further polarized, these examples from Missouri being no different.¹⁸⁷ The importance of slavery in this conflict is seen in multiple examples from each of the two churches. Slavery is playing a crucial role in the proselytizing on either side.

The largely unanimous desire to form the MECS that Monroe discusses with

¹⁸⁴ Marvin 254. The original grammar of this quote was erroneous.

¹⁸⁵ Marvin 254-5.

¹⁸⁶ Marvin 255.

¹⁸⁷ Noll 388-9.

Lanius originated from these ideas. Furthermore, these Biblical arguments were further strengthened by the fact that without the northern church, there was no impetus to moderate their pro-slavery themes (and vice versa with the North). Even those that can be seen as moderate, such as Cartwright, wanted the elimination of slavery. With every one of the sources presented here from the MECS expressing ideas that would be pro-slavery, pro-southern, and pro-MECS, there is no doubt that they would fight the MEC until the last man. The ministers and members of the MECS were backing up their pro-southern ideas, such as slavery, with religion. They were as a result becoming polarized from their northern brethren. This polarization started before the larger national sectional crisis got into full swing and thus helped to drive it as it heated up.

As alluded to before, 1854 was the year when the sectional crisis began to heat up in Missouri. In that year the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed and the border war between Kansas and Missouri would soon start up. This period in the 1850s was a time of political transition, as the economic issues of the previous decade were becoming out of style and the ideas of slavery and nativism had yet to take hold. The full-fledged conflicts between the MEC and the MECS were normally atypical for Missouri prior to 1854.¹⁸⁸

The conflicts between the MEC and the MECS were eventually agitated by the larger conflicts of the sectional crisis in the 1850s. As things got worse in Missouri as the war got closer, the conflict within the Methodist church worsened as well. However, it is

¹⁸⁸ Etcheson, Nicole. *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004. Pp. 12-5, 22.

clear from the description of the events leading up to this that the Methodists began fighting prior to the sectional crisis fully heating up. Northern Methodists took on Southern Methodists before such events as the border war began. It is clear from their language that each side saw itself as a participant in a full-fledged sectional conflict. Thus, the fight between the Methodists helped to increase the larger sectional conflict.

The Methodists were a force for major ideological separation and sectional unity in antebellum Missouri. Any occurrence that took place in their church would be significant politically as well. Many believed and hoped that a clean schism would result in minimum of political consequences. For example, in a speech to the 1845 convention at Louisville, the Rev. Dr. William Winans made one of the initial speeches in favor of forming the MECS. He discusses what he views as the national implications of the schism in this speech by proclaiming:

Many feared that the separation contemplated would tend to sever the political union of these United States. If so it assumes a very important aspect. Yet if I believed it would, still I would vote just as I shall, for with me principle outweighs expediency. I would vote for division of the Church if it would divide the union of the states.¹⁸⁹

However he goes on to say that he does not believe that the formation of the MECS will cause national division. Rather he states that “I verily believe that we shall strengthen the union of these United States by dividing.”¹⁹⁰ For Winans, “the influence of abolitionism on church and state”¹⁹¹ has made this division necessary. Granted, Winans was not a Missouri delegate, though his speech would have been heard by all of those present from

¹⁸⁹ Lee 401.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

Missouri and heeded when they voted to form the MECS. What is most telling is the fact that Winans would have undertaken the schism even if it would have national consequences, which it eventually did. Political unity did not matter if the right to hold slaves had to be sacrificed.

Obviously, those in the MECS did not take heed of Bishop Soule's speech during the General Conference of 1844 that the nation was watching to see if the MEC could remain unified. Soule at least had some fear of national political ramifications if the MEC split. Others in the northern church soon realized that is what had happened as this issue continued to merit discussion several years later. On a more local level, Waugh gives us a poem, published in Jefferson City, Missouri around 1850 in response to the schism, which he says "will give a clear touch of my views at that time."¹⁹² It proclaims that:

The Preachers of the church called "South,"
A mighty stir have made of late;
In practice they, if not by mouth,
Have cried, "dissolve this Union great."¹⁹³

In the end, Peter Cartwright agrees with Waugh in that anyone who attempted to discount the ramifications of the schism was really only undertaking an exercise in wishful thinking. He laments a few years before the start of the war:

What an awful thought! These were the fearful, legitimate results of schism; and indeed, this dreadful rupture in the Methodist Church spread terror over almost every other branch of the Church of Christ; and really, disguise it as we may, it shook the pillars of our American government to the center, and many of our ablest statesmen were alarmed, and looked upon it as the entering wedge to political disunion, and a fearful step toward the downfall of our happy republic; and...

¹⁹² Waugh 171

¹⁹³ Ibid.

that all the horrors of civil war will break upon us shortly.¹⁹⁴

Cartwright obviously saw a connection between the possible dissolution of the union and the schism. For him, the political effects of the schism were obvious. Cartwright's words in 1856 were indeed prophetic, to the extent that the schism in the Methodist church had an effect politically.

Non-Methodist politicians closely followed the schism, as Henry Clay demonstrates. Responding to a letter from a friend, Dr W. A. Booth in April of 1845, Clay comments on the schism in the MEC, which he kept up on. Clay writes of his deep regret of hearing “of the danger of a division of the Church, in consequence of a difference of opinion existing on the delicate and unhappy subject of slavery.”¹⁹⁵ Clay deplores the possibility of this schism being consummated “both on the account of the Church itself and in its political tendency.”¹⁹⁶ However, Clay's words a bit later in the letter are more telling in that he firmly believes that “scarcely any public occurrence has happened for a long time that gave me so much real concern and pain as the menaced separation of the Church, by a line throwing all the Free States on one side, and all the Slave States on the other.”¹⁹⁷

Clay does not believe that the breakup of the union was imminent as a result of this event, only more likely. With the breakup of the Methodist Church the nation was

¹⁹⁴ Cartwright 286-7.

¹⁹⁵ Colton, Calvin, editor. *The Private Correspondence of Henry Clay*, Volume 4. New York: A. S. Barnes and Co, 1856. Pg 525.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

beginning to descend down a slippery slope to civil war. Seeing the impact of the schism on those who are not members of the MEC, such as Clay (who was not a member of any denomination at this point in his life) one cannot help but appreciate the extent of the effects of the schism on the larger political landscape. Finally, Clay did not keep these comments only between himself and Booth, but made them in other letters and newspapers as C. C. Goen explains.¹⁹⁸

Noting how both the Methodist and Baptist churches had split, the Missouri Presbyterian (OS) minister, Rev. Nathan Lewis Rice, commented that “the importance of this subject is greatly enhanced by its bearings upon our civil Union.”¹⁹⁹ Rice feared that a continued conflict between both sides (especially if the abolitionists continued to press their case) would lead to larger national political problems. He concluded by explaining that “the day is at hand when the northern and southern States will form two distinct and hostile governments.”²⁰⁰ Although he would be quick to blame the war on abolition, Rice predicted that the furthering of the religious conflict over slavery would eventually lead to larger problems and a war between the states. Obviously, he was correct.

The impact the schism and the subsequent events had on the entire population of Missouri is evident by those that aided the MECS in their suppression of the MEC. The

¹⁹⁸ Goen 100-1.

¹⁹⁹ Blanchard, Rev. J. and Rev. N. L. Rice, DD. *A Debate on Slavery: Held in The City of Cincinnati, on the First Second, Third, and Sixth Days of October, 1845, Upon the Question: Is Slaveholding itself Sinful, and the Relation between Master and Slave, a Sinful Relation?* Cincinnati: William H Moore and Co, Publishers, 1846. Pg 34.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

conflict drew other people into it and forced them to take sides, further polarizing them along with the respective churches while extending the sectional conflict. Not everyone in these instances were members of the MECS. By standing up with the MECS and declaring with the MECS that the MEC must not be allowed to continue its ministry in the state, non-Methodists were participating in this conflict.

The mobs that formed, despite their instigation from the MECS, contained non-Methodists as well. Platte county in expelling the MEC further represents non-Methodists participating in these conflicts as does the General Assembly in denying the MEC their university. The state and local governments were participating in this conflict as well. It was the whole state, not just the MECS that held a poor view of the MEC according to Elliot. The previous examples throughout this chapter bear forth this fact. Those not directly involved with Evangelical churches and the government would continue to participate through the war in these conflicts.

The schism in the Methodist Church and the events after it had a profound impact on the political events of Missouri. These events predated the sectional crisis and in numerous ways are an earlier example of a crisis between the North and the South. It was the initial events surrounding the schism that perpetuated these later events, in both the secular and religious spheres that surrounded the Methodists. Although there was a lull in the conflict immediately after the split, the events of the General Conference of 1844 were vicious indeed and their apparent polarization over slavery would serve to cause battles soon after.

The schisms in the other two churches examined in this thesis were nowhere near

as vicious over the topic of slavery in the antebellum period. In the two branches of the Presbyterian church the severity of these conflicts are not as apparent. The Old and New Schools did not engage in acts of hatred against one another with the same fervency over slavery that the Methodists did, though they still had issues over slavery. These problems would cause both further division in the NS just prior to the war and future problems in the OS during the war.

Prior to the schism there were some major difficulties in the church over abolitionism. Missourians fought the abolitionists with different views on slavery. Well-known is the case of the Presbyterian minister Elijah Lovejoy, who was murdered by a mob in 1837 after he fled Missouri to Alton, IL. Lovejoy had started the *St Louis Observer* in 1833, shortly after completing college at Princeton. Although his paper survived for two years, its office was destroyed by a mob in 1835, forcing him to flee to Illinois. There he continued his work in abolitionist societies till his murder. Nevertheless, his fellow Missouri Presbyterians would write that “To this man exact justice has never been done. He was no wild fanatic recklessly causing death, but an earnest, conscientious man...”²⁰¹ He was “a martyr for liberty.”²⁰² All did not think that way of Lovejoy, for these were NS Presbyterians that praised him being some of the most anti-slavery men of their denomination.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Hill, Rev. Timothy. *Historical Outlines of the Presbyterian Church in Missouri*. Kansas City, MO: Van Horn and Abel Printers, 1871. Pg 19.

²⁰² Hill 54.

²⁰³ Hill 54, Thompson 348.

Another case, that happened immediately prior to the schism, transpired at Marion College. This school, one of the first universities granted an official charter in Missouri, was founded in 1832 in rural Marion County (in the eastern part of the state). The Rev. David Nelson MD was its founder, who had emancipated his slaves shortly after his conversion. He had “reached the conclusion that slavery was essentially wrong, and that its continuance was a perpetual menace to the religious and social life of the southern states.”²⁰⁴ The university soon “rose to prominence and bid fair to a source of great good...”²⁰⁵

Nevertheless, it soon became obvious to those living around the college and the other Presbyterians in Missouri that Dr. Nelson and the other faculty members were fervent abolitionists. Therefore, they were driven out of the county and left the state out of fear for their lives in 1835. In the end, it was said by Missouri Presbyterians that Nelson’s “southern birth, his thorough acquaintance with southern people, and his great personal popularity, were not sufficient to shield him from the mad, increasing fury of the mob. Such is the spirit of slavery always.”²⁰⁶ His views were so repugnant to Missourians and many of his fellow Presbyterians that he had to be driven from the state.

Rev. William Potts would take over the presidency that year, a man who was by no means an abolitionist and had no desires to eliminate slavery within Missouri. With

²⁰⁴ Marks, J. J. “Some Personal Remembrances of Rev. David Nelson,” in *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882. Pg 75.

²⁰⁵ Hill 54.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

the college under his charge, he proclaimed that “We start in our own present labor, with a desire to benefit our fellow-citizens, and to be useful to the world.”²⁰⁷ Potts and the rest of the Presbyterian church hoped the manual labor school could continue to prosper and educate those in Missouri in the Presbyterian spirit without abolition within its walls. However, the former was not to be the case.

Unfortunately, the plight of an unidentified student writing in 1840 was typical of what happened there as a result of the economic panics of the late 1830s. He writes earlier in the year “I wished very much to have visited Nashville during the vacation, but a variety of hindrances prevented me...the College could not advance, or rather pay what would be necessary for my expenses.”²⁰⁸ For whatever reason the school owed him money and could not pay him. He in turn was running short of money and his plight was not aided by the numerous other economic difficulties that he complained of in his letter. Larger economic issues were running their course and soon the college would experience these problems as well. These problems for Marion’s students and for the school itself forced the school’s closure.²⁰⁹

What these two examples show us is that there were struggles over slavery within the Presbyterian Church prior to the schism. Both sides undertook actions in order to further their views on the struggle for slavery. Again, ordinary citizens of Missouri were

²⁰⁷ Potts, Rev. William S. *The Inaugural Address of Rev. William S. Potts, President of Marion College*. St. Louis: Printed by R. M. Treadway, 1835. Pg 15.

²⁰⁸ Letter 1840 May 2, Marion College, MO to Mr. Woods, Tennessee State Library and Archives. Document s1163. This letter was unsigned and no author could be determined by the archives.

²⁰⁹ Thompson 273.

also involved in these two controversies illustrating how the problems within the Presbyterian Church had an affect on Missourians as a whole. The larger population of the state cannot be discounted here, since they also supported slavery. Moreover, those that wished to suppress the actions of the abolitionists in the Evangelical churches did not mind the extra help from those outside their churches.

The fight to influence individual congregations and churches would ensue in the days after the schism of the Presbyterian Church in Missouri. There were many theological reasons that the OS and NS would conflict, with literature being exchanged on both sides to further the cause of either school.

In 1842 the OS sent out a pamphlet to its congregations attempting to fight what it believed was an attempt to “deceive the churches situated in remote parts of the State,” by a previously issued pamphlet.²¹⁰ This pamphlet attempted to fight the OS by holding that ““we cannot attach ourselves to the party now known as the Old School Assembly.””²¹¹ Although the pamphlet being responded too claimed to be neutral on the issue of the schism, many of the positions it articulated seemed to the authors to be poorly disguised NS positions.²¹² They explain, touting an obvious OS position which sums up many of their arguments, that “ It will be obvious to every person that this arrangement [1801 Plan

²¹⁰ Jones, Isaac et al. *Review of “A Declaration of Sentiments made by the Synod of Missouri.”* St. Louis: Native American Bulletin, 1842. Pg 3.

²¹¹ Jones 4.

²¹² Jones 5-6.

of Union] opened a wide door for the introduction of error and misrule in the Presbyterian Church.”²¹³

Nonetheless, it is on the position of slavery where the pamphlet gets interesting. According to Rev. Jones and his co-authors, the pamphlet that they are writing against holds that the OS is “claiming and exercising the right to agitate the church upon the subject [of slavery].”²¹⁴ Obviously, those authors know that the subject of slavery can raise a great deal of problems for the OS and by making this claim they hopefully can in turn gain (or retain) additional members in Missouri. However, this accusation cannot be further from the truth according to the OS writers for “the only action of the Old School General Assembly on the subject of slavery has been a refusal to act at all!”²¹⁵

Indeed, this statement is an accurate portrayal of the view of the OS on slavery, nationally and in Missouri. Unlike the MECS, the OS General Assembly never explicitly proclaimed its support for slavery. It retained an ambivalent stance on the issue throughout the antebellum period. Being that its membership consisted of crucial segments in both the North and the South, this position is not surprising. The schism did not completely polarize its members like the Methodists. A strong stance in either direction would perpetuate a further schism.

The abolitionists that existed in the NS (or MEC) were not present in the OS at this point in time to force the question on the issue of slavery. Only after the war broke

²¹³ Jones 9.

²¹⁴ Jones 11.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

out would a stronger stance on slavery and the Union be taken by the OS General Assembly. The outbreak of the war led many in the North to take a stronger stance against slavery, moderates became more radical. Also eliminating many of the impediments to the new northern position was that the OS Synods in the Confederacy had already formed their own separate General Assembly. As we will see in the next chapter, only border synods, such as Missouri, were left to take issue with the North's new stances. Missourians could no longer follow the lead of their General Assembly once the war broke out.

Previously in Missouri, most of the sources imply that the Synod was happy with maintaining the stance of its General Assembly. There were no significant problems over slavery within it so there was no reason to define an actual stance. All the fervent anti-slavery men were in the NS Synod. As it will be demonstrated, there were those that would seek conflict with the NS over slavery, defining a position for many in the OS.

Jones and his fellow writers do explain where the “agitators for abolition” come from in the Missourian Presbyterian Church, from the NS. Indeed, this has not been the first pamphlet on the schism or slavery, northerners have published from Hannibal among other places. In the conclusion, the question is asked “And where do we find the agitation on this subject of slavery? Are they not the leaders, clerical and lay, in the New School Assembly?”²¹⁶ Although they do not accuse the Missouri Synod directly, they show that the NS and its subsidiaries (such as the Missouri Synod) are abolitionist in nature and should be avoided. Painting the NS as abolitionists was sufficient for many in the OS,

²¹⁶ Ibid.

they need not go any further in their views on slavery by defining their own. These views only had to be manifested in their relations with the NS, a point that will become clearer shortly.

As expected, the stance of the NS on slavery would not be as ambivalent as the OS's. In the twenty years after the schism each General Assembly passed some sort of resolution condemning the institution of slavery and urging its subordinate bodies to do everything in their power to end it.²¹⁷ The General Assembly of 1857 declared that it "has, from the beginning, maintained an attitude of decided opposition to the institution of Slavery."²¹⁸ The pressure upon the synods in slaveholding states was tremendous, both from slaveholding members and those in the larger political body of the state watching the synods.

In Missouri, neither the OS or NS adherents would explicitly condemn or support slavery. Many in the Missouri NS desired the end of slavery, but others did not. Their schism was based on the theological issues, not slavery, thus no mandatory position was needed. The larger OS General Assembly supported this declaration by its Synod in their silence on the issue. This was not the case in the NS, but until 1857 action was not needed on its part on the slavery issue. Like the OS, nationally (or at the very least

²¹⁷ Marsden 188.

²¹⁸ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (NS). From A. D. 1838 To A. D. 1858, Inclusive.* Reprinted: Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School work, 1894. Pg 573.

regionally in the South) there were many within its confines that supported slavery or at least did not believe in interfering with it. Unlike the OS, those that supported its abolition or viewed that allowing slavery within the church as seriously sinful were an important force in the NS Synod, the majority in fact. Clashes between the New and Old Schools could not easily occur as it would in the Methodist church since there was too much ambiguity within its membership.

The lack of a substantial view on slavery from the OS did not prevent some within it from preaching a defined position on slavery. Many in the South and in Missouri did so. Formerly stationed in Cincinnati, the Rev. Nathan Lewis Rice, D. D. of St. Louis was representative of those that held a positive conception on the institution of slavery. In 1845 he held a debate with a fellow OS Presbyterian, Rev. Jonathan Blanchard. Many of Rice's positions and those who were pro-slavery within the OS can be seen in this lengthy debate.

Rice was not a slaveholder. He defined his position as being "opposed to slavery" and he said that "I deplore the evils connected with it."²¹⁹ Nevertheless, that fact did not make him an abolitionist or anything close to it. He maintained in seeing how the master and slave relate "that circumstances have existed, and do now exist, which justify the relation for the time being."²²⁰ Rice did not condone the denouncing of the slaveholder as many others, such as his opponent in the debate, Rev. Blanchard, wanted. There were

²¹⁹ Blanchard and Rice 33.

²²⁰ Blanchard and Rice 34.

economic reasons to allow slavery to continue, despite his desire for the gradual emancipation of slaves and their colonization in places such as Liberia. He feared that slaves immediately manumitted in mass would come to dominate the governments of the South when granted equal rights with whites.²²¹ For, “the entire administration of the government in those States would be placed in the hands of degraded men, wholly ignorant of the principles of law and government.”²²²

As long as the mass colonization could not take place and/or the evils of slavery could be seen as tolerable, men such as Rice had no desire to end the institution of slavery. Those who held slaves were not sinful in Rice’s eyes. To condemn them and uphold the doctrines of abolition would force Christians to “refuse to hold Christian fellowship with slave-holders”²²³ separating the church in the North from that of the South. Both of these consequences were abhorrent according to Rice and should be avoided. He contends that abolitionism would lead to these problems in the future, and thus in his “mind it is clear that it is not Christianity at all.”²²⁴

The attitudes of Rev. Rice and those in the OS that followed his thinking deplore abolitionism. Although he seeks the gradual abolition of slavery, he really provides no mechanism for this gradual end and is fine with it continuing in the South as long as it appears as necessary. Like many of his Methodist contemporaries, he sees abolition as a

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Blanchard and Rice 33.

²²³ Blanchard and Rice 34.

²²⁴ Ibid.

great problem and threat to the well-being of both the church and the government. It must be fought if at all possible in order to eliminate its threat.

Rev. Blanchard, an abolitionist was in Ohio, not Missouri. There, without the slave society of Missouri acting upon the OS, he could be a fervent abolitionist and still be in the Ohio OS. Although there were many in the OS who opposed slavery, men who will be discussed in the next chapter where they have more relevancy, they never were as fervent as men in the NS.

Nonetheless, cases can be seen of members of the NS in Missouri and their views on slavery. The continued case of Rev. David Nelson illustrates one of these cases and how those in the Missourian NS synod (or rather at this point those who would become members of that Synod) in many cases held abolitionist views. In 1836, after he fled the state of Missouri for Quincy, Illinois, Dr. Nelson returned to Greenfield, Missouri to preach regularly to a congregation of willing listeners. During one of these sermons, a prominent member of the congregation, a Mr. Muldrow arose and proceeded to hand Rev. Nelson a letter to read which expressed the sentiment that Missouri could only rise to prominence as a free state. However, a wealthy slaveholder in the congregation, a Dr. Bozley “denounced the writer as an unprincipled schemer and the enemy of the State.”²²⁵ They soon came to blows and Bozley was seriously wounded by Muldrow’s knife.

Fortunately, the seriousness of Bozley’s wound temporarily prevented more bloodshed. However, “during that day all the friends of slavery flew to arms. Many expressed the determination that Dr. N[elson] should never leave the State a living

²²⁵ Marks 78.

man.”²²⁶ After a great deal of pleading, Rev. Nelson’s family was able to convince him to avoid the mob by returning to safety in Illinois. He left Missouri and was eventually able to reach Quincy.

Nevertheless, the day after he arrived in Quincy after a perilous journey, a band of armed men arrived there and demanded that the mayor surrender Dr. Nelson to their charge as a murderer (Bozley had died at this point). However, some prominent locals and supporters of Nelson came to the mayor and pleaded with him. Although the Missourians explained the details of the charge and subsequently swore to these charges, they presented no written proof of the crimes levied against Nelson. Thus, Nelson’s supporters argued to the mayor that ““You know that this charge is utterly false. These men are murderers, for Dr. N[elson] once in their hands they will assassinate him at the first moment possible...we most solemnly assure you that if you surrender Dr. N[elson], and he is shot or hung, his fate awaits you...”²²⁷

After hearing this plea from Nelson’s supporters, the mayor “turned pale and shook with fear...”²²⁸ for he knew he must refuse the demand of the mob, which he did. This seemingly close encounter with death did not deter Nelson from returning to Missouri. That June, he and his wife attempted to visit a sick acquaintance that was dying in the vicinity of Marion College. Upon passing through Palmyra in route to the college, they were recognized by the townspeople of Palmyra. At that instance “the passing of the

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Marks 79.

²²⁸ Ibid.

Doctor through the town was followed by the wildest excitement-bells rang, men gathered, gesticulated, and made show of pistols and knives in the street.”²²⁹ Dr. Nelson was not a welcomed man in many parts of Missouri, his arrival warranted a great deal of excitement. He had become a polarizing figure due to his connection with abolition, and the townspeople acted accordingly. He would be forced to once again leave the state, but his wife continued to Marion College.²³⁰

Nelson continued his work and attempt to preach in Missouri once again. In 1838, numerous citizens of Hannibal requested that he preach at a campground west of the city. Unfortunately for Dr. Nelson and his supporters in Hannibal, “those who had driven the Doctor from the State were determined that such a meeting not be held...They filled the land with their threats, publications and hand-bills.”²³¹ Nonetheless, Dr.. Nelson’s supporters were just as active in those regards. Nelson was able to preach at the campground, but at “the place where the Doctor was to preach, not fewer than five hundred guns were borne.”²³² Fortunately, during this engagement there was no further violence.

The possibility of violence and controversy that followed the Rev. Dr. Nelson continued to follow him throughout his days as he continued to preach and work in Illinois and on occasion in Missouri. Even when he ended up with the NS Presbyterians

²²⁹ Marks 80.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Marks 81.

²³² Ibid.

in Illinois he did not stop his efforts. There would be no desire to halt his abolition work within the Illinois or Missouri NS congregations. In the end, Nelson did not meet his end by the actions of a mob vehemently opposed to his philosophies. He died of complications of epilepsy during the hot summer of 1844 and was missed by many who held the same views that he was persecuted for.²³³

Further instances of battles against abolitionists can be seen in conflicts between the OS and the NS. Artemas Bullard received a letter from Frederick Starr, a NS minister in Weston, which is in Platte County. There he was threatened with hanging and eventually expelled for teaching slaves.²³⁴ For, as the pamphlet from the 1830s shows, the OS would continue to paint the NS as composed of abolitionists. As did the MECS, the OS Presbyterians did show their influence upon the state of Missouri in that they received outside help in undertaking their desired destruction of the NS. Starr and Nelson's cases emphasize this fact.

Overall, not every man or woman in the NS held abolitionist views or even acted upon these views as Dr. Nelson often did. Those that did often underwent the types of persecution that Nelson received from the OS and other concerned citizens. These issues based around slavery continued in the Presbyterian Church through the 1850s, but nowhere near the extent that they did in the Methodist Church. With the gray area on views of slaveholding within the branches of the Presbyterian Church, strife as in the Methodist

²³³ Marks 82-3.

²³⁴ F. Starr to A. Bullard, Aug. 25, 1854, Bullard Papers, Presbyterian Historical Society; from Carwardine, Pp. 246, 410.

Church was not possible. There were those in the NS that would object to those that held the views that Dr. Nelson did. These objections did not eliminate the violence, they only minimized it.

In 1857, things changed in Missouri in this regard. The NS experienced a minor schism of sorts on this issue of abolition. Prior to the General Assembly, the Presbytery of Lexington (VA) served notice that many of its members held slaves out of principle and by their own choosing. They had become fed up with the position taken yearly by the General Assembly and wanted to therefore prompt some sort of action on the part of the General Assembly.

By this point, the sectional crisis had really heated up and the idea of slaveholders within a largely abolitionist church was becoming more and more unworkable. Unlike the Methodists, much larger issues of sectional strife were being pressed upon them. The North and the South were falling further apart and the majority of those in the NS saw no reason to keep the few southern slaveholders as members, each side had grown apart from the another. The Methodists, on the other hand, had already undergone their schism over slavery with the MEC and the MECS holding opposite views on slavery as a result, no further divisions were needed within their ranks.

Thus, the whole General Assembly was forced to come to terms with Lexington's statements on slavery. In a vote that passed the mostly northern General Assembly overwhelmingly, the action of the Presbytery of Lexington was condemned. The General Assembly chose "to disapprove and earnestly condemn the position, which has thus been assumed by the Presbytery of Lexington, South, as one which is opposed to the

established convections of the Presbyterian Church...and we do hereby call on that Presbytery to review and rectify their position”²³⁵ Many of those who voted against this condemnation of both the institution of slavery and the Presbytery of Lexington’s view on it were from southern synods. Four of the six Missouri delegates were among these commissioners that voted against this resolution.²³⁶

These synods soon offered a protest that was considered over the next two days, with many of the same names of those who voted against the original resolution appearing on this protest. In the end, as it would be expected, the committee that was appointed to review the position upheld the previous vote.²³⁷ The various Synods in the slaveholding states now had to choose to remain in the NS General Assembly or pursue some alternate course. In the end, many ended up leaving the General Assembly. Some would remain independent, while all would have a significant portion of their membership joining the OS.²³⁸ For, as it was noted at the end of the century, there was a “constant trend on the part of those in the NS...to leave that body and enter the Old [School]”²³⁹ As a result, the NS would be able to pursue a more abolitionist course owing to the mostly northern nature of their membership.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*. 575.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*. 576, 580-1.

²³⁸ *Hill Historical Outlines* 27.

²³⁹ Hill, Timothy, “Presbyterians in Missouri” *Meeting of the Synod of Missouri held in Maryville, October 23rd, 1900*. Synod of Missouri Publications, 1900. Pg 11.

²⁴⁰ Marsden 188-9.

Missouri was one of the Synods that left the NS General Assembly. There were many in the Missouri Synod that did not wish an abolitionist stance taken in their religion. They joined the NS out of a concern for its theology, not its view on slaveholding. However, there were others, such as Timothy Hill and Thomas H. Tatlow, who voted for the censure of the Lexington Presbytery that did not mind this course of action. Despite their influence, the Missouri Synod chose to leave the NS and to continue as an independent Synod, with most of its membership temporarily intact. Also crucial in their decision was the fact that the American Home Missionary Society did allow the Missouri Home Missionary Society, its subsidiary, to appoint slaveholding missionaries.²⁴¹

Until 1859, the Missouri Synod continued to exist as an independent synod. In 1860 what was left of it rejoined the General Assembly. The lack of delegates at the General Assemblies in this period testifies to this fact.²⁴² In this brief period the Missouri Synod had attempted to join the United Synod of the South. This group was comprised of the southern NS synods that left the General Assembly. The Missouri Synod was never fully united with the United Synod, allowing its eventual reunification with the General Assembly. The failure to unite with the United Synod and the impracticality of remaining independent forced the reunification with the General Assembly.²⁴³ When it did finally rejoin the General Assembly, it was the only NS Synod left in a slaveholding states,

²⁴¹ Hill *Historical Outlines* 27.

²⁴² *Minutes, N S General Assembly*, 598.

²⁴³ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

granted, with decreased membership.²⁴⁴

What eventually allowed this reunification was not the fact that the Missouri Synods was able to rectify its status as being in a slaveholding state with the NS, but the fact that many of those that had a problem with the abolitionist views of the NS. They left the Missouri Synod and joined the OS, leaving fewer people in the NS synod.²⁴⁵ In 1861 there would be 921 reported members in the churches of the New School Synod in Missouri (it should be noted that some of the numbers in the Presbytery of St Louis were incomplete and the Presbytery of Kansas was in the Synod of Missouri).²⁴⁶ Prior to the temporary split in 1857, there were 2,190 adherents in the Synod of Missouri. Thus, there was a forty-one percent decrease in the population of the NS Synod throughout the state, with a majority now concentrated in St. Louis.²⁴⁷

Numerous ministers followed the members of their congregations out of the NS and into the Old. Examples can be seen in the case of the NS church in Palmyra and the Revs. John Leighton and Allan Gallaher who were reported to have left for the OS when it reunited with the NS General Assembly.²⁴⁸ Gallaher, the man who swept up the records of the St. Charles Presbytery as it split in 1840 no longer felt the same way about the OS.

²⁴⁴ Hill 59.

²⁴⁵ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

²⁴⁶ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (NS) 1861*. New York: Presbyterian Publication Committee, 1861. Pg 623-4.

²⁴⁷ *Minutes, N S General Assembly*, 590.

²⁴⁸ Cochran, Rev. Dr. W. P. "Historical Sketch of the Synod of Missouri." *Minutes of the Semi-Centennial Session of the Session of the Synod of Missouri*. St. Louis: Perrin and Smith, 1882. Pg 40.

The theological differences paled in comparison to the NS view on slavery.

There was a “feeling that the work of the New School in Missouri was done and there was no further use of an attempt of perpetuating it here.”²⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the NS Synod of Missouri endured, despite all of these problems, and things began to slowly improve in the last few years prior to the war. Like the MEC, they had some support in Missouri, despite their small numbers.

At the meeting of the Synod in the year before the war, Dr Hill explains that “all things were in apparent harmony, the brethren and the churches were at peace with each other and anticipated good in the future.”²⁵⁰ There were some small problems, but nothing to the extent of the problems that the MEC faced. Despite the largely abolitionist character of the NS synod in Missouri, the problems that we see with ministers such as Nelson and Starr seem to die down. No one writing about this period either inside or outside of the Presbyterian Church has no large examples of conflict with the NS as Elliot presented with the MEC after 1859.

Sectional tensions did not die down, but there are multiple reasons for this lack of problems. The main site of political conflict in Missouri at this point was the border with Kansas. The majority of the NS Presbyterians were in St. Louis, a place of lesser conflict. This distribution was not the case with the MEC. Lincoln carried St. Louis county in 1860, there were enough anti-slavery people in St. Louis to keep the NS relatively safe. The size of the NS Synod, very small compared to the rest of the churches discussed here

²⁴⁹ Hill *Historical Outlines* 28.

²⁵⁰ Hill 59.

(even the MEC) might have also played a part. Smaller churches usually mean that there are fewer records kept. Furthermore, the ambiguous nature of the OS toward slavery, unlike the MECS, would not have easily led to any widespread problems, though they could still occur in theory.

Finally, it is possible that in many places the NS churches were ignored or that their ministers were able to better integrate themselves in their communities, thus minimizing the chances for action taken against them prior to the war. Many of these men were not coming into Missouri from out of state like some of the MEC ministers.²⁵¹ If there were conflicts relating to the NS Synod, no records seemed to have survived.

Violence continued with the new makeup of the NS Synod in Missouri. The initial schism did not produce major issues over slavery till later in time as the sectional crisis was heating up, a complete difference from the Methodists. The political atmosphere of the late 1850s was what allowed the NS General Assembly to end slaveholding within its jurisdiction, unlike the Methodists. The lines of theology that had divided the schools in the 1830s were becoming less important, which eventually led to reunification after the war. The NS had become almost completely pro-abolition in character. Those that did not desire this viewpoint returned to the OS, who maintained an all-encompassing viewpoint nationally.²⁵²

Nevertheless, like the Methodists, the schism in the Presbyterian Church had a political effect. Non-Presbyterians participated in the internal conflicts. The virtual

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Marsden 100-2.

expulsion of the NS Synods that were in favor of slavery had the same effect as the breakup of the Baptist and Methodist churches on the political unity of America and Missouri. The Presbyterians definitely played a role in the sectional crisis, as they would the war itself, it was just a lesser role than the Methodists at this time.

The Baptists of Missouri were different from the Presbyterians and Methodists of Missouri in a variety of ways. First and foremost they had no corresponding body in Missouri that was aligned with the North as did the other two churches. No large associations split off from the Missouri General Baptist Association when it chose to align itself with the SBC. Thus, the amount of conflict produced over their schism over slavery was less than the other two churches presented in this study prior to the war. Nevertheless, this issue alone did not prevent them from experiencing turmoil over slavery, either during the war itself or the years leading up to the war. Like the Presbyterians, they would play a role in the politics of the sectional crisis in Missouri, but a lesser role than the Methodists.

Throughout the antebellum period, the main concern of the Baptists in Missouri was the missionizing of various regions of the state that had not been reached to that point. The SBC helped to accomplish this goal in a variety of ways, mainly in terms of allocating resources that the state did not have internally. The 1850 Missouri convention, hoped that “Missouri, being one of the recently settled and destitute States, would be the recipient of a liberal portion of the benefactions of our brethren in the older and more

favorable States.”²⁵³

Ensuring that all the churches in Missouri would have ministers was a major problem according to the minutes of the Missouri Baptist General Association and whatever means necessary would have to be undertaken to fulfill that goal. Fortunately, the SBC also presented an opportunity to do this without excluding slaveholders. Although Missouri would not get everything that its Baptists hoped for, the subsequent conventions clearly show that the Missouri Baptist General Association received a great deal of aid and was able to remedy some of its problems prior to the war.

Thus, in 1851 when the SBC organized the Southern Bible Board the Missouri Baptists went along without any dissent. It was generally accepted that it was needed to promulgate the Gospel in Missouri and to “secure harmony among the Churches of the South...”²⁵⁴ The board, needed in order to ensure that slaveholders could participate without worry of any problems from the northern churches, was held by the Missouri Baptists as “imperiously demanded by the circumstances of the times, and that it was a wise, prudent, and conservative movement.”²⁵⁵ Obviously set against problems with abolitionists, the board was formed and its status as a “conservative movement” ran against any “agitation” from abolitionist-minded Baptists.

What was established by the SBC obviously met most of the demands of the Missouri Baptists; there is nothing to the contrary recorded in the minutes prior to the

²⁵³ General Assoc. Minutes 1850, 9.

²⁵⁴ General Assoc. Minutes 1851, 9.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

war. The lack of severity in the schism did not cause the problems that were quickly apparent in the Methodist Church or that would develop in the Presbyterian Church. Until the war, there was no need for the Baptists in Missouri, aligned with the SBC to fight those employed in the service of the North and vice versa. The Missouri Baptists mention no attempts that were made by those aligned with the ABHMS to raise issues in Missouri. While problems occurred elsewhere,²⁵⁶ there were no major issues in a state such as Missouri that already had an established Baptist mechanism, even if it was not as great as some of the older states. A variety of Missouri Baptist sources from this period confirm this idea.²⁵⁷

The independence of Baptist congregations did prevent some of the problems of a schism in that individual congregations in Missouri were not forced out of the churches or compelled to choose sides. The independence in Baptist congregations allowed this unanimity with the Missouri Baptists. There were disputes in Missouri, but they primarily dealt with the anti-mission controversy and other problems of what was referred to as church governance. Although the majority of the Baptists in Missouri were pro-slavery in some regards (the slave society²⁵⁸ of Missouri made this the dominant mindset in the

²⁵⁶ Carwardine 248. He mentions ABHMS incursions into several southern areas in the 1850s but gives no specific examples.

²⁵⁷ *The Western Watchman*, St. Louis, MO: Keith and Woods. (Monthly: 1847-59); and *Missouri Baptist*, St. Louis, MO. (Monthly: 1857-61). Neither of these papers have any mention of problems besides vague mentions of the incursions that Carwardine briefly discusses.

²⁵⁸ Refers to the concept of the larger political/cultural Missouri society organized to perpetuate the institution of slavery.

state), one could at least in theory maintain anti-slavery or even abolitionist views as long as they did not attempt to force these beliefs on other Baptists. The schism was so Baptist missionaries could be slaveholders if they desired, that is what it did in Missouri. Since no more on the issue was needed, there was less internal fighting than with the Methodists or Presbyterians.

These occurrences did not divorce the political tensions from the Baptist schism. As it was seen with the quote from Rev. Rice, there was some apprehension over the schism, despite its lack of severity. The apprehensions men such as Henry Clay felt over the Methodist schism could easily be transferred to the Baptists. It split the North from the South and would do nothing to alleviate the sectional tensions that had already begun to be felt in the mid 1840s. There would be political repercussions, especially with the onset of the war. But, it must be kept in mind that the lesser degree of harshness in the schism and the previously discussed repercussions would allow things to play out quite differently for the Baptists in Missouri.

Nonetheless, especially as the sectional crisis became more frenzied, there were issues with Baptists and slavery. Examples of issues with slavery can be found in their records. As the account retold by Rev. Elliot illustrates, Baptists participated in the persecution of the MEC along with the MECS. There is no doubt that there were other small, similar occurrences in the 1850s in Missouri. However, although free from the strife of the significance that it existed in Methodist church there would be problems that the Baptists experienced.

In his history of Missouri Baptists, W. Pope Yeaman explains that “A Faithful

History of the General Association can not be written without a truthful narrative of the secular movements and agitations that powerfully influenced social and religious conditions.”²⁵⁹ What is important here is that Yeaman attributes all of the pain experienced by the churches of Missouri during the latter sectional crisis and especially with the war to the influence of outside political events upon the Baptists, a notion not found to that extent with the Methodists. He is minimizing the role of the Baptist church in Missouri in its politics. While there are additional testimonies and examples that could be no doubt brought up to verify this conclusion, it is nonetheless clear that Yeaman is correct in his statement.

Although the controversies over Kansas were of a crucial importance in the politics of Missouri, the church did not further these controversies, but some of its members may have participated. Yeaman confirms that the meetings of the General Association in Missouri were fairly routine during the period, but he points out an alarming trend of a decrease of results in mission work via the funds that were invested in it. Though not commented upon at the time by the General Association, for Yeaman it becomes clear that the border war with Kansas was having an ill-effect upon the efforts of the Baptists of Missouri. Those churches close to Kansas experienced the most problems and the greatest decrease in results per the amount of money that was contributed. Things would only worsen during the Civil War.²⁶⁰

In many cases, the individual accounts of Baptist ministers confirm what Yeaman

²⁵⁹ Yeaman 111.

²⁶⁰ Yeaman 118-20.

avows. Elder William Russell Wiggington, of Boone County is fairly typical in this regard. Most of his problems deal with the lack of men to minister in the churches of Boone County and other minor problems that would be expected of anyone acting as pastor to a congregation. Although he mentions in his autobiography that his father was a slaveholder, there is nothing more about slavery and only a vague reference to of the political crisis surrounding Kansas and the Civil War. Many other Baptist accounts read the same.²⁶¹

Rev. Jonathan B. Fuller on the other hand was not stationed in the central part of Missouri. After converting and being ordained in November of 1860, he served as pastor of the La Grange (on the Mississippi River, by Quincy, Illinois) Baptist church for two years and of the church in Louisiana, Missouri in the first half of the war. In his journal and records, there is no real mention of sectional conflict over slavery within the church as the Methodists experienced in that town. All of his issues deal with the war itself. Though, as it will be seen in the next chapter, politics did come into his preaching, as with many other Baptists. Fuller was a fervent Unionist and an anti-slavery man. He did not attempt to hide his feelings with his preaching.²⁶²

Unlike Fuller, there would be those in Missouri that favored slavery (or at least its

²⁶¹ Wiggington, W. R. *Life and Labors of Elder W R Wiggington: An Autobiography*. No publisher/date. Pp. 2, 12-3, 19.

²⁶² "Journal of Jonathan B. Fuller for the Pastoral Year in Louisiana, Missouri, 1863," Folder 1, *Jonathan B Fuller Papers*, Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri-Kansas City; for the biographical information on Fuller, see the MA Thesis presented by Gray, Larry G. *Sheppard in a Divided Land: The Life and Times of The Reverend Jonathan B. Fuller, 1840-1928*, UMKC, 1996.

preservation) and during the war favored the South. One of these men, Rev. Robert Samuel Duncan, can be seen as representative for these Baptists. Although not a slaveholder himself from what can be gathered from his autobiography, Elder Duncan was by no means an abolitionist and felt compelled to write during the war that the state of Missouri “rightly belonged to the South,” as an illustration of his political preferences during the war.²⁶³ As a result, the war, in his own words, “was the most inconvenient period of my life, by far.”²⁶⁴ Duncan, who would write *A History of the Baptists in Missouri* after the war, the primary historical record of the Missouri Baptists, illustrates cases of numerous ministers that felt similarly to him and to Fuller during the sectional crisis and the period leading up to the war.²⁶⁵

However, there were different takes on the sectional crisis among Missouri Baptists. While virtually all ministers had some sort of political leanings, others expressed them more explicitly and wished that their church might take a more active role in politics, despite any potential drawbacks. These sentiments seemed to be expressed by Dr. Stephen Fisk in his memoir of Rev. William Hurley in 1857. In praising his friend at his death, Fisk proclaims that “perhaps at the present crisis, the death of no man in our

²⁶³ Duncan, R. S. *Autobiography of R. S. Duncan*. Kansas City, MO: The Western Baptist Publishing Company, 1910. Pg 77.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Duncan, R. S. *A History of the Baptists in Missouri: An Account of the Organization and Growth of Baptist Churches and Associations; Biographical Sketches of Ministers of the Gospel and Other Prominent Members of the Denomination; The Founding of Baptist Institutions, Periodicals, ETC*. St. Louis: Scammell and Company, 1882.

denomination in Missouri, would have been so deeply deplored.”²⁶⁶ Fisk laments the loss of the political influence that Hurley exerted on all who were around him both religiously and secularly.²⁶⁷

The diverse viewpoints that can be seen in the Presbyterians and Methodists is also apparent from the story of the Baptists in Missouri during the period leading up to the war. However, the unique nature of the Baptist denomination and their schism led to a different set of results. Conflicts over slavery in their churches were decidedly less than the churches of their fellow Christians in Missouri. Nevertheless, problems did occur, only to worsen during the war. Furthermore, divergent views on slavery were present in the Baptists as well, but they could co-exist under the Baptist structure. Their schism, like that of the Methodists, did not help matters during the sectional crisis by driving the North from the South, but it did not produce the same results as the Methodists. Only during the war will the full brunt of the Baptist cultural/political influence on Missouri be felt. Their influence on driving tensions between the North and South apart before that point is considerably less than either of the other two denominations.

Each of the three denominations examined played a role in the coming of the Civil War in Missouri, but each played a different role. Each used their influence to bring both

²⁶⁶ Fisk, Stephen, MD. *Memoir of Rev. William Hurley, also His Funeral Sermon*. St. Louis: William Crowell, 1857. Pg 59.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

the government and the people of Missouri into their battles. The nature and severity of the initial schism combined with other factors in their denominations determined the outcome of events both nationally and in Missouri as the nation headed toward war. The Methodists, with the most pronounced schism experienced the most problems. Their membership was far more polarized between pro and anti-slavery ideologies than the other two denominations. Thus, they would also influence the sectional conflict to the greatest degree.

The Presbyterians, while just as harsh in their schism, separated over theological issues, only later did these problems translate into serious problems over slavery. They had some influence in agitating the sectional conflict, but not as much as the Methodists did. On the other hand, the Baptists experienced a schism over slavery, but one that was less severe. Owing to the lack of any significant northern sympathizing mechanism in Missouri and the fact that the independent nature of Baptist congregations allowed those not in favor of slavery to accept the Missouri Baptist General Association as a subsidiary of the pro-slavery SBC, large-scale conflicts did not occur. The Baptists could generally get along with one another until the war. The Presbyterians and Baptists prove that the statement of Rev. Elliot was true in that being a member of the MEC was the worst thing possible in the eyes of pro-slavery Missourians.

Chapter Three:

Broken Churches and a Broken Nation

In the election of 1860, Missourians split their votes between the Democrat, Stephen A Douglas and the Constitutional Unionist, John C. Bell. Douglas' narrow victory, 35.5 to 35.4 percent demonstrated that Missourians wanted "conservative" candidates that would maintain both the union and slavery. Lincoln and the southern Democrat, John C. Breckinridge, received 18.8 and ten percent of the vote respectively. Both received only sporadic support because they were seen as too radical for Missouri. Most Missourians did not want a civil war, which was feared if the latter two men won, and overwhelmingly wanted to keep slavery alive in their state.²⁶⁸

However, the Missouri Democrats had nominated a variety of radical pro-slavery and secessionist-leaning men for state-wide offices. Despite their views in this area, they ran on the Douglas-Democratic ticket in order to ensure election. Thus, when war broke out, these men, led by Gov. Claiborne Jackson, sought to produce Missouri's secession from the Union. He called for a convention on this issue to be held in February of 1861. As would be expected from the results of the 1860 election, the vast majority of the delegates elected were those in favor of remaining in the Union.²⁶⁹ Thus, the February

²⁶⁸ Gilmore, Donald L. *Civil War on the Missouri-Kansas Border*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006. Pg 105-6.

²⁶⁹ Gilmore 107-8.

convention concluded “that at present there is no adequate cause to impel Missouri to dissolve her connection with the Federal Union.”²⁷⁰ Missouri would not leave the Union. While there was significant support to leave, especially when the North sought to put down the rebellion, this was not enough support to produce her secession.

Nonetheless, Claiborne and his supporters were undeterred in their efforts to sever Missouri’s ties with the Union. He ordered the formation of the Missouri State Guard, under Sterling Price, to defeat possible Union military incursions into the state. Federal forces, composed largely of loyal Germans under Nathaniel Lyon were able to secure most of the state for the Union, forcing Claiborne and his secessionist government to flee Jefferson City. Claiborne’s government was soon repudiated by the same convention that he had set up for Missouri’s secession (the convention met again in July for this purpose instead of the originally planned December meeting).²⁷¹ Though soon recognized by Richmond, the pro-southern rump government would be forced to flee from the federal forces throughout the war and eventually ended up in Arkansas and Texas as the war went increasingly poorly for the South.

Despite setbacks at Wilson’s Creek (north of Springfield) and Lexington, by the end of 1861 most of Missouri (except the southwestern portion of the state) would be in Union hands. Price’s forces continued to threaten St. Louis, but after his (and the larger Confederate Army of the West’s) defeat at Pea Ridge in northern Arkansas in early 1862,

²⁷⁰ *Journal of the Missouri State Convention, Held at Jefferson City, July, 1861*. St. Louis: George Knapp and Co., 1861. Pg 20.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

the larger threat to Missouri was lessened. Price continued to threaten parts of the state to a lesser extent cumulating in his defeat at the battle of Westport (by Kansas City) in 1864.²⁷²

Unfortunately for Missourians, the onset of war allowed people in both Missouri and Kansas to seize the initiative to use violence to revenge old grievances.²⁷³ The Presbyterian minister, George Miller, sums up such sediments when he recalls a conversation with a young man. His companion explains “with evident bitterness, *‘I am glad war is coming; we want a chance at Kansas,’*” but Miller answers him, ““Does it not occur to you that it would also *give Kansas a chance at Missouri?*””²⁷⁴ He had no answer. Miller’s comments foreshadowed what was to come. Combined with the larger war in the West, many parts of Missouri were thrown into chaos.

Battles within each of Missouri churches only increased. However, conflicts between the civil authorities and these churches also were on the increase, with religion in Missouri as a whole being adversely effected by the war. Here, the full effects of the governmental/popular participation in the struggles over slavery within the denominations are apparent. Here, popular participation reaches its height. While some sought to use religion as a justification to prevent or end the war, others used it as a pretense to fight. In

²⁷² Gilmore 109-12.

²⁷³ Etcheson 219.

²⁷⁴ Miller, Rev. George, *Missouri’s Memorable Decade, 1860-1870* Columbia, MO: Press of E. W. Stephens, 1898. Pg 41.

the end, the churches in Missouri experienced an enormous amount of devastation as a result of the war, with numerous churches ceasing to exist as their members and clergy went off to war, or were forced to flee. Through the war, we can clearly see the larger political events acting on the churches to further conflict and hostilities. Nevertheless, the war can also be seen as the logical outcome to the struggle over slavery within the formerly unified churches.

Nonetheless, neither of the three denominations experienced the war in the same way. While all experienced problems, the different schisms and paths of development that each undertook in the years leading up to the war led to a different experience of the war. Each church had a unique political make-up and a general trend (though there was the occasional exception), due to the experience of the initial schism. The NS Presbyterians and the MEC were fairly consistent in their support of the Union and desire to rid the nation of slavery. The OS Synod of the Presbyterian Church and Baptists of Missouri, while generally pro-slavery and at least a little sympathetic to the South had large percentages of their members that were pro-Union. It was only in the MECS that these pro-Union members did not exist to any significant degree. This was a product of the schisms.

The schism of the Methodist church had a profound impact politically. This impact would not stop during the war, with a large number of the ministers and their congregants participating in it. In Missouri, with the vast majority of the members in the southern-sympathizing MECS, the majority of the Methodists in Missouri can be documented as southern sympathizers. Those in the MEC, who officially supported the

Union during the war were in the minority in Missouri, but were present nonetheless.

With the severity of the schism over the Methodist church, the membership and their ministers were far more likely to take the respective church teaching on slavery to heart, and support the Confederacy or the Union. Without the other side to restrict their views, another product of the schism, many became quite radical in the ideals that they fought for.

As war broke out in Missouri those that supported the Confederacy soon became vocal in their support. In his *Life of Caples*, Marvin writes that Rev. Caples was a denouncer of abolition and a therefore a firm supporter of the Confederacy. According to Marvin, for Caples “the fact that Abolitionism bred disrespect for the Bible was to him cause of anxiety.”²⁷⁵ Thus, those that upheld abolitionism were in fact rejecting the word of God in his outlook. Furthermore, Caples felt that the Constitution was based upon the precepts of the Bible, so as a result, to deny the institution of slavery was paramount to denying the word of God. For that reason Marvin says that Caples supported the South when Lincoln was elected in 1860.²⁷⁶ Caples believed that with Lincoln’s election “the occasion justified revolution.”²⁷⁷

Caples put his beliefs into practice once the war broke out. In 1861 as General Price won at Wilson’s Creek and was poised to capture Lexington, Caples felt that it was prudent to minister to his flock (many of whom had joined the Missouri State Guard) in

²⁷⁵ Marvin 258.

²⁷⁶ Marvin 258-9.

²⁷⁷ Marvin 260.

Price's pro-Confederate camps, since that is where a majority of the congregation was now. Thus, he continued to show his support for the Confederate cause by becoming a chaplain in the army.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, when Price's fortunes turned, Caples was forced to retreat with him out of Missouri. Later, while in Arkansas, after the battle of Pea Ridge, Caples attempted to return home in order to see his family and procure winter clothing for the army. However, he was captured by the Union army and sent to a prison in St. Louis.²⁷⁹

Although he was only there for about six weeks, Marvin does not miss an opportunity to describe what he considered the deplorable conditions of the prison. Marvin, being both pro-southern and stationed in St. Louis at the time, definitely had the first-hand experience that allowed him to bring forth his views on the matter while recounting Caples' experiences.²⁸⁰

Once Caples was released from prison he was forced to take an oath of loyalty to the Union. Thus, unless he broke his oath, he could no longer help the Confederate army and he was further restricted in what he could preach. According to Marvin, this predicament placed a great deal of stress on Caples. He desired to continue spreading what he thought were Biblical truths, but then again he did not want to get into further trouble with the federal authorities and risk possible harm to his family (his daughter Catherine was also ill at this time). Nevertheless, Marvin explains that Caples eventually

²⁷⁸ Marvin 263-5.

²⁷⁹ Marvin 270-1.

²⁸⁰ Marvin 272-4.

resumed his ministry in spite of these risks.²⁸¹

Other Methodists in Missouri would feel the same way as Caples toward slavery and the South. They too acted on these strong feelings, also incurring the wrath of the federal government. Rev. David Rice McAnally, who wrote multiple biographies for the MECS and served as the editor of its official paper, the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, was one of these men. In July of 1861, a pro-union mob formed and in his words

threatened to destroy my dwelling house and church because I had publically baptized a child whose parents chose to name it Harry Beauregard [after the Confederate general], which mob desisted from their purpose only a few short hours before that purpose was to have been accomplished, and then not until one of the principle men had been told that there were no less than thirty or forty men who would, at the risk of their lives, hold him personally responsible for all harm that might befall me from the mob.²⁸²

Fortunately, his supporters had saved him, but they were not be able to save him from federal troops that would ransack his house later that month, looking for evidence that he was aiding the South in their war effort. What they found during their search of his personal papers they took, but nothing was there that they could use against him.

A man who's "name and face were familiar to the people of the city" of St. Louis quickly gained further displeasure in the eyes of the Union authorities by the manner in which he ran his paper.²⁸³ The *Advocate* would be suppressed, denying the MECS its newspaper and an important organ in its mission. McAnally was printing pro-southern

²⁸¹ Marvin 278-81.

²⁸² Lewis 82.

²⁸³ Hyde, William and Howard L. Conard. *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, A Compendium of History and Biography for Ready Reference*. New York: The Southern History Company, 1899. Pg 1385.

editorials in his paper, which could not be tolerated by the Union authorities.²⁸⁴ A few years after the war, Rev. W. H. Lewis laments that many who “hail with pleasure the weekly visitation of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate!*” and find within it “many sound and instructive religious lessons” would be without their paper.²⁸⁵ For, with its suppression, McAnally would be thrown into prison charged with violating the articles of war by giving news that might have aided the enemy.²⁸⁶

Eventually, after his arrest, McAnally was put on trial before the provost marshal’s court. On the first day of his trial, “The Judge Advocate threw on the table a number of copies of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, with certain articles therein marked.”²⁸⁷ His pro-southern editorials would now be used against him. Combined with the witnesses brought against him, these were to be the primary foundations of the evidence that sought to convict McAnally. Nevertheless, McAnally’s defense and counter-witnesses proved effective enough that despite his conviction, no serious penalty was handed out against him. He was “remanded to the care of the provost-marshal, who, upon [his] verbal pledge ‘not to give aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States, nor to leave the County of St. Louis, and to report myself at the office whenever required,’ allowed [him] to go.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ It should be noted that copies of his paper from this era have survived sporadically and the issues in question, from 1861 and early 1862 have not survived in the collections the author has access too.

²⁸⁵ Lewis 75.

²⁸⁶ Hyde and Conard 1386.

²⁸⁷ Lewis 79.

²⁸⁸ Lewis 79-80.

Nevertheless, in 1863 the federal authorities, not satisfied with their failure to imprison McAnally and thus to end his preaching, attempted to have him banished to the South. As in 1862, McAnally was saved from any actual punishment when an order came at the last second allowing him to avoid the steamship for the South.²⁸⁹ Despite his pro-slavery views and his obvious sympathies for the South, McAnally was careful and did little more to support their cause for independence. Thus, the Union army officials in St. Louis could never find any evidence to condemn him as a traitor to the Union cause and levy a harsher penalty against him. Though under duress and a thorn in the side of the same officials, McAnally could never be expelled or jailed on a permanent basis.

Nonetheless, his case was typical of many southern Methodists in Missouri. They may not have joined pro-Confederate forces in some fashion as did Caples, but they deplored the war and most vocally supported the Confederacy in a variety of ways. They almost certainly would not have minded if the state of Missouri had joined the Confederacy. Revs. Lewis and William Leftwich give countless examples of these MECS ministers undergoing persecution during the war for both of their works are exceedingly detailed in their description of the plight of the MECS. There are men in their works that supported the South in some manner during the war, some more actively aiding the Confederacy, some acting similar to McAnally.

From what Marvin records in his biography of Caples, he too was a supporter of the South during the Civil War. According to McAnally in his biography of Marvin, in April of 1862 the General Conference of the MECS was to be held in New Orleans,

²⁸⁹ Lewis 80-1.

Louisiana. Marvin was one of the two delegates from Missouri that crossed Union lines in order to reach the conference. However, the conference was cancelled before he got there, leaving him behind Confederate lines. Choosing not to risk capture by returning to St. Louis, where he was stationed at the time, Marvin remained in the South and ministered in various capacities in the army. He did so until he received permission from Lincoln to cross the lines back into Missouri in 1865 as the war was coming to a close.²⁹⁰

Of Marvin's views toward the southern cause, McAnally writes that "it is not sought to be disguised, that his reason and heart were with the Southern cause. Indeed, to the day of his death, his opinions and feelings on this subject were deepened but never changed..."²⁹¹ The idea of his views being unchanged can be certainly testified to in the biography of Caples. Furthermore, the idea of southern support being linked heavily to religion is crucial here for Marvin as well. Like Caples, he believed that the Bible dictated support of the southern cause due to its principles.²⁹² Here another example can be seen of a member of the MECS that supported the southern cause. Like Caples, with those opinions being expressed in a post-war biography where a mollification of these views was likely, the fervency of their pro-southern views are maintained.

The elimination of any possible abolitionist men from their ranks as a result of the schism allowed the MECS to continue on this course. No one was attempting to limit their support for slavery or in many instances the Confederate cause. As explained before,

²⁹⁰ McAnally *Marvin* 178-81; 187-90.

²⁹¹ McAnally *Marvin* 181.

²⁹² McAnally *Marvin* 178-81

religion and politics continue to merge as they had in the antebellum period. With the onset of the war, southern Methodists in Missouri only had all the more reason to act out their religious views on the political stage. The merging of politics and religion that Noll and Carwardine describe in their works is very apparent here in Missouri.

For this theory to work, the same must hold true with the MEC in that they support the Union during the war. Confirmation is quickly provided by Rev. Elliot in a letter that he wrote to Simon Cameron, the Secretary of War in 1861. In it he asserts that “there is no more loyal people in the Union than the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”²⁹³

Furthermore he proves the point that the schism allowed each resulting church to go in its separate and polarized way on slavery and the Union when he explains that “Had the Southern Methodists been retained in our Church with their pro-slavery principles...the Methodist Episcopal Church would not have been the great barrier to secession in the State it has proved to be, during the war.”²⁹⁴ MEC members were loyal to the Union and Elliot provides many examples to prove these points. However, as a result of this loyalty, they would experience more persecution in the days after the 1860 election and the opening days of the war before Missouri had been largely secured for the Union. For this reason Elliot wrote Secretary Cameron in April of 1865.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ Elliot 244-5.

²⁹⁴ Elliot 243.

²⁹⁵ Elliot 288.

Problems abounded for the MEC. During May of 1861 Elliot writes that “the religious services of our Church in Missouri were quite suspended, outside of St. Louis. Most of our preachers were either compelled to leave the State or confine themselves to one single place.”²⁹⁶ In many ways it may be said that things worsened with the initial onset of war for the MEC. In his paper, Elliot publishes a letter from a layman, E. G. Evans. In this letter he explains that “All persecutions that we have endured can be traced to that new religion called Southern Methodism,”²⁹⁷ confirming Elliot’s previous ascertain.

Furthermore, Elliot furnishes the case of a Mr. Weller, a member who was compelled to leave St. Louis, one of the safer regions for the MEC.²⁹⁸ The fact that the Annual Conference of the MEC was moved from Jefferson City to St. Louis for its protection in 1861 shows that there was at least the threat of violence, especially since the federal army had not taken full control of that area of the state yet.²⁹⁹

Additional MEC examples from the German Methodists show their unconditional condemnation of slavery continued into the war with their support for the Union (it should be noted that German votes made up a great deal of Lincoln’s support in 1860).³⁰⁰ However, like the rest of the MEC, significant problems would remain as a result of this support for the Union, which J. A. Muller says “every German [in the MEC] was loyal

²⁹⁶ Elliot 267.

²⁹⁷ *Central Christian Advocate*, St. Louis, MO: C. Elliot, J. Brooks, et al. (weekly) May 15, 1861, pg 78.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Elliot 243.

³⁰⁰ Gilmore 105-6.

too.”³⁰¹ Three of the German MEC presiding elders; Fessil, Steinly, and Hendel had their horses stolen by rebels and had subsequent problems reaching their appointments. Rev. Widmann, who’s residence was in Lexington (in west-central Missouri and a battle site when this instance occurred), was forced to flee for his life and was then captured twice by the rebels. Furthermore, J. P. Miller and Peter Hehner of Booneville and Liberty respectively (both towns in west-central Missouri as well), were also forced to take flight. Finally Muller gives the example of a camp meeting in Eudora (south-west Missouri) that was broken up in August of 1863. Quantell’s guerilla band arrived and proceeded to end this meeting before leaving to sack Lawrence, Kansas.³⁰²

In another issue of his *Central Christian Advocate*, Elliot writes that the MECS “is now kicking hard for secession. The common talk is that it is ‘a unit for secession...’”³⁰³ He then goes on to detail secessionist speeches made in various Missouri counties. Elliot continues to shed light on the matter with his discussion that holds “Most of the Southern Methodist preachers and many of their members were co-laborers with the General [Price] in this treasonable work” of attempting to conquer Missouri for the Confederacy.³⁰⁴ The future MEC minister and current Union soldier S. G. Bundy complained of the “talk of secession by the ministers of the M. E. Church, South,” throughout the war in his autobiography.³⁰⁵ It was clear that the MEC saw their southern

³⁰¹ The Old Grey Book, Western c. 3595, f. 29.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ *Central Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1861, pg 56.

³⁰⁴ Elliot 353.

³⁰⁵ Bundy, S. G. *Autobiography of S. G. Bundy*. Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri-

counterparts as traitors to the Union cause.

Things would improve for the MEC in Missouri. Elliot is able to describe what was a turn of events in the testimony of the Rev. S. S. Wood who is relieved when he says that “before the arrival of the troops at Rolla there was an activity exerted by Jackson and his dupes which, had not the Government interposed, would have run out or have so intimidated all Union men...”³⁰⁶ With the Union gaining control of most of Missouri, things were a great deal better for the MEC in Missouri. Granted there would be problems later on, as we can see with the German Methodist incident in 1863. No longer would they suffer the large-scale wrath of the government of Missouri with strong-Unionists in its charge. The mobs and the government would increase their role in the MEC’s disputes with the MECS, but they would now help the MEC.

To ensure their Unionists credentials, while in their Annual Conference in 1862, the MEC asked the provost marshal of St. Louis to come and administer an oath of loyalty to the Union for those in attendance. This oath was not forced upon them, they requested it unlike their fellow Evangelicals in many cases during the war.³⁰⁷ With their loyalty confirmed, Elliot claims that there were those that soon arrived asking to join the MEC.

By May of 1862, “Many loyal persons of the Southern Methodist Church were

Columbia, Collection 2985. Pg 23.

³⁰⁶ Elliot 295.

³⁰⁷ Elliot 370.

waiting anxiously for the services of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”³⁰⁸ For example, the congregation of the MECS church in Louisiana, MO deserted the MECS and petitioned for a loyal MEC minister.³⁰⁹ Seeing both its proximity to Illinois and the fact that the MEC minister had a great deal of success, this request is not surprising.

Unfortunately for the MEC they botched their attempt to take legal possession of the church building in Louisiana as the MECS would fight back. The MECS supporters did not completely desert their church in its times of troubles. As W. H. Lewis explains the building had been built by the MECS after the schism, thus giving the MEC no legal right to it. However, despite this fact, the MEC won the initial judgment in the lower court in 1862. Though, the fact that “Thomas J. C. Fagg, then Judge of the Louisiana Court of Common Pleas, was council for the M. E. Church (North) in his own court,” most likely played a crucial role, no longer could the MECS count on the government for protection.³¹⁰ Nevertheless, this injustice was overturned on appeal by the Missouri State Supreme Court, albeit in 1866, which ordered the return of the possession of the church building to the MECS trustees.³¹¹

This example of the church in Louisiana is typical of what went on in Missouri during the war. The MEC tried to move in on the MECS and the MECS fought back, with eventual success, despite the federal authorities in Missouri and increasing numbers of

³⁰⁸ Elliot 390.

³⁰⁹ Elliot 412-3.

³¹⁰ Lewis 63.

³¹¹ State Archives of Missouri, *Supreme Court Case Files*. Box 271, folder 14.

outside people as well during the war. Lewis agrees with Elliot's discussion in explaining that "The Northern Methodists put into practical operation a very extensive system of Church seizure in all parts of Missouri...embracing the entire territory of the State."³¹² The MEC attempted to seize any MECS church it could get its hands on, while the MECS fought back using whatever methods it could. Churches that Elliot gives as examples, such as Booneville, were eventually won back by the MECS as Rev. Lewis explains.³¹³

Another example is given of the church in Potosi (in southeastern Missouri). A minister affiliated with the MEC came in when the station was vacant and claimed to be neutral in his affiliation. Nevertheless it soon became apparent that he was a northern sympathizer determined to take possession of the church. However, after the war ended the MECS presiding elder of the circuit, Rev. Solvin, was again able to make his rounds to Potosi and announced there "that the house belonged to them, [MECS] and henceforth they intended to hold and possess the same."³¹⁴

In the end, some members defected to the MEC from the MECS. However, most remained loyal to the MECS. They were able to maintain their initial loyalty to slavery and the South, but less vocally than before. The most convincing fact to support this argument is that nowhere do we find large numbers of people joining the MEC during the war period. There are some defections, but only a few. Elliot among others would have

³¹² Lewis 231.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Lewis 231.

been sure to mention otherwise.³¹⁵ Any MECS members that were supporters of the Union in the later years of the war were usually supporters in name only. Like Caples and Marvin, they simply took loyalty oaths to avoid prison and/or protect their families.

More numerous are those instances of persecution levied by the MEC against the MECS after 1861. Lincoln's second Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, issued a proclamation written by MEC Bishop Edward Raymond Ames allowing for the MEC to seize (and the army was to cooperate in this endeavor) any churches run by disloyal ministers of the MECS.³¹⁶ In 1870 MECS minister William Leftwich published *Martyrdom in Missouri*, describing the religious persecution in Missouri during the Civil War, and bringing to light in his view many of the instances of persecutions levied against the MECS. In his introduction Leftwich elucidates that Missouri was the only state in which religious persecution was legal during the Civil War and those that were the persecutors were in turn shielded from the law.³¹⁷ Leftwich was critical of those he views as persecuting other churches.

According to Leftwich, the MEC newspapers did not miss an opportunity to denounce their southern counterparts. To prove this point, Leftwich uses multiple examples from Elliot's paper *The Central Christian Advocate*.³¹⁸ Furthermore, there are

³¹⁵ Farish 382.

³¹⁶ Jones 40.

³¹⁷ Leftwich v1 4-5.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

numerous examples of persecution of the MECS on the behalf of the MEC. Multiple examples of MEC members expelling the MECS from the MECS church buildings can be seen in Leftwich's account.³¹⁹ Also, there are two instances of the MECS not being able to hold their conferences in the locations that they desired in 1864. A conference in Hannibal (on the Mississippi River) had to be moved to Glasgow (in central Missouri). Also, a conference originally slated for St. Louis had to be moved to Arrow Rock (in west central Missouri).³²⁰

These last examples give further credence to what Marvin writes about the conferences being moved towards the end of the war in his biography of Caples. For everyone attempting to go to a conference (either quarterly or annual) faced a journey fraught with numerous difficulties. Since these men at one point had virtually all been southern supporters and only loyal to the Union in name, they were marked men in Marvin's view.³²¹ As a result, the MECS was unable to hold its Annual Conferences in both 1862 and 1863. Caples was one of the few men that attended the one held in 1864, shortly before his death.

In the end, examples could be given that illustrate that some in the MECS were not as sympathetic for the southern cause as they were made out to be by the MEC or Rev. Caples himself. Lewis and Leftwich, writing after the war, wished to bring forth this

³¹⁹ Leftwich 150-7.

³²⁰ Leftwich v1 158-9.

³²¹ Marvin 176-7.

idea. Though, looking at the instances of men imprisoned or driven from their posts who refused to acknowledge the Union or take some sort of oath diminish their arguments. Writing pro-southern literature was still not the safest thing to do in Missouri after the war, especially since they were writing during Reconstruction. After 1861, widespread vocal support of the Confederacy was difficult to maintain in many parts of Missouri. McAnally's publishing almost got him separated from his family by being expelled to the Confederacy. Those in the MECS had to maintain some semblance of loyalty if they were to have any hope in continuing their ministries during the war or afterwards.

Unfortunately, what took place in Missouri for the Methodists of both sides was misery. They could not continue their work in many cases. The example of one MECS quarterly conference in New Madrid is telling. Just two years before the war they proclaimed that their Sunday school was "in a most gratifying state of prosperity."³²² However, by their meeting in July of 1861, "people's minds were drawn away" with the coming of the war and they would not meet again until 1865.³²³ Similar examples took place in many of the other quarterly conferences in Missouri, MEC and MECS. By the end of the war, it was apparent that the churches of the circuit were in disarray with their flock experiencing the problems that come with a lack of religious instruction in such a period of crisis. The records that remain of the MECS all indicate the same thing.

There were many after the war that would attempt to sum up what had occurred. At the MECS St. Louis Annual Conference of 1866, the unnamed preacher of a sermon at

³²² Western c3308 v 1307.

³²³ Ibid.

that Conference asks when coming to the war period in his history of his church in Missouri: “And what shall I say? What pen can describe, what pencil can paint, or what tongue could tell the scenes through which we have passed since the close of 1860! Our day and Sunday schools were nearly all broken up. Some of our houses of worship were forcibly wrested from us and seized in the name of the Lord.”³²⁴ He, like most of his listeners hoped that this chaos could be exchanged for some good now that the war had ended.

Chaos indeed was the result of the conflicts that had taken place since and as the result of the schism in the Methodist Church. The result of the “altar erected against altar” that Patton’s biographer writes of in the 1850s was the Civil War that Cartwright and many others feared. A war that some foolishly dismissed as impossible during the initial period of the schism but took place still.

Without one another to moderate their views on slavery and eventually the Union, each segment of the Methodist Church in Missouri went off on the direction of extremism helping in many ways to precipitate a war between the states. As a result of the initial schism, in the Methodist church in Missouri, a Methodist was either against slavery or a member of the MECS. Those who held that slavery was at the very least a necessary evil were forced to leave with the MECS. Thus, as the war came, their religion encouraged

³²⁴ “Sermon-Preached Before the St. Louis Annual Conference, assembled at Lexington, Missouri, September 19, 1866” from Horn, G. W, editor. *Sermons by Missouri Methodist Preachers Representing The Missouri, St. Louis and the West St. Louis Conferences of the M. E. Church, South.* St. Louis: Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1874.

and even forced them into varying degrees of support for the Confederacy. Those, for whom the opposite was true in 1845 remained in the MEC and became stringent Unionists during the war. The popular and governmental participation in these conflicts increased with the war, as it can be seen from the multiple examples presented here.

Thus, the severity of the schism over slavery set into motion events that ended with the utter destruction of many facets of Missourian Methodism. The nation was led on the path to war. Although not the sole cause for the war, the schism only worsened already developing problems and its result is apparent. Fortunately, the Methodist Church was able to pick itself up from the ashes in the years after the war and renew itself again.

The problems in proclaiming the Gospel during the war in Missouri were no different for the Baptists of Missouri. Like their fellow Evangelicals, in many parts of the State the Baptists would face difficult issues in attempting to further their denomination. Churches were closed in numerous counties, ministers could not exercise their ministry, congregations could not worship. Outside and governmental participation in the problems of the Baptists would become apparent during the war. With the nation and the state divided between those who supported the Union and those that supported the Confederacy, many individual congregations were no different. Thus, the words of R. S. Duncan ring true when he proclaims that “the war was paralyzing to the religious interests of Missouri, as well as destructive of life and property.”³²⁵ They could not escape the horrors that their fellow Evangelicals in the Methodist church would experience.

³²⁵ Duncan 77.

The Baptists, unlike the Methodists, did not have to deal with an organized northern Baptist wing in Missouri during the war, only as the war ended did the ABHMS attempt incursions into the state. The later divisions in the Missouri Baptist church would occur after the war. Without the fear of organized repression from northern Baptists, their problems were somewhat diminished. Though, as it will be clear shortly, that did not stop the federal government from using its military might to interfere with the Baptists and their mission to the people of Missouri. Eventually the same order that allowed the MEC to seize the churches of the MECS was extended to the Baptists of Missouri.³²⁶ Loyalty to the Union was expressed more often within the confines of the Missouri Baptist General Association than through its southern counterpart in the MECS. But this loyalty eventually led to divisions within the Baptists of Missouri. The Baptists of Missouri could not endure with half for slavery and half for freedom.

With the outbreak of the war, the General Association was forced to deal with the same problems that befell the New Madrid Quarterly Conference of the MECS. At the conference of 1861 it was bemoaned that “The political crisis and consequent financial prostration of our whole country, forced upon the Publication Society the necessity of suspending for a time, the *Missouri Baptist*, and still forbid its re-issue.”³²⁷ Unfortunately, this would be the case for the duration of the war. Wartime limitations would greatly contract the ability of the Association to do what it could during the pre-war period.

³²⁶ Jones 40-1.

³²⁷ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1861*, Pg 7.

Things would only worsen the next year. A circular letter put out after the conference lamented “ O how greatly are these suffering! Some of our district Associations have ceased to meet; our General Association was, last year and this, almost a failure.”³²⁸ The authors were correct in their assertions, little business took place at the meeting in 1862, far less than was the case in 1861. The war was taking its toll and continued to do so on the Baptists of Missouri throughout the war period.

Nonetheless, while not seeming to have the problems that plagued the MECS or the lack of that the Annual Conference of the MEC experienced, the Baptists existed during the war period. The nature of their schism allowed for a middle-road of sorts. They tolerated and supported slavery among their members, but in many cases they did not overtly support the South, with many of their members being Unionists. While in the end there was a higher percentage of support for the South during the war within the Baptists than that of Missourians who supported Breckenridge in 1860, in many ways they mirror Missourians as a whole in that election. They desired conservative leaders that upheld slavery and did not rock the boat.

Thus, throughout the war, the General Association did not take sides during the war, the makeup of their membership prohibited it. The Baptists held that there was “no equivocal position on the relations sustained by the Churches to the State. ...they have likewise held, that the State has no right to interfere with the freedom of conscience, the relation of the ministry to their congregations...”³²⁹ Any theoretical attempt by the

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1865*, Pg 13.

government to suppress other churches, as they did with the Methodists, even to benefit the Baptists in Missouri would have been frowned upon. Their membership was diverse, and this middle-line had to be walked.

Even the smaller Baptist associations possessed a diverse membership when it came to positions taken during the war. For example, the writer of the Polk County Baptist Association's history in 1897 mourns the division of supporters between the North and the South within the Missouri Baptists forcing the "members of the same church who had sworn before God and ratified the same in their baptism...to imbrue their hands in blood, and often with fiendish delight."³³⁰ The biography section of this history is fraught with examples of ministers that supported either side during the war. In the end, one would have to ascertain that the Polk County Association was almost evenly split between the North and the South during the war. Examples in Duncan's *History of the Missouri Baptists* (he went through each of the regional/county associations) agree with Polk County. In some jurisdictions there were more of one side's supporters than the other, but the Baptists of Missouri were deeply divided during the war.

Nevertheless, in the words of William Leftwich, many of these ministers had "to share largely in the persecutions and trials of their less fortunate Southern Methodist brethren and not a few of the Presbyterian ministers were implicated in the same way, and

³³⁰ Haines, J. W. *The History of the Polk County Baptist Association*. Bolivar, Mo: The Bolivar Herald, 1897. Pg 12.

had to suffer for being in Missouri.”³³¹ As Leftwich subsequently demonstrates, there were numerous instances of persecution that the southern Baptists would suffer. Things were far from optimal for the southern-sympathizing Baptists of Missouri.

Like those in the MECS, the federal authorities would go after Baptists as well. The Rev. James Fewel, who served as the pastor of a church in Henry County was apprehended by the authorities for being a southern sympathizer. He was then taken to Sedalia to the east and then to St. Louis “where he lay in prison more than a month, and until death came to his relief.”³³² This death, due to the poor treatment of his captors was more often than not the treatment that many of the Baptists and other southern-sympathizing Missourians experienced at the hands of the federal authorities. Those that might cause problems in this manner could not be tolerated by the federal authorities.

Equally disturbing is the case of Rev. Nathaniel Wollard, an elderly pastor in Dallas County (north-east of Springfield). Elder Wollard “expressed himself in opposition to the ‘abolitionists,’ as he called the Union men, and in sympathy with the South.”³³³ In September of 1863 a company of militia rode out to his house, with the intention of drawing him outside and then to shoot him, feigning that he had escaped. Wollard realized something of their plan and he resisted. When the militia men figured this out “one of the militia raised his pistol and shot him, the ball taking effect in the face

³³¹ Leftwich v1 158.

³³² Leftwich v1 169.

³³³ Leftwich v1 388.

and inflicting a mortal wound.”³³⁴ While Wollard lay dying, the militia burned and looted his house. Finally, seeing that he still hung onto his life, another man shot him in the forehead, instantly finishing their work. For his southern sympathies, Wollard’s family was made both fatherless and homeless.³³⁵

There are numerous other examples of Baptists in Missouri of southern leanings that experienced pain during the war. Some years later, as he stood over a monument to the Confederate dead, Rev. W. J. Patrick proclaimed: “...the history, the honor was preserved. The bodies of these missionaries have been broken, they have gone into their graves, but their works were not buried with their bodies. They live. Their works, under God, are a part of our palisades.”³³⁶ As with the Southern Methodists after the war, there was some hope, they had not died in vain in their attempts to spread their Gospel.

Missouri Baptists that supported the Union would suffer difficulties as well. Despite his support for the Union, the Rev. James E. Hughes experienced difficulties during the war. Hughes wrote that “During the war I was a loyal man, and was so considered by all.”³³⁷ Despite his dislike of Lincoln’s administration, he retained this loyalty to the Union and spoke in favor of it at the beginning of the war. However, when required to take the “Test Oath” as the war closed, Hughes refused out of principle. Thus,

³³⁴ Leftwich v1 389-90.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Patrick, Rev. W. J. “The Missionaries from 1834 to 1884.” from *Semi-Centennial Memorial Missouri Baptist General Association. Containing Sermons, Addresses, Etc., in Commemoration of its Fiftieth Anniversary*. Columbia, MO: The Herald Printing Establishment, 1885. Pg. 52.

³³⁷ Leftwich v2 372.

he explains “At this period of my ministerial life, and in January, of the year 1866, I was arrested and tried for preaching the Gospel of Christ.”³³⁸ In the end, Hughes was allowed to pay a fine and he was not imprisoned, according to the records he provided with his testimony. His case illustrates that for many Baptist Union-sympathizers the war was not any easier than it was on their southern-sympathizing counterparts.

Fortunately for Rev. Jonathan Fuller, he would not be jailed during the war for his Unionist beliefs. However, he would have to negotiate the divisions in his congregation at the First Baptist Church of Kansas City. Numerous problems would develop over his tenure that he would have to mollify. One example involved his choir director, a fellow Unionist, who wanted to begin the service one Sunday by signing *My Country 'Tis of Thee*. Obviously the Confederate sympathizers in his congregation were vehement in their opposition to this hymn. But, the other Union sympathizers took issue with it not being sung. In the end, Fuller relied on the advice of one of the prominent laymen of the congregation, a man referred to as Brother Rogers. He would not play the hymn, but this man, described by Fuller as the “blackest” of the radical Republicans (strange usage by Fuller, being that this was usually a derogatory term), was able to calm their fellow Union supporters.³³⁹

Unlike Rev. Fuller, the Baptists on a whole experienced persecution as well. Especially troubling at the General Association of 1862 was the arrival of Union soldiers during the meeting. After surrounding the meeting house, they compelled all of the

³³⁸ Leftwich v2 373.

³³⁹ Jonathan Fuller to William Fuller, June 20, 1864, Fuller Papers, folder 11.

attendees to exit and form three groups. One, for those that supported the Union; another for those in favor of the South, but who had taken oaths to the Union and a third for those who had not. The latter groups were then marched off to Marshall and the provost-marshal's office there. The witness to this story, the Rev. A. P. Williams, though no doubt troubled by the forced exile of a large portion of the attendees, was troubled by one additional fact. He exclaims that "there were Baptists among the troops! Did not angels weep when they witnessed such a spectacle? Baptists assisting in arresting their own brethren when assembled in General Association doing the work of the Lord! The Judgment! O the Judgment day!"³⁴⁰ The large degree of unanimity among the Baptists of Missouri would not last forever. By the war's end, there would be all out division in the church.

An 1864 order of Secretary Stanton, similar to the one with regard to the Methodists, allowed the ABHMS to seize any churches with disloyal ministers currently occupying their pulpits. Rev. Williams' testimony describes the initial stages of these takeovers. While they were not as bad as what took place with the Methodists, they happened nonetheless. The Baptists of Missouri were further restricted in their ministries.

Some northern Baptists began to filter into Missouri. The Rev. S. W. Marston who came from Illinois to Missouri as the war closed was by no doubt one of these men. After his initial time in Missouri, the ABHMS would send him to minister to the freedmen of the South, showing no doubt where he stood on critical issues before and

³⁴⁰ Leftwich 365-6.

during the war.³⁴¹ Though, more often than not, the Union supporters during the war were those that undertook these acts against their fellow Baptists.³⁴²

Nonetheless, it would be the Test Oath, passed in the Missouri State Constitution of 1865 that caused further divisions between the Baptists of Missouri, as it did in the other churches. This Constitution, passed by popular vote in June, held in Article 2, section 3, that anyone serving in a variety of institutions must take an oath of loyalty swearing that they had not participated in the Civil War on the side of the South. It should be noted, that the voters of Missouri in this case were a minority of the population, since to vote one had to first take an oath of having not supported the Confederacy during the war, which many could not take.³⁴³ One of these such institutions were the churches of Missouri. Problems for men, such as Hughes would occur in that they refused to take the oath on grounds that it violated a host of rights and the separation of church and state. Further problems took place for those in addition who could not take the oath knowing that they were lying when they swore to it.

There would be some that would take the Oath. Many could in good conscious, such as the Annual Conference of the MEC. Others could not or would not. Thus, when looking back upon the Test Oath some years later, Rev. R. S. Duncan would remark,

³⁴¹ *Semi-Centennial Memorial Missouri Baptist General Association. Containing Sermons, Addresses, Etc., in Commemoration of its Fiftieth Anniversary.* Columbia, MO: The Herald Printing Establishment, 1885. Pg 189.

³⁴² Leftwich 363-4, Duncan *History* 456-8.

³⁴³ Gilmore 284.

“This feature of the Missouri Constitution was especially oppressive, and greatly alarmed the thoughtful friends of Christianity, and none more so than the Baptists.”³⁴⁴ Although eventually thrown out on appeal from the U. S. Supreme Court,³⁴⁵ for the few years leading up to that decision there were problems for the Baptists of Missouri despite the cessation of conflict. At the meeting of the General Association in 1865, shortly after it took effect, the Test Oath was condemned, using some of the same words that had been used not to take sides during the war. Thus, the Association could not “therefore but express our sorrow that the new constitution of the state of Missouri requires of our ministers a certain oath before they can lawfully discharge the duties of their sacred office.”³⁴⁶ They then proceeded to give multiple reasons why they condemned the Test Oath.

Numerous examples of men arrested for their refusal are given. Rev. B. F. Kenny, was a sixty-one year old clergyman arrested for preaching without having taken the Oath. Duncan describes Kenny as being “arrested at his home, after sunset, notwithstanding his age and his protest against the brutality, [he] was compelled to ride ten miles to Gallatin in the dark.”³⁴⁷ This case is really not too dissimilar to the MEC minister C. H. Kelly in 1855. The “radical” Union-supporting Grand Jury of Daviess County (in north-

³⁴⁴ Duncan 167.

³⁴⁵ Duncan 169-74. Fr. John A. Cummings, a Catholic Priest from Louisiana, MO refused the oath. After his conviction, his case was forwarded up the judicial hierarchy until the US Supreme Court overturned the conviction on Jan. 14, 1867.

³⁴⁶ Missouri Baptist General Association, *Minutes, 1865*, Pg 13

³⁴⁷ Duncan *History* 927.

central Missouri) then brought him up on charges.

Other examples can be given, many of them comparing the proceedings to the “Star Chamber” of Henry VII. Like the Star Chamber, men who charges were brought against for violating the Test Oath stood little chance of receiving a fair trial. Baptists would be split as a result of these problems. Rev. Fuller in Kansas City describes a schism in his own congregation in 1866. He and most of the former Union supporters left to form their own congregation. The problems, most likely caused by the Oath, were too much to keep his divided flock together.

Things would only worsen for the Baptists of Missouri. Their General Association in turn divided itself between those who had taken the Oath and those who had not. Those that had taken the oath attempted to claim the churches of those that refused the it. After much effort, they were not that successful in that endeavor, as A. P. Williams recounts.³⁴⁸ While in the end the Missouri Baptists were able to mend their fences over the Test Oath, as it was struck down almost as quickly as it passed, this reunification was not completed quickly and the pre-war unity would never really be obtained again.

These eventual legacy of the history of the Missouri Baptists during the war can be seen as a result of the schism in 1845. By creating a consensus that neither the Methodists or Presbyterians enjoyed, it would only by a matter of time till things fell apart. The nature of the Baptist schism had helped edge the nation into war as did the Methodists. What it did not do was guarantee that there would be no further divisions.

³⁴⁸ Leftwich v2 367-9.

The Baptists would pay the price for the lack of hostilities in the antebellum period. The mechanism that allowed for supporters of both the North and the South to remain united in the General Association would not stand up against the rigors imposed by the Test Oath. Division over this question, and essentially those of the war would ensue. Cut off from the SBC as a result of the war, there would be little help until after the war from their mother body in preventing the problems of division.

The Presbyterians of Missouri, now almost totally united into the OS, experienced a similar problem. With the OS Synod, there was a diverse body of members composed into one body of Presbyterians. The lack of a coherent statement on slavery in the antebellum period, due to the nature of their schism, while holding the northern and southern portions together, would lead to trouble as the war broke out. The synods in the Confederacy would form their own General Assembly, The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. This move, though quite logical on their part, allowed the remainder of the OS in the North to declare their absolute support for the Union while compelling the subordinate bodies to do the same and condemn slavery as well. None of these actions sat well with the Presbyterians of Missouri. Many Missourians and Presbyterians as well were opposed to the federal side during the war, virtually all were opposed to anything being said against slavery.

Like their Baptist brethren, the OS Presbyterians would be forced to undergo a test of faith of whether or not to remain united with the OS General Assembly. Like their NS counterparts a few years earlier, they now faced being in a General Assembly that condemned slavery, an unacceptable position. Like the NS and the Baptists a few years in

the future, the Presbyterians would break apart in Missouri.

When it met in Philadelphia in 1861, the northern OS General Assembly passed multiple resolutions in favor of the Union. The Spring Resolutions, as they were called, required subordinate Presbyterian bodies to profess their undivided support for the Union. The commissioners in Philadelphia declared their “obligation, to promote and perpetuate, so far in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions...”³⁴⁹ Furthermore, as to the Constitution of the United States, the General Assembly sought to “profess our unabated loyalty” to it.³⁵⁰ With the other Spring Resolutions, the stage was set for conflict within the Presbyterian Church.

Problems ensued immediately, but only escalated after the war. However, at that General Assembly, a resolution of protest would be passed. Although their leader was Dr. Charles Hodge, a Princeton Seminary Professor who was by no means a southern sympathizer (he opposed it on legal grounds), most of the fifty-seven that signed this protest were from states with slavery. The Missouri commissioners were unanimous in their support of this protest. They proclaimed in the protest that “we deny the right of the General Assembly to decide the political question, to what Government the allegiance of

³⁴⁹ Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (Old School), *Minutes of the General Assembly, 1861* Philadelphia. Pg 45.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

Presbyterians, as citizens, is due.”³⁵¹ In passing these regulations the General Assembly had “violated the Constitution of the Church and usurped the prerogative of its Divine Master.”³⁵²

The mostly southern dissenters had set forth their views. However, due to the chaos of the war, nothing further was done until 1865. Until the war closed, it was generally understood that as long as one voiced their opinions quietly, they would not face repercussions from the General Assembly. Many individual ministers in Missouri did just that and avoided having to accept doctrines of which they were personally opposed.³⁵³

In December of 1861 commissioners from the ten synods in the recently formed Confederate States Of America met to form a new General Assembly. These were the Synods that were absent at the OS General Assembly earlier that year. They formed The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. The unity that had been lauded of the OS General Assembly only a year earlier had broken down, resulting in the northern and southern churches not being reconciled until 1983. With the nation torn in two, the OS Presbyterian Church was as well. While any Presbyterians were welcomed to join the new southern church without letters of dismissal from the North, in practice only

³⁵¹ PC in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes 1861* Pg 52.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Williams, David Riddle *James H. Brookes: A Memoir, Published for Dr. Brookes' family*. St. Louis: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1897. Pp 102-3.

those in the states that had left the Union would do so until the war ended.³⁵⁴ It was the standing order of the General Assembly that all subordinate presbyteries were “authorised [sic] to receive Ministers coming from the Presbyterian Church in the United States, on their giving satisfactory evidence of their good standing...without requiring a certificate of dismissal.”³⁵⁵

When the war broke out in 1861, many Missouri OS churches were divided over slavery and their support for the Union. The Synods and Presbyteries did not divide until the end of the war. Granted, the fact that most of them could not meet during the war might have had something to do with this temporary unity. For, in the words of Rev. George Miller “religion surrenders to war” during the 1860s.³⁵⁶ Many churches would not meet during the war and those that could were often a shadow of themselves.

Like the Baptists, many OS churches experienced problems over the different opinions of their members with regards to the war. As with multiple Presbyterian congregations, the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia had no pastor from 1861-2. No minister could be provided that was acceptable to the entire congregation according to the church records. The church elders resigned one by one as well, each proclaiming that they were not acceptable to the congregation. Their resignations were not accepted to preserve

³⁵⁴ Thompson v2 13-5.

³⁵⁵ Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, General Assembly. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, 1862*. Atlanta: Steam Power Press Chronicle and Sentinel, 1862. Pg 9.

³⁵⁶ Miller 64.

some semblance of unity.

Only in 1862 were they able to secure a preacher, Rev. Dr. Fisher, the Latin professor from Westminster College, who preached every two weeks. However, showing his ability to unite a torn congregation, Fisher obtained the services of Rev. Robert W. Landis, a Union chaplain and Dr. S. S. Lewis who was described as “the strongest southerner in the country” to minister together at a communion service.³⁵⁷ The church endured until the end of the war due to Fisher’s efforts.³⁵⁸

On the other hand, the Dardenne Presbyterian Church, a mostly southern-sympathizing congregation with some Unionists, had its church mysteriously burned in 1862. Only a few days earlier Union soldiers had entered the church for the Sunday service, leaving many to wonder if they had something to do with the destruction of the church building. Only in 1867 would a joint effort with the MECS result in a new church’s construction.³⁵⁹

Rev. George Miller details much of the war along the Kansas Missouri border in his *Missouri’s Memorable Decade*. Miller was the minister in Pleasant Hill, in Cass County along the Kansas border. He sums up the sentiments of his congregation and the county at large in that “southern pride and sympathy ran deeper with the vast majority... the hostile feeling grew and deepened from Lincoln's election, until by June 1, men were

³⁵⁷ *Addresses Delivered at the Centennial Celebration of the Founding of the First Presbyterian Church*. Columbia, MO: October 17, 1928. Pg 25.

³⁵⁸ Ibid. 24-5, *First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, Missouri, Records, 1833-1935*, Western Historical Manuscripts, (C2308). f2, pg 12.

³⁵⁹ Watson 90-2.

seen every where rushing into confederate camps.”³⁶⁰ Miller, on the other hand, was a Unionist, a fact that he was not shy about expressing. By 1862 his ministry had ended in Cass County. His congregation had grown tired of him and the disorganization of the church prevented another minister from being stationed there.³⁶¹

Like the Baptists, the OS Presbyterians found themselves in a Synod that contained a large number of Union and Confederate sympathizers. Conflict and division down to the church level was the inevitable conclusion. Thus, the congregations we see presented here underwent problems as the war broke out, prohibiting the exercise of Presbyterianism in many parts of Missouri. Furthermore, with the chaos of war, numerous churches and the presbyteries had their operations cease during the 1860s. Governmental and popular forces would participate in these efforts from time to time, as they did with Miller.

On the other hand, virtually all of the members of the NS were Union supporters, a mirror image of their General Assembly. The NS held that the Union must be preserved and that slavery be eradicated as well. For them, it was the duty of Christians to uphold the Union.³⁶² The NS in Missouri clearly held this view, but they still experienced some problems during the war.

Although they would have been supported by the Federal authorities like the

³⁶⁰ Miller 62.

³⁶¹ Miller 82.

³⁶² Marsden 199-200.

MEC, the NS Synod in Missouri was unable to meet in 1861 or 1862. In 1863, they met in Kansas for that state was still a part of their Synod until 1864. The same chaos that struck the other churches in Missouri played a role with the NS. They could not meet due to the upheaval caused by the war in Missouri. Again, the availability of records on the NS were scarce, but their Unionism can still be verified. Throughout the war the few remaining Presbyterians in the NS Synod of Missouri would continue in this support and emerge from the war fairly intact (their Synod was already split prior to the war after all). By the end of the 1860s they were in favor of the reunification between the New and Old Schools.³⁶³

Like the Methodists and the Baptists, the Presbyterians also experienced violence during the war. Miller laments that one of the elders that he went to the last meeting of his Lafayette Presbytery in April of 1861, Elder John Caldwell, a southern-sympathizer, was killed by Kansas men near Westport in 1863.³⁶⁴ Miller himself narrowly avoided death during the war. When he was still in Cass County in the beginning of the war, he says that “As a matter of prudence, on certain occasions, I would sleep in the woods and fields.”³⁶⁵ For there were many in Cass County that did not like his views on the war. He was referred to as a “Lincolnist” by many in his congregation and in the community.³⁶⁶

³⁶³ Hill 59-60, Miller 42.

³⁶⁴ Hill 61.

³⁶⁵ Miller 67.

³⁶⁶ Miller 65.

Only with his move to Kansas City in 1863, a city with more Union supporters in it among its Presbyterians, did his problems lessen.

Leftwich, in his *Martyrdom in Missouri* mentions that there were several in the Presbyterian Church that underwent persecution during the war. The Presbyterians were no different than any of the other denominations in Missouri in his view.³⁶⁷ Unfortunately he regrets not having spent more time on the Presbyterian Church for he was prohibited due to publishing constraints.³⁶⁸

Nonetheless, he presents some additional examples of violence perpetuated against the OS Presbyterians. Leftwich gives the example of Rev. William Cleaveland. Cleaveland, a Baptist, hoped to gain a pass out of Lewis County (in northwest Missouri) in the early days of the war. A detachment from Price's army was to invade the county in a matter of days and Cleaveland did not want to remain in the county for fear of his family. Due to his southern leanings, Cleaveland was forced to remain in the county and had to seek permission to leave. The federal commander in the county, Col. J. T. K. Hayward was a OS Presbyterian elder. Hayward, refused to hear Cleaveland's pleas to flee Lewis County, presenting an example of northern persecution by Presbyterians levied against southerners. In this case it was a multi-denominational occurrence.³⁶⁹

The prominent OS minister, Robert P. Farris, can be seen as representative of the persecution suffered by the OS as well. Being that he was pastor of the church in St.

³⁶⁷ Leftwich v1 176.

³⁶⁸ Leftwich v1 436.

³⁶⁹ Leftwich v1 304.

Charles, there were many in the federal administration along with their supporters that desired his removal from this influential position. Thus, “they sought to manufactured much cheap and cowardly abuse, which was heaped upon him without stint. They called him “secesh” “rebel,” “traitor,” “disloyal,” and many similar epithets.”³⁷⁰ In addition he was accused of publicly praying for Jefferson Davis and the success of the Confederacy.

The provost marshal of the area eventually ordered him to take an oath of loyalty and pay a two-thousand dollar fine for his prayers for the Confederacy and his general lack of support for the Union. After ignoring the request for the oath and the fine, Farris was arrested some weeks later along with another OS minister, Rev. Tyson Dines. He was then taken to prison in St. Louis until his trial.

During the trial in front of the provost marshal’s court Farris presented numerous witnesses on his behalf, but “Not a single question was addressed to any of them. But Merrill [the provost-marshal], saying that Dr. Farris had made out against himself a clear case of “general disloyalty,” sentenced him to be confined in a military prison during the war.”³⁷¹ His sentence was soon commuted to banishment north of Missouri, in Chicago. However, Farris wrote President Lincoln and asked that he could be pardoned. Included in his request were the testimonies of numerous Union men to his character. In the end, “The speedy result was the issue of a ‘General Order’ covering all such cases [of those brought up with similar charges as Farris], and Mr. Lincoln's assurance, in his own hand

³⁷⁰ Leftwich v2 86.

³⁷¹ Leftwich v2 87.

writing, that I would be released under said order.”³⁷² Farris would be able to continue his ministry. Although he faced some other problems throughout the war, he was a free man and could return to his post in St. Charles.³⁷³

In 1864, the Presbytery of St. Louis (which was fairly pro-southern) met with only a slight quorum. In order to meet, they had to take what was referred to as the Rosecrans Church Order, a military oath to the Union (named after the Union general in Missouri that proclaimed the oath). Most of the few men in attendance took the oath and allowed the meeting to largely be run by the military in that the proposals put forth were designed to support the war effort, condemn slavery, and support oaths to the Union. Rev. Farris and Rev. S. S. Watson, refused the oath and were subsequently arrested. This action was by no means condemned by all once the military was gone and free speech was once again possible. Union supporters were quite happy by what went on at the meeting.³⁷⁴

As the war came to a close, the Presbyterians experienced some problems with the successor to the military oaths, the Test Oath. Many could not take it in good faith, others refused it. Still some, like those that were critical of Farris and Watson for their refusal to take the Rosecrans oath, supported it. Two prominent Presbyterian laymen, George P. Strong and Charles D. Drake were, according to Leftwich, “active members of the

³⁷² Leftwich v2 88.

³⁷³ Leftwich v2 85-9.

³⁷⁴ Leftwich v2 90-2, *True Loyalty and Independence of the Church*. St. Louis: 1865. Pg 26-7.

Constitutional Convention, were active and bold defenders of their own work.”³⁷⁵ Strong in their pro-Union beliefs, they are typical of the minority in the Presbyterian Church that upheld these views. They attempted to force everyone else in Missouri, especially those that preached from the pulpit, to acknowledge their pro-Union views through the Test Oath.³⁷⁶

In the end, what caused numerous problems for the OS Presbyterians of Missouri was not the Test Oath. It was the OS General Assembly of 1861. The protest that began soon after it proclaimed its doctrine of loyalty to the Union for its members did not subside as a result of the war. Although the fact many of the Presbyteries and the Synod of Missouri did not meet during the war prevented a widespread condemnation for a while, things fell apart once the war came to a close.

As the war was coming to a close in 1865, the General Assembly began to change its stance towards those that were against the Spring Resolutions of 1861. According to Rev. James H. Brookes of St. Louis, who was one of the leading ministers to oppose the General Assembly nationally, “every minister was now required not only to accept the deliverance, but to co-operate actively in the execution of every doctrinal and ecclesiastical decree.”³⁷⁷ This position was unacceptable for many in the Missouri OS and it led to a division within the Synod.

The ministers of the OS that did not support the General Assembly in this view

³⁷⁵ Leftwich v2 326.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Williams 103.

point could no longer be silent. In 1865, as a protest of the pro-Union actions of each of the General Assemblies from 1861-5, the *Declaration and Testimony* was drawn up. Originally written by a group led by Rev. Samuel R. Wilson of Kentucky and first adapted by the Presbytery of Louisville in 1865, the Missouri OS Presbyterians led the charge getting its grievances heard by the General Assembly. Rev. Brookes became one of the primary leaders in this effort.³⁷⁸

Referring to directly to the OS General Assembly, the *Declaration* itself begins by declaring “For several years past that Church in this country has been departing farther and farther from both the spirit and the plain letter of her commission to “preach the Gospel to every creature” and her charter as a “kingdom not of this world.”³⁷⁹ Numerous grievances were spelled out in the *Declaration and Testimony*. All of these grievances dealt with the acts of the previous General Assemblies that began with the Spring Resolutions and continued throughout the war. The *Declaration* held that these actions were beyond the legal jurisdiction of the Assembly. Thus, “that the action of the Assembly in the premises does *not only decide the political question referred to*, but makes that decision *a test of membership in our Church, is no less clear.*”³⁸⁰

The somewhat harsh language throughout the document only served to incur the wrath of the General Assembly when it met the next year in St. Louis. Many wanted to

³⁷⁸ Williams 102-3, 105.

³⁷⁹ Grasty, John S. *Memoir of Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters, D. D.* St. Louis: Southwestern Book and Publishing Company, 1871. Pg 304.

³⁸⁰ Grasty 307.

disband the Louisville Presbytery which was the only one that signed the document as a whole to this point. Eventually, a substitute resolution was passed, the Gurley *Ipsa Facto* Resolution. It held that any presbytery which had signers of *Declaration* as members could be disbanded.³⁸¹

In one last battle of the Civil War among Missouri Presbyterians, the OS Synod of Missouri would be divided. Many, who had already signed or would sign the *Declaration*, would not remain with the General Assembly. They would form a Synod that would remain independent for the next decade. Many, like Rev. Brookes gladly severed relations with their mother body. Like many of the other churchmen examined within this work, they could not accept what the General Assembly now viewed as doctrine.³⁸²

Other men, such as George Miller, did not desire this separation from the General Assembly. He was the only member of his Presbytery of Lafayette to not sign the *Declaration*. Miller was expelled as a result of his action which he felt as justifiable in the circumstances. He was not loyal to the South in any way during the war and saw no desire to continue with mostly southern men. He would support the General Assembly.³⁸³

He and the other members of the OS in Missouri formed their own Synod, still aligned with the General Assembly. They were in the minority, but from help with the NS Synod in Missouri, the new Synod endured. Both groups were composed of members that

³⁸¹ PC in the U.S.A., (OS), *Minutes 1866* Pp 345-7, 348-9.

³⁸² Williams 106-7. It should be noted that the Independent Synod was declared by the State Courts as the legal successor to the Missouri Synod as was therefore entitled to the records.

³⁸³ Miller 127-8, 132.

heavily supported the Union during the war and opposed slavery in many instances as well. Along with the ever narrowing theological differences that separated them, politically they were both fairly succinct, and could cooperate well together. Thus, as the 1860s closed and the New and Old Schools reunified, both of these Synods would as well. Once the theological issues were resolved, there was almost nothing separating these groups politically or otherwise that would prevent their reunification.

The Independent OS Synod contained many members that were both southern sympathizers during the war and ministers for men that fought for the Confederacy during the war. However, Brookes and the other leaders sought to perform “the greatest good to the greatest number of their beloved Church...they cheerfully signed a statement which practically cut them (ecclesiastically) aloof from many dear friends in the South.”³⁸⁴ The statement did not condemn the South in any way. It simply said that they were “determined to know neither North nor South in the Church of God.”³⁸⁵ This statement was not anti-southern, but used to show unity, unity that would not be popular in the immediate aftermath of the war. Southern sympathizers according to Brooke’s biographer wanted a document to the General Assembly that supported their views in light of the *Declaration*.³⁸⁶

Although this statement was not what many of the members of the Independent Synod desired, it was required in order to achieve reunification with the General

³⁸⁴ Williams 104.

³⁸⁵ Williams 105.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

Assembly. The largely northern General Assembly could not see the Missourians as being southern-sympathizers. In time, this strategy worked as wounds from the war began to heal. Typical of what took place in the early 1870s, the New Yorker Rev. S. S. Laws addressed the Synod in 1872. There he put the blame for the break solely on the General Assembly.³⁸⁷ Shortly after he visited Missouri, others in the General Assembly saw the error of their ways and began to attempt to get the Missouri Synod to rejoin the General Assembly.

While Brookes would argue vehemently to rejoin the northern General Assembly in the years to come, the majority of the Presbyterians in the independent Synod joined the southern General Assembly. It was thought by many in Missouri they had more in common with the South. This action left the Presbyterians of Missouri divided as Brookes and his few supporters joined the North.³⁸⁸

Like the Baptists, the lack of severity in the schism itself and subsequent events leading up to the Civil War had a profound effect during the war. There was enough of a diversity of opinions over the war itself and the issue of slavery to cause a split in their Synod. Those supporting the *Declaration and Testimony* formed an independent synod, leaving the minority that did not agree with them to continue their union with the General Assembly. If the schism between the Old and New Schools had been over slavery, these

³⁸⁷ Laws, Rev. S. S. A Letter By the Rev. S. S. Laws, LL. D., to the Synod of Missouri (O.S.) Which Met at Columbia, Missouri, October 8, 1872. New York: S. Angell, Book and Pamphlet Printer, 1873. Pp. 10-2.

³⁸⁸ Thompson v2 192-4.

problems during the war most likely would not have occurred. Support for the Union and slavery could not be resolved, so separation ensued. The Presbyterians would have been like the Methodists in both their support for one side or the other and increased influence during the sectional crisis.

Nonetheless, one thing that continued to take place with the Presbyterians, as with the other two denominations, was that the violence used against them continued to occur. Groups of citizens formed that detested those Presbyterian ministers that were on the opposite side during the war. For the large number of Presbyterians that supported the South in one way or another during the war, they experienced persecution by the Federal authorities. In the end, like the Methodists and Baptists, there would be a great deal of work for the Presbyterians to accomplish in order to rebuild after the war.

Each of the three denominations had a different experience during the war. This unique experience was the result of the nature of their schism and the resulting events of the sectional crisis. Although there would be similarities during the war period, each of the separate churches within the three denominations would emerge from the war differently. In the end, the war that no one really desired left the churches of Missouri in shambles in large portions of the state, forcing them to spend years recovering.

Conclusion

It took many decades for the wounds from the schisms and the resulting strife from the Civil War to heal. The unity experienced before the schisms could never be replicated in many of the churches affected by it. The clashes that took place within the formally unified churches prior to the war help bring about national disunion. Things could not be rebuilt easily, and in some instances the process lasted into the twentieth century. The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians were not alone in the problems that they faced after the war. Even with the issue of slavery resolved, national unity would take time to rebuild, Evangelical unity would be no different.

The Presbyterians were the first to break apart in the 1830s. Their schism was over theology, not slavery, but their abolitionists and slaveholders were divided into separate churches with this theological division. Eventually, the Old and New Schools fought among themselves in Missouri over problems resulting from their schism. The Methodists fought in the same way as well, but between the MEC and MECS. However, their clashes were far more numerous and violent than those among the Presbyterians. Unlike the Presbyterians, the Methodist schism was over slavery directly.

The Methodists' break over slavery divided the church into northern and southern sections that had polar opposite views on slavery. The Presbyterian schism, while leaving the abolitionists and slaveholders in the New and Old Schools respectively, was less binding with respect to slavery than the Methodist schism. There were still a very small number of slaveholders within the NS and an equally small number within the OS that held anti-slavery views. Thus, their conflicts were not as severe and tended to move along

with the larger sectional crisis. The Methodists on the other hand presaged and brought about the national crisis in many ways through their internal clashes.

The third denomination, the Baptists, like the Methodists, split over slavery. However, due to the independent nature of their churches, unlike the other two denominations, their schism was cleaner. The General Association of Missouri was unanimous in their adherence to the newly formed SBC. Thus, there was no mechanism for the ABHMS to work within Missouri unlike the other two denominations. Baptist clashes in Missouri were almost non-existent, owing to the nature of this schism. They, like the Presbyterians, largely moved along with the political events of the sectional crisis. Yes, their schism was over slavery, but not in the manner that the MEC's was.

National unity was undermined by these schisms. Divisions between North and South did nothing to help it. The events after the schism continued to harm the fabric of national unity. With its conflicts that presaged the Border War over Kansas and the more serious events of the sectional crisis of the 1850s, the Methodist schism caused the further disintegration of national unity. The other two denominations did this to some extent, but not to the point of the Methodists. For the Presbyterians and the Baptists, events acted upon them to a greater extent than the Methodists.

The influence of the evangelicals in America and likewise in Missouri enabled these schisms to have the effect on the larger political and cultural scale that they did. The people of Missouri were soon drawn into the conflicts, and oftentimes supported the pro-slavery wings of the churches. The Missouri government did the same. Religion and culture began to merge during this period and divided churches could only sooner or later beget a divided country.

Once the war broke out, things would only worsen. With the chaos of war, many facets of church life would be disrupted. Sadder still was the worsening of the conflicts within the churches. Thus, an the increase of popular participation in these conflicts took place. Unfortunately for the southern supporters, the government increased its role as well, now supporting the Union as expected with the status of Missouri during the war. The end result of the schisms were now apparent for those in Missouri. What many had feared or foolishly discounted had taken place, the Civil War.

For the Presbyterians and Baptists, the nature of their schisms resulted in further divisions. The NS Synod was purged of its few slaveholders immediately prior to the war. The OS Synod, as a result of its General Assembly's support of the Union and desire that its subordinate Presbyterians support it as well, split. Those that thought these laws just and/or supported the Union remained loyal. However, most Presbyterians in Missouri, especially those that supported the South, could not. After the war the OS Synod divided. The Baptists would do the same thing in Missouri as a result of the Test Oath.

If they had undergone their schisms as the Methodists did, the Baptists and Presbyterians would not have suffered the same fate during the war. Moreover, they would have had a greater influence on the events of the sectional crisis. Granted, structures and movements that prevented anything that completely mirrored the Methodists in either church stood in the way of this happening. Avoiding the problems that the Methodists suffered during the 1840s and 1850s was most likely a positive thing. In the end, despite these differences, each of the three denominations presented here had some sort of impact on the events leading to the Civil War and the war itself. The schisms insured both an impact and a different one at that.

Finally, a criticism could be brought up that the ministers examined in this paper were already predisposed to the North or South prior to their arrival in Missouri, nullifying the argument that the schisms could have had any significant political implications. In turn, the influence of the churches can be further seen if they changed their views while in Missouri. In some cases, this was so, many were predisposed toward either region. In others, the ministers in question were born in and lived in northern states before their arrival in Missouri and ended up on the side of the South. For others, the opposite was true.

Some of the MECS men were of northern origins. Even though he was not ever stationed in Missouri, Bishop Soule was originally from Maine and ended up in the South later in his career. Rev. Caples was born in Jeromeville in Wayne County, Ohio emigrating to Missouri when he was a young man.³⁸⁹ Bishop Marvin was born in Missouri. However, his father emigrated to Missouri when he was a young man from Massachusetts. Furthermore, the Marvin family had been in New England for some time according to McAnally. Previously they had intermarried with the line of Increase and Cotton Mather.³⁹⁰

The Presbyterian minister Rice, who had argued so vehemently for slavery, was stationed in Ohio when he made those arguments. So was Rev. Brookes for a time, the

³⁸⁹ Marvin 7-8.

³⁹⁰ McAally *Marvin* 23-5.

man who abhorred the Spring Resolutions.³⁹¹ They are a sample of the many examples of northerners to support slavery and the Confederacy during the war.

Anti-slavery and Union supporters have already been shown as southerners by birth. MEC supporters, such as the Methodist Peter Cartwright, were born in slave states. Presbyterian minister George Miller, a Union supporter during the war was a proud southerner. The abolitionist Dr. David Nelson was born in the South as well. Unlike their counterparts that stayed as southern-loyalists through the war, they detested slavery and supported the Union.

In the end, as a result of these men and the others like them that are not listed, the predisposition to one region or the other was broken upon arrival in Missouri. Many, because of the influence of the churches that they were in, among other reasons, grew loyal to the South and the views it represented. Although many were predisposed to a certain region before their arrival in Missouri, others were not, showing the influence that their churches had on them.

The men that were discussed here were all sincere in their faith. Each sought to further what they believed was the true Gospel in whatever way that they could. However, in the end they not only succeeded in spreading the Gospel, but spreading sectionalism as well. The goal that they had of linking the political and cultural aspects of America with religion succeeded in numerous ways. That success led in part to the Civil War. Their defense of the pro-northern or pro-southern side first led to the split of their respective

³⁹¹ Williams 67.

churches. Conflict ensued, and eventually war broke out. As authors such as Carwardine Noll, and Goen also testify to, this process was crucial in the coming of the Civil War. What this paper is attempting to show is the fact that Missouri was no different. Being a border state, these regrettable conflicts are further brought to the center-stage. By no means should their significance be ignored.

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