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WHITE VIOLENCE, HEGEMONY, AND SLAVE REBELLION IN DALLAS, TEXAS, BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

by *Michael Phillips*

Just seven months before a suspected slave rebellion resulted in a July 1860 fire that consumed almost all of downtown Dallas, Charles R. Pryor, editor of the *Dallas Herald*, fretted that his sleepy village of 581 whites and ninety-seven black slaves could not long remain at peace. To him it appeared that armies of Indians, Mexicans, and slaves agitated by abolitionists stood poised to assault the city and install colored rule. Pryor's newspaper seemed deliberately designed to promote panic. Throughout January 1860 the part-time physician filled the publication with dispatches on the so-called "Cortinas War" on Texas' Mexican border as well as scalplings carried out by Indians on the state's western frontier. Lurid coverage concerned the evil work of abolitionist fanatics who, inspired by John Brown's bloody slave revolt in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, late in 1859, might incite Texas slaves to butcher whites. The paper's hysterical tone continued throughout the first half of 1860. "Two Women Murdered and Scalped, and two others Carried into Captivity!" a headline screamed on February 22. An article published on May 23 warned of abolitionists furnishing powder and lead to Cherokees in Arkansas to provoke an assault on the institution of slavery.¹

Abolitionists particularly haunted Pryor's imagination as he contemplated the future. He printed alarming accounts of Northerners holding "John Brown meetings" to mourn the leader of the insurrection of October 16, 1859, in which a United States arsenal was seized as prelude to a slave revolt. One such gathering in New York met "for the purpose of expressing their sympathy for Brown," and nearly resulted in bloodshed but for swift police action. Abolitionists and their "Black Republican" allies advocated miscegenation and black oppression of their former white masters, the paper claimed. If the Black Republicans triumphed in the presidential race, it would not be "long [before] we may have a negro President, a negro Cabinet, a negro Governor, and negro naval and military officers."² One letter, signed "Caucasian" and printed in the *Herald* on January 18, 1860, warned that the triumph of the Republicans would cause the world to take "a step backwards for 500 years ... Mongrelism as seen in Mexico and Central America, will become ... characteristic... . This destructive, abhorrent, damnable intermixture of the races, is ever slowly going on at the North – white women marrying black negro men and *vice versa*."³

The threat of race war loomed ever larger. Pryor's writings contributed to a panic that swept much of the state in 1860 and resulted in widespread violence against slaves and whites considered insufficiently "sound" on slavery. Before crucial statewide races in August and a turning-point presidential race in November, Pryor created an atmosphere that encouraged harassment, intimidation, and harsh violations of civil liberties against political foes. Fires and rumors of fires raged across the state in July and

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August. Pryor placed blame for the fires on abolitionists and slave lackeys. His newspaper painted free-state immigrants in Texas as potential dangers while his journalism aimed at ensuring political orthodoxy on the emerging sectional crisis. The low point of this campaign focused on the summer fires in 1860, the so-called "Texas Troubles." With Pryor's help, the alleged arsonists rushed Texas into the Confederate camp at the beginning of the Civil War. Pryor manipulated the arson panic, which reflected economic and political disunity within the white community on the eve of the Civil War, to ensure the success of the secessionist cause.

Charles Pryor, then an eighteen-year-old Virginian, had settled in Dallas in 1850, just nine years after John Neely Bryan began permanent Anglo settlement along the east bank of the Trinity River. Pryor had followed his older brother, Samuel Pryor, who became Dallas' first mayor when the town incorporated in 1856. Charles Pryor, a sometimes doctor, became friends with James Wellington Latimer, founder and editor of the *Dallas Herald*. He wrote articles for the paper and served as an "occasional assistant" to Latimer. Pryor inherited the newspaper's editorship when Latimer died in 1859. Both Latimer and Pryor staked out a fire-eater position on slavery and secession in the 1850s, declaring Texas had the right to secede from the Union if abolitionists won the White House. The two partners devoted much ink to abusing political opponents, especially Sam Houston.⁴

Houston dominated state politics in the 1850s. He staked his career on a pro-Union stance and thus earned the enmity of fire-eaters such as Latimer and Pryor. The hero of the Texas Revolution and two-term president of the Republic of Texas served as one of the state's first two senators in Washington from 1846 to 1859. His pro-Unionist position probably lost him the governor's race in 1857. Houston remained in the Senate and was chided by the *Herald* for weakly supporting the expansion of slavery in Senate debates concerning the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The *Herald* insisted that he resign. Latimer and Pryor backed Hardin R. Runnels' successful gubernatorial campaign against Houston in 1857. Houston recovered, winning the governor's race in 1859. After Latimer died, Pryor continued the anti-Houston campaign, calling the governor-elect a "submissionist" on slavery "bidding for the votes of the North for the Presidency."⁵

As statewide elections for attorney general, comptroller, and treasurer approached in August 1860, the *Herald* interpreted the race as a referendum on Houston's pro-Union beliefs. By electing anti-Houston men, Texas would send a message to the rest of the country that the state would secede if Republicans won the White House. The tone of the *Herald* grew increasingly harsh as Pryor used his editorial platform to intimidate those he considered unfriendly to slavery. If Pryor did not suggest there was an abolitionist hiding under every bed, he seemed to find one in every county.

Pryor's fears had been growing since late 1859, when, during public meetings held August 12 and 13, Solomon McKinney and Parson Blount, two Dallas County residents described as Iowa natives, faced accusations that they

advocated “free soil sentiments and abolition doctrines.” The *Herald* reported that a mob gave McKinney, a minister, his “walking papers” and told him to leave Texas for daring to “tell Southern men how to manage their servants.” McKinney was confined in the county jail to await his expulsion. Parson Blount made the mistake of defending McKinney during the public meetings. Blount requested a place in the jail for himself, fearing he would be in danger. The *Herald* darkly threatened Blount. “[U]ntil he came all was peace and quiet, harmony and good will,” Pryor wrote. “He has offended a generous community, who will not soon forgive him; hence he had better consult his own safety and *leave*.” When Blount and McKinney mysteriously disappeared from their jail cell, the *Herald* suggested it was through the aid of the “Prince of Darkness” or perhaps “the assistance of outside pressure.” The “escape” might have been evidence of a wider abolitionist conspiracy, but Pryor was happy to see the ministers gone. “The fact is, they are gone on their way, whether rejoicing or not, we cannot say,” Pryor wrote. “They left not a trace behind, save their shackles and an old Bible – awful warning to others who may feel disposed to engage in pursuits so unholy, and embarrassing.”⁶

Intimidation of suspected slave sympathizers continued throughout 1860, eventually turning deadly. The *Herald* reported the case of George D. Drake, accused of inciting a slave woman to attempt arson at her master’s house in neighboring Collin County on March 7, 1860. The *Herald* called for Drake to “suffer to the fullest extent of the law” for this crime. On April 18, the *Herald* published a long letter written by Drake’s friend, B. Warren Stone, in which Stone suggested that the slave woman lied and that Drake was being persecuted because he, like Blount and McKinney, had immigrated from a free state. “If coming from the state of Illinois is crime, and subjects a man to the imputations of being an abolitionist then I am a ‘tainted one,’” Stone wrote. “Yet I have some little negro property.” In just four months, coming from free states such as Illinois would indeed be treated as a crime by the state’s fire-eaters. Dallas’ only newspaper carried a tone of anti-Northernism in the weeks preceding one of the biggest disasters in the city’s history. In a county with a ninety-three percent literacy rate among free adults, Pryor’s inflammatory words reached a widespread audience.⁸ All year long, Pryor seemingly anticipated a racial conflagration prompted by Northern outsiders.

Pryor’s predicted holocaust finally arrived on July 8 when a fire consumed almost all of downtown Dallas. The fire began on Sunday, between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., in a rubbish pile outside the W.W. Peak and Brothers drug store located on the west side of the town square. The blaze spread quickly on a hot day on which temperatures reached 105 Fahrenheit. A high southwest wind fed the blaze, which in just five minutes engulfed the entire store. The flames spread, consuming the north side of the town square and much of the east side. The city was caught unprepared for the disaster. “[N]o one was ready to save his property,” according to one account. “Some saved a few things by dragging them into the streets, leaving them there only to be burnt in a few moments, as the flames surged down the wide openings between the houses, and in some instances catching on fire nearly 100 yards ahead of the flames.”

The fire reduced dry good stores, groceries, law offices, inns, and the offices of the *Dallas Herald* to rubble. Officials calculated the loss at \$400,000, with a mere \$10,000 of that total insured.⁹

One witness, Emma Baird, described the confused scene seventy-two years later: "With mother and the younger children we watched from the porch the dense black smoke pouring upward, a heavy pall that cut off the rays of the sun, a licking flame that mounted high and destroyed all within its grasp." The brick courthouse was one of the few buildings left standing. Volunteer firefighters diverted the inferno from the courthouse, although "the heat was so great that the curtains on the inside of the windows caught fire through the glass." When the fire had burned itself out, Dallas smoldered, a smoking ruin.¹⁰

The fire itself claimed no lives, but that changed as Pryor and others decided that the fire had been set deliberately and represented an ominous conspiracy. The next day, July 9, a home burned a mile and a half from town. Groups of men "with inflamed minds, swearing vengeance" gathered at the courthouse. "When the wiser heads decided that it was better to call a mass meeting, guards were placed at the [courthouse] doors, to see that only the proper ones were admitted," wrote Frank M. Cockrell, son of a Dallas founder, Alexander Cockrell, who was six years of age at the time of the fire. Judge Nat M. Burford left court proceedings in Waxahachie to preside over the meeting. Burford, Cockrell wrote, advised the meeting to respect due process and not to make hasty decisions. A fifty-two man Committee of Vigilance investigated the fire. Suspicion quickly settled on slaves and their alleged abolitionist accomplices. Judge Burford left the meeting, Cockrell reported, without explanation. Records of the committee, including confessions reportedly made by the suspects, have disappeared. The chief source of information on the investigation comes from a series of letters Charles Pryor wrote to newspapers across the state, such as the politically-allied *State Gazette* in Austin. With his printing press gone, Pryor launched a letter-writing campaign to spread the news, and along with it, the panic, about a slave revolt instigated by abolitionist outsiders.¹¹

These letters told the same story – black rebels plotted to burn down the state, murder white leaders, poison wells, and commit horrors on "certain ladies ... selected as victims of these misguided monsters." On July 28, the *State Gazette*, like the *Herald* an anti-Sam Houston paper, carried Pryor's letter proclaiming the Dallas fire the opening gambit in a planned statewide revolution. Several white men and slaves had been arrested and interrogated by the Committee of Vigilance, Pryor said, and the investigation had uncovered "a most diabolical plot to destroy the country." Abolition preachers "expelled from the country last year" had hatched a scheme to "devastate with fire and assassination" the "whole of Northern Texas," starting a general slave revolt on "*the day of election in August.*"¹²

Slave rebels hoped to destroy military targets such as supplies of powder, lead, and grain to "reduce this ... country to a state of utter helplessness."¹³ Blount and McKinney, the suspected abolitionists expelled from Dallas the

previous summer, now emerged as masterminds of the revolt. "Bl[o]unt and McKinney, the abolition preachers, were expected here at the head of the large force at that time," Pryor wrote to the *State Gazette*. "We are expecting the worst, and do not know what an hour may bring forth."¹⁴

The Committee of Vigilance interrogated nearly 100 slaves about the alleged plot, often using torture to extract confessions. "We whipped every negro in the county one by one," a leader of the community told the *Dallas Morning News* in 1892. "One of the negroes whipped became very sick afterwards and thinking he was going to die, he made a confession to his old mistress, telling her all about the plot."¹⁵ The inquisition dragged on for fifteen days and eight suspects languished in jail before the committee announced to a mob gathered outside the courthouse that three black ringleaders – Patrick Jennings, Sam Smith, and a slave called "Cato" – had been identified "by many witnesses without hesitation or contradiction of each other's statements." The three faced hanging the next day.¹⁶

It appears that the committee divided over the verdicts. A minority of the committee voted against the convictions. The only evidence published against the suspects was a report in the *Gazette* that Sam Smith had "much intercourse" with Blount and McKinney the year before. Patrick Jennings reportedly bragged about starting the blaze, pronouncing it "only the commencement of the good work." Officials led the three convicted slaves from the jail to a bank of the Trinity River near the site where the Commerce Street Bridge later spanned the waterway. A gallows awaited the accused rebels.¹⁷

Patrick Jennings remained calm and "betrayed no remorse or feeling whatever in view of his approaching doom." All three men, according to a letter in the *Gazette*, approached the hanging with a "composure worthy of a better cause." Jennings, displaying "unparalleled *nonchalance*," made no final statement and died with a "chew of tobacco in his mouth."¹⁸ Authorities also whipped and exiled two white preachers suspected of abolitionism.¹⁹

As the Committee of Vigilance continued its work in Dallas, a wave of fires and false arson reports swept the state. Approximately ninety minutes after the Dallas fire on July 8, a blaze broke out in Denton County northwest of Dallas. In all, fires causing an estimated \$1 million in damages were reported in fourteen north and central Texas counties. The accompanying hysteria lasted for eight weeks.²⁰ The abolitionist conspiracy theory gained greater currency as the elections in August approached with the discovery of the "Bailey letter," supposedly found near Fort Worth. Reportedly written by William H. Bailey to the Reverend Anthony Bewley, the only Texas elder of the anti-slavery Methodist Episcopal Church, the letter purportedly outlined the abolitionist plot. Bailey depicted slaves as easily manipulated into destroying "towns, mills, &c," which would render Texas "easy prey" to a revolution which would replace Texas leaders with "honest Republicans."²¹

The "hellish document," reportedly uncovered by a "most reliable and undoubted source," was sent to the *Belton Democrat*, edited by John Henry Brown, the former mayor of Galveston, retired state legislator, and future

mayor of Dallas. Brown shared Pryor's opposition to Sam Houston. Fanning the flames of anti-Union sentiment as well, Brown advised slaveowners to "whip no abolitionist, drive off no abolitionist – *hang them*, or let them alone." In response to the letter, local assemblies called for the compilation of "black lists" of Republicans and abolitionists to be hanged and suspected traitors to be watched carefully.²²

Anthony Bewley, sensing personal danger when the fires occurred, fled the state. In Fayetteville, Arkansas, a posse won a \$1,000 reward for capturing Bewley, who formerly lived in Johnson and Collin counties near Dallas. Between September 4 and 6, Bewley wrote to a friend from a Fayetteville jail, "So far as I am concerned, all these things are false." The fire-eater press disagreed over whether Bewley confessed to possessing the Bailey Letter. Transported to Fort Worth, Bewley was taken to a pecan tree and hanged. His body was left overnight and cut down the next morning by two slaves.²³

Many suffered Bewley's fate in the coming weeks as the northern and central part of the state turned into a killing field for slaves and accused abolitionists. Historian Alwyn Barr estimated that mobs executed eighty slaves and thirty-seven whites as a result of what the *New Orleans Daily Picayune* labeled the "Texas Troubles." One Mississippi newspaper editor sardonically described Texas slaves as "dancing to the music of the cracking of the necks of the Abolitionists." This music, the *Austin State Gazette* predicted, would last until the final abolitionist was "elevated on his platform."²⁴

In this over-heated atmosphere, Clement R. John won his race to become state comptroller in August, a victory hailed by the *Austin State Gazette* as a repudiation of Sam Houston and his pro-Union sentiments.²⁵ Early on, Houston expressed skepticism about the abolitionist plot, suggesting that the fire-eaters spread rumors for political purposes. Houston concluded that lost property and scattered reports of slave insubordination did not confirm a revolt. "[E]very occurrence has been magnified by the disunion press," he said, "... for no other purpose than to arouse the passions of the people and drive them into the Southern Disunion movement."²⁶

By late September, much of the fear and passion stirred over the summer had burned out, and some began to question whether the alleged plot ever existed. Even the *Austin State Gazette* conceded that many rumors of the revolts were unreliable.²⁷ The burning of trash in the back of the courthouse in Brenham sparked a panic there, while a newspaper editor in Weatherford expressed his surprise at reading in another city's newspaper a false report that Weatherford had been set ablaze.²⁸ The *New Orleans Daily Picayune* held as dim a view of "Black Republicans" as either the *Austin State Gazette* or the *Dallas Herald*, yet on September 8 its editor concluded, "Not half of what has been confessed seems to have been born out by later facts... The strychnine said to have been discovered in the hands of negroes turns out to be very harmless ... wells thought to have been poisoned [were] untainted with any deleterious substance."²⁹ The fact that many of the slave "suspects" possessed guns was neither unusual nor sinister. The *Austin State Gazette* observed that

slaves living in the rugged condition of the Texas frontier often carried guns, purchased alcohol, and sent letters with few difficulties.³⁰

In spite of contemporary doubts about the abolitionist conspiracy, a century later scholars remain uncertain about the plot's existence. Early in the twentieth century, scholars who were Southern sympathizers often accepted the existence of a plot to justify pro-secession sentiment.³¹ Later, leftist historian Herbert Aptheker used incidents such as the Dallas fire to debunk the image of the passive, happy Southern slave and to demonstrate that blacks bravely battled the peculiar institution. Aptheker tends to accept any account of slave insurrection uncritically.³² Recent writers are more skeptical, noting that torture was used to extract confessions, but demure from completely rejecting the slave plot story.³³

There is reason to suspect that the "Texas Troubles" were, as Sam Houston claimed, a series of accidents exploited by pro-secessionists to intimidate their opposition. Many fires reported in the press never took place, while the fires that did occur happened during a drought which facilitated the spread of accidental fires. One might also question the authenticity of the "Bailey Letter" suddenly produced by a newspaper editor who was one of the fiercest fire-eater voices. Why one conspirator wrote a letter reviewing the details of capital crimes already underway, confessing to cynical attitudes towards the slaves supposedly the beneficiaries of the revolt, and why the recipient of this letter carelessly lost this damning evidence, is hard to fathom.

The work of the Committee of Vigilance in Dallas is also suspect. The only statement from a member of the vigilance committee came in July 1892, and his comments in a *Dallas Morning News* retrospective on the blaze cast doubt on the proceedings. The jurymen, unnamed in the story, voted against conviction of the three slaves. The juror at first declined to be interviewed because, "this was a bit of southern history that was not good." This committee member said he believed that the white preachers accused of conspiracy were innocent. He claimed that the Dallas fire that had inspired a state-wide panic was accidental. "When the town burned it was a hot day – so hot that matches ignited from the heat of the sun," the committee member said. "Wallace Peak had just finished a new two-story frame building and in the upper-story that day a number of men were lounging and smoking." Near the Peak drug store, he said, were "a lot of boxes filled with shavings and I think a cigar stump or match was thrown into one of the boxes, and from that the fire started about two o'clock in the afternoon ... Somebody had to hang; and the three negroes went."³⁴

Even if the initial fire was accidental, did slaves exploit the chaos and rebel spontaneously? This, too, is doubtful, since conditions in Dallas in particular and in Texas generally varied greatly from the pattern of other Western Hemisphere slave revolts. Verified rebellions in the United States tended to take place in labor-intensive agricultural economies such as tobacco, cotton, rice, and cane sugar that required a large number of slaves.³⁵ At the time of the Texas Troubles, the Dallas economy depended on the less labor-intensive cultivation of wheat. The communications network usually present

in slave rebellions was also lacking, with the Central Railroad not extending to Dallas until 1871. If wheat farmers were isolated, so too were their slaves and any would-be conspirators.³⁶

The nature of black Texan culture also suggests their resistance involved community building more than overt politics. Slaves maintained African practices such as holding dance contests in which participants placed glasses of water on their heads to see who could “jig” the hardest without spilling water, which, in the context of Texas slavery, symbolized endurance in the face of hardship.³⁷ Such practices strengthened ties within the slave community but did not directly challenge the state’s slaveocracy. Africanized Christianity emphasized fellowship and promoted a long view on social justice. Slaves in Texas avoided suicidal millennialist impulses while at the same time resisted an otherworldly passivity.³⁸

Perhaps the slave community’s bold embrace of Africanity intimidated whites, particularly as the election of a perceived abolitionist as president loomed on the horizon. Certainly African Americans suffered most in the racial violence of 1860. Mass whippings and hangings might discourage thoughts of slave revolt should Texas secede and a Northern army dedicated to emancipation march towards the Red River. What is extraordinary is the level of violence within the white community. A virtual civil war raged across Texas before the first shots were fired at Fort Sumter. This violence reflects economic and cultural tensions among whites. The suppression of abolitionists imposed political conformity upon the state during the secession crisis.

Even in its infancy Dallas was neither ethnically unified nor completely Southern in sentiment. In 1855, approximately 700 French, Swiss, and Belgian immigrants, led by Victor Considerant, created *La Réunion*, a utopian socialist community, located west of the Trinity River three miles from Dallas. Considerant founded the anti-slavery colony when the anti-immigrant, Know-Nothing Party was at its apex of popularity and lobbied the state legislature to battle the “communal experiment” of these “European socialists.”³⁹ As a result of the pressure, the state legislature refused Considerant a vitally important land grant which crippled the colony.⁴⁰ Persecution of the *Réunionists* continued through the Civil War. When officials tried conscripting the colonists into the Confederate Army, settlers barricaded themselves in the old colony and refused to fight for the pro-slavery cause.⁴¹

The presence of “foreigners” perceived as hostile to slavery heightened white anxiety about the state’s future, but immigrants from free states presented the greatest threat to fire-eaters. Dallas residents born in free states formed a highly visible minority, about twenty-four percent of the population. The numerous free-state natives thus became a significant target when rumors of an abolitionist revolution broke out in 1860.⁴² Generally, immigrants from the upper South, such as G.M. Record of Tennessee, one of the county’s richest residents with \$16,850 in real estate holdings and \$23,650 in personal assets, occupied the county’s higher income strata. George Wheeler represented the typical free state immigrant. The thirty year old worked as a miller

and possessed a total of \$885 in personal assets.⁴³ Immigrants from free states such as Illinois and Iowa and border slave states such as Missouri formed a productive part of the county's economy, but their visibility was not matched by political and social power. To be from a free state was to be in danger. "No matter how well disposed or quiet an Eastern man here may be, he is continually questioned, annoyed, and distrusted," a businessman from a free state wrote to the *New York Daily Tribune*.⁴⁴

This regional tension played out in a summer of severe drought and economic tension in Dallas. "[W]heat growers of Dallas have but a poor market for their staple, on account of their inland location," a traveler to Dallas noted in a letter printed in the *Herald*. Land was also scarce with "no vacant lands and no places to rent or sell at prices which emigrants are disposed to give," the *Herald* reported.⁴⁵ Beset by economic anxieties, Dallas proved fertile ground for panic and fear.

In spite of a summer of intimidation and violence, the editors of the *Austin State Gazette* and men such as Pryor never silenced the opposition. Following Abraham Lincoln's victory in the presidential race, Texas scheduled a referendum on secession for February 23, 1861. Historians usually interpret Dallas County's seventy-six percent "yes" vote for secession as endorsement of the Confederate cause. Considering that the election came just seven months after the Dallas fire and the violence against dissenters, the fact that twenty-four percent of the county voted against secession suggests continued white disunity. Collin County voted against secession, as did most counties north of Dallas. At least forty percent of the voters in nearby Wise, Denton, Hunt, and Van Zandt counties also voted no. Far north central Texas represented the most anti-secession region of the state outside the "German Belt" in central Texas.⁴⁶

A combination of economic, political, ethnic, and regional tensions, heightened by sensationalist journalism and fear over outside events such as the John Brown raid, formed the combustible elements when a match or lit cigar was thrown atop dry kindling one hot summer day in Dallas. The violence unleashed by the Texas Troubles eventually proved so embarrassing to one fire-eater that he devoted only one sentence to the incident when he published his *History of Dallas County, Texas From 1837 to 1887* almost three decades later. John Henry Brown edited the *Belton Democrat* when the conspiracy panic erupted and circulated the infamous "Bailey Letter." He moved to Dallas early in the 1870s and became mayor in 1885. An amateur historian, Brown published his county history in 1887. He barely mentioned the Texas Troubles, preferring more comfortable topics. "To recount the recent events preceding the war, the destructive fire of July, 1860 ... would be to open a question, the discussion of which should be left to a later day – farther removed from the acrimonies of the war and of the actors in those scenes," he wrote.⁴⁷

In the next paragraph, after barely alluding to the divisions in Dallas during the 1860s, Brown painted a picture of sweet consensus in the following years. "When the sectional controversy assumed the character of war, there

were probably not twenty bona fide citizens of Dallas County who were not truly and sincerely southern in feeling and sentiment.”⁴⁵ This myth of unity rested on a foundation of terror and bloodshed instigated by men such as Brown. The “southernness” of Dallas could be measured by the length of a hangman’s rope.

NOTES

¹“Latest News from the Rio Grande!” *Dallas Herald*, January 4, 1860, p. 2, col. 4; “Act for the Protection of the Frontier,” *Dallas Herald*, January 4, 1860, p. 2, col. 3; “Exciting News from the Frontier! Two Women Murdered and Scalped, and Two Others Carried into Captivity!” *Dallas Herald*, February 22, 1860, p. 1, col. 2; “Abolitionists in the Cherokee Nation,” *Dallas Herald*, May 23, 1860, p. 1, col. 4. The Cortinas War of 1859-1860 was the first in a series of violent flare-ups, often sparked by the abuse of Mexican labor, along the United States-Mexico border that lasted until late in the 1870s. For an account of the U.S.-Mexican border wars from 1859-1877, see David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin, 1987), pp. 32-34.

²“Brown Meeting,” *Dallas Herald*, January 4, 1860, p. 1. col. 1; “Incitement to Treason and Civil War,” *Dallas Herald*, January 4, 1860, p. 1. col. 5; “The Democracy and the Opposition,” *Dallas Herald*, April 25, 1860, p. 2., col. 2.

³“The Bible on Slavery,” *Dallas Herald*, January 18, 1860, p. 1. col. 4.

⁴“Dallas by the Decade,” *Legacies: A History Journal of Dallas and North Central Texas* 3: 2 (Fall, 1991); p. 18; Ron Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas* (Austin, 1996), s.v. “Charles R. Pryor”; *Dallas Herald*, April 6, 1859, p. 2, col. 1.

⁵“Another Message, ‘Still Worse,’” *Dallas Herald*, February 1, 1860, p. 2, col. 2. For a discussion of Houston’s feud with the *Herald*, see M. K. Wisheart, *Sam Houston: American Giant* (Washington, 1962), pp. 552-558, 573.

⁶*Dallas Herald*, August 17, 1859, p. 3, col. 1; “The Climate of Texas,” *Dallas Herald*, August 31, 1859, p. 3, col. 1.

⁷“The Excitement in Collin County,” *Dallas Herald*, March 7, 1860, p. 2, col. 4; “Excitement in Collin County - Tampering With Slaves,” *Dallas Herald*, April 18, 1860, p. 2, col. 3; “Collin County Excitement,” *Dallas Herald*, April 18, 1860, p. 2, col. 4.

⁸U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Dallas County*, (Manuscript) pp. 1-192.

⁹“The Late Conflagrations,” *Austin State Gazette*, July 28 July 1860, p. 1, col. 6; William H. White, “The Texas Slave Insurrection of 1860,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 52: 3 (Jan. 1949), pp. 259-260; Frank M. Cockrell, *History of Early Dallas* (Chicago, 1944), pp. 70-73. The *State Gazette* article is drawn from a letter sent to the paper from Charles Pryor.

¹⁰Cockrell, *History of Early Dallas*, pp. 73-75.

¹¹Cockrell, *Early Dallas*, pp. 76-77; Tyler, *New Handbook of Texas*, s.v. “Charles R. Pryor.”

¹²“The Late Conflagrations,” *Austin State Gazette*, July 28, 1860, p. 1, col. 6.

¹³“Late Conflagrations.”

¹⁴“Late Conflagrations.”

¹⁵“Red Letter Anniversary of the Burning of Dallas Thirty-Two Years Ago,” *Dallas Morning News*, July 10, 1892, p. 12, cols. 1-2.

¹⁶“Letter from Dallas,” *Austin State Gazette*, August 4, 1860, p. 2, cols. 7-8.

¹⁷“Letter from Dallas,” Cockrell, *History of Early Dallas*, p. 77.

¹⁸“Letter from Dallas,” *Austin State Gazette*, August 4, 1860, p. 2, cols. 7-8.

¹⁹“Red Letter Anniversary,” *Dallas Morning News*, July 10, 1892, p. 12, cols. 1-2; Cockrell, *History of Early Dallas*, p. 77.

²⁰White. “Texas Slave Insurrection.” n. 260; Herbert Antheke, *American Negro Slave*

²¹White, "Texas Slave Insurrection," p. 265.

²²"Texas Slave Insurrection," p. 265; Tyler, *The New Handbook of Texas*, s.v. "John Henry Brown." Wendell G. Addington, "Slave Insurrections in Texas," *The Journal of Negro History* 35: 4 (Oct. 1950), p. 427.

²³Addington, "Slave Insurrections in Texas," pp. 428-429; White, "Texas Slave Insurrection," p. 267; "Texas Abolition Incendiaries," *Austin State Gazette*, September 29, 1860, p. 2, col. 2; "The Rev. Wm. Buley," *Austin State Gazette*, September 29, 1860, p. 2, col. 4; "The Rev. W. Buley," *Austin State Gazette*, October 13, 1860, p. 4., col. 1; Wesley Norton, "The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil Disturbances in North Texas in 1859 and 1860," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 68:3 (Jan. 1965), pp. 318, 321, 333-335, 338-339.

²⁴Alwyn Barr, *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995* (Norman, Okla. 1996), p. 33; "Strong Figure of Speech," *Austin State Gazette*, October 6, 1860, p. 3, col. 4.

²⁵"Let all Texans Mingle in this Glorious Triumph!" *Austin State Gazette*, August 18, 1860, p. 2, col. 1.

²⁶Wisehart, *Sam Houston*, p. 589.

²⁷"Incendiarism in Austin," *Austin State Gazette*, August 4, 1860, p. 3, col. 1.

²⁸Donald E. Reynolds, *Editors Make War: Southern Newspapers in the Secession Crisis* (Nashville, 1970), p. 108.

²⁹"The Texas Troubles," *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, September 8, 1860.

³⁰Margaret Joan Agnew Telford, "Slave Resistance in Texas." (master's thesis. Southern Methodist University, 1975), p. 14.

³¹For a representation of this viewpoint, see Joseph Cephas Carroll, *Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865* (Boston, 1938), pp. 195-196.

³²Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York, 1943).

³³Barr, *Black Texans*, pp. 33-34. Another critique of the abolitionist conspiracy can be found in White, "Texas Slave Insurrection," pp. 259-285.

³⁴"Red Letter Anniversary," *Dallas Morning News*, July 10, 1892, p. 12, cols. 1-2.

³⁵Marion D. de B. Kilson, "Towards Freedom: An Analysis of Slave Revolts in the United States," *Phylon* 25: 2 (1964), pp. 179-183.

³⁶"News From a Stage Coach," *Dallas Herald*, April 20, 1859, p. 1., col. 3 (The front page of the issue is erroneously dated 13 Apr. 1859); Cockrell, *History of Early Dallas*, p. 61.

³⁷Ronnie C. Tyler and Lawrence R. Murphy, eds., *The Slave Narratives of Texas* (Austin, 1974), p. 71; Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York, 1987), p. 67.

³⁸Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1976), p. 275.

³⁹James Pratt. "Our European Heritage: The Diverse Contributions of *La Réunion*," *Legacies* 1: 2 (Fall, 1989), pp. 14-17; Rondel V. Davidson, "Victor Considerant and the Failure of *La Réunion*," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 76: 3 (Jan. 1973), p. 289.

⁴⁰Davidson, "Victor Considerant," p. 289.

⁴¹Pratt. "Our European Heritage," p. 17.

⁴²U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Dallas County*, (Manuscript), pp. 1-192.

⁴³*Eighth Census*, pp. 1-192.

⁴⁴Quoted in Reynolds, *Editors Make War*, pp. 107-108.

⁴⁵"News From a Stage Coach," *Dallas Herald*, April 20, 1859, p. 1. col. 3.

⁴⁶Rupert Norval Richardson, *Texas: The Lone Star State* (Edgewood Cliffs, N.J., 1981), pp. 222-226; *The New Handbook of Texas*, s.v. "Secession"; Ralph A. Wooster and Robert Wooster, "A People at War: East Texas During the Civil War," *East Texas Historical Journal* 28: 1 (1990), p. 4.

⁴⁷John Henry Brown, *History of Dallas County, Texas: From 1837 to 1887* (1887; Reprint, Dallas, 1966), p. 102.

⁴⁸Brown, *History of Dallas County*, p. 102.