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The Civil War in Missouri: A look at Confederate Guerrillas’ Four-Stage Devolution

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Introduction

Today, many Americans are familiar with Jesse James, one of America's most famous outlaws. James’ reign came to an end on April 3, 1882, when he was shot in the back of the head, unarmed and in his own home. The man who shot James was 20-year-old Bob Ford, kid-brother of Charlie Ford, a man with whom James had recently robbed a bank. At the time of his death, James had been an outlaw for over sixteen years. During that period, conservative estimates account him to have committed over 11 bank and train robberies, as well as several murders. He died a poor, isolated exhausted and paranoid from living life on the run. ¹

James’ experience living outside the law did not begin after the Civil War, however. In fact, James was a Confederate guerrilla in Missouri during the final year and a half of the war, rode with the most violent men of the period, and participated in almost all of the gruesome atrocities of the war. James did not suddenly emerge from a vacuum as a notorious outlaw but rather from a series of personal conflicts created and connected to national conflicts over slavery, state’s rights, and territorial expansion. In fact, James was relatively unknown during the war and served under commanders who influenced his postwar behavior but did not attain his enduring fame.

Personal bitterness and cruelty characterized the Civil War in Missouri. It was a conflict that, without exaggeration, lasted almost 11 years. The rising sectionalism of the 1850s played out most violently during neighboring Kansas’ rise to statehood in the mid to late 1850s. Missouri was a slave state and determined to see Kansas enter the Union as a slave state as well. Since the decision rested on a vote by the people in Kansas,
hordes of “border ruffians” from Missouri attempted to strong-arm election results. The conflicts turned violent. When the Civil War began, Missouri clung precariously to conditional Unionism but soon their state government split. One faction, lead by the present governor, Claiborne Jackson, joined the Confederacy, while the Union recognized St. Louis as new Union capital. By the spring of 1862, Union forces had driven the Confederate army from the state. Confederate guerrillas remained, however, and the rest of the war in Missouri and Kansas was fought by Federal patrols, Confederate guerrillas and Kansas’s abolitionists in a bloody, vengeful manner. General Robert E. Lee’s surrender in early April 1865 brought little closure to the Kansas-Missouri border war. Emotions were seared and the countryside was ravaged. The reconstruction period in Missouri began in the same chaos in which the war had ended.

Two Confederate guerrillas who led men like James, contributed immensely to the bloodshed and hatred of the border war were William Clarke Quantrill and William Anderson, Jr. Quantrill achieved a similar infamy to Anderson. Labeled the “bloodiest man in America” by his first biographer, William Connelley, Quantrill has cut a wide swath in American history and folklore. His most notable feat is the Lawrence, Kansas, Massacre of August 25, 1863. Quantrill led over 400 Confederate guerrillas 40 miles into Union patrolled Kansas to burn and pillage the abolitionist stronghold, killing over 180 civilians. Even after General Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses Grant at Appomattox on Quantrill continued to fight for the Southern cause in the woods of Kentucky.

William Anderson, Jr., was born in Kentucky in 1839 and moved to Missouri, then Kansas during the late 1850s. It was in these warring states that Anderson earned
the moniker “Bloody Bill.” The sobriquet was aptly deserved, as Bloody Bill Anderson participated in all the major guerrilla massacres in Missouri and Kansas. As the Civil War dragged on and Missouri’s particular brand of guerrilla fighting worsened, Anderson became more violent and depraved. Not only did Anderson murder, but also he was known for decapitating, scalping and castrating Union soldiers.

Because of men like Anderson and Quantrill and Union policy aimed at stopping them, Missouri lay in ruins after the Civil War. Western Missouri was depopulated; houses and barns lay in ashes; fields were overrun with weeds and farming equipment sat destroyed. Feelings of bitterness and hate remained on both sides. According to author Michael Fellman, “the terrible grudge of neighbor against neighbor created in the guerrilla conflict remained unsolved at the end of the war. No one apologized. No one forgave.”

What could have led to this ruin and hatred? The answer lies in the escalation of the border war on both the Confederate and Union sides and can be explained by a four-stage process of Confederate guerrilla degeneration. Integrity and enthusiasm on the part of the Confederacy represented the first stage, when the future guerrillas were fighting under regular Confederate command. The Civil War was new and both sides were enthusiastic about their cause and the romantic notion of war masked the horrors of that lay ahead. During the War’s beginning in Missouri, each side operated with military goals and under military conduct. Even though civilian mobs from Kansas and Missouri looted and burned, the character of the war was official: uniformed men from the Confederacy met uniformed men from the Union on the battlefield. The second stage was the beginning of the guerrilla conflict. After the Confederate Army was driven from the state, retaliatory events perpetrated by both sides began to replace the conventional character of
the war. Guerrillas like Quantrill remained to fight in Missouri as part of the Confederate Army and paroled the Union forces they captured. In the third stage, the guerrillas began to lose their official ties to the Confederacy and abandon the implicit rules of war. This abandonment of conventional warfare in favor of a desperate struggle waged against Union soldiers and civilians alike is marked by Quantrill's Lawrence massacre and Anderson's killing sprees. Soon, fewer and fewer prisoners were left alive and civilians became targets. The guerrillas were, however, still unified as shown by their mustering of over 400 men for the attack on Lawrence. During the winter of 1864-1865 and throughout the rest of the war, the guerrilla war had entered its fourth and final stage of unmerciful killings along with a loss of purpose and unity. No longer did the guerrillas have any sense of duty to the Confederacy, nor respect for outsiders, nor discipline among themselves. The end of the war found small bands of guerrillas roaming West-Central Missouri and then finally Kentucky, robbing, looting and murdering.

This paper will examine the conflicting social and political forces in Missouri that created its chaotic and violent identity before and during the Civil War. Missouri's brand of conflict was a guerrilla war waged by Confederate irregulars. Central to this irregular war of and between the people were these four distinct stages of development. In addition to examining these four stages, the lives of five of the most violent and infamous Confederate guerrillas will also be examined to serve as evidence of the four stages. Two of these men, Bill Anderson and William Quantrill, achieved their notoriety during the war and the other three, Jesse and Frank James and Cole Younger, achieved their notoriety after their time as Confederate guerrillas, when they became as old west outlaws. Through analyzing the guerrilla conflict in Missouri and Kansas through these stages, it shows that men like
Quantrill and Anderson changed during the war in response to surrounding events. These men did not start off as violent murderers even though they may have ended the war as such. In the conclusion, Confederate guerrillas' activity during the closing year of the war resembled and laid the foundation for their post-war lives as outlaws—if they survived past Appomattox.

Prelude to War in Missouri and Kansas

As the Union expanded westward in the 19th century, the tensions between the North and the South were constantly inflamed by the question of how to add new territory while preserving the existing political order. In order to gain a more broad and complete understanding of the violent events in Missouri and Kansas in the 1850s, looking back to Missouri in 1820 is essential. Missouri entered the Union as a slave state in 1820 as part of a compromise that prohibited slavery north of the 36°30' parallel of the Louisiana Purchase. This compromise avoided the slavery issue for a generation yet the issue would flare up again during the 1850s—with Missouri being in the center of the issue again.3

During the rise of sectionalism in the United States, Missouri presents a unique case because the state shared characteristics with both the South and the North. Unlike the Deep South, cotton was not king in Missouri but corn and hogs were.4 The landscape of Missouri was dotted with yeoman farmers, a characteristic of the upper South and the Midwest. Early colonists in the area were chiefly emigrants from Canada who were engaged in the burgeoning fur industry of the early 1800s. Even though most of the actual trapping took place north of Missouri in the Mississippi valley, settlements such as St. Louis served as fur rendezvous and shipping centers.5 As the population of Missouri
increased and urban centers grew, Missouri remained largely agrarian, and it stayed that way through the Civil War. Before the Civil War, the average Missourian owned a 215-acre family farm, owned no slaves, produced most of the family's subsistence needs and purchased and sold products in the local service economy. As westward expansion increased, St. Louis businessman began to engage in wholesale supply to towns like Franklin, Independence, St. Joseph, and Kansas City. These towns, along with Missouri farmers, profited from westward migration. Missouri farmers met the increased demand and began to supply the increasing number of travelers. As seen from this overview of Missouri's development, it shared just as many similarities with Northern states like Ohio and Illinois than it did with states in which it shared the institution of slavery. This identity crisis would contribute to the political division that would erupt as the country grew closer to civil war.

Compared to many states in the upper south like Virginia, Missouri was still largely unpopulated and isolated from the rest of the country. This landscape would later provide ideal cover for guerrillas to hide in the expansive, thick and rugged regions of western Missouri and avoid Federal patrols. By the mid 1840s, along with other western centers like Illinois, Missouri began its interest in railroad construction. Although farmers, suppliers and manufacturers alike saw the economic benefit of railroads and the increased land value they would bring, their financing proved difficult. Even though the Missouri General Assembly, the state legislature of Missouri, essentially agreed on the development of railroads, the wisdom of publicly financing the railroad was debated. The first railroad reached St. Louis in 1853. By 1855, however, only 100 miles of railroad was in existence in Missouri, preserving the outlying areas' relative isolation. Even though production was
slow, the General Assembly continued to grant the sale of more and more public bonds and by the beginning of the Civil War, Missouri had over 800 miles of operative railroads.⁹

Like other slave states like Virginia and the Carolinas, Missouri had a small number of plantations where slave owners were the exception compared to the largely non-slave owning agrarian class. Missouri plantations that owned large numbers of slaves were only found in a small area along the rich bottomland of the Missouri River. This class of citizens was small in numbers yet politically powerful. During the early 1850s, they had allied with the rising merchant class to produce what was termed the “boonslick democracy” named after the town Booneville, located along the Missouri River. Realizing that their power was not in numbers, they expanded their direction of appeal and championed Jacksonian ideals in order to gain the support of the majority, the rural yeoman farmers. This change began the agrarian masses vital addition of more formal support for the institution of slave labor and an increasing southern conscious to their already established Jacksonian values of individualism and states rights. While this political shift was taking place, Missouri began to industrialize slowly in the 1840s-1850s as St. Louis began develop as a manufacturing center and railroads began to connect rural traditional villages.¹⁰ Even though slavery was not widely prevalent throughout Missouri, the fact that the state shared the institution with other Southern states oriented Missouri with predominately southern sentiments.

As Missouri’s economy developed, a merchant class emerged that sided with the slave owning plantation owners but also brought in more Northern influences. With infrastructure improvements came the decrease of household production and the increase of bartering for goods along with “semi-cash” exchanges. As mentioned before, a small town merchant class began to grow that soon politically linked themselves with the plantation
owners of the Missouri River bottomland. The yeoman reaction to the change in the economic and social landscape can be characterized as ambivalent. "The yeoman farmers viewed these changes as infringing but at the same time saw the profitability of the new economic forces." The economic development of Missouri had a subtle, yet effective, influence on the rise of sectionalism. Not only did the rising yeoman class begin to politically identify with the more established plantation owners, but also similarities with the rapidly growing northern economy alienated this rising class. The more the Missouri economy came to share classical attributes of the Northern economy, like industrialism and goods produced with free-market labor, the more Missouri began to be infused with the growing abolitionist values of New England. Missouri's most populous and most economically productive city, St. Louis, was a hotbed of northern values like free labor due to the large Irish and German immigrant population. Even though these populations anti-slave agenda was motivated by reasons that were chiefly economic, other more radical abolitionists from New England used this commonality to advance their cause. The rural yeoman farmers of Missouri were not against economic development; it was the economic changes that were concurrent with Northern social and political pressure that caused reaction against the North's influence. The people of Missouri, save St. Louis, were largely agrarianists with Southern values. St. Louis would continue to be the most Northern leaning area of Missouri leading up to the Civil War and throughout the conflict.

On the eve of the Civil War, the people of Missouri had strong ties to both Northern and Southern influences. Even though the addition of Missouri to the Union was a solution to the rising conflict between the North and South, the state was essentially a wilderness. Political conflict within Missouri was minimal until the election year of 1844. 1844 marked
the first time in which Missourians were forced to deal with major national issues like the future of slavery in territories. "The national election of 1844 marked a major step in turning the national Democrats away from old Jacksonian values towards a party led by Southerners who sought to direct its policy in the interests of slavery and territorial expansion." The issues that would create sectional lines between the north and the south were beginning to be unearthed with the annexation of Texas. At the time, the annexation of Texas from Mexico loomed larger than the issue of the expansion of slavery, though the slavery question still surrounded the decision in a variety of ways. From the 1844 election until the beginning of the Civil War, the struggle for political power in Missouri would reflect national political trends.

The evolution of Missouri's political views and the erosion of compromise can be shown in the example of Missouri senator Thomas Benton, a public figure who would emerge as a principal player in the fifteen years of Missouri politics that led up to the Civil War. Benton supported the annexation of Texas when the issue rose to national prominence in 1844. However, he did not support how John Calhoun, President John Tyler's secretary of state, approached the negotiation with Texas. Benton disagreed with the "timing, procedure, and alleged motives of the promoters." Furthermore, he charged that Calhoun was pressing annexation in order to advance the interest of slaveholders and to disrupt the Union over the slavery issue. In contrast, Missouri Senator David Atchison, also a principal political actor within the politics of the state leading up to the Civil War, supported the immediate annexation of Texas. Benton had his roots deeper in the dated Jacksonian values of individualism when Missouri was a wilderness on the frontier, and due to his moderate cause, fell from Missouri favor in 1850, unlike the increasingly pro-
southern Atchison. On the issue of Texas, however, the two senators were able to reach a compromise by agreeing that, “Texas would be annexed at the earliest practical moment.” However, this political compromise, achieved in 1844, would mark the last time these two men were able to reach a concession. The men grew increasingly polarized in their views during the heated period before the Civil War and would stand in bitter opposition to one another as sectionalism increased in Missouri and the United States in the 1850s.

When James Polk captured the Democratic nomination as a dark horse candidate advocating annexation, and was subsequently elected President in 1844, Benton again opposed Polk’s action of initiating the entry of Texas into the Union by means of a joint congressional resolution instead of diplomatic relations with Mexico. The general sentiment of Missouri, however, matched the course of Polk because Missouri saw economic opportunity and southern solidarity through Texas entering the Union. Through Missouri identifying with Texas’ political and economic appeal of entering the Union as a slave state, it furthered its growing Southern identity. The end result of this political wrangling showed that the pro-south Atchison had more support throughout Missouri than Benton did. Furthermore, the statewide tenor that supported Atchison would provide the framework for Missouri’s aggressive campaign to strong-arm slavery into the settling Kansas territory. It was at this juncture that Benton’s political career began to be characterized by his opposition to southern sentiment.

The politics of the 1844 election was the genesis of the conflict that would soon split the Democratic Party into the Benton party of Unionists and the pro-southern Atchison camp, and would later split Missouri. As the sectional conflict intensified, the politics of Atchison would grow increasingly ultra-Southern, even though the men were both
democrats. Benton warned in an address given in Jefferson City in May 1847 that slavery could break parties along sectional lines and eventually bring about the destruction of the Union. Benton was prophetic in his address, but his political views fell from the democratic consciousness in Missouri in favor of Atchinson’s.16

Much was happening in the national picture surrounding the increasing sectional tensions. 1850 marked the year Senator Henry Clay, near his death, would leave his legacy in a six-part compromise. The bills that Congress passed that affected Missouri’s situation dealt with the admission of New Mexico and Utah as territories with slave codes. Upon their entrance to the Union, slavery would be decided by their state constitution. The intentions of the compromises differed from how the newly passed bills ran their course (despite California entering as a free state, its Congressional Representatives were pro-south and pro-slavery) but the bill prolonged the sectional conflict.17

When the re-election year of Benton was approaching in 1850, a group of Anti-Benton forces convened in the Missouri General Assembly to pass what came to be known as the Jackson Resolutions, laws that upheld Missouri’s growing Southern conscience. The Jackson Resolutions stated that Congress could not legislate on the subject of slavery in the territories, only the people of the territories could decide at the time of statehood, on the right to prohibit slavery. The Jackson Resolutions mirrored popular sovereignty, the policy that would engulf Kansas and Missouri into a bloody guerrilla struggle even before the Civil War. The Resolutions said that as a result of the conduct displayed by the combatant northern states, the southern states did not have to adhere to the Missouri compromise. The Jackson Resolutions also stated that when future tensions and conflict arose surrounding slavery and the northern states, Missouri would cooperate with the
southern states in order to assure mutual protection against northern fanaticism. The final clause of the resolution stated that all Missouri senators and representatives were instructed to act in conformity with the resolution.

With the exception of Benton and his followers, the Jackson Resolutions illustrated the change of prerogatives of the Democratic Party of Missouri. Once surrounded by issues that involved the public issuing of bonds in order to finance the construction of railroads and land rights, the Democratic party of Missouri that was founded on Jacksonian values had evolved away from the less complicated and less volatile time of early statehood. Benton adamantly disagreed with the resolutions and began to plan a series of speeches that were to be delivered to audiences from across the state denouncing the resolutions. Benton argued that the Resolutions did not represent the true voice of the people and they promoted dissension in Missouri and national disunion. The extent to which Benton was correct in his view of the resolutions is uncertain; however, the increasingly radical stance he was taking was largely unsupported by the people of Missouri, especially the farmers. The election of 1850 saw Benton’s long and influential senate career come to an end. Replacing him was Henry Geyer, a lawyer from St. Louis who was able to find a middle road between Benton and the anti-Benton candidate James Green. The issues that surrounded Benton when he was first elected to Missouri’s senate seat in 1820 were considerably different from the hostile political landscape that surrounded his defeat. The slavery question and expansionism were the hot-button issues that confronted Missouri in the 1850s. It is doubtful that the word ‘secession’ was ever used surrounding regional political parlance when Benton first came to his senate seat, but by 1850, debates surrounding the constitutionality of secession reflected the rising sectional tensions.
The rights of slaveholders to carry their slaves to new territories was an issue that further divided the nation and surrounded the Missouri political scene in the early and mid 1850s. A former slave, Dred Scott, sued his owners’ heirs for his freedom citing that because his master had brought him into a free state, Illinois, and a free territory, Wisconsin, he was indeed free on grounds of the Missouri Compromise. The Dred Scott case’s first stop on its way to the Supreme Court was a Missouri State court. In March 1852, in a 2-1 decision, the court ruled that state courts were not required to heed the laws of other states and congressional legislation controlling the territories.\(^{19}\) Free soilers in Kansas and Pro-southern forces in Missouri did not wait until 1857, when the Supreme Court finally handed down the Dred Scott decision to act violently in the name of their causes. The Supreme Court had envisioned laying the question of the legal status of slavery in the territories to rest but only succeeded in increasing the sectional conflict.

In the same year that the Dred Scott case began, Missourians elected Sterling Price as Governor on a democratic ticket whose platform was purposely moderate and vague on the slavery issue. Price would later become a pivotal figure in the Civil War in Missouri as a Confederate General who encouraged guerrilla warfare after his armies were driven from the state. This election coincided with the organization of the Nebraska and Kansas territories by Congress. The national debate over the extension of slavery into the territories would have serious implications in Missouri throughout the rest of the decade. After a series of territorial organization acts failed, the Kansas-Nebraska act finally navigated its way through the United States Congress in the spring of 1854. The Kansas-Nebraska Act began initially as an attempt to organize the area northwest and west of Missouri as Nebraska territory. As with the territorial expansion of New Mexico and Utah, it renewed
the dispute over slavery in the territories in a manner that would turn violent. “The Kansas-Nebraska measure was the major national question of its time, but probably in no state did it create greater public excitement than in Missouri.”\textsuperscript{20} Angering some Northern Democrats, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that prohibited slavery north of 36°30' was repealed and Nebraska was divided into Kansas and Nebraska. These Democrats could not, however, vote on the issue from a principled anti-slavery stance. Settlers (voters) were hungry for new land and added to the push of manifest destiny that would outweigh the chance for slavery to expand. Therefore, popular sovereignty was going to decide the fate of slavery in the territories. Reflecting on the fact that a regional election would decide the future of slavery in Kansas, Senator Atchison advised his pro-slavery cohorts that, “the game must be played boldly.”\textsuperscript{21}

After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the question of slavery transcended political debate and turned violent. Nebraska offered slaveholders little geographic attraction; it bordered no Southern states and only the area bordering Kansas was suitable for farming. As a result, its free-soil settlement was not a debated issue.\textsuperscript{22} Kansas, on the other hand, was a different story. The aggregate number of slaves in Western Missouri was around 50,000, almost a third of the slave population in the state. Their owners were concerned that if Kansas entered the Union as a free state, Missouri would be surrounded on three sides by free-soil providing convenient haven for runaways. Furthermore, a free Kansas would in effect block the Westward expansion of slavery as well. In the prophetic words of Atchison, the future of slavery in the United States depended on the fate of Kansas.\textsuperscript{23}
The majority of Missourians embraced the Kansas-Nebraska act and popular sovereignty. This time Benton, serving as a United States representative from a district that included St. Louis, was outspoken against the Kansas-Nebraska act. Benton was alone in his dissent as all other Missouri senators and representatives supported the act. As a result of the Kansas-Nebraska act, the Whig party, while not having that strong of a presence in Missouri, was further weakened by the rise of the slavery issue and expansionism, providing fertile ground for a new political party that would be founded on the slavery issue: the Republican Party.

The fight over sectionalism and the future of slaves and southern values was not limited to the Senators and Congressmen of Missouri and their free-soil foes. The struggle between the citizens of Missouri and Kansas that began in 1854 would foreshadow the vengeful violence of the Civil War in Missouri and Kansas. As early as 1854, the civil strife that began along the border between Missouri and Kansas illustrated that the war between the two was going to be a war of the people—not just politicians and words. These bitter feelings between pro-slavery factions and free-soilers were created and exacerbated by the politics of the era. Central to the newly formed Republican Party was their free-soil commitment to the Wilmot Proviso. The Wilmot Proviso, named after a Pennsylvania Congressman David Wilmot, had further split the country down sectional lines when it declared that slavery would be illegal to the expanding territories back in 1846. Until the mid 1840s, the question of slavery had been largely avoided in the federal government because it was an institution controlled at the state level. Presently, however, the question of slavery confronted the Federal Government in a number of ways due to rapid westward expansion and because the unorganized territories were under Federal controls.24
Michael Fellman writes, "the popular northern ideological thrust [of anti-slavery propaganda] against rural southern whites in the 1850s came to bear particularly on Missourians in the period of 1854-1856." The decision for popular sovereignty represented by the Kansas-Nebraska Act increased sectional tensions in Kansas and Missouri because the issue of the spread of slavery seemed to be a matter under the direct influence of Missouri and Kansas's citizens. Senator Atchison of Missouri illustrated the sentiments of rural Missourians in the face of rising free-soil immigration to Kansas when he said. "A set of fanatics and demagogues, a 1000 miles off, can afford to advance their money and exert every nerve to abolitionize the territory and exclude the slaveholders when they have not the least personal interest." What Atchison referred to through partisanship was the New England Emigrant Aid Company, a company that was started in 1854 to help finance free-soil settlers in Kansas. Missouri was being used as a battleground for the nation's varying opinions on slavery. Senator Atchison was clear that Missouri felt the intense heat of being under the national spotlight. The conflict between pro-slavery and anti-slavery values was being exacerbated by the forced settlement of Kansas. In response to the aggressive antagonism of the abolitionists' voice and presence, it was Atchison who organized pro-slavery Kansas settlers. The result of action on both sides was a clear line of sectionalism and accompanying violence.

Even before a part of Kansas was opened up to settlement, land-seeking men were already crossing the border and squatting on claims. Rivalries over claims ensued over universal frontier issues like water rights and sporadic violence erupted. Often, claims were disputed between pro-slavery and free-soil parties. "Organized efforts by both northern and southern elements to promote their respective interest in Kansas worsened the difficult
A hoard of Missourians first crossed the Kansas border to "participate" in the Kansas territories' United States Congressional elections of 1854. Even though census reports indicate only 3,000 eligible voters, over 6,500 votes were cast. The "border ruffians," a descriptor that Atchison gave the men he led and that inadvertently stuck, achieved their goals and a pro-slavery territorial delegation was sent to Washington. The free-soilers of Kansas responded by convening a free-state constitution to counter the pro-slavery legislation that was forming. Essentially Kansas now had two territorial governments and, initially, Washington recognized the pro-slavery forces until the 1857 election was recognized as unjust and then placed free-soilers in control for the remainder of period until the Civil War.

Violence between the two sides continued and an entirely new level of animosity was established after pro-slavery forces raided the "free-soil capital" of Lawrence, Kansas, in May of 1856 in a prelude of a later, infamous attack by William Quantrill. The events that preceded the raid took place while United States Marshal Israel B. Donaldson was serving indictment papers cast by a Missouri based grand jury. Donaldson met resistance while trying to arrest two men in Lawrence. Atchison was quick to provide Donaldson the clout he needed and formed a group of pro-slavery men to ride to Lawrence and allow Donaldson to make the arrests. Much to the disappointment of Atchison and his men, the Marshal dismissed the men. Missouri Sheriff Sam Jones, frustrated with the free-soil intransigence and Marshal Donaldson's ambivalence, led Atchison's men and sacked Lawrence by throwing two newspaper presses into the river, burning two homes, and torching the "Free State Hotel."
The raid on Lawrence triggered fury from a man who by the outbreak of the war was a folk hero in the North. Complete with his long-bearded Old Testament look, John Brown believed in "an eye for an eye." Infuriated over the sack of Lawrence, Brown's obsession with violent revenge was further provoked after Preston Brooks' caning of Charles Sumner on the floor of the U.S. Senate. "Striking a blow for freedom" Brown led his four sons and two others on a raid of a Missouri settlement near Dutch Henry's Crossing at Pottawatomie Creek, where they murdered five unarmed men. Brown's attack was an early example of citizens resorting to violence, and intensified the pro-slavery hatred. Missourians responded by destroying Brown's town of Osawatomee, though Brown was never caught.  

According to James McPherson, this butchery "launched a full-scale guerrilla war in Kansas." Until President James Buchanan replaced Kansas's territorial governor, Wilson Shannon, with John Geary and he was able to negotiate a truce before winter, almost 200 people died. The violence was renewed after 1857 when bands of Kansas Jayhawkers, profit-seeking abolitionists named after an imaginary bird, repeatedly raided Missouri's western counties. Started in the name of abolitionism, these raids degenerated into expeditions of robbery and destruction. The governors from both states responded by sending federal troops to patrol the state's borders. It was only after each state took these extreme measures that the raiding Jayhawkers and Border Ruffians would subside until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Added to this mix, of course, were the aggressive free-soil settlers, whom one witness described as "men from the North with wagons that contained no visible furniture, agricultural implements or mechanical tools but abound in the requisite articles for camping
and campaigning purposes." Why did the debate over popular sovereignty take on its violent and bitter personality in Missouri? In short, Missouri realized that its location left it uniquely suited to decide the pressing question of slavery in Kansas and the rest of the territories. "In population, wealth and industrial capacity the South in general had fallen behind the North and was increasingly conscious of its minority status." The rise of abolitionism had agitated Southern sentiments and pushed even the more Unionist-by-compromise sentiments of rural Missourians in the direction of more aggressive secessionist-like sentiments. The abolitionist campaign of denunciation of the Southern, and especially the Missouri, lifestyle "lacerated southern feelings as never before." In addition, the idea of popular sovereignty amounted to political power through grassroots action. The men on the frontier could speak not only with their vote, but also through intimidation and violence.

On the eve of the election of 1860, the same divisive forces that fortified sectionalism nationally tore Missouri. A state that began on the frontier of America, Missouri and its populace's essentially agrarian and Southern values had been confronted with considerable economic development and northern influence, contributing to an identity crisis. The Jacksonian political ideology that had grounded the state through a series of national compromises over slavery had disintegrated in the 1850s. The strong ties that Missourians had to their values and institutions as well as the pressure from Kansas and other northern influences heightened emotions and eroded the political center of moderation and compromise. All of these factors fed into the violence committed by the Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers. Although these factors did not decide Missouri's future as a
Confederate or Union state, they promised that the coming war would only intensify and amplify the chaos, bloodshed and hatred that had characterized the 1850s.

The Civil War

Claiborne Jackson, an aggressive southern sympathizer, was elected governor of Missouri in 1860. Jackson’s past reflected his Southern leanings: he had led border ruffians into Kansas to “participate” in their first territorial elections. It was Jackson that first bestowed the name “Border Ruffians” on Southern leaning Missourians who caused trouble in Kansas. Also, Jackson had adamantly denounced the New England Emigrant Aid Society efforts to populate Kansas with free-soilers. Upon the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April of 1861, recently elected Republican President Abraham Lincoln called for federal troops from Missouri. Jackson responded defiantly, “your requisition is illegal, unconstitutional, revolutionary, inhuman, diabolical, and cannot be complied with.”

Jackson moved quickly to secure Missouri in the Confederacy through appointing Sterling Price to head soldier recruitment, before Unionist forces could build.

Though his Southern leanings were strong, Jackson did not seek out to immediately have Missouri secede from the Union. Part of his hesitation may have been economic: At the time of South Carolina’s secession from the Union in December 1860, Missouri, like the rest of the states, was becoming economically stagnant due to the political uncertainty surrounding the nation. Many workers in the industrial capital of St. Louis lay idle and all banks, save one, had suspended specie payment. Newly elected Governor Jackson voiced his Southern nationalism, though he believed Missouri’s secession from the Union was cursory. The governor stated,
So far as Missouri is concerned, her citizens have ever been devoted to the Union, and she will remain in it so long as there is any hope that it will maintain the spirit and guarantees of the Constitution. But if the Northern States have determined to put the slave-holding States on footing of inequality, then they have themselves practically abandoned the Union, and will not expect our submission to a government on terms of inequality and subordination.  

Jackson, like St. Louis free-soil Congressman Frank Blair, believed that St. Louis and its federal arsenal of 60,000 muskets, 200 powder barrels and other war implements, was of principal importance during the chaos and uncertainty of the spring of 1861. On the eve of the bombardment of Fort Sumter, Jackson took control of the St. Louis police through the appointment of an independent police board. In response, Congressman Blair and Mayor Oliver D. Filley began to organize the large German American free-soil contingency of St. Louis into "Home Guard" units. Not to be outdone, Jackson's Lieutenant Governor Thomas Reynolds organized secessionists into units of minutemen. "Soon both outfits were drilling secretly in various halls around the city."  

Mirroring the nation, many volatile issues were coming to a head in Missouri and especially in St. Louis. The General Assembly, dominated by Breckenridge Democrats and Douglas Democrats, approved an election to determine a special state convention early that year. The convention members were still opposed taking any measure as extreme as secession. With the exception of four delegates elected from St. Louis, the newly elected members of the convention were not free-soilers or adamant secessionists. The key issues were the protection of slave property and the preservation of Southern rights. As already noted, Missouri was different in its makeup from many of the states that had already seceded, such as Virginia and South Carolina. No plantations existed in Missouri that were similar in size to the large tobacco plantations in the Deep South. The per capita slave population had decreased from one in four 30 years earlier to one in nine. Ultimately
secession, the convention decided, would further cripple the Missouri economy at the time of this national insurrection. 42

Missouri’s feelings or Unionism remained delicately intact, though the state was unable to maintain its stance of conditional unionism for long. As in many civil wars and revolutions, the political and social center of Missouri disappeared in the surrounding violence, panic and extremism. Unable to sit on the Secession/Unionism fence the circumstances forced tough choices on citizens and politicians alike. Though most of rural Missouri was sympathetic to the Southern cause and slaves still populated the countryside, St. Louis was a political powder keg because of its strong free-soil element. Perhaps predictably, events in St. Louis knocked Missouri from its cautious Unionist stance and propelled it down its bloody and fratricidal path.

In St. Louis, Congressman Blair removed General William Harney from command at the federal arsenal, Jefferson Barracks, and promoted a Connecticut born free-soiler Captain Nathaniel Lyon in late April 1861. Before being transferred to Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis, Lyon was stationed in Kansas during the late 1850s and witnessed first hand the violence of the Border Ruffians. The appointment of an ardent Unionist to be the commander of a federal arsenal within a slave-holding state but in a city with Unionist majority would clearly produce, as it indeed did, conflict and pro-Union action on the part of Lyon. 43

Sensing the importance of the stockpile of arms now under his control, Lyon armed four German American regiments into Federal service and shipped the rest of the arms across the Mississippi to Illinois. The creation of the American Home Guards, made up of German and Irish immigrants, “increased tension in [St. Louis].” 44 In response to the
arming of German-Americans, who were resented by nativist Missourians because of their rising political power and economic based free-soil views, the secessionist element in St. Louis appealed to Governor Jackson for counter-action. On the same day that Jackson refused to provide Lincoln with Federal volunteer troops from Missouri, he secretly met with secessionist troop commander General Frost and ordered him to gather troops and begin military training throughout the state.\(^45\)

Jackson hoped that mustering troops from the area surrounding St. Louis would serve as a decoy to Lyon and allow Frost to capture Jackson Barracks and secure arms and military supplies for the Southern cause. Frost camped a complement of 700 militia on a hill east of the federal arsenal. Jackson, upon Frost's urging, petitioned the newly seceded Virginia for armaments. The Confederate government responded and a total of thirty-two cannons arrived from Virginia.\(^46\) Using his new police board, Governor Jackson demanded that General Lyon leave the federal arsenal. Lyon refused the order and began to prepare for an assault. The encampment of secessionist militia now named Camp Jackson, did not attack.\(^47\)

Instead of waiting for the possibility of Frost attacking Jefferson Barracks, Lyon moved on the 700 militia stationed at camp Jackson. On May 10, 1861, Lyon surrounded Camp Jackson and the outnumbered Confederate militia surrendered. The Union officers placed the militia under arrest and marched them through St. Louis back to Jefferson Barracks. The polarized and unstable atmosphere of the city produced a raucous crowd. Many cheered for Jefferson Davis and harangued the German American soldiers by calling them "Hessians." Others turned out to cheer the Union army.\(^48\)
The tense situation reached its critical mass when a drunk tried to cross the line of marching Union soldiers. After being roughed up, the man brandished a pistol and according to some sources he shot a Union officer while other sources say he fired an errant shot toward the Home Guards. Either way, the Federal Soldiers responded by firing a volley over the heads of the protesting crowd. A fracas ensued, rioters organized and continued throughout the night. Nearly thirty people lay dead before nightfall.49

War had now come to the frontier state. According to Parrish, the melee "forced Missourians to get off the fence and make immediate personal choices."50 Much of the Union sentiment dissolved across Missouri as news of the incident at Camp Jackson spread. Former Governor Sterling Price, once a Conditional Unionist, was appointed to the command of Missouri’s Confederate troops and would lead them for the remainder of the war and continue even after Lee’s surrender at Appomattox.

William Clarke Quantrill

Perhaps ironic in light of the blood, mayhem and destruction that followed William Clarke Quantrill as he navigated the Kansas-Missouri border during the Civil War, Quantrill was born to uninteresting parents under the most unsensational circumstances. Nevertheless, by the fall of 1863, the name Quantrill conjured fear and hatred among Unionists as well as arousing feelings of admiration and heroism among Confederate supporters. Besides the fact that he was born in Canal Dover, Ohio, on July 31, 1837, to a homemaker and a tinsmith-turned-school administrator, little detail is know of Quantrill’s early childhood. Many of the first pulpy novels that appeared around the turn of the century paint Quantrill as a sadistic child having few friends. For example, Quantrill
reportedly took pleasure in capturing and mutilating rabbits, frogs and snakes as a young child. In addition, some have claimed Quantrill killed his first man when he was but 18 as a lumber yard clerk after the assailant tried to rob him. No facts back these stories up and they are a result of sensational writing and attempts to explain his later violent acts in terms of a cruel and sadistic childhood. The literature that abounded after the war on Quantrill and his Confederate raiders ties into the cultural need and proclivity towards folklore and heroes. It is as easy for people of the period to answer the question of “why” in terms of a troubled childhood or in the case of a southern perspective, as noble man questing to avenge terrible wrongs committed against his people by rabid Unionists.

What is known of his life before his involvement in the Civil War is based primarily upon his first accredited biographer, William Connelley, who wrote Quantrill and the Border Wars in 1910. Much of Connelley’s treatment of Quantrill before the Civil War is based on a series of letters that Quantrill sent his mother during his Western travels. While the book attempts to give an objective account of Quantrill’s life, Connelley’s pro-Kansas and pro-Unionist feelings emerge and make his analysis biased and slanted. As a result of Quantrill’s father working in education as well as his own inherent ability, Quantrill was a good student and began to teach school at age sixteen. Quantrill’s father died in December 1854 of consumption when Quantrill was eighteen. In order to make ends meet, the Quantrills began taking in boarders and Quantrill continued teaching. Hoping to win enough bread to end his mother’s boarding business, Quantrill traveled around the area surrounding Canal Dover but only could find jobs as a teacher. When Quantrill had the chance to travel to Kansas in February 1857 with a group of Canal Dover citizens, he took the chance. Working a land claim bought by two former Canal Dover citizens, Colonel
Henry Torrey and Harmon V. Beeson, Quantrill encouraged his mother to sell their home in Ohio and move to Kansas to purchase land. Before Quantrill’s mother could move to Kansas, Quantrill, still poor and unable to send any money home, was suspected of stealing supplies from a local settlement, Tuscarora Lake. Quantrill’s theft continued and then he was caught with a yoke of Torrey’s oxen. He returned the oxen and was banished from the settlement and drifted to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Quantrill joined an army expedition to Utah as a teamster under the command of General Albert Sidney Johnston, a future Confederate General who died leading forces in the battle of Shiloh. The expedition arrived in Salt Lake City in October 1857. Quantrill sent an optimistic letter to his mother and sister in Canal Dover assuring them, “You need not expect me home till you see me there, but bear in mind that I will do what is right, take care of myself, and try to make a fortune honestly, which I think I can do in a year or two.”

Throughout the winter in Utah, Quantrill’s letters become less optimistic. Although he landed a job as an assistant Quartermaster that paid fifty dollars a month, he soon lost the job and was reduced to working as a mess hall cook. Quantrill tells his mother about plans on traveling to the Colville gold mines in Canada and assures his mother not to “grieve any more than possible” and to realize that “someday he would be worth something—don’t fear.” Instead of traveling to Canadian gold mines however, Quantrill traveled to Pike’s Peak, Colorado, and both the trip and the mining proved harrowing. Out of the nineteen men in the expedition that left Salt Lake City, only seven survived. Added to the hardship of the trip, the mining was not profitable either. Soon Quantrill was back in Lawrence, his traveling companion and horse shot by Indians on the return trip. Quantrill then returned to Stanton, Kansas, and began teaching. Four years of Western travels had hardened Quantrill
and left him no further ahead financially than when he first went west. The austerity and
disaster of the trip from Salt Lake City to Pike's Peak, Colorado, must have added to his
frustration but more importantly foreshadowed and demonstrated his ability to survive.
Quantrill did not succumb to starvation, mountain winters, Indian attacks or yellow fever
even though he was threatened by each. During the Civil War and his days as a Jayhawker
leading up to it, Quantrill was the most wanted man on the Missouri-Kansas frontier.
Thousands of Union patrols, home guard units and militia never once captured or killed the
Confederate Guerrilla Captain. After being hunted for over five years, it was a man similar
to the company Quantrill kept that would finally end the life of, according to Connelley, the
"bloodiest man in American history."34

Quantrill’s days of teaching upon his return from the West in the summer of 1859
were marked with a growing sense of uncertainty and angst. He had little to show for his
hard life and he had failed as a provider for his aging mother and sister. Quantrill
questioned himself as well as his purpose. The following excerpt is the most frequently
quoted passage from the next to last letter he ever wrote his mother. It illustrates his
feelings and offers a dark and brooding foreshadowing of the future. Quantrill’s eloquent
and grim prose reflects on the nature of the surrounding country (Missouri and Kansas) by
asserting his own free will over the promise of frontier life. Horse and slave stealing and
double-crossing would soon trump Quantrill’s past petty blanket thievery.

There is no news here but hard times, and harder still coming, for I see their
shadows; and “coming events cast their shadows before” is an old proverb. But I do not fear that my destiny is fixed in this country, nor do I wish to be compelled to stay in it any longer than possible, for the devil has got
unlimited sway over this territory.55
At the conclusion of the school term in 1860, Quantrill headed for Lawrence and would not return to teaching again. Quantrill held no job and fell into company with both Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers. Similar to Bill Anderson, these men capitalized on the conflict between abolitionists and pro-slavery forces and the surrounding chaos of the area for their own advantage. Specifically, these men would engage in capturing free blacks and selling them into slavery or kidnapping slaves and then re-selling them to their masters for a reward. Between the time Quantrill taught his last term and degenerated into a border outlaw, Castel writes, “Quantrill ran foot races, wrestled, gambled, and drank with his new found friends, who soon accepted him as one of their own kind—which, in fact, he soon became.”

During the fall of 1860 and the winter of 1861, Quantrill began to play a dangerous double game between the anti-slavery Jayhawkers and the pro-southern Border Ruffians. As an example, Quantrill assembled a group of Jayhawkers and led them on a cattle raid in Western Missouri. After seizing a number of head of cattle, Quantrill slipped away from the Jayhawkers and aroused the farmers whose cattle were just stolen. Leading a posse of insolent farmers Quantrill caught up to the Jayhawkers driving the cattle and a short gunfight ensued. Unable to stop them, the Jayhawkers crossed the Kansas border and sold the cattle to Kansas settlers. Quantrill then appeared in Lawrence a few days later and claimed his share of the spoils! His alibi was that he had become lost and disoriented in the dark and in order to elude the farmers, Quantrill took the most roundabout way back to Lawrence. While his Jayhawking partners were suspicious, they paid Quantrill his share just the same.
After Quantrill’s bloodiest and largest double-cross, he was unable to ride the fence between Jayhawkers and Border Ruffians. He soon emerged as a hero within Jackson County, Missouri, for aiding in the ambush of three Jayhawkers, and loathed among Jayhawking circles. Historians of the period and of Quantrill call this episode the Morgan Walker raid, named after a rich Jackson County farmer. Quantrill assembled a band of Jayhawkers with the intention to raid Walker’s farm. Many turned Quantrill’s plan down citing its danger and the cold weather of December as the reason why it was a suicide mission. Nevertheless, Quantrill teamed up with a group of abolitionist Jayhawkers, former Quakers from Springdale, Iowa, named Charles Ball, Chalkey Lipsey, and Edwin S. Morrison. All men had once listened to the orations of John Brown and it was he who had influenced their settling in Kansas to fight the abolitionist crusade. After two days’ travel, the men had camped in a thicket about a mile away from the farm of Morgan Walker. Quantrill left the group under the pretense that he was going to scout the farm. After arriving at the farm, Quantrill approached the house and asked for Walker. Only his son, Andrew Walker, was home at the time yet Quantrill confided his plan to the surprised son. Quantrill told the young man that a group of Jayhawkers would soon be approaching the house looking to steal slaves, horses, cattle and money. Quantrill suggested setting an ambush for the Jayhawkers: two men hid behind a loom on the porch and two hid in an adjoining harness house. His only stipulation was to allow him to get out of the way. Andrew Walker alerted five neighbors and they lay in ambush for the Jayhawkers. Morgan Walker had returned home and he was also notified of the plan. As planned, Quantrill and his band approached the Walker farm and the four men went inside and demanded money. At the suggestion of Quantrill, he remained inside covering the
Walkers, and the three men left for the barn to gather horses. When the three men were seen leaving the house, Walker’s neighbor John Tatum emptied his shotgun into Morrison and he died instantly. Due to the darkness and confusion, Ball and Lipsey were able to escape despite Lipsey receiving a “nasty wound in the groin.”

Quantrill had pulled off his double cross with impunity. He remained at the Walker farm while the band of men hunted for the two surviving Jayhawkers. Ball and Lipsey managed to escape yet were unable to travel far from the Walker farm. While encamped in a thicket, a neighbor and his slave spotted the two Jayhawkers while they were out cutting wood. The location of the two Jayhawkers was passed along to the Walkers and Quantrill and they descended on the camp where Lipsey lay on a bed of leaves in agony and Ball squatted over a fire. Morgan Walker shot Ball while he was reaching for his pistol and Quantrill shot the helpless Lipsey through the head. Quantrill had come a long way since his days of blanket stealing in Kansas almost four years ago.

The story passed through the community quickly and Quantrill became a local hero of sorts to some as well as a suspicious outsider. Quantrill was arrested by the Jackson County sheriff and taken to Independence for questioning. Satisfied with his answers, no charges were pressed against Quantrill, yet many were still suspicious of his activity because of his connection with the Jayhawkers. Andrew Walker helped diffuse a lynch mob by insisting that Quantrill would only be killed over “his dead body.” To show their gratitude, Morgan Walker gave Quantrill a horse, saddle and $50 in cash and Quantrill stayed at the Walkers’ and with neighbors just in case other Jayhawkers should seek revenge for Morrison, Ball and Lipsey. Quantrill soaked in the attention and it was here that
he concocted a story of how he acquired his Pro-Southern sentiments and came to hate Unionists.61

According to Quantrill’s tale, he was born in Maryland and while traveling west through Kansas, his older brother and he were ambushed by Jayhawkers. His older brother was killed while he was wounded and left for dead. Luckily Quantrill, after beating off buzzards from his brother’s body, was found by an Indian named Spiebuck and nursed back to health. Upon recovering from his wounds, Quantrill lurked among the Jayhawkers in order to avenge the death of his brother. Morrison, Ball and Lipsey were, according to Quantrill, the last Jayhawkers he needed to kill in order to finally settle the score. As shown by Quantrill’s earlier life, the major facts of the story were false. He did not have a brother. Quantrill laced the story with his real experiences among Jayhawkers giving the tale extreme plausibility. The story fell on captive ears and catered to the notion of noble revenge that many pro-southern Missourians wanted to hear. Quantrill’s tale paralleled themes of the early literature that emerged from the period depicting Confederate Guerrillas as noble warriors seeking revenge.62

This story was essential to Jonathan Edwards’s treatise, Noted Guerrillas. Knowing many Confederate guerrillas himself, Edwards used his first hand knowledge and access to surviving memories to produce an account that is anything but historical in his 1877 book. Using flowery language and epic-like prose, Edwards paints Quantrill as the noble crusader avenging the horrible killing of his brother. The Confederate guerrillas are dashingingly romantic and flamboyantly noble. Instead of being a reliable historical source, the book adds to the folklore and legend surrounding the Confederate raiders, commenting on the sociological need for heroes in a society marred by violence, injustice and atrocities. With
Quantrill firmly grounded on the Southern side after the Morgan Walker raid, the looming Civil War found Quantrill,

Essentially just another boarder outlaw, only perhaps somewhat more vicious, imaginative, and daring than the average... a common case of a young man whose ambitions outran his accomplishment; who desired wealth and success, but who was impatient and impotent in their quest; and who came to resent his failure and the world which caused it. 63

“Bloody” Bill Anderson

William Anderson, Jr’s. background and upbringing were typical for pioneer families. His family continually pioneered West and Bill became a product of his pioneer environment: a tough and an able horseman. Born in Kentucky in 1839, Bill Anderson’s father, William Sr., moved his family to Missouri in the mid 1850s and then to Kansas during the spring of 1857 when Kansas was opened to settlers. Anderson Sr., and his family homesteaded along the Santa Fe Trail and sold supplies to traveling settlers. 64 Hard luck soon hit the Anderson family when Bill’s mother was struck by lightning and killed in 1860. Bill’s older brother Ellis Anderson fled to Iowa after he shot an Indian. The surrounding social and political environment was volatile and marked with sectional tension and violence. Living within these environmental factors, Bill Anderson experienced hardship and loss. By the time the country plunged into the Civil War, Anderson had already seen the death of his mother and the exile of his brother. Soon, his father was to meet the same fate. Such hardships were not uncommon to pioneer families during the 1850s, though the death of both parents and exile of a brother seem particularly unlucky and uncommon. The hardships of the frontier as well as its lack of a solidified law presence characterized young Anderson’s environment. Bill worked as a rancher and
accompanied wagon trains on the Santa Fe Trail. He experienced success working as a skinner and rancher though his business practices soon came into question when Anderson returned from trips to Missouri with horses that he would soon sell locally. 

At the beginning of the Civil War, Anderson was 22 and the increasingly chaotic environment afforded him the ability to expand his “horse business” into full-blown banditry. Similar to the activity of Jayhawkers during the Bleeding Kansas struggle of 1856-1860, bands of Kansas Red Legs, loosely organized brigades of Unionist militia under the command of Kansas Senator James H. Lane were recognized by the red leggings they wore. These gangs operated under the ideological cloak of abolitionism to foray into Western Missouri plundering and looting “secessionists.” Anderson, while not specifically identifying under the same ideological fig leaf of these Red Legs, participated in the same raids of Western Missouri. It would certainly seem counter to his southern upbringing and his Kentucky birth that Anderson would steal and loot from people with whom he shared similar political ideals and values. It was financial profit, however, that seemed to motivate Anderson and eclipsed any commonality that he shared with pro-southern Missourians. Authors Albert Castel and Thomas Goodrich write that Anderson, while trying unsuccessfully to recruit neighbor Charles Strieby to join his horse-stealing forces, said, “I don’t care any more than you for the South, Strieby, but there is a lot of money in this [bushwhacking] business.” Anderson’s values changed as the Missouri-Kansas guerrilla conflict intensified during the Civil War. Early in the war, Anderson can be described as living for profit under loosely formed Southern values with a lust for violent adventure. After the death of his sister Josephine and the maiming of his sister Mary Ellen
at the hands of Federal authorities, Anderson lived for retribution that he would enact in a ruthless, bloody and enraged fashion.

At twenty three Anderson had experienced the death of both parents and used the cover of regional politics to plunder to rob from Unionists in Missouri. His horse thievery had led to violence and violence had led to murder. To what extent Anderson, now exiled to Missouri, began to identify with the Southern cause is unclear. In the beginning of the war seems Anderson’s ideology was driven equally by greed and his loyalties to the South. By the summer of 1863, Anderson could not kill enough Unionists after the death of a sister and the maiming of another. It was a retributional, violent life that the young Anderson had already experienced on the frontier. He had gotten ahead by robbing and stealing and Anderson had not been punished for his actions. Anderson allowed his horsemanship skills, skill with a gun, and his knowledge of the country to blend with the boldness required to rustle horses and a lack of ethics to prevent it. The chaotic environment of Kansas and Missouri allowed Anderson’s actions to go largely unchecked. Anderson’s fearless and daring personality, shown by his actions throughout the war, fueled his continued bushwhacking and soon earned him his nickname, Bloody Bill.

Little is known of Anderson’s actions between his flight from Kansas and when he first appears in the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies for leading an attack on a German-Unionist settlement in Lafayette, Missouri, on July 15, 1863. While Anderson had participated in guerrilla activities before the war, he too committed greater and greater atrocities as the war went on. Castel and Goodrich report that Anderson belonged to a gang of bushwhackers comprised mainly of young men from Kansas. It is believed that Anderson rode under the notorious bushwhacker Dick Yager. Yager was described by the
Johnson 35

Council Grove Press as “one of the worst Guerrillas in Missouri.” On one foray into Kansas, Anderson returned home to Council Grove to find the family farm reduced to ashes. Anderson was probably not surprised. The act of burning suspected and known southern farms was common in eastern Kansas. After leaving Council Grove, Dick Yager’s gang of bushwhackers was surprised by U.S. Marshal James McDowell’s sixty-man posse. Even though Yager and both Bill and Jim Anderson escaped, ten bushwhackers were captured. The men were later shot while “attempting to escape.” Since Anderson is the only notorious Confederate Guerrilla of fighting age not to begin the war fighting under Price he seems not to fit into the four stage guerrilla devolution. Closer examination of Anderson’s Civil War life shows that he did fit the four stages because his murderous streak grew while his respect for Confederate superiors decreased as the war progressed, major themes of the four stages.

Jesse and Frank James

Jesse James had a short history before joining Bill Anderson and George Todd’s guerrilla outfit in the spring of 1864, after the Lawrence Massacre. The soon to be notorious Confederate guerrilla turned outlaw was only sixteen. Described as icy cool and lithe by those who rode with him, the young James would participate and experience the most base and terrible times of Missouri’s guerrilla warfare before embarking on his outlaw career. A certain mystique and folk hero status surrounds the hard life of Jesse James. He was championed by some as a noble Robin Hood like outlaw, driven to a life of crime by radical Northerners. In reality, James’ young life as a Confederate guerrilla was neither noble nor similar to the legend of Robin Hood. The time in which he lived and the
surrounding environment were violent, chaotic and deeply divided along sectional lines. Jesse James fought for the South and possessed Southern sympathies as the son of Kentucky farmers. He also plundered, murdered and burned with a cool vengeance that was created when James was young, growing up on a farm in Clay County, western Missouri.

Born of pioneer stock in Clay County, Missouri, on September 5, 1847, James was the second son of Zerelda Cole and Robert James, both from Kentucky. Jesse's older brother Franklin, born four years ahead of Jesse, would ride with Jesse throughout his outlaw career. To explain Jesse and Frank's violent and murderous streak as the result of being born to poor, abusive parents devoid of morals, is not possible. The James brothers' parents were, "apparently better off intellectually, morally, and even financially than the great masses rolling across the Mississippi." After serving the towns surrounding the James's farm as a Baptist minister for the first ten years of Jesse's life, Robert James abruptly left for the California gold fields. Robert James died in California soon after he arrived and Zerelda Cole remarried, soon separated and then married her third husband, Dr. Ruben Samuel.

None of the scholarship on the Jameses mentions their homestead being a victim of Jayhawking during the pre-war violence that engulfed Western Missouri and Eastern Kansas. Frank James answered Confederate General Sterling Price's call for men and left home to join the Clay County militia when Jesse was only thirteen. The James farm was only a few miles away from a family farm that shared the name of their post-Civil War gang-the Youngers. Furthermore, the James farm was less than a day's ride from another famous Confederate guerrilla family turned outlaw-the Daltons. This proximity and sharing of a common cause formed the support network that provided the guerrillas with
intelligence, cover, and sustenance throughout the war and after. It was Union efforts to eradicate this support network that increased the severity of the conflict and infused Confederate guerrillas with the need for violent revenge.

Growing up on the frontier undoubtedly produced young men that were rugged and capable of enduring the hard riding life and wounds of a Confederate guerrilla and Western outlaw. The Youngers and the Jameses were no exception. In fact, the first summer when Jesse joined Anderson and Todd’s band of guerrillas, he was severely wounded when a bullet from a federal cavalry carbine passed through the left side of his chest on August 12, 1864. Jesse James recovered and the scar was still readily visible at the time of his death in 1882 and was used to positively identify the outlaw’s body.

The Confederate guerrillas all clung to stories, some true, some fabricated, of why they held the Union in utter hatred. Quantrill fabricated a story that his older brother (he was the oldest male of the family) was murdered by Kansas Jayhawkers before the war. Bill Anderson’s sister was killed while being held in a Federal jail that collapsed shortly before the Lawrence massacre. Jesse James had ample reason to despise the Union. Each biographer of James has given a slightly different account of an incident that occurred when Frank had left to join the Confederate militia and just Jesse, Jesse’s mother and stepfather Dr. Samuel remained on the James farm. Unfortunately nothing in the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies or local newspapers corroborates the story, though the incident seems plausible enough. Author James Horan writes, “there is nothing to support [the story] but its repeated telling.”

Basically the story goes like this: A group of Union militiamen arrived at the James farm determined to interrogate Zerelda Cole and Dr. Samuel as to the location of Quantrill.
The fiery Cole, pregnant at the time, only berated the militia so they turned their attention to Dr. Samuel. Despite the hysterical Cole, the militiamen looped a noose around the neck of the aging doctor and repeatedly hung him from the coffee tree in their front yard. Young Jesse, fifteen at the time, was caught while working in the fields and was chased, caught, and repeatedly flogged with a rope. Zerelda Cole managed to cut her husband down from the tree, yet the repeated hangings “resulted in permanent damage.” “Jesse was enraged by the events of the day. His hatred for his enemy intensified far beyond the ordinary emotions of a teenage boy.” Overlooking the stylistic surplus of the passage, a very personalized hatred of the Union was undoubtedly formed within the young Jesse James as a result of the incident.

James then tried to join Quantrill’s band. Frank, however, sent the fifteen year old Jesse home. If this story is true and had Jesse stayed on with Quantrill’s band, the youth would have participated in the historic Lawrence Massacre, the largest atrocity committed by the largest number of guerrillas ever assembled. The Lawrence Massacre represents an important turning point during the Confederate guerrilla struggle. The murder and violence established a new precedent on both sides. The Confederate guerrillas had sealed their identity as unscrupulously fighting for their cause. The Union was under intense political pressure to up the retaliation. While not trivializing the atrocities committed, on the part of the guerrillas, the raid was a military feat of organization, travel and eluding Federal pursuit. Never again would such a large number of guerrillas unite. The following summer, the guerrillas would continue to commit atrocities, yet their cause became confused and their purpose hazy. Many of the older guerrillas who started off as Confederate regulars under General Price, would leave the bands after the Lawrence massacre due to lack of discipline.
As a result of what they had become, dissension further divided their numbers. Boys who had grown up in the violence and chaos of Missouri and Kansas were attracted to the guerrilla bands for adventure and began to replace the older men who had begun fighting for the Southern cause. Furthermore, it was impossible for these young men to remain in Jackson, Cass, Bates, and Clay counties as male southern sympathizers. Jesse James was one of those young men who joined the band of Bill Anderson and George Todd in the spring of 1864. The band was, if not already, soon to become the most notorious and bloody guerrillas after the Lawrence Massacre. Bill Anderson and George Todd welcomed the young Jesse James into their band.

Cole Younger

Cole Younger is the best example of someone who was “driven to the bush,” or forced to fight a guerrilla war, by the events that unfolded around him before the Civil War. Cole Younger was born January 15, 1844, in Cass County, Missouri. Cole Younger hailed from an old “aristocratic” family that had their roots in Virginia. Cole’s father, Henry Younger and his mother, Bertha, were prosperous pioneers and leading social citizens. The Youngers owned as many as five different farms as well as a dry-goods store and a livery. The Youngers also were among the minority in Missouri who owned slaves. The Younger’s farm in Jackson county would become a repeated victim of Jayhawking as well as the livery that Henry Younger kept to service his mail run.

As a result of an incident with a Union militiaman during the fall of 1861, Cole had placed himself in a dangerous position. Cole, along with his brother Jim and two of their sisters attended a dance thrown for Martha Mockbee, the daughter of a local affluent family
also with Southern sympathies. During the evening, a militiaman named Irving Walley who was stationed at Harrisonville asked one of the Younger sisters to dance. The Younger sister refused and Walley may have commented negatively on her character. Defending his sister, Cole Younger ordered Walley to leave her alone. Walley then increased the tension of the situation by asking Younger the location of Quantrill. Younger replied that he did not know and Walley proceeded to accuse him of lying. Cole struck the militiaman and a fracas between the two ensued. Although Walley reportedly drew a pistol on Cole, the other young men at the party stopped the incident from escalating. 

Cole returned home and his father advised him to continue on to the Younger farm in Jackson county. Henry Younger’s advice to his son proved wise because that night Walley traveled to the Younger farm and demanded Henry Younger produce Cole on grounds of him being a spy for Quantrill. As a result of this incident the eighteen-year-old Younger used the circumstances to justify his actions. That winter Cole joined his brother-in-law John Jarrett and together the two joined Quantrill’s band. When Cole joined Jarrett, and bid his father farewell, the two would never speak again. Henry Younger was murdered on July 20, 1862 while returning home after a successful week of business. The motivations for the murder seem to be political because his watch, wallet and money belt containing over $1,000 dollars remained intact on his body. Before the war, Cole Younger demonstrated the least amount of outlaw tendencies. Before the Walley incident, his father urged him to attend college so as to stay out of the war. Due to his families’ wealth, it is likely that Cole would have gone on to be a successful business man like his father. In the case of Quantrill and Anderson, who demonstrated their outlaw tendencies before the war,
Cole is the opposite. His outlaw career began after the war and continue until he was securely locked away in prison in Stillwater, Minnesota.
Stage 1

The Beginning of the War: Enthusiasm and Integrity

Due to the uncertainty of Missouri's identity, the first stage of conventional war between the Confederacy and Union would prove to be the shortest. After these furious days of early May 1861, the men who would become Missouri's most notorious guerrillas and post-war outlaws were part of the established social fabric and institutions. William Clarke Quantrill, served as a private under Sterling Price and his first taste of warfare came at the same time as Frank James's and Cole Younger's and other soon to be notable guerrillas like George Todd and William Gregg. Both men were under the command of General Price at the first and largest, pitched battles in Missouri. Frank James, a member of his Clay County militia, was a private under Price because his unit was called into service. Quantrill, who did not officially receive his Confederate Captainship until that next spring, would serve as a private after the battle of Wilson's Creek on August 10th, 1861. Jesse James, fourteen at the time of the battle of Wilson's Creek, was home with his mother and stepfather in Jackson County, Missouri, living an unremarkable life not yet touched by the war. As events unfolded, however, James would go on to join Anderson and Todd in numerous guerrilla raids.

Conflict in Missouri began as a result of thoughtful deliberation by the state Legislature. The Missouri legislature called a special session in Jefferson City after the developments in St. Louis. Even though this same legislature had no outright secessionist members within its ranks, and had navigated a middle ground of compromise and
Unionism, when Governor Jackson recounted the events of the Camp Jackson affair, "resistance [to the secessionist cause] crumbled rapidly." Governor Jackson was given dictator-like powers in order to "secure the safety of the state." The entire state treasury, some $8.2 million dollars, was allotted for the purchase of war materials and an additional $2 million was raised through loans and the issue of war bonds.

The Unionist elements centered in St. Louis were also acting fast to secure soldiers, arms and munitions for the uncertain future of Missouri. Congressman Blair called upon his brother, then Lincoln’s postmaster general, to remove the moderate and slow-moving Harney and promote Lyon to brigadier general. Lincoln complied and soon Lyon commanded a force of 10,000. While Price was hard at work recruiting militia to fill his ranks through secret orders that he issued to all of his division commanders, he issued public statements to the effect that he hoped that Lyon would restore calm to St. Louis and not move beyond Missouri’s largest city. Lyon stayed in St. Louis for the time being and did not stop his efforts towards mustering troops within the borders of the state. Due to a possible threat from Confederate troops marching from Arkansas, Lyon also had troops from Iowa and Illinois standing by.

With Missouri poised on the brink of war between the St. Louis-based Lyon and Blair and the Secessionists Jackson and Price, the two sides sat down to one last meeting on June 11. Whatever their intentions, both sides found it worthwhile to at least meet to discuss their differences. This relative civility would disappear as the war dragged on and the troops devolved into guerrillas. Complete with their support staffs, Lyon met with Price and Jackson in Jefferson City and at the conclusion of the conference, both men returned to their troops to prepare for battle. While some scholars say that Jackson and Price came in
earnest, and it was the haughty and impetuous Lyon that dashed the hopes of a continued truce, other scholars insist that neither side was interested in compromise but rather in buying time to recruit, organize and train troops. It was Lyon that definitively ended the moderates’ hopes for neutrality. “Rather than concede to the state of Missouri for the single instant the right to dictate to my Government . . . I would see you, and you, and every man, and every woman, and child in the state dead and buried.”

After Lyon’s return to St. Louis, he moved his troops down river via ferry to Jefferson City in hopes of meeting Price’s militia. Price had retreated further down river to Booneville. Lyon followed and after a brief skirmish near Booneville on June 17th, Price was defeated and retreated to the southwest corner of the state with Lyon following. Lyon made camp in the town of Springfield while Price was camped near Wilson’s Creek with an army of 6,000. Price was met by Confederate General Ben McCulloch, a former Texas Ranger, and between the two commands the Confederates numbered 12,000 men, many of them fresh recruits.

While Lyon was chasing Price, a political development in the Union would prove to hamstring Lyon in the battles to follow. Former Republican presidential candidate, hero of California’s bear flag revolt, and western explorer John C. Fremont was appointed to command the Union’s Western department on July 25. The challenges of Missouri’s chaotic political and social climate would prove too much for Fremont despite his political and military background. In one of his first mistakes, Fremont did not divert supplies and soldiers to the extended Lyon, but instead chose to reinforce a Union garrison at Cairo, Illinois, in preparation for the 6000 Confederate troops marching from Western Tennessee to New Madrid. The threatening troops, however, did not attack.
The inability to receive supplies did not stall or slow down Lyon's march, though he was over 100 miles away from the nearest supply railhead at Rolla, Missouri. Even though Price's troops were hastily assembled, and poorly armed, they outnumbered Lyon's two to one. The aggressive and impetuous nerve that Lyon had demonstrated earlier would continue to guide the events in southern Missouri. Instead of turning back, waiting for reinforcements, or waiting for Price to make a move, Lyon boldly split his small army and attacked Price's men in the early morning of August 10, 1861, along Wilson's creek.

Lyon's surprise attack achieved initial success. Many Confederates only had the shotguns or squirrel guns that they carried from their farms and some were caught drawing water from Wilson's creek in the early morning. A critical point in the battle came when General Franz Sigel, Lyon's second in command and leader of the smaller part of the split army, saw an approaching regiment dressed similarly to that of the first Iowans. He ordered his troops to hold their fire. The approaching regiment was not from Iowa but rather Louisiana and used the advantage of their unabated approach to rout Sigel's line with unopposed fire. After suffering casualties due to the surprise, Sigel was driven from the field in route to a Confederate victory.⁸⁶

The battle of Wilson's Creek was one of the "bloodiest and most memorable battles of the early west."⁸⁷ Both sides fought viciously and to the point of exhaustion. The battle proved to be a Confederate victory, although Price failed to pursue the disoriented and retreating Federal troops and perhaps cost the Confederacy control of Western and Southern Missouri. General Lyon, whose ardent abolitionist beliefs influenced the early course of the War in Missouri was killed when a ball struck him in the chest. Casualties on both sides numbered over 1,200.⁸⁸
In an attempt to restore order and reverse the direction of the state, Fremont took a hard-line stance that further exacerbated the chaos in Missouri and removed him from Lincoln's favor. On August 30th, Fremont placed the entire state under martial law, something that General Haley had sought to avoid. Already a hot-button issue, property and the issue of slaves determined the loyalties of many conditional Unionists in Missouri. Fremont's edict furthered tensions on each side by turning the war in Missouri into a war of the people. Men chiefly concerned about their slave property became secessionist supporters because Fremont's order removed the chance for neutrality. The result would be the burning of homes, the seizing of property and the further exacerbation of the already deep-seeded conflict.

Lincoln began to receive political pressure not only from Missouri but also from Maryland, and threats of defection to the South were issued by Maryland if Fremont did not rescind his orders. Lincoln privately encouraged Fremont to modify his order to be more congruent to Congress's stance on secessionist property. Lincoln asked that Fremont execute no Confederate irregulars without Washington's approval. Fremont rejected Lincoln's prodding and Lincoln was forced to publicly order Fremont to modify his orders.

On the military side of things, the death of Lyon and the defeat at Wilson's Creek made Fremont's first few weeks as commander of the Western Department of war a failure. His problems would continue when Price reversed his course after Wilson's Creek and headed north to Lexington, Missouri. Price's forces attacked the 3,500 man Union garrison at Lexington on September 20th and through the ingenious use of water-soaked bales of hemp as mobile trenches, he forced the garrison to surrender. Price's men would crawl behind the large bales of hemp, three men butting the bales with their heads, slowly
advancing towards the fort. Union shot could not penetrate the bails and incendiary fire could not ignite the wet hemp. The garrison wasted much of its ammunition trying to repel the rolling bales and soon Colonel James A. Mulligan had to surrender after a three-day siege. In less than two months Fremont had lost over half of the state. The administrative duties of supply requisitions, managing the rebel population, and the polar political atmosphere of Missouri all proved too much for Fremont.

Fremont felt that only military victory could save him and he turned to the field in hopes of engender support and boosting morale for the Unionists in Missouri through military victory. While initially successful in driving Price to the border of Arkansas, he was relieved of command during the final portion of his thrust and the more cautious General Henry Halleck took over the newly reorganized Department of Missouri. Halleck now reported to General Ulysses S. Grant and it was Halleck who would oversee the disposition of Confederate regulars from Missouri. Halleck appointed General Samuel R. Curtis to command the Union army that was determined to see Price driven from Missouri. Curtis did just that at the battle of Pea Ridge on March 7, 1862.

Though the Pea Ridge battle took place just over the Missouri border in Arkansas, the Union victory ushered in control of the Mississippi in Missouri and marked the last time non-guerrilla Confederate forces would fight for Missouri. From now on, the Missourians who formerly fought for Price and continued to hold their Confederate sympathies were on their own.

Thus far, this paper has sought to provide a framework in which to introduce its cast of characters. Central to the understanding the lives of the Confederate guerrillas is the environment that they were raised in and in which they lived. The paper has stressed that
the Missouri-Kansas Civil War was a personal conflict where neighbor lashed out against neighbor; revenge bred murder and further revenge bred atrocity. In short it was a war of the people. The lives of these five Confederate guerrillas clearly illustrate how their war was personal: being whipped by Union soldiers, having their family farm set ablaze by Jayhawkers and finally, bearing the death and maiming of sisters held in Union custody. During the war, all gained notoriety through their violent deeds. For the three that survived the war, the surrender of the Confederacy in the spring of 1865 brought little closure to their lives as guerrillas.
Many of the men that would later take on infamous roles as Confederate guerrillas fought in the pitched battles of Wilson's Creek in August 10, 1861, and Pea Ridge, Arkansas on March 7, 1862. At that point in the war, the men who would later become guerrillas were in their first stage of development. The initial enthusiasm, confidence and determination present on both sides of the struggle produced the clear military purposes of meeting the opposing army and driving him from the field. During the beginning stages of the war, Kansas and Missouri experienced violence of two kinds. The first was the pitched battles between Union and Confederate forces, which, at the beginning of the second stage, had come to an end. The second kind was the violence that Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers committed that had a more ruthless and unofficial character because it involved civilians, both as perpetrators and victims. During the rise of Confederate guerrilla action in Missouri, the guerrillas fought for the Confederate cause and against Jayhawkers. Even though the line was slight depending on the situation, boundaries still existed among the early Confederate guerrillas as shown by Quantrill "accepting surrender, granting paroles [and] trying to exchange prisoners."

Although the Confederates in Missouri had lost their official support of the Confederate army by the spring of 1862, after it had been driven from the state, they maintained much of their honorable conduct and their internal discipline. Quantrill, for example, at this time was "accepting surrender, granting paroles [and] trying to exchange
Nevertheless, the violence perpetrated by Jayhawkers, now called Red Legs was beginning to spread.

One source of the escalation was when newly elected Senator James H. Lane of Kansas led a group of 1,500 Red Legs, former Jayhawkers currently under Union auspices, to loot and burn the town of Osceola, Missouri, on September 20, 1861. Lane was by no means new to the political arena of Kansas. He had been the vanguard of the Jayhawker's attempts to thwart Missourians with Southern sympathies throughout the late 1850s. Shortly after Kansas was admitted to the Union as a free state on January 29, 1861, Lane was elected senator and traveled to Washington, D.C. While at the Federal capital, he secured the favor of President Lincoln by organizing Union defense of the capital after Fort Sumter was bombarded in early April 1861. Lincoln then appointed Lane Brigadier General and gave him the authority to raise Federal troops in Kansas. Due to his past activity as a leader of the Jayhawkers, Lane was already well connected and soon formed the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Kansas regiments, known as Red Legs. Now that there was a virulent anti-Southern figure, operating under the blessing of Lincoln, committing depredations against Southern sympathizers or anybody unlucky enough to cross his path, the hatred along the border would escalate.

In response to Confederate General Sterling Price's recent victory at Lexington, Missouri, on September 20th, Lane became "infuriated." Determined to act against the Confederate victories, Lane consolidated a force of 1,500 Red Legs from the three Kansas Regiments and crossed the Missouri border. Lane's bands plundered and burned their way to the town of Osceola, Missouri, approximately 45 miles from the state line. Here the Red Legs savaged the town by looting from homes, and stores while robbing the bank. Osceola
was a principal port on the Osage River so many warehouses were filled with dry goods and Lane and his men made an impressive haul. The courthouse was burnt to the ground and 12 civilians were killed during the raid. For Confederate guerrillas, the incident sealed Lane's fate as perhaps the most hated man in Kansas. In the spirit of previous violence along the border, the guerrillas would soon repay Lane less than two years later by massacring the town of Lawrence, Kansas. Cole Younger recounts in his biography that Lane was the principle (and only) reason for their visit. Survivors of the Lawrence massacre recalled Southern guerrillas shouting "remember Osceola" as they murdered and pillaged the Kansas town a little less than two years later.

It was near the end of the Confederacy being driven from the state when two of the central characters of this paper met for the first time. Frank James met Cole Younger during the winter of 1861-1862. A Confederate guerrilla serving under Quantrill named John Jarrett, who was Cole Younger's brother in law, brought Cole with him when Quantrill called the band together late in January 1861. During the spring of 1862 the guerrilla war began in earnest, with bands of guerrillas with commissions from the Confederate Congress under the Partisan Ranger Act of April 1862, a bill that acknowledged irregulars like Quantrill as part of the Confederate army, attacking supply lines, cutting telegraph wire and destroying bridges. Even before the passage of the Partisan Ranger Act, "Confederate generals in Missouri and Arkansas encouraged the early operations of William Quantrill and other guerrilla leaders."

The core of Quantrill's band was, according to Connelley, formed during the winter of 1861-1862 with the help of Morgan Walker and his son Andrew. That winter, Jayhawkers were reportedly robbing Jackson county citizens. Quantrill, along with Andrew
Walker was one of 11 men who had been organized to tail the band of Jayhawkers. The band followed the Jayhawkers to the farm of Strawder Stone where the house had been robbed and Mrs. Stone was suffering from a head wound after being struck by a Jayhawker's pistol. Quantrill's party continued and came to the neighboring Thompson farm when the party charged the Jayhawkers, "killing the man who had struck Mrs. Stone and wounding two others, both of whom died at Independence later."\(^98\) As result of the incident, Thompson and Stone were charged with murder by civil authorities in Independence. Quantrill freed the men by swearing in an affidavit that he had done the killing. Somehow, Quantrill was never arrested and Connelley writes, "the soldier killed by Quantrill was the first Federal soldier killed in Jackson County, Missouri in the Civil War."\(^99\) Shortly after the Stone-Thompson affair, Quantrill attacked a group of Missouri Militia who was passing through Independence. It is believed that this engagement was the "first real contest" for Quantrill and his men. Among those present was George Todd and two men accused of participating in a bank robbery eight months after the surrender of the Confederacy.\(^100\)

However, as the war continued and the Missouri guerrillas increased the scope of their depredations, the Confederate Congress questioned the advisability of their earlier decision of sanctioning irregulars. No doubt influenced by the Lawrence massacre, the Confederate Congress ordered that all partisan units merge with the regular uniformed army in January 1864. For the guerrillas of Missouri, this order was nothing more than a change on paper: some guerrillas, like Quantrill, refused while others were hundreds of miles away from regular Confederate companies. Quantrill and Anderson paid these orders little heed,
and even had they tried to make any of their men obey during the winter of 1863-1864, guerrilla captains had little control over their men.  

After the Union army had driven General Price from the state after the battle of Pea Ridge in early March, 1862, bands of guerrillas began to ambush Union patrols and supply trains as well as hitting military targets like telegraph wires, bridges and railroad tracks. The first mention of Quantrill functioning as a guerrilla in the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies is February 3, 1862. Captain William S. Oliver of the Seventh Missouri Infantry writes, “I have seen this infamous scoundrel rob mails, steal coaches and horses, and commit other similar outrages.” The description in Captain Olive’s report on Quantrill’s deeds committed early in 1862 is striking when compared to Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Blair’s report of the Baxter Springs Massacre of October 6, 1863: “They killed our men as fast as they caught them, sparing none.”  

A critical time that raised the stakes and severity of the border war and also began the transition from the second stage to the third stage was when the Confederate guerrillas were declared outlaws by the Union. On March 13, 1862, in response to the depredations of Quantrill’s band and other similar bands operating in Missouri, the commander of the Department of the Missouri, Major General Henry W. Halleck ordered that Confederate guerrillas, if captured “will not be treated as ordinary prisoners of war, but will be hung as robbers and murderers.” When Quantrill found out about Halleck’s recent proclamation, he was immediately cognizant about the ramifications. According to Connelley, Quantrill read the order to his men “carefully explaining to them that they were deprived of the benefits of civil and military laws, that from that day no quarter would be given them.” The men who wished to leave were given permission by Quantrill,
Edwards writes that the noble Quantrill dramatically drew a line in the ground with his saber telling all those that wished to continue should cross.

For the rest of the summer, Quantrill and his band, which had grown to over one hundred men, raided and ambushed. In comparison to the following summers, guerrilla activity could be considered mild. The implicit rules of war that had governed the guerrillas when they served under Price still largely governed their conduct. As the scope of depredations along the border increased, the implicit rules of war would be lost. Their most notable engagement was a raid on the Union garrison of Independence, Missouri in which Quantrill’s band teamed up with a Confederate colonel named Upton Hays who was in northeast Missouri recruiting for the Confederacy. Quantrill was successful and the raid increased his notoriety. That winter, Quantrill and his band scouted for Jo Shelby’s Missouri Brigade, a cavalry division under the command of General John S. Marmaduke and Quantrill traveled to Richmond, Virginia. While in Richmond, Quantrill had hopes of obtaining a colonel’s commission though it is believed that he never obtained it. The spring of 1863 found Quantrill back in Jackson country Missouri with an even larger following. During the summer of 1863, the border war was intensified, made more personal and the guerrilla war began to model the attributes of stage three: the breakdown of the traditional rules of war that historically protected civilians. Soon, the Missouri conflict would degrade into bloody vengeful killing of civilian and soldiers alike.
Stage Three
Descent into Blood, Events leading to Lawrence Massacre

During the late days of August 1863, the largest guerrilla band ever assembled in Missouri, led by Quantrill, committed perhaps the largest atrocity of the war. Bill Anderson, Cole Younger, Frank James, George Todd and William Gregg were among the 400 guerrillas that wrecked havoc on the Kansas town of Lawrence. The massacre of Lawrence and its surrounding events are key events in the history of the border war. The events leading up to the massacre are emblematic of the level of personal savagery the border war had reached: guerrilla family members arrested and deported, captured guerrillas executed, and the creation of death lists by the guerrillas. The level to which the struggle escalated after the massacre truly made the war in Missouri and Kansas a war of the people and seared feelings and memories that would be largely responsible for the hostile environment after the war. The divisions between civilians and soldiers were breaking down, as men like Quantrill brought the people of Missouri and Kansas into the conflict during this third stage.

In the spring of 1863, Quantrill again was the bane of Union efforts to control Missouri and stop the violence in Kansas. The particular brand of ruthless guerrilla violence that the people of Kansas and Missouri had created was escalating. The guerrillas maintained discipline and had proven their attachment to the Confederacy that winter by serving under General Joseph Shelby as scouts and cavalry. While Quantrill was in Richmond attempting to increase his rank from Captain to Colonel, guerrillas George Todd and William Gregg commanded Quantrill’s band that winter. That winter, the Missouri
guerrillas would see action in the battles of Cane Hill, Arkansas and a brief invasion of Springfield, Missouri. As spring approached, Missouri guerrillas broke off Shelby's brigade and began to filter back to Missouri. The fact that the guerrillas had served under regular commands showed that they still believed in the Confederate cause. Granted, the guerrillas did not stay through the winter and some, in the case of Cole Younger, left early to care for other wounded guerrillas. The important distinction that illustrates the difference between stages three and four is that the following winter Missouri guerrillas would largely ignore Confederate orders.

Events that unfolded that spring, the hanging of noted guerrilla Jim Vaughn and the collapse of a federal prison in Kansas City that killed five female family members of Confederate guerrillas, were immediate causes of Quantrill's massacre of Lawrence, Kansas. In addition, Kansas Senator Jim Lane, leader of the Red Legs and the Osceola raid made Lawrence his stronghold. He was also in the process of completing a large new home that he had built largely from spoils taken from Missouri.

Early that summer, Quantrill had attempted to arrange a prisoner exchange. Union authorities refused to deal with Quantrill because he was viewed as a criminal and one of his men, Jim Vaughn, was sent to the gallows. The hanging of Vaughn was not distinctive; many guerrillas were executed after capture, though his story is representative of the retaliatory nature of the conflict. Among his fellow guerrillas, Jim Vaughn was a brave and "well liked bushwhacker" who rode with Quantrill. Attracted to the town of Wyandotte, Kansas, for a haircut and shave, Vaughn donned Union blues as a disguise and traveled to town in the early summer of 1863. John McCorkle, a scout who also rode with Quantrill, recounted to biographer O.S. Barton that Vaughn was going to visit a girl who was "sweet
on him." This story, however, does not correlate with any other treatments in the secondary literature, so it is likely that it is an embellishment striving to serve the romantic appeal of many Confederate sources that were produced by guerrillas after the war. In any event, Vaughn was recognized and he was reported to authorities. He was captured while reclining in a barber chair by Federal troops. Upon hearing the news of Vaughn's arrest, Quantrill offered to exchange three captured Union troops, including an officer, for the return of Vaughn.

Brigadier General James Blunt refused this negotiation and Vaughn was given to the hangman sometime during the end of July. McCorkle gives a romantic knightly account of the execution of Vaughn that also illustrates the chivalric-like honor code that was popularized in Confederate guerrilla biographies after the war. The captured Union officer speaks to Quantrill after he learns that Blunt has rejected Quantrill's offer to exchange Vaughn for him.

Colonel, I know you intend to execute me and my two companions and, after knowing you have tried to save us, I do not blame you, but I have a proposition to make to you: if you will let me, I will go to Kansas City and see the authorities and, I believe, that being a lieutenant in the regular army, I may be able to prevail upon them to accept your proposition. I will return, whatever may be their decision. Quantrill looked at him a moment and said, I trust you; go. On an afternoon of the third day, the lieutenant rode into our camp and walking straight up to our colonel (Quantrill) said, I have failed; I gave you my word, and I have returned to be executed, and I am prepared to die.

Quantrill, according to McCorkle's story, was impressed with the man's bravery and set the three Union soldiers free on the condition that they resign their commissions and not take up arms against the South. McCorkle recounts, "the three federal soldiers, with tears in their eyes, thanked Quantrill, mounted and left to go home." Jim Vaughn was hanged the next day and these were his last words, "We can be killed by we cannot be
conquered. Taking my life today will cost you one hundred lives, and this debt my friends will be paid in a very short time.""12 Quantrill and his raiders would soon prove true to their friend's word through violence and killing that were not surpassed by a single incident during the entire Kansas and Missouri guerrilla war.

Although revenge for Vaughn's hanging was also a contributing factor, the most influential immediate cause for the sack of Lawrence, and the further escalation of the border war, was when captured Confederate guerrilla family members were killed when a Federal prison in Kansas City collapsed. The capturing of soldiers' families was illegal during the Civil War. The Union, however, did not consider Missouri guerrillas soldiers, and as a result, their families, believed to clandestinely support their efforts, were arrested and deported beginning in 1862.113 The strategic effect of the policy was hard to judge yet the effect on Confederate guerrillas was pronounced. This treatment of women violated the Victorian code of the guerrillas. While women had been wounded as a result of the guerrillas' violence, Quantrill and his men expressly sought to avoid their physical harm if only out of fear of the Jayhawkers' reprisal. Confederate guerrilla George Todd sent a letter to Brigadier General Thomas Ewing demanding that captured women be released or else he would burn Kansas City to the ground. Major General John Schofield commented on what the border war had become, "it is the old border hatred intensified by the rebellion and by the murders, robberies, and arson which have characterized the irregular warfare carried on here during the early periods of the rebellion, not only by the rebels, but by our own troops and people."114

Since the Missouri guerrillas were so elusive, frustration was rising on the part of Union commanders and fear was growing among civilians. Many of the men had grown up
in Western Missouri, like the James brothers and Cole Younger, and knew the country well. The fact that the men were adept horseman and lived off the land gave them flexible latitudes in which to travel and operate. The Confederate government could not supply the guerrillas, and as a result they foraged the land and received food and shelter from local secessionists. Indeed, General Ewing, as a reaction to the Lawrence Massacre, increased the depopulation of people living in Western Missouri counties and even “destroy[ed] all forage and subsistence therein”115. Even before then, the families of known guerrillas were arrested and exiled in July of 1863. Many of Quantrill’s men attempted to hide their families, and Southern sympathizing men who had not yet taken to arms as guerrillas ended up joining Confederate guerrilla ranks to avoid capture, further increasing the number of Confederate guerrillas.

Despite the threats from these men who carried barbaric, fear-instilling reputations, the captured women that included Cole Younger’s cousin and Bill Anderson’s two sisters, remained securely locked in a prison in Kansas City. What would happen next would sear the temperaments of Confederate guerrillas and cause their ensuing quest for revenge to outstrip their purposes as men fighting for the Confederate cause. Accounts of why the prison collapsed and killed five women and wounded three are varied. Charity McCorkle Carr, the sister of John McCorkle and the cousin of Cole Younger, died in the collapse. McCorkle charges that the Federal soldiers had intentionally, “removed a large section of the foundation wall . . . [and then when] the building did not fall the first day more of the wall was removed.” The prison collapsed and as McCorkle noted, “Janie Anderson, who was the youngest, tried to escape through a window, but the twelve pound ball that had been chained to her ankle held her back.” “Josephine Anderson,” he continued, “could be
heard calling for someone to take the bricks off her head. Finally her cries ceased."116

Clearly, McCorkle was not present at the prison, yet the tone of the details, assumedly shared among his fellow guerrillas, illustrated their perception of their enemy and galvanized their pact of vengeance.

In his notes to McCorkle’s biography, author O.S. Barton remarks that “Union troops did not deliberately undermine it, but the Federal authorities were guilty of gross negligence in keeping the women there after being warned that it was unsafe.”117 Regardless of what the facts were, the response was the guerrillas’ retribution for past injustices and a personal hatred that revolved around houses and families. Female family members dying while in Federal custody raised the stakes of the already bloody conflict. Plans were beginning to form that would earn Quantrill the title, “the bloodiest man in American history.”118

On Friday, August 21, 1863, after nearly a continuous two-day ride, Quantrill led approximately 400 men into the town of Lawrence, Kansas, where Senator Lane lay sleeping in the abolitionist stronghold. Three hours later, these guerrillas would leave the town pillaged and in flames and would have murdered 183 men.119 It was Quantrill’s boldest, bloodiest and most egregious raid yet, and would prove to be the largest massacre of the Missouri-Kansas struggle. The morning of the raid was clear and calm. Quantrill’s men tightened the cinches on their saddles, drew their revolvers and some even “stuck leather reins in their mouths and bit down hard, leaving both hands free” so as to be able to use both hands to fire the guerrilla weapon of choice, the revolver.120 At five past five Quantrill’s men galloped into Lawrence, fanned out across the city, and began shooting and setting fire to houses. The raiding guerrillas were not completely indiscriminate in their
killings, according to author Goodrich, “from out of shirt pockets came the lists with long rows of names... The Missourians had finally gotten among those they hated most.”

The names on the lists included leading citizens and political figures, Mayor George Washington Collamore, Senator Jim Lane and other prominent citizens such as state senator Simeon Thorpe and newspaper editor Joseph Trask. All these men were rounded up, their wealthy homes set ablaze, and shot, many still in their nightshirts. The band continue to loot and pillage; two bank safes were blown open and an estimated $25,000 of currency was stolen.

Despite the viciousness of the raid, a citizen of Lawrence marveled at the horsemanship and marksman ability of the guerrillas. This passage illustrates the guerrillas' formidableness as an enemy and also depicts the mystique of their ferocious reputation.

The horsemanship of the guerrillas was perfect. They rode with that ease and abandon which are acquired only by a life spent in the saddle amid desperate scenes. Their horses scarcely seemed to touch the ground, and the riders sat upon them with bodies erect and arms perfectly free with revolvers at full cock, shouting at every house and man they passed, and yelling like demons at every bound.

Despite the heavy damage that the Confederate guerrillas achieved, especially to the emotions of Kansas free-soilers, the raiders were unable to find and kill the first name on their death list. The leader of the Red Legs and organizer of the Osceola raid, Senator Lane, escaped Lawrence. Upon hearing the beginning gunshots of the raid, Lane tore into the cornfield that abutted his house and continued to flee in his nightshirt until he was able to make it to a nearby farm. Lane then took a plow horse and rode it barebacked to a neighboring Union garrison in Olathe, Kansas to warn neighbors and surrounding towns.
Reaction to Lawrence

Quantrill’s raid on Lawrence, Kansas, was met with cries of outrage and promises of vengeance from the town’s surviving inhabitants. Also as a result of the Lawrence massacre, Major General John M. Schofield of the Union Army, who was the commander of the Department of the Missouri, and Brigadier General Thomas Ewing, Jr., commander of the District of the Border, were forced into an increasingly difficult position. Both men were prodded to accept resolutions that permitted a Kansas militia, assembled from seven towns along the border and from Lawrence, to meet in Olathe, Kansas, with fifteen days worth of supplies, to venture into Western Missouri in order to “recover stolen property,” a clear justification for further Jayhawking.¹²⁴ The two generals had to assuage the anger of Kansas while not allowing non-military forces to engage in further indiscriminate killing as now practiced by Quantrill that had escalated since the summer of 1861—a difficult position to be sure.

In a report to General Schofield dated August 24, 1863, the day after the Lawrence Massacre, Thomas Carney, the Governor of Kansas begins: “disaster has again fallen on our state.” His frustration and anger are clear in his letter. The governor blames Missouri and accuses Western Missouri of “knowing everything about it [the raid].” The root of the problem, believes Carney, is the guerrilla sympathizers that live along Missouri’s Western border. “There is no way of reaching these armed ruffians while the civilian is permitted to cloak him.” He continues, “There can be no peace in Missouri, there will be desolation in Kansas, unless both are made to feel promptly the rigor of military law.”¹²⁵
Governor Carney implores Schofield to act upon his recommendations and also includes an order for arms, horses and supplies for three militia regiments. General Schofield replies to Governor Carney's request with "3,000 stand of arms" but is clear that their purpose only is to "arm the militia of the towns." General Schofield makes no suggestion of taking Kansas Militia into Missouri. The importance of militia, according to Schofield is to protect towns because, "Quantrill, in the summer season, is simply impossible with out five times my present force." Schofield closes his letter by promising justice for those who have been wronged, and urges Carney to assist in "preventing the recurrence of any calamity like that which befell Lawrence." General Schofield is also clear in his objection to a militia-led foray into Missouri to recover stolen property. If the recovery of stolen property were the only purpose of the expedition, then the General claims support. He cautions, however, "it is a simple matter of course that the action of such an irresponsible organization of enraged citizens would be an indiscriminate retaliation upon innocent and guilty alike. You cannot expect me to permit anything of the sort."126

Criticisms fell on Ewing for failing to protect the border and Lawrence. In his report of the incident, the General blamed poor intelligence and his subordinates. Earlier that summer, Ewing, having heard rumors that Quantrill was planning to sack Lawrence, stationed a garrison in the town for a fortnight in July, but no attack came. He moved the troops to locations closer to the border where they were needed. Ewing was sensitive to criticisms from the northern press because Quantrill had eluded him since 1861. In his report he blamed Captain J.A. Pike, who had received intelligence that Quantrill had crossed the Kansas border on the 19th of August, for not engaging in pursuit but merely relaying information to Ewing. "By Captain Pike's error of judgement in failing to follow promptly
and closely, the surest means of arresting the terrible blow was thrown away, for Quantrill
would never have gone as far as Lawrence, or attacked it, with 100 men close on his rear.”
Ewing also cites as a reason for his troops’ inability to stop the guerrilla that, “Quantrill
had his men mounted on the best horses of the border, and had collected fresh ones going
to and at Lawrence, almost enough to remount his command.”127 Conversely, Federal
soldiers were riding exhausted horses, which had “marched 65 miles without rest.”
Quantrill, according to Ewing, had not only the advantage of fresh horses, but also
employed crafty riding techniques to elude Federal troops: “he broke trail, turned sharp to
the north, and dodged and bewildered the forces waiting for his as well as those in
pursuit.”128

Ewing also blamed Pike for not sending a scout to warn the people of Lawrence.
One effort to warn the townspeople also met with poor luck when a civilian rider, racing to
warn the town the day of the massacre, was thrown from his horse after it tripped. As a
result from the accident, both the horse and rider died. As was the case in such border
towns of Olathe and Paola, many border towns were near military outposts or had garrisons
and militia on alert in case of guerrilla attack. Lawrence, however, was not one of them. The
hubris of the citizens of Lawrence, a full day’s ride from the border, was responsible for the
surprise Quantrill achieved. The townspeople believed Lawrence too large and strong to
possibly be a target for guerrilla attack.

John Edwards, author of Noted Guerrillas, 1877, the first history of the guerrilla
warfare on the border contests that, “a full company of soldiers were stationed at Oxford,
Kansas, but they seemed more anxious to keep out of harm’s way than to protect the
citizens.”129 The reasons for Quantrill’s success can be attributed to strategic Federal
errors, Lawrence’s lack of preparation, the military skill and endurance of Quantrill’s raiders, and the psychological effect of the guerrillas’ reputation that produced caution on the part of Federal forces. Federal excuses about losing the trail of Quantrill seem less plausible given the size of his band: 400 mounted men with some even riding with two horses.

Just as the raid of Osceola caused a heightened reprisal by the guerrillas, General Ewing escalated the savageness on the border by issuing his controversial 11th general order in an attempt to stamp out the guerrillas. It was an order that General Schofield opposed because he foresaw the problems in enforcing it. Schofield described his decision: “On the 25th instant I issued an order requiring all residents of the counties of Jackson, Cass, Bates, and the part of Vernon included in this district... to remove from their present place of residence, within fifteen days of that date, to any military station in it, or any part of Kansas west of the border counties.” The order operated under the understanding that anybody who remained in the Missouri counties of Jackson, Cass, Bates, and the part of Vernon counties were sympathizers with the guerrillas or fearfully neutral because those loyal to the Union had already absconded. Ewing knew full well that those still in residence were unlikely to move into military bases. Furthermore, Ewing stated that “to obtain the full military advantages of this removal of the people, I have ordered the destruction of all grain and hay.” With this order, Ewing hoped to accomplish two goals central to defeating the guerrillas: taking away their sources of supply and intelligence while permitting the military to further depopulate western Missouri. Ewing was cognizant of the ramifications of his aggressive orders, noting that “the execution of these orders will possibly lead to a still
fiercer and more active struggle, ... but will soon result, though with much unmerited loss and suffering, in putting an end to this savage border war.”131

General Ewing was right, and the events of Lawrence proved that the Confederate guerrillas were now firmly entrenched in the third stage of their development. The guerrillas were not protected by the rules of war and nor did they apply to their victims. Bill Anderson most strongly embodied the traits of stage three because he fought chiefly to avenge his sister’s death. Connelley and Edwards report that Anderson killed at least fourteen men during the Lawrence massacre, the most of any guerrilla. He rode into the town that morning, sobbing his sister’s names. In Goodrich’s account of the Lawrence massacre, near the end of the killing, he reportedly told a Lawrence woman, “I am here for revenge and I have got it.”132 Even though it was early September when the last of the guerrillas reached the safety of the Sni-A-Bar Creek thickets in Jackson County, Missouri, the killing of the summer was not over. While traveling to winter in Texas, Quantrill’s band would meet Union troops at Baxter Springs, Kansas and the ensuing slaughter paralleled the precedent established earlier in Lawrence.

Baxter Springs

Another example of Quantrill abandoning the established conventions of warfare occurred in Baxter Springs, Kansas. It was a little over a month after the Lawrence massacre when Quantrill led many of the same 400 men through the southeast corner of Kansas on their way to winter in Texas.133 The guerrilla leader and his sergeants had no plans for another large-scale attack, though circumstances would allow otherwise. Major General James G. Blunt, a native of Maine and current commander of the District of the
Frontier was moving his headquarters of several wagons under the protection of a 100-man cavalry. The convoy was approaching a small Union garrison at Baxter Springs, Kansas, that Quantrill’s lead scouting arm, led by guerrilla Dave Poole, had already attacked. The approaching wagon train and cavalry of General Blunt probably did not recognize the guerrillas because they were garbed in captured Union jackets. The compounded bad luck of Blunt meeting the traveling guerrillas and failing to recognize the deadly band may not have made a difference because Blunts’ cavalry were new recruits and poorly armed.

Blunt’s escort proved no match for the well-armed hard-bitten guerrillas and their fast horses. Quantrill’s main unit bore down on the cavalry and they scattered in complete confusion. Blunt and about 30 others were able to escape though the guerrillas claimed 89 lives and captured all nine wagons. Many of the Union soldiers, when found later by patrols, were shot in the head from close range and nearly laying on top of one another, evidence that they were executed after surrendering.
Stage Four

Loss of Internal Discipline and Purpose, Increase in Banditry and Murder

The carnage that Missouri had experienced during the late summer and early fall of 1863 severely outstripped all violence that had occurred along the Kansas-Missouri border, and showed how the guerrillas had stopped distinguishing between civilian and military targets. The Union response to the Lawrence massacre: General Order # 11 would prove devastating to the civilian population of Western Missouri. Quantrill and his men continued to travel towards Texas and finally set up a winter camp on Mineral Creek, 15 miles northwest of the town of Sherman. The winter would be the last time Quantrill would be recognized as the chieftain of Missouri guerrillas, as finally their internal discipline started to erode in the fourth and final stage of their devolution from Confederate soldiers, sympathizers and irregulars into bandits. That winter and early spring, Quantrill’s band terrorized the town of Sherman, drank, gambled and raced horses. As a result of the butchery at Lawrence and Baxter Springs, many of the older guerrillas that had joined the band in 1862 after the battle of Pea Ridge were becoming disenchanted by the conduct and direction of the guerrillas in the beginnings of their internal rifts. While the guerrillas behaved loutishly, Confederate Generals and politicians back east began to debate their worth.

However, as the war continued and the Missouri guerrillas increased the scope of their depredations, the Confederate Congress questioned the advisability of their earlier decision of sanctioning irregulars. No doubt influenced by the Lawrence massacre, the
Confederate Congress ordered that all partisan units merge with the regular uniformed army in January 1864. For the guerrillas of Missouri, this order was nothing more than a change on paper: some guerrillas, like Quantrill, refused while others were hundreds of miles away from regular Confederate companies. Quantrill and Anderson paid these orders little heed, and even had they tried to make any of their men obey during the winter of 1863-1864, guerrilla captains had little control over their men.\textsuperscript{135}

General J. Bankhead Magruder, commander of the district of Texas, Brigadier General Henry E. McCulloch, brother of Ben McCulloch who had died at Pea Ridge, and General Edmund Kirby Smith exchanged letters discussing the worth and future of the guerrillas. At this point during the war, Confederate manpower, among other things, was dwindling and many Confederate officers, including Sterling Price who once encouraged Missouri guerrillas, wanted the guerrillas to join the regular Confederate army. The Missouri guerrillas had grown used to the easy discipline and chance for plunder and refused. Officially, though, the guerrillas cited that if captured their fate would be different that other Confederate soldiers since the Union had branded them criminals. Through operating in their previous capacity as guerrillas, they believed they could slip away should a regular army have to surrender. Even though Price wanted the guerrillas to join regular Confederate ranks, he admitted to seeing their reasoning.\textsuperscript{136}

Added to the rude and wild conduct of the guerrillas and a general increase of their shenanigans, robberies and murders of those they had previously been allied with began to surface. While in Missouri, the guerrillas had only robbed Unionists and event defended Southern sympathizers. Currently, the guerrillas were now doing to Southerners what they had once only done to Unionists. Specifically, a Confederate Major named Butts was
found dead with his watch and wallet missing. Later, another guerrilla informed Quantrill that it was a member of his own band named Fletch Taylor. Previously in the war, it seems unlikely that Quantrill's men would have dared such a thing—especially when they were a sanctioned part of the Confederacy. As a result of the incident and other similar incidents, the frustrated and irate General McCulloch ordered Quantrill to "proceed as rapidly as possible to the headquarters of Major General Magruder where you will immediately be placed in the face of the enemy." Quantrill ignored the order. Again, though Quantrill had operated largely independently from the Confederate Army, this was the first time he ignored a direct order. Guerrillas from Missouri had joined Confederate regulars during the previous winter. In response to the robbing and murder of Confederate officers, Quantrill allegedly gathered his band of guerrillas together and issued a warning to cease the alleged robberies and murder of Confederate men.

According to a letter from W.L. Potter to W.W. Scott dated February 29, 1866, Quantrill said, "if there was any Man or Men . . . that did not like his style of command, they could take their horse and weapons and they were welcome to leave." "Bloody" Bill Anderson took him up on his offer. Anderson, then third in command behind Quantrill and George Todd, left the camp at Mineral Springs early in the spring of 1864 along with 20 of his men after exclaiming that he would having nothing to do with "any such a damned outfit." This dissention cemented the fourth and final stage. Even though military discipline had previously been slight among Confederate guerrillas, the desertion of Anderson shows that it now had disappeared. Again, through almost three year of terrible fighting, this was the first major incident of upheaval between guerrilla leaders.
Anderson and his men rode to General McCulloch's headquarters in Bonham, Texas, and accused Quantrill of ordering the robberies of Confederates, conduct that was markedly bitter and disloyal on the part of Anderson, perhaps as a result of when Quantrill had paroled captured Union soldiers earlier in the war---something that Anderson had rarely done. McCulloch sent for Quantrill and he traveled to Bonham along with 60 of his men. McCulloch placed Quantrill under arrest but he managed to escape. Quantrill and his 60-man compliment left Bonham in a hurry. McCulloch enlisted Anderson and a group of Texas militia to capture Quantrill. Clearly Anderson felt no ties to Quantrill and was now functioning as an independent renegade. The band lead by Anderson hounded Quantrill's group and even exchanged a few shots, though no guerrillas were killed or injured. The secondary literature that deals with this episode said that neither group of guerrillas were that intent on inflicting casualties on the other. It is likely that during this first instance of Confederate guerrilla fighting Confederate guerrilla each side was acutely aware of the others' capabilities as Cavalry men at close range with pistols. The bands half-heartedly exchanged shots over long range but the rift between the Anderson led band and the Quantrill-Todd led band could not have been that deep because Anderson and Todd would join again during the summer of 1864. Nevertheless, Confederate guerrillas were now fighting Confederate guerrillas and from this point forward, no force numbering Quantrill's band of 400-strong Lawrence raiders would ever be assembled again.

That April of 1864, Quantrill and Todd led their band of guerrillas back into Missouri. The trip was grueling in the spring mud and once in central Missouri Quantrill disbanded the guerrillas so that smaller groups could forage for food, horses and ammunition. After a rendezvous in Lafayette County in central Missouri, Quantrill and
Todd had a falling out due to a “conflict that had been building for a long time.”

According to Connelley, Todd and Quantrill were playing cards and Todd was cheating. Quantrill accused his second in command and it was Todd who drew his pistol first, thus backing the guerrilla leader down. After the incident, Quantrill saddled up and left with ten of his most loyal followers. After Todd deposed Quantrill, little is known how he spent the summer of 1864. While Anderson and Todd were busy raiding and committing some of the worst depredations since the Lawrence massacre, Quantrill was either home visiting friends and relatives in Canal Dover, living with his mistress Kate King in Howard County Missouri, or traveling with Sterling Price as he made another feeble invasion of Missouri in September of 1864. After being usurped in front of his men by Todd, Quantrill had lost influence over his band because by this point in the war, no military hierarchy governed the guerrillas, they resembled a pack of wolves and Todd and Anderson were now the new Alpha wolves.

Bill Anderson, George Todd and the Centralia Massacre

The spring of 1864 brought more bushwhacking to Missouri, though the landscape was vastly different than the preceding spring. The border counties of Clay, Jackson and Cass were largely depopulated due to Ewing’s Order No. 11. Many of the southern sympathizers, including many guerrillas, had taken residence in Central Missouri while continuing to rob and plunder. Steamboats became a favorite target and soon companies were offering steamboat captains $1,000 dollars for successful navigation from St. Louis to Leavenworth. Indeed, the summer of 1864 was Missouri’s “worst summer of bushwhacking.” Localized around Chariton and Carroll counties, known to be the most
Johnson 73

Unionist counties, Bill Anderson was rapidly declining towards the savage dementia that would characterize him until his death. Anderson responded to a Lexington, Missouri, newspaper editorial that had encouraged Union citizens to arm themselves.

Listen to me, fellow citizens... do not take up arms if you value your lives and property. It is not in my power to save your lives if you do. If you proclaim to be in arms against the guerrillas I will kill you. I will hunt you down like wolves and murder you. You cannot escape. It will not be federals after you. Your arms will be no protection to you... I will kill you for being fools.

Since leaving Quantrill after terrorizing Confederate controlled Sherman, Texas, Anderson had completed his step into the fourth stage of his guerrilla life: no longer was Anderson part of a larger arm of guerrillas engaged in a war effort. He and George Todd were now robbing and pillaging, concerned with nothing above plunder and killing for revenge. Citizens began to meld with Union soldiers and Anderson began to kill more of both. Anderson was consumed by his obsession with revenge for the death and maiming of his sisters, and he had lost his grounding in his Confederate roots, and was now fighting from an amorphous cause of confused beliefs and embittered emotions.

Anderson’s worst atrocity rivaled what he and other guerrillas had done in Lawrence that previous year. After Anderson’s and Todd’s guerrillas sustained heavy losses from their attack on a Union garrison in Fayette, Missouri, on September 24, Anderson moved his band to the town of Centralia, Missouri. Confederate General Sterling Price, who had led an army into Missouri hoping to incite an uprising among the southern sympathizers in the state, was soundly defeated that day after trying to capture Fort Davidson. Held by General Ewing, Fort Davidson was 130 miles to the southwest of
Fayette. Anderson and Todd were attempting to ascertain Price's location and hoping to rendezvous with his now ragged army.

While in Centralia, Anderson's men sacked the town and robbed the 11:00 o'clock stage. While robbing the stage, the men were distracted when a train out of St. Louis and bound for St. Joseph approached Centralia. The guerrillas constructed a barricade across the tracks and stopped the train with a barrage of pistol fire. The passengers on the train were all robbed except for a ill-fated group of furloughed soldiers who were returning home after serving under Sherman in the Atlanta campaign. The 23 unarmed men were stripped of their uniforms and executed. Anderson set the cars on fire and sent the empty locomotive speeding out of Centralia. The bloodshed of the day, however, was not over.

The 39th Missouri Infantry Volunteers under the command of Major A.V.E. Johnson had been tracking Anderson's band for over a day. The 100 men Johnson commanded were poorly mounted, poorly armed and inexperienced. Despite being warned by the towns' people, Johnson was determined to attack Anderson's and Todd's guerrillas who were now camped a few miles from Centralia. Anderson and Todd were warned by their scouts of the approaching Federal patrol. The guerrillas mounted and Major Johnson, seeking to secure the advantage by using the range of his troops' rifles, dismounted his men and formed a firing line. Anderson divided his men into three groups and charged each flank and the center of Johnson's line. Frank James, while charging in the middle column, was spattered with blood and brains when the charging guerrilla on either side of him was killed. One of the men was a friend Frank Shepard, a man that Frank James had met while in Texas.
The volley from the 100-man Federal line did little damage to the guerrillas and few Union soldiers had time to reload their muzzle-loading weapons. Major Johnson's men were slaughtered. Those trying to escape on horseback were easily caught by the swift horses of the guerrillas. All Union officers were scalped; some men were pinned to the ground with their own bayonets. Jesse James, along with Frank was present at Centralia. Frank James claimed in an interview given to the Missouri Herald in 1897 that he remained with Todd in camp during the initial slaughter of the furloughed troops and was busy chasing fleeing Union troops so as not to be around during the scalping, mutilating and in one case castration of Union troops, though no other source can confirm his report.

As expected, the massacre of almost 150 Union soldiers and 3 civilians raised cries of anguish among Union military and civilians alike. Even though the results of Centralia are heavily weighted in favor of the Confederate guerrillas, the guerrillas had very little military power in Missouri by the end of the summer of 1864. They were divided in their ranks and unscrupulous in their actions. After Centralia, Anderson met General Price in Booneville on October 11 and was ordered by a revolted Price to immediately remove the scalps hanging from his bridle. The Union presence in Missouri was similar to what was happening in the eastern theaters: the Union was overwhelming Confederate forces. Within the month George Todd would be dead and Prices army would be reduced to a mob as they were squeezed by Union forces on their retreat South. On October 25, 1864, the same day Price suffered another devastating blow during his retreat, Bloody Bill Anderson made his last raid. After charging through a Union line, when all but one other guerrilla had stopped, Anderson pitched from his horse and was found dead from two bullet wounds in the back of his head.
Subsequently, the body of this man, known as one of the most feared and violent bushwhackers for leading the Centralia massacre and writing letters to newspapers threatening to murder Union citizens, was displayed in front of gaping crowds. His body was photographed with a pistol in his hand, his long hair draping over his shoulders. Rumored to have been decapitated and dragged behind a horse before burial, Anderson was placed in an unmarked grave. Samuel Cox, a former cavalry Major and a veteran of the Mexican War and the Sioux uprising, was serving as a civilian in order to hunt down Anderson. He remarked that Anderson’s burial in an unmarked grave demonstrated, “respect not due to him but to ourselves and humanity.” Union Militia were seen spitting and urinating on the grave by nightfall.

Even before Anderson compiled his bloody “rap sheet”, his motivations were more criminal than noble, and his hand was experienced in raiding, robbery and murder. The longer he bushwhacked, as Castel and Goodrich write, “he paid a price: degeneration. For many—too many—the thirst of revenge became mixed with a lust for loot, causing the difference between guerrilla and bandit to blur, then all but disappear.” The quote outlines the theme of devolution that all guerrillas shared, especially Anderson.

Castel and Goodrich are largely on target with their assessment of Anderson, yet they fail to consider his ideological framework political role that he played. Yes Anderson’s impact was through murdered and butchered Unionists, yet he spoke through the only viable currency of the time. He existed in a ravaged and war-torn environment where the channels of political influence were violent even before the war and even more violent during the war. Missouri was under marshal law when Fremont first gave the order in the fall of 1861 in an attempt to get a handle on the situation. By 1862 it was illegal for anyone not
affiliated with the regular Union army or a Union militia to carry a weapon. Furthermore, Confederate guerrillas were shot if captured starting at the beginning of 1862. After the Lawrence massacre, all families believed to be supporting Confederate guerrillas were captured and taken behind Union lines. Citizens with southern sympathies were banished from their land, their farms burned. This fact accounted for much of Anderson's and other guerrillas' motivation. In the chaos of Western Missouri, Anderson was a political leader as well as a leader of men. After he was recognized as a Confederate Guerrilla captain, his victims were Union soldiers and Union sympathizers.

The Death of Quantrill

By late October of 1864, Quantrill's game was up in Missouri. The Union held the country more securely than ever before and General Price's late summer raid proved futile and further unified the Union cause. Bill Anderson and George Todd, the scourges of Missouri during the summer of 1864, were both dead. Even though the social climate was still embittered over the conflict and Missouri's western border counties were ravaged and depopulated, Confederate guerrillas were thin in their ranks. This fact was evident when just a little over 30 men answered Quantrill's call for a rendezvous in late December 1864.

Frank James, who Quantrill now knew since the two had ridden together on and off since the summer of 1862, responded to the call with his younger brother, Jesse. Quantrill decided he would lead his band into Kentucky. Connelley offers different interpretations of why Quantrill reached this decision, ranging from the absurd that Quantrill was bound for Washington to assassinate President Lincoln, to the probable: Quantrill was seeking to meet up with General Lee's army, which he believed was
surrendering soon, in order to surrender far away from Missouri. Quantrill never did traverse the state, however, and would soon be dead. Perhaps Quantrill found some sort of familiarity in the hostile Kentucky environment because it was similar to Missouri and Kansas in its vicious brand of personal conflict. Quantrill had lived among guerrillas since the summer of 1862, and had kept similar company before the war. The end of Quantrill’s life seems all that more fitting, since he died in the capacity he lived.

Many partisan bands, including Quantrill’s, roamed the Kentucky countryside. Both Union patrols and Homeguards scoured the Kentucky brush and hills for the guerrillas. According to Leslie, “the desultory partisan war went on too, guerrillas continued to burn railroad cars, rob, kidnap, and murder, though with gradually decreasing frequency as their numbers were thinned by rapacious soldiers and home guardsmen.”

Often men under Federal payrolls, were equally guilty of robbing and murdering civilians, as in the case of the gang that shot and captured Quantrill.

Sometime in early May, Connelley recounts that a guerrilla named Jack Graham was attempting to re-shoe Quantrill’s loyal war-horse, Old Charley. The horse had been with Quantrill for years and his hide bore numerous bullet scars. Known for not letting anybody except Quantrill go near him or handle him, Old Charley’s personality saved him once after the Quantrill-Anderson split in the winter of 1864. Audacious members of Anderson’s band had tried to steal Old Charley from Quantrill’s camp but the horse kicked and bucked so that their efforts were denied. While being shoed, the horse jerked awkwardly and was hamstrung. In response to the turn of events, Connelley reports that Quantrill said, “My career is run. Death is coming, and my end is near.”
On the morning of May 10, 1865, Quantrill’s prophecies proved true. While camped in the barn of Confederate sympathizer James H. Wakefield, the scouts of Edwin Terrell attacked them. Most of the guerrillas were able to mount their horses and counterattack but Quantrill was unable to mount his new horse amidst the gunfire. Quantrill began to flee on foot and while attempting to mount a horse that already had a rider, the horse was shot under the two men and Quantrill was afoot again. It was then a bullet struck him in his back and he fell mortally wounded. Quantrill was not immediately identified until Terrell returned to the Wakefield farm a day later. Frank James reportedly visited the dying guerrilla chieftain and offered to move him to hiding. Quantrill refused and was then transported to Louisville by Terrell where he died on June 7, 1865.151

At the time of Quantrill’s death, the Confederacy had officially surrendered almost two months ago. Many of the most notorious Missouri guerrillas were dead. Including Bill Anderson, George Todd, Dick Yeager, William Haller, and many of the leading men in Quantrill’s band. The last months of the lives of Anderson and Todd were marked by robbery and murder. For the small band that Quantrill had led into Kentucky, their situation was similar. For the Quantrill and Anderson, the fourth and final stage ended in its only plausible manner, their death and the end of the war. For the men who had begun their fight for the Confederacy as regular soldiers and now ended their lives as hunted criminals, their struggle to their violent end was a sequential progression of circumstance and environmental factors. Out of all the Confederate guerrillas, it was Anderson who probably entered stage four the soonest and sank the deepest. For all the other Confederate guerrillas who survived the war, especially the James brothers and Cole Younger, peace was to prove equally violent and unsettling.
The Civil War Ends

Lee’s Surrender and an Uncertain Future

The spring of 1865 brought with it the same feeling of uncertainty to Western Missouri and Kansas of each proceeding spring. Would the thaw mark the beginning of further guerrilla action? Even though the prospects of Lee surrendering his ragged army were high, Confederate guerrillas in Missouri had operated independently of the Confederate army since 1862 and therefore Lee’s decision to surrender is not necessarily predictive of the guerrillas’ actions.

The Confederate war effort was exasperated and dwindling. Economically, the South was devastated and the old social order that the South had sought to protect, was in a state of upheaval. Sherman had finished his devastating march to the sea by the end of December 1864 and was beginning to slash through the Carolinas overcoming swollen rivers and heavy spring rains. The confederate cities of Charleston and Columbia fell in flames. Lee’s army of Northern Virginia was nearing its end, desertion was high, supplies were low, and army moral was eroding from defeat after defeat. The South lay in ruins and the massive manufacturing power of the North had increased thus exacerbating the northern economic hegemony. Indeed, Lee would go on to surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865 marking the end of massive pitched battles between the blue and gray and the United States Civil War.

Jefferson Davis and his cabinet, however, “remained at large, moving southward as fast as the dilapidated railroads could carry them. At every stop Davis exhorted his people to fight on.” According to Civil War historian James MacPherson, “it appeared to the Union that guerrilla warfare might go on for years. Turning the South into another
In the case of Quantrill and General Price, the bloodshed was not over, General Sterling Price, refusing to accept defeat, led a band of troops into Mexico. Quantrill continued to raid in Kentucky though he was nothing more than a marauding bandit. For many, however, the strain and hard life of guerrilla warfare turned many to surrendering despite their uncertain future.

The future was uncertain for Confederate guerrillas who remained in Missouri, in personal terms and in how the Reconstruction government would deal with them. Would the men return to Missouri to pick up their pre-war lives? The role of men who fought as guerrillas in Missouri during the Civil War would prove as varied, and in some extreme cases, equally bloody, as it had been during the war.

Politically, Pro-Southern civilian and ex guerrillas would have cause for uneasiness as the abolitionist Republicans had controlled the state legislature. According to historian Parrish, of the 66 delegates at the state convention, three-quarters were radicals. Once such radical was St. Louis lawyer Charles D. Drake, who had such an overarching influence on the new state constitution that it became known as the Drake Constitution. The Drake Constitution came down hard on Southern sympathizers and Anti-Unionist by enacting restrictions aimed at eliminating any Democrat influence or Southern sympathizers in office. The Constitution said ex-confederates could not vote or hold office and be employed in any professional position including church offices. The Constitution offered no parole, amnesty or exemption from secessionist acts against the Union.

After the war, the Confederate guerrillas went in three directions. Some stayed on with General Shelby and General Price who continued his campaign in Mexico. Others stayed in Texas and took up ranching. The majority, however, traveled back to Missouri
along the same route they had during the previous spring. The guerrillas' future was uncertain because even after the war, Missouri retained its variety of viewpoints about the guerrillas' actions. They were viewed in many ways by Missouri's chaotic society. To some they were cold-blooded killers who, if not prosecuted by Army law, should be summarily executed under criminal law for their heinous crimes committed during the war. To the Southern sympathizers or perhaps Missouri citizens that had suffered at the hands of Red Legs, the ex-Confederate guerrillas were heroes of a lost cause.

For the guerrillas that returned to Missouri, most would eventually surrender and be granted parole. Guerrilla leader Dave Poole, after making his return trip from Texas during the spring of 1865 requested a meeting with Major B.K. Davis. On May 17th, Davis and five soldiers met Poole and five bushwhackers and Davis, operating under General Dodge's orders, said that upon surrendering their weapons and obeying the laws, the military would take no further action against the bushwhackers. Therefore, on May 21, Poole lead a band of 85 longhaired grizzled young Confederate guerrillas down the main street of Lexington, Missouri, and surrendered their weapons in front of the courthouse. Upon the surrender of their weapons, they took an oath of allegiance from the provost marshal and received their parole certificate.154

Other guerrillas, like Ol Shepard, reputed the best pistol shot in Quantrill's band, was reluctant to give up his arms while surrendering. "We must keep our side arms... for you know we have personal enemies who would kill us at the first opportunity." With reluctance, the worn guerrillas finally did surrender and the Clay county sheriff arrested two bushwhackers who surrendered with Ol Shepard for murder and horse stealing.155
Some bushwhackers made it only as far as negotiations. Jim Anderson, Bill Anderson's brother, and Archie Clement were required to surrender unconditionally to the federal commander stationed near Glasgow, Missouri. Sensing the ardent Unionist feelings surrounding the area, Anderson and Clement felt surrender meant certain death so the two left for Texas again and only Clement would ever return to Missouri.

The last confederate "soldiers" that surrendered were the guerrillas that followed Quantrill into Kentucky after the death of Bill Anderson and George Todd. Among these 14 men who surrendered a full three months after Appomattox was Frank James. The majority of the former bushwhackers had surrendered and took oaths of allegiance. The worst guerrillas, Quantrill, Todd and Anderson were dead. No doubt that the surrender of these known chieftains would have produced much controversy. The emotional scars that the Missouri war had created were not healed that summer of surrendering. Albert Castle writes, "Much animosity continued to exist between pro-Union and pro-Confederate Missourians. In particular, the Unionist hated and resented former bushwhackers. They believed that these men should be punished for their wartime crimes." In some cases, men suspected of once being bushwhackers were driven from their farms and even killed. In an ironic way, war proved safer than peace for many ex-confederate guerrillas since they had been constantly on guard during the war.

Archie Clement, one of the most violently degenerate bushwhackers, was shot by Union forces while trying to escape from a saloon in Lexington, Missouri. Clement, in town earlier that day in order to register for the Missouri state militia as mandated by law, was ordered to leave but soon returned to the saloon. Federal troops when to root him out and after escaping from the back of the saloon was shot while riding out of town.
Ex-bushwhackers finally left an indelible mark on the town of Liberty, Missouri only eight months after the surrender. If their existed any ambiguousness during the delicate initial reconstruction, the robbing of the Clay County Savings Bank once more divided Unionist and ex-Confederates. Among the robbers that left a William Jewell College student dead, were Ol Shepherd, Bud and Don Pence, and Frank Gregg—all once prominent members of Quantrill's band.

Albert Castle offers a reason based on social terms of why a few ex-confederate Guerrillas traveled down the outlaw path after the war.

The wild young ex-partisans found it extremely hard to settle down to a humdrum, poverty-tinged existence on a farm after the adventurous life and easy money of the war. This was especially true of those whose criminal tendencies had been developed and confirmed by bushwhacking. Therefore, it is little wonder that some of them, exasperated and made desperate by Unionist persecution, were unable to resist the temptation to make use of the techniques and skills they had learned so well under Quantrill, Todd and Anderson.\textsuperscript{138}

In this passage, Castel touches on many of the social and economic reasons that many guerrillas turned outlaws. Many of his reasons are external factors and conditions operating on the guerrillas. He does, however, note that perhaps the Confederate men of Missouri had criminal tendencies that were exacerbated by the environment. Castle subtly notes that while the environment developed the skills needed of successful outlaws, something existed internally that rose from the guerrillas-turned-outlaws to meet the environmental influence of the war.

The Confederate guerrilla of Missouri had evolved considerably since Quantrill first assembled a band of Partisan in the early winter of 1862. As the Civil War progressed, the guerrilla's actions, Union policies, and continued Jayhawking escalated the savages of the
border war. Of the characters introduced, their guerrilla struggle was, in the case of Quantrill and Anderson, their end. For the Jameses and Cole Younger, their participation marked a beginning of their lives as the Old West’s most famous outlaws. To be sure, banditry and abject killing marked the final months of Quantrill and Anderson’s lives, though these men had begun the war, Quantrill more than Anderson, fighting for the Southern cause. It was their quest for retribution, however, that began their decent through the four stages while incurring further injustice and atrocity among their victims. In the final judgement of Quantrill and Anderson, it is not as simple as labeling the men as greedy, bloodthirsty killers; nor, is it correct to place Quantrill and Anderson among the Confederate heroes of the Civil War. The men occupied a gory niche that was influenced harshly by the sectional politics of the war as well as by their lives growing up on the frontier of America. Both Quantrill and Anderson spoke through the most powerful currency of the time and the James brothers and Cole Younger would continue to carry the violent and bloody legacy of the border war.

Conclusion

Even before the Civil War broke out, pro-slavery and abolitionist groups were fighting for the future of slavery in the state of Missouri. Jayhawks took the abolitionist cause into their own hands, and border ruffians did the same for slavery. When war eventually broke out, it was therefore fought by and against the people and characterized by guerrilla activity. Some of these guerrillas, like Quantrill and Anderson, had histories of criminal activities, whereas others, like the James brothers and Cole Younger, went on to further influence American history after the war. As the Union
gained control of Missouri, Confederate guerrillas became isolated, desperate, and
criminal. Through tracing the history of Missouri before and during the Civil War, these
men were examples of the violent, bitter and tumultuous history of the state.

Missouri’s pre-war history sowed the seeds for the guerrilla conflicts it would
later endure. Missouri entered the Union as part of a compromise to temporarily assuage
the question of slavery in America. Even though the state’s early identity was influenced
by it being a wilderness on the frontier of America, the slavery question surfaced again in
the 1850s as Kansas became open to settlement. Missourians attempted to bring slavery
to Kansas by violently influencing elections of territorial representatives. The violence
went beyond the elections and by the mid-1850s, the border of Missouri and Kansas was
in a state of violence and upheaval. By the beginning of the Civil War the environment
was still chaotic. Because of the presence of yeoman farmers, Missouri still clung to
Unionist ties even though Confederate forces were preparing to fight for control of the
state.

In the beginning of the war, the Confederate Army of Missouri began with
enthusiasm for their cause, internal discipline, and adhered to the formal rules of war.
Men like Quantrill, Younger, and Frank James fought under General Price. Due to strong
Unionist forces centered in St. Louis, and the fact that Missouri was surrounded on three
sides by free states, the Confederacy was unable to maintain formal control over the state.
Former Governor now General Price and the Confederate Army that he led was driven
from the state in early March, 1862. Largely due to Missouri’s changing and chaotic
identity before the war, it is no surprise that conventional fighting between the Union and
Confederacy did not last long.
Even though the Confederate Army of Missouri was driven from the state, the fighting in Missouri was far from over. Confederate guerrillas, encouraged by General Price and operating under the Confederate Congress’ Partisan Ranger Act, continued military campaigns against the Union in Missouri. This began the second stage of the guerrilla war, which was characterized by disciplined Confederate guerrillas following conventions of war such like not executing captured soldiers or killing civilians. After General Price had been driven from the state, the guerrillas largely kept to leading campaigns against the Unionists. In response to developments in the war, this second stage did not last long.

Soon, the Confederate guerrillas were considered outlaws by the Union army and would be executed if captured. The guerrillas’ style of warfare began to mirror the Union’s treatment of them: showing the enemy no quarter. The guerrillas still believed themselves to be members of the Confederate army as shown by many of them serving as cavalry and scouts for regular infantry brigades during the winter of 1862-1863. They were still well organized and disciplined, with Quantrill successfully leading 400 men deep into Kansas and evading Union forces during his retreat. However, in this stage they began to kill more indiscriminately, as in the case of the Lawrence raid.

The fourth and final stage of the Confederate guerrillas’ devolution began when they left Missouri to spend the winter of 1863-1864 in Texas. Unlike the previous winter, few guerrillas served regular Confederate forces. An exception was Anderson’s men briefly tracking down Confederate deserters, though they were soon relieved of this duty because they ended up shooting more men than they captured. The guerrillas once-organized groups disintegrated as factions began to leave Quantrill’s band, and their
discipline eroded as they began to rob even Confederate citizens. The ensuing events of the Confederate guerrillas in Missouri during the summer of 1864 resembled bushwhacking more than military campaigns. As discipline deteriorated, these men turned into bandits without loyalties or allegiances.

Tracing Missouri's path during the years leading up to the Civil War as well as throughout the conflict illuminates many aspects of the Civil War and America's history. First, the events in Missouri and Kansas illustrate the intense feelings that surrounded the Civil War. Beyond just the future of slavery, the conflict along the Missouri-Kansas border arose over the intersection of national sectionalism, territorial rights, westward expansion, and economic factors. In addition, studying Missouri's role in the border war is important because Civil War battles like Gettysburg and other events in the Eastern Theater can overshadow other dimensions of the Civil War. On the frontier of America, the Civil War was very much a war even though few massive pitched battles occurred. Southern institutions, while firmly established in older parts of the South, were new and evolving in Missouri. Therefore, the social and political environment proved more unpredictable and chaotic.

Second, in light of the gruesome accounts of the actions depicted in this paper we must ask ourselves, why did these men commit such terrible atrocities? In the treatment of Bill Anderson, it is easy to pathologize him as a pure demon, or excuse his deeds due to the influence of environmental and situational factors. After the war, much of continuing animosity in Missouri existed because of inflammatory writings that defamed Confederate guerrillas. In order to correctly understand why these men behaved as they did, a middle ground must be found between these two treatments.
Lastly, and most important, the stages of guerrilla degeneration explain the source of lawlessness that would go on to be a part of westward expansion. General Lee was aware of the result of continued guerrilla fighting. A Confederate artillery officer suggested to Lee to disbanded into the woods to carry on their struggle as guerrillas. Though Lee said he would rather “die one thousand deaths before surrendering to General Grant,” Lee replied, “[the guerrillas] would become mere bands of marauders . . . and would bring on a state of affairs it would take the country years to recover from.” \(^{139}\) Even though the Civil War officially ended in early April 1865, its effects were lasting throughout the end of the century and some would even argue, it’s effects can still be seen today. Old west outlandry and frontier violence did not emerge out of anywhere but had subtle ties to the Civil War and, in the case of the James brothers and Cole Younger, direct ties.

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7 Fellman, 7.
8 Parrish, 147.
9 Ibid, 149.
10 Fellman, 3.
11 Ibid, 4.
12 Ibid, 2.
13 Parrish, 238.
14 Parrish, 233.
15 Ibid, 238.
16 Ibid, 244.
17 McPherson, 71-72.
18 Parrish, 253.
19 Ibid, 260.
20 Ibid, 265.
21 McPherson, 95.
22 Parrish, 270.
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25 Fellman, 12.
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27 McPherson, 95.
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29 Ibid, 273.
30 Ibid 276.
31 Ibid, 275.
32 Ibid, 275.
33 MacPherson, 98.
34 Ibid, 98.
35 Monaghan, 245.
36 Fellman, 29.
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50 Ibid, 14.
52 Ibid, 28.
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54 Connelley, 442.
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56 Castel, 33.
57 Ibid, 34.
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158 Ibid. 222.
159 McPherson. 481.
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*Note: The three sources marked above will be used as primary sources. All three men were Missouri “bushwhackers” and rode with William Quantrill.*