

# BROWN GEORGE WILLIAM

BALTIMORE AND THE  
NINETEENTH OF APRIL,  
1861: A STUDY OF THE  
WAR

**George Brown**  
**Baltimore and the Nineteenth of**  
**April, 1861: A Study of the War**

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# **Baltimore and the Nineteenth of April, 1861: A Study of the War**

## **CHAPTER I**

INTRODUCTION. – THE FIRST BLOOD SHED  
IN THE WAR. – THE SUPPOSED PLOT TO  
ASSASSINATE THE INCOMING PRESIDENT. – THE  
MIDNIGHT RIDE TO WASHINGTON.

I have often been solicited by persons of widely opposite political opinions to write an account of the events which occurred in Baltimore on the 19th of April, 1861, about which much that is exaggerated and sensational has been circulated; but, for different reasons, I have delayed complying with the request until this time.

These events were not isolated facts, but were the natural result of causes which had roots deep in the past, and they were followed by serious and important consequences. The narrative, to be complete, must give some account of both cause and consequence, and to do this briefly and with a proper regard to

historical proportion is no easy task.

Moreover, it is not pleasant to disturb the ashes of a great conflagration, which, although they have grown cold on the surface, cover embers still capable of emitting both smoke and heat; and especially is it not pleasant when the disturber of the ashes was himself an actor in the scenes which he is asked to describe.

But more than twenty-five years have passed, and with them have passed away most of the generation then living; and, as one of the rapidly diminishing survivors, I am admonished by the lengthening shadows that anything I may have to say should be said speedily. The nation has learned many lessons of wisdom from its civil war, and not the least among them is that every truthful contribution to its annals or to its teachings is not without some value.

I have accordingly undertaken the task, but not without reluctance, because it necessarily revives recollections of the most trying and painful experiences of my life – experiences which for a long time I have not unwillingly permitted to fade in the dim distance.

There was another 19th of April – that of Lexington in 1775 – which has become memorable in history for a battle between the Minute Men of Massachusetts and a column of British troops, in which the first blood was shed in the war of the Revolution. It was the heroic beginning of that contest.

The fight which occurred in the streets of Baltimore on the

19th of April, 1861, between the 6th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers and a mob of citizens, was also memorable, because then was shed the first blood in a conflict between the North and the South; then a step was taken which made compromise or retreat almost impossible; then passions on both sides were aroused which could not be controlled.<sup>1</sup> In each case the outbreak was an explosion of conflicting forces long suppressed, but certain, sooner or later, to occur. Here the coincidence ends. The Minute Men of Massachusetts were so called because they were prepared to rise on a minute's notice. They had anticipated and had prepared for the strife. The attack by the mob in Baltimore was a sudden uprising of popular fury. The events themselves were magnified as the tidings flashed over the whole country, and the consequences were immediate. The North became wild with astonishment and rage, and the South rose to fever-heat from the conviction that Maryland was about to fall into line as the advance guard of the Southern Confederacy.

In February, 1861, when Mr. Lincoln was on his way to Washington to prepare for his inauguration as President of the United States, an unfortunate incident occurred which had a sinister influence on the State of Maryland, and especially on the city of Baltimore. Some superserviceable persons, carried away, honestly no doubt, by their own frightened imaginations,

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<sup>1</sup> At Fort Sumter, it is true, one week earlier, the first collision of arms had taken place; but strangely, that bombardment was unattended with loss of life. And it did not necessarily mean war between North and South: accommodation still seemed possible.

and perhaps in part stimulated by the temptation of getting up a sensation of the first class, succeeded in persuading Mr. Lincoln that a formidable conspiracy existed to assassinate him on his way through Maryland.

It was announced publicly that he was to come from Philadelphia, not by the usual route through Wilmington, but by a circuitous journey through Harrisburg, and thence by the Northern Central Railroad to Baltimore. Misled by this statement, I, as Mayor of the city, accompanied by the Police Commissioners and supported by a strong force of police, was at the Calvert-street station on Saturday morning, February 23d, at half-past eleven o'clock, the appointed time of arrival, ready to receive with due respect the incoming President. An open carriage was in waiting, in which I was to have the honor of escorting Mr. Lincoln through the city to the Washington station, and of sharing in any danger which he might encounter. It is hardly necessary to say that I apprehended none. When the train came it appeared, to my great astonishment, that Mrs. Lincoln and her three sons had arrived safely and without hindrance or molestation of any kind, but that Mr. Lincoln could not be found. It was then announced that he had passed through the city *incognito* in the night train by the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, and had reached Washington in safety at the usual hour in the morning. For this signal deliverance from an imaginary peril, those who devised the ingenious plan of escape were of course devoutly thankful, and they accordingly took to

themselves no little amount of credit for its success.

If Mr. Lincoln had arrived in Baltimore at the time expected, and had spoken a few words to the people who had gathered to hear him, expressing the kind feelings which were in his heart with the simple eloquence of which he was so great a master, he could not have failed to make a very different impression from that which was produced not only by the want of confidence and respect manifested towards the city of Baltimore by the plan pursued, but still more by the manner in which it was carried out. On such an occasion as this even trifles are of importance, and this incident was not a trifle. The emotional part of human nature is its strongest side and soonest leads to action. It was so with the people of Baltimore. Fearful accounts of the conspiracy flew all over the country, creating a hostile feeling against the city, from which it soon afterwards suffered. A single specimen of the news thus spread will suffice. A dispatch from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to the *New York Times*, dated February 23d, 8 A. M., says: "Abraham Lincoln, the President-elect of the United States, is safe in the capital of the nation." Then, after describing the dreadful nature of the conspiracy, it adds: "The list of the names of the conspirators presented a most astonishing array of persons high in Southern confidence, and some whose fame is not confined to this country alone."

Of course, the list of names was never furnished, and all the men in buckram vanished in air. This is all the notice which this matter would require except for the extraordinary narrative



contributed by Mr. Samuel M. Felton, at that time President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Company, to the volume entitled "A History of Massachusetts in the Civil War," published in 1868.

Early in 1861, Mr. Felton had made, as he supposed, a remarkable discovery of "a deep-laid conspiracy to capture Washington and break up the Government."

Soon afterwards Miss Dix, the philanthropist, opportunely came to his office on a Saturday afternoon, stating that she had an important communication to make to him personally, and then, with closed doors and for more than an hour, she poured into his ears a thrilling tale, to which he attentively listened. "The sum of all was (I quote the language of Mr. Felton) that there was then an extensive and organized conspiracy throughout the South to seize upon Washington, with its archives and records, and then declare the Southern conspirators *de facto* the Government of the United States. The whole was to be a *coup d'état*. At the same time they were to cut off all modes of communication between Washington and the North, East or West, and thus prevent the transportation of troops to wrest the capital from the hands of the insurgents. Mr. Lincoln's inauguration was thus to be prevented, or his life was to fall a sacrifice to the attempt at inauguration. In fact, troops were then drilling on the line of our own road, and the Washington and Annapolis line and other lines."

It was clear that the knowledge of a treasonable conspiracy of such vast proportions, which had already begun its operations,

ought not to be confined solely to the keeping of Mr. Felton and Miss Dix. Mr. N. P. Trist, an officer of the road, was accordingly admitted into the secret, and was dispatched in haste to Washington, to lay all the facts before General Scott, the Commander-in-Chief. The General, however, would give no assurances except that he would do all he could to bring sufficient troops to Washington to make it secure. Matters stood in this unsatisfactory condition for some time, until a new rumor reached the ears of Mr. Felton.

A gentleman from Baltimore, he says, came out to Back River Bridge, about five miles east of the city, and told the bridgekeeper that he had information which had come to his knowledge, of vital importance to the road, which he wished communicated to Mr. Felton. The nature of this communication was that a party was then organized in Baltimore to burn the bridges in case Mr. Lincoln came over the road, or in case an attempt was made to carry troops for the defense of Washington. The party at that time had combustible materials prepared to pour over the bridges, and were to disguise themselves as negroes and be at the bridge just before the train in which Mr. Lincoln travelled had arrived. The bridge was then to be burned, the train attacked, and Mr. Lincoln to be put out of the way. The man appeared several times, always, it seems, to the bridgekeeper, and he always communicated new information about the conspirators, but he would never give his name nor place of abode, and both still remain a mystery. Mr.

Felton himself then went to Washington, where he succeeded in obtaining from a prominent gentleman from Baltimore whom he there saw, the judicious advice to apply to Marshal Kane, the Chief of Police in Baltimore, with the assurance that he was a perfectly reliable person. Marshal Kane was accordingly seen, but he scouted the idea that there was any such thing on foot as a conspiracy to burn the bridges and cut off Washington, and said he had thoroughly investigated the whole matter, and there was not the slightest foundation for such rumors. Mr. Felton was not satisfied, but he would have nothing more to do with Marshal Kane. He next sent for a celebrated detective in the West, whose name is not given, and through this chief and his subordinates every nook and corner of the road and its vicinity was explored. They reported that they had joined the societies of the conspirators in Baltimore and got into their secrets, and that the secret working of secession and treason was laid bare, with all its midnight plottings and daily consultations. The conspiracy being thus proved to Mr. Felton's satisfaction, he at once organized and armed a force of two hundred men and scattered them along the line of the railroad between the Susquehanna and Baltimore, principally at the bridges. But, strange to say, all that was accomplished by this formidable body was an enormous job of whitewashing.

The narrative proceeds: "These men were drilled secretly and regularly by drill-masters, and were apparently employed in whitewashing the bridges, patting on some six or seven coats of

whitewash saturated with salt and alum, to make the outside of the bridges as nearly fireproof as possible. This whitewashing, so extensive in its application, became (continues Mr. Felton) the nine days' wonder of the neighborhood." And well it might. After the lapse of twenty-five years the wonder over this feat of strategy can hardly yet have ceased in that rural and peaceful neighborhood. But, unfortunately for Mr. Felton's peace of mind, the programme of Mr. Lincoln's journey was suddenly changed. He had selected a different route. He had decided to go to Harrisburg from Philadelphia, and thence by day to Baltimore, over another and a rival road, known as the Northern Central. Then the chief detective discovered that the attention of the conspirators was suddenly turned to the Northern Central road. The mysterious unknown gentleman from Baltimore appeared again on the scene and confirmed this statement. He gave warning that Mr. Lincoln was to be waylaid and his life sacrificed on that road, on which no whitewash had been used, and where there were no armed men to protect him.

Mr. Felton hurried to Philadelphia, and there, in a hotel, joined his chief detective, who was registered under a feigned name. Mr. Lincoln, cheered by a dense crowd, was, at that moment, passing through the streets of Philadelphia. A sub-detective was sent to bring Mr. Judd, Mr. Lincoln's intimate friend, to the hotel to hold a consultation. Mr. Judd was in the procession with Mr. Lincoln, but the emergency admitted no delay. The eagerness of the sub-detective was so great that

he was three times arrested and carried out of the crowd by the police before he could reach Mr. Judd. The fourth attempt succeeded, and Mr. Judd was at last brought to the hotel, where he met both Mr. Felton and the chief detective. The narrative then proceeds in the words of Mr. Felton: "We lost no time in making known to him (Mr. Judd) all the facts which had come to our knowledge in reference to the conspiracy, and I most earnestly advised sleeping-car. Mr. Judd fully entered into the plan, and said he would urge Mr. Lincoln to adopt it. On his communicating with Mr. Lincoln, after the services of the evening were over, he answered that he had engaged to go to Harrisburg and speak the next day, and that he would not break his engagement, even in the face of such peril, but that after he had fulfilled his engagement he would follow such advice as we might give him in reference to his journey to Washington." Mr. Lincoln accordingly went to Harrisburg the next day and made an address. After that the arrangements for the journey were shrouded in the profoundest mystery. It was given out that he was to go to Governor Curtin's house for the night, but he was, instead, conducted to a point about two miles out of Harrisburg, where an extra car and engine waited to take him to Philadelphia. The telegraph lines east, west, north and south from Harrisburg were cut, so that no message as to his movements could be sent off in any direction. But all this caused a detention, and the night train from Philadelphia to Baltimore had to be held back until the arrival of Mr. Lincoln at the former place. If,

however, the delay proved to be considerable, when Mr. Lincoln reached Baltimore the connecting train to Washington might leave without him. But Mr. Felton was equal to the occasion. He devised a plan which was communicated to only three or four on the road. A messenger was sent to Baltimore by an earlier train to say to the officials of the Washington road that a very important package must be delivered in Washington early in the morning, and to request them to wait for the night train from Philadelphia. To give color to this statement, a package of old railroad reports, done up with great care, and with a large seal attached, marked by Mr. Felton's own hand, "Very Important," was sent in the train which carried Mr. Lincoln on his famous night ride from Philadelphia through Maryland and Baltimore to the city of Washington. The only remarkable incident of the journey was the mysterious behavior of the few officials who were entrusted with the portentous secret.

I do not know how others may be affected by this narrative, but I confess even now to a feeling of indignation that Mr. Lincoln, who was no coward, but proved himself on many an occasion to be a brave man, was thus prevented from carrying out his original intention of journeying to Baltimore in the light of day, in company with his wife and children, relying as he always did on the honor and manhood of the American people. It is true we have, to our sorrow, learned by the manner of his death, as well as by the fate of still another President, that no one occupying so high a place can be absolutely safe, even in this

country, from the danger of assassination, but it is still true that as a rule the best way to meet such danger is boldly to defy it.

Mr. C. C. Felton, son of Mr. Samuel M. Felton, in an article entitled "The Baltimore Plot," published in December, 1885, in the *Harvard Monthly*, has attempted to revive this absurd story. He repeats the account of whitewashing the bridges, and of the astonishment created among the good people of the neighborhood. He has faith in "the unknown Baltimorean" who visited the bridgekeeper, but would never give his name, and in the spies employed, who, he tells us, were "the well-known detective Pinkerton and eight assistants," and he leaves his readers to infer that Mr. Lincoln's life was saved by the extraordinary vigilance which had been exercised and the ingenious plan which had been devised by his worthy father, but alas! —

"The earth hath bubbles as the water has,"

and this was of them.

Colonel Lamon, a close friend of President Lincoln, and the only person who accompanied him on his night ride to Washington, has written his biography, a very careful and conscientious work, which unfortunately was left unfinished, and he of course had the strongest reasons for carefully examining the subject. After a full examination of all the documents, Colonel Lamon pronounces the conspiracy to be a mere fiction, and adds

in confirmation the mature opinion of Mr. Lincoln himself.

Colonel Lamon says:<sup>2</sup> "Mr. Lincoln soon learned to regret the midnight ride. His friends reproached him, his enemies taunted him. He was convinced that he had committed a grave mistake in yielding to the solicitations of a professional spy and of friends too easily alarmed. He saw that he had fled from a danger purely imaginary, and felt the shame and mortification natural to a brave man under such circumstances. But he was not disposed to take all the responsibility to himself, and frequently upbraided the writer for having aided and assisted him to demean himself at the very moment in all his life when his behavior should have exhibited the utmost dignity and composure."

As Colonel Lamon's biography, a work of absorbing interest, is now out of print, and as his account of the ride and of the results of the investigation of the conspiracy is too long to be inserted here, it is added in an Appendix.

The account above given has its appropriateness here, for the midnight ride through Baltimore, and the charge that its citizens were plotting the President's assassination, helped to feed the flame of excitement which, in the stirring events of that time, was already burning too high all over the land, and especially in a border city with divided sympathies.

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<sup>2</sup> The Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 526; and see Appendix [I](#).



# CHAPTER II

THE COMPROMISES OF THE CONSTITUTION  
IN REGARD TO SLAVERY. – A DIVIDED HOUSE.  
– THE BROKEN COMPACT. – THE RIGHT OF  
REVOLUTION.

For a period the broad provisions of the Constitution of the United States, as expounded by the wise and broad decisions of the Supreme Court, had proved to be equal to every emergency. The thirteen feeble colonies had grown to be a great Republic, and no external obstacle threatened its majestic progress; foreign wars had been waged and vast territories had been annexed, but every strain on the Constitution only served to make it stronger. Yet there was a canker in a vital part which nothing could heal, which from day to day became more malignant, and which those who looked beneath the surface could perceive was surely leading, and at no distant day, to dissolution or war, or perhaps to both. The canker was the existence of negro slavery.

In colonial days, kings, lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, all united in favoring the slave trade. In Massachusetts the Puritan minister might be seen on the Sabbath going to meeting in family procession, with his negro slave bringing up the rear. Boston was largely engaged in building ships and manufacturing rum, and a portion of the ships and much of the

rum were sent to Africa, the rum to buy slaves, and the ships to bring them to a market in America. Newport was more largely, and until a more recent time, engaged in the same traffic.

In Maryland, even the Friends were sometimes owners of slaves; and it is charged, and apparently with reason, that Wenlock Christison, the Quaker preacher, after being driven from Massachusetts by persecution and coming to Maryland by way of Barbadoes, sent or brought in with him a number of slaves, who cultivated his plantation until his death. In Georgia, the Calvinist Whitefield blessed God for his negro plantation, which was generously given to him to establish his "Bethesda" as a refuge for orphan children.

In the Dred Scott case, Chief Justice Taney truly described the opinion, which he deplored, prevailing at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, as being that the colored man had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.<sup>3</sup>

The Constitution had endeavored to settle the question of slavery by a compromise. As the difficulty in regard to it arose far more from political than moral grounds, so in the settlement the former were almost exclusively considered. It was, however, the best that could be made at that time. It is certain that without such a compromise the Constitution would not have been adopted. The existence of slavery in a State was left in the discretion of the State itself. If a slave escaped to another State, he was to be

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<sup>3</sup> Judge Taney's utterance on this subject has been frequently and grossly misrepresented. In Appendix II. will be found what he really did say.

returned to his master. Laws were passed by Congress to carry out this provision, and the Supreme Court decided that they were constitutional.

For a long time the best people at the North stood firmly by the compromise. It was a national compact, and must be respected. But ideas, and especially moral ideas, cannot be forever fettered by a compact, no matter how solemn may be its sanctions. The change of opinion at the North was first slow, then rapid, and then so powerful as to overwhelm all opposition. John Brown, who was executed for raising a negro insurrection in Virginia, in which men were wounded and killed, was revered by many at the North as a hero, a martyr and a saint. It had long been a fixed fact that no fugitive slave could by process of law be returned from the North into slavery. With the advent to power of the Republican party – a party based on opposition to slavery – another breach in the outworks of the Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, had been made. Sooner or later the same hands would capture the citadel. Sooner or later it was plain that slavery was doomed.

In the memorable Senatorial campaign in Illinois between Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, the latter, in his speech before the Republican State Convention at Springfield, June 17, 1858, struck the keynote of his party by the bold declaration on the subject of slavery which he then made and never recalled.

This utterance was the more remarkable because on the

previous day the convention had passed unanimously a resolution declaring that Mr. Lincoln was their first and only choice for United States Senator, to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration of Mr. Douglas's term of office, but the convention had done nothing which called for the advanced ground on which Mr. Lincoln planted himself in that speech. It was carefully prepared.

The narrative of Colonel Lamon in his biography of Lincoln is intensely interesting and dramatic.<sup>4</sup>

About a dozen gentlemen, he says, were called to meet in the library of the State House. After seating them at the round table, Mr. Lincoln read his entire speech, dwelling slowly on that part which speaks of a divided house, so that every man fully understood it. After he had finished, he asked for the opinion of his friends. All but William H. Herndon, the law partner of Mr. Lincoln, declared that the whole speech was too far in advance of the times, and they especially condemned that part which referred to a divided house. Mr. Herndon sat still while they were giving their respective opinions; then he sprang to his feet and said: "Lincoln, deliver it just as it reads. If it is in advance of the times, let us – you and I, if no one else – lift the people to the level of this speech now, higher hereafter. The speech is true, wise and politic, and will succeed now, or in the future. Nay, it will aid you, if it will not make you President of the United States."...

"Mr. Lincoln sat still a short moment, rose from his chair,

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<sup>4</sup> Lamon's Life of Lincoln, p. 808.

walked backward and forward in the hall, stopped and said: "Friends, I have thought about this matter a great deal, have weighed the question well from all corners, and am thoroughly convinced the time has come when it should be uttered; and if it must be that I must go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to truth – die in the advocacy of what is right and just. This nation cannot live on injustice. A house divided against itself cannot stand, I say again and again."

The opening paragraph of the speech is as follows: "If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far on into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy that agitation has not only not ceased, but is constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this Government can not endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

The blast of the trumpet gave no uncertain sound. The far-seeing suggestion of Mr. Herndon came true to the letter. I believe this speech made Abraham Lincoln President of the United States.

But the founders of the Constitution of the United States had built a house which was divided against itself from the beginning. They had framed a union of States which was part free and part slave, and that union was intended to last forever. Here was an irreconcilable conflict between the Constitution and the future President of the United States.

When the Republican Convention assembled at Chicago in May, 1860, in the heat of the contest, which soon became narrowed down to a choice between Mr. Seward and Mr. Lincoln, the latter dispatched a friend to Chicago with a message in writing, which was handed either to Judge Davis or Judge Logan, both members of the convention, which runs as follows: "Lincoln agrees with Seward in his irrepressible-conflict idea, and in negro equality; but he is opposed to Seward's higher law." But there was no substantial difference between the position of the two: Lincoln's "divided house" and Seward's "higher law" placed them really in the same attitude.

The seventh resolution in the Chicago platform condemned what it described as the "new dogma that the Constitution, of its own force, carries slavery into any or all of the Territories of the United States." This resolution was a direct repudiation by a National Convention of the decision of the Supreme Court in

the Dred Scott case.

On the 6th of November, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States. Of the actual votes cast there was a majority against him of 930,170. Next came Mr. Douglas, who lost the support of the Southern Democrats by his advocacy of the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty," as it was called, which was in effect, although not in form, as hostile to the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case as the seventh resolution of the Chicago Convention itself. Mr. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, the candidate of the Southern Democracy, fell very far, and Mr. Bell, of Tennessee, the candidate of the Union party, as it was called, a short-lived successor of the old Whig party, fell still farther in the rear of the two Northern candidates.

The great crisis had come at last. The Abolition party had become a portion of the victorious Republican party. The South, politically, was overwhelmed. Separated now from its only ally, the Northern Democracy, it stood at last alone.

It matters not that Mr. Lincoln, after his election, in sincerity of heart held out the olive branch to the nation, and that during his term of office the South, so far as his influence could avail, would have been comparatively safe from direct aggressions. Mr. Lincoln was not known then as he is known now, and, moreover, his term of office would be but four years.

What course, then, was left to the South if it was determined to maintain its rights under the Constitution? What but the right of self-defense?

The house of every man is his castle, and he may defend it to the death against all aggressors. When a hostile hand is raised to strike a blow, he who is assaulted need not wait until the blow falls, but on the instant may protect himself as best he can. These are the rights of self-defense known, approved and acted on by all freemen. And where constitutional rights of a people are in jeopardy, a kindred right of self-defense belongs to them. Although revolutionary in its character, it is not the less a right.

Wendell Phillips, abolitionist as he was, in a speech made at New Bedford on the 9th of April, 1861, three days before the bombardment of Fort Sumter, fully recognized this right. He said: "Here are a series of States girding the Gulf, who think that their peculiar institutions require that they should have a separate government. They have a right to decide that question without appealing to you or me. A large body of the people, sufficient to make a nation, have come to the conclusion that they will have a government of a certain form. Who denies them the right? Standing with the principles of '76 behind us, who can deny them the right? What is a matter of a few millions of dollars or a few forts? It is a mere drop in the bucket of the great national question. It is theirs just as much as ours. I maintain, on the principles of '76, that Abraham Lincoln has no right to a soldier in Fort Sumter."

And such was the honest belief of the people who united in establishing the Southern Confederacy.

Wendell Phillips was not wrong in declaring the principles of



'76 to be kindred to those of '61. The men of '76 did not fight to get rid of the petty tax of three pence a pound on tea, which was the only tax left to quarrel about. They were determined to pay no taxes, large or small, then or thereafter. Whether the tax was lawful or not was a doubtful question, about which there was a wide difference of opinion, but they did not care for that. Nothing would satisfy them but the relinquishment of any claim of right to tax the colonies, and this they could not obtain. They maintained that their rights were violated. They were, moreover, embittered by a long series of disputes with the mother country, and they wanted to be independent and to have a country of their own. They thought they were strong enough to maintain that position.

Neither were the Southern men of '61 fighting for money. And they too were deeply embittered, not against a mother country, but against a brother country. The Northern people had published invectives of the most exasperating character broadcast against the South in their speeches, sermons, newspapers and books. The abolitionists had proceeded from words to deeds and were unwearied in tampering with the slaves and carrying them off. The Southern people, on their part, were not less violent in denunciation of the North. The slavery question had divided the political parties throughout the nation, and on this question the South was practically a unit. They could get no security that the provisions of the Constitution would be kept either in letter or in spirit, and this they demanded as their right.

The Southern men thought that they also were strong enough

to wage successfully a defensive war. Like the men of '76, they in great part were of British stock; they lived in a thinly settled country, led simple lives, were accustomed to the use of arms, and knew how to protect themselves. Such men make good soldiers, and when their armies were enrolled the ranks were filled with men of all classes, the rich as well as the poor, the educated as well as the ignorant.

It is a mistake to suppose that they were inveigled into secession by ambitious leaders. On the contrary, it is probable that they were not as much under the influence of leaders as the men of '76, and that there were fewer disaffected among them. At times the scales trembled in the balance. There are always mistakes in war. It is an easy and ungrateful task to point them out afterward. We can now see that grave errors, both financial and military, were made, and that opportunities were thrown away. How far these went to settle the contest, we can never certainly know, but it does not need great boldness to assert that the belief which the Southern people entertained that they were strong enough to defend themselves, was not unreasonable.

The determination of the South to maintain slavery was undoubtedly the main cause of secession, but another deep and underlying cause was the firm belief of the Southern people in the doctrine of States' rights, and their jealousy of any attack upon those rights. Devotion to their State first of all, a conviction that paramount obligation – in case of any conflict of allegiance – was due not to the Union but to the State, had been part of

the political creed of very many in the South ever since the adoption of the Constitution. An ignoble love of slavery was not the general and impelling motive. The slaveholders, who were largely in the minority, acted as a privileged class always does act. They were determined to maintain their privileges at all hazards. But they, as well as the great mass of the people who had no personal interest in slavery, fought the battles of the war with the passionate earnestness of men who believed with an undoubting conviction that they were the defenders not only of home rule and of their firesides, but also of their constitutional rights.

And behind the money question, the constitutional question and the moral question, there was still another of the gravest import. Was it possible for two races nearly equal in number, but widely different in character and civilization, to live together in a republic in peace and equality of rights without mingling in blood? The answer of the Southern man was, "It is not possible."

## CHAPTER III

MARYLAND'S DESIRE FOR PEACE. –  
EVENTS WHICH FOLLOWED THE ELECTION OF  
PRESIDENT LINCOLN. – HIS PROCLAMATION  
CALLING FOR TROOPS. – THE CITY AUTHORITIES  
AND POLICE OF BALTIMORE. – INCREASING  
EXCITEMENT IN BALTIMORE.

I now come to consider the condition of affairs in Maryland. As yet the Republican party had obtained a very slight foothold. Only 2,294 votes had in the whole State been cast for Mr. Lincoln. Her sympathies were divided between the North and the South, with a decided preponderance on the Southern side. For many years her conscience had been neither dead nor asleep on the subject of slavery. Families had impoverished themselves to free their slaves. In 1860 there were 83,942 free colored people in Maryland and 87,189 slaves, the white population being 515,918. Thus there were nearly as many free as slaves of the colored race. Emancipation, in spite of harsh laws passed to discountenance it, had rapidly gone on. In the northern part of the State and in the city of Baltimore there were but few slaveholders, and the slavery was hardly more than nominal. The patriarchal institution, as it has been derisively called, had a real existence in many a household. Not a few excellent people have I known and respected who were born and bred in slavery and had been freed

by their masters. In 1831 the State incorporated the Maryland Colonization Society, which founded on the west coast of Africa a successful republican colony of colored people, now known as the State of Maryland in Liberia, and for twenty-six years, and until the war broke out, the State contributed \$10,000 a year to its support. This amount was increased by the contributions of individuals. The board, of which Mr. John H. B. Latrobe was for many years president, was composed of our best citizens. A code of laws for the government of the colony was prepared by the excellent and learned lawyer, Hugh Davey Evans.

While there was on the part of a large portion of the people a deep-rooted and growing dislike to slavery, agitation on the subject had not commenced. It was in fact suppressed by reason of the violence of Northern abolitionists with whom the friends of emancipation were not able to unite.

It is not surprising that Maryland was in no mood for war, but that her voice was for compromise and peace – compromise and peace at any price consistent with honor.

The period immediately following the election of Mr. Lincoln in November, 1860, was throughout the country one of intense agitation and of important events. A large party at the North preferred compromise to war, even at the cost of dissolution of the Union. If dissolution began, no one could tell where it would stop. South Carolina seceded on the 17th of December, 1860. Georgia and the five Gulf States soon followed. On the 6th of January, 1861, Fernando Wood, mayor of the city of New York,

sent a message to the common council advising that New York should secede and become a free city.<sup>5</sup>

On February the 9th, Jefferson Davis was elected President of the Southern Confederacy, a Confederacy to which other States would perhaps soon be added. But the Border States were as yet debatable ground; they might be retained by conciliation and compromise or alienated by hostile measures, whether directed against them or against the seceded States. In Virginia a convention had been called to consider the momentous question of union or secession, and an overwhelming majority of the delegates chosen were in favor of remaining in the Union. Other States were watching Virginia's course, in order to decide

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<sup>5</sup> John P. Kennedy, of Baltimore, the well-known author, who had been member of Congress and Secretary of the Navy, published early in 1861 a pamphlet entitled "The Border States, Their Power and Duty in the Present Disordered Condition of the Country." His idea was that if concert of action could be had between the Border States and concurring States of the South which had not seceded, stipulations might be obtained from the Free States, with the aid of Congress, and, if necessary, an amendment of the Constitution, which would protect the rights of the South; but if this failed, that the Border States and their allies of the South would then be forced to consider the Union impracticable and to organize a separate confederacy of the Border States, with the association of such of the Southern and Free States as might be willing to accede to the proposed conditions. He hoped that the Union would thus be "reconstructed by the healthy action of the Border States." The necessary result, however, would have been that in the meantime three confederacies would have been in existence. And yet Mr. Kennedy had always been a Union man, and when the war broke out was its consistent advocate. These proposals, from such different sources as Fernando Wood and John P. Kennedy, tend to show the uncertainty and bewilderment which had taken possession of the minds of men, and in which few did not share to a greater or less degree.

whether to stay in the Union or go out of it with her.

On the 12th and 13th of April occurred the memorable bombardment and surrender of Fort Sumter. On the 15th of April, President Lincoln issued his celebrated proclamation calling out seventy-five thousand militia, and appealing "to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity and existence of our National Union, and the perpetuity of popular government, and to redress wrongs already long enough endured." What these wrongs were is not stated. "The first service assigned to the forces hereby called forth," said the proclamation, "will probably be to re-possess the forts, places and property which have been seized from the Union." On the same day there was issued from the War Department a request addressed to the Governors of the different States, announcing what the quota of each State would be, and that the troops were to serve for three months unless sooner discharged. Maryland's quota was four regiments.

The proclamation was received with exultation at the North – many dissentient voices being silenced in the general acclaim – with defiance at the South, and in Maryland with mingled feelings in which astonishment, dismay and disapprobation were predominant. On all sides it was agreed that the result must be war, or a dissolution of the Union, and I may safely say that a large majority of our people then preferred the latter.

An immediate effect of the proclamation was to intensify the feeling of hostility in the wavering States, and to drive four of

them into secession. Virginia acted promptly. On April 17th her convention passed an ordinance of secession – subject to ratification by a vote of the people – and Virginia became the head and front of the Confederacy. North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas soon followed her lead. Meanwhile, and before the formal acts of secession, the Governors of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee sent prompt and defiant answers to the requisition, emphatically refusing to furnish troops, as did also the Governors of Kentucky and Missouri.

The position of Maryland was most critical. This State was especially important, because the capital of the nation lay within her borders, and all the roads from the North leading to it passed through her territory. After the President's proclamation was issued, no doubt a large majority of her people sympathized with the South; but even had that sentiment been far more preponderating, there was an underlying feeling that by a sort of geographical necessity her lot was cast with the North, that the larger and stronger half of the nation would not allow its capital to be quietly disintegrated away by her secession. Delaware and Maryland were the only Border States which did not attempt to secede. Kentucky at first took the impossible stand of an armed neutrality. When this failed, a portion of her people passed an ordinance of secession, and a portion of the people of Missouri passed a similar ordinance.

It is now proper to give some explanation of the condition of affairs in Baltimore, at that time a city of 215,000 inhabitants.



Thomas Holliday Hicks, who had been elected by the American, or Know-Nothing party, three years before, was the Governor of the State. The city authorities, consisting of the mayor and city council, had been elected in October, 1860, a few weeks before the Presidential election, not as representatives of any of the national parties, but as the candidates of an independent reform party, and in opposition to the Know-Nothing party. This party, which then received its quietus, had been in power for some years, and had maintained itself by methods which made its rule little better than a reign of terror.<sup>6</sup> No one acquainted with the history of that period can doubt that the reform was greatly needed. A large number of the best men of the American party united in the movement, and with their aid it became triumphantly successful, carrying every ward in the city. The city council was composed of men of unusually high character. "Taken as a whole" (Scharf's "History of Maryland," Vol. III., p. 284), "a better ticket has seldom, if ever, been brought out. In the selection of candidates all

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<sup>6</sup> The culmination of this period of misrule was at the election in November, 1859, when the fraud and violence were so flagrant that the Legislature of the State unseated the whole Baltimore delegation – ten members. The city being thus without representation, it became necessary, when a special session of the Legislature was called in April, 1861, that a new delegation from Baltimore should be chosen. It was this same Legislature (elected in 1859), which took away from the mayor of the city the control of its police, and entrusted that force to a board of police commissioners. This change, a most fortunate one for the city at that crisis, resulted in the immediate establishment of good order, and made possible the reform movement of the next autumn.

party tests were discarded, and all thought of rewarding partisan services repudiated." Four police commissioners, appointed by the Legislature – Charles Howard, William H. Gatchell, Charles D. Hinks and John W. Davis – men of marked ability and worth, had, with the mayor, who was *ex officio* a member of the board, the appointment and control of the police force. Mr. S. Teackle Wallis was the legal adviser of the board. The entire police force consisted of 398 men, and had been raised to a high degree of discipline and efficiency under the command of Marshal Kane. They were armed with revolvers.

Immediately after the call of the President for troops, including four regiments from Maryland, a marked division among the people manifested itself. Two large and excited crowds, eager for news, and nearly touching each other, stood from morning until late at night before two newspaper offices on Baltimore street which advocated contrary views and opinions. Strife was in the air. It was difficult for the police to keep the peace. Business was almost suspended. Was there indeed to be war between the sections, or could it yet, by some unlooked-for interposition, be averted? Would the Border States interfere and demand peace? There was a deep and pervading impression of impending evil. And now an immediate fear was as to the effect on the citizens of the passage of Northern troops through the city. Should they be permitted to cross the soil of Maryland, to make war on sister States of the South, allied to her by so many ties of affection, as well as of kindred institutions? On the other

hand, when the capital of the nation was in danger, should not the kindest greeting and welcome be extended to those who were first to come to the rescue? Widely different were the answers given to these questions. The Palmetto flag had several times been raised by some audacious hands in street and harbor, but it was soon torn down. The National flag and the flag of the State, with its black and orange, the colors of Lord Baltimore, waved unmolested, but not side by side, for they had become symbols of different ideas, although the difference was, as yet, not clearly defined.

On the 17th of April, the state of affairs became so serious that I, as mayor, issued a proclamation earnestly invoking all good citizens to refrain from every act which could lead to outbreak or violence of any kind; to refrain from harshness of speech, and to render in all cases prompt and efficient aid, as by law they were required to do, to the public authorities, whose constant efforts would be exerted to maintain unbroken the peace and order of the city, and to administer the laws with fidelity and impartiality. I cannot flatter myself that this appeal produced much effect. The excitement was too great for any words to allay it.

On the 18th of April, notice was received from Harrisburg that two companies of United States artillery, commanded by Major Pemberton, and also four companies of militia, would arrive by the Northern Central Railroad at Bolton Station, in the northern part of the city, at two o'clock in the afternoon. The militia had

neither arms nor uniforms.

Before the troops arrived at the station, where I was waiting to receive them, I was suddenly called away by a message from Governor Hicks stating that he desired to see me on business of urgent importance, and this prevented my having personal knowledge of what immediately afterward occurred. The facts, however, are that a large crowd assembled at the station and followed the soldiers in their march to the Washington station with abuse and threats. The regulars were not molested, but the wrath of the mob was directed against the militia, and an attack would certainly have been made but for the vigilance and determination of the police, under the command of Marshal Kane.

"These proceedings," says Mr. Scharf, in the third volume of his "History of Maryland," page 401, "were an earnest of what might be expected on the arrival of other troops, the excitement growing in intensity with every hour. Numerous outbreaks occurred in the neighborhood of the newspaper offices during the day, and in the evening a meeting of the States Rights Convention was held in Taylor's building, on Fayette street near Calvert, where, it is alleged, very strong ground was taken against the passage of any more troops through Baltimore, and armed resistance to it threatened. On motion of Mr. Ross Winans, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

*"Resolved,* That in the opinion of this convention the prosecution of the design announced by the President

in his late proclamation, of recapturing the forts in the seceded States, will inevitably lead to a sanguinary war, the dissolution of the Union, and the irreconcilable estrangement of the people of the South from the people of the North.

*"Resolved, That we protest in the name of the people of Maryland against the garrisoning of Southern forts by militia drawn from the free States; or the quartering of militia from the free States in any of the towns or places of the slaveholding States.*

*"Resolved, That in the opinion of this convention the massing of large bodies of militia, exclusively from the free States, in the District of Columbia, is uncalled for by any public danger or exigency, is a standing menace to the State of Maryland, and an insult to her loyalty and good faith, and will, if persisted in, alienate her people from a government which thus attempts to overawe them by the presence of armed men and treats them with contempt and distrust.*

*"Resolved, That the time has arrived when it becomes all good citizens to unite in a common effort to obliterate all party lines which have heretofore unhappily divided us, and to present an unbroken front in the preservation and defense of our interests, our homes and our firesides, to avert the horrors of civil war, and to repel, if need be, any invader who may come to establish a military despotism over us.*

*"A. C. Robinson, Chairman."*

"G. Harlan Williams,

"Albert Ritchie,

*"Secretaries."*

The names of the members who composed this convention are not given, but the mover of the resolutions and the officers of the meeting were men well known and respected in this community.

The bold and threatening character of the resolutions did not tend to calm the public mind. They did not, however, advocate an attack on the troops.

In Putnam's "Record of the Rebellion," Volume I, page 29, the following statement is made of a meeting which was held on the morning of the 18th of April: "An excited secession meeting was held at Baltimore, Maryland. T. Parkin Scott occupied the chair, and speeches denunciatory of the Administration and the North were made by Wilson C. N. Carr, William Byrne [improperly spelled Burns], President of the National Volunteer Association, and others."

An account of the meeting is before me, written by Mr. Carr, lately deceased, a gentleman entirely trustworthy. He did not know, he says, of the existence of such an association, but on his way down town having seen the notice of a town meeting to be held at Taylor's Hall, to take into consideration the state of affairs, he went to the meeting. Mr. Scott was in the chair and was speaking. He was not making an excited speech, but, on the contrary, was urging the audience to do nothing rashly, but to be moderate and not to interfere with any troops that might attempt to pass through the city. As soon as he had finished, Mr. Carr was urged to go up to the platform and reply to Mr. Scott. I now

give Mr. Carr's words. "I went up," he says, "but had no intention of saying anything in opposition to what Mr. Scott had advised the people to do. I was not there as an advocate of secession, but was anxious to see some way opened for reconciliation between the North and South. I did not make an excited speech nor did I denounce the Administration. I saw that I was disappointing the crowd. Some expressed their disapprobation pretty plainly and I cut my speech short. As soon as I finished speaking the meeting adjourned."

After the war was over, Mr. Scott was elected Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City. He was a strong sympathizer with the South, and had the courage of his convictions, but he had been also an opponent of slavery, and I have it from his own lips that years before the war, on a Fourth of July, he had persuaded his mother to liberate all her slaves, although she depended largely on their services for her support. And yet he lived and died a poor man.

On the 16th of April, Marshal Kane addressed a letter to William Crawford, the Baltimore agent of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Company, in the following terms:

*"Dear Sir:* – Is it true as stated that an attempt will be made to pass the volunteers from New York intended to war upon the South over your road to-day? It is important that we have explicit understanding on the subject.

Your friend,  
*George P. Kane."*

This letter was not submitted to me, nor to the board of police. If it had been, it would have been couched in very different language. Mr. Crawford forwarded it to the President of the road, who, on the same day, sent it to Simon Cameron, the Secretary of War.

Mr. Cameron, on April 18th, wrote to Governor Hicks, giving him notice that there were unlawful combinations of citizens of Maryland to impede the transit of United States troops across Maryland on their way to the defense of the capital, and that the President thought it his duty to make it known to the Governor, so that all loyal and patriotic citizens might be warned in time, and that he might be prepared to take immediate and effective measures against it.

On the afternoon of the 18th, Governor Hicks arrived in town. He had prepared a proclamation as Governor of the State, and wished me to issue another as mayor of the city, which I agreed to do. In it he said, among other things, that the unfortunate state of affairs now existing in the country had greatly excited the people of Maryland; that the emergency was great, and that the consequences of a rash step would be fearful. He therefore counselled the people in all earnestness to withhold their hands from whatever might tend to precipitate us into the gulf of discord and ruin gaping to receive us. All powers vested in the Governor of the State would be strenuously exerted to



preserve peace and maintain inviolate the honor and integrity of Maryland. He assured the people that no troops would be sent from Maryland, unless it might be for the defense of the national capital. He concluded by saying that the people of this State would in a short time have the opportunity afforded them, in a special election for members of Congress, to express their devotion to the Union, or their desire to see it broken up.

This proclamation is of importance in several respects. It shows the great excitement of the people and the imminent danger of domestic strife. It shows, moreover, that even the Governor of the State had then little idea of the course which he himself was soon about to pursue. If this was the case with the Governor, it could not have been different with thousands of the people. Very soon he became a thorough and uncompromising upholder of the war.

In my proclamation I concurred with the Governor in his determination to preserve the peace and maintain inviolate the honor and integrity of Maryland, and added that I could not withhold my expression of satisfaction at his resolution that no troops should be sent from Maryland to the soil of any other State.

Simultaneously with the passage of the first Northern regiments on their way to Washington, came the news that Virginia had seceded. Two days were crowded with stirring news – a proclamation from the President of the Southern Confederacy offering to issue commissions or letters of marque

to privateers, President Lincoln's proclamation declaring a blockade of Southern ports, the Norfolk Navy Yard abandoned, Harper's Ferry evacuated and the arsenal in the hands of Virginia troops. These events, so exciting in themselves, and coming together with the passage of the first troops, greatly increased the danger of an explosion.

# CHAPTER IV

THE SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT IN  
BALTIMORE. – THE FIGHT. – THE DEPARTURE  
FOR WASHINGTON. – CORRESPONDENCE IN  
REGARD TO THE KILLED AND WOUNDED.  
– PUBLIC MEETING. – TELEGRAM TO THE  
PRESIDENT. – NO REPLY. – BURNING OF BRIDGES.

The Sixth Massachusetts Regiment had the honor of being the first to march in obedience to the call of the President, completely equipped and organized. It had a full band and regimental staff. Mustered at Lowell on the morning of the 16th, the day after the proclamation was issued, four companies from Lowell presented themselves, and to these were added two from Lawrence, one from Groton, one from Acton, and one from Worcester; and when the regiment reached Boston, at one o'clock, an additional company was added from that city and another from Stoneham, making eleven in all – about seven hundred men.<sup>7</sup> It was addressed by the Governor of the State in front of the State House. In the city and along the line of the railroad, on the 17th, everywhere, ovations attended them. In the march down Broadway, in New York, on the 18th, the wildest enthusiasm inspired all classes. Similar scenes

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<sup>7</sup> Hanson's Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, p. 14.

occurred in the progress through New Jersey and through the city of Philadelphia. At midnight on the 18th, reports reached Philadelphia that the passage of the regiment through Baltimore would be disputed.

An unarmed and un-uniformed Pennsylvania regiment, under Colonel Small, was added to the train, either in Philadelphia or when the train reached the Susquehanna – it has been stated both ways, and I am not sure which account is correct – and the two regiments made the force about seventeen hundred men.

The proper course for the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Company was to have given immediate notice to the mayor or board of police of the number of the troops, and the time when they were expected to arrive in the city, so that preparation might have been made to receive them, but no such notice was given. On the contrary, it was purposely withheld, and no information could be obtained from the office of the company, although the marshal of police repeatedly telegraphed to Philadelphia to learn when the troops were to be expected. No news was received until from a half hour to an hour of the time at which they were to arrive. Whatever was the reason that no notice of the approach of the troops was given, it was not because they had no apprehensions of trouble. Mr. Felton, the president of the railroad company, says that *before* the troops left Philadelphia he called the colonel and principal officers into his office, and told them of the dangers they would probably encounter, and advised that each soldier should load his musket

before leaving and be ready for any emergency. Colonel Jones's official report, which is dated, "Capitol, Washington, April 22, 1861," says, "*After* leaving Philadelphia, I received intimation that the passage through the city of Baltimore would be resisted. I caused ammunition to be distributed and arms loaded, and went personally through the cars, and issued the following order – viz.:

"The regiment will march through Baltimore in columns of sections, arms at will. You will undoubtedly be insulted, abused, and perhaps assaulted, to which you must pay no attention whatever, but march with your faces square to the front, and pay no attention to the mob, even if they throw stones, bricks, or other missiles; but if you are fired upon, and any of you are hit, your officers will order you to fire. Do not fire into any promiscuous crowds, but select any man whom you may see aiming at you, and be sure you drop him."

If due notice had been given, and if this order had been carried out, the danger of a serious disturbance would have been greatly diminished. The plainest dictates of prudence required the Massachusetts and Pennsylvania regiments to march through the city in a body. The Massachusetts regiment was armed with muskets, and could have defended itself, and would also have had aid from the police; and although the Pennsylvania troops were unarmed, they would have been protected by the police just as troops from the same State had been protected on the day before. The mayor and police commissioners would have been present, adding the sanction and authority of their official positions. But

the plan adopted laid the troops open to be attacked in detail when they were least able to defend themselves and were out of the reach of assistance from the police. This plan was that when the train reached the President-street or Philadelphia station, in the southeastern part of Baltimore, each car should, according to custom, be detached from the engine and be drawn through the city by four horses for the distance of more than a mile to the Camden-street or Washington station, in the southwestern part of the city. Some one had blundered.

The train of thirty-five cars arrived at President-street Station at about eleven o'clock. The course which the troops had to take was first northerly on President street, four squares to Pratt street, a crowded thoroughfare leading along the heads of the docks, then along Pratt street west for nearly a mile to Howard street, and then south, on Howard street, one square to the Camden-street station.

Drawn by horses across the city at a rapid pace, about nine<sup>8</sup> cars, containing seven companies of the Massachusetts Sixth, reached the Camden-street station, the first carloads being assailed only with jeers and hisses; but the last car, containing Company "K" and Major Watson, was delayed on its passage – according to one account was thrown off the track by obstructions, and had to be replaced with the help of a passing

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<sup>8</sup> According to some of the published accounts *seven* cars got through, which would have been one to each company, but I believe that the number of the cars and of the companies did not correspond. Probably the larger companies were divided.

team; paving-stones and other missiles were thrown, the windows were broken, and some of the soldiers were struck. Colonel Jones was in one of the cars which passed through. Near Gay street, it happened that a number of laborers were at work repaving Pratt street, and had taken up the cobble-stones for the purpose of relaying them. As the troops kept passing, the crowd of bystanders grew larger, the excitement and – among many – the feeling of indignation grew more intense; each new aggressive act was the signal and example for further aggression. A cart coming by with a load of sand, the track was blocked by dumping the cartload upon it – I have been told that this was the act of some merchants and clerks of the neighborhood – and then, as a more effectual means of obstruction, some anchors lying near the head of the Gay-street dock were dragged up to and placed across the track.<sup>9</sup>

The next car being stopped by these obstructions, the driver attached the horses to the rear end of the car and drove it back, with the soldiers, to the President-street station, the rest of the cars also, of course, having to turn back, or – if any of them had not yet started – to remain where they were at the depot. In the cars thus stopped and turned back there were four companies, "C," "D," "I" and "L," under Captains Follansbee, Hart, Pickering and Dike; also the band, which, I

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<sup>9</sup> For participation in placing this obstruction, a wealthy merchant of long experience, usually a very peaceful man, was afterward indicted for treason by the Grand Jury of the Circuit Court of the United States in Baltimore, but his trial was not pressed.

believe, did not leave the depot, and which remained there with the unarmed Pennsylvania regiment. These four companies, in all about 220 men, formed on President street, in the midst of a dense and angry crowd, which threatened and pressed upon the troops, uttering cheers for Jefferson Davis and the Southern Confederacy, and groans for Lincoln and the North, with much abusive language. As the soldiers advanced along President street, the commotion increased; one of the band of rioters appeared bearing a Confederate flag, and it was carried a considerable distance before it was torn from its staff by citizens. Stones were thrown in great numbers, and at the corner of Fawn street two of the soldiers were knocked down by stones and seriously injured. In crossing Pratt-street bridge, the troops had to pick their way over joists and scantling, which by this time had been placed on the bridge to obstruct their passage.

Colonel Jones's official report, from which I have already quoted, thus describes what happened after the four companies left the cars. As Colonel Jones was not present during the march, but obtained the particulars from others, it is not surprising that his account contains errors. These will be pointed out and corrected later:

"They proceeded to march in accordance with orders, and had proceeded but a short distance before they were furiously attacked by a shower of missiles, which came faster as they advanced. They increased their step to double-quick, which seemed to infuriate the mob, as it evidently impressed the



mob with the idea that the soldiers dared not fire or had no ammunition, and pistol-shots were numerously fired into the ranks, and one soldier fell dead. The order "Fire!" was given, and it was executed; in consequence several of the mob fell, and the soldiers again advanced hastily. The mayor of Baltimore placed himself at the head of the column beside Captain Follansbee, and proceeded with them a short distance, assuring him that he would protect them, and begging him not to let the men fire. But the mayor's patience was soon exhausted, and he seized a musket from the hands of one of the men, and killed a man therewith; and a policeman, who was in advance of the column, also shot a man with a revolver. They at last reached the cars, and they started immediately for Washington. On going through the train I found there were about one hundred and thirty missing, including the band and field music. Our baggage was seized, and we have not as yet been able to recover any of it. I have found it very difficult to get reliable information in regard to the killed and wounded, but believe there were only three killed.

"As the men went into the cars" [meaning the men who had marched through the city to Camden Station], "I caused the blinds to the cars to be closed, and took every precaution to prevent any shadow of offense to the people of Baltimore, but still the stones flew thick and fast into the train, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I could prevent the troops from leaving the cars and revenging the death of their comrades. After a volley of stones, some one of the soldiers fired and killed a Mr. Davis,

who, I ascertained by reliable witnesses, threw a stone into the car." This is incorrectly stated, as will hereafter appear.

It is proper that I should now go back and take up the narration from my own point of view.

On the morning of the 19th of April I was at my law office in Saint Paul street after ten o'clock, when three members of the city council came to me with a message from Marshal Kane, informing me that he had just received intelligence that troops were about to arrive – I did not learn how many – and that he apprehended a disturbance, and requesting me to go to the Camden-street station. I immediately hastened to the office of the board of police, and found that they had received a similar notice. The Counsellor of the City, Mr. George M. Gill, and myself then drove rapidly in a carriage to the Camden-street station. The police commissioners followed, and, on reaching the station, we found Marshal Kane on the ground and the police coming in in squads. A large and angry crowd had assembled, but were restrained by the police from committing any serious breach of the peace.

After considerable delay seven of the eleven companies of the Massachusetts regiment arrived at the station, as already mentioned, and I saw that the windows of the last car were badly broken. No one to whom I applied could inform me whether more troops were expected or not. At this time an alarm was given that the mob was about to tear up the rails in advance of the train on the Washington road, and Marshal Kane ordered

some of his men to go out the road as far as necessary to protect the track. Soon afterward, and when I was about to leave the Camden-street station, supposing all danger to be over, news was brought to Police Commissioner Davis and myself, who were standing together, that some troops had been left behind, and that the mob was tearing up the track on Pratt street, so as to obstruct the progress of the cars, which were coming to the Camden-street station. Mr. Davis immediately ran to summon the marshal, who was at the station with a body of police, to be sent to the point of danger, while I hastened alone in the same direction. On arriving at about Smith's Wharf, foot of Gay street, I found that anchors had been placed on the track, and that Sergeant McComas and four policemen who were with him were not allowed by a group of rioters to remove the obstruction. I at once ordered the anchors to be removed, and my authority was not resisted. I hurried on, and, approaching Pratt-street bridge, I saw a battalion, which proved to be four companies of the Massachusetts regiment which had crossed the bridge, coming towards me in double-quick time.

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