

## “The Beginning of the End” An Analysis of British Newspaper Coverage of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation

*Although negative perceptions of the character of African Americans were at the center of the British press debate over the merits of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, it was the way that his character was portrayed that gave it potency and direction. Editors who opposed the Proclamation besmirched him in a way that enabled them to argue that they were not defending slavery but keeping their commentary within Britain’s popular anti-slavery traditions. In contrast, those papers which supported the Proclamation believed he was a liberal statesman who shared the core moral values of the British. Because the debate occurred when newspapers were undergoing profound and innovative changes, this helped shape the character of the debate, increased its intensity, and provided a commentary on the evolving nature of British newspaper journalism.*

On October 21, 1862, the editor of *The Times* newspaper in London informed readers that events in the American Civil War had reached a turning point:

We have here the history of the beginning of the end, but who can tell how the pages will be written which are yet to be filled before the inevitable separation is accomplished? Are scenes like those which we a short time since described from Dahomey yet to interpose, and is the reign of the last PRESIDENT to go out amid horrible massacres of white women and children, to be followed by the extermination of the black race in the South?<sup>1</sup>

The editor answered his rhetorical question by accusing Abraham Lincoln of being the instigator of “a servile war.” Such emotive and colorful language pointed to the revolutionary significance of

his Emancipation Proclamation. While not all British newspapers responded as fervently as *The Times*, the vast majority of editors felt obliged to explain the significance of his history-making measure.<sup>2</sup>

The Proclamation divided the British press just as it did public opinion in the United States.<sup>3</sup> This article analyses this division through two major arguments. First, it argues that the debate about the Emancipation Proclamation was focused on the racial character of African Americans and the question of servile insurrection. Whether editors supported or opposed Lincoln’s Proclamation depended on the stance that they took on these two issues, which formed the fulcrum of the debate. Second, it argues the way that the debate was contextualized gave it dynamism and potency. For racial imagery of servile insurrections to have persuasive power, it had to be related to the president’s leadership, the progress of the war, the landscape of British journalism, and the social and political fabric of the British nation. For the sake of clarity, both the preliminary Proclamation (September 22, 1862) and the final Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863) are considered as part of the same liberating process rather than two different edicts.

The Civil War attracted wide scale reporting and a large newspaper readership. Because of the distances involved and the relative freedom given to foreign and war correspondents, news of the war reached the British public as a series of interpretative essays long after the events had occurred. This delay in publication could influence the way news was received. For example, news about



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the Emancipation Proclamation reached Britain at the same time as reports about the Union's heavy defeat at Fredericksburg. The largely simultaneous reporting of these two events enabled the pro-southern press in Britain to depict the Proclamation as a desperate gamble by a beaten nation seeking to avoid ultimate defeat.<sup>4</sup>

During the war, British newspaper correspondents based in America actively engaged in partisan reporting. E.L. Godkin, the correspondent for the *Daily News*, produced reports so favorable to Washington that he was accused of being paid by Union authorities. In contrast, correspondents for *The Times* produced reports that were so pro-Confederate that federal authorities felt compelled to restrict their movements. Yet more important than these correspondents' reports in explaining *The Times'* pro-southern stance was the paper's desire to appeal to its conservative readership as well as the editorial independence and the pro-southern bias of its editor, John Delane.<sup>5</sup>

The particular stance that a paper took on the war, whether it was pro-North or pro-South, did not depend solely on the disposition of its correspondents, however. Instead, there was a complex variety of factors. In an age when a tradition of "anonymous journalism" was strong, leading articles and editorials were not generally written by the editor, although he did review them to ensure that they reflected the views of the paper's proprietors and financial supporters. In her 1985 study, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, Lucy Brown noted it was "an important and unvarying generalization [that] the sovereign powers of decision" were exercised by proprietors and not editors. "A sleepy proprietor was very rare indeed," she wrote. James Johnstone, proprietor of the London *Standard*, improved the financial viability of his paper by adopting a strong pro-southern position which boosted circulation and pleased his Conservative Party sponsors. The improved financial standing of the *Standard* also may have been the result of a retainer given to the paper by the Confederate agent working in London, Henry Hotze. But although he was an important conduit for Confederate propaganda, there is no evidence that his influence decisively shaped the British press' coverage of the Civil War.<sup>6</sup>

The British newspaper coverage of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation must be viewed against important changes that were occurring in the character of British journalism and in the political fabric of England. In some ways, the newspaper debate over the Proclamation embodied elements of the long-standing metropolitan, provincial newspaper rivalry. This was most clearly seen in the reaction of the provincial press to the growing national influence of *The Times*. The repeal of newspaper advertising duty in the 1850s, the introduction of cheaper postage, the embryonic development of a railway network radiating from London, and the high quality of *The Times'* production and editorial coverage under Delane combined to strengthen the paper's national reach. Although *The Times* was not really a national paper in the 1860s, its distribution area was sufficiently extensive for it be considered a serious rival by the more liberal provincial press. This alleged threat, which was seen as the forerunner of other metropolitan dailies, occurred at a time when the provincial press was growing in strength and circu-

lation as the result of the growth in the number of cheap 1d dailies. Yet the threat of *The Times* and other metropolitan newspapers was not seen exclusively in terms of declining circulation and economic viability. Prominent, reform-minded liberal politicians, such as John Bright and Richard Cobden, strongly opposed the extension of *The Times* and the metropolitan press because they saw it as a conservative threat to the political heartland of the provinces. This threat appeared particularly relevant during the Civil War because conservative provincial and regional dailies often reproduced and championed *The Times'* pro-southern, anti-Lincoln stance in their editorial commentary on the emancipation debate. Against this

background it appears that the debate over the Proclamation was not shaped solely by American considerations alone but also by British domestic political affiliations and the changing nature of the British journalism. These factors contributed to newspapers being dynamic and partisan participants.<sup>7</sup>

This study utilized a sample of twenty-one newspapers, which were selected for various reasons. First, mainly major dailies or weeklies were selected and widely circulated reflective editorial comment on current news was examined rather than long discursive pieces that are usually found in fortnightly publications, monthly periodicals, or journals. Second, the newspaper selection was drawn predominately from two areas: London and the industrial north of England. Metropolitan dailies are important because

they had large circulations and were often nationally significant. Some, such as *The Times*, claimed to speak for the nation. The authoritative position adopted by some London newspaper editors did much to provoke debate and dialogue between editors, and the practice of syndicating news and reports from the London papers to smaller regional papers created a favorable environment for a debate to occur. Newspapers from the industrial north provide a different perspective from which to examine the Emancipation Proclamation. They often had large working class readerships and, in the case of cotton manufacturing areas, economic links with the South that were largely severed as a result of the Union blockade. The industrial north also was important in the British anti-slavery movement. Finally, excluded from the study were those papers which lacked independence and were mouthpieces for sectional interests. Therefore, two London newspapers, the Confederate controlled and funded *Index* and the pro-Union *London American*, were excluded.<sup>8</sup>

The newspapers examined were in two main groups: those that were politically conservative and opposed the Proclamation and those that were liberal and supported it. The opposition papers included: the *Bolton Guardian*; the *Manchester Guardian*; the *Halifax Courier*; the *Leeds Intelligencer*; the *Liverpool Mail*; the *Liverpool Daily Post*; the *Newcastle Daily Journal*; the *London Morning Herald* and *The Times*; the *Glasgow Sentinel*; Edinburgh's *Scotsman*, *Weekly Review*, and *North Briton*; and Dublin's *Irish Times*. Those papers which supported Lincoln's Proclamation included: London's *Daily News*, *Daily Mail*, and *Reynolds's Newspaper*; the *Birmingham Daily Post*, the *Manchester Weekly Times*, the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, and Belfast's *Banner of Ulster*.

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Of course, such groupings are somewhat artificial because some papers made limited comment on the Proclamation. Moreover, some newspapers were rarely consistent in their editorial comment and reporting. For example, the liberal *Manchester Guardian* adopted a consistently anti-Lincoln position throughout the war. The popular *Reynolds's Newspaper*, which was owned by political reformer and Chartist J.H. Dalziel, supported the South's attempts to end the blockade because it damaged British industry and labor but strongly condemned the South's support of slavery and welcomed the Proclamation. Above all, newspaper editors were influenced by the course of the war and the position that the Union and the Confederacy took on issues impacting Britain's national self interest. While issues such as trade and diplomacy shaped editorial policy, no issue was more important than slavery. The opposing position that the North and the South adopted over slavery did much to realign and shape newspaper policy. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was therefore significant because it challenged newspaper editors and proprietors to publicly rationalize their support for either the Union or the Confederacy.<sup>9</sup>

This article is straightforward. It begins with an analysis of the historical context that influenced the newspaper coverage. This is important because the editors and their readers had their perception of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation shaped by long-term Anglo-American traditions as well as the more immediate events of the Civil War. Then, the study focuses on newspaper editorial opinion. The editorial comments by those who opposed the Proclamation is examined first and followed by an examination of the coverage of Lincoln's supporters. This strategy of dividing editorial opinion into two diametrically opposed groups may appear somewhat arbitrary because editorial opinion seldom falls into neat categories. This was particularly the case during the Civil War when British editorial commentary on the Emancipation Proclamation was both intermittent and intensively interactive. Yet this methodological strategy does have advantages. It is an accessible way of analyzing a complex issue and is in keeping with the spirit of the times, when British newspaper editors proudly and demonstratively proclaimed themselves as either anti- or pro-Lincoln men when debating the Proclamation. Finally, the study concludes by reflecting upon the evolving character of the debate and the dynamic nature of British newspaper journalism.

At the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861, Great Britain had many ties with the United States. The Revolutionary War had separated the citizens of each country, but culturally and political they were cousins as both nations shared a legal heritage and a commitment to democracy. In spite of this, the Britain's image of America was somewhat ambivalent. Throughout the war British liberal and conservative sectional loyalties were complex and malleable. While the image of American democracy, religious freedom, and a liberal constitution had a strong appeal to British liberals, by the 1850s some radicals believed this image had become somewhat tarnished by crass individualism and commercial corruption. The majority of British Conservatives were sympathetic to the Confederate cause. Some believed that America was populated by two groups of people with two distinctly different cultures. The South, under aristocratic government, had retained many of the British traditions while in the politically dominant North, an ideology of radical democracy and social equality, had spawned the American Revolution and the Civil War.<sup>10</sup>

The bastion of conservative opinion, *The Times*, did not hesitate to attribute the Civil War to endemic flaws in the national

character of Americans, which was "warlike," and it saw the Emancipation Proclamation as a product of the national trait towards emotionally charged impulsive action. "No one can have failed to observe that the Americans act almost entirely under the influence of impulses, and never with calm decision which protracts and steadies our contests in Europe," the editor commented. Abolitionists agitated for emancipation "without a thought of how it is to be attained, or the consequences to the South or themselves." Even Lincoln was "as much possessed as the rest" because he gave "no thought to the results of his policy" and had no plans for a compromise with the South.<sup>11</sup>

In many ways, these contrasting liberal and conservative images of America were captured in the divergent representations of Lincoln. For liberals such as Bright, the president's frontier background and his election symbolized the triumph of democracy. Yet for British conservatives, his humble social background and political populism pointed to a leaderless nation with an anarchical social structure and excessive democracy. "These are the consequences," exclaimed the editor of *The Times* in November 1862, of a nation that had a "cheap and simple form of government" and elected a "rural attorney for Sovereign." *Punch's* grotesque caricatures of the United States and its president also did much to reinforce middle-class and upper-class prejudice against the Union. Such stereotyping of the American nation, and more particularly its president, both in the antebellum period and during the war, influenced the emancipation debate. Both conservative and liberal newspaper editors had images of America and Lincoln which they sought to affirm while the debate raged over the fate of the Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>12</sup>

Great Britain and the United States also were linked by strong economic ties, which fed their burgeoning industrial economies. By 1860, more than 88 percent of Britain's cotton came from the United States and provided the raw material for a rapidly growing national manufacturing industry. The cotton famine caused by the war resulted in widespread economic hardship and unemployment, particularly in Lancashire and Cheshire, and trade also was disrupted in 1861 when Congress passed the Morrill Tariff, which imposed heavy duties on British imports. All of this economic dislocation helped to give Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation high news value; editors knew they were commenting on issues that directly affected the welfare of the working class and Britain's economic prosperity.<sup>13</sup>

On May 14, 1861, the British government issued a proclamation of neutrality. This proclamation granted the Union de facto support, and while it recognized the Confederacy as a belligerent power, it fell well short of granting the South diplomatic status. But the infringement of British honor and prestige evident in the *Trent* Affair in 1861 strained Britain's relationship with the Union and gave impetus to moves to recognize the Confederacy.<sup>14</sup>

By 1862, the pressure to recognize the Confederacy had become critical. During the course of 1862, in the eastern theatre of war, Confederate armies won a number of crushing victories, which culminated with the defeat of John Pope by Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson at the second battle of Bull Run on August 29-30, 1862. When news of the Confederate victory reached Britain, the editor of *Glasgow Sentinel* exclaimed that "the establishment of two republics instead of one across the Atlantic seems to be the natural solution to an unnatural conflict."<sup>15</sup>

Recognition of the South as an independent nation gained some support in Britain partly because the Civil War occurred at a critical time in the evolution of British racial attitudes. Although

Britain remained more racially tolerant than America during the 1850s and 1860s, English attitudes about Africans were hardening and becoming more inherently racist. Both Christine Bolt and Philip Curtain have linked this development to the expansion of the British empire. As the number of colonial wars increased and became more violent, the native people were depicted in the popular press more as savages who were inherently violent and treacherous instead of just uncivilized children. References were made to the horrors of the Indian mutiny in a way that was linked to servile insurrections. The editor of the *Morning Herald* warned readers that “a servile insurrection means midnight massacres, incendiarism, worse than were perpetuated or imagined in Delhi or Cawnpore.” Horrific imagery of slave revolts had a powerful resonance with the British public because the British anti-slavery movement had used it most effectively in their campaigns against the slave trade.

British changing racial attitudes also were linked to a growing disillusionment over the success of the emancipation process in the West Indies, a disillusionment which largely came to fruition with the Eyre crisis in 1865. Developing racism in Great Britain was nurtured among the educated upper classes in the debating chambers of the Ethnological Society and the Anthropological Society, where politics was blended with “science” to demonstrate the alleged savagery and inferiority of the black race. Among the wider public, negative racial stereotyping was sustained in the musical halls by the increasing popularity of minstrel shows, which depicted caricatures of American blacks as foolish, emotionally charged children who were happy in slavery.<sup>16</sup>

Although racist beliefs were gathering support in the mid-nineteenth century, British public opinion remained firmly against slavery because Britain’s recent abolitionist tradition ensured that slavery was perceived as an inhumane and corrupting institution. British liberals and business interests saw slave labor as backward, expensive, and inefficient. They also blamed slavery for causing southern secession, violating the United State’s experiment in republican government, and threatening the health of its democratic political system. While sections of the conservative classes and landed gentry wanted to believe that the South was populated by a paternal aristocracy, the spectre of slavery challenged the British sense of moral superiority because Britain was the home of freedom, the so-called “liberal heartland” of Europe. British politicians such as Prime Minister Viscount Henry Palmerston, Chancellor of the Exchequer William Gladstone, and Foreign Minister Lord John Russell could boast that Britain had suppressed the transatlantic slave trade and emancipated the slaves in the West Indies. How, then, could Britain, a crusader for freedom, seriously contemplate formal recognition of the slave-owning South? The answer was that both the Yankees and the rebels were slave-owning people. At the start of the war Lincoln’s armies were fighting to save the Union, not to destroy slavery, and his failure to make abolition a war aim caused deep disappointment in British anti-slavery circles and strengthened the cause of those lobbying for recognition of the Confederacy.<sup>17</sup>

In September 1862, the Union Army victory at Antietam provided Lincoln with an opportunity to act decisively on the slavery issue, and on September 22, 1862, he announced a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. Justified on the grounds of military necessity, the Proclamation endorsed voluntary colonisation, pleaded for the gradual emancipation of slaves in the Union states, and declared that slaves in the rebel states on January 1, 1863, “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.” The Emancipation Proclamation issued by Lincoln on January 1 freed all

Figure 1



This Punch cartoon in October 1862 shows President Abraham Lincoln as a desperate gambler playing his last card as Confederate President Jefferson Davis looks on confidently.

slaves in the Confederate states with the exception of Tennessee, southern Louisiana, and regions in western Virginia. It also opened the way for black enlistment in the army and navy.<sup>18</sup>

The reaction of the British national press to the Emancipation Proclamation varied considerably. Most newspaper comment focused on “Lincoln’s Thunderbolt,” the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. The final Proclamation received less editorial comment because by then the issue of emancipating the slaves of rebel slave owners was considered Union policy.

Newspapers who opposed Lincoln’s preliminary Proclamation generally saw it as the act of a desperate man. The editor of the *Newcastle Daily Journal* reminded his readers, “The last resource of a desperate trader is to burn down his own house. . . . Mr. Abraham Lincoln has a mind to play the same game.” And the editor of the *Irish Times* wrote, “Mr Lincoln has risked all upon a throw.” Even the liberally inclined *Manchester Guardian* accused Lincoln of finally “casting his lot” with the extreme abolitionist party. This image of the president as the consummate gambler was perhaps most clearly portrayed in a *Punch* cartoon on October 18, 1862 (see figure 1). Down on his luck and desperate to win, grim faced honest Abe holds the last card in his hand, the ace of spades. A self-assured, smiling Jefferson Davis looks on, confident that he will finally win the game.<sup>19</sup>

This depiction of Lincoln as a desperate gambler was persuasive because it was set in the context of Union military defeats. Newspapers editors were well aware that Confederate forces during 1862 had achieved a string of victories in Virginia. The gambling image also was set against a British foreign policy which increasingly recognized the sovereignty of newly emergent nations. In Britain, a growing number of newspapers added their support to the developing political momentum to recognize the South as an independent nation. Editors quoted from a speech by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Gladstone, at Newcastle in early October to justify their belief in the impregnable sovereignty of the South. “Jefferson Davis and the other leaders of the South,” exclaimed Gladstone, “have made an army; they are making it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either; they

have made a nation.” In an editorial on October 11, the *Newcastle Daily Journal* challenged the British cabinet to make Gladstone’s speech British policy.<sup>20</sup>

Pleas for the diplomatic recognition of the Confederacy were associated with accusations that Lincoln had exceeded his powers and was acting unconstitutionally. “If Congress has no power to abolish slavery in any state without the consent of the Legislature of that state,” asserted the *Liverpool Mail*, “by what authority does Mr. Lincoln take upon himself to do so? . . . When and how was he invested with the functions of a dictator?” The president, according to the *Newcastle Daily Journal*, was trampling the constitution underfoot. The arrest of Ohio Copperhead Clement L. Vallandigham, Lincoln’s suspension of habeas corpus, and his imposition of press censorship just two days after he had issued the preliminary Proclamation were cited as further proof of his tyranny. The editor of the *Scotsman* accused the president of “allotting freedom to 4 million of slaves, and ‘martial law’ to 27 million whites.” Editors who accused Lincoln of tyranny also predicted that his unconstitutional proclamation would prolong the war by stiffening southern resolve and turn the northern public against him.<sup>21</sup>

Opponents of the Proclamation were keen to note that it freed only the slaves of rebel masters. In this respect it was, according to the *Liverpool Mail*, “a dead letter” as well as “a mockery and a sham.” “Is slavery less a sin—is its operation less ‘unjust’—because the slaveholder is a ‘loyalist?’” the editor asked. The editor of the *Glasgow Sentinel* accused Lincoln of introducing a “vindictive and incendiary measure” under the guise of black liberation. And the editor of the *Newcastle Daily Journal* felt Lincoln dealt with the slavery issue in “the spirit of a pettifogger.” He was accused of political hypocrisy and of putting politics before principle.<sup>22</sup>

The institution of slavery was condemned in almost all British newspapers. Many editors referred to the abolition of the slave trade and the ending of slavery in the West Indies as the hallmark of Britain’s moral superiority. This contrasted sharply with the situation in the United States where African-American slaves worked under the lash of Union and Confederate masters. Given this strong, national anti-slavery tradition, it would appear that newspaper editors would have had considerable difficulty opposing the Emancipation Proclamation. Yet this was not so, because the most fervent opponents of it astutely framed their discussion of the Proclamation in the Civil War’s wider military and political context. This strategy of contextualizing the debate meant that discussion of the Proclamation was carried out against a dark background that highlighted the alleged flaws in Lincoln’s leadership and personal character. The negative, multifaceted image of him as reckless gambler, tyrant, and political hypocrite also was used to attack the Proclamation.<sup>23</sup>

Accusations of callous hypocrisy were closely linked to claims that Lincoln was deliberately attempting to incite servile insurrections in the South. Such charges carried considerable weight because the belief that slave revolts would inevitably follow slave emancipation gained widespread acceptance in political circles. Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell expected servile insurrection would follow Lincoln’s revolutionary measure. Even Cobden, an ardent Union supporter and an anti-slavery advocate, feared that a sudden, revolutionary emancipation process would lead to massacres and outrages. Furthermore, John Brown’s abortive raid at Harper’s Ferry in 1859 had united British conservatives and liberals against any attempt to end slavery by provoking slave rebellion. In this political context, the campaign against Lincoln’s Proclamation

gained momentum. “His proclamation must be a mere waste of paper,” asserted the editor of the *Liverpool Mail*, “unless it should have the effect of stimulating the slaves to take up arms against their masters, and thus precipitate a servile war. This, no doubt, is what Mr. Lincoln desires.” Images of nightmarish retribution and insurrection repeatedly appeared in newspapers opposed to the Proclamation. These were supported by images of African Americans as treacherous savages, who were governed by their passions. *The Times* described Lincoln as directly appealing to the “black blood of the African” in order to kill their masters and their families. The *Newcastle Daily Journal* predicted that slave revolts would “begin on the remote plantations where every white man would be murdered, every traveller waylaid, every white woman seized, and every pale-faced child tossed into the flames of the burning homestead.”

Three weeks after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, *Punch* published a cartoon which alluded to a scene from Shakespeare’s *Tempest* (see figure 2). An African-American slave is portrayed receiving the Emancipation Proclamation from Lincoln and gleefully preparing to inflict retribution on his former master. Jefferson Davis is scowling in the background. In the foreground Caliban, or Sambo, says to Lincoln: “You beat him ‘nough, mass! Berry little time, I’ll beat him too.” The implication of racial warfare following the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation and the defeat of the Confederacy was clear.<sup>24</sup>

Although images of bloody slaughter were paraded before the newspaper readers by those who opposed the Proclamation, few predicted that servile insurrections would be finally successful. These editors generally explained the ultimate failure of the insurrections by drawing upon racial stereotypes which portrayed the Africans’ allegedly child-like nature and images of southern plantations as being essentially havens of paternal benevolence. The editor of the *Edinburgh Weekly Review* believed that Sambo considered liberty an abstraction: “Plenty of food, little to do, and no flogging if he even does nothing, are blessings which he can thoroughly appreciate.”<sup>25</sup>

In an effort to win over the large anti-slavery public, some of

Figure 2



This *Punch* cartoon in January 1863 pictures a black slave being given the Emancipation Proclamation by Lincoln while his former master stands behind him. He tells the president, “You beat him ‘nough, mass! Berry little time, I’ll beat him too.”

Lincoln's opponents made reference to Britain's experience in the West Indies. The *London Morning Herald* warned readers not to judge southern slaves by comparing them to West Indian slaves. West Indies planters were "speculators and absentees," their slaves "imported Africans, heathens, and savages." In the South, the situation was entirely different. There, the master's connection with his slaves was "close, intimate and often affectionate." These "well fed," "well clothed" slaves were no more likely to rise against their masters "than English workmen to massacre their employers."<sup>26</sup>

Some newspapers even claimed that the real cause of bloodshed and chaos among the civilian population of the South was the presence of an ill-disciplined Union army. The *Morning Herald* informed its readers that black regiments were being formed in the Mississippi Valley to "enforce the President's Proclamation of liberty among their colored brethren." The *Liverpool Mail* believed black enlistment, "to all intents and purposes," inaugurated the "war of races," which it believed was the "obvious tendency, if not the express object," of the president's Proclamation. The *Irish Times*, relying heavily on the biased pro-southern reports of the American correspondents of *The Times*, accused Lincoln of allowing General Benjamin F. Butler to arm former slaves in order to "enforce the emancipation proclamation." By these actions, the president was responsible for letting loose on the Mississippi plantations thousands of armed blacks to "rouse the slaves against the wives, children and the property of the masters." Subsequent reports gleaned from *The Times'* correspondents of raids by the black troops of Colonel T.W. Higginson and Colonel J. Montgomery on southern plantations appeared to reinforce the validity of these claims. In their effort to justify their condemnation of the Lincoln's Proclamation, conservative editors freely employed the copy of like-minded newspapers. In this regard *The Times* and its American correspondents became a fount of useful copy for many conservative newspapers.<sup>27</sup>

In its condemnation of the Emancipation Proclamation, *The Times* expressed many of the themes exhibited by other anti-Lincoln papers. The principal accusation was that Lincoln's policy of emancipation was a deliberate abolitionist strategy to incite servile insurrection. This editorial position was reinforced by the pro-southern reporting of its correspondents, especially Charles Mackay, and it won strong support in the readers' correspondence columns. In December 1862, Charles Buxton of Cobham claimed that Lincoln was far more interested in using the Proclamation to elicit the political support of abolitionists rather than having any concern for blacks' welfare. Even Henry William Wilberforce, the son of famous abolitionist William Wilberforce and editor of the *Weekly Register*, wrote to the editor of *The Times* in March 1863 opposing Lincoln's action, claiming the "only meaning of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, if it has any meaning at all," was to incite a servile rebellion.<sup>28</sup>

*The Times* blamed much of this incitement of servile rebellion on Lincoln's poor leadership, saying the president lacked the ability and perception to understand the far-reaching consequences of his actions. "An ordinary Illinois politician" and "not . . . a man of commanding ability," Lincoln appeared to be carried forward in the wake of fervent abolitionist generals such as Major General David Hunter and Major General Benjamin F. Butler, who were raising armies of black soldiers.<sup>29</sup> More than most anti-Lincoln newspapers, *The Times* saw emancipation and black recruitment as part of one bloody, revolutionary process. That "men like General Hunter will really try to excite an insurrection we have never entered any doubt," the paper assured readers.<sup>30</sup>

Newspaper editors who supported the Proclamation did so by defending it as a statesman's masterpiece and the creation of a liberal-minded politician. They praised Lincoln for acting in a way which was entirely consistent with British anti-slavery principles. At the same time, they condemned southern slavery for being the ultimate source of evil and the true cause of the bloody conflict in America.

On January 23, 1863, J.W. Burns wrote a letter to the editor of the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* to remind readers what the Civil War was about. "I again repeat," he asserted, "the South is fighting to maintain slavery; and those who support the South in fact support the slavery of the South." Newspapers supporting the Proclamation generally adopted a position similar to that of Burns. They depicted Lincoln as a great liberator, who was acting according to British liberal traditions. *Reynold's Newspaper* praised him for adopting a course which "every liberal-minded man must cordially approve of." The *Manchester Weekly Times* heralded the Proclamation as "a great victory gained" and "a great advance in the policy of Mr. Lincoln" and predicted it would "stand out promi-

nently before the world as an act of deliverance." The *Banner of Ulster* rejoiced because the day of jubilee had dawned. Now, "impelled by the noble impulse of manhood," it wrote, "sable children" would "fling aside the iron fetters of their degradation."<sup>31</sup>

Some pro-Union papers praised Lincoln's political wisdom because they believed the Emancipation Proclamation would forestall servile insurrection in the South, and they urged the South to avoid slave revolts by accepting it. Thus, they saw servile insurrection as an inevitable consequence of the cruel regime of slavery and not the product of the Proclamation. Such arguments gained potency because they were consistent with the image of southern slavery presented to the British public by anti-slavery agitators. For decades, British and American abolitionists had described southern plantations as places of wanton cruelty and suffering, and because the anti-slavery cause had strong public support, some newspapers believed press opposition to the Proclamation was immoral and hypocritical. The editor of *Reynold's Newspaper* accused *The Times* and the *Morning Post* in particular of hypocritically reversing their opposition to slavery and

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finding “hobgoblin objections” to the Proclamation. Rather than fear a servile insurrections, *Reynolds’s Newspaper* welcomed them as “one of the greatest blessings that could befall mankind.” One letter to the editor of *Reynolds’s Newspaper* reminded readers that American blacks were docile religious people, but once their passions were aroused they became savages. The cruelty of slavery had done just that. “A bad tree beareth evil fruit. What else than murder, rapine, and outrage can be expected,” the writer exclaimed. The paper believed the day of black vengeance was at hand. Under a bold heading, “The Negro’s Revenge,” the editor claimed southern slaveholders “will reap what they have sown.” After graphically describing the horrors of a St. Domingo slave insurrection, the editor warned the South that it would escape an even worse disaster only by granting the slaves their freedom.<sup>32</sup>

In the minds of many newspaper editors who supported the Emancipation Proclamation, the question of black liberty was closely tied to the issue of black enlistment. Some editors, such as the editor of the *Daily News*, believed southern blacks could not secure their freedom until they were armed. Calls for black enlistment carried with them elements of racial stereotyping, which depicted blacks as being peculiarly suited to laboring in the tropical South. “There is a universal disposition to employ them in all ways which can save the white troops from unaccustomed labour and garrison life in the South,” declared the *Daily News*. Those papers, which saw emancipation and enlistment as part of the same nation-building process, believed the pathway to citizenship was now open to African Americans. The *Birmingham Daily Post* noted the Proclamation had made African Americans think about the United States as “their country as well as that of the white man.” The *London Daily News* believed the enlistment of blacks was “the surest” and “perhaps the only way to prevent servile war.”<sup>33</sup>

In their efforts to defend the Proclamation, some papers called upon class loyalty. The *Daily News* reminded readers that it was welcome news because the spread of slavery in America was impoverishing the laboring classes in the North. The British “upper classes, in the insolence of their ignorance, are but too widely finding fault with the Proclamation,” bemoaned the paper. In this regard, *The Times*, the “British Thunderer,” became a target for special criticism. Cobden and John Bright’s radical newspaper, *The Morning Star*, condemned *The Times* for its poor journalism and for misreporting the Emancipation Proclamation. *Reynolds’s Newspaper* accused *The Times* of violating Britain’s national character, and in its effort to support the Proclamation, it actively defended Lincoln from the “sneers and sarcasm” of *The Times’* correspondent based in New York. This attack on *The Times* and the implicit defense of Britain’s anti-slavery heritage was supported even by papers which favored recognition of southern independence while fervently opposing slavery.<sup>34</sup>

Much of the reactive hostility that the pro-Union press displayed towards newspapers sympathetic to the South arose from negative coverage of the activities of British anti-slavery societies. The Emancipation Proclamation breathed new life into the largely

dormant anti-slavery movement, and this renewed activity provoked a diverse response from the national press. Some newspapers described anti-slavery society meetings in terms of national moral regeneration while others condemned them as Yankee conspiracies. The *Newcastle Daily Journal*, for example, barked at pro-Union “agitators” for promoting the anti-slavery cause. Such action allegedly belittled the nation’s proud anti-slavery traditions. The paper also accused United States ambassador Charles Francis Adams of using secret service funds to drum up support for the North. The *Liverpool Mail* also accused “Northern sympathisers” of hypocritically subverting the anti-slavery cause for crass political purposes: “We have no love of the South. We hate and detest its cherished ‘domestic institutions.’” However, the president’s abandonment of the slaves in “loyal states” filled the paper with “unutterable loathing.”<sup>35</sup>

British anti-slavery societies supporting Lincoln defended his Emancipation Proclamation against his newspaper critics by proclaiming its merits and by attacking the quality of the critics’ journalism. At public meetings, some speakers made the conservative press a leading target of their attack. One man, speaking in defense of the Proclamation at a “meeting of the working class” in Edinburgh in February 1863, vocally condemned the “general tone” of the press of the country from the *London Times* to the *Edinburgh Scotsman*: “Give us cotton, no matter at what sacrifice of human rights.” The *Scotsman* was singled out for special criticism for its “cunningly

constructed articles,” which were “characterised [*sic*] by misrepresentation.” While these articles opposed slavery “in the abstract,” they had no commitment to human rights or “free political institutions.” Yet at the same Edinburgh meeting, opponents of Lincoln attempted to use newspaper coverage to justify their attack on his Proclamation. One speaker drew the meeting’s attention to the fact that two newspapers had uncovered the hypocrisy of Lincoln’s policy of defending slavery “in his own country, and yet pretending to abolish it elsewhere.” The speaker believed the papers were “better judges” than those assembled on the anti-slavery platform.<sup>36</sup>

At a meeting held by the “working men” of Manchester in the Free Trade Hall in late December 1862 to formulate an “Address” to Lincoln supporting his Emancipation Proclamation, the local *Guardian* newspaper was heavily criticized. One of the organizers of the meeting believed the *Manchester Guardian* had so misrepresented working class opinion on slavery that he had been “goaded to call the meeting,” to set the record straight. Another speaker even accused the *Guardian* of “having pro-slavery proclivities and desiring the maintenance of the institution of slavery.” Outside Manchester, news of the working men’s response to Lincoln was greeted with acclaim by the pro-Union press. The *London Daily News* praised the meeting as evidence of the working classes’ moral resolution, independence, and anti-slavery spirit. Such editorial comments were supported by letters in the correspondence columns. Burns, writing to the editor of the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, looked forward with “a cheerful hope” to the efforts being made to establish emancipation societies in larger towns. He

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***“British anti-slavery societies supporting Lincoln defended his Emancipation Proclamation against his newspaper critics by proclaiming its merits and by attacking the quality of the critics’ journalism. At public meetings, some speakers made the conservative press a leading target of their attack.”***

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believed that these societies would “have a great tendency to counteract the evil machinations of *The Times* and other journals that have for months past been advocating the claims of the South.”<sup>37</sup>

Although the Emancipation Proclamation was hotly debated in the British press, the controversy was never decisively shaped by class loyalty or regionality. What counted more was the editors’ attitudes toward servile insurrection. Yet they came to a position on this issue not by studying the nature of the slave revolts but through their understanding of Lincoln’s political personality and their assessment of the slaves’ racial character.

Thus, editors’ perceptions of Lincoln and American slaves were reflected in the way they contextualised the emancipation debate. Those who opposed the Proclamation generally saw the president as a reckless gambler, a hypocrite, and a tyrant who was prepared to violate the rules of warfare and the codes of civilised behaviour in order to achieve victory over the South. They argued that if the author of the Proclamation was corrupt, then his creation would inevitably be flawed. This reasoning enabled them to claim that the intended consequence of the Proclamation was not black freedom but servile insurrection. Not surprisingly, these critics placed negative racial images of African Americans and predictions of savage and bloody servile insurrections at the center of their editorials. Although this sensational and emotional reporting brought the Proclamation into disrepute, it was essentially the negative images of Lincoln that gave this commentary persuasive power and energy. If servile insurrection occurred in the South, it was Lincoln and not African Americans who was to blame. This line of reasoning enabled these editors to argue against the Emancipation Proclamation without arguing for slavery, which meant their editorial coverage remained largely consistent with prevailing mainstream public opinion and prevailing British anti-slavery ideology.

Supporters of the Proclamation portrayed Lincoln as a liberal statesman, who believed in the same core political values as the British, and they praised him for forestalling servile insurrection, which was the inevitable product of the cruel instrument of slavery, by offering southern blacks a pathway to freedom. They saw the Proclamation as an exercise in nation building and Lincoln as a national visionary.

Although the emancipation debate was framed in the popular press as a moral contest in which the main protagonist was Lincoln, it had immediate national relevance because it drew extensively upon Britain’s historical traditions and imperial past, and it occurred at a time when British journalism was expanding in new ways. Questions about the British anti-slavery movement, class and political loyalty, and imperial ambitions were entwined in the debate. While at one level the newspaper debate revealed much about British national values and attitudes toward the Civil War and Lincoln’s leadership, at another level it provided revealing insights into the dynamic and volatile nature of British newspaper journalism in the mid-nineteenth century. From this perspective, the newspaper coverage of the emancipation debate highlighted the way that editors could manipulate racial imagery and emotionally charged portrayals of slave revolts to defend their positions. This situation was not surprising because the polarizing images of African Americans and Lincoln that were present in the British press also reflected the interests of the newspapers. Issues such as political affiliation, editorial control, readership loyalty, metropolitan and provincial competition, and newspaper rivalry were never far from an editor’s mind when he penned his comments on Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, Oct. 21, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Although Lincoln opposed slavery he was acutely aware that the issue of slave emancipation deeply divided the nation. In an effort to retain the support of southern loyalists and unite support behind his administration in the North, he had disavowed emancipation as a war aim when the southern states seceded. See James M. McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 265-66, 269. Historians who have analyzed Lincoln’s motives and the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation on the United States generally include: John Hope Franklin, *The Emancipation Proclamation* (New York: Doubleday, 1963); Hans L. Trefousse, *Lincoln’s Decision for Emancipation* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1975); Allen C. Guelzo, *Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004); and Harold Holzer, Edna Greene Medford, and Frank J. Williams, *The Emancipation Proclamation: Three Views* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 105, 222-23.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 90, 222-23. John Delane directed his writers to adopt pro-southern views. He believed in an independent Confederacy, and he hoped the Civil War would both weaken the United States and strengthen Britain’s international standing. *The Times*’s pro-Southern stance also may have been influenced by its manager, Mowbray Morris. A strong conservative, he had family connections linked to West Indies slavery. For comment on *The Times*’ American correspondents and Delane’s editorial policy, see Martin Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis of the Mid-Nineteenth Century: The Times and America, 1850-1862* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 20-21; Donald Jordan and Edwin J. Pratt, *Europe and the Civil War* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 80-83; John Grigg, Iverach McDonald, and Graham Stewart, *The History of the Times*, vol. 2 (London: Times Books, 1939), 63-64, 359, 366; and Arnold Whitridge, “British Liberals and the American Civil War,” *History Today* 12 (October 1962): 695.

<sup>6</sup> See Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), 107-08; and Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, 62-63, 89. Confederate agent Henry Hotze launched the *Index* in London in May 1862. See Charles P. Cullop *Confederate Propaganda in Europe, 1861-1865* (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1969), 53; and Stephen B. Oates, “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” *The Historian* 27 (February 1965): 131-54 (see especially 138-39). For a discussion of the impact of Hotze’s racist mission in Great Britain and Europe, see Robert E. Bonner, “Slavery, Confederate Diplomacy and the Racist Mission of Henry Hotze,” *Civil War History* 51 (September 2005): 288-316.

<sup>7</sup> See Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914*, 46-47, 49, 59, 64, 73-75, 133-34; Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, 31-32; and Grigg, McDonald, and Stewart, *The History of the Times*, 294-95, 299.

<sup>8</sup> The London newspapers include: *The Times*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily News*, the *Morning Herald*, and *Reynolds’s Newspaper*. The newspapers from the industrial north include: the *Birmingham Daily Post*, the *Bolton Guardian*, the *Halifax Courier*, the *Leeds Intelligencer*, the *Liverpool Mail*, the *Liverpool Daily Post*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Manchester Weekly Times*, the *Newcastle Daily Journal*, and the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*. In addition to reviewing English newspapers, a small number of Scottish newspapers were examined, including: Edinburgh’s *Scotsman*, *Weekly Review*, and *North Briton* and the *Glasgow Sentinel*. Two Irish newspapers, Belfast’s *Banner of Ulster* and Dublin’s *Irish Times*, also were read. In addition to newspapers, there are references to *Punch*, an important satirical journal which actively commented on the Civil War and the role African Americans were playing in it. Eugenio Biagini wrote that newspapers are “a group of sources rather than a single source” because they contain editorials, correspondent reports, letters to the editor, advertising, and other forms of reporting. Like Biagini, the author believes that editorials are important historical sources because they have significant political influence. For comments on the importance of editorials and a discussion on the merits of nineteenth-century British newspapers as historical sources, see Eugenio F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 21-23, 25-26.

<sup>9</sup> For the conservative and liberal alignment of the various newspapers in this study, reliance was placed on Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914*, 69, 134; Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, 69, 90-91; R.J.M.

Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 149-50; Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1971), xv-xvi, 33, 43-45; Duncan Andrew Campbell, *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Royal Society/Boydell Press, 2003), 179-82, 206-15; and James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 551. For comment on the *Manchester Guardian's* anti-Lincoln stance, see note 37 in McPherson. For comment on the political identity of the *Reynolds's Newspaper* see Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform*, 23. For comment on the changing allegiances of British newspapers during the Civil War, see Douglas A. Lorimer, "The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War," *The Historical Journal* 19 (June 1976): 415-16.

<sup>10</sup> See Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 11-12, 15-17; Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform*, 69; Bernard Semmel, *The Liberal Ideal and the Demons of Empire: Theories of Imperialism from Adam Smith to Lenin* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 38; Whitridge, "British Liberals and the American Civil War," 688-95; and Gregory Claeys, "The Example of America as a Warning to England? The Transformation of America in British Radicalism and Socialism, 1790-1850," in Malcolm Chase and Ian Dyck, eds., *Living and Learning: Essays in Honour of J.F.C. Harrison* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Scolar Press, 1996), 66-80 (see especially 75-76). Donald Bellows argued that conservative Britons viewed secession as a democratic right and a *fait accompli* and saw northern resistance as being both tyrannical and futile. See Donald Bellows, "A Study of British Conservative Reaction to the American Civil War," *Journal of Southern History* 51 (November 1985): 505-26 (see especially 507). Wilbur Jones argued that conservative support for the Confederacy has been exaggerated. See Wilbur Deveraux Jones, "The British Conservatives and the American Civil War," *American Historical Review* 58 (April 1953): 527-43 (see especially 542-43).

<sup>11</sup> *The Times*, May 3, 1861, Jan. 7, 1863, and Sept. 18, 1863.

<sup>12</sup> See Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 241-42; *The Times*, Nov. 4, 1862; and Grigg, McDonald, and Stewart, *The History of the Times*, 365. For comment on the way John Bright promoted the Union cause and the image of Lincoln as a representation of democracy and working class success in order to advocate plebian radicalism in England, see Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform*, 69, 375-76; Gabor S. Borritt, Mark E. Neely, Jr., and Harold Holzer, "The European Image of Abraham Lincoln," *Winterthur Portfolio* 21 (Summer-Autumn 1986): 159-60; and Oscar Maurer, "'Punch' on Slavery and Civil War, 1841-1865," *Victorian Studies* 1 (September 1957): 4-28 (see especially 19-28). When news of Lincoln's assassination reached Britain, most newspapers and journals that had once strongly opposed him reversed their position and strongly supported him. See Borritt, Neely, and Holzer, "The European Image of Abraham Lincoln," 160.

<sup>13</sup> See Howard Temperley, *Britain and America Since Independence* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 34-35, 55; Ronald Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery: Black Labor, Cotton, and Textile Industrialization in Great Britain and the United States," *Agricultural History* 68 (Spring 1994): 35-50; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 21, 171-73; *Manchester Guardian*, April 28, 1863; Christopher Ewan, "The Emancipation Proclamation and British Public Opinion," *The Historian* 67 (Spring 2005): 2-3; Philip S. Foner, *British Labor and the American Civil War* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1981), 3; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 383-86; and McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 217-19.

<sup>14</sup> See Brian Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union*, vol. 2 (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1980), 145-46; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 387-91; and *Glasgow Sentinel*, Sept. 20, 1862. On Nov. 8, 1861, the U.S.S. *San Jacinto* stopped the British mail packet, the *Trent*, on its way from Havana to St. Thomas. The commander of the *San Jacinto* apprehended two Confederate commissioners on board the *Trent* and took them to Boston, where they were imprisoned. The British government reacted angrily at what it felt was an illegal seizure on the high seas, and the United States government avoided a further escalation of the conflict by releasing the commissioners on a technicality. See McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 219-20.

<sup>15</sup> See McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 554; McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 301-02; and *Glasgow Sentinel*, Sept. 20, 1862.

<sup>16</sup> See Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, 31, 41-42, 105; Campbell, *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War*, 124-26; Douglas A. Lorimer, *Colour, Class and the Victorians: English Attitudes to the Negro in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Leicester, England: Leicester University Press, 1978), 16, 59-60, 124-30, 142-47, 149, 160-61; "Race, Science, and Culture: Historical Continuities and Disconti-

nuities, 1850-1914," in Shearer West, ed. *The Victorians and Race* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1996), 23-24, 29-30, 32-33; Lorimer, "The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War," 405-20 (see especially 420); Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union*, 156-57; Helen M. Cooper, "Tracing the Route to England: Nineteenth-Century Caribbean Interventions into English Debates on Race and Slavery," in West, *The Victorians and Race*, 194-208; Peter Mandler, "'Race' and 'Nation' in Mid-Victorian Thought," in Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian Young, eds., *History, Religion and Culture: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 224-44; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 35-37, 41-43, 46-47; Philip D. Curtain, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780-1850* (London: Macmillan, 1965), 377-81, 387; J.S. Bratton, "English Ethiopians: British Audiences and Black-Face Acts, 1835-1865," *Yearbook of English Studies* 11 (1981): 127-42; *Morning Herald*, Oct. 10, 1862; *The Times*, Oct. 21, 1862; and "English Opinion on the American War," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Feb. 3, 1863. The Jamaican Morant Bay uprising of 1865 and Governor John Edward Eyre's subsequent ruthless repression of the revolt revived negative stereotypes of blacks and led to new expressions of British racism. See James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society, 1555-1945* (London: Allen Lane, 1973), 187; and Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, 81-86, 88, 102-05.

<sup>17</sup> See Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 87-88; Ewan, "The Emancipation Proclamation and British Public Opinion," 1-3; David Paul Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965): 37-38, 195; Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union*, 139; and Campbell, *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War*, 125. James McPherson claims that support for the rebellion on behalf of slavery was seen as being "un-British." See McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 552. Southern lobbyists had some reason to expect success. As Douglass A. Lorimer's research has shown, the success of English antislavery propaganda in the decades prior to the war actually reinforced suspicion of the federal government and contributed to a belief in some anti-slavery circles that the best way to support emancipation was to oppose Lincoln and support the Confederacy. See Lorimer, "The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War," 405-20 (see especially 420).

<sup>18</sup> McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 557, 563.

<sup>19</sup> See "President Lincoln's Emancipation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 9, 1862; "Weekly Summary," *Bolton Guardian*, Jan. 17, 1863; *Guardian*, Dec. 21, 1863; *Irish Times*, Jan. 14, 1863; "Review of the Week" and "Mr. Lincoln's Manifesto," *Halifax Courier*, Oct. 11, 1862; *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 18, 1862; and "ABE LINCOLN'S LAST CARD; OR, ROUGE-ET-NOIR," *Punch*, Oct. 18, 1862, in [M. H. Spielmann], *Cartoons from Punch*, vol. 2 (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1906), 138.

<sup>20</sup> See McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 552; and "The Southern Confederacy," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 11, 1862. See also "The Federal Thunderbolt," *Glasgow Sentinel*, Oct. 11, 1862; "Lincoln's Vindicators," *Glasgow Sentinel*, Jan. 31, 1863; "North and South—The 'Times' and American Slavery," *North Briton*, Jan. 24, 1863; *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 11, 1862; "American Affairs," *Irish Times*, Aug. 13, 1862; "American Affairs—The Federal Defeat," *Irish Times*, Dec. 31, 1862; and Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union*, 162-83. "S," a "well informed correspondent," in a letter to *The Times* that was reprinted in the *Irish Times*, reminded readers that the British people sympathized with the independence struggles of the Hungarians, the Poles, and the Venetians. Therefore, "S" believed they should even more enthusiastically support the independent Confederate States of America, which were made up of "descendants of their own ancestors." See "American Affairs—The Federal Defeat," *Irish Times*, Dec. 31, 1862. For more readers' correspondence to the editor of the *Irish Times* supporting Southern independence, see "American Affairs," *Irish Times*, Aug. 13, 1862; and *Irish Times*, Sept. 12, 1862.

<sup>21</sup> See *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 11 and 18, 1862; "The Southern Confederacy," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 11, 1862; "Summary of the Week" and "Lincoln's Proclamation," *Edinburgh Weekly Review*, Oct. 11, 1863; "The Emancipation Proclamation," *Irish Times*, July 10, 1863; and *Scotsman*, Oct. 13, 1862. A Copperhead was a northerner, especially a northern Democrat, who opposed Lincoln and his war policy. Accusations that Lincoln was acting unconstitutionally ignored the fact that he was acting within his war powers, which gave him the authority to seize the resources of those who were in rebellion. See McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 557-58.

<sup>22</sup> See "Chief Events and Topics of the Week," *Liverpool Mail*, Jan. 10, 1863; "News of the Week," *Glasgow Sentinel*, Jan. 17, 1863; "President Lincoln's Proclamation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 9, 1862; and "The Southern Confederacy," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 11, 1862.

<sup>23</sup> See "President Lincoln's Proclamation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 9, 1862; "The Southern Confederacy," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 11, 1862; "The Emancipation Proclamation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Jan. 19, 1863; *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 11, 1862; "Chief Events and Topics of the Week," *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 18, 1862; "Chief Events and Topics of the Week," *Liverpool Mail*, Jan. 10, 1863; "News of the Week," *Glasgow Sentinel*, Jan. 17, 1863; and "ABE LINCOLN'S LAST CARD," 138.

<sup>24</sup> See Seymour Drescher, "Servile Insurrection and John Brown's Body in Europe," *Journal of American History* 80 (September 1993): 499-524 (see especially 516-20); Howard Jones, *Abraham Lincoln and a New Birth of Freedom: The Union and Slavery in the Diplomacy of the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 117, 126; William K. Klingaman, *Abraham Lincoln and the Road to Emancipation, 1861-1865* (New York: Viking, 2001), 113; *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 11, 1862; *The Times*, Oct. 7 and 21, 1862; "The Southern Confederacy," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 11, 1862; "The Emancipation Proclamation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Jan. 19, 1863; "English Opinion on the American War," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Feb. 3, 1863; *Leeds Intelligencer*, Feb. 21, 1863; *Morning Herald*, Oct. 7 and 10, 1862, and Jan. 9, 1863; Lorimer, *Colour, Class and the Victorians*, 168; and *Morning Herald*, Oct. 10, 1862. British newspapers generally believed slavery had not prepared African Americans for freedom, and they would become the political pawns of radical Republicans. See Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, 33-34; and "SCENE FROM THE AMERICAN 'TEMPEST,'" *Punch*, Jan. 24, 1863, in [Spielmann], *Cartoons from Punch*, 144.

<sup>25</sup> See "Summary of the Week. America," *Edinburgh Weekly Review*, Oct. 11, 1862; "Review of the Week," *Halifax Courier*, Oct. 18, 1862; *Morning Herald*, Oct. 10, 1862, and Jan. 9, 1863; *Liverpool Mail*, Oct. 11 1862; "President Lincoln's Proclamation," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Oct. 9, 1862; *Irish Times*, Aug. 6, 1862, and Jan. 14, 1863; and *Scotsman*, Aug. 6, 1862.

<sup>26</sup> *Morning Herald*, Oct. 10, 1862.

<sup>27</sup> See *Morning Herald*, Jan. 9, 1862; *Liverpool Mail*, Feb. 14 and 21, 1863; "The London Journals. The American Question," *Irish Times*, Oct. 21, 1862; "American Affairs—The Federal Defeat," *Irish Times*, Dec. 31, 1862; *Irish Times*, Jan. 7 and 14, 1863; "American Affairs," *Irish Times*, Jan. 21, 1863; "The Civil War in America," *Irish Times*, April 4, 1863; and *Irish Times*, July 7, 1863.

<sup>28</sup> See *The Times*, Feb. 6 and April 17, 1863; Charles Buxton to the editor, "American Slavery," *The Times*, Dec. 26, 1862; and Henry William Wilberforce to the editor, "Mr. Wilberforce on a Servile Insurrection," *The Times*, March 2, 1863. See also Edwin De Leon to the editor, "The Civil War in America," *The Times*, May 25, 1861; and "D" to the editor, "Slavery in America," *The Times*, Sept. 22, 1864. The first *Times* correspondent to cover the Civil War, H.W. Russell, was sympathetic to the North and had a high opinion of Lincoln's character. However, his successors, principally Charles Mackay, were pro-South in their reporting. See Grigg, McDonald, and Stewart, *History of The Times*, 364, 377-78, 382; Oliver Woods and James Bishop, *The Story of The Times* (London: Michael Joseph, 1983), 10; and Joseph M. Hermon, Jr., "British Sympathies in the American Civil War: A Reconsideration," *Journal of Southern History* 33 (August 1967): 361.

<sup>29</sup> *The Times*, Dec. 19 and 29, 1862. *The Times* saw Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler as the mouthpiece of the government and the herald of the nightmare to come. See *The Times*, April 17, 1863.

<sup>30</sup> *The Times*, Jan. 13, Feb. 6, March 12, and Nov. 14, 1863

<sup>31</sup> See J.W. Burns to the editor, "The American War," *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, Jan. 27, 1863; "President Lincoln's Slave Emancipation Decree," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Jan. 18, 1863; *Manchester Weekly Times*, Jan. 17, 1863; "President Lincoln's Proclamation," *Banner of Ulster*, Jan. 15, 1863; and *Daily News*, Oct. 2, 1862.

<sup>32</sup> See *Daily Mail*, Oct. 6, 1862; "The Negro's Revenge," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Oct. 19, 1862; "The Servile Insurrections of America," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Oct. 26, 1862; and "President Lincoln's Slave Emancipation Decree," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Jan. 18, 1863.

<sup>33</sup> See *Daily News*, Oct. 7 and 15, 1862; "News of the Day," *Birmingham Daily Post*, Oct. 8, 1862; and "THE BLACK CONSCRIPTION," *Punch*, Sept. 26, 1863, in [Spielmann], *Cartoons from Punch*, 165.

<sup>34</sup> See *Daily News*, Oct. 2 and 8, 1862, and Jan. 20, 1863; Raymond Postgate and Aylmer Vallance, *England Goes to Press: The English People's Opinion on Foreign Affairs as Reflected in Their Newspapers Since Waterloo (1815-1937)* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1937), 118-19; "The 'Times' and Slavery," *Banner of Ulster*, Jan. 16, 1863; and J.W. Burns to the editor, "The American War," *The Times*, the "British Thunderer," was accused by the *North Briton* of using "defective logic and limping theology" in its efforts to defend slavery. The *North Briton* expected southern slavery to wither and die when the Confederacy felt itself "isolated" in a "civilised world." See "North and South—The 'Times' and American Slavery," *North Briton*, Jan. 24, 1863; and "President Lincoln's Slave Emancipation Decree," *Reynolds's Newspaper*, Jan. 18, 1863.

<sup>35</sup> The editor of the *Newcastle Daily Journal* condemned two pro-Union antislavery meetings, which were held in mid-January 1863, as being the work of "agitators." "No leaders of public opinion" were present, and those who attended were not "a fair representation, even on the smallest scale, of the great body of intelligent people of England." See "Sympathy with the Federal Government," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Jan. 22, 1863; "English Opinion on the American War," *Newcastle Daily Journal*, Feb. 3, 1863; *Liverpool Mail*, Jan. 24 and Feb. 21, 1863; *Daily News*, Jan. 2 and 20, 1863; and "England and American Slavery," *Daily Post*, Jan. 19, 1863. For comment on the Emancipation Proclamation stimulating a revival of anti-slavery sentiment among the working classes and nullifying government recognition of the Confederacy, see Klingaman, *Abraham Lincoln and the Road to Emancipation, 1861-1865*, 205, 242; and Henry Pelling, *America and the British Left: From Bright to Bevan* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1956), 8.

<sup>36</sup> Douglas Lorimer argued that *The Times'* violent attack on Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and its argument defending southern slavery resulted in a loss of readership and waning public influence. See Lorimer, "The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War," 411-12; and *Scotsman*, Feb. 20, 1863.

<sup>37</sup> "Address from the Working Men to the President," *Guardian*, Jan. 1, 1863. David Ayerst argued that the Manchester *Guardian* believed in southern independence and adopted an anti-Lincoln stance during the war. The newspaper believed the meeting at the Free Trade Hall was primarily an anti-*Guardian* meeting. See David Ayerst, *Guardian: Biography of a Newspaper* (London: Collins, 1971), 153-55. In March 1863, the *Manchester Guardian* reported that public meetings held in Manchester, Exeter Hall, Oldham, Bradford, and Liverpool in January and February had strongly supported Lincoln's Proclamation. However, the *Guardian* noted that dissenters were active at all of the meetings and concluded that popular opinion counted for little when it was not supported by the opinion of leading citizens. See *Guardian*, March 10, 1863. For reports on anti-slavery meetings, see "England and Slavery. Meeting at Liverpool," *Guardian*, Jan. 19, 1863; "Emancipation Demonstration in London," *Guardian*, Jan. 30, 1863; "President Lincoln's Emancipation Policy," *Guardian*, Feb. 19, 1863; Burns, "The American War," and James Looney to the editor, "President Lincoln and Slavery," *Daily Post*, Jan. 16, 1863.

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