Democratic Attitudes in
Johnson County during the Civil War Era:
A Look at the Demaree Papers

Edited by
William G. Eidson and Vincent Akers*

The Demaree family of north central Kentucky and Johnson County, Indiana, has left an absorbing legacy in a collection of more than seventy unpublished letters.¹ Full of politics, religion, farming, and family news, the letters offer a valuable commentary on life in Indiana and Kentucky during the turbulent middle decades of the nineteenth century. The patriarch of the family was Samuel Demaree, a prosperous farmer in Henry County, Kentucky. Of French Hugenot and Dutch ancestry, Samuel was born in 1792, the year Kentucky became a state. His father and grandfather had moved to Kentucky in the 1780s with a large migration of Dutch families from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Within a few years after Samuel's birth his father had moved to the "Low Dutch Tract" in Shelby and Henry counties. Here many of the Dutch families had pooled their interests in 1786 to purchase a tract of over 8,000 acres. The land was held by the Low Dutch Company until deeded to individuals in the 1830s. Samuel's farm was carved out of the portion of the tract lying in Henry County.²

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¹ William G. Eidson is associate professor of history at Ball State University, Muncie. Vincent Akers, a C.P.A. with Price Waterhouse & Co., is a Demaree descendant with a special interest in Johnson County history.

² Information on the early family background and "Low Dutch" connections comes primarily from family papers, grants, deeds, depositions, and memoranda in Mr. Akers' possession. Samuel Demaree's deed from the Low Dutch Company, dated September 12, 1836, is recorded in Deed Book, XVIII, 6-7 (Henry County Courthouse, New Castle, Kentucky).
While Henry County magistrate in the 1820s and 1830s Samuel watched seven of his younger brothers and sisters migrate to Johnson County, Indiana, where the younger Demarees and many of their Dutch relatives hoped their financial prospects would be better. Samuel, a slaveholder, did not follow their example. Samuel and his wife, Rachel, raised thirteen children in Kentucky, a border state becoming increasingly divided in the years just prior to the Civil War. In order of their birth the thirteen were: David (1814-1874), Henry (1816-1890), Elizabeth (1818-1907), Peter (1819-1888), Mary (1820-1908), Ann (1822-1907), Susan (1823-1882), Albert (1825-1841), Samuel (1827-1871), John (1829-1915), George (1832-1915), Joseph (1833-1858), and Cornelius (1836-1898). The letters printed below are from their fourth child, Peter, and from William T. Shuck (1824-1900), the husband of Susan, their seventh child.

Susan and her husband moved to Johnson County, Indiana, shortly after their marriage in 1847. There they settled in the Shiloh community in Union Township where Shuck farmed and became a leader in the local Presbyterian church. His behavior, however, puzzled many of those who knew him well. Always a faithful church attender and a staunch Democrat, he nevertheless gained a reputation for being one of the most cantankerous and stubborn men in the county. One of his six children wrote of Shuck: he was “the most unreasonable, wicked man I ever saw.”

Peter Demaree, nearly five years older than Shuck, did not move to Johnson County until 1856. Like other Demarees he was a devout Presbyterian and an active Democrat. Many of his letters reflect these two interests. Following in his father's footsteps, Peter dabbled in local politics and was elected Johnson County commissioner for three years. Peter

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5 The Dutch were instrumental in the founding of four Johnson County, Indiana, communities: Franklin, Greenwood, Hopewell, and Shiloh. The Demarees were most closely associated with the farming communities of Shiloh and Hopewell. The basic sources for the history of these communities are David Demaree Banta, Making A Neighborhood, Delivered at the Shiloh Reunion, May 26, 1887 (Franklin, Ind., 1887); and Robert Allen Brown, “The Making of Hopewell, 1831-1915,” typescript (Indiana State Library, Indianapolis).


7 Emma Shuck to Elizabeth Demaree, August 20, 1890, Demaree Collection. Various letters and memoranda in the Demaree Collection are the sources for the background information on Shuck.

8 Peter Demaree's obituary, Franklin (Indiana) Democrat, May 25, 1888.
also felt the wrath of his younger brother-in-law. The two men lived in the same community, attended the same church, and visited in each other's homes; but they did not always do so harmoniously. Once, after Peter accused William of opening a letter which did not belong to him, Shuck angrily implied that Peter and his whole family were liars.7

All the letters printed below were written to George Whitefield Demaree, Samuel's eleventh child. While a young man George did some pioneering in Missouri; but by 1856 he had returned to Kentucky, where he lived the remainder of his life. He was a Kentucky Democrat with strong beliefs in states rights and slavery. Outwardly he remained neutral during the Civil War, but inwardly his sympathies were with the Confederacy. George was a deeply religious, Presbyterian elder who penned many articles expressing his premillenial beliefs. His chief fame and main source of income, however, came as a beekeeper. Through numerous articles and noteworthy experiments, George became a nationally known apiarist. He was also interested in history and preserved most of the letters now found in the Demaree Collection.8

In the first letter printed below Shuck provides some insight into the crippling effects a drought can have on a farming community and observes the cooperative method for dealing with crises. He sounds particularly modern, however, when he complains about the price charged by and the "speed" of the men who were building his home. The latter half of the letter touches on the 1856 elections in Indiana. The Willard referred to was the youthful and charming

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7 Peter Demaree to George W. Demaree, April 6, 1860, Demaree Collection.
8 George W. Demaree wrote hundreds of articles for beekeeping magazines during the period of 1880 to 1900. His name became known internationally through his method of swarm control, first publicized in 1892. George W. Demaree, "How to Prevent Swarming," The American Bee Journal, XXIX (April 21, 1892), 545-46. The term "Demareeing" was generally adopted to describe the necessary manipulations. Two biographies are: [L. L. Langstroth], "Biographical—G. W. Demaree, Esq.," The American Bee Journal, XXXI (March 6, 1893), 328; and William G. Eaton, "Beemaster—Not Just A Beekeeper (A story about Kentucky's George W. Demaree, of Swarm-Control fame, in Retrospect)," The American Bee Journal, XCVI (December, 1956), 474-77. Sources for the background information on G. W. Demaree are various letters and memoranda in the Demaree Collection. Demaree's Civil War attitudes are clearly spelled out in a series of newspaper articles which he wrote in 1903 entitled "Some Local History of the Dark Days of the Civil War," Shelbyville (Kentucky) Shelby News, June 18, 25, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 1903.
Ashbel P. Willard whom the Democrats succeeded in electing governor that year. Willard's rise in politics had been swift. As a New Albany lawyer he had become the Democratic leader of the Indiana House of Representatives and was elected lieutenant governor in 1852. The People's party, as opposition to the Democrats called themselves in 1856, supported for governor an even younger candidate, thirty-two year old Oliver P. Morton. Willard carried the state but not without the opposition's shouting fraud. The People's party maintained that the Democrats won by importing scores of voters from other states, especially Kentucky. Shuck obviously believes these rumors.

Johnson Co. Ind Oct. 26, 1856

Dear Bro

Through the mercy of a kind Redeemer we are yet the Spared number of the living & Blessed with usual health health here is very good.

We have a very dry fall here & very Smoky Indian Summer wether & agreeable of damage has been done with fire & More Expected Ef the drouth continues our wheat Surely will perish for the want of rain & perhaps we wil hafto Sow over My workman are getting along Slow with my house it wil push us to get mooved this winter it is my calculation to have the chimbleys put up this week & wil get my plastering done next week Ef the floors are layed

I am feeding 18 hogs 11 [t]o 12 for Sale hafto pack water to them which is an up hill Business i have a pretty

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10 The six letters in this article were transcribed from the original handwritten documents; photocopies of the originals were used for editorial purposes. Although decisions were at times necessarily arbitrary, every effort was made to determine and retain the capitalization, spelling, paragraphing, and punctuation intended by the correspondents. Unintentional word repetitions and what appeared to be superfluous or indiscriminate commas and periods were deleted. Spacing of headings, salutations, and closings was standardized; and in order to increase readability, space was left between sentences when there was no punctuation in the original letters. Brackets enclose letters or words which were missing because of torn manuscripts or possible explanations of illegible or confusing terms. Notes written in the margins of the letters were added following the signatures. Local individuals and family members mentioned in the letters have been identified through footnotes wherever possible.

11 "Mr. W. T. has not got his house finished yet nor wont have before christmas if then his workmen get along slow." John B. Demaree to George W. Demaree, November 25, 1856, Demaree Collection.
WILLIAM T. SHUCK
C. 1889

SUSAN DEMAREE SHUCK

WILLIAM T. AND SUSAN SHUCK LOG CABIN

This log cabin was built upon the Shucks' arrival in Johnson County in 1847 and was used until their frame home was built in 1856.
fare crop of Corn & Some old corn Sold Some old Corn at 50 pr Bu new corn 40 appels 50 & 60 wheat $1.00 cattel kno Sale horses hy I took my colts to the fare But Being Rather much rabbit Sine there i come out wheare i Began owlny with less money & loss of time old dad [started] to Switzerland Some time ago [ha]ve not heard from him Since Ef he is in y[o]ur State tel him we have heard from andrew & andrew wished him to write direct to west point Mo Susan cooks for all our hands complains Agoodeal but Stil works on we would be more than glad to See you All & you must all come to See us

Isaac Johnson took Suppr with us the other night but they Sent for him About bedtime to help about fire I must close as uncle P. Shuck & John are here on a viset have preaching this Evning at Shiloh by mr allen At 3.ocl Su[s]an Sends her respects to all you[r]s &c

fare wel

G. W. Demaree Wm. T. Shuck

Nov. 216

Again the drouth Stil [c]o[n]tinues & fire Stil rageing in the woods & pastures A few Evnings ago i was invited to help Extinguish a fire on Mrs VanNices17 farm which was makeing towards her Barn But we removed Several thousand

12 "Being rather much rabbit sine there" probably means that the buyers and sellers were too timid while there.

13 Henry Shuck, William T. Shuck's father, was then sixty years old and addicted to heavy drinking. He had evidently set out for a related settlement of Dutch families in Pleasant Township, Switzerland County, Indiana. Andrew was W. T. Shuck's younger brother. Information is from notes on the Shuck family by John Owen Demaree, Demaree Collection.

14 Uncle P. Shuck and John are either Shuck's uncles, Peter and John, twin brothers who had settled in the Shiloh neighborhood in the 1830s, or they are Peter and his son John. John O. Demaree's notes, Demaree Collection.

15 The Reverend Archibald Cameron Allen was pastor of the Hopewell Presbyterian Church from 1854 to 1859 and of the Shiloh church from 1868 to 1870. The two churches were closely associated since the Shiloh church was organized by Hopewell members in 1832. In 1888 the Shiloh congregation was combined with the Hopewell church. Brown, "The Making of Hopewell," 9, 33-35; D. D. Banta, Making A Neighborhood, 48.

16 Shuck resumed his letter to his brother-in-law on November 2.

17 Shuck is probably referring to Elizabeth VanNuyse, widow of Isaac VanNuyse. The VanNyusses had moved to the neighborhood in 1836. Isaac died in 1844, and Mrs. VanNuyse moved to Franklin in 1858. D. D. Banta, Making A Neighborhood, 39.
rails & rather Stopped the fire  Since time i have been Very hoarse & have a very bad cold by over doing my Self  my chimbley Builder come on last monday at 12 o clock put me up 2 Chimbleys & one flue finished friday at 4  Charged me $13.50 waited on him my self  Nearabout put me through.  The carpenters wil get redy for the plasters this week.

I received a letter from [b]ro A. T. Shuck18 Last thursday he says they have had Terabel times in Kanzes but have peace At present but no Secu[r]ity for life or property for what one pa[r]ty dose not destroy the other dose  fine wether there grass green cattel fat  plenty of melons up to the 16 Oct. & he voted the proslavery ticket & Expected to give buck alift & that he never Expected to be an Abolitionist & he had took kno part in the affairs yet but he Expected to Join the govengers army as he was for peace19

But willard is Elected i can Standit we beat the [bl]ack republicans abolitionis Negro Steal[ers] ownly 7000 Stick this in your hat they are the worst Beat people you Ever Seen  hogs have Been drive[n] from here to madison & not lost as much flesh In the Same length of time as they have Since the Election  Ef you kyans [Kentuckians] had not of come over & voted they would have Beatenous they Say you must all stay at home on Election days20

old Squer Shuck21 looks nearly as Black as nase Sence the Election

18 A. T. Shuck, W. T. Shuck's younger brother, is undoubtedly the same Andrew who was requesting that his father write to him at West Point, Missouri. Shuck would have received this new letter from his brother on the intervening Thursday, October 30.
19 After passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, settlers had moved into Kansas determined to make that territory free or slave. Agitation between proslavery forces and free state forces led to disputed elections and bloodshed. In May, 1856, proslavery advocates sacked Lawrence, Kansas. Antislavery settlers under the leadership of John Brown retaliated by murdering five proslavery men at Pottawatomie Creek. The guerrilla warfare that followed led to many deaths and much destruction of property. The “buck” referred to is James Buchanan, successful candidate for the presidency in 1856. The “governors army” was the Kansas militia organized by Governor John White Geary to help maintain peace and to divert the turbulent energies of both the free state and proslave forces. Jay Monaghan, Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865 (Boston, 1955), 92; Richmond (Indiana) Palladium, October 2, 1856.
20 Willard actually defeated Morton by slightly less than 6,000 votes. Charles Roll, Indiana: One Hundred and Fifty Years of American Development (5 vols., Chicago, 1931), II, 149; Richmond (Indiana) Palladium, October 23, 1856.
21 Squire John Shuck, William’s uncle, was a justice of the peace in Johnson County. Theodore M. Banta, A Frisian Family: The Banta Genealogy (New York, 1893), 158.
Ef they had of Beatten us we would have had to of left the State. But we jist ask them have you heard from pennsylvania & Indiana [th]at kills a free monter. We Expect to [illegible] franklin Before long & [illegible] river.

I have many things to write to you But time & Space will not prpm[i]t. J. More wars married to Jmima forsythe thursday night last.

you wil pardon me for not written Sooner as I have been uncommon Busy that i have quit chopping Stove wood for the old lady make the Buoys packit & you kno Jo & Sam are workers i would like to heare from all Especially Saml & John give my respects to all &c

G. W. Demaree/Wm. T. Shuck

I wil perhaps send you one number of the Jeffersonian 3rd you must all write Soon Stil cloudy but no rain yet us old liners gave our governer ownly 7000 majority Stick this in your hat hat & keep the woolies down 5 o'clock morning it Surely is raining Some but i fear By day light it wil be over But it is thundering very heavy which is a good prospect. Ef dad is with you let me kno W. T. S

22 A "free monter" was a supporter of John C. Frémont, Republican presidential candidate in the 1856 election. Indiana and Pennsylvania supported Frémont's Democratic opponent, James Buchanan. The Indiana vote was 118,000 to 94,000 in favor of Buchanan. In Pennsylvania, Buchanan's home state, the margin was much greater—230,000 to 147,000. W. Dean Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892 (Baltimore, 1955), 248.

23 Joseph J. Moore and Ermina Forsythe were married Thursday, October 23, 1856. Moore had been born in Union Township in 1831 and was destined to become one of the most prominent businessmen of the county. He at one time operated dry goods, grocery and clothing stores, a warehouse, tin shop, butcher shop, scale house, and lumber mill in Trafalgar, a town in Hensley Township, Johnson County, which he is credited with having named. David Demaree Banta, History of Johnson County, Indiana (Chicago, 1888), 562-64, 709-10.

24 Jo & Sam were William Shuck's two oldest children. Joseph William was eight and Samuel Nelson was seven at the time this letter was written. William T. and Susan Shuck family Bible in the possession of Mr. Akers.

25 The Franklin (Indiana) Jeffersonian, published from 1852 to 1886, was Johnson County's Democratic newspaper in 1856. The paper was never proslavery and was later to be the organ of the Stephen A. Douglas Democrats. When the Civil War broke out, it became a Republican newspaper. Elba L. Branigin, History of Johnson County, Indiana (Indianapolis, 1913), 412. The county papers published during the 1856 election are no longer extant.

26 The exact meaning of the term "woolies," as it is used here, has not been ascertained.
The second letter, from Peter Demaree to his brother in Kentucky, reflects the concerns of a typical Indiana farmer at this time in history. Health, money, and the war are uppermost in his thoughts. The Missouri lands mentioned were inherited when Peter's father died in 1858. Samuel had been given land in Missouri for service in the War of 1812. At the same time he bought cheaply large tracts of additional Missouri land from other veterans who preferred ready cash to uncultivated soil. By this method the elder Demaree acquired thousands of acres in Missouri, which were then divided among his heirs. The depressed prices on sugar, coffee, and cotton remained low throughout the latter half of 1861, but the hog price of two dollars was only half what hogs had been bringing three months earlier.

Johnson Co Ind
Nov 13th 1861

Dear Brother

I have bin thinking of Wrighting to you for Sum time but have neglected it. I now make the attempt.

We ar in usul helth at present. tha ar a good eal of cickness about feever of typhared forme Seemes to predomininate then tha ar other grades of feever & a good eal of dip-theara & Sor throat

We have not had the deeds of our masoura lands recorded yet the trobeld State of a fairs in that State We have bin afraid to risk Sending them, & it Seemes to get nobeter that Will have to be Sum araingments maid to paying the tax on it. I Will be glad if you Will give me Sum information concerning it. I Supose it has bin all assessed to gether. With out [a doubt] the rest of you have had your deeds recorded befor it Was assessed. I hav no ida how Wel manage to

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27 Information here and in footnote thirty regarding Samuel Demaree's estate is taken from the grants, deeds, letters, memoranda, and the administrators' receipts and records in the Demaree Collection.

28 Franklin (Indiana) Democratic Herald, August 15, 1861; January 2, 1862. These are the nearest existing issues to November, 1861.

29 In Missouri the conflicts between unionists and secessionists were particularly severe. By the summer of 1861 attempts to avoid bloodshed by conciliation had failed. The second largest battle of 1861 was fought at Wilson's Creek in August. Guerrilla fighting, neighborhood war, and the intervention of forces from Kansas continued to trouble the state for the next few years. James G. Randall and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction (2nd ed., Lexington, Mass., 1969), 234-36.

30 The Missouri lands had been surveyed and divided into eleven equal parts in May of 1860. A drawing was held June 28, 1860, and each heir was assigned a ticket representing one of the eleven parts.
Pay our tax on the account of the troubled estate of government.
A fair in mo it is very hard to tell who is the legal officers.
Times is very hard her every thing We have to sell is
very low & every thing We buy is very high. Sugar is 12½
cents lb coffee 20, [brown?] coten 15 & every thing else in proportion is
only offering $2.00 for hogs gross. I have a good cow,
year old steer that I have been offering at 10 dollars
& I hav not had one man to come to look him even
War.
Such as the present one is the greatest calamity that ever
befell a nation. My advise to you is to act as much as possible
With a christen spirit not act rashly neither in word or deed.
you know how I stand. I have been troubled about
government affairs but I find it is no use to fret. I try to be
reconcile as much as possible believing that God will be with the
Wright.

If there ever was a thing that Christians should pray more
then another it seems to me that now is the time, but
O what a coldness seems to exist in the church it seems
that we are left to ourselves to go astray.

What a glorious day it will be when peace and harmony shall once more reign. When

Eleven deeds were drawn up, each of which had to be signed by all of
the heirs and their husbands and wives. The brothers and sisters were
at that time living in Kentucky, Indiana, and Missouri, and all the deeds
were sent to each state to be signed and notarized. Even after the last
of the heirs in Missouri had finally signed in October of 1860, the trouble
was not nearly over. William T. Shuck in a letter dated January 20,
1861 (Demaree Collection), and addressed to Samuel Demaree, Jr., who
was handling the division, brought up a matter of pride which further
delayed the recording of the deeds:

"I know that we will get the same shears the way the deeds are, but what man wants
to send a deed to the recorder's office to be recorded in his wife's name. I
do not care if she is the heir of inheritance, the supposition arises that
she is a widow otherwise her husband is a worthless bankrupt & not
worthy to manage his wife's affairs.

"You say those deeds must be recorded next Spring, If you will make them as they should be made we will have them recorded. If not I
care but little what becomes of them that is my feeling about it . . . ."
By the time this point was cleared up the war had made it unsafe to
have the deeds recorded; thus, the recording was delayed until September
25, 1866.

In September, 1861, Confederate forces under General Leonidas
Pulaski seized Columbus, and Union troops under Grant retaliated by occu-
pying Paducah. During the remainder of the year Union troops moved
into Louisville and Covington while Confederates advanced to Bowling
Green and the Cumberland. Though no major battles occurred in Ken-
tucky during 1861, the situation was tense as counties, cities, and even
families divided their loyalties. Mark Mayo Boatner, III, The Civil War
Dictionary (New York, 1959), 466.
the christian heart shall flow with love to god & good will to all men

may the Lord keep us & help us to liv faithful to the end yours as ever

to G. M. Demaree  P. Demaree

Write Sone tell me What bro Samuel is Dooing

Shuck wrote the next letter only five weeks after Peter penned the one above. Again there is complaint about low farm prices. Actually from 1859 to the outbreak of the war in 1861 farm prices had risen steadily in Indiana. Then prices fell and remained low for several months. Recovery came in 1862, and prices continued to rise for the remainder of the war. Shuck mentions selling corn for twenty-five cents per bushel. This is as low as the price dropped. By 1864 corn was selling for ninety-five cents per bushel, the highest figure reached during the war.32

The Wild Cat Battle was not as impressive a Union victory as the letter indicates. Northern troops pursued a Confederate force from Perryville, Kentucky, toward the Cumberland Gap. The southerners, who were heading for Tennessee, tried to slow the Yankee pursuit by blocking roads with fallen trees. The battle occurred in October, 1861, near London, Kentucky, when some northern soldiers overran a small detachment of Confederates engaged in delaying tactics. A few hundred men on each side participated in the skirmish with total casualties amounting to less than seventy-five.33

Johnson Co Ind December 23, 1861.

Dear Brother & Sistr,

After long delay I Shal address a few lines to you in the way of news, &c.

I Shal Jest write to you on Such Subjects as tho we ware together.

as the war is uppermost in evry mans thoughts you wil pleas pardon me ef I should write you a random Shot letter, that is miss the subject I ame at & lead off on the war.

32 Thornbrough, Indiana in the Civil War Era, 389-90.

we have had a beautiful fall of fine warm wether which
gave the farmers a fine chance to Build repair dig & wall
wels gather in there corn & get up there wintr wood tho there
is allways Some one behind the times, or as the old Saying is
put off the eve1 day as far as possible or think thre never wil
be a change
we finished gathering corn the 17. inst we have cribed
near a 1000 bushels of corn we husked Some 85 bbl on the
Stalk then we made a husking filled our crib & yet have a
large pile on the floar put up 7 loads in a pen for our out
hogs & put the ballance in the old house.
yestureday was rather a rainy day or rather Sleet upon
the Snow that fell Satureday night this morning was quite
cold & today has been a very good winter day, tho a very good
day to chop & hall wood on the Sled, prepareing for christmas
&c
tomorrow I expect to go to Franklin as that is the day of
reconing between man & man that is in the way dets. there
is no complaint needing in regard to the scarceity of money
for it is as plenty as you ever Seen it but the rub is to get it.
when our stock go off at half value to former years we think
it quite a Sacrafice, beside paying dets quite slow but we must
indulge with old father Abraham [Lincoln] for alittel Season
& Then.
I have Sold two fine horses this fall for $160. I have Sold
horses cattel & Sheep with one hundred & 25 bu old corn at
25 pr Bu to the amount of over $300. when it Should have
Brought $500.
our children are going to School that is 3 of them Mary
Jane Saml & Joseph Jo is about as figity as ever he has a
great nacck for beating the Drum Sam whistels for the fifeer
he has all the Barn doors & tabels nearly caved in I wil either
haveto get him a drum or go to repairing.
the war. wel we have had Several months of war with
Blood Shed deth & distress But whether we are any nearer
great ness that at the Start I cannot tel. it is vey Strange
that as intelgent a people as the Americans are they cannot
Settel a question without resorting to the Soard.
the papers Say the Wild Cat Battel in Ky was the great-
est uneion victory that has been atcheived Sence the war
Began, as we get but littel Southern news you wil give me a
Johnson County during the Civil War Era

history of all the affairs of your State as we are deeply concerned about Ky as that is our Mother country. 34

there is a great deal of Sickness in the Regiment35 our neighbor boys are in Virginia. there has a good many returned home from that Regiment Sick perhaps will die from the exposure.

wel G. W. we have another fine Boy Born the 31. Aug we have not entirely named him yet we talk of calling his name George Thomas & ef we do you are to Send him a pair of Boots or a dog knife or Some other fine present.36

the old lady37 has quit Smoking except once a day we are all in usual helth the kinfolks are generally well.

Sister Mary wanted to know what had become of cousin Voris He is roving around Teaching Singing School & He entertains the same principal that Her husband does.38

Peter told me He had received a letter from you & promise to Send it to me but has not.

we will expect Samuel to attend to paying the tax on the Mo lands as usual as there are none of them deeds yet Recorded Ef other wise we should be informed. I think it unnecessary to have them Recorded under the presan distracted affairs

34 Apparently many Hoosiers were concerned about events in Kentucky. Almost every issue of the Indianapolis Daily Journal in December carried letters from Indiana soldiers stationed in Kentucky, news articles about the border state, or items from Kentucky newspapers. For further discussion of Indiana's preoccupation with affairs in Kentucky see Thornbrough, Indiana in the Civil War Era, 108-109; Kenneth M. Stampp, "Kentucky's Influence on Indiana in the Crisis of 1861," Indiana Magazine of History, XXXIX (September, 1943), 263-76.

35 Shuck was undoubtedly referring to the Seventh Indiana Regiment, reorganized in the fall of 1861 for three years' service, with Company F being made up of Johnson County men. Seven Johnson County men in this company are known to have died in the period from November, 1861, to January, 1862. Five Demarees from the Shiloh and Hopewell neighborhoods belonged to this company, including two nephews of the correspondents. D. D. Banta, History of Johnson County, 731, 739; Demarest, The Demarest Family, II, 8, 9. Volume II of this work contains war records of the Demarest family.

36 George Thomas Shuck, the sixth and last child of William T. and Susan Shuck, was born August 31, 1861, and died January 21, 1935. Shuck family Bible.

37 The "old lady" undoubtedly refers to Shuck's wife, Susan Demaree Shuck, as both his mother and mother-in-law had died prior to 1861.

38 The exact identities of "Sister Mary" and "cousin Voris" are difficult to establish. Both Shuck and Demaree had sisters named Mary. Demaree's mother was one of fourteen children of Albert and Anna Banta Voris and was distantly related to Congressman Daniel W. Voorhees of Terre Haute, Indiana. Shuck also had Voris cousins and was in fact a grandnephew of Anna Banta Voris. T. M. Banta, Frisian Family, 157-58; Elias W. Van Voorhis, A Genealogy of the Van Voorhees Family (New York, 1888), 315-42, 543-54.
I shall direct this to consolation thinking this to be your nearest Postoffice write soon donot delay as I have done. I must close.

Hoping that this will find you & yours in the enjoyment of health & prosperity & that I shall hear from you soon.

I remain yours as ever.

G.W. W.T.

P.S. as I failed to mail this when I was at Franklin I have retained it up to the present date 31s. Dec there has been considerable stir the past week in collecting & paying dets there is but few that meets there contracts oven to the pressure of times my payment was $400 I have paid $200. & have $100 Due me that I will not get which leaves me $100. minus. I expect to go to Franklin to day ef there is any thing new I shall add another PS.

the weather is quite fine at present, two New moons this month.

Buckner of this state has just returned from Newcastel Ky.

He says the people there are much dissatisfied & will finally secede. He says they are crazy.

you will please write me the health of John I. Vorises dauter

In the first paragraph of the next letter Peter mentions money received from his brother George. Since Shuck and Henry Demaree also received money about the same time, Peter is undoubtedly referring to an inheritance from his father's estate.

The substitutes mentioned in paragraph two were men who, for a substantial sum of money, agreed to take a draftee's place in military service. Four hundred dollars was not an excessive amount, however, for in some sections of the North substitutes were paid more than a thousand dollars. Then,

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39 Consolation was a railroad depot and post office in northeastern Shelby County, Kentucky, near where George W. Demaree was living.
40 The original purpose of substitution was to allow those in critical jobs to aid the war effort by remaining at home while another took their place in the service, but in reality anyone who had the resources and the desire could furnish a substitute without reference to the importance of his position. At the time Peter wrote this letter draft boards could exempt a man the whole term for which he was drafted if the draftee would provide a substitute who was not eligible for the draft. If the substitute was eligible for the draft, then the draftee's name was again placed on the rolls for future calls. Eugene Converse Murdock, *Patriotism Limited, 1862-1865* (Kent, Ohio, 1967), 9-10, 31-32; Jack Franklin Leach, *Conscription in the United States: Historical Background* (Rutland, Vt., 1952), 256, 396-97; U.S., *Congressional Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 140-42, 257.
as now, no one wanted to be drafted, especially one who totally opposed the war as did many in Union Township and Johnson County as a whole.\textsuperscript{41} Townships did all possible to raise their quotas without resorting to the draft. It is doubtful that the citizens of Union Township raised subscriptions so much out of patriotic enthusiasm as out of the desire to avoid sending their young men to a war they did not favor. Also, by raising their quota through subscription, the citizens avoided the stigma of cowardice that was sometimes attached to anyone who was drafted. That some of the townships had to draft is not difficult to explain. This was the third time in six months that the national government had called for additional troops. Johnson County's quota for these three calls was 920.\textsuperscript{42}

Most of the Johnson County residents were unhappy with the Lincoln administration. Peter wrote that he intended to vote for George B. McClellan; so did most of his neighbors. Johnson County was so thoroughly Democratic that it voted for the Democratic presidential candidate in every election from 1824 to 1920. In 1864 the county cast 1,713 votes for McClellan and 1,532 for Lincoln. The state, however, gave Lincoln fifty-four per cent of its vote.\textsuperscript{43}

Brother Samuel, referred to in the last paragraph of this letter, joined the Confederate army in 1863 rather than be drafted by the Union in Kentucky. He rode with John Morgan's raiders in their romp through Indiana and Ohio but was eventually wounded and captured. He spent several months in the prison hospital at Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio, before Henry obtained his release. He lived with Henry's family in Johnson County for a year before returning to Kentucky.\textsuperscript{44}

Johnson Co Ind Oct 12 1864

Dear Brother

I Reciev'd A leter from you A few days agou & owing to the pressur of work I have not had A chance to write you.

\textsuperscript{41} D. D. Banta, \textit{History of Johnson County}, 1735; Livy A. Young, \textit{A Backward Glance at Old Union} (Franklin, Ind., [1940]), 37-39.

\textsuperscript{42} D. D. Banta, \textit{History of Johnson County}, 738.


\textsuperscript{44} Samuel Demaree, Troop C, Fourth Kentucky Cavalry, died in October, 1871, in Henry County, Kentucky, of the wounds he had received in the war. Various letters and memoranda in the Demaree Collection, especially correspondence between Samuel and George W. Demaree, 1863-1865.
We Recievd the money you Sent us & have neglected to ac-
nolage the Reciept or Send Reciepts for Same Bro Henry &
W T had Bought A Seperater & had comenst thrashing When
the money come & Was So Engaged With that tha thought
of but litel Els I maned it to them & told them that We ought
to attend to it but it was Still neglected I doo not know the
Exact form of the reciet or I Would get them up & have them
Sinde you had beter Send reciepts & I Will have them
atended to & Return them. It Would allways be best for
Recietos to accompany the money & then tha Would be no
neglect

the peopel of this State has just Past throug a draft our
town Ship Raised money by Subscription & herd Subistuts
We had 30 men to furnish tha cos $400 each making 12000
dolars & this Saved our township of a draft. tha Was 3
other townships dun the Same the Rest of the County Was
Drafted tha ar all trying hard to get Subistuts Cozen D D
Banta was Drafted the State Election has went of I Su-
pose the abeys has beeten us it is as easy for them to beat us
50000 as 1000 as tha Resort to all maner of frauds

I See from your last Ieter that you ar not Pleasd With
McClellan it makes but litel difernce hoo is the canidate for
tha Will Elect old Abe at all hasards & Mc had as Well
be Slauterd as eny other man if tha Was eny chance to Elect
A Decocrat President I would rather have an oth man but
I have no hopes I think the Sun of american liberty is a bout
Seting never to Raise a gain

I in tend to vot for Mc if I am Spaird Bro Henry has
bin to Washing city to get Bro Samuels Release he accom-
plished it Samuel as at Henry's he Sami Stood his trip
beond Expecttation he is geting along Very Well he is
quite Weak tho quite cherfull I think if he Would try to

42 This is David Demaree Banta (1833-1896) who later became a
circuit court judge, president of the Indiana University Board of Trus-
tees, and dean of the Law School at Indiana University. He was fasci-
nated by local history and wrote several Johnson County histories. The
Banta Collection at Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana, is named after
Judge Banta and consists primarily of material on Indiana and the
Middle West. Banta's mother, Sarah, was the youngest sister of Samuel
Demaree, Sr. Burton Dorr Myers, Trustees and Officers of Indiana
University, 1820 to 1950 (Greenfield, Ind., 1951), 296-99; Demarest,

45 “Abeys” is the editors' conjectural transcription of the almost
illegible word scrawled by Demaree. If this is indeed the correct term,
it presumably referred to Republican followers of President Abraham
Lincoln.
Excercise A litel he Would gain Strenth but he Seemes perfectly giv up. I heave Seen Worse looking men then him going a bout. We are in usuel helth yours as Ever to G. W. Demaree Peter Demaree
I have Writen this A great hury look ore Blunders

The next letter from Shuck is interesting for the observations he makes about the end of the war, Lincoln's assassination, and John Wilkes Booth. The letter also demonstrates that to a farmer national events were important, but so were the spring rains and the price of land.

Shuck's letter exemplifies the phonetic spelling of that era. A clear distinction was not made between the "e" and "i" sounds in many words. Thus Shuck wrote "sence," "ef," "distroyed," and "distruction." Other words, while not conforming to current spelling practices, are easily recognized and make for delightful reading. Some examples are: "broak," "deth," "helth," "littel," "reddy," "rool," and "wo."

Johnson co Ind May 2, 1865.

Dear Brother & sistr,

perhaps you wil think I am in a hurry in writing you so often, But the many great changes that have taken place sence we saw each other affords plenty of news &.

it seems that the Rebellion is over that the spirit of the southern people has departed & they are owmly fit subjects for the yoke & chains that have been prepared for them there doom is yet untold there case is deploreabel in the extreme. ef they could be allowed to return home in peace & follow there daily ocupation with there slaves around them they would be doing wel, but there slaves are proclaimed free there country distroyed there lands to be confscated the public ded [debt] perhaps to be saddeled uppon them, wo to there misery & there folly.

I fear they wil be a people without a country.

There has been a great ado here about the deth of President Lincon who has been shamefully assasinated. his corps was at Indianapolis Sunday last they say there was 40000 people there all tho a very rainy day rumer Says thre
Dearest and Co. Sis.

May 2, 1863.

I am in a hurry in writing you so often, but the great changes that have taken place since we knew each other afford plenty of news — it seems that the 11th billion is over that the spirit of the Sonton people has departed, and they are now fit subjects for the yoke. Claims that have been signed for their three dollars is yet undecided. This case is explainable in the primary if they could be allowed to return home in peace to follow their daily occupation with their hands around them, then they would be doing well, but those slaves we proclaimed free their country destroyed their lands to be.
Johnson County during the Civil War Era

was thousands of dollars worth of Bonnets & dresses spoiled. But they all braved the storm & mud to see the chieftain. It seems from the best proof that poor Booth, has payed the penalty that is laid down in Holy writ, wo to our nation & our beloved country.

may the prayers of the Just wise meek lowly yet prevaille & save the nation from distruction.

we are haveing quite a wet spring the most of farmers has but littel Broak for corn from 5, 10, to 15 Ac. Some few are done but there is But littel planted yet. Some hardy ones are plowing up the mud But it may be dry after while. wheat has come out beyond all expectation grass is plenty.

Wel G.W. we have waited Some 2 months on Mr Ellis & yet there has no money yet. I informed you in my last that I had Bought land at the high price of $50 pr Acre my first payment being christmas Sence I Bot I have a chance to Shave paper from 10 to 15 pr cent this I could have done the first of march, therefore Ef Mr Ellis is not reddy for settlement He must Expect to pay at least 10 pr cent.

we are Seling our produce at Reduced prices to meet our contracts therefore the golden Rool. I saw Peter yestureday He is kneeding his money.

I Started a letter to Missouria yestureday in Regard to our Lands there. Ef you have any thing new on that subject pleas inform me. you wil also inform me whether thre is any ajents employed in each county.

we learn that David Johnston has been killed on his farm.

47 Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865. His funeral train arrived in Indianapolis at 7:00 a.m., April 30. The body was taken to the State House where visitors were able to view the fallen President from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. One newspaper estimated that despite the rain which fell throughout the day 100,000 persons passed by the President's coffin. Indianapolis Daily Journal, April 30, 1865.


49 William R. Ellis bought from the heirs, at $25.00 per acre, 173 acres of the Samuel Demaree farm in Henry County, Kentucky. Deed Book, XXIX, 50-51 (Henry County Courthouse, New Castle, Kentucky).

50 Bank notes which circulated as paper money during this period were frequently discounted at less than face value. This practice, known as "note shaving," was applied not only to bank notes but also to other types of commercial paper. For a discussion of the complex financial practices and conditions in early Indiana see R. Carlyle Buley, The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840 (2 vols., Bloomington, 1951), I, 565-832; II, 290-325; Logan Esarey, State Banking in Early Indiana, 1814-1873 (Indiana University Studies, No. 15; Bloomington, 1912), 219-305.
I was to see Brother Saml Sunday his helth is about as usuel he was quite talking & seemed cheerful.

Susan has been quite complaning with pain in her side & Back for several days but is Bettr.

Jes Demaree has lately marryed Molly Miller thompsons sister. Ellen has lately died with scrofula51 She is next to Jane, there has been 4 deths in aunt Sallys family in a littel over a year, there is but 3 of the family left.52 we are all in usuel helth &c.

write soon
I remain yours affectontly
G.W. Demaree

there is a great prospect here for fruit. Plery Shuck is at home give me all the news & the price & prospect of tobacco. our George Boy is growing fast & fine we have Broak 15 Acres for corn we sowed some oats we Broak 10 last fall we wish to plant 36 Acres.

The last letter from Peter Demaree is in many ways the most fascinating of the six printed here. The letter and the newspaper article following it picture in a few words the attitude of the average Hoosier toward blacks in 1867. One historian who has studied attitudes toward blacks during the Civil War wrote that of all the midwestern states Indiana was the most conservative by far. The racial situation did change somewhat after the war when the Indiana Supreme Court declared null and void the provisions of the Indiana Constitution which excluded blacks from entering the state and when the state legislature modified the law which excluded blacks from testifying in court. Nevertheless, many Indiana communities strongly discouraged blacks from settling in their midst, and it continued to be unlawful for black children to

51 Scrofula is an antiquated term for a morbid constitutional condition which is usually hereditary and most common in childhood. It manifests itself in development of glandular tumors, particularly in the lymphatic glands of the neck, which usually degenerate into ulcers.

52 Jesse Young Demaree (1838-1902) married Mary Melvina Miller (1843-1871) on April 3, 1865. Two weeks later his sister, Rachel Ellen (1847-1865), died, the fourth death in the family in a little over a year. Only Jesse and two sisters remained of the family of George Washington Demaree (1812-1851), Samuel's younger brother, who had moved to Johnson County in 1835. Demarest, The Demarest Family, Vol. I, pp. VII-21, VIII-28-9.
Johnson County during the Civil War Era

65

attend public school. The latter law was not changed until 1869.53

The last paragraph mentions an incident which resulted in the only lynching in Johnson County's history. David J. Lyons, an elderly Greenwood man, was murdered August 10, 1867, in an attempted robbery. The five men to whom Peter refers were an old man, his two sons, and two sons-in-law. They were arrested for murder and robbery but later were cleared of the murder charge after implicating three men named Patterson, Simmons, and Hatchell. Patterson and Hatchell were eventually arrested, but Simmons escaped and reportedly was killed in Kentucky. During the night of October 31, 1867, an angry mob from the Greenwood area broke into the county jail at Franklin, removed the two suspects, and lynched them outside the town.54

Johnson Co Ind August 18 1867

Dear Brother

I recievd [your] letter I am very sorry to lern Bro Samuels condition I try in my Pore Way to Pray the Lord that he may Deliver him out of his affliction & give grase to suporte him in his trials & afflictions

We have very dry Wether corn crop is bound to be short

I have nothing New to Write you Except A dificultia that I am in I Will giv you the perticklers the trobel is betwen old John Shuck55 my Self he has bin thrying to get me tryd in the church for more then A month the first of June


54 Branigin, History of Johnson County, 107-108; Franklin (Indiana) Johnson County Press, August 22, September 26, October 31, November 7, 14, 1867; Indianapolis Daily Journal, August 13, November 2, 1867. It was rumored that Hatchell may have been innocent of the murder charge, and in the following spring several leaders of the lynch mob were indicted for his murder. Although found not guilty and supported by the majority of the county, their indictment was an unusual aftermath for a lynching in that era. Franklin (Indiana) Johnson County Press, March 12, 1868; Indianapolis Daily Journal, March 6, 10, 13, 18, 19, 1868.

55 Squire John Shuck (1800-1878), William T. Shuck's uncle, was a first cousin of Peter Demaree's mother. He was described as “the neighborhood chimney corner lawyer” noted “for his wit and humor and power of declamation.” His humor was evidently stretched by Peter's alleged insult to his daughter. T. M. Banta, Frisian Family, 157-58; D. D. Banta, Making A Neighborhood, 32, 34.
The sabbath school celebration was held June 4. The funeral Peter attended would have been that of Mrs. Serril Winchester who died June 3, 1867. The Winchesters were among the earliest settlers in the Shiloh community. Franklin (Indiana) Johnson County Press, May 23, 1867; D. D. Banta, History of Johnson County, 674; D. D. Banta, Making A Neighborhood, 14-15.

Samuel (1847-1938) was Peter Demaree's son. Isaac Vandivier was an area farmer, then forty-one years old. Demarest, The Demarest Family, Vol. I, p. IX-26; Branigin, History of Johnson County, 822.

Margaret F. Shuck, daughter of Squire John Shuck, was at this time an "old maid" school teacher of thirty-three. T. M. Banta, Frisian Family, 158; Young, A Backward Glance, 78.
here the subject droped. I told this conversation to sev-
erl of [meny ?] Democrat friends sum one Roat an article
for the County Paper [giving her line ?] tha acusd me of
Writing or having hand in the article refurd to I told them
I had no hand in it nor I did not know hoo ha[d roa]t it tha
told me I ned not Deny it for I nod I had hand in it & Brow
beat & villifyd me to the last & told me that tha Was going
to have me before the church seshion. he has had it formely
before the seshion for A month the seshion has bin dragen
me Round trying to get sumthing out of me I tell them that
I neather Roat dictated nor counsield the Writing of the article
refurd to & I have told nothing but the trueht & Intended to
defend it I dont know Whar the thing Will end bro H
stands suar up to me in my dificultia

She [does] not deny What she said but tha say it Was
cowardly in me in telling it

Shuck is clamering for the church seshion to Pas sum
order to pertect thar Radicals members aganst talk A ganst
the negrow eliment the ida is Il say What I pleas & you don
tel it

When if eve[r] this Dificultia is seteld I Will Write you
the result We expect to see the thing though We expect to
take it to Presbytery if nesary.

murdering Robing & theaving has become the order of
the day last monday morning tha Was a gang of men Went
to A mans home a bov franklin baterd Down [his d]ore with
a rail the man Resisted & tha shot him & Robd him & left
the man has died I believ tha have Arested 5 men & have
them in jail at Franklin tha ar sitizens of this county you
must write

yours as ever
Peter Demaree

Following is the article to which Peter referred:

Black or White

MR. EDITOR:—It is very natural for persons to look
and see who will take the lead in new things, and who is
willing to condesend to teach the colored children in our midst.
There is a blooming maid of some 25 summers, living in
Union township, by the name of Miss N. S........ [sic], who
has publicly expressed her willingness to teach the young
negroes of this or some other county, provided she can get the dimes for her services when rendered, and says some one has this NOBLE OFFICE to fill, and expresses her entire willingness to teach and associate with the loyal "Americans of African descent." "She has had some experience in teaching the white children of this vicinity, and no doubt she would do well teaching the MORE NOBLE RACE," and thus advance the reputation of the poor white children whom she has taught in days gone by and make the hearts of those poor parents rejoice to know that the minds of their children have been directed onward and upward. Would not some young and dashing youth do well to call at her father's house and see this fair and lovely maid, who has such a good heart, and try to persuade her to cast her lot with his and travel life's weary journey together. It might not be amiss for some young gentleman of color to give her a call; he would no doubt receive a cordial welcome, and the "twain might be made one flesh," and bring into existence something more grand, more noble and more sublime than has ever yet graced our neighborhood.

UNION

The Franklin (Indiana) Johnson County Press was the county's Democratic paper. It was extremely anti-Republican, antiradical, and anti-Negro. It made all manner of charges against the Republicans—perjury and stuffing the ballot box being the most frequent. Three months later, on October 17, the paper added: "it has been settled by a church in our county that if a man tells an ordinary lie he is not a fit person to be a member, but if he will cast an illegal vote and commit perjury in the bargain, his conduct does not deserve even a censure."  

The Shiloh church session records have not been located and with them rests the final outcome of Peter's trouble with John Shuck. It is interesting to note, however, that Peter and his wife left the membership of the Shiloh church on December 8, 1867. Since Peter denied writing the newspaper

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59 Franklin (Indiana) Johnson County Press, July 11, 1867.
60Ibid., October 17, 1867. There is no way to determine whether or not this notice was connected with the order which Shuck was clamoring for the church session to pass "to perfect thar radicals." Other churches in the county were also having political troubles at this time.
61 Membership roll of the Shiloh Presbyterian Church, published in D. D. Banta, Making A Neighborhood, 42.
Johnson County during the Civil War Era

article, he probably was not expelled from the church but more likely quit in disgust.

The six letters printed here reveal an interesting change in the attitudes of two northern Democrats during the era of the Civil War. In the first letter Shuck is nearly ecstatic as he brags that the Democrats have outsmarted the Republicans in the 1856 elections. The war, however, changed that attitude abruptly. No expression of triumph, no sense of bragging are seen in the letters of the 1860s. Both Peter and Shuck cry out against the futility of the war in 1861. By 1864 Peter exhibits a feeling of political frustration and hopelessness. Instead of lauding the Democrats he laments that the Republicans have probably won again in Indiana and that no one the Democrats nominate can defeat Lincoln.

Shuck and Peter were never stalwart supporters of the war or of Lincoln's administration. It is not surprising then to find in Shuck's 1865 letter no attitude of vindictiveness. No "bloody-shirt" phrases come from his pen. Instead the former Kentuckian expresses fear and concern for the fate of defeated southerners. He had not agreed with their secessionist stand, and he had not supported them in the conflict that followed; but he fears that their punishment will be greater than their crime. And 1867 finds Peter, a Hoosier who had signed slave deeds less than ten years earlier, in the midst of postwar difficulties relating to social equality of the blacks. Such difficulties were not unusual for residents of Indiana in the post-Civil War era, nor have they been completely resolved today.

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62 The heirs of Samuel Demaree had sold slaves in 1859. Deed for the sale of Thomas Perce to Samuel Demaree, Jr., January 14, 1859, Demaree Collection.