

The Political Symbiosis of Rutherford B. Hayes & William McKinley

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ABSTRACT

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Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley as a pair are undoubtedly peculiar. To the casual scholar of American history, Hayes's presidency is practically a footnote lost in the minutia of America's Gilded Age and Reconstruction period though presidential historians might find it noteworthy that he is one of only four presidents who attained office without winning the popular vote. Historians fail to appreciate Rutherford B. Hayes's handling of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and his commitment to end the military reconstruction of the South. William McKinley will be better known simply because he was assassinated and he has a mountain named after him. Historians have established McKinley's reputation as the sneering jingoist who saw opportunities to take land in both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. On the other hand, McKinley was sympathetic to labor, globalization of the United States economy, and a refusal to back down from the argument that a segregated society is still a society that is enslaved. Apart from presidential historians, few people could tell you much about either of these two men—either their personal lives or their political careers.

This study contends that Hayes and McKinley's historical and popular reputations do not begin to accurately portray their contributions to American society. Further, it is argued here that the personal and professional relationship between these two presidents is unlike any other in American history. Hayes served as a mentor, a role model and a father figure to McKinley, and McKinley was the son that Hayes never had. He was also a loyal supporter of Hayes, and even though they disagreed on some issues, these disagreements never seriously threatened the close personal and political bonds they shared.

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Chapter 1: Hayes & McKinley: Comrades in Arms

Introduction:

Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley as a pair are undoubtedly peculiar. To the casual scholar of American history, Hayes's presidency is practically a footnote lost in the minutia of America's Gilded Age and Reconstruction period though presidential historians might find it noteworthy that he is one of only four presidents who attained office without winning the popular vote. Contrary to the common theme that Hayes was a representative of "big business," he was more concerned with achieving results by skillfully pulling the right strings in the background to achieve his ends. Historians fail to appreciate Rutherford B. Hayes's handling of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and his commitment to end the military reconstruction of the South. William McKinley is better known simply because he was assassinated and he has a mountain named after him. Historians have established McKinley's reputation as the sneering jingoist who saw opportunities to take land in both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. On the other hand, William McKinley was sympathetic to labor, globalization of the United States economy, and a refusal to back down from the argument that a segregated society is still an enslaved society. Apart from presidential historians, few people could tell you much about either of these two men—either their personal lives or their political careers. Although they both served in the Civil War, they were *hawkish* presidents, and their administrations did not have the kind of crises that make for big headlines in history books. The more diligent scholar will recognize that both of these men were presidents during what is called America's "Gilded Age"—the period between 1877 and 1901, which is known for America's second industrialization boom prompting the rise of big business. With trusts and corporations controlling the United States economy, the

two political parties – Democrats and Republicans, sought control over Washington D.C. through graft (political bribes), machine politics, and convincing Americans that their policies were fit for a prosperous America. Democrats were left in fragments after the Civil War was settled which created factions – Low Tariff Democrats/Deep South Democrats and Northern Democrats who controlled the urbanized areas of the northeast. Republicans continued to maintain the respect of the Union although they too fell victim to factions – the Stalwarts, Half-Breeds, and Mugwumps. The major issues of the time period included but were not limited to – the tariff rate, railroads, monetary policy (gold standard vs. free silver), rise of labor unions, party patronage, and the monopolization of the economy.

But this dissertation is not a double-biography, nor is it a political history. I am investigating how Rutherford B. Hayes, whose presidency began with the Gilded Age, mentored his comrade in arms during the Civil War, William McKinley, who happened to be the last president of the Gilded Age and the last Civil War veteran to be President. It seeks to document a friendship that began on the battlefield and carried on while both men lived; becoming a political alliance that I believe is unique among American presidents.

The Hayes and McKinley relationship is truly unique. Never in the history of the United States did one president mentor another through war, the political arena, and family life. Arguably, presidents before Hayes and McKinley had friendly relationships with each other especially if they represented a certain political party or faction. What makes Hayes and McKinley rise above these relationships is the fact that their friendship began in the state of Ohio as they enlisted to fight for the Union during the start of Civil War. The history of the American presidency has provided the United States with memorable figures (George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, etc.) but never have we seen a situation where one (future) president mentored

another (future) president on the battlefield and then eventually in the political arena. Upon reviewing the past presidents it becomes very difficult to mention any presidential figure that mentored another president before there was even a talk of entering the political arena.

Presidents have fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, and the Civil War but it is very difficult to find a partnership within these military events that compare to a close relationship of Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley. Presidents who were related, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt, experienced a mentorship but it was usually one-sided such as where Franklin Roosevelt always looked to Theodore Roosevelt as a role model, whereas, Hayes and McKinley mentored each other in the political arena as advisers to the events surrounding the Gilded Age. It is during the Civil War where Hayes becomes a mentor to William McKinley. Rutherford B. Hayes commanded William McKinley whereas other presidents may have only seen a glimpse of other presidents (or read about them through a victory at a certain battle). When Hayes met McKinley during the preparatory period of enlisting in the 23rd Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, it seemed that Private McKinley easily came to respect Major Hayes due to Hayes's respectful treatment of the regiment. Instead of threatening the men, Rutherford B. Hayes personally walked to their quarters and asked them for a hearing. McKinley said, "Hayes's manner was so generous and his relations with the men were so kind, and yet always dignified, that he won my heart almost from the start."¹ Automatically, one would assume that the battlefield heroics of Hayes won the confidence of McKinley but surprisingly it was the bureaucratic style of Hayes that created a sense of "stardom" to William McKinley.²

¹ *Ashtabula Sentinel*, Oct. 22, 1862; Lyle, *Lights and Shadows of Army Life*, 177.

² *Ashtabula Sentinel*, Oct. 22, 1862; Lyle, *Lights and Shadows of Army Life*, 178

Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley were presidents of America's Gilded Age. The typical assessment of presidents like Rutherford B. Hayes, James Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and William McKinley is that they were "do-nothing" presidents only treading water before the great presidents like Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. This dissertation will counter this do-nothing view of the Hayes and McKinley administrations. Hayes served from 1877 to 1881 which can be considered the beginning of the era itself whereas William McKinley who served from 1897 to 1901 would be the last president of that same era. Their leadership styles were different as Hayes was more reserved in his approach to politics than McKinley but that could have been due to changing times of the era. Hayes preferred to use political maneuvers to control members of Congress without anyone finding out that he was the actual architect of the deal. For example, it was Hayes who banned alcohol in the White House and not his wife Lucy (who has been mocked by historians for creating a nonalcoholic White House resulting in her nickname, Lemonade Lucy). He did not ban liquor as a result of his Protestant ethic, but instead to ensure that the Prohibitionist wing of the Republican Party would not leave to form a third political party.³ Again, it was Hayes who mastered this move but unfortunately it was his wife who became the victim as the supposed mastermind of removing liquor from the White House resulting in a dampened social scene for dinners and gatherings.

Hayes valued the founding documents of the United States: the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution (with the Reconstruction era Amendments 13, 14, and 15), and "he found himself repeating Abraham Lincoln's view that everyone should have a fair start and an equal chance in the race of life. He often spoke of how these documents fostered

³ Ari Hoogenboom, *Rutherford B. Hayes: Warrior and President* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), p. 3

political and legal equality as well as universal education and suffrage.”⁴ Hayes’s objective, after winning the presidency in 1876, was to reform the politics of the time (civil service reform) which, in turn, laid the foundation for the modern American bureaucracy. It was Rutherford B. Hayes who united the Republican Party under the banner of reform which motivated Americans to vote for the next president, James Garfield (another Ohioan) due to the simple fact that Hayes took his politics to the people instead of party bosses or Congressional leaders.

Unlike Hayes, William McKinley entered the presidency with a different atmosphere surrounding him, the threat of war with Spain. The Hayes presidency did not cast a shadow upon McKinley but their relationship within the Civil War and throughout the Gilded Age affected McKinley’s decision to fight a war on foreign soil. After witnessing death and almost seeing his mentor killed at the Battle of South Mountain, William McKinley understood all too clearly that a declaration of war meant that American lives were at stake. McKinley received criticism for his lack of action against the Spanish Empire as yellow journalists continued to sensationalize stories in Cuba to inflame the American public (and to make a profit from those same headlines).⁵ It was almost forgotten that William McKinley was a veteran of the Battle of Antietam as the term yet “coward” was used to describe his actions in delaying a war with Spain. Even with the sinking of the USS *Maine* (assumed as an attack by the Spanish Empire in the port of Havana, Cuba on February 15, 1898) William McKinley refused to ask Congress for a declaration of war until he had solid evidence that Spain did attack the *USS Maine*. Was this the influence of Rutherford B. Hayes that led McKinley to take a step back from the bully pulpit and allow the factions to argue until a political compromise was created by the President? Hayes would have been proud to see that William McKinley attempted several times to create a cease

⁴ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 3-4

⁵ Morgan, H. Wayne, *William McKinley and His America*, 331

fire agreement between the Cubans and the Spanish Empire before asking Congress for a declaration of war. Hayes would have congratulated McKinley on the attempt to set Cuba free from the economic exploitation of Spain and to recognize the birth of economic globalization in 1898. **But** Rutherford B. Hayes was not the only mentor in McKinley's life as his advisor; Marcus Hanna, must be recognized in this role as well.⁶ While this dissertation will focus on the relationship of Hayes and McKinley, it must also delve into a competition between Hayes and Hanna in influencing McKinley in running for higher office and in his decision to promote certain economic interests for the United States.

Although there is no present work on the relationship between Hayes and McKinley by scholars or presidential historians, Ari Hoogenboom's *Rutherford B. Hayes: Warrior and President* defended the decisions made by Hayes by revealing details that other historians failed to uncover. Hoogenboom felt that Hayes was an underrated president and provided a helpful insight towards this dissertation by utilizing Hayes's diary through every historical event that unfolded before Hayes. There is barely any mention of McKinley in his book which resulted in research to find out what McKinley was doing while Hayes was the focus by Hoogenboom. For example, Hayes held several parties within the White House and it was hard to imagine how McKinley was not part of that guest list. After looking through letters between both men, there were instances where McKinley thanked Hayes for a lovely dinner party.

William Armstrong's *Major McKinley* provided an in-depth look on how McKinley fared in the Civil War. Unlike Hoogenboom, he mentions Hayes on several occasions. The biography is primarily on the Civil War which helped in researching further details on the less known battles that took place near and within the border states. The missing piece of Armstrong's

⁶ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 5

biography was the political world in which McKinley lived in after the war. To be fair, Armstrong had no desire to discuss the politics of the Gilded Age in his biography of McKinley but H. Wayne Morgan did just that in *McKinley and His America*. Morgan's biography on McKinley is the foundation of William McKinley biographies. William Armstrong's *Major McKinley* and Quentin Skrabec's *McKinley: Apostle for Protectionism* credit and note Morgan on several occasions. Astonishingly, Morgan, like Hoogenboom, barely mentions his counterpart, Hayes in the biography. The puzzle pieces of both men are found in these biographies but the ultimate scholarly work was finished by C.R. Williams and his *Diary of President Rutherford B. Hayes*. The five volume set possesses letters and diary entries by Hayes. Every historian and scholarly writer utilized this work in writing a biography on Hayes. Williams, thankfully, included the letters from McKinley to Hayes.

This dissertation aims to illuminate the great prominence that Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley certainly deserve. I would like to de-mythologize Hayes and McKinley as do-nothing presidents known only for their great whiskers and sideburns by amateur students of United States history.

In the early months of 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley found themselves travelling together by train to Washington D.C. under two new titles: the elected President of the United States and the elected Congressman from the State of Ohio. As they were accompanied by their wives, Lucy W. Hayes and Ida S. McKinley, the excitement of entering the political quagmire of Washington certainly unnerved them.⁷ McKinley found Rutherford B.

⁷ Williams, Charles Richard., *The Diaries and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes: Nineteenth President of the United States*, 5 vols. (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1922-26), 79-80

Hayes as a strong role model as their backgrounds blended well together. Hayes was a lawyer from Cincinnati and graduate from Harvard Law School with political party affiliations in the Whig Party and then the Republican Party where he considered himself an abolitionist.⁸ As a lawyer, he defended runaway slaves which led him to volunteer for the Union army during the outbreak Of the Civil War.⁹ Rutherford B. Hayes was elected in the 1876 Presidential Election by one electoral vote over the Democratic candidate, Samuel Tilden, and was subsequently accused of defrauding the Election, hence the nickname: *Rutherfraud* B. Hayes.¹⁰ William McKinley, who was accused of riding the Republican coattails of Hayes since their enlistment within the 23rd Ohio infantry during America's Civil War was preparing to confront a House of Representatives controlled by the Democratic party.¹¹ The Colonel Hayes that McKinley knew was right there with him to once again conduct battle but instead of the battlefields of the Civil War; the political arena waited in its place.¹²

As the train left their beloved state of Ohio, William McKinley may have reflected on the first time he witnessed Hayes's leadership capability. He must have never forgotten his time during the Civil War as a young man serving the state of Ohio. As a Union soldier within the 23rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Private William McKinley was determined to do his "patriotic duty" and force his southern brethren into submission for two reasons: the despicable nature of slavery for which his views had been shaped by Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the lack of loyalty to the Union by the Confederate States. Upon receiving his uniform for the Infantry, Private McKinley felt as if he were participating in another American Revolution.

⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 5

⁹ Ibid, 7

¹⁰ Ibid, 8

¹¹ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 81

¹² Ibid, 82

May we be as bold soldiers as they were, and stand up for our God given rights as they did. May we never forget that we owe to them the support of the government they so nobly fought to establish. May we never become oblivious to the fact that it is ours to hand down to prosperity this government as free, as pure, and as spotless as our sires transmitted it to us.¹³

Upon enlisting as a volunteer it was during the summer months of 1861 that the 23rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry found itself in a minor dispute. Members of the regiment refused to accept their muskets due to their lack of combat training and the uncomfortable feeling that the muskets were relics of the War of 1812.¹⁴ One soldier said, “The muskets were of the make of 1825 passed over.”¹⁵ After all, these were volunteers without any military experience. William McKinley even admitted, “None of us knew our rights and were all conscious of our importance.”¹⁶ McKinley was referring to the order of accepting the muskets. One by one, a member of the Regiment (upon being called forward by their Captain (Zimmerman) would accept the old musket as their weapon but a few were reluctant and continued to stack the musket from its origin.¹⁷ Instead of threatening the men, “[Rutherford] Hayes went to their quarters and asked them to give him a hearing. Then he reasoned with them, with what McKinley thought “patriotic feeling” and “sound sense.”¹⁸

He said that many of the most decisive battles of history had been won with the rudest weapons. At Lexington and Bunker Hill and many other of the Revolution engagements of the Revolution our Forefathers had triumphed over the well-equipped English armies with the very poorest firearms – and that even pikes and scythes had done good work in that glorious conflict. Should we be less patriotic than our brave ancestors? Should we hesitate at the very start of another struggle for liberty and union, for the best and freest

¹³ *Mahoning Register*, June 27, 1861

¹⁴ William McKinley, “*Personal Recollections of Rutherford B. Hayes*,” *Chautauquan* 17 (April 1893) 42

¹⁵ William H. Armstrong, *Major McKinley: William McKinley & the Civil War* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2000), 12

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 12

¹⁷ William McKinley, “*Personal Recollections of Rutherford B. Hayes*,” *Chautauquan* 17 (Apr. 1893):43-44

¹⁸ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 13

Government on the face of the earth, because we were not pleased with the pattern of our muskets, or with the caliber of our rifles?¹⁹

Hayes's manner, McKinley said, "was so generous and his relations with the men were so kind, and yet always dignified, that he won my heart from the very start."²⁰ From that moment our confidence in our leader never wavered."²¹ Communication and confidence are the two elements that McKinley found in Rutherford B. Hayes, while Hayes saw a young man who did not consume alcohol, was uncorrupted, and did not swear in the presence of officers.²²

As the 23rd Ohio began to inch towards Civil War battle the 1,020 men of the regiment were ordered to Western Virginia.²³ Hayes, instead of riding on horseback, joined the volunteer group on foot as they marched towards Columbus, Ohio, waiting to board a train. After crossing the Ohio River, they boarded another train to Clarksburg. According to McKinley, Western Virginia felt vulnerable due to the recent Union defeat at Bull Run and departure of Union soldiers in the "great skedaddle" back to Washington.²⁴ McKinley was happy to see that Union flags were still flying and the reception by the Western Virginia residents aroused the troops.²⁵ As Hayes said, "They stood on the tops of the railroad cars and danced and shouted with delight. Our men enjoyed it beyond measure. Many had never seen a mountain; none had ever seen such a reception."²⁶

With confidence and applause came the harsh reality of war. Neither McKinley nor Hayes had ever experienced war (although Hayes was old enough to serve in the Mexican-

¹⁹ Ibid, 13-14

²⁰ WM, "Personal Recollections of Rutherford B. Hayes," 44

²¹ Ibid, 44

²² Ibid, 42

²³ Williams, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:44-46

²⁴ Ibid, 2:44-46

²⁵ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 17

²⁶ Williams, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:44-46

American War of 1848-50, he was too ill to fight).²⁷ As the regiment marched nine miles from Clarksburg to a town called Weston, they saw men buried by their comrades, a first lieutenant of Company F (within the 23rd Ohio) accidentally shot himself in the foot, and a drunken soldier who resisted arrest was shot and killed.²⁸ While the 23rd of Ohio was anxious to fight, instead it was assigned guard duty as its first “mission.” Hayes and McKinley were stationed at Barnes Mill, in Bendale, south of Weston, where they served until the Middle of August.²⁹

On August 17, 1861, Hayes witnessed an increase in guerrilla attacks by the Rebels. “They rob and murder the Union men and the latter come to us for help. We have out all the time from two to six parties of from ten to seventy-five or one hundred men on scouting duty.”³⁰ The first casualties of the 23rd were created by a skirmish with guerrillas that wounded three men.³¹ Hayes, upset with another regiment’s reaction to the attack by these so called “bushwhackers,” who used hit and run tactics to try and weaken the Union forces until Confederate reinforcements arrived, heard that a captain ordered the killing of three bushwhackers in cold blood. Hayes vowed, “If any of my men kill prisoners, I’ll kill them.”³²

Finally on August 18, the 23rd Ohio received word that the Confederate armies were approaching from the southeast. Hayes was excited by the thought of “real combat” and confronted the possibility of death. He told his wife Lucy, “I feel no apprehension – no presentiment of evil, but at any rate you know how I love you and the dear boys and Grandma

²⁷ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 119

²⁸ *Ibid*, 119

²⁹ Roy B. Cook, *William McKinley: The Soldier in West Virginia*, *West Virginia Review* I (March 1924): 18-19

³⁰ T. Harry Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875-1881*, Aug 12, 13, 15, 17, 1861, pp. 2:63-65

³¹ *Ibid*, 2: 67-68

³² *Ibid*, 2: 70.

and all will take care that I am not forgotten.”³³ McKinley had some serious thoughts which he recorded in a note to his family:

Soon, yes very soon, we may meet our once brothers, now aliens and enemies, face to face. It will be the fate of some of us to fall, fall at the cannon’s mouth. If it be my lot to fall, I want to fall at my post and have it said that I fell in defense of my country in honor of the glorious stars and stripes. Not only do I want it said that I fell a valiant soldier of my country, but a soldier for my Redeemer.³⁴

By September of 1861, McKinley and Hayes reached approximately 6,000 Confederates in Carnifex Ferry (on the Gauley River), organized into two separate armies, one under Henry A. Wise, and the other under John B. Floyd.³⁵ “Floyd’s troops had attacked and routed the 7th Ohio at Cross Lanes and then retired to a strongly fortified position on a high hill above the Gauley River at a place called Carnifex Ferry.”³⁶ McKinley noted that the fighting began at 3:24 pm and lasted for over three hours.³⁷ Hayes was ordered to take four companies of the 23rd and attack the enemy’s right flank with an objective to cut off a retreat by Floyd.³⁸ McKinley, who was placed in one of the four regiments under Hayes’s command, said, “We went on quick time through meadows, cornfields, and laurel thickets, over rocks and deep precipices. Part of our march was made on our knees, and to preserve a man’s equilibrium was almost impossible.”³⁹ Upon reaching the river, Hayes and McKinley heard sounds and movements coming from a thicket. Hayes took out his revolver and before he could point and warn the intruders he smiled and laughed as the noise was caused by his law partner from Cincinnati, Ohio – Leopold Markbreit.⁴⁰ McKinley notes Hayes’s laughter as it was Markbreit who promised Hayes that he would look

³³ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, August 18-20, 22-24, 26-28, 1861

³⁴ William McKinley Diary, August 24, 26, 1861

³⁵ William H. Armstrong, Major McKinley, 20

³⁶ Ibid, 21

³⁷ Ibid, 21

³⁸ Ibid, 22

³⁹ William McKinley, “Personal Recollections of Rutherford B. Hayes,” p.43

⁴⁰ Ibid, 43

after the law office when Hayes joined the 23rd Ohio. Markbreit, who joined the 28th of Ohio, was relieved that Hayes had forgiven him “for having run away from the law office.”⁴¹

Rutherford B. Hayes, who was enjoying the independent command of these four regiments, had the privilege of acknowledging that only two men had been wounded in the attack of Floyd’s right flank.⁴² Speaking of Floyd, he realized that his army was not in a comfortable position and withdrew from Carnifex Ferry altogether. He destroyed the ferry and bridge before retreating.⁴³ McKinley wrote, “This was our first real fight... It gave us confidence in ourselves and faith in our commander. We learned that we could fight and whip the rebels on their own ground.”⁴⁴ While the Battle of Carnifex Ferry was not a major Civil War battle, it was McKinley’s and Hayes’s first fight together.⁴⁵

Three days after the battle, McKinley learned that he was reassigned to become a clerk with the brigade quartermaster’s office. He preferred to be a soldier but did clerical work during off hours when the 23rd Ohio was encamped. It is obvious that Hayes played an important role in the assignment as McKinley would still remain a part of the 23rd Ohio but in a different role. Impressed by McKinley’s “soldierly appearance,” Hayes had advised the quartermaster’s office to “keep your eye on that young man... there is something in him.”⁴⁶ Hayes did his best to try and convince his superiors in transferring the 23rd Ohio to battlegrounds like Kentucky but to no avail.⁴⁷ So Hayes, his wife Lucy, and McKinley would have the opportunity to safely make it through 1861 without a scratch or heart break.⁴⁸ On November 2, 1861, Hayes was promoted to

⁴¹ Ibid, 43

⁴² William McKinley Diary, September 11, 1861; *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley* (1893), 643

⁴³ William McKinley, *Speeches*, 643

⁴⁴ Ibid, 643

⁴⁵ Ibid, 643

⁴⁶ McKinley Diary, September 13, 1861

⁴⁷ Ibid, September 13, 1861

⁴⁸ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 19

lieutenant colonel of the 23rd Ohio. (Hayes didn't enjoy the title of major due to the fact that medical doctors within the division had the same title).⁴⁹ One private would remember him: "Hayes was a man who has made himself universally beloved throughout the regiment, by his uniform kindness and respect to his subordinates."⁵⁰

December 22, 1861 proved to be an important day for Rutherford B. Hayes, for on this day he realized that the Civil War was a war against slavery. Without is no mentioning of "states' rights" or the "preservation of the Union," He declared, "We are at the same high call here today, freedom, freedom for all. We all know that is the essence of this contest."⁵¹ It is unfortunate for Hayes that he was unable to "back up" his rhetoric as President of the United States in 1877 with the withdrawal of Federal troops from Southern States which ultimately paved the way for disastrous Jim Crow segregation laws. To be fair, Hayes was not expecting a controversial election that led to the infamous "Compromise of 1877" or even the opportunity to run for the presidency in the first place.⁵²

Within the war over slavery, Hayes displayed many contradictions. He felt that fugitive slaves from the Confederacy should not be returned to their masters, since these States turned their back on the United States Constitution and the Fugitive Slave Act, but if a slave fled from a Union master then that slave must be returned to his owner as the Union master was still loyal to the United States Constitution.⁵³ Historian, Ari Hoogenboom notes Hayes's view that the Border States who remained loyal to the Union would have the ability to dispose of slavery in their own way.⁵⁴ He [Hayes] predicted that abolition would come if it is found that a stubborn and

⁴⁹ Rutheford B. Hayes Diary, December 22, 1861

⁵⁰ *Painesville Telegraph*, April 3, 1862

⁵¹ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, December 22, 1861

⁵² *Ibid*, December 22, 1861

⁵³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 134

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 134

prolonged resistance is likely to be made in the cotton states. Ultimately and regardless of legal entitlements, Hayes believed this war was going to end with the destruction of the slave system. He proved this by acknowledging Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation as the administration's recognition that slavery would have to be abolished to suppress the rebellion.⁵⁵ For now, the rhetoric would stand and there would be a long wait until orders came for the 23rd Ohio's next move into battle.⁵⁶

In April of 1862, like his beloved commander Hayes, William McKinley was promoted to commissary sergeant (ration distribution, attending to horses, and piles of paperwork).⁵⁷ Once again, McKinley caught the eye of Hayes especially with respect to his care of the horses and his attention to details. "I came to know him like a book, and love him like a brother. We soon found that in business, in executive ability, young McKinley was a man of rare capacity, especially for a boy of his age," said Hayes.⁵⁸ The assignment kept McKinley away from the front lines but it kept him in great favor with his superior officers. Whether McKinley was ambitious or not, it was obvious that he enjoyed having a great relationship with some like Hayes, who continued to promote and acknowledge McKinley as an accomplished young man throughout the entire Civil War.⁵⁹

As McKinley continued to help his superiors, Hayes finally received word that the 23rd Ohio would mobilize. Unfortunately, those who were expecting a great battle were disappointed as only tiny skirmishes occurred throughout May, 1862.⁶⁰ For the first time, Hayes received an order of retreat and the 23rd Ohio was forced to venture north of Princeton, Virginia. On May 19,

⁵⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior & President*, 135

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 135

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 136

⁵⁸ Morgan, *William McKinley & His America*, 23

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 23-24

⁶⁰ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, May 24, 1862

the 23rd reached Flat Top Mountain and remained there for almost two months where Hayes felt “safe as a bug in the rug.”⁶¹ Hayes noted, “Flat Top Mountain is the boundary line between America and Dixie – between Virginia, either loyal or subdued, and Western Virginia, rebellious and unconquered.”⁶² Again, skirmishes commenced, but the majority of the time was spent reading, writing, dancing, and drilling. Finally, on July 13, 1862, the 23rd Ohio marched fourteen miles down the mountain to Camp Green Meadows; closer to the enemy.⁶³ Ten days later, unfortunately for the 23rd Ohio, Rutherford B. Hayes received word that he would be appointed the colonel of the 79th Regiment of Ohio. This was a perplexing situation for Hayes as he grown accustomed to the daily routine and gentlemen quality of his volunteers. Hayes thought – was this a foolish move to leave a “well-oiled machine?”⁶⁴ On the other hand, he sought action and wanted this promotion badly. At the same time, this promotion gave Hayes the opportunity to return to Ohio and visit his family. Hayes’s final thought of the 23rd Ohio (or at least he thought it would be the final message): “Our men are delighted with the change. They cheer and laugh, the band plays, and it is a real frolic. During the hot dusty marching, the idea that we were leaving the mountains of West Virginia kept them in good heart.” The regimental band even played, “We Are So Glad to Get out of the Wilderness.”⁶⁵

Before making the trip by train to Ohio, Hayes and the 23rd Ohio made a stop in Washington D.C. on August 24, 1862 near the Smithsonian Institution. On August 25th, the 23rd Ohio marched to the White House where they would spend time with President Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln thanked the soldiers for their service and promoted confidence in their future

⁶¹ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, May 24, 1862

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Ibid, July 11, 13, 1862

⁶⁴ Ibid, July 13, 1862

⁶⁵ Rutherford B. Hayes to Lucy Hayes Letter, August 18,19, 1862

work for the Union.⁶⁶ This trip foreshadowed the residence of each in the White House. While McKinley and soldiers played the role of tourist in the nation's capitol, Rutherford B. Hayes and the 23rd Ohio had an opportunity like no other to serve in the Civil War. He heard the fighting across the Potomac and missed the Second Battle of Bull Run, after George McClellan assumed command of the Army of the Potomac and ordered the men (including the 23rd) to counter General Robert E. Lee's invasion of Maryland. Hayes was given the opportunity to participate in a major battle, in which two major generals would confront one another in the direction of the war.⁶⁷

On September 14, 1862, William McKinley and Rutherford B. Hayes found themselves in a battle they would never forget. The Battle of South Mountain was the precursor to America's bloodiest battle up to that point – Antietam. Hayes waited for his transfer to the 79th Ohio but felt he was needed within the 23rd Ohio, especially for the great fight awaiting his men.⁶⁸ “The National Road led over South Mountain, and General Lee had fortified Turner's Gap, where it went over the mountain, and two other passes through the mountain, Fox's Gap and Crampton's Gap, to delay the Union Army.”⁶⁹ The 23rd Ohio was the first to reach South Mountain and advanced towards Fox's Gap. Hayes notes that he made contact with the Rebels at approximately nine o'clock that morning with a strong rush by the Confederates down the mountain. Hayes shouted, “Now boys, remember you are the 23rd and give them hell. In these woods the Rebels don't know but we are ten thousand; and ... we are as good as ten thousand, by

⁶⁶ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, August 25-30, 1862

⁶⁷ William H. Amrstrong, “Major McKinley: William McKinley & the Civil War” p.36

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Ibid, pg. 37

God.”⁷⁰ William McKinley’s recollection of the battle provides the account of Rutherford B.

Hayes’s leadership of the 23rd Ohio:

It was a lovely September day – an ideal Sunday morning. McClellan’s army, with Burnside’s Corps in the front, was passing up the mountain by the National Road. General Cox’s Ohio Division led Burnside’s Corps, and the 23rd Ohio was in the lead of that division. Hayes was ordered to take one of the mountain paths and move to the right of the rebels. At nine o’clock the rebel picket was driven back, and on our pushing forward the rebels advanced upon us in strong force. Our regiment was quickly formed in the woods and charged over rocks and broken rocks through deep underbrush, under the heavy fire of the enemy at short range, and, after one of the hottest fights of the war, we drove them out of the woods and into an open field near the hilltop. Another charge was ordered by Hayes. No sooner has he given the word of command, than a minnie ball from the enemy shattered his left arm above the elbow, crushing the bone to fragments... The regiment made three successful charges in that fight, and lost nearly two hundred men – half of the effective force – in action.⁷¹

Suddenly, Rutherford B. Hayes felt a stunning blow to his left arm. Not only did he receive a musket ball hole in it but a few bruised ribs, as well. Although he felt, “weak, faint, and sick at the stomach,” he rallied his men and ordered a final charge before falling to the ground.⁷² As he looked into the sky and “(musket) balls passed near my face and hit the ground all around me,” he got up sensing that something was wrong and directed the 23rd Ohio to continue pouring the fire onto the enemy.⁷³ Moments later, he fell down again but still gave out occasional commands until he felt faint due to the blood flowing from his left arm. As Hayes slipped in and out of consciousness, he came to realization that this battle might be his last.⁷⁴ The glorious battle he sought had come but the conclusion of that glorious battle was still a mystery to him. The answer came within twenty minutes. The firing had stopped and Hayes was in suspense wondering how his men fared against a superior Confederate defense. He shouted, “Hallo 23rd men are you going

⁷⁰ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, September 18, 1862

⁷¹ Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893) pp.643-44

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ Ibid, pg. 645

⁷⁴ Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893) pp.644-645

to leave your colonel here for the enemy?”⁷⁵ As his men came out of the woods to drag Hayes off the battlefield, the Confederates opened fire. Hayes, surprised, ordered his men back to cover. As another pause came, Hayes was dragged into the woods and eventually taken by ambulance to a field hospital. The battle that had begun at seven o’clock in the morning, ended at approximately eleven o’clock that evening when Lee began to withdraw his forces back to Sharpsburg. As Hayes was laid up in a private home near South Mountain, he saw this battle of as an introduction to an even greater battle – Antietam.⁷⁶

On September 17, 1862 near and around Sharpsburg, Maryland, the Battle of Antietam began with the Union objective of keeping General Lee from escaping.⁷⁷ Hayes reflected on the battle by calling it, “the bloodiest day of the war, the day on which more men were killed or wounded than on any other day of the war.”⁷⁸ As Union troops poured into Sharpsburg they were met by constant enemy fire. The difference between the exposures at Sharpsburg versus other battles is the fact that the Confederates had the reinforcements to continue pouring on the attack. To make matter worse, the Union soldiers were exhausted, without breakfast and rations, as they waited for supply trains until 2 a.m.⁷⁹ William McKinley was determined to provide for his men as the Commissary Sergeant. “Without consulting anyone, he went back to the wagon train and the commissary stores two miles behind the battlefield, gathered up stragglers, and put them to work preparing rations. Then he loaded a wagon with cooked meat, pork and beans, crackers, and a barrel of ground coffee and asked for a volunteer to go with him to get the food to the

⁷⁵ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, September 18, 1862

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Robert P. Porter, *Life of William McKinley, Soldier, Lawyer, Statesman* (Cleveland: N.G. Hamilton Publishing Company, 1896) 62

⁷⁹ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.39

men.”⁸⁰ The heroic action of William McKinley in feeding the starved men of the several regiments on his own accord was later commended by Rutherford B. Hayes: ⁸¹

That battle began at daylight... without breakfast, without coffee, they went to fight and it continued until after the sun had set. Early in the afternoon, naturally enough, with the exertion required of the men, they were famished and thirsty, and to some extent broken in spirit. The commissary department of the brigade was under Sergeant McKinley’s administration and personal supervision. From his hands every man in the regiment was served hot coffee and warm meats – a thing that had never occurred under similar circumstances in any other army in the world.⁸²

William McKinley, speaking at a celebration of Lincoln’s birthday during the presidential campaign of 1896, reflected on the battle of Antietam and the latter’s visit to South Mountain and Antietam on October 3, 1862 – “I remember as though it were yesterday, and thousands of comrades will recall, how, when he [Lincoln] reviewed the Army of the Potomac immediately after the Battle of Antietam, his indescribably sad, thoughtful, far-seeing expression pierced every man’s soul.”⁸³ McKinley added, “The sadness of President Lincoln’s face on that occasion made more impression upon him as a boy than all the carnage of that dreadful day.”⁸⁴

With his quick thinking and disregard for danger, Sergeant McKinley was easily up for promotion for

showing ability and energy of the first class, in not only keeping us fully supplied with rations throughout the fight, but in having them fully prepared for eating, also. We had plenty when everybody else was short. He delivered them to us under fire, in two instances with perfect method and coolness, I feel greatly indebted to McKinley. No promotion could be made which would give more general satisfaction.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.40

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid, p. 41

⁸³ *Abraham Lincoln: An Address by William McKinley of Ohio before the Marquette Club, Chicago, February 12, 1896*, pp. 24-25

⁸⁴ *Abraham Lincoln: An Address by William McKinley of Ohio before the Marquette Club, Chicago, February 12, 1896*, pp. 24-25

⁸⁵ James M. Comly to Rutherford B. Hayes, October 5, 1862, Rutherford B. Hayes Papers

The promotion was sent to Rutherford B. Hayes who, in turn, sent the promotion request to Ohio's Governor, David Tod, noting McKinley's bravery on the battlefield. On November 3, 1862, Sergeant William McKinley was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant.⁸⁶

Upon receiving a short leave to celebrate his promotion and to recruit more men for the 23rd Ohio, Lieutenant McKinley went straight to Columbus, Ohio to visit the recovering Hayes.⁸⁷ McKinley, in a letter to Hayes in 1888, said, "If I may indulge a moment in reminiscence, let me tell you that the proudest and happiest moment of my life was when in 1862 I was sent from the regiment on recruiting service with other sergeants, and upon arriving at Columbus found that you had my commission as 2nd lieutenant, and that it had been issued upon your personal recommendation, for what as a boy, I had done at Antietam."⁸⁸ Hayes, excited for William McKinley's promotion, mentioned that he had news to share as well. Before leaving for Ohio to command the 79th Ohio, Hayes requested his discharge from the 23rd Ohio to be revoked.⁸⁹ Nearing the middle of October, 1862, Hayes's request was approved and was named colonel of the 23rd Ohio. Hayes's passion and friendship with men like McKinley, forced him to rethink the command of the 79th Ohio and gratefully accept the rank of colonel instead.⁹⁰ To Hayes, the men of the 23rd Ohio, were his comrades in arms.

By the time Hayes reached the 23rd Ohio, it was late November and the fighting declined with the cold weather looming on the horizon. He tried to keep busy by delegating various projects to his subordinate officers. He even delegated the job of clearing a parade ground to

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Williams, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:374

⁸⁸ Williams, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:375

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Ibid, 2: 375-76

William McKinley to create a new log cabin town to be called Camp Reynolds.⁹¹ Hayes noted in his diary that “our new second Lieutenant, McKinley returned today – an exceedingly bright intelligent and gentlemanly young officer. He promises to be one of our best.”⁹² Hayes added his compliments to McKinley with a letter to his wife, Lucy, during their down time in late November:

One of our new second lieutenants – McKinley – a handsome, bright, gallant boy, got back last night. He went to Ohio to recruit with the other orderly sergeants of the regiment. He tells good stories of their travels. The Thirtieth and Twelfth sergeants stopped at second-class hotels, but the Twenty-third boys “splurged.” They stopped at the American and swung by the big figure. Very proper. They are the generals of the next war.⁹³

For Hayes, this was a period of time to spend with his family as his sons, Webb and Birch, came with his wife, Lucy to the camp to spend the winter with him.⁹⁴ William McKinley saw this as an opportunity to write home – “There is nothing new in camp, all being quiet...[I] have more time than usual, as I suspend all unnecessary business on that day [Sundays]. My health is good and spirits fine. Love to all.”⁹⁵

On January 7, 1863, William McKinley was honored by Rutherford B. Hayes once more. “Hayes was given command of the 23rd and 89th Ohio Infantry Regiments and two companies of the cavalry. It was a small brigade, numbering 1,859 on paper but with only 1,350 present for duty. Immediately, Hayes appointed McKinley as the brigade’s acting assistant quartermaster.”⁹⁶ If cheering was expected, Hayes would have been disappointed as several members of the 23rd

⁹¹ Ibid, 2: 376

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Williams, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:374

⁹⁴ Morgan, *William McKinley & His America*, pg. 26

⁹⁵ Morgan, *William McKinley & His America*, pg. 27

⁹⁶ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 48

Ohio saw this as complete farce and favoritism towards William McKinley.⁹⁷ Regardless, McKinley was in a position that was usually held for those of “powerful and important families.” The change was common – a new year during the Civil War prompted changes and promotions in rank to prepare for battle in the spring of that same year.⁹⁸

McKinley was in the position to supply Hayes and the chief quartermaster at Charleston, South Carolina. To say that this was an ideal job would be an exaggeration as he preferred to spend most of his time with the mules.⁹⁹ He felt that the paperwork could be handled by his clerks as he only needed to review and sign them. The documents contained supply orders for specific dates/times and, not surprisingly, some of the supplies were missing.¹⁰⁰ Regulations allowed Hayes to investigate the losses through a committee which found William McKinley not responsible for the losses. Hayes provided a letter clearing William McKinley of any wrong doing. As other quartermasters throughout the war profited from “missing supplies,” William McKinley told a friend, “This is where the quartermasters make their money, but I don’t want a dollar of Uncle Sam’s that doesn’t belong to me.”¹⁰¹

Finally, on March 15, 1863, Rutherford B. Hayes was ordered to move out of the wilderness, leaving his family at his log cabin in Camp Reynolds and moved the regiments to a new headquarters, Camp White, near Charleston, West Virginia.¹⁰² Hayes experienced several raids by the Confederates while McKinley had difficulty issuing supplies.¹⁰³ The objective at Camp White was to simply fortify the position but to Rutherford B. Hayes this was a perfect location to “play it safe” while providing his men with the opportunity to “boat, play ball, and

⁹⁷ Ibid

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Porter, *Life of William McKinley*, pg. 110

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Ibid, pg. 111

¹⁰² Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 51

¹⁰³ Ibid

relax from the stress war.” In Ari Hoogenboom’s *Hayes: Warrior and President*, the author notes, “Hayes’s optimism grew in the spring of 1863. Congress passed conscription, banking reforms, habeas corpus acts, all giving the Government more power to fight the war. Hayes was very excited in the Spring of 1863 as Vicksburg was in the target of Ulysses Grant, the south was occupied by Union troops, and the fact that the Army of the Potomac was handling the Rebel onslaught without any real threat of northern invasion.”¹⁰⁴

Fifteen days later and free from the hit and run tactics of the Rebels, William McKinley received another promotion by Governor Tod of Ohio to become a First Lieutenant. Unlike the hints of favoritism by Hayes towards McKinley that accompanied his first promotion, this one was done by another major and lead to several congratulatory comments by McKinley’s fellow soldiers.¹⁰⁵ With his new status, McKinley had the pleasure of riding with Colonel Hayes visiting boarding houses and having dinner with Union sympathizers.¹⁰⁶ Lucy Hayes and his sons returned to the camp for a short stay but the fun ended in June when Hayes received notice that his youngest son, Joe, died. “Teething, dysentery, and brain affected” were the cause of death for the eighteen month old.¹⁰⁷

With the capture of Vicksburg and the victory at the battle of Gettysburg Hayes and his men fired shots on Independence Day.¹⁰⁸ Although these were great victories for the Union, Hayes still felt that there was much more to be done to end the war. On July 16, 1863, Rutherford B. Hayes received startling news that his home state of Ohio was on the verge of invasion by the Confederate general, John Hunt Morgan. The 2,000 Confederate cavalry sought

¹⁰⁴ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, June 25, 1863, July 1, 1863

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, July 4, 1863

equipment and supplies that were stored near Gallipolis, at the mouth of the Kanawha.¹⁰⁹ Hayes, who did not have any orders to return to Ohio, pleaded with the top brass to take two regiments, the 23rd Ohio and the 13th West Virginia, to defend the storage houses.¹¹⁰ Upon receiving approval for the mission, Hayes and his regiments were approximately five miles from confronting Morgan along the Kanawha River. After a game of cat and mouse, Morgan realized that Hayes's men were determined to defend the supplies.¹¹¹ On July 19, "Hayes's troops assisted Union militiamen, federal cavalrymen, and US Navy gunboats in preventing the crossing by Morgan into West Virginia and captured more than 1,300 raiders." Eventually, Morgan and the rest of his men were captured near West Point, Ohio.¹¹²

Soon afterwards, Hayes and McKinley were ordered back to Camp White in West Virginia.¹¹³ (William McKinley was ordered back to Ohio to secure weapons and supplies for the 13th West Virginia but returned to Camp White by August, 1863 to rejoin Hayes).¹¹⁴ The men were back to a relaxed environment filled with mental and physical rest.¹¹⁵ With relaxation, came temptation to fool around with the young ladies near Camp White. Of course, prostitution existed at camps throughout the Civil War and many took advantage of that service.¹¹⁶ William McKinley and his close friends within the 23rd Ohio enjoyed nightly strolls in Charleston, West Virginia.¹¹⁷ Although there are no records of McKinley soliciting the services of a prostitute, Rutherford B. Hayes received word on his social life by his commanding officers to the point

¹⁰⁹ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 53

¹¹⁰ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 55

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 56

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Ibid

¹¹⁵ Ibid

¹¹⁶ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, September 15, 1863

¹¹⁷ Ibid

where Lt. McKinley was named in a letter, and that he would be arrested if he continued to visit Charleston.¹¹⁸

The down time at Camp White led to an increased awareness of the political climate nationally and within the state of Ohio. The Union soldiers at Camp White supported Republican candidates and despised most Democrats for their support of the rebellion. The Gubernatorial Election of Ohio was held on October 13, 1863 and to the joy of the 23rd Ohio, the Republican candidate, John Brough, defeated the Democrat, Clement L. Vallandigham.¹¹⁹ The excitement caused William McKinley to rush into Rutherford B. Hayes's quarters to share the news and celebrate the triumph by the Unionist candidate. It was clear that all of Hayes's men voted for the Republican since there was no provision for a secret ballot during this time. (Although there were political movements to create the secret ballot, a serious attempt was not seen until the start of America's Gilded Age). It was very easy to pressure a regiment into voting for a candidate, given that if you voted for the other side you were labeled a traitor.¹²⁰ Interestingly, the soldiers served as campaign workers by writing endorsement letters to their home states to sway their friends and family to vote Republican.¹²¹ "The 23rd wrote letters home to keep Vallandigham and his "Copperheads" out of office. Copperheads were Democrats who wanted to call for peace and end the war. McKinley had supported Lincoln through the darkest hours, and known for his ability to forgive others, never really could forgive the Copperheads and called this war – "the most sacred cause in history."¹²²

Hayes pronounced Brough's huge majority of 40,000 or 50,000 votes "equal to a triumph of arms in an important battle. It shows persistent determination, willingness to pay taxes, to

¹¹⁸ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 57

¹¹⁹ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 57

¹²⁰ Ibid, pg. 58

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Eugene Roseboom, *The Civil War: 1850-1873*, Columbus: The Ohio Historical Society, 1944, pg.421

wait, to be patient.”¹²³ Although McKinley voted for Brough, he had a special interest in this election as generations of his family were well acquainted with the Vallandigham family. McKinley knew that he could not vote for a family friend due to his Democratic policies but that it would also hurt his reputation as a Lieutenant of the 23rd Ohio.¹²⁴ Regardless, the regiment’s man had won and Hayes reminded his men that President Lincoln thanked Ohio for saving the Union.¹²⁵

While the beauty of Autumn settled in with cool and crisp air, William McKinley had the opportunity to settle down with the Hayes family in November of 1863. Not only did McKinley have great respect for Hayes, but he had to thank him for forming a new habit, cigar smoking.¹²⁶ Author of *Major McKinley*, William Armstrong, points out that when officers entered the quarters of Hayes, the room was filled with dense smoke, making it nearly impossible to distinguish the person one was looking for.¹²⁷ It didn’t help matters for Hayes when Lucy would catch their boys “hanging out” in the quarters under these foggy conditions.¹²⁸ The cigar filled room’s popularity gained a reputation throughout several regiments in the Union Army, but it is unknown if that attention was positive or negative.

McKinley used this opportunity to become closer to Hayes’s son, Webb, who was seven years old at this time.¹²⁹ Webb Hayes was captivated with the military and was provided with old rusty swords and useless materials to play the role of soldier. Although useless to the 23rd Ohio, they were priceless to Webb Hayes as he marched in formation with his “fellow comrades in arms.” When he saw McKinley on his brown horse, he would cheerfully call to him with

¹²³ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, October 15, 1863

¹²⁴ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, pg. 59

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Ibid, pg. 60

¹²⁷ Ibid

¹²⁸ Ibid

¹²⁹ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, November 18, 1863

McKinley providing a gesture of acknowledgment right back to him.¹³⁰ Some would see this kindness as a form of flattery to the Hayes family by an ambitious McKinley.¹³¹

As for Lucy Hayes, she was very happy to see McKinley as a close friend to the family.¹³² Although there is no evidence of Lucy Hayes demonstrating improper affection for McKinley, the 23rd Ohio noticed how several ladies would gaze upon the handsome Lt. McKinley.¹³³ Lucy, writing to Hayes, commented, “Do not let Lt. McKinley venture to Ohio, he would not return alone.”¹³⁴ McKinley jested with Lucy that when they were alone with Rutherford Hayes, spectators thought he (McKinley) was their son. And if he were their adopted son, William McKinley must have provided Hayes with a thank you for raising him well within the 23rd Ohio. As Christmas neared, William McKinley departed back to Ohio on a furlough, but continued to order supplies when requested by superior officers.¹³⁵ Hayes, on the other hand, remained in his quarters, presumably content for two reasons. First, he had a hot coal stove that kept him comfortable and cozy, and second, the majority of his men reenlisted to continue the good fight.¹³⁶ Hayes received word that his men wanted to push for his promotion to brigadier general. Hayes responded to his men, “A good colonel makes a good regiment... I would rather be one of the good colonels than one of the poor generals.”¹³⁷ Eventually, Hayes received his furlough and used that time to rejoin his family in Ohio to await the preparation for battle in the spring of 1864.

¹³⁰ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, November 18,, 1863

¹³¹ Armstrong, pg. 63. Although some of that may be true it would then make no sense for McKinley to remain in contact with Webb Hayes after his Rutherford Hayes’s death in 1893. With McKinley gaining the Presidency in 1896, he continued to write letters to Webb without any obvious reason which signifies McKinley’s desire to remain a key component to the Hayes family.

¹³² Lucy Hayes to Rutherford B. Hayes, September 7, 1863, Rutherford B. Hayes Papers

¹³³ Armstrong, pg. 63-64

¹³⁴ Lucy Hayes to Rutherford B. Hayes, September 7, 1863, Rutherford B. Hayes Papers

¹³⁵ Armstrong, pg. 64

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, October 31, November 7, 1863, January 18, 1864

CHAPTER 2: Endings and Beginnings

Upon Hayes's and McKinley's return to camp, Ulysses S. Grant was promoted to commander of the Union army.¹³⁸ The faster the Union Army captured Richmond, Virginia, and destroyed the Army of North Virginia the faster the war would end. Sadly for the Confederates, the end was on the horizon, but for many Southerners to give up to the Federal Government would be an act of submission and a complete disregard to all that has been accomplished (politically) up to this point.¹³⁹ Hayes saw this as a great opportunity for his regiment to become involved in decisive action.¹⁴⁰ Once again, Hayes said his farewell to his family and reported to his new superior officer, General George Crook, at Camp White.¹⁴¹ In addition to preparing for a move towards Dublin, Virginia, Hayes changed McKinley's role to aide-de-camp and as the

¹³⁸ Halstead, *Illustrious Life of William McKinley*, p. 116

¹³⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, p.162

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ Ibid

brigade's acting assistant quartermaster.¹⁴² The new role provided McKinley with the opportunity to relinquish the duties of commissary sergeant to various other assistants, but he still felt obligated to supply those in need. Before McKinley could demonstrate his compassion towards refugee slaves abandoned by their "masters" after a defeat, a difficult situation arose at Cloyd's Mountain.¹⁴³

On May 9, 1864, the Battle of Cloyd's Mountain was fought to command the road running between Poplar Hill and Dublin Depot.¹⁴⁴ Upon reaching the heavily fortified Confederate position, Hayes and his men were greeted by cannon fire when General Crook ordered a charge through the meadow. A description of the charge was recorded by McKinley:

Over the beautiful meadow which intervened, the troops move grandly as a double quick –down to the ugly stream which interposed its obstruction, in full sight and range of Confederates. Without halt, on they dashed into it and across it. Then with a yell, amidst shrapnel and shell, the ascent commenced – quick and furious the charge continued amid heavy fire of the musketry; the enemy's works are taken, their artillery captured, and another great victory is added to the regiment's scroll of fame.¹⁴⁵

Hayes recalled, "...they charged up the hill, and the moment we passed the curve as fearful a fire met us as I ever faced, dreadful fire, that killed men and officers terribly. It seemed as if the whole line was falling."¹⁴⁶ Luckily, Hayes's description was not the reality as the regiment shocked the Confederates by "plowing" through the defense line and eventually capturing the cannon in just ten minutes.¹⁴⁷ Moments later, "General Crook fainted from overexertion, and while his staff revived him, some of his men bayoneted surrendering Confederates before Union

¹⁴² Halstead, *Illustrious Life of William McKinley*, p. 117

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, p.163

¹⁴⁵ Halstead, *Illustrious Life of William McKinley*, p. 117

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

officers could stop them.”¹⁴⁸ Since Crook was still in a daze, Hayes was determined to turn the Union victory into a complete rout. With approximately 500 men, Hayes pushed onto a second Confederate line of defense and easily took the line within five minutes.¹⁴⁹ The Battle of Cloyd’s Mountain is not remembered for its length of time but as a costly battle to both sides. Union troops buried more than 200 of their enemies while suffering 688 casualties during the initial charge up the Mountain.¹⁵⁰ Hayes, once again, was proud of his 23rd, which lost 123 men and refused to retreat during the charge.

The thought to relax after the Battle of Cloyd’s Mountain was absent from the mind of Rutherford B. Hayes. He saw this as an opportunity to continue the attack against the Confederates by destroying their supplies in nearby towns and railroad service depots to slow them down for the next six weeks.¹⁵¹ The only concern was stretching beyond the reach of their own supply depot which caused Crook to recall the Union forces back through Blacksburg and Union to Meadow Bluff, where they could be resupplied.¹⁵² The march back was actually more difficult than the offensive against the Confederates. The slow process of crossing New River with one small ferryboat and the pouring rain did not help matters for the Union brigade. The thick mud caused several wagons to tip over, and McKinley envisioned to small boulders as tiny mountains as his men tried to push even the lightest wagons over the difficult wet terrain.¹⁵³ As the men wore out their shoes through this grueling process, Confederates took advantage of the situation with hit and run tactics to make the march even more of a nightmare.¹⁵⁴ Hayes, impressed with Crook’s leadership, witnessed the General ordering men from the 36th Ohio to

¹⁴⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, p.163

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

¹⁵⁰ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, May 10, 1864, Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, May 19, 1864

¹⁵¹ Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, May 10, 1864, Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, May 19, 1864

¹⁵² Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp.178-185

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

execute a Confederate after Crook was wounded from a guerrilla attack. Crook allowed the 36th to lay the body in the middle of their path with a note attached saying, “this is the fate of all bushwackers.”¹⁵⁵ Finally, after two days of marching to the point where the troops’ shoes were worn out to the soles of their feet, a wagon train waited to resupply those in need. Hayes, seeing the happiness around him, commented, “General Crook is the best general I have ever known.”¹⁵⁶

After the men were refreshed from their supply wagon, the retreat to Meadow Bluff continued, but suddenly an unexpected group of visitors appeared walking the same road. Hundreds of fugitive slaves, young and old, were looking for a new home.¹⁵⁷ As the soldiers witnessed the harsh reality that these individuals were on the run and putting their lives on the line with this escape to the North, McKinley ran to the supply wagon. As he distributed what he could to families that were in great need, he decided to help one family by carrying their children for one mile and stopping for any wagons that were stuck in ditches to lend a hand.¹⁵⁸ Lt. McKinley, was not required by military protocol to help these people, but according to one of his fellow officers, “he did those things just as if he thought it was more than his duty to do them.”¹⁵⁹ Hayes, who heard about McKinley’s heroic action, could only think of his wife, Lucy, pregnant again, and settled with their boys in Ohio.¹⁶⁰

The remainder of the campaign was hurried. General Crook’s army became a division within the Army of the Shenandoah under the leadership of General David Hunter.¹⁶¹ The march from hell turned into a fury of destruction by the Union army to the disgust of Rutherford B.

¹⁵⁵ Williams, Hayes of the Twenty-Third, pp.185-187, *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:461-462

¹⁵⁶ Ibid

¹⁵⁷ *Life of William McKinley*, pp. 67-68

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁰ *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:463

¹⁶¹ Ibid

Hayes.¹⁶² By June 11, Confederate base after base was destroyed and burned to the ground. Relics, such as a bronze statue of George Washington, which originally sat outside of the Virginia Military Institute, were carried away by Hunter's soldiers.¹⁶³ The homes located near the Institute, were looted and burned. Although the homes were located in enemy territory, it was only natural for Union officers, like Hayes and McKinley, to feel sympathetic towards the families located in the wrong place at the wrong time.¹⁶⁴

The original objective of this mission was for the Army of the Shenandoah to capture Lynchburg, Virginia.¹⁶⁵ Hayes and McKinley already saw that the leadership under General Hunter was not the same as General Crook's. Even after Hayes took the lead, and within three hours captured Lexington on June 11, he continued to see Hunter's army pillage and destroy historical artifacts of the South. Simply put, Hunter destroyed Union sentiment in Lexington.¹⁶⁶ The Confederate cavalry eventually caught up to Hunter's army and instead of reinforcing its ground to continue the push into Virginia, a retreat was ordered back across the mountains of West Virginia.¹⁶⁷ Not surprising, Hunter left almost a hundred of his wounded men behind, while his healthy soldiers carted away more valuable material goods and ornaments.¹⁶⁸

McKinley's recollection about the Lynchburg campaign did not include Hunter, as he felt General Crook could have easily taken Lynchburg:

Acknowledging no impediments and yielding to no resistance, nothing could then have stood between our advance column and Lynchburg but command to halt from one higher in command than a Crook, a Hayes or a Duval. Lynchburg, that coveted prize, was within its grasp; but lo! In the morning it was too late; the shades of night had safely guided reinforcements from Richmond to that beleaguered garrison, the opportunity of

¹⁶² Ibid

¹⁶³ *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:464

¹⁶⁴ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp.196-198

¹⁶⁵ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.69

¹⁶⁶ Ibid

¹⁶⁷ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.70

¹⁶⁸ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp.199

the previous night was gone, and we were at the mercy of the enemy... It took the genius of a Crook, the steady, vigorous hand of a Hayes, and the thorough discipline of the troops to save us from the complete capture or a dreadful slaughter.¹⁶⁹

McKinley was referring to the retreat orchestrated by the entire regiment without the help of Hunter. Although the latter ordered the destruction of the railway and factories, the men were so starved that they began to drop to their knees without any motivation to continue moving.¹⁷⁰ As for the rest who had the energy to continue retreating into West Virginia, they witnessed the death of their horses and mules that could not keep up with the march while experiencing guerrilla attacks all around them.¹⁷¹ When they reached the Big Sewell Mountains, a supply train met them to satisfy their hunger and despair.¹⁷² William McKinley remembered the hunger – “Two days and two nights, without sleep or rest, part of the time wholly without food; unreal and incredible that men could or would suffer such discomforts or hardships.”¹⁷³

Hayes perceived his men as “broken down” as he had the duty of staying in the rear of the retreating army to repel any Confederate attacks.¹⁷⁴ In a fearful moment of the retreat, Hayes ordered his men to create barricades to protect the army and ordered McKinley up the mountain to bring the men down to hide behind the newly built barricades.¹⁷⁵ “It was dark, and Hayes waited for McKinley to return. Suddenly, he heard the order to fire and was sure that his men had come down on the wrong side of the mountain and were about to be shot by their comrades. Hayes rushed out to the troops guarding the barricade. He said, “My soul was on fire. I was too choked to cry out: My men! Our men! Don’t fire!” Hayes was too late. A volley of fire was heard and the groans and cries and curses. Fearing the worst, Hayes jumped over the barricade

¹⁶⁹ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.70

¹⁷⁰ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.71

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Ibid, p.72

¹⁷³ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, p.118

¹⁷⁴ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, p.200

¹⁷⁵ Ibid

and grabbed one man after another shouting, “what regiment?” One wounded man answered faintly, “the, the, Virginia; Early’s army.”¹⁷⁶ To his great relief, Hayes realized that they were not his men.¹⁷⁷ After Hayes’s near “heart attack,” he found out later that McKinley led the men down the mountain to safety and instead of reporting to Hayes he continued to follow the retreating Union army.¹⁷⁸ It is here that Rutherford B. Hayes shows his compassion towards his men especially, William McKinley, for saving his men from an almost disastrous situation.

On July 1, 1864, the army halted near Charleston, West Virginia. Hayes was under the impression that calm had settled in and the long overdue rest would reinvigorate his men.¹⁷⁹ He was wrong since the Confederates were planning to invade Maryland. To cut off this attack, on Sunday, July 24, the Battle of Kernstown was underway.¹⁸⁰ General Crook commanded approximately 12,000 men who were surprised by a small Rebel cavalry that managed to break through one his flanks. Crook’s forces were exhausted and separated from the main division as the rest of the Union army fought in the Shenandoah Valley.¹⁸¹ Once again, it was Rutherford Hayes and his Ohio infantry who took the brunt of the attack. While the small cavalry attacked, the Confederate infantry formed a “horseshoe” with long lines to surround Crook’s army. As the volley of fire poured onto the left flank where Hayes was stationed, his fellow officers began to sound the retreat, leaving the entire left side in confusion.¹⁸² Hayes, without hesitation, ordered McKinley to find the retreating men and bring them back.¹⁸³ Hayes believed this was a suicide

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p.201

¹⁷⁷ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, p. 201

¹⁷⁸ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p.71

¹⁷⁹ Ibid

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

¹⁸¹ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p. 72

¹⁸² Ibid

¹⁸³ Ibid

mission for McKinley, yet he had no choice but to give that order to protect the left side of the line.¹⁸⁴ Another soldier offered his take on this event:

None of us expected to see him again, as we watched him push his horse through the open fields, over fences, through ditches, while a well directed fire from the enemy was poured upon him, with shells exploding around, about and over him. Once he was completely enveloped in the smoke of an exploding shell, and we thought he had gone down; but no, he was saved for better work for his country in future years. Out firmly seated, and as erect as a hussar. Now he had passed under cover from the enemy's fire, and a sense of relief came to us all.¹⁸⁵

Hayes watched as McKinley appeared on horseback without a scratch, smiled and said, "I never expected to see you in life again!"¹⁸⁶ The reunited comrades could only show delight for a few seconds as the Confederates continued to fire, volley after volley.¹⁸⁷ The brigade was able to make it back to Winchester, outside of Kernstown, suffering heavy losses in the attack.

Unknown to him at the time, Hayes was hit by a spent ball that did little damage to his shoulder; his horse also took a hit which caused him to fall over and spill his possessions on the ground. As his men raced to protect their leader and secure his documents, the Confederates continued their hellish assault.¹⁸⁸

Crook's army continued from Winchester to Martinsburg only halting to defend against the Confederate fire.¹⁸⁹ Crook decided to burn empty wagons, and Hayes, who saw abandoned cannons, ordered McKinley to take them along rather than leaving them for the enemy.¹⁹⁰

McKinley, who saw Hayes's men as exhausted, asked the men at Company E for a hand in gathering the cannons which eventually made their way into the hands of the artillery captain,

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

¹⁸⁵ Porter, *William McKinley*, Chapter VI

¹⁸⁶ Ibid

¹⁸⁷ Ibid

¹⁸⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2:485-486

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 2:487

overcome with joy.¹⁹¹ Although the brigade lost the battle of Kernstown and were once again forced to retreat, a period of calm finally occurred.. The men needed time to collect their thoughts and prepare for their next assignment. Hayes, writing to his wife, Lucy, said, “The camp is now alive with laughter and good feeling; more so than usual. The recoil after so much toil and anxiety.”¹⁹² Hayes knew that his brigade suffered the most casualties but he realized that a greater disaster could have occurred, especially if all 17,000 men were captured by the Confederates.¹⁹³

After two days of rest, Crook’s army crossed the Potomac into Maryland to rejoin Hunter’s army located five miles from Harper’s Ferry.¹⁹⁴ While the Confederates continued to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Crook’s army found themselves in familiar places, crossing the Burnside Bridge, marching across the Antietam battlefield, and camping near Sharpsburg.¹⁹⁵ Things began to look brighter for Hayes and his men. He would continue to fight alongside Crook and under a brand new commander of the Army of the Shenandoah, Philip Sheridan.¹⁹⁶ Hunter was relieved by Ulysses S. Grant on August 7, 1864 when the former contracted poison ivy. Both Crook and Hayes were happy to see Hunter go but were cautious with their new commander, as his résumé was unknown.¹⁹⁷

William McKinley, too, was in great spirits as he was promoted to the rank of captain which was signed by President Abraham Lincoln. The promotion was not for his heroic actions at Kernstown, but those actions cemented his soldiers’ confidence in McKinley, and they

¹⁹¹ Ibid

¹⁹² Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 410, 415-17

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 417

¹⁹⁵ Ibid

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 418

¹⁹⁷ Ibid

accepted his status as captain without reservation.¹⁹⁸ Although Hayes was extremely proud of his young comrade, he would soon find out that General Crook, promoted to brevet major general, requested a transfer of McKinley from Hayes's staff to his own.¹⁹⁹ It was McKinley's leadership, cool head, and bravery that won him a position on General Crook's staff.²⁰⁰ Not surprisingly, Hayes was sad to see McKinley go.²⁰¹ Hayes once said he found him "a clean-cut, bright fellow, honest to the core, and always willing to do anything asked of him. Sometimes he fairly seemed to anticipate my wishes, and he always carried them out, no matter what the cost."²⁰² Hayes continued, "Of course it was my duty to tell McKinley he must leave me. I am sorry to lose McKinley but I couldn't as a friend advise him to do otherwise. He is taken out of the quartermaster's department and that is good, and into the adjutant-generals office and that is good."²⁰³ Although McKinley was transferred to Crook's staff, Hayes was also part of Crook's seven thousand member army, thus McKinley and Hayes continued to have a close relationship.²⁰⁴

The role of an adjutant was familiar to McKinley as he had served this post under Hayes. He wrote reports, letters, and orders for Crook, issuing orders and signing them with, "William McKinley, Jr., Acting Assistant Adjutant General."²⁰⁵ Later when McKinley became President of the United States during the Spanish-American War, he said to his nephew regarding the position of adjutant, "Be attentive to all your duties. Do everything the best you know how and if you are in doubt ask some superior officer the best way to do it. Be careful about your writing. See that

¹⁹⁸ Porter, *William McKinley*, Chapter VI

¹⁹⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 419

²⁰⁰ Ibid

²⁰¹ Ibid

²⁰² Ibid, 2:420

²⁰³ Rutherford B Hayes speech at Lakeside, Ohio, July 30, 1891; Williams, ed., *Diary & Letters of Hayes* 2:492

²⁰⁴ Williams, ed., *Diary & Letters of Hayes* 2:492

²⁰⁵ William McKinley to James F. McKinley, April 13, 1899, *William McKinley Papers*, LC

your words are spelled correctly. Better have a little pocket dictionary with you. It mars an official paper or letter to have a word misspelled.”²⁰⁶

William McKinley and Rutherford B. Hayes were proud to have General George Crook as their commander. At 34 years of age and a graduate of West Point, he served as a professional soldier in the Pacific Northwest before the Civil War and in both the western and eastern battles during the War. He treated his volunteer soldiers as equals and won their trust and devotion.²⁰⁷ After seeing him in action at the Battle of Cloyd’s Mountain, one of his soldiers remarked that “all have faith in our General George Crook. He makes his camp in the field without display, puts on no style and sees to all movements in person, is the first and foremost on the battlefield cheering on his men and taking his chances with them.”²⁰⁸ Hayes was so fond of Crook that he named one his sons after him.²⁰⁹

Hayes’s men finally had the opportunity to rest and live off the land in Middletown Valley before marching eighteen miles to the Monocacy River. It was here where Hayes was blessed by receiving ninety recruits for the 23rd Ohio; “among them was one named Whitlow who had tempted fate once too often. Earlier in the war, he had deserted the Confederates, joined the 23rd, deserted it, and rejoined the Confederates. At Cloyd’s Mountain, he was captured by the 23rd but had the good fortune to escape. He then made his way to Ohio, where he enlisted again as a substitute for someone about to be conscripted. He was sent back to the 23rd, tried and shot

²⁰⁶ William McKinley to James F. McKinley, April 13, 1899, *William McKinley Papers*, LC

²⁰⁷ Williams, ed., *Diary & Letters of Hayes*, 3:25-26

²⁰⁸ Ibid

²⁰⁹ Rutherford B. Hayes Speech at Marietta, Ohio, September 7, 1877, *Rutherford B Hayes Papers*; Williams, ed., *Diary & Letters of Hayes*, 3:25-26

within twenty-four hours.”²¹⁰ Hayes would go on to say, “We are getting a considerable number of substitutes – many good men, but many who were professional villains.”²¹¹

On August 5, 1864, none other than General Ulysses S. Grant made an appearance at Monocacy to consult with General Hunter and the latter’s new replacement – Philip Sheridan, the 33 year old commander of the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac and a soldier McKinley later compared with Stonewall Jackson, saying, “he was our army what Jackson was to the other side.”²¹² Sheridan commanded a new Middle Military Division while George Crook replaced Hunter in command of the Department of West Virginia, or simply the Army of West Virginia.²¹³ This army along other divisions made up Sheridan’s Army of the Shenandoah.²¹⁴ George Crook was pleased with the replacement, which in turn pleased Rutherford B. Hayes.

On the Monday afternoon of August 8, 1864, the Army of West Virginia entered the Shenandoah Valley where they met a line of Confederates who were then driven to Cedar Creek, near Strasburg.²¹⁵ Having learned that the Rebels had reinforcements waiting in the wings, McKinley described the movements by Sheridan as, “a waltz up and down the valley, fighting and skirmishing, first at this point, then at another, entrenching ourselves for a little while here and then over yonder.”²¹⁶ At Halltown, Hayes’s brigade made reconnaissance in three days where his men successfully captured a small regiment of South Carolina troops on outpost duty.²¹⁷ McKinley described the engagement as “a sharp and decisive conflict, resulting in a

²¹⁰ Ibid

²¹¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2:489-90, 492

²¹² Ibid

²¹³ Ibid, 492

²¹⁴ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes* 2:498

²¹⁵ Ibid

²¹⁶ Ibid, 2: 499

²¹⁷ Ibid

marked victory, routing the enemy, and capturing many prisoners. I witnessed nothing through the war more plucky and determined than the affair just mentioned.”²¹⁸

On August 28, 1864, Sheridan’s army crossed into Charles Town, West Virginia, where the men sang “John Brown’s Body” as they were well aware of the execution of Brown there.²¹⁹ Hayes was excited to hear updates on the Election campaign of 1864, but upon hearing that the Democrats nominated George McClellan for the presidency his excitement turned to fear thinking that McClellan would defeat Lincoln.²²⁰ Hayes did not allow this political campaign to damper his spirits as his home state of Ohio would have him on the ballot in November of 1864 as well.²²¹ Hayes responded to his campaign team in Ohio upon hearing that he should take a leave of absence to campaign for Congress: “An officer fit for duty who at this crisis would abandon his post to electioneer for a seat in Congress ought to be scalped.”²²² Unknowing at the time, this statement would advance Hayes’s career politically right into the White House.²²³

A few days later on September 3, the army found themselves engaged with Major General Joseph Kershaw’s division at Berryville, Virginia.²²⁴ Hayes called it one of the fiercest fights he had ever experienced.²²⁵ The men were motivated by reports indicating that General Sherman’s army had taken Atlanta.²²⁶ As Sheridan’s divisions began to attack, Crook commanded his men to fire which created a “grand spectacle” according to McKinley.²²⁷ Unlike the majority of the battles fought in the Civil War, the battle of Berryville was fought in

²¹⁸ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 119

²¹⁹ *Life of William McKinley*, 33

²²⁰ Ibid

²²¹ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 121

²²² Ibid

²²³ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:440

²²⁴ Ibid, 2:441

²²⁵ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 502-03

²²⁶ Ibid

²²⁷ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 125

darkness. Luckily for McKinley, the darkness may have saved his life, as his horse was shot from under him without leaving a scratch on his body.²²⁸ After the Union forces drove the Confederates back to an entrenched position, the field was lit up with lanterns to find any surviving casualties of the conflict.²²⁹ McKinley, on the other hand, was ordered to direct a regiment some distance away to a new position. He was terrified knowing that his regiment, cloaked by darkness, was completely surrounded by Confederates.²³⁰ McKinley said his heart “jumped into his throat” when he heard the words, “Halt! Who goes thar?” in a pronounced southern accent. He turned his horse and hurried away. Soon he was stopped again, but this time the words were “Halt! Who goes there?” and he said that as soon as he heard the word “there” pronounced in *that way* he knew he was among friends.²³¹

Rutherford B. Hayes felt that evening battle was an exhilarating experience for him and his men but was upset that he lost two officers within the 23rd.²³² He wrote to Lucy, “I suppose I was never in so much danger before, but I enjoyed the excitement more than ever.”²³³ He made sure to include his love for his wife, ensuring her that his thoughts are always about her during a battle. But one thing was obvious: Hayes seemed to enjoy war more and more and he loved his brigade even more than that.²³⁴ “We have fought nine times since we entered the valley and have been under fire, when men of my company were killed and wounded, probably thirty or forty times since the campaign opened. I doubt if a brigade in Sherman’s army has fought more. None has marched half as much. I started with 2400 men and now have less than 1200, and almost

²²⁸ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 126

²²⁹ *Life of William McKinley*, 136

²³⁰ Stratemeyer, *American Boys’ Life of William McKinley*, 84-85

²³¹ Russell, *Lives of William McKinley and Garrett A. Hobart*, 109.

²³² Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 502

²³³ *Ibid*

²³⁴ *Ibid*, 2: 503

none of the loss is stragglers.”²³⁵ Hayes felt his army ranked third, with Sherman’s Army ranked at first, and Lee’s Confederate army, second.²³⁶

Hayes was still for Lincoln in the upcoming presidential election, but he very much respected George McClellan as former commander of the Union army. Hayes said of McClellan, “He is on a mean platform and is in bad company, but I do not doubt his personal loyalty and he has been a soldier, and what is more a soldier’s friend. No man ever treated the private soldier better. No commander was ever more loved by his men.”²³⁷ Hayes believed that if the Democrats were victorious in the Presidential race, they too, would accept the necessity of emancipation.²³⁸ Regardless, Hayes was confident with a Lincoln victory in the election of 1864.²³⁹

With a presidential election approaching, Hayes was confident that an offensive would occur during the fall campaign of September, 1864. General Sheridan, after consulting with General Grant on September 17, 1864, pushed south and west to confront Confederate General Jubal Early and his 12,000 man army.²⁴⁰ The battle of Opequon began on Monday morning, September 19, 1864, two miles east from Winchester.²⁴¹ Sheridan kept Crook’s army in reserve which resulted in an early Confederate victory, “Rebels were jubilant, cheering and rejoicing over the victory.”²⁴² Meanwhile, Crook, Hayes, and their respective staff, including McKinley, were hiding in a field waiting for orders. McKinley with excitement, proclaimed, “I think I see

²³⁵ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2:503-04

²³⁶ Ibid

²³⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 504-07

²³⁸ Ibid

²³⁹ Ibid

²⁴⁰ Ibid

²⁴¹ Ibid

²⁴² Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 504-07

one of Sheridan's staff officers riding full tilt for us."²⁴³ Sheridan's 6th and 19th Corps were driven back, thus, Crook's army was desperately needed for reinforcement.²⁴⁴ With Hayes's men leading the attack, they were prepared to charge and scream at their enemies with ferocity until they reached a swamp, approximately twenty-five yards wide. Hayes wrote, "The Rebel fire now broke out furiously, to stop was death."²⁴⁵

As they moved closer to the front line, Sheridan and Crook sent McKinley back to bring Col. Isaac Duval's 2nd Division to the front.²⁴⁶ McKinley, knowing how difficult it was to pass through several obstructions, urged Duval to avoid it at all costs. Duval, surprisingly, countered with a reply stating that only General Crook could give that kind of order.²⁴⁷ McKinley with the feeling of urgency, said, "Then, by order of General Crook, I command you."²⁴⁸ Duval's 2nd Division arrived in time to play an important role in the battle. McKinley did not keep his actions a secret but he was often reminded by Hayes that if the 2nd Division's arrival resulted in a loss, McKinley's situation might be considerably different. Crook's men chased the Confederates to a second line of defense where they met even more fire. Hayes noted in his letter to Lucy, "Things began to look dark but Sheridan's splendid shouts at a gallop charged right into the Rebel lines. We pushed on and away broke the Rebels. The cavalry came back, and an hour later and nearly a mile back, the same scene again; and a third time; and the victory was ours just before sundown."²⁴⁹ Jubal Early had suffered a decisive defeat with credit given to Hayes and his men for crossing the swamp to push the Confederates back. Hayes took the opportunity to joke with

²⁴³ Ibid

²⁴⁴ Ibid

²⁴⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 507-11

²⁴⁶ Ibid

²⁴⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 513-14

²⁴⁸ Ibid

²⁴⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 513-14

McKinley after the battle was over and Hayes saw that McKinley joined the charge without orders to do so saying, “How could anybody help it?”²⁵⁰

The Battle of Opequhan ended in a Union victory.²⁵¹ President Lincoln telegraphed his congratulations “I just heard of your great victory. God bless you all, officers and men.” The Union suffered 5,000 and the Confederates 3,000 casualties.²⁵² Hayes became commander of the Second Division after Colonel Duval was shot in the thigh during the charge.²⁵³ While the Union buried their dead, the Confederates fled up the Shenandoah Valley to a defensive position at Fisher’s Hill, south of Strasburg.²⁵⁴ Upon consulting with Sheridan, Crook’s Army of West Virginia took the lead and planned to flank the Confederates by dividing his men into two divisions.²⁵⁵ Hayes, who was embedded within Crook’s division moved to a position near the Little North Mountains on September 22, while Sheridan positioned his 6th and 19th Corps for a frontal assault.²⁵⁶ As Hayes and Crook reached Early’s extreme left, Hayes recalled in his diary, “We just yelled as we came down at the top of our voices and the enemy were taken with a panic and fled like sheep. We got every gun they had.”²⁵⁷ McKinley spoke later of the Confederate’s, “utter rout and demoralization. Thinking only of personal safety, they left camp, equipage, artillery, and stores, giving us undisputed possession of what was believed to be an impregnable position. Hayes summed up the victory by saying, “Sheridan, a whole-souled, brave man and Crook as the brains of this army.”²⁵⁸

²⁵⁰ *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2:508-11

²⁵¹ Williams, *Life of Hayes*, 1:242-43

²⁵² Ibid

²⁵³ *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2:512

²⁵⁴ Ibid

²⁵⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes*, 2: 513-14

²⁵⁶ Ibid

²⁵⁷ Williams, *Life of Hayes*, 1:244

²⁵⁸ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp.265-75; *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley* (1893), 646

With another victory came another campaign. Hayes's men had the opportunity to rest for a few days near Harrisonburg (a hundred miles south of the Potomac and about thirty miles from Staunton).²⁵⁹ If Rutherford B. Hayes ever became weary of the "solder's life," it would be here. Lucy Hayes gave birth to another child, intensifying Hayes's desire to return home to be with his family.²⁶⁰ With the Confederates harassing the encampment, Hayes confessed to himself, "a great repugnance to fighting another battle."²⁶¹ Although Hayes felt weary he would not waiver in his desire to finally defeat the Rebels and then return home to his family, alive.²⁶² When Sheridan ordered the destruction of the Shenandoah Valley to render it a barren wasteland, the Union soldiers sprang to their feet to began the decimation of the Confederate supply lines, crops, herds, and several buildings south of Harrisonburg.²⁶³

Although it seemed that the Confederates were on the run, the Union army would be in for quite a shock on October 19, 1864 at Cedar Creek. The assumption was that Early and his Confederate army were running low on supplies and food, encouraging them to attack Sheridan to regain the necessary resources for survival.²⁶⁴ Hayes, keeping busy before the Confederates' eventual attack on Sheridan's position, received word that he was officially elected to the House of Representatives. The new Congressman of Ohio never showed excitement or enthusiasm over this "new assignment," but instead a calmness and confidence with the Republican Party at the helm.²⁶⁵ Before any real celebration could take place, Early and Confederates attacked on the morning of October 19, 1864.²⁶⁶ Crook's First Division fell and the demoralized Army of the

²⁵⁹ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 120

²⁶⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2: 519

²⁶¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2: 520

²⁶² Ibid

²⁶³ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2: 521-22

²⁶⁴ Ibid, 2: 522

²⁶⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2: 523-24

²⁶⁶ Ibid

Shenandoah fell back into a defensive position near Middletown.²⁶⁷ Surprisingly, the Confederates did not continue their assault; they were completely exhausted and incapable of a second charge.²⁶⁸ It did not help matters that General Sheridan was absent from this battle; he had left for Washington after the Battle of Fisher Hill.²⁶⁹ Rutherford B. Hayes did all he could to try and rally his Kanawha Division. As he rode his black horse to retrieve the retreating soldiers, “his horse was killed instantly, tumbling heels over head and dashing Hayes on the ground violently, injuring his ankle and knocking him out.”²⁷⁰ Most assumed Rutherford B. Hayes died at Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864. They thought that their leader, Congressman, and more importantly, mentor, would not see his family ever again, and the “death” of Rutherford B. Hayes was erroneously reported to the local newspapers.²⁷¹ Eventually, Hayes regained consciousness and jumped to his feet while the Confederates shouted for his surrender.²⁷² Even with his ankle injured, Hayes escaped to the nearby woods, caught up with his retreating army, and jumped on the first horse he saw. He unintentionally frightened his wife when, he reported to her that he was hit in the head by a ball “which had lost force in getting (I suppose) through somebody else! It gave me only a slight shock.”²⁷³

Although the morning seemed grim, roars were heard in the back of the defensive line: General Sheridan had returned from Washington. The sight of Sheridan riding up and down the Union line reinvigorated the defeated men.²⁷⁴ Sheridan yelled, “We’ll whip em’ yet like hell!”

²⁶⁷ Ibid

²⁶⁸ Ibid

²⁶⁹ Ibid

²⁷⁰ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, 303

²⁷¹ Ibid, 304-305

²⁷² Ibid

²⁷³ Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, 305

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 306

Chants of “Sheridan! Sheridan! were heard throughout the line.”²⁷⁵ The Army of the Shenandoah repelled the Confederate attack after 4 p.m. Hayes, having a fine view of the battle, commented:

The Union attack surged forward, and the rebels fought poorly and were awfully whipped with cannon and spoils now on our side. It was glorious. Sheridan, retook all we had lost and utterly ruined Early... The fact is... all the fight is out of Early’s men. They have been whipped so much that they can’t keep a victory after it is gained. This is the last of fighting on this line.²⁷⁶

McKinley played an important part in Sheridan’s return from Washington. He wrote his own account of meeting Sheridan and the General’s ride through the Union lines:

I had been across the pike to put in position Colonel Dupont’s battery, by order of General Crook, and as I returned I met Sheridan dashing up, and he asked me where Crook was. I took Sheridan to Crook, and they and the staff went back of the red barn. It was there determined by Sheridan to make the charge. Then it was suggested that Sheridan should ride down the lines of the disheartened troops. His overcoat was pulled off him, and somebody took his epaulettes out of a box. The epaulettes were placed upon his shoulders – and my recollection is that this was done by Colonel Forsythe and another officer. Then Sheridan rode down the lines. He was dressed in a new uniform. He did not appear excited. I might say he was calm, but there was a tightening of the muscles of the face and a look in the eye that denoted determination. There was a set purpose in his face, and it meant fight. His arrival at Cedar Creek was like the reinforcement of a thousand men. When he rode down the line to show that he was there every man saw fight and victory in his presence.²⁷⁷

Although Cedar Creek ended in a dramatic fashion, Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley marveled at Sheridan’s charge down the Union line. They stood next to each other and saluted the General and a tattered flag as he rode by, Sheridan! Sheridan!²⁷⁸

Although he didn’t know it at the time, Cedar Creek was Hayes’s last battle. Ironically, Hayes was pronounced dead during the Confederate charge through the Union lines when his horse was shot under him.²⁷⁹ With his “resurrection,” most thought Hayes would be promoted to join Ulysses S. Grant. Sadly, Hayes missed the birth of his fifth son, George Crook Hayes. Lucy

²⁷⁵ Ibid

²⁷⁶ *Diaries and Letters of Hayes* 2: 527-29; 4:136-37; Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp.287-312

²⁷⁷ Halstead, *Illustrious Life*, 123

²⁷⁸ Porter, *Life of William McKinley*, 107-08

²⁷⁹ C.R. Williams, *Life of Hayes*, I:259-60

Hayes's reaction to her husband's "death" was never revealed by the newspapers as they were hidden from her eyes, but a telegraph message did make it through: "The report that your husband was killed this morning is untrue. He was wounded, not dangerously, and is safe."²⁸⁰ Sheridan's army stayed at Cedar Creek for approximately three weeks and after the dust cleared, Rutherford B. Hayes was promoted to Brigadier General.²⁸¹

Hayes watched McKinley's work on Crook's staff with pride and noted with satisfaction that "he has not been wounded but everyone admires him as one of the bravest and finest young officers in the army."²⁸² Although the battle had ended, McKinley's work had just begun. It was his duty to report on the loss of men and the need to resupply the army to full strength, if possible.²⁸³ One of McKinley's perks as adjutant was the ability to receive war reports from different battlefields.²⁸⁴ There are a handful of occasions where he would take these reports and draw up his own report. With these reports, General Crook would then have the ability to issue orders which became one of McKinley's favorite tasks.²⁸⁵ With enthusiasm, he would telegraph an order by General Crook but add optimism as if the General were coordinating the entire Civil War.²⁸⁶ For example, McKinley issued an order to West Virginia: "The general commanding directs that you hold out, fight, clean out, and destroy all in your front and there can be nothing but bushwhackers in that country. You must not permit yourself to be frightened by them. You have force enough; none can be spared from here."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letter of Hayes*, 2:531

²⁸¹ T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp. 312

²⁸² Ibid, 315

²⁸³ Ibid

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 316

²⁸⁵ T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp. 316

²⁸⁶ Ibid

²⁸⁷ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 90

On November 8, 1864, the Army of the Shenandoah remained at Cedar Creek for Election Day. With Union armies racking up victory after victory, Hayes and McKinley were certain that incumbent President, Abraham Lincoln, would be rewarded with a second term in the White House. Hayes already received word that his election to the House of Representatives was official and that majority of candidates running in Ohio were “pro-Union.”²⁸⁸ The election to Congress did not change Rutherford B. Hayes’s attitude one bit. He remained with the Army of the Shenandoah and refused to take his seat on Capitol Hill until the war was over.²⁸⁹ McKinley’s excitement was obvious as this was the first presidential election in which he would vote.²⁹⁰ William McKinley, Rutherford B. Hayes, George Crook, and Philip Sheridan stood in line together to vote in the election of 1864.²⁹¹ In the front of them stood an army ambulance filled with election officials and a old cartridge box where ballots were submitted. Hayes recalled the event:

...nine o’clock...five thousand soldiers and two brass bands were on hand...three judges and two young fellow clerks on a wagon. I said I would vote first, so as to show Crook and Sheridan how it was done. I stepped up and said: My name is Rutherford B. Hayes; I vote in Hamilton County, Ohio in the fifteenth Ward, Cincinnati.

Hayes mentioned that Sheridan was embarrassed on his lack of knowing how to cast a ballot but he was very excited to vote for “Old Abe.”²⁹² The United States showed their vote of Confidence for Lincoln; he won the election of 1864 with 212 electoral votes to George McClellan’s 98.²⁹³

After the election was over, Sheridan’s army moved to Kernstown, eleven miles north of Cedar Creek.²⁹⁴ The autumn climate radically changed to winter snow near the Thanksgiving

²⁸⁸ Ibid

²⁸⁹ T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, pp. 317-18

²⁹⁰ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 91

²⁹¹ Ibid

²⁹² Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes 2*: 524

²⁹³ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes 2*: 526

²⁹⁴ C.R. Williams, *Life of Hayes I*:263-64

celebration. Hayes and McKinley spent time together visiting comrades wounded in battle and had the opportunity to read the constitutional provision to abolish slavery in the United States.²⁹⁵ The Thirteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution was not easily won approval in Congress. Before the recent election, the House of Representatives rejected the Amendment, whereas, the Senate passed it.²⁹⁶ With the Congressional election won upon Lincoln's coattails, Republicans guaranteed its passage and the system of slavery would finally end.²⁹⁷ It was understood that even with the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, the Confederates were still an obstacle and it was clearly time to end America's Civil War.²⁹⁸

The month of December was a cold one with several inches of snow falling in Shenandoah Valley.²⁹⁹ It seemed as if this might become another *Valley Forge* but Brigadier General Hayes would not allow his men to "freeze on the picket line."³⁰⁰ He did what he could to make his men feel comfortable, and fortunately for him the temperatures increased above freezing by mid-December. McKinley issued orders to move divisions to join Grant's army at Petersburg, while Hayes and his men remained at the winter encampment. On December 17, Hayes inspected his brigade and pronounced the 23rd, "the crack regiment, I could only see six to ten in a company of the old men. They all smiled as I rode by. But as I passed away I couldn't help dropping a few natural tears. I felt as I did when I saw them mustered in at Camp Chase."³⁰¹ Hayes was the father of the 23rd and with the loss of so many casualties he struggled to compose

²⁹⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2:535-36

²⁹⁶ Ibid, 2: 537-39

²⁹⁷ Ibid, 2: 541

²⁹⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 543-44

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 546

³⁰⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 546

³⁰¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, pp.180

himself.³⁰² Undoubtedly, he considered the 23rd the best division in Sheridan's army, and proud to be its commander.³⁰³

By the end of December and into the New Year, all of Crook's divisions spilled into Cumberland, Maryland. "Cumberland had been chosen as the headquarters of the department of West Virginia earlier in the war because of its location on the National Road, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and especially the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad."³⁰⁴ Hayes and his division were tasked with guarding the encampment from Confederate attacks.³⁰⁵ Hayes called this encampment Camp Hastings after his dear friend, Russell Hastings. McKinley continued to serve within Crook's staff at a nearby hotel outside of the camp.³⁰⁶

On January 3, 1865, after he swore his oath of office as a brigadier general, Hayes had the opportunity to return to Ohio for a twenty day leave.³⁰⁷ The opportunity to see his family was not a joyous occasion. Hayes returned to his wife who was suffering from rheumatism and his newborn child was colicky. It was obvious that Lucy was not sleeping well which provided Hayes with opportunity to visit other members of the family. He only spent a week with his direct family and a few days with supporters of his Congressional campaign.³⁰⁸ Party patronage poked its head at Hayes. He was now a Congressman and it became his duty to reward those who supported his victory. This was only a preview of what was to come in the political résumé of Rutherford B. Hayes. He would have the unfortunate recognition in becoming the first president of the United States during America's Gilded Age.³⁰⁹

³⁰² Ibid

³⁰³ Ibid, 181

³⁰⁴ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 548

³⁰⁵ Ibid

³⁰⁶ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 93

³⁰⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries & Letters of Hayes* 2: 553

³⁰⁸ Ibid

³⁰⁹ Williams, ed., *Dairies and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 554-55

By mid-January of 1865, the 23rd Ohio was sent to Grafton, West Virginia to protect a railroad after the Confederates captured a Union station at Beverly, West Virginia.³¹⁰ McKinley accompanied the 23rd which seemed to excite the men as Hayes was still on leave.³¹¹ To have their old comrade back in their ranks in the bitter cold proved once again how much McKinley cared for his old regiment.³¹² This relationship was never broken since this was the regiment in which McKinley first found himself after volunteering in the Civil War. One night, McKinley gave an order to the 23rd to keep an eye out on a barn in the near vicinity of the picket line.³¹³ As the men stared at this barn, they saw three men carrying items to the back of the barn. After several attempts of trying to halt the three men, shots were fired – one was left dead and the other two escaped. The soldiers discovered a handcar loaded with cotton and turpentine. The three men were planning on setting the handcar on fire and sending it on the track. The 23rd Ohio was impressed with McKinley’s vision and ability to foresee a dangerous situation.³¹⁴

The cold and dreary conditions wouldn’t end until late February as several commanding officers, which included General Crook, sponsored balls at the Revere House in Cumberland.³¹⁵ McKinley was honored as a member of the Invitation Committee. Hayes, still on a furlough, received updates from his staff on how well the balls went. One message which shocked most was the matter of William McKinley, who “...must have been the drunkest at the grand party.” This was the only reference of McKinley drinking during the war.³¹⁶ This one sentence would be used several times by his future political opponents. The men were so distracted by these parties

³¹⁰ Ibid

³¹¹ Ibid

³¹² Stratemeyer, *American Boys’ Life of William McKinley*, 103-06

³¹³ Ibid

³¹⁴ Stratemeyer, *American Boys’ Life of William McKinley*, 103-06

³¹⁵ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 554

³¹⁶ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 94-95

that the Confederates were bold enough to conduct a raid on February 21, 1865.³¹⁷ This was not any ordinary attack, since the Confederates (McNeill's Rangers) captured General Crook and General Benjamin F. Kelley.³¹⁸ There was only one division left to handle a situation as dire as this one and that division was led by Rutherford B. Hayes.³¹⁹

Since most of the army was with Grant, Hayes automatically became the commander of the Army of West Virginia. Hayes documented that, "The raiders were about fifty strong. The truth is that all but a 'feeble few' are taken to the coast from Savannah to Richmond, leaving these posts to take their chances. I think it is wise policy, but at the same time we are exposed to surprise and capture at any time."³²⁰ Hayes understood that he was very capable of recapturing Crook and Kelly, but he was extremely worried that this raid would hurt General Crook's reputation.³²¹ William McKinley, on the other hand, stayed at the same location as Crook, the St. Nicholas Hotel, but was never captured because he did not return to the hotel that evening. It was that "grand party" that saved McKinley as he danced the night away with a young woman he met that same evening.³²²

Although the bad news of Crook's capture was public, the war as a whole was simply nearing its end. Hayes commented on the importance of the draft and black volunteers in speeding up the conclusion of the Civil War: "black troops had been proving themselves to doubters like Crook. He has become a convert to Negro soldiers. He thinks them better than a great part of the sort we are now getting."³²³ Hayes was not a fan of the Army of the Potomac,

³¹⁷ Ibid

³¹⁸ Ibid

³¹⁹ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 557-59

³²⁰ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 182

³²¹ Ibid

³²² Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 560-62

³²³ Ibid

and evaluated them as, "...composed too largely of the scum of the Great Cities!"³²⁴ While Hayes hinted at "equal opportunity" towards the black soldier, but he went on to state that, "I have no doubt the Negroes are better than many of us thought they would be but I am sure they are not better than our good white troops."³²⁵ Hayes was comparing the black soldiers with his division, but still invoked race, not atypical for the times.³²⁶

After two weeks of trying to figure out who would replace Crook, Major General Winfield Scott Hancock made his way to Cumberland to command the Department of West Virginia. Hancock was a graduate of West Point, a veteran of the Mexican-American War, and had commanded the 2nd Corps in the Army of the Potomac.³²⁷ Although he only remained there for a few days, he decided to take William McKinley and most of Crook's staff with him to Winchester.³²⁸ Although Hayes missed General Crook, he liked Hancock and felt he was "nervous, excitable, hasty, but very fair."³²⁹ While Hayes remained on duty in Cumberland and Hancock and his staff made his leave for Winchester, General George Crook was freed from the Confederates through an exchange. Although it seemed that the exchange was swift and automatic, the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton was furious when he received a message by Hayes updating him on the capture of the generals.³³⁰ Stanton replied, "Crook and Kelley could rot in prison for their carelessness."³³¹ Hayes, disappointed with the reply, appealed to Ulysses S. Grant. Grant created the prisoner exchange and returned Crook to the Army of West Virginia but

³²⁴ Ibid

³²⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 183

³²⁶ Ibid

³²⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 568-69

³²⁸ T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, 320

³²⁹ Ibid

³³⁰ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 268-70

³³¹ Ibid

for only one day.³³² Hancock protested this move as he became the commander of the Army of West Virginia, resulting in Crook's departure to join Grant in Petersburg.³³³ Crook eventually led a cavalry to end the war itself at the Battle of Appomattox under Sheridan.³³⁴ George Crook's desire was to return to his men at Cumberland, and Hayes made sure that Crook received a grand reception for his short-lived return. The question was whether Hancock was pleased with Hayes's cheer-leading of Crook; luckily for Hayes, the end of the war was near and his responsibilities under Hancock never changed after that event.³³⁵

The staff who served under Crook was careful under Winfield S. Hancock.³³⁶ Since his service was limited due to a wound received at Gettysburg, he became an absolute nightmare to adjutants with his "taste for military papers."³³⁷ Word also spread on the General's use of profane language toward his subordinates.³³⁸ William McKinley, however, only served Hancock for a month as Ulysses S. Grant reorganized the Army of the Shenandoah.³³⁹ McKinley served under a brand new division created by Grant, the 4th Provisional Division, "which was to be commanded by Samuel Carroll. The division was made up of a brigade from the Army of West Virginia at Cumberland, commanded by Brigadier General Isaac Duval, and one brigade of the Hancock's veteran volunteers."³⁴⁰ Hayes was given command of the Second Brigade, "which at 5,000 men was quite a little army and was ordered to take it 'over awful mountain roads, through destitute country' to Lynchburg, Virginia."³⁴¹ Hayes, showing compassion for his 1st Division,

³³² Ibid

³³³ Ibid

³³⁴ Ibid, 271

³³⁵ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 271-272

³³⁶ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 96-97

³³⁷ Ibid

³³⁸ Ibid

³³⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 568

³⁴⁰ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 184

³⁴¹ Ibid

wrote a farewell speech praising their acts of bravery and stating that he would never forget their toughness through some of the bloodiest campaigns of the war.³⁴² The military relationship between Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley ended on April 6, 1865.³⁴³ William McKinley made his way to Winchester as Hayes was immediately sent to New Creek, West Virginia.³⁴⁴

With the fall of Richmond and Robert E. Lee's surrender to Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865, Hayes's travel to Lynchburg was unnecessary.³⁴⁵ Hayes was excited for two reasons: First, the war ended with a grand finale between two great generals which included his hero, George Crook. Second, his resignation would be submitted by June, resulting in his ability to spend more time with Lucy and his boys.³⁴⁶ Although the Battle of Appomattox was over, a stream of orders came in through McKinley's office at Winchester.³⁴⁷ The military was not disbanded and the soldiers were not ordered to return to their homes. McKinley had no problem issuing a letter of acknowledgement that Lee surrendered to Grant. He wrote, "In honor of the crowning victory of our arms, and the prospect of a speedy peace, the City of Winchester will be thoroughly illuminated this evening. All citizens are called upon to bear their part in the illumination."³⁴⁸ Although most residents of Winchester supported the Confederacy, they understood that McKinley's order was truly the end of the bloody war and for once the southern sympathizers could at least acknowledge its final end.³⁴⁹

³⁴² Ibid

³⁴³ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 571

³⁴⁴ Ibid 2: 572-73

³⁴⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 186

³⁴⁶ Ibid

³⁴⁷ Porter, *William McKinley*, 106

³⁴⁸ Ibid

³⁴⁹ Ibid

With this excitement came a shattering event, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The news was made available to Hayes on April 15, 8 a.m. From a great victory to despair, the assassination of Lincoln would lead to the ineptitude of the Andrew Johnson administration. Hayes, remembering his conversations with Lincoln, wrote in his diary:

As to Mr. Lincoln's name and fame and memory, - all is safe. His firmness, moderation, goodness of heart; his quaint humor, his perfect honesty and directness of purpose; his logic, his modesty, his sound judgment, and great wisdom; the contrast between his obscure beginnings and the greatness of his subsequent position and achievements; his tragic death, giving him almost the crown of martyrdom, elevate him to a place in history second to none other of ancient or modern times. His success in his great office, his hold upon the confidence and affections of his countrymen, shall all say are only second to Washington's; we shall probably feel and think that they are not second even to his.³⁵⁰

On April 26, 1865, Hayes and McKinley both felt that the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston to Sherman officially ended the war.³⁵¹ While Hayes awaited his notice of leave, he wanted to make sure that every man of the 23rd Ohio was cared for before he left.³⁵² The one problem Hayes faced was that he was now a Congressman, so while the physical fighting of the war may have been over, the beginning of his political career had just begun. It was in early May that Hayes received his leave from the military, but instead of returning to Lucy Hayes and his boys in Ohio, he felt the need to visit Washington.³⁵³ It was here where Hayes reflected on four years of war and the awful murder of President Lincoln. After visiting friends, he had the opportunity to meet and speak with the new president, Andrew Johnson. Hayes noted, "He strikes one as a capable and sincere man; patriotic and with a great deal of experience as a public man."³⁵⁴

³⁵⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 492

³⁵¹ Ibid

³⁵² T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, 233

³⁵³ Ibid

³⁵⁴ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 580-83; This was Hayes's greatest miscalculation.

William McKinley did not participate in the Grand Review of the armies in Washington.³⁵⁵ In early May, he had the opportunity to join a Masonry Lodge at Hiram Lodge No. 21, Free and Accepted Masons, in Winchester.³⁵⁶ Witnessing a surgeon providing money to injured Confederates, “so that they can start over,” moved McKinley.³⁵⁷

He was impressed by the compassion of the Masons and remained a member until his death in 1901.³⁵⁸ On May 24, 1865, McKinley was able to observe thousands upon thousands of soldiers marching through the Capitol for the Grand Review.³⁵⁹ From Sherman’s ragged and rough men to the pristine Army of the Potomac, all the while the crowds cheered as the divisions walked by. Rutherford and Lucy Hayes were in attendance as well but with the massive crowds they were unable to connect with McKinley.³⁶⁰ For Lucy, she was joyful that her husband survived the entire war. For McKinley, he was struck by a motto displayed at the Capitol: “The only debt this government can never pay is the debt it owes the brave men who saved the nation.”³⁶¹

On June 8, 1865, Rutherford B. Hayes was officially discharged from the military. “Hayes was brevetted major general for ‘gallant and distinguished services during the campaign of 1864.’ He had experienced physical hardship, personal danger, and mental strain and had proved a worthy warrior; he had been wounded five times, and had four horses shot under him.”³⁶² As a volunteer for the 23rd Ohio, Hayes was a proud of his service and more importantly, the service of his men. Hayes would never experience war again as a soldier nor

³⁵⁵ Ibid

³⁵⁶ John Wise, *Recollections of Thirteen Presidents*, 215-216

³⁵⁷ Ibid

³⁵⁸ John Wise, *Recollections of Thirteen Presidents*, 215-216

³⁵⁹ *Canton Repository*, February 22, 1896

³⁶⁰ Ibid

³⁶¹ Ibid

³⁶² C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 273-75

politician. McKinley noted, “His whole nature seemed to change when in battle. From the sunny, agreeable, the kind, the generous, the gentle gentlemen, he was, when the battle was once on, intense and ferocious.” Hayes’s final statement as a departing soldier: “I am very happy to be through with this war.”³⁶³

Later, on June 19, William McKinley, like his mentor Hayes, received a promotion as well. He was appointed to brevet major which was recommended by Crook and confirmed by Sheridan.³⁶⁴ The honor was given due to “gallant and meritorious service during the campaign in West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley.”³⁶⁵ Once he swore his oath on July 11, 1865, William McKinley was known as Major McKinley.³⁶⁶ Out of every title McKinley possessed, the title of major was his proudest accomplishment during and even after the war.³⁶⁷ Although McKinley was relieved from duty on July 19, 1865, he processed an application to remain in the United States military for the position of captain in the 1st Army Corps.³⁶⁸ As the 23rd Ohio was mustered out of service on July 26, 1865, William McKinley received word that the board of examiners had recommended him to the position of captain. Surprisingly, he declined the commission.³⁶⁹ McKinley later said, “I wanted to remain in the army. My friends among the officers urged me to do so, and I would probably be in the military service today if my father and mother had not seriously objected. Somehow or other, they did not think much of my being in the army in the time of peace. The result was that I came home and studied law.”³⁷⁰

³⁶³ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 286-88 T.H. Williams, *Hayes of the Twenty-Third*, 19-30, 324; Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 187

³⁶⁴ Russell, *Lives of William McKinley and Garret A. Hobart*, 126

³⁶⁵ *Cleveland Leader*, August 25, 1895,

³⁶⁶ Russell, *Lives of William McKinley and Garret A. Hobart*, 128

³⁶⁷ Ibid

³⁶⁸ Ibid, 129

³⁶⁹ Ibid

³⁷⁰ *Cleveland Leader*, August 22, 1897

William McKinley's and Rutherford B. Hayes's service to the United States military during the Civil War was sacred to both men. Although their relationship in the same unit as mentor and student did not last the entire war, the partnership was cemented for Ohio politics and eventually the national political arena.³⁷¹ Hayes was uncertain with his new role as Congressman from Ohio, whereas, McKinley was uncertain with his entire future at a young age of 22 and veteran of the Civil War. Regardless of what was next, William McKinley and Rutherford B. Hayes finally returned home to Ohio. After the 23rd Ohio's monument was unveiled in Cleveland, McKinley said,

We had a million soldiers in the field when the war terminated, and the highest testimony to their character is found in the fact that when the muster hour came, and that vast army, which for years had been accustomed to wars and carnage, returned to their homes, they dropped into the quiet walks of citizenship, and no trace of them was ever discernible except in their integrity of character, their intense patriotism, and their participation in the growth and development and maintenance of the Government which they had contributed so much to save.³⁷²

³⁷¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 194

³⁷² *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893)*, 360; Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 105-06

Chapter Three: Separation

Rutherford B. Hayes had his sights set on the rural life in Ohio after the war was over, but the desire to go home and live out the rest of his life in retirement would have to wait as Hayes was already elected a member of the House of Representatives during the final stages of the war.³⁷³ Early on, Hayes realized that his role in Congress was nothing more than to provide party patronage to loyalists of the Republican Party.³⁷⁴ Congressmen provided advice on who to appoint nationally and locally within their home state, and they usually appointed supporters. Very quickly, “Hayes discovered that each appointment disappointed old friends and failed to make new ones.”³⁷⁵ It is here, in Congress, that Hayes began to doubt a career in national politics. The political arena was not the Shenandoah Valley, and his fellow Congressmen were not members of the 23rd Ohio. Although the position grew on Hayes, it paled in comparison to his days on the battlefield.³⁷⁶ Hayes mentioned to Lucy, “Politics is a bad trade, runs in my head often.”³⁷⁷ The 3/5 Clause, no longer a reality within the United States Constitution, caused Hayes to push his fellow Republicans in creating an amendment that “would base congressional representation on actual voters.”³⁷⁸ Hayes saw this as an important matter, since it would

³⁷³ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 2: 565

³⁷⁴ Ibid, 581

³⁷⁵ Ibid, 3:1-2

³⁷⁶ Ibid, 3: 55-56

³⁷⁷ Ibid, 5: 131

³⁷⁸ Ibid, 3: 57

increase the South's power in Congress and the majority of blacks would be *persuaded* not to vote with the "Party of Lincoln."³⁷⁹

William McKinley was unsure where his destiny pointed. The military was an option, and he successfully completed an application to become a captain only to be deterred by his father.³⁸⁰ His mother was hopeful that he would become a minister but he did not share in her enthusiasm.³⁸¹ It is no surprise that McKinley did at this moment of confusion seek the advice of his mentor, Rutherford B. Hayes. After receiving a letter from McKinley, Hayes wrote back:

My notion of the place for a young man is a fine large growing town anywhere, but would prefer a town in the West. (The West was rapidly growing during and after the Civil War, especially with the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad). St. Louis, Kansas City, Leavenworth, Omaha, Chicago, etc, are my favorites, with your business capacity and experience I would have preferred railroading or some commercial business. A man in any of our western towns with half your wit ought to be independent at forty in business. As a lawyer, a man sacrifices independence to ambition which is a bad bargain at best. However, you have decided for the present your profession, I must hush.³⁸²

McKinley had already made up his mind. In September of 1865, he entered Albany Law School and graduated in just nine months.³⁸³ His ability to debate, study, and his calm demeanor made him a natural for a career in law. He really never had a desire to go into business to become a "man of money." While McKinley enjoyed his days as a Major where he felt a sense of accomplishment and honor, but it was his days as a lawyer that fueled his ambition for power.³⁸⁴

Upon passing the bar exam in late 1867, he began to seek a location on where to practice law.³⁸⁵ Since this was the first step of his political career, he viewed his status as a lawyer equivalent to private in the military. This was going to be a step by step process and instead of

³⁷⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 131

³⁸⁰ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 33-34

³⁸¹ Ibid

³⁸² Hayes to McKinley, November 6, 1866

³⁸³ Ibid, 35

³⁸⁴ Ibid

³⁸⁵ Smalley, *William McKinley*, 33-45

generals providing a promotion in rank, it would be his fellow citizens providing a vote of confidence in his leadership.³⁸⁶ Biographer H. Wayne Morgan's perceptions of McKinley during his time are worthy of study:

His deliberation and reflection subverted any irrational tendencies in his makeup. His temper was sure but slow. His relations with people rested on insight rather than on emotion. His decisions came from careful deliberation, never from quick or thoughtless action. Caution was the keynote of all his life. He respected deeds more than words; tasks were challenges to overcome. The tragedies of his personal life and the necessities of his profession veneered his whole life with a layer of charm and personal kindness so sincere that he thought first of others. That basic sense of kindness merged in him with a deep sense of responsibility and duty that was never a pose, but a way of life.³⁸⁷

McKinley began studying law in the office of Charles Glidden in Canton, Ohio's greatest attorney. Canton, a town of 7,000 residents, was the location that met McKinley's desire to be a lawyer. Poland, Ohio was too small and the bonus of having his family in Canton would help boost McKinley's reputation while starting a legal career. Even as he continued to study and practice law, he had his sights set on Congress; it was clear that McKinley's ambition would lead him into public service.³⁸⁸

While McKinley studied law in Ohio, Rutherford B. Hayes caucused with his fellow Ohio delegates on several issues dealing with post war America. On December 1, 1865, the Union had difficulty in accepting the admission of "Rebel Congressmen" from the south.³⁸⁹ President Andrew Johnson wanted to unify the two sides but Republicans were appalled by state governments that created black codes, which essentially replaced slavery with peonage (paid "slave" labor).³⁹⁰ With the Union victory, Hayes and his counterparts believed that if the "other side" were to rejoin the United States, it required swearing allegiance to the Constitution that

³⁸⁶ Ibid

³⁸⁷ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 34

³⁸⁸ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 35-36

³⁸⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 6

³⁹⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 7

banned slavery under the Thirteenth Amendment.³⁹¹ Hayes, with the confidence of his Ohio delegation, offered a resolution basing representation on actual voters.³⁹² Two members, James M. Ashley and Samuel Shellabarger dissented but Hayes was introduced to another Ohio Congressman and veteran of the Civil War, James A. Garfield, “a smooth, ready, pleasant man, not very strong.”³⁹³ As the resolution was debated, the Republicans caucused throughout December to try and reorganize Congress.³⁹⁴ A joint committee was established to oversee the reconstruction of the South, Schuyler Colfax was elected Speaker, and the Republican leader of the House was none other than Thaddeus Stevens.³⁹⁵ Hayes’s perception of “Thad” Stevens was recorded in a letter to Lucy, “The only blemish in his puritanical, severe appearance is a brown wig. He is witty, cool, full of and fond of sarcasms and thoroughly informed and accurate. He has a knack of saying things which turn the laugh on his opponent. When he rises everyone expects something worth hearing, and he has the attention of all; He is radical throughout, except, I am told, he doesn’t believe in hanging.”³⁹⁶

By the end of December, 1865, Hayes had settled in his life as Congressman. He received his committee assignment, Land Claims, and was appointed chairman of the Joint Committee on Library.³⁹⁷ After the Christmas recess, Hayes’s stamina was challenged with Reconstruction issues, night after night, as he met with the Republican caucus to determine which bills needed to be heard on the main floor.³⁹⁸ One bill authored by William D. Kelley, provided black males for the right to vote in Washington D.C. as the District of Columbia was not a state nor a territory

³⁹¹ Ibid: 7-8

³⁹² Ibid, 8-9

³⁹³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 192-193

³⁹⁴ Ibid

³⁹⁵ Ibid

³⁹⁶ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:12;

³⁹⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 19

³⁹⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 196

but an “enclave” within the United States. Hayes originally supported an “educational test or condition” but was swayed by Thad Stevens and the caucus leaders to accept “universal suffrage for the black male.” While the caucusing depleted his mental strength, Hayes found time to visit attractions within Washington. On the anniversary of Lincoln’s assassination, Hayes finally saw George Washington’s Mount Vernon and although he was in awe of the historical site he felt the need to compare Washington to Lincoln.³⁹⁹ Hayes wrote, “The truth is, if it were not sacrilege, I should say Lincoln is overshadowing Washington. Washington is formal, statue like, a figure for exhibition but Lincoln is the highest character... neither could have done the other’s work, and without the work of both we should have had a different history.”⁴⁰⁰

The Congressional career of Hayes was a very short one. He wanted to limit his time in D.C. for one term but was motivated by his colleagues to run for a second term.⁴⁰¹ The task of trying to unify the nation during the Reconstruction era was nearly impossible. Hayes felt that President Andrew Johnson was largely influenced by the southern Democrats thus creating a divide within the Republican Party itself.⁴⁰² Johnson, a Republican (but a former Democrat), vetoed the Freedmen’s Bureau Bill (which would have extended the ability to help former slaves in the South) and the Civil Rights Bill of 1866, which declared former slaves United States citizens. Hayes was furious. He defended the Civil Rights Bill to his home state of Ohio. Hayes’s biographer, Ari Hoogenboom provides an in-depth account of Hayes’s anger to the editor of the *Cincinnati Volksblatt*:

...as if it gave unusual and unheard of rights and privileges to negroes – as if it would compel the schools to receive negro children, the Hotels, negro guests... when it undertakes to secure to the negro no right which he has not enjoyed in Ohio ever since the repeal of the Black Laws in 1848-49! The objective of the bill was to protect

³⁹⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 23

⁴⁰⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 24

⁴⁰¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 198-99

⁴⁰² Ibid

Freedmen and Loyal men generally in the Rebel States. The great danger here is local oppression – local ruffianism – depriving the individual citizen on account of color or loyalty or both, of the Commonest rights. Hayes rejected the foolish notion of States Rights that would protect American citizens abroad but not at home.

Hayes went on to say, “Congress has done next to nothing.”⁴⁰³ With the Republicans sharing in Hayes’s anger, they passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 over President Johnson’s veto in early April of 1866.⁴⁰⁴ The anger festered a bit more as Johnson went on to show his disapproval of the proposed Fourteenth Amendment: “preventing states from depriving any person of life, liberty, and property without due process of law; to reduce representation of states that denied the vote to any male citizens over twenty-one; to disenfranchise all Confederates until 1870; and to repudiate the Confederate debt.”⁴⁰⁵

By June 14, 1866, the Fourteenth Amendment cleared Congress without the disenfranchisement clause and provided the South with a condition of restoration: accept the Fourteenth Amendment and admission to the Union was guaranteed.⁴⁰⁶ President Johnson, of course, disagreed with this style of “deal making with the South.”⁴⁰⁷ His spin on the issue led many to believe that the South actually never left the Union, thus, all members of Congress from southern states should be seated immediately.⁴⁰⁸ Johnson’s relationship with Congress further declined with another veto of the Freedmen’s Bureau Bill and allegations of corruption within his own administration.⁴⁰⁹ Hayes could only watch as the country seemed to be ripping apart, again. On a positive note, Hayes was nominated by the Republican Party to serve another term as a member of the House of Representatives. Although he despised his current position, he was

⁴⁰³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 198-99

⁴⁰⁴ McKittrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction*, 349-350

⁴⁰⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 20

⁴⁰⁶ McKittrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction*, 350

⁴⁰⁷ McPherson, *Reconstruction*, 74

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, 151

glad that his fellow Republicans had faith in his leadership. Hayes had to decide whether a second term would be necessary and if the stress of Reconstruction was worth it.⁴¹⁰

Hayes did not want to disappoint his Republican colleagues, therefore, he decided to campaign for his seat in Congress during September of 1866. As printed campaign documents circulated his beloved state of Ohio, his true mission was to campaign for the Union's plan of Reconstruction. Hayes declared to his audiences:

...there was a Union plan and a rebel plan of Reconstruction before the country. The President and the Democrats embraced the Rebel plan and wished to restore the seceded states into the Union with seventy traitors representing them in Congress. The Rebel plan would exclude Union men in the South from every office and banish many from the states they had tried to save for the Union. It would abandon the four millions of loyal colored people to such treatment as the ruffian class of the South, educated in the barbarism of slavery and the atrocities of the Rebellion may choose to give them. In contrast, the Union plan, as embodied in the proposed fourteenth amendment, would remove every relic of slavery from the Constitution and from state institutions and laws, would respect loyalty and make treason odious, and would not repudiate the federal debt incurred in crushing the rebellion.”

Ohio held its election in October, providing some sense of relief to Hayes, since it indicated how well Republicans would dominate the Northern states. On October 9, 1866, Rutherford B. Hayes was elected to a second term in Congress.⁴¹¹ With little time to celebrate his victory, he was ready to continue the debate on Reconstruction with the opening of the 39th Congress on December 3, 1866.⁴¹²

Finally, in his second term in the House Hayes found his calling – civil service reform. The bill, authored by Thomas A. Jenckes of Rhode Island, “would create a bipartisan commission to curtail congressional as well as executive patronage.”⁴¹³ The bill required appointees to prove their ability by taking a civil service exam and to ensure that the open

⁴¹⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 29

⁴¹¹ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 283-84

⁴¹² Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 203-204

⁴¹³ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 285

position is filled with an individual who actually possess experience.⁴¹⁴ Hayes, disappointed that the bill failed in the House, committed a lifelong crusade to ensure the passage of a civil service act.⁴¹⁵ Unfortunately for Hayes, it would not be until the assassination of President James Garfield in 1881 that the public was outraged enough to force Chester A. Arthur to sign the Pendleton Act (Civil Service Reform Act).⁴¹⁶ Hayes's disappointment was short lived as several events unfolded in the winter of 1867, starting with the majority of Southern States rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment on the advice of President Johnson.⁴¹⁷ The Republican Congress struck back. "They proposed to disqualify rebels from voting, enfranchise blacks, guaranteeing equal rights for all, and the impeachment of Andrew Johnson." ⁴¹⁸

Hayes's experience in Congress was not full of passionate speeches or lively debates. He simply completed his time because the voters of Ohio asked him to do so. Luckily for Hayes, the voters in Ohio had another grand idea – Rutherford B. Hayes for Governor. He easily won the Republican nomination in June of 1867 but according to his diary his confidence in actually winning the election was near zero percent.⁴¹⁹ He was called a war hero and he accomplished great feats but he was unsure if the Civil War experience was enough to propel him in the gubernatorial election. Hayes resigned from his seat in Congress on August 7, 1867.⁴²⁰

William McKinley, whose law practice kept him busy throughout the day, made his first political speech on behalf of Rutherford B. Hayes's candidacy for Governor in Stark County,

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, 286

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, 286-87

⁴¹⁶ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 205

⁴¹⁷ Ibid

⁴¹⁸ Willaims, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 38-39

⁴¹⁹ Willaims, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 38-39

⁴²⁰ Ibid

Ohio.⁴²¹ McKinley was worried that Hayes's chances of election were in jeopardy due to the candidate's support of the high tariff during his tenure as Congressman.⁴²²

The normally Republican Ohio Wool Growers Association had not endorsed Hayes. This cost thousands of votes in the industrial counties. While McKinley would support Hayes throughout his political career, he would develop his own alliance and beliefs about the middle class. McKinley, unlike Hayes, was not from a privileged class. His friends and family were all tied to the industrial health of the United States.⁴²³

Regardless of the distinction, Hayes was his mentor, comrade in arms, and great friend. From the top of a dry goods box at New Berlin and then repeating the speech throughout Stark County, McKinley recited Hayes's war record, described his wound at South Mountain, exhorting how he had, "waded, swam, and floundered across the dense marsh at Opequon. He [Hayes] served his country until the last rebel stronghold had been surrendered although months before elected to Congress by the 2nd District of Ohio."⁴²⁴ Hayes's opponent, Allen G. Thurman, Democrat, received no kindness from William McKinley's speech. "Every energy of his mind was directed against the war measures of the Union party. Every effort which he could employ was used against the administration and its policy. You have one choice Ohio, this nation for the present at least must be confided to none but its preservers, its enemies must be kept out of the counsel chambers."⁴²⁵

While this was McKinley's first campaign speech, there was an issue that he addressed outside of the gubernatorial election. The state of Ohio was asked to vote on an amendment to the state constitution that would grant the vote to black and white male citizens. While McKinley referred to his "friend" Hayes, the candidate who backed suffrage for all male voters, McKinley

⁴²¹ Heald, *William McKinley Story*, 12-14

⁴²² Ibid

⁴²³ Olcott, *Life of William McKinley*, I:58

⁴²⁴ Willaims, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 40

⁴²⁵ Russell, *Lives of William McKinley and Garret A. Hobart*, 132

inadvertently labelled him a radical, since he supported “negro suffrage.”⁴²⁶ McKinley pointed to the volunteering of black soldiers during the Civil War. Although he did not serve alongside black soldiers, he was well aware of their service and called them his comrades:

They enlisted in our armies and were made soldiers... they served with distinction in the field, they marched and countermarched and fought side by side with our white soldiers. They were not only soldiers, but see the services they rendered as guides to our armies, as spies to the enemy’s camp, and greatest of all their kindness, sympathy and assistance to our soldiers attempting to escape from the prison hells of the south. I tell you was there nothing else to recommend from their services alone should be sufficient.⁴²⁷

Although Hayes’s momentum was present in west Ohio counties, he felt guilt for leaving Congress with the unfinished Reconstruction agenda.⁴²⁸ He allowed that guilt to slide away as his comrades within the 23rd Ohio cheered on his campaign for governor. Hayes stated, “My chief personal objection to being a candidate for governor was removed.”⁴²⁹ Hayes journeyed throughout the state of Ohio speaking once or twice per day until he would lose his voice altogether. He knew it was a tough hill to climb against the Democratic Party but the soldier inside of him made him keep his promise to fight until the last vote was cast.⁴³⁰ Hayes, like McKinley, spoke in favor of the Negro Suffrage amendment and defended his position on radical Reconstruction. Using Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence, he noted, “...to destroy the great fundamental truth of the Declaration, by limiting the application of the phrase ‘all men’ to men of a single race. The south had denied the right of over four millions of our countrymen because of their race and color. They held them in slavery and to perpetuate that slavery, made war to

⁴²⁶ Ibid

⁴²⁷ Ibid

⁴²⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 211-212

⁴²⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 42-45

⁴³⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 47

destroy the great Republic.”⁴³¹ He linked the leadership of the Ohio Democrats which included his opponent, Thurman, as conspirators to overthrow the Union. “They had embraced a policy of peace in January of 1861 and had looked smilingly on while an armed oligarchy had tried to establish a nation based on slavery and the denial of human rights.”⁴³²

It seemed that Hayes finally enjoyed the art of politicking. No longer did he have to appease fellow Congressmen to unify the North and South during the disaster of Reconstruction. Instead, he simply required the state of Ohio to voice its confidence through the gubernatorial election of 1867.⁴³³ Hayes was determined on having political equality extended to the black males of Ohio. Hayes continued his attack on the opposing party:

These Democrats regarded treason as no crime and loyalty as no virtue; they would banish patriots from the states they labored to save, abandon blacks to southern ruffians, and impair the integrity of the public debt. They [the Blacks] are not aliens or strangers... They are here by the misfortune of their fathers and the crime of ours. Their labor, privations, and sufferings, unpaid and unrequited, have cleared and redeemed one third of the inhabited territory of the Union. Their toil has added to the resources and wealth of the nation untold millions. Whether we prefer it or not, they are our countrymen, and will remain so forever. Our government... is not the government of any class, or sect, or nationality, or race. It is not the government of the native born, or of the foreign born, of the rich man, or of the poor man, of the white man, or of the colored man – it is the government of the freeman, it is the government of the governed. The Ohio Democrats were waging one more campaign on the old and rotten platform of prejudice against the colored people. The plain and monstrous inconsistency and injustice of excluding one seventh of our population from all participation in a Government founded on the consent of the governed in this land of free discussion is simply impossible. Impartial suffrage would secure free public schools for all and would promote popular intelligence, economic progress, and sectional and racial harmony.⁴³⁴

Rutherford B. Hayes’s speech must have struck a chord within the Ohio voter community. He had proved himself on the battlefield and was simply asking his beloved state for the opportunity to lead within the political arena. The voter may have interpreted his speech as a bit of radical

⁴³¹ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I:293-295

⁴³² C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I:295-300;

⁴³³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 212-13

⁴³⁴ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 316-20

with his proposal of suffrage for blacks, but this didn't affect the outcome of the election; possibly the Ohioans fell in love with Hayes's passion.⁴³⁵

On Election Day, October 8, 1867, the Republican Party of Ohio was worried since the hard fought suffrage amendment failed.⁴³⁶ To make matters worse, the legislature shifted to the Democratic Party and the hope of Hayes as the next governor seemed to fade.⁴³⁷ As he witnessed close friends losing their campaigns he finally received his own tally later in the day. Democrat Allen G. Thurman lost to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes by less than 3,000 votes. Ohio voters rewarded Hayes with 243,605 votes (50.31%) to Thurman's 240,622 (49.69%).⁴³⁸ The message was clear; even the state of Ohio wasn't unified during the Reconstruction era. Rutherford B. Hayes was the governor of a state that failed to pass the state suffrage amendment that he promoted, provided the Democrats with the majority power in the state legislature, and threatened to revoke the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution altogether. Hayes had to decide what kind of executive he would be – a man of compromise or a leader for his party.⁴³⁹

After several rounds of issuing rewards through Republican Party patronage, Hayes prepared for his first inaugural address to the state of Ohio. On January 13, 1868, Hayes committed his executive powers to equal voting rights. According to Hayes, "Since the divisive debates over state debt, taxation, banking, currency, and internal improvements had been either settled or transferred to the federal government, Hayes stressed that only 'one important question of principle' remained unsettled – the abolition of distinctions in political rights based on

⁴³⁵ Ibid

⁴³⁶ Ibid

⁴³⁷ Ibid

⁴³⁸ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 328

⁴³⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 49

color.”⁴⁴⁰ Sadly, the governor of Ohio had no veto power and could only watch as blacks were disenfranchised by the Democratic legislature. Although there was debate on the national debt and efforts to replace the national bank currency with the greenback, Hayes’s focus was still on Reconstruction. Although his days as a Congressman were over, he still felt the need to provide advice to his fellow Republicans on this matter. Upon hearing that the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson was to take place within May of 1868, Hayes visited Washington immediately to be a witness to history. On May 16, 1868, Hayes watched as the United States Senate acquitted Andrew Johnson by one vote.⁴⁴¹ Johnson was never thrown out of the Presidency but the Republican Party knew they needed a strong candidate for the election of 1868.⁴⁴²

William McKinley cheered hearing the results of the gubernatorial election of 1867 but wasn’t surprised that his own “hometown” voted against the General. Stark County did not vote for Hayes or the suffrage amendment to the state constitution.⁴⁴³ Nevertheless, McKinley continued his support for black voting rights. In 1868, he became the chairman of the Republican Central Committee of Stark County.⁴⁴⁴ The Republicans nominated Ulysses S. Grant as the presidential candidate for 1868, and McKinley organized “Grant clubs” throughout the state of Ohio to campaign against the Democratic candidate, Horatio Seymour.⁴⁴⁵ McKinley, just as he did when he campaigned for Hayes, supported his radical thinking by bringing the Civil War into this election. He accused the Democratic Party of supporting the Confederacy during the war:

The Southern Democrats fought against the Union, and the Democrats of the North with many happy exceptions aided their southern allies in the field with their sympathy as well as their material aid. Too cowardly to enlist in the Southern Army and fight from the front, they entranced themselves in the rear of the Union Army, and while it was battling

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴⁴¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 215-16

⁴⁴² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 52

⁴⁴³ H. Wayne Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 41

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid, 42

with rebellious hosts who were in the front, these covert, cowardly, stay at home rebels were firing upon our rear, shooting us in the back, proclaiming the war a failure. The voters have a clear choice in the election: one party sought to destroy the government of our Fathers, and erect on its ruins an Autocracy of Caste and Color: the other met, fought, and defeated fiendish schemes and saved our homes, our friends, our constitution, and our country... Let us fight now upon the same line upon which our brave boys fell, and as they died to save our nation let us vote to keep it saved.⁴⁴⁶

McKinley felt that only military force would prevent racial riots or the attacks by the Ku Klux Klan. The crowds cheered for him as he was able to draw out the anger of his fellow Republican voters and turn that anger into energy of excitement.⁴⁴⁷ While the crowds roared, he was still able to run his law office but it was evident – William McKinley was in dire need of a rest.⁴⁴⁸ Ever since his enlistment in the 23rd Ohio, he had kept moving, physically and mentally, but the national election of 1868 finally broke William McKinley's stamina.⁴⁴⁹

While McKinley tested his energy reserves, Hayes campaigned throughout the state of Ohio as well. Hayes respected Grant's leadership in the war and had no doubt that the "Hero of Appomattox" would win this election. Hayes and McKinley, once again through their teamwork, helped provide Grant with Ohio which in turn was key in winning for Grant the presidency of the United States.⁴⁵⁰ The Republicans would continue to rule the White House during Reconstruction but the question of voting rights for blacks remained on McKinley's and Hayes's mind.⁴⁵¹ If they were unable to vote, this would create a majority for the Democrats in other elections. After the election, November 23, 1868, Hayes focused his attention back on Ohio with proposals to revise the state's elections by requiring pre-election voter registration and minority

⁴⁴⁶ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 109-110

⁴⁴⁷ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 109-110

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid, 111

⁴⁵⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:56

⁴⁵¹ Ibid

party representation on election boards.⁴⁵² In December, Hayes met with Ulysses S. Grant and noted, “Grant’s leadership and rule is beyond question. It seems to mean business and not political scheming. If anybody could overthrow the spoils doctrine and practice, Grant is the man.”⁴⁵³

In 1869, two important events would unfold in Ohio politics. First, Rutherford B. Hayes was nominated by the state Republicans to run for a second term as governor.⁴⁵⁴ Second, William McKinley announced his candidacy for prosecuting attorney of Stark County.⁴⁵⁵ These were two completely different candidacies but this is where McKinley decided his political career would start. Since Hayes was the incumbent, his campaign was not as difficult as McKinley’s since this was McKinley’s first attempt at seeking office. McKinley ran against a Democratic opponent, William Lynch, which should have caused concern for him since Stark County’s majority was mainly Democrats.⁴⁵⁶ The Canton newspaper, *The Repository*, provided hope by supporting his candidacy due to his status as “a good lawyer and a fine orator.”⁴⁵⁷ William McKinley defeated William Lynch by a small margin, 5,001 to 4,866.⁴⁵⁸ He would have to thank his comrades from the 23rd Ohio for the needed votes, but Stark County truly appreciated a candidate that was willing to cross party lines and create much needed compromise.⁴⁵⁹ The term began on January 1, 1870 and lasted two years with a salary of \$1,000 per year. *The Repository* remarked as he took office, “Let Republicans see to it that, in the

⁴⁵² Ibid, 57

⁴⁵³ Ibid, 58

⁴⁵⁴ *Canton Repository*, October 7, 1869

⁴⁵⁵ *Canton Repository*, July 1, 1869

⁴⁵⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 42

⁴⁵⁷ *Canton Repository*, October 7, 1869

⁴⁵⁸ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 44

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid

performance of his duties he is sustained by all who desire to see the laws sustained and enforced.”⁴⁶⁰

While Hayes watched his protégé campaign against Lynch, he received word on who his Democratic opponent would be in the October 1869 Election. The Democratic Convention in Ohio nominated Hayes’s old commander, General William S. Rosecrans.⁴⁶¹ This would have provided an entertaining campaign for the voters of Ohio but Rosecrans refused to run on the Democratic platform. The Ohio Democrats opposed the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, they wished to tax federal government bonds, and required that payment of those bonds be in gold, although they had been purchased in greenbacks.⁴⁶² With Rosecrans out of the race, George Hunt Pendleton was nominated to run against Rutherford B. Hayes.⁴⁶³ Suddenly, Hayes’s confidence of victory shrunk as Pendleton’s popularity in Ohio soared due to his backing of greenbacks to pay for the war debt and his position on keeping blacks from voting at the polls.⁴⁶⁴ It did not help matters that Pendleton was the vice-presidential candidate in the 1864 election which provided him experience in running a national campaign and the necessary name recognition among the Ohio citizens.⁴⁶⁵ Hayes decided to introduce Ohio to a guest speaker that he supported throughout the war, General Phil A. Sheridan. The Republicans decided to promote Hayes as a war hero and at Bellefontaine, Ohio, Sheridan preached to voters, “...when Hayes was leading troops through the quagmire at Opequon, where was George H. Pendleton? At that very hour, he was the candidate of the ‘peace party’ for Vice President. At the very instant Hayes was crowning the banners of Ohio with glory, Pendleton was doing all he

⁴⁶⁰ *Canton Repository*, January 6, 1870

⁴⁶¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 65-67

⁴⁶² Ibid

⁴⁶³ Ibid, 3:68

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid

could to drape the banners all in white in token of surrender... Is there no choice between the man for Governor, the one a soldier tried and true, the other a traitor of the most unquestioned kind?"⁴⁶⁶ Hayes was concerned that since the war was over, how many voters would truly care about his heroic actions.⁴⁶⁷ Already, McKinley, finding out his election was secured, looked on to see the results of Hayes and Pendleton. On October 12, 1869, Rutherford B. Hayes was elected to his second term as Governor of Ohio, 235,081 to Pendleton's 227,580 votes.⁴⁶⁸ The voters had rejected the greenback theory and now provided Hayes with a Republican dominated legislature that would secure ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment.⁴⁶⁹

The duties of county prosecutor were not strenuous but they gave William McKinley an opportunity to expand his experience with politics. McKinley's problem in the early stages of his political career was his continued reference to the war while voters were trying to forget it. The *Canton Repository* stated that while "McKinley was fighting side by side with Governor R. B. Hayes, earning distinction and the gratitude of his countrymen on many a bloody battlefield, Lynch, was making Vallandigham speeches in the villages of Stark County. He was the enemy in the rear, using all his puny efforts to neutralize what McKinley achieved in the front."⁴⁷⁰ William Lynch defeated McKinley, 5,228 to 5,085 votes, in the Election of 1871, handing him his first defeat in the political arena.⁴⁷¹

McKinley's defeat wasn't a devastating loss. This was a local race and his sights were set on a different position and partnership – marriage. The single life depressed McKinley as he

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, 3:69

⁴⁶⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:74

⁴⁶⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:80

⁴⁶⁹ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 338-39

⁴⁷⁰ *Delaware Gazette*, September 24, 1869, October 8, 1869

⁴⁷¹ *Canton Repository*, July 1, 1870, August 4, September 8, 15, October 20, 1871

witnessed friends and family members marrying.⁴⁷² The future Mrs. McKinley would be Ida Saxton, a daughter of Canton's most prominent family and founders of the *Canton Repository*. Miss Saxton was independent, a supporter of women's rights, and known for her nervousness and possessiveness.⁴⁷³ McKinley, who demonstrated love and loyalty, was the perfect match for her. After Ida accepted his proposal, McKinley thought of two guests who must be present at his ceremony – Mr. and Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes:

I have a mind to get married – time 24th of next month – place Canton. It is now settled that Miss Saxton and I will write our fortunes at the above time and place. I of course am happy and want my friends to know it and therefore hasten to tell you. Away down at Camp opposite Charleston, in that scolding widow's house, I promised Mrs. Hayes I would give her long notice of my marriage and she in turn promised that she would be present and the General, if not in direct terms, by his silence consented to the arrangement- thereby agreeing he would be present. I have performed my part of the agreement and I do hope you will find it convenient to perform yours. I think I am doing a good thing. Miss S. is everything I could hope for. She is good.

They were married in a Canton Presbyterian church on January 24, 1871.⁴⁷⁴

If Hayes had the opportunity to teach McKinley the responsibilities of marriage he would have more than likely mentioned that the finding of a home is the first priority and “creating” a family to fill that home is the second. McKinley, finding a home in Canton, wanted to please his wife which resulted in the birth of his first daughter, Katherine by Christmas of 1871.⁴⁷⁵

If William McKinley met Ida Saxton before 1861 it is quite possible that he would have waited to serve the Ohio infantry or not serve at all.⁴⁷⁶ Regardless, William McKinley was in love and wanted to please his wife. It is after the wedding and honeymoon in New York that McKinley began to trumpet “temperance.”⁴⁷⁷ Canton, Ohio sought ways to clean up the German

⁴⁷² Heald, *The McKinley Era*, 635

⁴⁷³ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 43

⁴⁷⁴ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 43-44

⁴⁷⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:83

⁴⁷⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 45

⁴⁷⁷ Heald, *The McKinley Era*, 484

element of drinking near North Market Street.⁴⁷⁸ Young women crowded the streets asking those who drank intoxicating beverages the simple question, “Why do you continue to serve Satan?”⁴⁷⁹ Eventually, the rowdy crowd would pour their beer upon the young women to show their displeasure but this ultimately provided a victory of sorts to the local temperance movement: the sale of liquor was banned on Sundays and Election Day.⁴⁸⁰ McKinley found time to attend temperance meetings between his law practice and political activities. Although he wasn’t passionate on the topic of temperance he stated, “It is poor logic indeed to say that because men drink and always have we will therefore license and protect dealers in this wicked traffic. Because there is sin and crime and wrong abroad in the land therefore we will legalize them. Enunciate such a principle and you may bid a long farewell to social, moral, and political reform.”⁴⁸¹ During his time as prosecuting attorney, McKinley was successful in stopping the illegal sale of alcohol to college students.⁴⁸² Because of his hard work, he was rewarded by temperance groups in the form of votes towards future elections and was supported by Elizabeth Cady Stanton.⁴⁸³ William McKinley was not a prohibitionist; instead he believed that liquor can destroy a family which resulted in his pressing for local communities to determine on how liquor should be handled: sale, regulation, and distribution.⁴⁸⁴

For Hayes, temperance was never an issue. He respected those who decided to give up the drink but was angered when temperance groups forced their beliefs upon his family. During his years as President of the United States, it became known that “liquor was banned from the

⁴⁷⁸ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 46

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid

⁴⁸¹ Ibid, 47

⁴⁸² Heald, *The McKinley Era*, 486

⁴⁸³ Ibid

⁴⁸⁴ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 48

White House” by “Lemonade Lucy” Hayes, but the rumor was untrue.⁴⁸⁵ Hayes realized that the symbolic ban on liquor was strictly to keep the Republican Party from splitting into two separate parties. A ban on liquor was honored by the White House but Hayes and his wife angered advocates of temperance through Lucy’s words, “It is a great mistake to suppose that I desire to dictate my views to others in this matter of the use of wine and such drinks. I do not use them myself nor in my family, but I have no thought of shunning those who think and act differently, I want people to enjoy themselves in the manner that is most pleasing to them.”⁴⁸⁶ With those words, the “Lucy Hayes Temperance Society of Washington” threw out its founding member and teased her with a bottle of old Kentucky Whiskey.⁴⁸⁷

While McKinley enjoyed his days as a newly married man and father, Hayes continued to enjoy his position as Governor of Ohio. In his first order of business, Hayes promoted a change to Ohio’s political influence over civil servant positions:

For many years political influence and political services have been essential qualifications for employment in the civil service, whether State or National. But even the Warden of the Penitentiary and his subordinates, and the Superintendents of asylums and reformatories and their assistants were dismissed when their party lost power, no matter how much their experience had enhanced their qualifications. The radical reform in the civil service proposed for the federal government – making qualifications and not political services and influence, the chief test in determining appointments and giving civil servants the same permanency of place enjoyed by army and navy officers – to be part of the state constitution.⁴⁸⁸

Rutherford B. Hayes followed the federal government’s example and called for judges to be nominated by the governor and confirmed by the state senate; they would serve during good behavior and paid adequate salaries.⁴⁸⁹ The judicial system needed reform regarding pay and

⁴⁸⁵ Greer, *First Lady*, 184

⁴⁸⁶ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 363

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 81

⁴⁸⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 225

tenure, since it was very easy for big businesses to bribe judges and remove them when they weren't "cooperating."⁴⁹⁰ Throughout the Gilded Age, Ohioan judges enjoyed the liberty of a lifetime position but in other states an election was required to fill the position.⁴⁹¹ With campaigning came funding resulting in the corruption of the judicial system.⁴⁹² Although no system is perfect, Hayes's decision to model the nomination process along the lines of the federal government paved the way for other states to recognize the importance of the federal system and the checks and balances that accompany that system.⁴⁹³

On March 30, 1870, Governor Hayes received excellent news from the state legislature. Not only did the state of Ohio ratify the Fifteenth Amendment, but the entire country officially added the Amendment to the United States Constitution.⁴⁹⁴ Hayes noted, "...the final overthrow of the atrocious system which the Republican Party was organized to oppose. By the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment the principles of the fathers will be fully recognized in the Constitution."⁴⁹⁵ The long war over slavery was officially over. The former slaves would provide the "Party of Lincoln" with even more votes for the elections throughout the Reconstruction era and Gilded Age. Unfortunately for Hayes, his joy would be short lived as the South would seek its revenge against blacks through the Jim Crow Segregation while adding the final insult with the *Plessy v. Ferguson*, case of 1896.⁴⁹⁶ Ironically, this was the same year William McKinley campaigned for the presidency against William Jennings Bryan. The result of the Supreme Court upholding the "separate but equal doctrine" destroyed McKinley's hopes of acting on any civil

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid

⁴⁹¹ Ibid

⁴⁹² Ibid, 226

⁴⁹³ Ibid

⁴⁹⁴ C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, I: 346

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid

⁴⁹⁶ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 90

rights movement. But the accusation or perception that he lacked any motivation to do so is inaccurate.⁴⁹⁷

Governor Hayes was lucky to have a solid majority in the Ohio legislature. Unlike his first term when he experienced gridlock, the second term provided Hayes with the opportunity to help Ohioans through the passage of several bills which ranged from the creation of colleges (Ohio State University) to the state's takeover of institutions (Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans' Home).⁴⁹⁸ As he continued to trumpet his thoughts on suffrage for minorities, he threw in a wild card when the conversation shifted to women's suffrage. Upon witnessing a women's suffrage convention in Ohio, Hayes noted, "The proper discharge of the functions of maternity is inconsistent with the like discharge of the political duties of citizenship."⁴⁹⁹ Although he never campaigned against women's suffrage publicly, Hayes influenced Lucy resulting in Mrs. Hayes's decision to back away from the suffrage conventions altogether. It is unknown if Hayes and McKinley had any conversations regarding women's suffrage but if they had it would have more than likely led to an argument based on their spouses' roles. Mrs. McKinley was an independent woman who wanted to work as a professional, versus Mrs. Hayes, who supported her husband throughout the war by raising a family and visited him every chance she had.⁵⁰⁰ Hayes and McKinley lived in two different worlds but upon campaigning for the presidency in 1896, William McKinley, unlike Hayes, promoted women's rights and established this policy as a foundation of the Republican Party right up to the Progressive Era.⁵⁰¹

Hayes's term as Governor of Ohio lasted until January of 1872. He loved his state of Ohio but also kept up to date on national affairs. Although he stated, repeatedly, that the job of a

⁴⁹⁷ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 56

⁴⁹⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 94

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰⁰ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 58

⁵⁰¹ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 58

Congressman was not a great one, he continued to contact Ulysses S. Grant for updates on Reconstruction.⁵⁰² He was worried that the Grant Administration was not paying attention to the Democratic Party in the South and the arbitration with Great Britain over the *Alabama* Claims case and the demilitarization of the US-Canadian border in 1871.⁵⁰³ Great Britain acknowledged that ships were built by the empire for the Confederates but refused to hand over Canada and billions of dollars as reparations to the Union because of the damages caused by the CSS *Alabama*.⁵⁰⁴ Luckily for Grant, his diplomats strategically allowed Britain to be absolved of all future “damages” regarding their ships that fought for the Confederates, while granting the United States monetary compensation for its losses.⁵⁰⁵ Grant wanted to annex Santo Domingo which caused the majority of Republicans to question his direction, especially during the Reconstruction period. Hayes was surprised but he felt that the failures by the Democrats overshadowed any blunders by Grant’s Administration.⁵⁰⁶ He could have easily run for Congress or even a third term as Governor but Hayes’s war regarding African Americans was the victory he sought.⁵⁰⁷ After the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, his desire to argue for lower taxes or civil service reform proved to be a bore.⁵⁰⁸ After visiting President Grant in 1871, Hayes confided to Lucy that his days in Washington and as Governor of Ohio were over.⁵⁰⁹ On Monday, January 8, 1872, Rutherford B. Hayes said his goodbyes as Governor of Ohio and celebrated the Republican dominance of the 1871 Election. Luckily, he resigned at the

⁵⁰² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:130

⁵⁰³ Ibid

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid, 3: 132

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid

⁵⁰⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 135

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid

appropriate time, since a major recession began to unfold within the railroad industry and in several financial houses in New York City. This event became known as the Panic of 1873.⁵¹⁰

The Great Recession of 1873 was a major blow to any economic recovery after the Civil War. Nationally, almost 3 million workers lost their jobs and another 25% felt their wages cut.⁵¹¹ Canton, Ohio experienced an unemployment rate of 30% with more than half of the workers experiencing a wage cut as well.⁵¹² The streets of Canton experienced an increase in families without homes. Economists question if the rapid expansion of the railroad industry during this era was too fast.⁵¹³ The companies who competed for more land borrowed funds from financial houses and when the “bubble” finally burst, 360 railroads failed and close to 20,000 businesses fell apart.⁵¹⁴ Without a railroad, boom towns turned into ghost towns and for the first time in the nation’s history: Wall Street was closed for several days.⁵¹⁵ William McKinley saw firsthand how a recession of this magnitude affected his community in Canton. The bankers slowed withdrawals, workers were paid with “loan notes,” business owners cut hours and wages, farmers had difficulty paying their loans, and with the introduction of the “silver dollar” by the Federal Government to promote bimetallism, money was deflating.⁵¹⁶ When McKinley wrote to Hayes and asked him, “what should I do with my life,” Hayes responded that business would be kind to McKinley. In 1873, McKinley inherited his father-in-law’s Stark County Bank, a city lot of land within Canton, and even the YMCA recruited him to help him get out of debt.⁵¹⁷ The banking experience he received during a recession of this magnitude would prepare McKinley for the

⁵¹⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 142

⁵¹¹ *Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, (Columbus, 1878)

⁵¹² Ibid

⁵¹³ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 62-63

⁵¹⁴ Ibid

⁵¹⁵ Ibid

⁵¹⁶ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 62-63

⁵¹⁷ Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley*, 203

economic questions that the United States would face in the coming years. “McKinley saw the interconnected economy, where others saw segments such as farmers, businessmen, laborers, merchants, and capitalists. The very assumption of Adam Smith’s view of a simplistic economy was being challenged. He knew the fear of a bank run firsthand.” ⁵¹⁸

With a recession in full swing, the masses sought different approaches to ensure job security and pay. One of those approaches was the introduction of American socialism. As class differences were obvious during the recession, the era received a name by author Mark Twain – “The Gilded Age,” in which the rich became richer and the poor became poorer.⁵¹⁹ McKinley never experienced life inside a mansion and completely understood why the unemployed became angry at the “captains of industry.” The unemployed fought over food and the ability to find a decent paying job while men like Jay Gould or Cornelius Vanderbilt wondered what company they would buy out at low prices during the recession.⁵²⁰ It is here that William McKinley witnessed the rise of labor unions and their appeal to the United States worker. Americans would tie unions and socialists (even anarchists) into one, but McKinley saw workers united to preserve their jobs and their dignity altogether.⁵²¹ In terms of his own situation, McKinley’s experience within the recession was plagued by mental depression.⁵²² His second daughter, Ida, died within five months of her birth and his first daughter, Katie, died of typhoid fever in 1875.⁵²³ Mrs. McKinley began to have epileptic seizures and took out her anger on her husband.⁵²⁴ McKinley

⁵¹⁸ Ibid

⁵¹⁹ Ibid

⁵²⁰ Ibid, 204

⁵²¹ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 64-65

⁵²² Ibid

⁵²³ Ibid

⁵²⁴ Ibid

could only sit and watch as his marriage imploded from these two dreadful events. Only his work as a lawyer and politician would keep him busy enough to avoid insanity.⁵²⁵

Hayes enjoyed his life as a “free man” after he resigned his post as the Governor of Ohio. He continued to monitor the Republican Party and received requests by his colleagues to run for the United States Senate in 1872. Ohioans saw Hayes as the senator that could unite the Republican and Democratic Parties on the national level as he did as Governor for Ohio.⁵²⁶ Hayes did not run for Senate as this would have put him at odds with his colleague from the war, John Sherman. State Senator J.S. Casement of Ohio observed, “...it is strange to see a man throw away the senate especially with the presidency in prospect.”⁵²⁷ Hayes went on to live his retirement adventuring in the railroad industry. He noted, “I want to study up railroad law, and railroad business generally, especially as to the construction of railroads.”⁵²⁸ Hayes invested in real estate that was ripe for railroad construction; especially a company named the Northern Pacific Railroad.⁵²⁹ Ohio received attention for construction as Hayes continued to lobby for rail lines from Columbus to Toledo.⁵³⁰ Afterwards, he began to speak about construction to Cincinnati.⁵³¹ Ironically, President Rutherford B. Hayes would have to deal with railroad workers during the Great Strike of 1877, but for now his focus was on creating a better economy for Ohio while reaping profits for his family.⁵³² His attention on the Republican Party never wavered even with these new investment projects. Liberal Republicans were attacking the Grant administration and labeled Grant as corrupt and an apathetic president. The threat of a divided

⁵²⁵ Ibid

⁵²⁶ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 246

⁵²⁷ Ibid

⁵²⁸ *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:201

⁵²⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 241

⁵³⁰ Ibid

⁵³¹ Ibid

⁵³² Ibid, 242

Republican Party threw Hayes back into party politics.⁵³³ The Democrats were no better as their party experienced the formation of the Greenbacks and the People's Party (Populists).⁵³⁴ Hayes refused to support the Liberal Republicans' candidate, Horace Greeley, and met with other staunch Republicans at the Philadelphia convention to support President Grant.⁵³⁵ Surprisingly, Hayes was nominated for his old seat in the House of Representatives.⁵³⁶ He originally declined the seat but understanding that his influence in Congress could help bring the election victory to Grant, Hayes accepted and began his campaign.⁵³⁷ He was embarrassed as he had promised the seat to his friend William E. Davis who saw his nomination as a betrayal of their friendship.⁵³⁸ Luckily for him, Hayes lost the election for his old seat and Grant regained the Presidency. He insisted to Davis that if he declined the seat it would have been "disastrous for the Party."⁵³⁹ Even with the loss, Hayes was convinced that his run helped Grant gain a second term as President.⁵⁴⁰

On March 25, 1873, Hayes received a letter of appointment to serve as the assistant U.S. Treasurer at Cincinnati.⁵⁴¹ With annoyance and surprise, Hayes noted, "it would be small potatoes to grasp this crumb. Thanks be given, I am independent of office for my daily bread!"⁵⁴² As Hayes began his response to the nomination he found out that John Sherman blocked his confirmation. Hayes was furious.⁵⁴³ This was an opportunity for him to decline a position with regret. Sherman replied that his action saved Hayes's credibility since he had no

⁵³³ Ibid, 243

⁵³⁴ Ibid

⁵³⁵ Ibid, 244

⁵³⁶ Ibid

⁵³⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:203

⁵³⁸ Ibid

⁵³⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:203

⁵⁴⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:206

⁵⁴¹ Ibid

⁵⁴² Ibid, 3:207

⁵⁴³ Ibid

experience within the U.S. Treasury.⁵⁴⁴ Hayes wrote back to Sherman, “The action taken was calculated, although not so intended, to injure me and to wound my feelings, and frankness requires that I should say that I think you were in error in your views of duty under the circumstances.”⁵⁴⁵ Hayes was eventually confirmed, but on May 1, 1863, he declined the appointment. “Grant’s failure to recognize his services, Sherman’s bungling, and the ‘cowardly lies’ told to the investigating committee by congressmen (including James Garfield), who acquired stock in Credit Mobilier under suspiciously favorable circumstances, made Hayes glad to be out of politics.”⁵⁴⁶

Like McKinley, Hayes witnessed the Panic of 1873 ravage the state of Ohio. His investments in Toledo and Columbus spiraled downward as Jay Cooke’s financial house in New York collapsed.⁵⁴⁷ In an instant, Hayes blamed the recession on the Credit Mobilier scandal and on Congress’s lack of action to prevent the crash altogether. He was passive and detached from the recession as Lucy gave birth to their eighth child while McKinley suffered from the death of his daughter.⁵⁴⁸ Hayes kept busy especially with the death of his uncle, Sardis, who provided Hayes with real estate and his last wishes of philanthropy to the State of Ohio.⁵⁴⁹ He attended rallies and campaigns but he still felt that there was no need to join the more active political arena.⁵⁵⁰

By 1875, many Americans began to consider Reconstruction a failure, President Grant’s cabinet filled with corruption, and that the Republican Party did not fulfill its promises for a

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid, 3:208

⁵⁴⁶ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 246-48

⁵⁴⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:233-34

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid; Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 65-66

⁵⁴⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 235-36

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid

postwar America.⁵⁵¹ Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley watched as the Republican Party imploded from within. With the Irish community joining northern Democrats and the Republicans trying to figure out what to do with the black voters segregated from the Southern Democrats, Hayes could only watch. As for McKinley, his separation from Hayes during the Reconstruction era introduced him to a new political ally and second mentor, Mark Hanna. He was six years older than McKinley, successful in business, enjoyed politics and civics.⁵⁵² Hanna supported the Republican Party, high tariffs, the gold standard, and was fair to his workforce.⁵⁵³ He witnessed McKinley take the side of arrested mine workers without charging them a fee during a strike against wage reduction.⁵⁵⁴ Interestingly enough, Governor Rutherford B. Hayes had a dilemma on his hands. He sympathized with the miners and was well aware of the repercussions this strike would have in an election year.⁵⁵⁵ Hayes felt that the disorder was a threat to law, and property had been destroyed which resulted in an executive order to send soldiers to arrest the striking miners.⁵⁵⁶ Although strikebreakers provoked the violence, one company official was killed and several men were injured on both sides.⁵⁵⁷ McKinley had the opportunity to debate his former adversary in court, William Lynch, to whom he had lost the election in 1871. He put on a show for the courtroom by defending the arrested miners and stressing the working conditions and wage cuts that inspired the strike. The majority of the miners received thirty days in jail and shared a fine of \$30.⁵⁵⁸ This was a victory for McKinley who already had his name mentioned for a congressional run. The small victory in the courtroom

⁵⁵¹ Ibid, 3: 237-238

⁵⁵² Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 68

⁵⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁵⁴ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 69

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid, 70

would turn into votes from the entire mining district of Ohio.⁵⁵⁹ Mark Hanna was impressed and decided to attach his political clout to William McKinley's future.⁵⁶⁰ But, Hanna would have to wait as William McKinley prepared to support his old commander for the Gubernatorial Election of 1875 and the Presidential Election of 1876.⁵⁶¹

Chapter Four: Loyalty

The Ohio Republicans caucused on March 25, 1875 and called on Rutherford B. Hayes to run for a third term as Governor. Hayes was surprised to learn that his fellow Republicans were setting him up for the 1876 Presidential Election. Hayes noted, "How Wild! What a queer lot we are becoming. No body is out of the reach of that mania."⁵⁶² One of the delegates at the caucus, William McKinley, nominated Hayes for a third term because Hayes was the only man in Ohio

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid

⁵⁶¹ Ibid

⁵⁶² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 269-70

to unify the Republicans and finally pass a Civil Rights Bill.⁵⁶³ Although he was excited by the loyalty of his Republican companions, Hayes refused the opportunity to run. His objective at the time was to simply expand his home at Spiegel Grove, and a governor's salary would have placed him in even more debt.⁵⁶⁴ Politically, he felt that another debate on civil rights and civil service reform were "all bad and weights on us and threatened defeat in Ohio."⁵⁶⁵

Hayes's bitterness towards politics came from the Grant Administration's numerous scandals.⁵⁶⁶ Mentally, he wanted to remain on the "sidelines" but physically he decided to speak on behalf of the Civil Rights Act of 1875 on March 1, 1875 where he stated that he believed in political equality for blacks but not social equality.⁵⁶⁷ Most Republicans agreed with Hayes during this time and they knew that the Federal government did not have the resources to enforce the new law especially in the Deep South.⁵⁶⁸ Hayes continued to receive support and continued to deny the call to run. Without surprise, on June 2, 1875, Rutherford B. Hayes was nominated with 396 votes. (He defeated Judge Alphonso Taft of Cincinnati, father of future president William Howard Taft).⁵⁶⁹ William McKinley wrote to Hayes after the nomination on June 8, 1875:

The people of this county are enthusiastic over your nomination and we think it will bring us success. It was very gratifying to me to find at Columbus so many grand fellows, who like myself, so thoroughly believe in you... It did my heart good to find so many men believing you to be what I knew you to be. The leading topic with us will be the school question. We have here a large catholic population which is thoroughly democratic, a large protestant German element that hitherto have been mainly democratic, they hate the catholics – their votes we must get. I modestly suggest that it would be well to have Judge Taft speak in this region of Ohio. Now as to yourself we want you here during the campaign & I want you so to arrange your appointments & when you come bring Mrs.

⁵⁶³ Ibid

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid

⁵⁶⁵ Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction*, 196-202, 259-279;

⁵⁶⁶ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:272

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid

⁵⁶⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 257-58

Hayes & as many of the children as you can and stop with us. I want my wife to see you & Mrs. Hayes... We intend to have a vigorous campaign in this county... You must be elected.⁵⁷⁰

As William McKinley organized “Hayes clubs” and spoke on topics which included sound money, tariff protection, and the enfranchisement of blacks, Hayes took on the “school question.”⁵⁷¹ The fear of Catholic schools caused the Republican Party to support the creation of “public” schools to ensure students were not subservient to the Vatican.⁵⁷² Hayes commented on the issue, “No sectarian flag floats over the school house, and no spirit enters there but that of peace and good will toward all men and creeds. We want to bring the children of Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Unbelievers together in the common School room.”⁵⁷³ Hayes defended the wall of separation between church and state and refused to use Catholics as “enemies” of his party and public schools.⁵⁷⁴ McKinley was confident that the Democratic votes of Protestant Germans and Catholics altogether were up for grabs.⁵⁷⁵ Unfortunately for Hayes, the spectre of temperance surrounded his name throughout the German community which overshadowed the latter’s hatred of Catholics.⁵⁷⁶ On the other hand, Hayes was lucky as the most important issue in the election of 1875 was currency.⁵⁷⁷

The Democrats, who were supported by Catholics, swayed Ohioans to the currency issue when Congress passed the Specie Resumption Act of 1875 (a return to the gold standard by January 1, 1879).⁵⁷⁸ With industry still lagging after the Panic of 1873, the Republicans anti-Catholic campaign received little attention from those who were desperately seeking work to

⁵⁷⁰ Hayes Presidential Center, William McKinley to Rutherford B. Hayes, June 8, 1875

⁵⁷¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 598-599

⁵⁷² Ibid

⁵⁷³ Ibid

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid

⁵⁷⁵ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 52-53

⁵⁷⁶ Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875-1881*, November 11-12, 1876, 49-51

⁵⁷⁷ *Canton Repository*, June 11, 18, 1875

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid

feed their families.⁵⁷⁹ Rutherford B. Hayes never endorsed the anti-Catholic crusade by his party but he did not condemn the position either.⁵⁸⁰ The Democrats wanted to abandon deflation and to bring the greenback into the fold. With inflation, they argued, the volume of currency would increase the supply of money. With more money, the depressed citizens of Ohio could then pay their debts and spend their way out of a recessed economy.⁵⁸¹ Hayes countered that a return to the gold standard was an economic moral issue. Hayes argued, “that inflation benefited wholesale dealers, middlemen, and retailers, who could set prices to ‘cover the risks of the fickle standard of value’ at the expense of farmers and laborers, who were least able to bear the burden.” Hayes simply believed that inflation was wrong as it led to uncontrollable spending.⁵⁸²

Hayes, as in the two previous elections, was nervous regarding the outcome. He questioned his performance through the lens of a state still dealing with a depressed economy. On a positive note, he knew that a loss in this gubernatorial election would provide him with the ability to return to a quiet life. A loss in this election might finally put an end to his party’s constant vetting of his candidacy. Hayes also realized that a win would promote him to the grand stage of a possible presidential nomination for the Election of 1876. As he waited for his defeat against the Democratic challenger, William Allen, Hayes received the final tally: William Allen, 293,273; Rutherford B. Hayes, 297,817.⁵⁸³ Hayes won by 4,544 votes and even though he had yet to exercise his power as Governor of Ohio again, the *Canton Repository* began to back his candidacy for President of the United States.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁷⁹ Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875-1881*, November 11-12, 1876, 49-51

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid

⁵⁸¹ Ibid

⁵⁸² Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875-1881*, November 11-12, 1876, 52

⁵⁸³ *Canton Repository* August 27, 1875

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid

McKinley decided to re-enter the political arena by declaring his candidacy for the House of Representatives. After his successful defense of the miners' strike, he felt confident that his defense would lead to votes from both Democrats and Republicans within the mining and manufacturing district of Ohio.⁵⁸⁵ As he began the race to win his Party's nomination, rumors swirled calling McKinley a drunk during his time in the Civil War.⁵⁸⁶ Hayes, always keeping tabs on his protégé, refuted the rumor: Yes, it was a McKinley from the 23rd Ohio Regiment, but it was John McKinley not William. Hayes stated, "[John] McKinley was indeed a drinker, a nuisance, a dangerous one too, when drunk, a savage when in liquor!"⁵⁸⁷ The attacks didn't stop. The Democrats nicknamed McKinley "Little Tin Major" and referred to him as "a military man, who is better accustomed to swearing than praying."⁵⁸⁸ Regardless, McKinley continued his campaign. He toured county after county and visited areas that were considered "out of the way" to gain votes toward his nomination.⁵⁸⁹ Even with an almost clean sweep of the district, he continued to shake hands, smile, and speak with those affected by the recession. On August 15, 1876, the *Canton Repository* exclaimed, "Comparatively young, vigorous, educated, well-posted, a fine orator, and with a personal magnetism that ever secures friends, he will make a canvass such as this district has rarely if ever had."⁵⁹⁰ McKinley won the nomination to represent the Republican Party as a candidate for the House of Representatives in the Election of 1876.⁵⁹¹

Rutherford B. Hayes wanted to serve Ohio as its Governor.⁵⁹² He continued to grant appointments, discussed the importance of nonpartisan civil service, and accomplished the daily

⁵⁸⁵ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 53-54

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid

⁵⁸⁷ Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875-1881*, November 11-12, 1876, 55

⁵⁸⁸ Stark County *Democrat*, September 28, October 5, 1876

⁵⁸⁹ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 53-54

⁵⁹⁰ *Canton Repository*, August 18, 25, 1876

⁵⁹¹ *Ohio Patriot*, September 14, 21, 1876 431

⁵⁹² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3:173-74

routines and tasks of an executive.⁵⁹³ Letters began to stream in contemplating who Hayes's Vice-Presidential candidate should be and who the overall delegation of Ohio will be to send to the Republican Convention.⁵⁹⁴ It was widely recognized that Hayes had the capability to unite not just the Republican Party but Democrats as well. As the letters and communication continued to pour in, Hayes's confidence grew and he declared, "...good purposes, and the judgment experience and firmness I possess would enable me to execute the duties of the office well. I do not feel the least fear that I should fail!" Even with strong support from the Ohio elite to put forward Hayes, he still had a tough hill to climb to win the Republican nomination. His opponents at the convention would include: James G. Blaine, a party favorite, and Senator Roscoe Conkling, leader of the stalwart faction in New York and endorsed by the Grant administration.⁵⁹⁵ Luckily for Hayes, Blaine's popularity decreased when a bribe of approximately \$64,000 was allegedly received from the Union Pacific Railroad, and since Conkling was a stalwart, his connection to the "corrupt" Grant Administration forced delegates to choose a "safer choice."⁵⁹⁶ The safer choice or the "compromise candidate" was Rutherford B. Hayes – "his public record as a radical Republican was impeccable; he was reform minded but had loyally supported Grant in 1872; he was a war hero for the Union; he stood for equal rights and sound money; he was from Ohio, a state that was essential for a Republican victory."⁵⁹⁷

The Republican Convention was held on June 14, 1876 in Cincinnati, Ohio, a "home field" advantage for the Hayes delegation.⁵⁹⁸ Once again, Rutherford B. Hayes was nervous about the outcome and already decided that the nomination was James G. Blaine's, the "plumed

⁵⁹³ Ibid

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid, 3: 174-75

⁵⁹⁶ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 300-01

⁵⁹⁷ Williams, ed., *Hayes: Diary of a President*, February 15, March 21, April 11, May 21, 1876, pp. 15-19, 23

⁵⁹⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 300-01

knight,” to give away.⁵⁹⁹ As delegates discussed the potential of the crowded field of candidates, the ballots were drawn and after several rounds of voting it came down to Hayes and Blaine. On June 16, Rutherford B. Hayes defeated James G. Blaine by five votes for the Republican nomination.⁶⁰⁰ It was a surprise to most who attended, but with the dark cloud of corruption hanging over Blaine’s head, the small majority of delegates gave their votes to Hayes as the safer choice. Hayes was in shock and could not hold back his emotions as he shook hands with Blaine.⁶⁰¹ Minutes later, the convention nominated Congressman William Wheeler of New York as his vice-presidential nominee which balanced the Ohio-New York political machines. Two weeks later the Republicans found out that Hayes was running against the popular Democratic Governor, Samuel Tilden of New York.⁶⁰²

William McKinley sent his congratulations on July 1, 1876, “I am highly gratified with your nomination and feel that the Republican Party did the very wisest and best thing in placing you at the head of its ticket. Your nomination is received here with great enthusiasm, while Tilden’s nomination invokes none.”⁶⁰³ McKinley attached his political services to Hayes and it was if they were back in war together. Two men who volunteered to serve the 23rd Ohio regiment volunteered to fight together in the political arena. McKinley worked hard by holding several Hayes Club meetings in Ohio and created as many “new friends” as he could find to vote for Hayes and the Republican ticket.⁶⁰⁴ The worry of a Hayes loss was real to McKinley. Samuel Tilden’s popularity came directly from the arrest and destruction of William “Boss” Tweed, who

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid, 3: 302

⁶⁰¹ Ibid

⁶⁰² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 302

⁶⁰³ Hayes Presidential Center, William McKinley to Rutherford B. Hayes, July 1, 1876

⁶⁰⁴ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 111-12

controlled New York City through the infamous Tammany Hall.⁶⁰⁵ To make matters worse, it seemed Americans lost faith in Ulysses S. Grant as president and were considering providing a Democrat with the opportunity to change America's current course.⁶⁰⁶ Like Hayes, Tilden was a reformer. He, too, believed in sound currency and civil rights for blacks. Unlike modern politics, the candidates did not actively participate in the campaign and relied completely on their surrogates to gather votes.⁶⁰⁷ William McKinley's opportunity came at Youngstown, Ohio when he read off Tilden's supposed reform record with such a spin that the crowd was convinced that the Governor of New York was no better than Boss Tweed. McKinley said, "Would you have such a man for President? Yes! Yelled a democratic supporter to which McKinley replied back, "there is a fellow who said yes. He must need reformation."⁶⁰⁸ As he campaigned for Hayes, he was campaigning for himself as well. Although Hayes preferred low tariffs, McKinley promoted the protective tariff as a means to save jobs.⁶⁰⁹ The majority of Republicans running for a post in the Election of 1876 displayed their anti-Catholic sentiment but Hayes and McKinley refused to accept that platform.⁶¹⁰ Regarding the issue of temperance, Hayes and McKinley did not want to lose the German population in Ohio, thus, they remained silent.⁶¹¹ Hayes followed his fellow Republicans on the national gold standard, but would consider allowing greenbacks while McKinley was a bimetallist (both silver and gold coinage).⁶¹² McKinley saw the bimetallist platform as an advantage since farmers continued to promote silver in the west, and bankers in the east favored gold. Whenever McKinley was questioned on bimetallism, he would respond

⁶⁰⁵ *Canton Repository*, September 22, 29, October 6, 1876

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid

⁶⁰⁷ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 112

⁶⁰⁸ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, 112

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid

⁶¹⁰ Ibid

⁶¹¹ Ibid, 113

⁶¹² Ibid

with the protection of American jobs and that sound money was the safer choice over inflationary spending.⁶¹³

Hayes's first act within the campaign was to write a letter of acceptance for his nomination by the Republican Party. In the letter he stated, "The two parts I thought about were the Civil Service, and the South. In the latter, I wanted to plainly talk of the rights of the colored man, and at the same time to say what I could for the interests and feelings of the well disposed white man."⁶¹⁴ He reinforced his commitment to nonsectarian public schools and a complete reform of the spoils system to counter Tilden's image as a reformer. Hayes was capable of bringing Liberal Republicans, like Carl Schurz, back into the Republican Party.⁶¹⁵ The issue of serving just one term was controversial to Hayes, since no other presidential candidate ever created such a bold promise.⁶¹⁶ Controversy followed as it was widely recognized that Hayes's goals and objectives in the White House could never be achieved in just four years. President Grant was annoyed because he felt that the one term promise was a direct attack on his administration.⁶¹⁷ Hayes replied with a political spin that a one term president is guarded against party patronage. Although no one believed Hayes's spin, they accepted his promise but did not like the idea.⁶¹⁸

Democrats in Ohio continued to attack Hayes and McKinley regarding their military record. They tried using money scandals as a way to shake off Hayes's military hero status, but to no avail. The veterans of the 23rd Ohio Regiment would not allow it.⁶¹⁹ As the Regiment held reunions on the anniversary of the Battle of South Mountain, McKinley used the event to praise

⁶¹³ *Canton Repository*, September 22, 29, October 6, 1876

⁶¹⁴ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 330

⁶¹⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 334

⁶¹⁶ Ibid

⁶¹⁷ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 267

⁶¹⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 334

⁶¹⁹ Ibid

Hayes as “one of the best officers the old 23rd ever had.”⁶²⁰ He characterized the Democrats as “tainted with treason, hypocrisy, and repudiation, while the Republican Party had always shone resplendent in loyalty, was covered with glory, and has spent its best blood in behalf of the Union.”⁶²¹ McKinley waived the “bloody shirt” at this event as he did for Hayes’s prior elections. He did not have to worry about the veterans, since they easily pledged their support for their old commander.⁶²²

Hayes was confident that McKinley would provide the votes from Ohio, but was less confident in the national election results. He could only sit back and watch his fellow Republicans try to rally the crowds away from Tilden.⁶²³ Hayes decided to write fellow Ohioan James Garfield that the campaign was focusing on the wrong issues. Although the school question and civil service reform were important, the main issue was still Southern Reconstruction. He wrote, “We must choose our own topics. The danger of giving Rebels the government is the topic people are most interested in.”⁶²⁴ As McKinley did in Ohio, Hayes urged his fellow Republicans to waive the bloody shirt nationally. The strategy was simple. When a veteran like William McKinley “waived the bloody shirt” he reminded the community that the Rebels started the Civil War. It was the South that shot and killed Union soldiers. It was a southern conspiracy that ultimately assassinated the beloved Abraham Lincoln. If Hayes had any intention in unifying the North and South it was not through the 1876 campaign. With Federal troops still patrolling the South to ensure blacks were able to their constitutional rights, the South was desperately seeking a candidate to win the White House.⁶²⁵ It is unknown if Samuel Tilden

⁶²⁰ Ibid, 335

⁶²¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 267

⁶²² *Cleveland Leader*, September 15, November 6, 1876

⁶²³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 268-69

⁶²⁴ Ibid

⁶²⁵ Ibid, 270

would have released the South from Federal control since he was a Northern Democrat.⁶²⁶

Hayes did not show any sympathy when his national campaign turned into a reflection of the war instead of a focus on reform. He reminded James G. Blaine of the new strategy during the month of September: “our strong ground is the death of a solid South, rebel rule, etc., etc. I hope you will make these topics prominent in your speeches. It leads people away from ‘hard Times,’ which is our deadliest foe.”⁶²⁷

As Hayes continued to campaign financially for his fellow Republicans, he was disgusted to learn that black Republicans were intimidated and murdered to prevent them from voting.⁶²⁸ He could only reflect on the hard fought battle in Congress to ratify the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. He called on Republican controlled state governments (South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana) to protect black voters.⁶²⁹ It is understandable why Hayes decided to revert to the “bloody shirt,” since Southerners reverted to their actions against black Americans. Ulysses S. Grant, who was still President, reinforced order in the southern states with a few thousand soldiers for policing purposes. The confidence of winning a few Southern states grew but all eyes were on Tilden’s home state – New York. Again, President Grant decided to intervene by enforcing the Federal Elections Act of 1871. Election supervisors were sent into New York to prevent any corruption by the Democrats, especially by Tammany Hall.⁶³⁰ Although Boss Tweed no longer reigned as its ruler, Tilden still received support from the Democratic machine.⁶³¹

⁶²⁶ Ibid

⁶²⁷ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 271-72

⁶²⁸ Ibid

⁶²⁹ Ibid

⁶³⁰ Ibid

⁶³¹ Ibid

Finally, on November 7, 1876, the Presidential Election was held. Hayes felt that the Democrats were going to win the White House and that their victory would stall every reform created to this point. Hayes noted in his diary, "...felt more anxiety about the South – about the colored people especially than about anything else sinister in the result... There the amendments will be nullified, disorder will continue, prosperity to both whites and colored people, will be pushed off for years." As ballots were slowly counted, one event cheered up Hayes – his protégé, William McKinley, defeated Leslie Sanborn by 3,300 votes. McKinley would enter the House of Representatives at the young age of 34.⁶³² This was the starting point of a national career in politics, and he could only wonder if his old commander, Hayes, would be joining him in Washington.⁶³³

Hayes's campaign team speculated that Tilden had the edge and would most likely win with more than the required 185 electoral votes. Although their hopes of a Hayes presidency seemed in jeopardy, the Republican Party continued to telegraph messages to the local Hayes clubs. The messages asked the state Republicans to continue their support, and ensure that if Hayes held a lead in their state over Tilden, to continue holding that lead.⁶³⁴ Hayes awoke Wednesday morning with no result of victory or defeat. Naturally, with the election so close, Hayes and Tilden began to claim victory among their constituents. The ballots were counted, but the focus of the voting attention by both parties turned to the states of Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida.⁶³⁵ Without any independent regulatory agencies to oversee the election, Republicans and Democrats turned to fraud and bullying techniques. Voters casted their ballots two to three times, ballot boxes were stuffed, and ballot switching occurred where Samuel Tilden appeared

⁶³² Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President: 1875-1881*, November 11, 1876, pp. 47-48

⁶³³ Ibid

⁶³⁴ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 273

⁶³⁵ Ibid

on the Republican ballot (as an illiterate voter wouldn't notice the difference in candidates).⁶³⁶ Although fraud was "natural" within the political machine atmosphere, Hayes continued to reinforce fairness. He stated, "We are not to allow our friends to defeat one outrage and fraud by another. There must be nothing crooked on our part." By December 6, 1876, Electors certified Samuel Tilden with 184 electoral votes and Hayes with 165. This was the final day of the election since the United States Constitution demanded Electors to cast their official ballot on December 6th. Twenty electoral votes remained unclaimed by both candidates. The Hayes family awaited the final votes that evening. Unfortunately for both candidates, this was just the beginning of the grueling process to determine who was the president of the United States. With Oregon preparing to cast its ballot for Tilden (even though Hayes was projected to win by more than a thousand votes) and Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina too close to call, Hayes and Tilden had to look to Congress and politically appointed committees to determine their fate since no winner was announced on December 6, 1876.⁶³⁷

Although Florida and Louisiana declared Hayes the winner in those states, Hayes continued to believe that if blacks were not harassed at the ballot box, he would have easily won the Southern States.⁶³⁸ With no official winner declared on December 6, 1876, the President of the Senate (Vice President of the United States) had the constitutional power to certify the results of the election. The problem the candidates faced was that Vice President Henry Wilson of the Grant Administration was dead. He passed away in 1875 resulting in a vacancy within the executive branch. President Grant did not have a desire to replace Wilson because he was ready to pass the presidency on to another hopeful Republican in 1876.⁶³⁹ Before the two parties began

⁶³⁶ Ibid

⁶³⁷ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 274-280

⁶³⁸ Ibid

⁶³⁹ Ibid

the mudslinging on who should count the votes, Hayes stated, “My judgment is neither House of Congress, nor both combined, have any right to interfere in the count. It is for the V.P. to do it all. His action is final. There should be no compromise of our constitutional rights.”⁶⁴⁰ Hayes was right. To allow Congress to proceed without a Vice President to count the electoral votes would have placed Hayes’s presidency in jeopardy as the majority leaned Democrat.⁶⁴¹ James Garfield wrote to Hayes on the position of the Democrats with Tilden, “...more anxious for quiet than for Tilden and that leading Southern Democrats in Congress, especially those who were old Whigs might be separated from their northern associates if they knew that Hayes would treat the South with kind consideration.” Although Hayes appreciated the offer from Garfield, his concern for the South was at best, modest.⁶⁴²

McKinley arrived in Washington in late January of 1877. He was convinced that Hayes already won the election and was excited to participate in his first Congressional session.⁶⁴³ While he was searching for housing and sightseeing, he like Hayes, awaited the official results of the 1876 Election by a fifteen member Election committee that was composed of five senators, five representatives, and five Supreme Court justices.⁶⁴⁴ The objective of the committee was to investigate the battleground states and determine the true winner. The process dragged on well into February and even when a Tilden loss seeming inevitable, the Democrats continued to fight and threatened a filibuster to delay Hayes’s presidency. Hayes received the news by the committee state by state. On February 9, 1877, Florida was officially in the Hayes column.⁶⁴⁵ On

⁶⁴⁰ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 274-280

⁶⁴¹ Ibid

⁶⁴² Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President: 1875-1881*, December 9, 1876, pp. 60-61; Brown, *The Diary of James Garfield*, 3: 393-95

⁶⁴³ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 69-70

⁶⁴⁴ Williams, ed., *Hayes: The Diary of a President: 1875-1881*, December 9, 1876, pp. 60-61

⁶⁴⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 274-280

February 16, Louisiana was given to Hayes.⁶⁴⁶ Hayes was confident that the election was his, and prepared both his inauguration speech and a list of possible appointments to his cabinet. On February 24, the state of Oregon was counted for Hayes.⁶⁴⁷ And on February 27, South Carolina was given to Hayes as well. Finally, on March 2, 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes was announced with 185 electoral votes to Samuel Tilden's 184.⁶⁴⁸ The Senate declared, "I do declare that Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio, having received a majority of the whole number of votes is duly elected President of the United States for four years commencing on the 4th day of March, 1877."⁶⁴⁹

President Rutherford B. Hayes and Congressman William McKinley travelled by railroad to Washington on March 2, 1877. Before Hayes left the Columbus Railroad Station, he looked at the crowd that met him for his departure to the Capitol. He realized that he was no longer Governor of Ohio, but Ohio would always remain in his heart. Hayes said his farewells to Ohio:

I appear to say a few words in bidding goodbye to you. I understand very well the uncertainty of public affairs at Washington; I also understand that it is my duty to be at Washington, prepared to assume another position higher and more responsible and with more difficult duties. I have thought, as I looked upon this great audience and as to-day I gazed on the people who thronged our route to this depot, of a similar occurrence sixteen years ago. A little less than sixteen years ago I marched down High Street with one thousand men to pass to the East and to the South to do what we could to restore the Union of the States, and to reestablish the authority of the Constitution."⁶⁵⁰

The crowds cheered a farewell to their beloved Governor and McKinley was not surprised with this reaction. He knew all too well how the war affected his former commander. After several stops in Ohio and Pennsylvania which was followed by similar speeches and crowd reactions, Hayes told McKinley, "To achieve success and fame, you must pursue a special line. You must

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid

⁶⁴⁷ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 285-86

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid

⁶⁴⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 287-294; Barnard, *Hayes*, 392-95

⁶⁵⁰ Williams, *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 6

not make a speech on every motion offered or bill introduced. Confine yourself to one particular thing. Become a specialist. Take up some branch of legislation and master that. Why not take up the subject of the tariff? That being a subject that will not be settled for years to come, it offers a great field of study for years to come.”⁶⁵¹ Hayes, having already served his time in Congress, provided William McKinley with advice that he would embrace for decades. He would master the protectionist tariff but for now, he was the “rookie Congressman” and wanted to support his mentor, the President of the United States. McKinley entered the 45th Congress as a member of the minority party. The Democrats controlled the House with 153 members to the 140 Republican members. Although the Senate was controlled by Republicans with 39 members to 36 Democrats, McKinley and Hayes entered Washington with fragile support. It was a committee and the Supreme Court that handed the 1876 election to Hayes. The Democrats successfully provided the President with the nickname, “Rutherfraud,” although he fairly won the election. Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley needed to set a tone in 1877 if they were to win seats for the Republicans in 1878.⁶⁵²

On March 5, 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes gave his Inaugural Address to the nation. It was a miracle that he had the speech prepared, since his announcement of becoming president didn’t come until March 2. For three days, unlike President Lincoln, Hayes tried to create a Cabinet and refused to nominate his competitors to the posts. Unfortunately for Hayes, that only angered party leaders, but he wanted to nominate individuals based on merit not as a favor to the party. After all, he was the civil service reformist.⁶⁵³ Luckily, the conversation regarding appointments had to wait as a large crowd gathered for Hayes’s address. After his introduction, he immediately focused the crowd’s attention on the South:

⁶⁵¹ McKinley Memorial Addresses, 94

⁶⁵² Williams, *The Life of Rutherford Birchard Hayes*, 2: 4

⁶⁵³ Ibid

The evils which afflict the Southern States can only be removed or remedied by the united and harmonious efforts of both races, actuated by motives of mutual sympathy and regard; and while in duty bound and fully determined to protect the rights of all by every constitutional means at the disposal of my Administration, I am sincerely anxious to use every legitimate influence in favor of honest and efficient local self-government as the true resource of those States for the promotion of the contentment and prosperity of their citizens. In the effort I shall make to accomplish this purpose I ask the cordial cooperation of all who cherish an interest in the welfare of the country, trusting that party ties and the prejudice of race will be freely surrendered in behalf of the great purpose to be accomplished. In the important work of restoring the South it is not the political situation alone that merits attention. The material development of that section of the country has been arrested by the social and political revolution through which it has passed, and now needs and deserves the considerate care of the National Government within the just limits prescribed by the Constitution and wise public economy.⁶⁵⁴

Hayes's speech followed with topics that included, a complete overhaul of civil service appointments, a return to the gold standard, to continue the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine by not creating entangling alliances internationally, and the recent disputed election. After he swore the oath of office and bid farewell to Ulysses S. Grant, the presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes finally began.⁶⁵⁵

McKinley was in awe when he entered Capitol Hill. He took his seat for the first time and gazed out into the crowd of Congressman. He was honored to share the room with well known politicians – Joseph G. Cannon of Illinois and a member of his own delegation and admirer of Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield.⁶⁵⁶ Although the Republicans were the minority in the House, McKinley was proud to represent the Union's party. Republicans viewed McKinley as a "liberal" with his support of government regulation of business, civil service reform, and the advance of "workers' rights."⁶⁵⁷ His defense of the coal miners strike in Ohio was proof enough

⁶⁵⁴ *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O. Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O., 1989; Bartleby.com, 2001. www.bartleby.com/124/

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁶⁵⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 57

⁶⁵⁷ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 57

that he was passionate on the subject of labor.⁶⁵⁸ He supported immigration restrictions to help labor; higher tariffs to ensure job protection and prosperity; he wanted some inflation in the economy to distribute wealth to the masses.⁶⁵⁹ The problem he faced was the fact that senior Republicans were happy to be isolated from these issues within their respective states. McKinley respected the “Party of Lincoln” and its historic significance prior to and during the Civil War, whereas, senior Republicans mainly sought reelection after reelection.⁶⁶⁰ However, McKinley was cautious due to his upbringing in Ohio politics. He sought public opinion before he made a decision on an issue, and believed this was the best way to ensure that the people were heard. Fortunately for McKinley, the Republican Party was united on one major issue of the time: the protective tariff.⁶⁶¹ As the House settled in, McKinley was appointed to unimportant committees, but as a freshman representative he wasn’t surprised with the selections (Committee on Revision of Laws).⁶⁶² The real problem William McKinley faced was his wife’s health, especially after the death of his daughter Katie. As he attended to her daily, his ability to participate in social gatherings with Garfield and Hayes and others diminished.⁶⁶³

As President Hayes prepared to take on civil service reform, an extraordinary event occurred in July; the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Although the United States was on the road to recovery from the Panic of 1873, railroads continued to compete for passengers, and the less they charged, the more passengers boarded their trains.⁶⁶⁴ The easiest way to cut expenses was to cut the wages of railroad workers. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company cut wages by 10% on workers earning more than \$1 per day. Other companies, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, the

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid, 58

⁶⁶¹ Ibid

⁶⁶² *Congressional Record*, 45th Congress, 1st Session, 198; 2nd Session, 706;

⁶⁶³ *Congressional Record*, 45th Congress, 1st Session, 198; 2nd Session, 706;

⁶⁶⁴ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 71-72

New York Central, and the Erie followed suit.⁶⁶⁵ On July 16, the workers went on strike; freight trains were stopped. Governors called on President Hayes to interrupt the strike with federal soldiers.⁶⁶⁶ Hayes had some experience with strikes as the Ohio Coal Strike had taken place in 1876 during his days as Governor. He felt that strikers had no right to destroy property or prevent others from working.⁶⁶⁷ He told James Garfield that the role of the president is to ensure that violence does not spread to the point where states could not handle the situation.⁶⁶⁸ The other problem Hayes faced was the federal army dealing with Native Americans in the west. After the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876 where George A. Custer and his 7th Cavalry met their demise at the hands of the Sioux and Cheyenne, the United States Government sought vengeance in dismantling the Native American leadership across the country. At the exact moment of the Strike, federal troops were already engaged with Chief Joseph and Nez Perce Indians in the Pacific Northwest.⁶⁶⁹ So too, the rioting associated with the strike continued as it spread to West Virginia, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh by July 21.⁶⁷⁰ Since national sympathy was with the strikers, citizens joined and destroyed over 1383 freight cars, 104 locomotives, and 66 passenger cars.⁶⁷¹ Since the local militia refused to fire on its own citizens, troops were sent in from Philadelphia.⁶⁷² Over twenty-five people were killed and hundreds wounded.⁶⁷³ As Hayes reinforced the National Guard with federal troops, Americans saw this as another “reign of terror.” President Hayes felt he did not have a choice but to protect the United States economy.⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁶⁹ Bruce, *1877*, pp. 33-34

⁶⁷⁰ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 73

⁶⁷¹ Bruce, *1877*, pp. 40-42

⁶⁷² Bruce, *1877*, pp. 40-42

⁶⁷³ Ibid

⁶⁷⁴ Williams, ed., *Hayes: Diary of a President: 1875-1881*, August 5, 1877, pg. 93

After the strike was over in August, 1877, Hayes declared, “The strikers have been put down by force, but now for the real remedy. Can’t something be done by education of the strikers, by judicious control of the capitalists, by wise general policy to end or diminish the evil? The R.R. strikers, as a rule are good men sober intelligent and industrious.”⁶⁷⁵ If Hayes wanted to win seats in Congress in the 1878 midterm election, he had a large mountain to climb as immigrants and laborers saw the Hayes Administration as a direct threat to “opportunity.”⁶⁷⁶

With the Great Railroad Strike over, Congress began to focus on the nation’s monetary policy. In October of 1877, William McKinley was introduced to his first debate in the House of Representatives.⁶⁷⁷ The “Bland Bill” was authored by Richard P. Bland of Missouri to promote the free coinage of silver.⁶⁷⁸ McKinley was interested in this conversation but he was already aware that the Republican Party opposed bimetallism. The commitment to the gold standard was expressed by his fellow delegate, James Garfield and by President Hayes. He believed he had no choice but to represent manufacturers, his family’s newspaper and the Ohio legislators who had voted for the restoration of the silver dollar and voted “yes” for Bland’s bill.⁶⁷⁹ Eventually, after the bill was debated in the Senate it was called the Bland-Allison bill, requiring the treasury to purchase (monthly) at least \$2,000,000, but no more than \$4,000,000 worth of silver.⁶⁸⁰ McKinley voted with the “silverites,” but Rutherford B. Hayes declared, “I shall veto the bill. It will probably become a law notwithstanding my veto... but I have no misgiving. The Nation

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid

⁶⁷⁶ Bruce, 1877, pp. 47-48, 50-55

⁶⁷⁷ *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley*, 1893, 544

⁶⁷⁸ *Congressional Record*, 45th Congress, 2nd session, 1285

⁶⁷⁹ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 460-461

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid

must not have a stain on its honor. Its credit must not be tainted. This is the first and great objection: It is a violation of the national faith.”⁶⁸¹

McKinley opposed his mentor on February 28, 1878 and voted to override the veto.⁶⁸² McKinley felt that his connections to labor were more powerful than acting upon a platform for the Republican Party. The *Canton Repository* reported after the vote: “Major McKinley voted for the re-monetization of silver the other day, like a man who has the courage of his convictions.”⁶⁸³ Fortunately for McKinley, he was a freshman and admitted that he did not understand the issue of bimetallism. Hayes was not angered by young friend’s passion to enter the debate of “sound money.”⁶⁸⁴ Without question, the guilt of voting against Hayes made him sick to the stomach.⁶⁸⁵ He never voted for “free silver” after 1878 and opposed any inflation schemes after the fact. He voted for the resumption of specie payments in 1879 by gold. McKinley proved to be a champion of the gold standard after the Depression of 1893 when he officially saw what inflation could do to a fragile economy.⁶⁸⁶ Upon becoming President for his second term, he signed the Gold Standard Act of 1900 which eliminated the bimetallism concept for the next 30 years. His first debate was over and it was only a warm up to his true calling: tariff protection.⁶⁸⁷

The tariff question was not a two-sided argument during the Gilded Age. One side, intellectuals and economic theorists, believed that “free trade” was the answer to ensure a balanced trade with other nations.⁶⁸⁸ Second, the tariff for revenue that most Democrats supported believed in taxing products not produced in the United States with only a slight tax on

⁶⁸¹ Ibid;

⁶⁸² Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 59-61

⁶⁸³ *Canton Repository*, March 3, 1878

⁶⁸⁴ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 460-461

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid

⁶⁸⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 59-61

⁶⁸⁷ *Canton Repository*, November 16, 1877

⁶⁸⁸ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 70-71

manufactured goods would provide help to farmers and the American consumer.⁶⁸⁹ Lastly, the American Protective Tariff was sponsored by Republicans and Northern Democrats to tax imported manufactured goods, ensuring that Americans would only buy American (in theory).⁶⁹⁰ In his second major debate in the House, McKinley prepared to debate Southern Democrats who called for a reduction in the tariff rate.⁶⁹¹ Without an income tax, the Federal government depended on revenue from the tariff. Lowering the tariff would reduce the Treasury's pocket book, whereas, increasing the tariff would create a surplus.⁶⁹² President Hayes only mildly supported the idea of reducing the tariff, and the working class of America began to realize that a free trade concept may, in fact, lower the price of consumer goods.⁶⁹³ On April 15, 1878, the Republican Party sought leadership on this issue when Representative Fernando Wood from New York brought a bill to the House floor to reduce the tariff.⁶⁹⁴ Since the Democrats held the majority in the House, it was expected that the bill would pass with ease.⁶⁹⁵

Ironically, it was Hayes who had suggested to McKinley, when a young lawyer, to study the tariff issue to prepare for a career in politics. After years of studying the issue, his position was clear, "I am a high protectionist; I do not deny it, and I would not be seriously disturbed in mind if the tariff were a little higher. We ask nothing for northern labor which we do not freely accord to southern labor; nor for northern industries that we do not cheerfully extend to southern industries."⁶⁹⁶ McKinley felt the tariff produced high wages (and the concept of a "globalized

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid

⁶⁹¹ Ibid

⁶⁹² Ibid

⁶⁹³ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 462

⁶⁹⁴ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 59-61

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid

economy” was not existent during this time).⁶⁹⁷ Once again, his compassion for laborers was expressed on the floor of Congress: “Reduce the tariff and labor is the first to suffer. He who would break down the manufactures of this country strikes a fatal blow at labor. It is labor I would protect.”⁶⁹⁸ When Democrats fired back with the notion that a high tariff led to high prices, McKinley replied, “When prices were the lowest did you not have the least money to buy with?”⁶⁹⁹ To William McKinley it was very simple, cheap foreign products ruined domestic production, and then raised prices. The speech had a Hamiltonian ring to it. He had studied capitalism through the works of Alexander Hamilton and Henry Clay. He wanted to understand the American economy from its birth to the war in which he bravely fought.⁷⁰⁰ McKinley concluded his speech with, “Home competition will always bring prices to a fair and reasonable level and prevent extortion and robbery. Lower prices mean nothing to the unemployed!”⁷⁰¹ The chamber applauded and the Republicans found their man. William McKinley, a freshman from Ohio would become their leader on the tariff issue.⁷⁰² This became obvious when the Wood bill (an attempt to lower the tariff) was defeated in the Democratic controlled House of Representatives.⁷⁰³

On March 12, 1878, Hayes reflected on his first presidential year. He appreciated the favorable comments from some major newspapers but was more concerned with being labeled of being a nonpartisan executive. He deflected the newspapers’ comments with the fact that the Republican Party was strengthened especially given his vulnerability from his association with

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰⁰ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 72

⁷⁰¹ *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893)*, 17

⁷⁰² *Cleveland Leader*, August 25, 1895

⁷⁰³ *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893)*, 97, 105, 215-219; Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 60-66

the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. Hayes outlined his accomplishments in his diary, “On the whole, the year’s work has produced results: Peace, Safety, order in the South, The [railway strike] riots; not a man shot, Civil service reforms: no nepotism in executive appointments, no machine work by Federal office holders, sound currency, untainted credit, fewer scandals than before in many years.”⁷⁰⁴ To be realistic, however, the first year as president was not very kind to Hayes. He tried to veto the Bland-Allison Act and the veto was overridden. The Senate, dominated by Republicans, rejected his nominees for the New York customhouse.⁷⁰⁵ Hayes’s attempts to finally overhaul civil service were delayed by the party leaders in Congress.⁷⁰⁶ The Election of 1876 still haunted Hayes as the House of Representatives created the Potter Committee to prove that Hayes won the election through fraud.⁷⁰⁷ Congress’s approval of Hayes dropped drastically to the point where they were already looking forward to the Election of 1880, the election in which Hayes promised he would not run.⁷⁰⁸

Hayes and McKinley’s relationship in 1878 included dinners and visits from McKinley and his wife to the White House.⁷⁰⁹ Hayes was president of the United States and each time the McKinleys were invited by Lucy Hayes, there were always other guests present.⁷¹⁰ It’s unclear what conversations took place while they dined, but it was obvious that the Election of 1878 was on their minds. McKinley was up for reelection for the House and Hayes wanted to know if the Republicans had a chance in gaining the House through the midterm election.⁷¹¹ Although his relationship with the stalwarts was shaky at best, the Republicans were still the majority party.

⁷⁰⁴ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 466-67

⁷⁰⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 368-69

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid

⁷⁰⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 368-69

⁷⁰⁹ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 60-66

⁷¹⁰ Ibid

⁷¹¹ Ibid

Right before the election, Congress returned to a heated exchange on the enforcement of the *Fourteenth Amendment* in the South. Although time “healed” McKinley’s emotions resulting from the Civil War and the Election of 1876 “resolved” the issue of Reconstruction, the Southern treatment of blacks was still a major concern.⁷¹² McKinley stated, “The war is over, the flag of the lost and wicked cause went down at Appomattox, but that does not prevent us from insisting that all that was gained in war shall not be lost in peace, the struggle cost too much human life and public treasure to be apologized for, or frittered away, under any pretext. The results admit of no compromise.”⁷¹³ McKinley felt that Southern obstruction was an attempt to ensure that the ballot box remained in the hands of the Democrats. He wanted to see Federal control of elections. Hayes commented as well:

The whites are resorting to intimidation and violence to prevent the colored people from organizing for the elections. The division there is still on the color line. Substantially all the whites are Democrats and all the colored people are Republicans. There is no political principle in dispute between them. The negroes are for the most part ignorant, poor, and timid. My view is that the whites must be divided there before a better state of things will prevail.⁷¹⁴

On Election Day in 1878, the Democrats remained in control of the House.⁷¹⁵ Through their tactics in the Southern states against blacks, every Southern Democrat that ran for a position was elected.⁷¹⁶ Hayes was not amused. His objective was to somehow organize the national Republicans and turn the tide against the Democrats by enfranchising blacks in the south. He commented on the travesty after the election in his second annual address to Congress: “What good people demand is exact justice, equality before the law, perfect freedom from political

⁷¹² Ibid

⁷¹³ *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893)*, 215-219

⁷¹⁴ *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley (1893)*, 171; Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3:501-502

⁷¹⁵ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 501-502

⁷¹⁶ Ibid

speech and action and no denial of rights to any citizen on account of color or race.”⁷¹⁷ He wanted to bring the winners of the Southern state elections to justice for their acts of intimidation against black voters.⁷¹⁸ Meanwhile, Democrats in Ohio tried to unseat McKinley through gerrymandering, and in order to diffuse McKinley’s war record altogether, ran Aquila Wiley who had an outstanding war record like McKinley.⁷¹⁹ McKinley sent a letter to Hayes before the election asking for help, since even he felt that the gerrymandering was too much to overcome.⁷²⁰ He requested General Sheridan to appear on the campaign but to no avail.⁷²¹ He was nervous but felt that his popularity would make this a close election. He said to Hayes, “I intend making a very close, active canvas and if appearances are not altogether deceptive, I ought to get through. I mean to deserve success, *anyhow*. I am certainly greatly obliged for what you say and greatly appreciate your interest in me, you have the people by a “large majority.”⁷²² McKinley, who supported the Bland-Allison Act of 1878, fought off the Democrats’ attempts and won back his seat in Congress, 15,489 to 14,255.⁷²³ Hayes, who was concerned with the Democrats keeping the House, was happy with McKinley’s win. He said, “Oh, the good luck of McKinley. He was gerrymandered out and then beat the gerrymander! We enjoyed it as much as he did.”⁷²⁴ McKinley replied, “The Victory in the District, was a very gratifying one to me personally and besides it was a grand triumph for just principles. I fought my campaign for

⁷¹⁷ Ibid

⁷¹⁸ Ibid

⁷¹⁹ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 68

⁷²⁰ Hayes Presidential Center, McKinley to Hayes, August 13, September 26, October 10, 1878

⁷²¹ Ibid

⁷²² Ibid

⁷²³ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 68

⁷²⁴ Ibid

honest money and protection to American industry. I fought it straight and contrast variance and the good people acquiesced.”⁷²⁵

McKinley's second term coincided with Hayes's last two years as President. There were no dramatic speeches but instead the everyday duty to present petitions, checking on the private pension bills, and looking after patronage. He introduced anti-liquor, anti-polygamy petitions and regulatory policy on railroads to support Grange organizations.⁷²⁶ The peak of his second term came when Ohioans provided James Garfield with a seat in the United States Senate.⁷²⁷ This created a vacancy on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee. Naturally, McKinley wanted Garfield's old seat as this committee spoke on the tariff issue. After only three years in Congress, James Garfield recommended William McKinley to one of the most important committees in the House.⁷²⁸ One item was never forgotten by McKinley during his first two terms in Congress: his first position as a volunteer for the 23rd Regiment of Ohio. He continued to attend the reunions year after year with President Hayes.⁷²⁹ During each ceremony, it was McKinley who spoke on the history of the regiment from the time it was mustered into service from Camp Chase until Lee's surrender at Appomattox.⁷³⁰

Hayes's last two years in office were uneventful. He signed the Pension Arrears Act of 1879, which provided pensions for disabled Union veterans.⁷³¹ Supporters of the treasury's surplus were worried that pension bills would create an eventual deficit. Hayes, the veteran, responded to critics, “The act was required by good faith. The soldiers had the pledge of the Government and the people, everybody assured the soldier that if disabled in the line of duty, he

⁷²⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 375

⁷²⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 72

⁷²⁷ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 72

⁷²⁸ Ibid

⁷²⁹ Ibid

⁷³⁰ Ibid

⁷³¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 376

would be pensioned. Hayes continued, "...I signed it, not because to veto it would have been ineffectual, but because it was right."⁷³²

The other piece of legislation that landed on Hayes's desk was the Chinese Exclusion bill.⁷³³ By February 20, 1879, both houses passed the bill to prevent Chinese from coming into the United States. As more and more Chinese flowed into the country, white workers began to revolt.⁷³⁴ The Chinese, like other immigrants, constituted cheap labor. Despite California's successful attempts to place taxes on cheap labor, companies continued to hire immigrants.⁷³⁵ McKinley and the House of Representatives voted for exclusion but allowed fifteen Chinese passengers per ship to the United States.⁷³⁶ Hayes commented, "I am satisfied the present Chinese labor invasion (it is not in any proper sense immigration: women and children do not come) is pernicious and should be discouraged, I therefore would consider with favor suited measures to discourage the Chinese from coming to our shores."⁷³⁷ Although Hayes was in favor of signing of the bill, he had a problem with the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, which recognized Chinese and American relations. One term within the agreement was clear, "...Chinese subjects in the United States shall enjoy entire liberty of conscience and shall be exempt from all disability or persecution on account of their religious faith or worship in either country."⁷³⁸ Hayes responded to the terms, "As I see it, our treaty with China forbids me to give it [the bill] my approval." Hayes studied the treaty and was well aware that this was an American treaty negotiated by William Seward in Washington D.C. Hayes was also aware that the treaty was created in good faith with the Chinese which is why he decided to veto the bill. William

⁷³² Williams, ed., *Dairy and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 54-55

⁷³³ Ibid

⁷³⁴ Williams, ed., *Dairy and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 54-55

⁷³⁵ Ibid

⁷³⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 73

⁷³⁷ Williams, ed., *Dairy and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 54-55

⁷³⁸ Ibid

McKinley and his wife dined with the President on February 26 and listened to Hayes's reasons for the eventual veto.⁷³⁹ McKinley was well aware that a Chinese immigrant influx would not enter the state of Ohio, but instead his position on immigration and the safety of laborers carried his "yes" vote on the exclusion bill. It is unknown if McKinley provided Hayes with reasons for his vote. McKinley would have mentioned that Irish gangs in San Francisco were killing Chinese immigrants. American businesses that supported the Republican Party saw China as a market potential, thus, eliminating any notion of a Republican caucus against the Chinese. Some abolitionists, like William Lloyd Garrison, spoke against the exclusion bill as vociferously as they had opposed slavery. The Party of Lincoln was not united on this issue for its exclusion purposes but for the safety of the immigrants held them together. Regardless of what Hayes believed was the correct course of action, the Exclusion bill was passed by Congress when he left the White House in 1881.⁷⁴⁰

With the arrival of 1879, the Democrats and Republicans prepared for the upcoming presidential election in 1880. The Democratic controlled 46th Congress decided to start the year off with appropriation and election repeal bills.⁷⁴¹ Republicans were worried. Since Hayes won the 1876 Election by only one electoral point, Hayes managed to win a few southern states but his loss in New York meant the state became the battleground for both parties.

A change in election laws would prove too costly politically for the Republicans, therefore, Hayes promised to veto any change in federal election laws, including the supervision of elections (especially in the Deep South). Hayes noted, "The Democrats will stop the wheels of government if I do not yield my convictions in favor of the election laws. It will be a severe,

⁷³⁹ Ibid, 4: 56

⁷⁴⁰ Alexander Saxton, *Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp.5-7, 76-77

⁷⁴¹ *Congressional Record*, 45th Congress, 3rd Session, 1770, 2141, 2384-85, 46th Congress, 1st Session, 1774-75

perhaps a long contest. I do not fear it, I do not even dread it. The people will not allow this Revolutionary course to triumph.”⁷⁴² McKinley speaking on behalf of the Republican minority in the House said, “the whole power of the Federal Government must be exhausted in securing to every citizen, black or white, rich or poor, everywhere within the limits of the Union, every right, civil and political, guaranteed by the Constitution and the laws. Nothing short of this will satisfy public conscience, public morals, and public justice.”⁷⁴³ The Democrats fired back on March 27 with an army of appropriation bills that included a rider attached preventing the federal military and civil authorities from keeping the peace at the polls. President Hayes reassured Republicans:

“It almost angers me to see in the [Cincinnati] *Commercial* that you are shaky on the question of my probable action. Now let me assure you that everybody here ought to know my soundness on two questions.

1. The right, duty and necessity of National protection at National elections.
2. The duty of the President not to allow Congress to usurp his power to share in legislation.

It does not require half the nerve to maintain the right side of the latter question than it did to stand against the Congressional claim to the appointing power.”⁷⁴⁴

Hayes vetoed and continued to veto any bill that introduced a change in Federal election law.⁷⁴⁵ The veto created a sense of brotherhood for his fellow Republicans. James Garfield wrote to Hayes regarding his vetoes, “I cannot be mistaken when I tell you, that no speech or paper ever emanated from your hand that will strike so deep into the heart and minds of the American

⁷⁴² C.R. Williams, *Hayes*, 2:172; Rutherford B. Hayes Diary, March 23, 1879, p. 199

⁷⁴³ Armstrong, *Major McKinley*, p. 114

⁷⁴⁴ Hayes Presidential Center, Hayes to Murat Halstead, March 31, 1879, Whitelaw Reid to Hayes, May 13, 1879

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid

people, and live so long in their gratitude as this noble and masterly paper of today.”⁷⁴⁶ The House was unable to muster the necessary two-thirds vote to overturn the veto and the Republicans continued to rally behind their President. Hayes went on to veto the Democrats four times before Congress adjourned in June.⁷⁴⁷

President Hayes unified the Republican Party for the 1880 presidential campaign. With his popularity at an all-time high, newspapers such as the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* urged Hayes to run for a second term.⁷⁴⁸ Hayes responded, “I will put my foot on it at once. I have had enough of it, and firmly adhere to my original determination. The first half of my term was so full of trouble and embarrassments as to be a continual struggle but our difficulties are over, we are moving harmoniously along and I do not propose to invite a new season of embarrassment.”⁷⁴⁹ There was no question that Hayes was serious in keeping his campaign promise to become a one term president.⁷⁵⁰

On March 4, 1880, Hayes wrote in his diary, “Three years of my term gone today. Only one year of it remains. The past has been on the whole more satisfactory, as I now look back, than I hoped it would be.”⁷⁵¹ As the Republicans and Democrats prepared for their Presidential nominating Conventions, William McKinley took the time to reflect on the Hayes Presidency and congratulated his old friend on his record. McKinley was a frequent visitor to the White House spending Sunday evenings reading aloud or singing hymns with the family, joining them for dinner or even standing in the receiving line to welcome guests.⁷⁵² Hayes was lonely in the White House as he had few friends in either party; therefore, he welcomed the McKinley family

⁷⁴⁶ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 50-51

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid

⁷⁴⁸ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, pp. 402-403

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid

⁷⁵¹ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 592

⁷⁵² Morgan. *McKinley and His America*, 87

with open arms.⁷⁵³ McKinley wrote, “We are very glad to be permitted in Washington during your term of office. We are indebted to yourself and Mrs. Hayes for much pleasure while in Washington.”⁷⁵⁴

When the Republican Convention opened in June of 1880 in Chicago, Congressman McKinley and President Hayes were curious to see who the front runner would be. The candidates that received the most support from the party faithful included: former President Ulysses S. Grant; Hayes’s Secretary of the Treasury, John Sherman; Ohio Senator, James A. Garfield; and Maine Senator, James G. Blaine.⁷⁵⁵ Hayes gave the impression of neutrality among the candidates but his thoughts were on the future of his own administrative work. If Grant or Blaine were nominated his southern and civil service policies would be repudiated by the convention. If Sherman were named, however, the administration and his policies would be endorsed.⁷⁵⁶ Hayes and McKinley agreed that Grant would not receive a third term as President due to “the unpopularity of the managers of his canvass, and their methods.”⁷⁵⁷ Hayes reflected, “our first soldier and a man of many sterling qualities should be so humiliated and degraded as he has been by his unprincipled supporters.”⁷⁵⁸ McKinley prepared to campaign for his own seat in Congress and endorsed James G. Blaine, the strong protectionist from Maine. McKinley’s future campaign manager, Mark Hanna, the industrialist from Ohio, supported John Sherman. McKinley respected Sherman’s candidacy but felt he was weak on protection and was a strict gold standard supporter.⁷⁵⁹ Ironically, it was Garfield who placed Sherman’s name on the ballot, but it was Garfield who proved to be victorious on the thirty-sixth ballot even though he only

⁷⁵³ Ibid

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵⁵ Barnard, *Rutherford B. Hayes*, 219

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid

⁷⁵⁷ Hayes, *Diary*, June 5, 1880, pp. 277-78

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid

⁷⁵⁹ Hayes, *Diary*, June 5, 1880, pp. 277-78

received two votes on the first ballot. The anti-Grant faction, supporters for Sherman, and even Blaine supporters provided Garfield with the 378 votes required to capture the nomination.⁷⁶⁰ Garfield was the individual whom each faction felt comfortable with as the balloting headed nowhere after the first ten votes. To ensure that New York would fall into the hands of the Republican Party, the Governor of New York, Chester A. Arthur, was named the vice presidential candidate.⁷⁶¹ The Party had their men. Although Hayes was close to Sherman, he called Garfield's nomination, "the best that was possible."⁷⁶² Hayes wrote in his diary,

Ohio to the front also and again; the endorsement of me and my administration; the endorsement of civil service reform. There is a great deal of strength in Garfield's life and struggles as a self-made man. How from poverty and obscurity, by labor at all avocations, he became a great scholar, a statesman, a major general, a Senator, a Presidential candidate. The truth is, no man ever started so low that accomplished so much in all our history. Not Franklin or Lincoln even.⁷⁶³

The candidates were set for the 1880 Presidential Election: Republican James Garfield versus the Democrat Winfield S. Hancock, the hero of Gettysburg. McKinley, who was victorious once again in the contest for his congressional seat, stumped the state of Ohio for Garfield (The Ohio election was held in October).⁷⁶⁴ President Hayes, on the other hand, saw Garfield's nomination as the beginning of the end of his own administration. He still had nine months to serve as President, but he was no longer at the center of American politics. To make matters worse, Garfield never sought any advice on strategy, principles, or issues from Hayes during the campaign of 1880, which explains why Hayes was absent in the campaign

⁷⁶⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 601

⁷⁶¹ Ibid

⁷⁶² Ibid

⁷⁶³ Ibid

⁷⁶⁴ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 75-76

altogether.⁷⁶⁵ Although he was confident that Garfield would defeat Hancock in the general election, Hayes felt useless and concerned with his current policies. He wasn't sure if Garfield "would foster prosperity with sound money, turn the civil service system over to the spoils system, and ensure the supremacy of the federal government."⁷⁶⁶

On November 2, 1880, Election Day, James Garfield received 214 electoral points to Winfield Hancock's 155.⁷⁶⁷ McKinley, who was already in the process of celebrating his third straight victory, was surprised to receive a letter from Garfield asking for advice towards a cabinet position. At first, McKinley thought he would be nominated but nonetheless he provided Garfield with Senator Allison for the Secretary of the Treasury and James G. Blaine for the Secretary of State positions.⁷⁶⁸ Although Allison did not become the Treasury Secretary, McKinley was honored that the president-elect consulted him on very important positions within the White House. McKinley's growing stature was realized when he was selected to replace Garfield on the Ways and Means Committee in the House of Representatives.⁷⁶⁹

As William McKinley prepared for his third term in office, Hayes received a letter from William Henry Smith, a political ally of Hayes, which stated, "You saved the Republican Party from destruction, planted it upon the solid rock of good government, and made it possible to elect Garfield in 1880. This your friends know to be the exact truth, and they rest content in the assurance that when the history of 1876 to 1880 is written that truth will be plain and unmistakable."⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 608

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid

⁷⁶⁷ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 625

⁷⁶⁸ Garfield Papers, McKinley to Garfield, November 13, 1880

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁷⁰ Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, 3: 625

Chapter 5: The Presidents of the Gilded Age

Rutherford B. Hayes was ready to enjoy his status as a lame duck. He reflected on the past four years and hoped President-elect James Garfield would continue to carry out his policies and objectives. When Hayes met with Congress on December 6, 1880, he presented his annual address which gave him the last opportunity to speak to his beloved country as its president. Hayes outlined the successful aspect of his policies but challenged Congress on the following

issues: civil rights for blacks, for which he urged Congress to investigate violations of the Fifteenth Amendment; the funding of public schools since education was the foundation to suffrage; the supervision of civil service reform with a merit system to prevent the resurrection of party patronage; the repeal of the Tenure of Office Act, 1867 which required the Senate to approve the removal of those appointees it had confirmed.⁷⁷¹

As Rutherford B. Hayes presented his annual address, William McKinley looked onto his mentor and wondered what the future held. Although Hayes wasn't leaving the White House until March of 1881, the goodbyes began. The McKinleys still attended White House dinners and every informal invitation sent by Rutherford or Lucy Hayes. The two statesmen reflected on their time together during the Civil War and as Republicans, but it were as if McKinley graduated from the teachings of Hayes. He was ready to spread his wings and take on the Southern Democrats in the political arena. With James Garfield's election as president, William McKinley replaced him on the House Ways and Means Committee. His gift for silence and evasion, his personal charm and political skill, and above all his identification with a great national issue, the tariff, served to promote him as a member on one of the top committees in the House of Representatives. He was now on his own. To McKinley, every year was an election year and he never passed the opportunity to campaign or speak on behalf of an Ohio candidate. When national figures visited Ohio he entertained them, and in national election years gave his time despite his own contests. Candidates could always count on McKinley for a spirited speech. Although he was well known in Northeastern Ohio, his next objective was to introduce his work and policies to the entire state. He visited every factory in the industrial districts to promote the tariff issue. If there was a starting point in McKinley becoming a national figure this was it. He was confident that the Garfield Administration would enforce protectionism, but it wasn't a

⁷⁷¹ Rutherford B. Hayes, *Diary*, November 14, 1880, pg. 299; Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 447

guarantee since Chester A. Arthur served as Vice-President. Although Arthur, was a Republican, he believed in tariff reform especially with the US Treasury experiencing a surplus. A surplus, during the nineteenth century, was a problem as it reinforced corruption, versus a lower tariff which, in turn, promoted less money in the Treasury Department (less money; less corruption). With Hayes leaving the Presidency, McKinley had no choice but allow President Garfield to lead and hope Vice-President Arthur did not have enough influence over the President.⁷⁷²

During President Hayes's last weeks in office, he concentrated on the transition of the Garfield administration. He was unsure how to proceed. Hayes had the knowledge of recommending the right personnel but he did not want to impose. He decided to wait until his last few days of office to suggest the moves to Garfield to avoid a negative reaction. He even considered offering James G. Blaine and John Sherman, whom Garfield defeated during the Republican Convention, but Vice President Wheeler said, "If Garfield fails to appoint Sherman to the Treasury, it will be regarded as a weak yielding to [Senator] Conkling, as ungenerous to Sherman, and as a disregard of the wishes and interests of the country. If he will be President all will be well; but if he merely does what Conkling wants, he will be a failure." Garfield appreciated the offer and accepted Blaine as the Secretary of State but refused to keep Sherman in the Treasury. Unlike Hayes, Garfield made his point; he was willing to sacrifice executive independence in cabinet selections to secure good relations with Congress. Hayes and Garfield compiled endless names to replace individuals who were departing from Washington, and Hayes suggested that the Garfields stay in the White House when they came to Washington before the inauguration. Upon Garfield's accepting, Vice President Wheeler commented, "I have said forty times, if he had one tenth of your amiable obstinacy and independence he would be a great

⁷⁷² Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 76

success.” It was only natural for the outgoing administration to compare and contrast itself with the new one. All Hayes and his team could do is wait for Inauguration Day.⁷⁷³

It was as if the Garfield presidency was doomed. After the Inauguration was over, the Hayes family boarded a train destined to reach Ohio. The train had made it only eleven miles outside of Washington D.C. when it crashed with an oncoming train. The tracks had never been doubled and two people were killed as a result of this mistake. The outgoing president and his family didn’t feel a scratch but he was shaken and felt that this was not the way to start retirement. Upon finally reaching Ohio, crowds of men, women, and children cheered to welcome Hayes as a permanent resident of Ohio. He was hoping to relax in his beloved state but he soon realized that an ex-president was still a man of the party. He received several requests by candidates to speak on their behalf before the primaries, and local universities asked Hayes to speak to crowds of students on his experience in the White House. To say Hayes did not follow the Garfield Administration’s policy changes would be an understatement. He ridiculed any change Garfield made. For example, Garfield replaced a Hayes appointee, Edwin A. Merritt, before his four year term was up. Not only was Merritt beloved by the majority of the Senate but it was the one appointment that Hayes and Senator Roscoe Conkling agreed upon. Surprisingly, Roscoe Conkling and his colleague, Thomas C. Platt, resigned after the removal of Merritt was official.⁷⁷⁴

James Garfield continued to play the spoils system card. As job seekers continued to write letters and appear at the door of the White House, he wondered how Rutherford B. Hayes had been able to accomplish anything. Ironically, it was party patronage that would test the Garfield Administration when an assassin’s bullet penetrated Garfield’s abdomen on July 2,

⁷⁷³ James A. Garfield, *Diary*, November 16 1880, 4: 487-489; Rutherford B. HAYES, *Diary*, pp.302-306; Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 560

⁷⁷⁴ Rutherford B. Hayes. *Diary*, March 9, 1881, pp.313-14; Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4:19.

1881. Charles Guiteau, an appointment seeker, stalked Garfield as he desperately wanted to become a United States diplomat to France. Upon several rejections, Guiteau confronted Garfield at the Potomac Railroad Station and severely wounded the newly elected President. Although the controversy remains as to how Garfield died (Charles Guiteau's shot or the doctors that treated Garfield resulting in an infection), he only served ten weeks in the White House. Rutherford and Lucy Hayes heard the news the next day. They expected Garfield's recovery was inevitable but Hayes still thought of the possibility that Garfield may die. He wrote in his diary,

The death of the President at this time would be a national calamity whose consequences we can not confidently conjecture. [Chester] Arthur for President! The Republican Party divided and defeated. An administration without the moral support of any of the best elements of the country, struggling to maintain itself and to perpetuate itself; with all of the worst features of Tyler and Johnson, and without some of the redeeming features of those unfortunate administrations. If Arthur comes in, he should have a fair trial. He should be encouraged to do well by a warm and sympathetic support as far as he is right. We pray to God that the President may yet be spared to his country and family.⁷⁷⁵

William McKinley feared that his friend and colleague from Ohio would die from the assassin's bullet. As James Garfield lingered in pain, McKinley's and Hayes's prediction came true. On September 19, 1881, President James Garfield passed away. McKinley, who lost a friend and a counselor in Garfield during their time in Congress, planned the memorial services to be held in the House of Representatives. He asked Secretary of State, James G. Blaine, who was present at the time of the shooting by Guiteau, to deliver the eulogy. Among those seated was the new President, Chester A. Arthur. He knew that he had no choice but to support the Arthur Administration as Garfield would have wanted him to do so. Although McKinley and Arthur disagreed on the tariff issue, they both supported civil service reform, and it was obvious

⁷⁷⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 23-24; Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 470

that the recent death of Garfield would promote a bill in Congress to finally rid the nation of party patronage.⁷⁷⁶

When Rutherford B. Hayes heard of the tragic news he could only think of the Garfield family. He remembered James Garfield as a soldier who heroically fought at the Battle of Winchester and how both them survived that fight against the Rebels. When he read the telegram on September 19th he replied, “I can’t believe it. I do doubt it, but I fear it, I dread it; Assassination does not change history. The march of events will go on, but it is a personal grief.” Hayes made his way to Washington in October to pay his respects for Garfield, but was unable to attend McKinley’s memorial of Garfield in the House of Representatives on February 27, 1882. Instead he provided a public speech and instructed the nation that the lesson of Garfield’s assassination “is the folly, the wickedness, and the danger of the extreme and bitter partisanship,” which “is greatly aggravated” by the spoils system. Hayes believed that civil service reform’s opportunity was now and that the people have the right to demand it from their elected representatives. Eventually, after debate, Congress passed the Civil Service Reform Act (Pendleton Act), and Chester A. Arthur signed it.⁷⁷⁷

As the Arthur Administration began its transition, William McKinley was worried about his nomination as a Republican to the House of Representatives. He had won the seat three times consecutively but with tariff reduction gaining ground and the tradition of allowing other Republican candidates to rotate districts his nomination was in doubt. He turned to Rutherford B. Hayes for help and advice since Hayes still had influence in the party. Once McKinley received his nomination on May 15, 1882, he wrote to Hayes, “I greatly appreciate your congratulations of the 15th. A desperate fight was made against me which gives my victory more than ordinary

⁷⁷⁶ Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 71-72

⁷⁷⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 35-36; Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 471

significance.” McKinley went on to defeat the Democrat Jonathan Wallace, but the election was contested as he won by only eight votes. Wallace, a Union supporter in the Civil War, Greenback, and one who attempted to use prohibition unsuccessfully against McKinley (especially with the German and Irish communities in Ohio), took his case to Washington and tried to provide evidence of fraud to kick out McKinley from Congress altogether. The case appeared on the House calendar but McKinley did not have time to worry about his post as he committed his full attention to the Ways and Means Committee to ensure the survival of the high tariff. The treasury surplus was the energy needed for reformists to start up the debate on reducing the tariff. On April 6, 1882 he gave a thirty-five page speech supporting President Arthur’s request for the House to create a commission on tariffs. He said to his colleagues, “I will vote for the bill now under consideration, because, among other reasons, I have no fear of an intelligent and businesslike examination and revision of the tariff by competent civilians who shall be known Americans and favorable to the American system.”⁷⁷⁸

A Commission was finally formed in May of 1882 and as they toured the country to take in testimony for a report on the tariff, McKinley prepared for a strong debate on the tariff issue with House Democrats. Meanwhile, Rutherford B. Hayes took notice of Arthur’s handling of the Presidency. He immediately labeled Arthur as another Martin Van Buren. Instead of leading the nation, Arthur was simply carrying out policy (as Van Buren did with Jackson) when legislation was available. It didn’t help matters that Hayes received word that Arthur was going to undo everything Hayes fought so hard for as President. When Congressional Republicans were defeated at the polls in the 1882 elections, Hayes immediately blamed the lack of leadership by Arthur. He was tempted to join the fight against Arthur, but he understood that a former

⁷⁷⁸ McKinley to Hayes, May 18, 1882, Hayes Papers, Hayes Presidential Center; *Canton Repository*, February 15, 1883; *Washington Post*, March 6, 1883; McKinley, *Speeches* (1893), 70-105

president should enjoy his retirement and keep his comments in confidence with loyal supporters.⁷⁷⁹

On January 27, 1883, William McKinley had the opportunity to show the nation his passion on the tariff issue. The commission that was established less than a year earlier reported its findings to Congress. Its recommendations were to cut many rates which included wool, iron, and steel. McKinley was furious with the report and tried to delay the vote with a filibuster in the House, but it failed. Upon passage of the report, the House prepared for a debate to determine what to do with the current tariff rates. McKinley looked at his political rivals and stated, “I speak for the workingmen in my `district, the workingmen of Ohio, and of the country.” A McKinley rival replied by yelling, “They did not speak for you very largely at the last election!” Silence fell on the main floor of the House of Representatives. McKinley replied, “Ah, my friend, my fidelity to my constituents is not measured by the support they give me!” As the applause for McKinley thundered, he continued to stare at his opponents and said, “I have convictions upon this subject which I would not surrender or refrain from advocating if ten thousand of a majority had entered against me last October.” He then focused on the Democrats’ attempt to reduce the tariff:

It has friends today that it never had in the past. Its adherents are no longer confined to the North and the East, but are found in the South and in the West. The idea travels with industry and its associate of enterprise and thrift. It encourages the development of skill, labor, and inventive genius as part of the great productive forces. Its advocacy is no longer limited to the manufacturer, but it has friends most devoted among the farmers, woolgrowers, the laborers, and the producers of land. It is strong in the country as in the manufacturing towns and cities; and while it is not taught generally in our colleges, and our young men fresh from universities join with the free trade thought of the country, practical business and everyday experience later teach them there are other sources of knowledge besides books, that demonstration is better than theory, and that actual results outweigh an idle philosophy. But while it is not favored in colleges, it is taught in the schools of experience, in the workshop, where honest men perform an

⁷⁷⁹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 476-477

honest day's labor, and where capital seeks the development of national wealth. It is, in my judgment, fixed in the national policy, and no party is strong enough to overthrow it.

William McKinley, again, masterfully convinced forty-one Democrats in the House to vote against the tariff bill (156-151). If the Republican Party didn't know it yet, they had a rising star in their ranks. The Democrats in the House saw an opponent with an ability to sway independent voters. Unfortunately for McKinley, on May 14, 1884, the Committee on Elections concluded their report regarding the election against Wallace. The report stated that fraudulent ballots were used to give McKinley the victory. McKinley was devastated, and since the Republicans did not have the majority in the House he was unseated by a Democratic majority vote. Rutherford B. Hayes, who was still paying close attention to McKinley's career wrote, "McKinley was unseated yesterday but the vote in his favor given by six Democrats – so many of them leaders – and by the crank, White (Republican), against him is a vote of admiration and certificate of character." Hayes already knew that his protégé's career may have been over in the House but there was another position on the horizon (that he was all too familiar with) that was better suited for McKinley – governor of Ohio.⁷⁸⁰

In June of 1884, William McKinley prepared an early campaign to regain his seat in the House of Representatives. His followers in Ohio begged him to take on a new district, but the Republican Party had a much better position for him. The Presidential Election of 1884 was near, and the Party was in need of a chairman for the National Convention's Resolutions Committee to adopt the official platform. Upon conceiving a platform that held to the party's foundation – high tariffs, railroad reform, bimetallism, curbs on Chinese immigration, the eight hour workday- the Republicans emerged with James G. Blaine as their candidate (who bested John Sherman in the final ballots of voting). Although Chester A. Arthur was the sitting President, he was not elected

⁷⁸⁰ William McKinley, *Speeches* (1893), 106-123; Morgan, *McKinley and His America*, 74-75; Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 78-79; Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 152

in 1880 and did not provide effective leadership from their standards, therefore, Republicans felt that he was beatable by the nominated Democrat: Stephen Grover Cleveland, Governor of New York. McKinley supported Blaine and he did his best by trying to unite the Republicans around the “man from Maine.” Hayes, on the other hand, said after the convention was over, “Blaine is not an admirable person. He is scheming demagogue, selfish, reckless. But he is a man of ability and will, if elected, be a better President than he has been a politician.” Hayes was proud of McKinley on taking the role of chairman and expected him to campaign for Blaine, but his biggest concern was that Grover Cleveland was truly a dark horse candidate in this election. Cleveland’s position was almost identical to the Republican Party’s platform. Governor Cleveland believed in the gold standard, high tariffs, support for the Grange movement, and he considered J.P. Morgan one of his closest friends. Hayes and McKinley knew that the race was not going to be won on the premises of political issues but good old fashioned mudslinging. The Blaine team introduced an illegitimate child fathered by Cleveland (Ma, Ma, where’s my Pa?), whereas, the Cleveland team reintroduced Blaine’s railroad bribery scandal to American voters. After the soap opera was over, the election came down to the State of New York and the slogan – Rum, Romanism, Rebellion which was used by the protestant faction of the Blaine campaign provided Cleveland with enough Catholic, Independent, and Republican Irish votes to take New York away from Blaine and the presidency.⁷⁸¹

Rutherford B. Hayes pondered the election results and concluded that Cleveland would be the correct choice over James G. Blaine. He wrote, “I have no prejudices against Cleveland. He is pledged to the right side of the most important administrative policy now before the

⁷⁸¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 153, 156-157, 172-176

country – civil service reform. He will have a decided majority on this question in the important branch of Congress with him and can easily go forward in the right direction.”⁷⁸²

During the Presidential election of 1884, William McKinley learned that his district was gerrymandered to favor the Democrats. He was still had the thought of regaining his congressional seat. His campaign for the seat was strong as he even had James G. Blaine visit Ohio to speak on his behalf. Normally, he would walk to the White House and have a cigar with Rutherford B. Hayes to determine what the next move would be. He would ask Hayes the best course of action to defeat his opponents but with the Hayes family back in Ohio since 1881 it became difficult for McKinley to sit down with his mentor and reflect on party politics. Although he lost his seat in Congress in 1882, McKinley regained his seat in a Democratic stronghold by 2,000 votes. The return to Washington was a personal victory as Grover Cleveland carried Ohio.⁷⁸³

On July 23, 1885, Rutherford B. Hayes received word that his former President and General, Ulysses S. Grant died. Hayes wrote in his diary, “General Grant was the most illustrious member of our society. As long as the annals of our Republic last, he will be known and honored throughout the world. He was the most illustrious soldier of the sacred case of Liberty and Union.” As Hayes prepared for his trip to New York to attend Grant’s funeral, he received several letters accepting his cordial invite to veterans of the Battle of Fort Stephenson. The invitation that he sent marked the ceremony for the unveiling of the Soldiers’ Monument in Sandusky County, Ohio. William McKinley, who wanted to be there, declined to attend due to Ida’s health but hoped that Hayes would stop by to pay a visit at his home in Canton. Unfortunately for McKinley, Hayes was on a tight schedule. As soon as the monument was

⁷⁸² Ibid, 4:175-176

⁷⁸³ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 81

unveiled he boarded a train to New York to pay his respects to the Grant family. On August 8, Hayes reached New York and met President Grover Cleveland in person for the first time. Hayes commented in his diary, “Found him plain, sensible, natural; in all respects well appearing. His talk was friendly and assuring. My favorable impressions were all confirmed. He lacks experience, is not a great man, but he intends and anxiously wishes to do well – good qualities in a President.” As Hayes spoke cordially with Cleveland and his Cabinet, he noticed another individual enter the funeral hall, former President Chester A. Arthur. The two former presidents found themselves speaking with the current President in depth for approximately five hours. After the funeral procession was over, Grant’s remains were laid on the banks of the Hudson River. Little did Hayes know at the time, that Arthur’s death was only a year away. As he witnessed colleagues and political rivals pass away, Hayes wondered if his time was next, as he and Cleveland were the only surviving Presidents after Arthur’s funeral in 1886.⁷⁸⁴

On September 11, 1885, William McKinley finally had the opportunity to sit down with Hayes at Spiegel Grove. McKinley was campaigning for Joseph Foraker to become the new Governor of Ohio. Hayes asked McKinley if he was interested in running, as rumors were swirling within the Ohio Republican Clubs that McKinley would in fact make the perfect Governor. McKinley denied the rumors, publicly stating that if Foraker wanted the nomination, it was his. McKinley concentrated the conversation on Hayes’s administration and flattered the former President’s ability to take on the Democrats. Hayes wrote, “He [McKinley] said a great many pleasant things, all tending to show a rapidly increasing appreciation of my Administration and a diminishing tendency to abuse of me personally.” Hayes was worried about the current tactic of still using the bloody-shirt campaign against the Southern Democrats. He told McKinley that the use of Union deaths in politics was “bad politics and of no use.” He advised McKinley

⁷⁸⁴ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 222, 231

that the issue was stale and more people in the North would rather compromise with the South than enter another political war. Hayes said, “Two ways are open to succeed in the South – A division of the white voters and the education of the ignorant Bloody-shirt utterances will prevent division.” McKinley spent the night at Hayes’s home and before he left in the morning he congratulated Hayes on the victory of South Mountain which took place twenty-three years ago. Hayes, who did not forget the date, reminded McKinley that he was off to attend a reunion of the Army of West Virginia to celebrate that victory and reflect on his near death from the wound he received as his men charged the Confederates. This was not the last time Hayes would see McKinley as Foraker was successful in winning the gubernatorial election in Ohio. Hayes would hold several lunches with McKinley and Foraker to discuss Ohio and National politics. There is no question that William McKinley was being groomed for the next gubernatorial election.⁷⁸⁵

In May of 1886, the United States experienced the famous Haymarket Riot in Chicago. The reason this event attained headlines throughout major newspapers was that this wasn’t the general strike where workers leveled general grievances to their employees. This was a populist movement where the working class saw the rich get richer while their wages were either cut or stagnant. As demonstrators marched onto the McCormick Reaper Plant in Chicago, where a bomb exploded killing several police officers. Since there really was no distinction made between an anarchist and a socialist, officers began an arresting spree. The suspects who were deemed guilty by public opinion were sent to prison or hanged. William McKinley was not anti-socialist but he saw the success of socialism only if capitalism and democracy failed. His beliefs were consistent since he entered politics – fair wages, industrial growth, better work conditions, and mobility to the middle class. Thanks to McKinley, the Republicans gained support from

⁷⁸⁵ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 236

Labor Unions for creating a platform that promoted the eight hour workday and tariff protection. It did not help matters for Democrats when President Cleveland ordered federal troops to break up another famous strike led by Eugene V. Debs – the Pullman Boycott. Rutherford B. Hayes, on the other hand, believed that strikes were “akin to war, and can be justified only on the grounds analogous to those which justify war, intolerable injustice and oppression.” At the same time, Hayes felt that railroads should be supervised by the federal government. He wrote in his diary, “every working man deserves a reasonable hope that by industry, temperance, and frugality he can secure a home for himself and his family.” After meeting railroad tycoon, Cornelius Vanderbilt, who inherited over \$100 million from his father, Hayes commented, “Americans will have to choose either to limit and control great wealth, corporations, and the like, or to resort to a strong military government to keep peace. Shall the interest of railroad kings be chiefly regarded, or shall the interest of the people be paramount?”⁷⁸⁶

Rutherford B. Hayes’s thoughts were in conflict. He had no choice but to remember his actions during the Great Strike of 1877. Like President Cleveland, he ordered federal troops to arrest the striking workers. His problem was that America changed economically from 1877. As president, he did not have to deal with monopolies like John D. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil, corporations that had assumed great wealth. He watched Congress pass the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887. William McKinley supported the bill which regulated interstate common carriers. McKinley said, “In any view, there is no harm in trying this experiment; and in this effort, small and inconsequential as it may seem to be, I am confident we are moving in the right direction, and that nothing but good can result.” Although the law was weak from Hayes’s point of view,

⁷⁸⁶ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 82-83; Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 277-278, 280; Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 493-494

there was appreciation that Congress and the President worked together to try and stall the power of the railroad industry.⁷⁸⁷

Although William McKinley and Rutherford B. Hayes did not see each other since their meeting at Spiegel Grove in 1885, they found themselves experiencing frustration toward President Grover Cleveland. Cleveland picked one topic that pushed McKinley and Hayes over the edge – tariff reform. In December of 1887, Cleveland addressed Congress on the importance of reducing the tariff. He mentioned that the treasury surplus was unfair to taxpayers. Although the Democrats held Congress this was a rallying cry for McKinley and the high tariff Republicans. With the presidential election less than a year away, McKinley rallied labor and industry leaders to stop the threat of reducing the nation’s tariff. Hayes looked on and knew McKinley was preparing for another great debate on the floor of the House and how the tariff revision would once again unify Republicans. He noted in his diary, “No doubt, Mr. Cleveland’s free trade message has brightened Republican prospects. For more than twenty years existing legislation has enticed capital and labor into manufactures. This is especially true of these last few years. To strike them down now at a blow looks like cruelty and bad faith. It will hardly be done.” McKinley witnessed the tariff reform bill reach the floor of the House on April 17, 1888, but did not speak against the bill until May 18. He lashed out against Cleveland for providing political favors to ensure the passage of the bill. He lectured Democrats for forgetting the farmer. He dismissed free trade theorists by stating, “I would rather have my political economy founded upon the every-day experience of the puddler or the potter than the learning of the professor, or the farmer and factory hand than the college faculty.” He ridiculed the theory that lower duties meant lower prices, insisting that they also meant lower wages and production.⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 309, 348, 354-56, 374; McKinley, *Speeches* (1893)197-198

⁷⁸⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 359; Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 109

William McKinley took his seat amid applause and cheers. He did his best in trying to persuade moderate Democrats, but to no avail. The bill passed the House but was stalled in the Republican Senate during the summer of 1888. It was very easy to forget about the tariff reform bill, because, once again, it was a presidential election year. The Democrats nominated Grover Cleveland without any debate and the Republicans had several candidates once again. The Republican Convention was held in Chicago and after several rounds of voting, and even with McKinley's endorsement for John Sherman, the Republicans selected Civil War veteran, Benjamin Harrison, grandson of former President William Henry Harrison. Of course, Rutherford B. Hayes was hoping John Sherman would finally be elected as president, but also held Harrison in high regard. "General Harrison would probably be a good candidate – probably the best, possibly a very excellent candidate. His ancestry would tell. He is a good soldier; his civil record is good; he is a firm, sound man; his personal character is clear and high." Interestingly, Hayes noticed that McKinley's name also appeared on the ballot. Although McKinley was not a serious contender (yet) Hayes said of his protégé, "If McKinley is nominated it will be in order for me to congratulate him with 'we're tenting tonight on the old campground.'" With Harrison winning the Convention, Hayes was still proud of McKinley's performance at the Convention as chairman of the Party's platform. He wrote to McKinley and provided advice,

I congratulate you heartily. You gained gloriously. There were ambitious men near you at Chicago. That, of course, men in political life must be ambitious. But the surest path to the White House is his who never allows his ambition to get there to stand in the way of any duty, large or small. The man who is guided by ambition alone, who acts from policy, cannot somehow sometimes always tell. The Presidency is unlike the Kingdom of Heaven – those who seek shall never find. Since 1868, twenty years ago, Republicans have not been so united as they are now. I could not help telling you how my young hero looked to his old friend at a distance.⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸⁹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4: 393, 396

The Election of 1888 was another close one. Grover Cleveland won the popular vote but lost the electoral college to Benjamin Harrison (223 – 168). William McKinley secured his seat in the House, a reflection of his status as a national figure. Overall, the Republicans held the Senate and a slight majority in the House. With a Republican President at the helm, Republicans rejoiced and promised Americans a return to a Republican agenda. For the first time since 1875, all three branches of the Federal Government were Republican. In the House, William McKinley's name was mentioned for the speakership. He knew that this position was one of the most important positions in Washington, since it controlled legislation through committee appointments, had influence in the party, and wielded parliamentary power in the House. McKinley wrote to Hayes, "Little can be known about the speakership until near the time when Congress meets. If we should have an extra session (which I doubt) it would soon be settled. I am doing no soliciting. If I am successful the selection will come in an honorable and self respecting way." Although he never stated it, McKinley wanted the speakership badly. He had put his time in as a loyal soldier to the Republican Party but in the end he lost the position by 85 to 38 votes to Thomas Reed of Maine (whose campaign managers for the position were Henry Cabot Lodge and McKinley's future Vice President, Theodore Roosevelt).⁷⁹⁰

Rutherford B. Hayes was excited when the results of General Harrison's election were announced. He felt that the veterans of the Civil War were in good hands, since Harrison was a veteran as well. He thought of the war day by day, especially when his close friends passed away. His vice-president, William Wheeler and war comrade, James Comly, died in the same year. Although Hayes wanted to aid the Harrison Administration in helping war veterans, his life changed on June 21, 1889; Lucy Hayes suffered from a stroke. Hayes, who was visiting Ohio

⁷⁹⁰ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 123; McKinley to Hayes, December 31, 1888, Hayes Papers, Hayes Presidential Center; Skrabec, *William McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 87-88

State University, rushed home to Spiegel Grove and saw his wife paralyzed in a chair. As he reached for her hand, she tried to smile but the paralysis made it very difficult to do so. The Hayes family saw this stroke as a notification that the end was near for Lucy. On Tuesday, June 25, Lucy Hayes passed away. For the first time in his life, Hayes was alone.⁷⁹¹

⁷⁹¹ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 4:471-474

Chapter Six: The End

Rutherford B. Hayes did his best to keep himself occupied. As hundreds of letters poured in paying respect to Lucy, he travelled across the country and attended anniversaries of Civil War battles and reunions with the Ohio infantry.⁷⁹² William McKinley was devastated to hear that Lucy Hayes had passed so suddenly. With his attempt to gain the speakership and current debate on the Tariff issue (McKinley Tariff of 1890) he never had the opportunity to visit Spiegel Grove to pay his respects.⁷⁹³ It is unknown if McKinley and Hayes had a private conversation regarding the death of Lucy. Speculation would say that McKinley offered his help to Hayes in the same manner that Hayes offered his friendship and family to McKinley during the Civil War.

1890 was an interesting year for William McKinley. He lost the speaker-ship but gained the chair of the Ways and Means Committee. His moment to shine as a national candidate came when he introduced a tariff bill. Since the Republicans controlled the government, McKinley felt that this was a perfect time to revise the tariff. President Harrison favored a high tariff but McKinley did not have a personal connection with the President. He continued to lean on his old friend, Rutherford B. Hayes, for advice on how to pass this bill in Congress.⁷⁹⁴ McKinley's brilliance would have made Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists proud as his bill sought to

⁷⁹² Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 16

⁷⁹³ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 131

⁷⁹⁴ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 150

generate revenue, create new industries (tinplate and sugar), and help the American farmer.⁷⁹⁵

His statistics were convincing: “Before 1820 nearly all our imports were dutiable; scarcely any were free; while in 1824 the proportion of free imports was less than 6 percent; in 1830, about 7 percent; the percent of free imports from 1873 to 1883 was about 30 percent, and under the tariff revision of 1883 it averaged 33 percent.”⁷⁹⁶ McKinley proposed a historic 50 percent tariff rate in his 1890 bill.⁷⁹⁷ The Democrats did their best to counter the bill with their theory of free trade. President Harrison battled the bill, advocating free trade in South America, but McKinley would not budge, even if it cost him his alliance with the President.⁷⁹⁸ McKinley said,

With me this position is a deep conviction, not theory. I believe in it and thus warmly advocate it because enveloped in it are my country’s highest development and greatest prosperity; out of it come the greatest gains to the people, the greatest comforts to the masses, the widest encouragement for manly aspirations, with the largest rewards, dignifying and elevating our citizenship, upon which the safety and purity and permanency of our political system depend.⁷⁹⁹

In the end, the bill passed the House, 164 to 142.⁸⁰⁰ In the Senate, McKinley worked with John Sherman to pass another Silver bill, the Sherman Silver Purchase Act 1890 in exchange for votes towards his tariff.⁸⁰¹ In just 17 days, the Senate passed the tariff bill and President Harrison signed it into law. Although this was a great victory for McKinley, he was worried about the 1890 midterm elections as Congress earned the name, “The Billion Dollar Congress.”⁸⁰² This was very first legislative branch to spend over one billion dollars, and many voters were

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid

⁷⁹⁶ McKinley, *The Value of Protection*, The North American Review, June 1890, Volume 150, Issue 403, pp.747-48

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid

⁷⁹⁸ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 98-99

⁷⁹⁹ McKinley, *The Value of Protection*, The North American Review, June 1890, Volume 150, Issue 403, pp.747-48

⁸⁰⁰ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 98-99

⁸⁰¹ Ibid

⁸⁰² Ibid

outraged.⁸⁰³ McKinley was exhausted from the tariff fight and was unable to campaign locally. He hoped the independents in his district would provide him with another term, but his district was gerrymandered by the Democrats in 1890.⁸⁰⁴ The election was a Democratic landslide as 78 of the 166 Republicans were defeated, leaving 88 Republicans against 235 Democrats in the House.⁸⁰⁵ The Populists who attacked the farmer provisions in McKinley's Tariff had made their case to the public. Every Republican that ran in a farm district lost.⁸⁰⁶ As one of those, McKinley released a press release:

Protection never was stronger than it is at this time and it will grow in strength and hearts of the people. The elections this year were determined upon a false issue. A conspiracy between importers and free trade to raise prices and charge it upon the McKinley bill was successful, but conspiracies are short-lived and soon expire. This one has already been laid bare and the infamy of it will still further appear. Keep up your courage, strengthen your organizations and be ready for the great battle of Ohio in 1891 and the still greater one in 1892. Home and country will triumph in the end.⁸⁰⁷

Rutherford B. Hayes was not surprised with the Democratic landslide in November, and instead of casting blame on the President he reflected on an opportunity that presented itself with the defeat of Ohio Governor Foraker. Since McKinley lost his seat in the House, what position would be better than governor for his friend?⁸⁰⁸ Newspapers in Ohio had the same thought as they advertised: McKinley for Governor!⁸⁰⁹ The nomination process for the Republican Party was quite simple; they waited for William McKinley to throw his hat into the ring.⁸¹⁰ McKinley, on the other hand, was concerned with the possibility of losing another election. His thoughts

⁸⁰³ Ibid

⁸⁰⁴ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 98-99

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid

⁸⁰⁷ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 152-153

⁸⁰⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 31

⁸⁰⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, March 30, 1891

⁸¹⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 31

dwelled on the possibility of regaining his seat in the House and focused on the tariff issue.⁸¹¹ He knew that if he were to become a national candidate, the position of Governor could possibly propel him into the race for the White House. McKinley declared to a group of Ohio reporters,

So far as I am concerned, I should be quite content to look after my personal affairs, which have suffered of course by my long absence from business and clients. If the path of duty seems to lead me to the gubernatorial candidacy, I shall take it, and if it doesn't I shall try to pick up the threads of my long neglected law practice and shall be quite as happy in professional as in political life.⁸¹²

McKinley finally said yes to the Ohio Republicans in June right before the convention was held in order to cement his nomination for Governor.⁸¹³ On July 29, 1891, Rutherford B. Hayes decided to visit Sandusky, Ohio to introduce McKinley at the Ohio Farmers Alliance meeting.⁸¹⁴ Interestingly enough, The Alliance backed the Democrats, but Hayes and McKinley made their presence felt as bipartisan. He immediately discussed McKinley's service in the 23rd Ohio. McKinley followed the kind words by his mentor with a powerful speech on the protection tariff and how it could easily change the life of a farmer.⁸¹⁵

On Election Day, McKinley carried Ohio by 21,511 votes and the state Republicans gained a majority in the state legislature.⁸¹⁶ The win solidified his status as a prominent Republican candidate for a possible future presidential run. Hayes saw the White House as McKinley's destiny as well, but he felt that a run in 1892 would not bode well, since Benjamin Harrison was seeking a second term.⁸¹⁷ McKinley focused on his current position and addressed the legislature in January, 1892: "It is my desire to cooperate with you in every endeavor to

⁸¹¹ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 152-153

⁸¹² *Ohio State Journal*, March 30, 1891

⁸¹³ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 105

⁸¹⁴ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 47

⁸¹⁵ Ibid

⁸¹⁶ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 105

⁸¹⁷ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 47

secure a wise, economical and honorable administration, and so far as can be done the improvement and elevation of the public service.”⁸¹⁸ While his platform during the campaign was vague and touched more on national issues, McKinley studied Ohio’s tax system, upgraded the canal system, reviewed the management of state institutions, introduced the need to arbitrate between labor and management, and reviewed working conditions, which included child labor and wages.⁸¹⁹

Rutherford B. Hayes tried to keep politics out of his mind, but as an ex-president it was difficult to not appear interested in the 1892 Presidential Election.⁸²⁰ Although he finished third in the Republican Convention ballot, Benjamin Harrison remained on the ticket as the incumbent candidate. (Hayes was listed on the ballot for the 1892 Republican convention even with his promise of not returning to the White House during his only term as president).⁸²¹ The Democrats selected former President Grover Cleveland to set up a rematch from the 1888 Election. With labor on the side of the Democrats, Harrison was easily defeated in the election (277-145).⁸²²

McKinley’s prestige grew from Harrison’s defeat as newspapers unofficially declared his candidacy for the 1896 Election.⁸²³ Something special also emerged from Harrison’s defeat. Marcus Hanna, the wealthy industrialist, viewed McKinley as a powerful ally. The McKinley-Hanna team formed after the election, and with the Election of 1896 four years away, the team began to campaign against the Cleveland Administration.⁸²⁴ As McKinley spoke out against the Democrats, Hanna handled McKinley’s public relations. Hanna never intruded on McKinley’s

⁸¹⁸ Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, January 11, 12, 1892

⁸¹⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, January 12, 1892

⁸²⁰ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 144-45

⁸²¹ Ibid

⁸²² Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 108-109

⁸²³ Ibid

⁸²⁴ Skrabec, *McKinley: Apostle of Protectionism*, 108-109

policies but instead played the role of campaign and finance manager.⁸²⁵ As the press got wind of the relationship, they began casting McKinley as a puppet to Marcus Hanna. Historian H.W. Brands described their relationship: “Hanna realized that he possessed certain gifts McKinley didn’t, including a greater quickness of mind and capacity for detailed planning. McKinley realized this too and felt little embarrassment in deferring to Hanna on matters where such gifts were essential. On the other hand, Hanna conceded a kind of moral superiority to McKinley.”⁸²⁶ In sum, Hanna found a friend who believed in capitalism without being brainwashed by it.⁸²⁷

With the emergence of the McKinley-Hanna team, Hayes could provide little advice to his protégé. His memories of McKinley consistently focused on their time together during the Civil War.⁸²⁸ He was proud of McKinley and predicted that the presidency would be his very soon.⁸²⁹ Hayes, seventy years of age, had the opportunity to ride a train with Governor McKinley after Christmas in 1892.⁸³⁰ He met with McKinley several times throughout the latter’s inaugural year, but he never had the opportunity to sit with him one on one.⁸³¹ It was usually a political event or a Civil War reunion that brought them together for a brief conversation.⁸³² The conversations were on reorganizing the University of Ohio an issue which troubled Hayes. Unbeknownst at the time, this was the last conversation William McKinley would have with his mentor. One day the middle of January, 1893, Hayes began to feel very cold and suffered from pain in his chest. Immediately, he thought of the Battle of South Mountain and the wound he

⁸²⁵ H.W. Brands, *The Reckless Decade*, 266

⁸²⁶ Ibid

⁸²⁷ Ibid

⁸²⁸ Williams, ed., *Diaries and Letters of Hayes*, 5: 158-59

⁸²⁹ Ibid

⁸³⁰ Ibid

⁸³¹ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 531-533

⁸³² Ibid

received.⁸³³ Upon his return to Spiegel Grove, he was confined to his bed for the first time since the South Mountain wound.⁸³⁴ On January 17, 1893, Rutherford B. Hayes looked at his doctor and said, “I know that I am going where Lucy is.”⁸³⁵ At 11 pm that evening, Hayes passed away.⁸³⁶

The funeral for President Rutherford B. Hayes was held on January 20, 1893. President-elect Grover Cleveland was present along with Governor McKinley to pay their respects.⁸³⁷ Veterans from the Civil War, family, and friends paid tribute to Hayes through biblical readings and song.⁸³⁸ Naturally, William McKinley spoke on the life and career of Hayes, his beloved mentor:

Rutherford Birchard Hayes, nineteenth President of the United States, was a great and good man, great in all that was good; good in all that was great. I had never seen Hayes until he reported to the 23rd regiment and I recall our first meeting the better because of a little incident which happened when, with all the pride of the new recruits, we came to receive our muskets. The State could only furnish the most inferior guns. These we positively and proudly refused to accept. We could accept nothing but the best. Major Hayes did the talking to our company and I shall never forget the impression of his speech. He said that many of the most decisive battles of history had been won by the crudest weapons. From that very moment he had our respect and admiration, which never weakened but ever increased during the four eventful years that followed.⁸³⁹

McKinley continued the speech by recalling Hayes’s dedication to the Union and the heroic actions he displayed in several battles including South Mountain. He recognized Hayes’s service as a Congressman and Governor and briefly described the excitement surrounding the Election of 1876.⁸⁴⁰ As President, McKinley said, “His lofty purpose was never questioned- his purity of personal and official life were everywhere accepted. His death discloses this even more

⁸³³ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 531-533

⁸³⁴ Ibid

⁸³⁵ Ibid

⁸³⁶ Ibid

⁸³⁷ Ibid

⁸³⁸ Ibid

⁸³⁹ William McKinley, *Speeches*, 1893

⁸⁴⁰ William McKinley, *Speeches*, 1893

clearly than did his retirement from public office. His bitterest enemy can find no flaw in his character, no defective link in the chain of his life. He expressed a noble sentiment, one that fitly characterized his own conduct, when he declared, “He serves his party best who serves his country best.”⁸⁴¹

McKinley concluded his speech by focusing on Hayes’s retirement from politics and his desire to volunteer for his country to work on several causes which included education, veterans’ pensions, and civil rights.⁸⁴² McKinley ended his speech with, “He lived long enough to see a reversion of popular sentiment in his own favor, and died with the confidence and affection of all his countrymen. Posterity can be trusted to give him his rightful place in history, and a proud one it will be.”⁸⁴³

Marcus Hanna never replaced Hayes, but it was understandable why William McKinley turned to Hanna when Hayes passed on. He was much older than McKinley and was able to provide advice on life just as Hayes had. McKinley never forgot Hayes’s leadership from the Civil War to the White House and although he disagreed on some political issues, he hoped that he could follow in his mentor’s footsteps. Hayes and McKinley rose through the military ranks during the Civil War. Hayes was elected to Congress during the War, governor afterwards, and eventually President of the United States. While Hayes served in the White House, McKinley joined his former commander in Washington as a member of the House of Representatives. After several terms, McKinley became Governor and like Hayes, he sought the White House.

After Hayes’s death, the year 1893 brought a massive economic depression which destroyed the Cleveland Administration’s ability to focus on any other topic.⁸⁴⁴ From the

⁸⁴¹ Ibid

⁸⁴² Ibid

⁸⁴³ Ibid

⁸⁴⁴ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 522

Pullman Boycott, Wilson-Gorman Tariff, to the repeal of silver, the economy would be Cleveland's downfall. In 1895, William McKinley prepared for the presidency. As the parties met to nominate their candidates, the Democrats decided to push Cleveland aside and give the young populist, William Jennings Bryan, an opportunity to motivate the base of the party.⁸⁴⁵ When the balloting ended for Republicans, William McKinley received more than enough votes to fulfill his dream of becoming the Republican candidate for President.⁸⁴⁶ McKinley would have to thank Hanna for ensuring the victory by creating agreements with party bosses from several states.⁸⁴⁷ The 1896 Election was a race between agriculture and populism vs. industry and capitalism. The young Bryan would become the first presidential candidate to use the railroad system to campaign, whereas, McKinley continued the tradition of front porch campaigning.⁸⁴⁸ Bryan lectured crowds with his Cross of Gold speech while McKinley argued for the preservation of the gold standard.⁸⁴⁹

In the end, McKinley defeated Bryan, 271 to 176. He would become the last President of the Gilded Age and the last President to have served in the Civil War. His Presidency is partnered with America's Imperialistic Age, which included the Spanish-American War of 1898, the acquisition of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands, and the dominance over Cuba.⁸⁵⁰ Under McKinley, The United States was officially recognized as a global power. Economically, he signed the Dingley Tariff which raised the rate to an all time high, replacing Cleveland's Wilson-Gorman Tariff.⁸⁵¹ With expansion came another industrial boom for the United States. Everything was fitting into place for the McKinley Administration. He ran as the incumbent

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid, 523

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid, 524

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid

⁸⁵⁰ Morgan, *William McKinley and His America*, 524

⁸⁵¹ Ibid

candidate in the 1900 Election against William Jennings Bryan. He defeated Bryan but this time with a brand new running mate, Theodore Roosevelt (Garrett Hobart died from a heart attack).⁸⁵² McKinley, looked to continue his policies and ensure that the United States remained a global power, but was unable to finish his term: an assassin, Leon Colgoz, shot him at the Buffalo World Exposition Fair.⁸⁵³ Colgoz claimed he shot McKinley for the working people of America. William McKinley lingered from the shot just as James Garfield had in 1881. On September 13, 1901, McKinley's fever rose from the infection of the bullet. His's last words were, "Good-bye, good-bye all. It is God's way. His will, not ours, be done. Nearer my God to Thee."⁸⁵⁴

Conclusion

There is no question that Rutherford B. Hayes had a tremendous impact on the political career of McKinley. McKinley witnessed Hayes's leadership capabilities during the Civil War to their ventures in Ohio and National politics. They fought and bled on the battlefields of the Civil War with the intention to free slaves from the South. Regardless of what critics say, their message was consistent in this objective as to why they volunteered for the 23rd Ohio Infantry. The Civil War also provided both men with a taste of a hierarchal structure and how to achieve higher positions through hard work and friendship. As Hayes moved higher into leadership roles, McKinley was not far behind in being noticed by generals and party leaders of the North. As their time ended in the Civil War, it was only appropriate to enter the political arena.

⁸⁵² Ibid

⁸⁵³ Ibid

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid

While greatness is not the term usually associated Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley, the term underrated would be more appropriate. It was Hayes and McKinley who found the Republican Party disorganized and weak during their first days as President and Congressman in 1877. Within four years, they tackled the issues of the 1870s: the Southern question, the gold standard, the riots and economic downturns, the Chinese question, civil service reform, and a Democratically controlled Congress. Hayes said of his own presidency, “It would be difficult to find one which began with so rough a situation, and few which closed with so smooth a sea.”⁸⁵⁵ Interestingly, in 1876, Henry Adams dismissed Hayes as a “third rate nonentity” and voted for Tilden, but by 1880, Adams, a critic of politicians, acknowledged that Hayes conducted “a most successful administration.”⁸⁵⁶

Shortly after Hayes left the White House, Mark Twain predicted that the Hayes administration “would steadily rise into higher and higher prominence, as time and distance give it a right perspective.”⁸⁵⁷ Instead, with the overall change of American society, with its Gilded Age, perspective, and with the laissez faire mentality of his successors, Hayes was simply forgotten. McKinley, on the other hand, experienced a coattail effect when either his alliance or disagreement with Hayes on certain issues (the gold standard) led him to national fame. He sought advice from Hayes on issues that held no precedent as he was a freshman in Congress with no political experience. He helped Hayes heal the breaches in the GOP caused by the divisive issues of the Gilded Age, and restored the party harmony so necessary to carry out his own long term policies after the Spanish-American War. Luckily for McKinley, Hayes and his successors solved most of the issues of this time period and with a decisive victory in the Spanish-American War, many Americans simply forgot about these political issues. This was

⁸⁵⁵ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 535

⁸⁵⁶ Henry Adams to Henry Cabot Lodge, May 13, 1880, in Levenson, *Letters of Henry Adams*, 2: 276, 400

⁸⁵⁷ Samuel Clemens to Rutherford B. Hayes, April 10, 1882, Hayes Presidential Center

evident when William Jennings Bryan ran against McKinley for the second time in the Presidential Election of 1900. Bryan, who had an easier time attacking McKinley in the previous election (1896) on issues dealing with the economy, had no real ammunition against McKinley in 1900. This resulted in a second but short victory for McKinley. McKinley simply fell within a great transitional period: the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. He stood not as the last old-fashioned chief executive or as the first modern one, but as something between, trying through his policies of conservative conciliation to ease his country and his people into the new position their responsibilities demanded.⁸⁵⁸ James Gary (McKinley's post-master general) once wrote McKinley, "Your administration will go down in history next to that of Lincoln as having more difficult problems to solve than any that preceded it."⁸⁵⁹

As for Hayes, modern day historians have criticized him for withdrawing Federal soldiers from the South which ultimately ended the Reconstruction era and reinforced the Jim Crow era. They were disappointed in Hayes's handling of the gold standard in which he rejected any notion of bimetallism, for breaking the Great Strike of 1877, for adopting an Indian policy that aimed at assimilation, for negotiating a treaty that led to Chinese exclusion, for his inconsistency in his support for civil service reform, and for not effectively leading Congress. Overall, late twentieth century historians have labeled Hayes as unimportant and uninteresting.⁸⁶⁰

Of course, this is completely unfair to Hayes. He is being measured against the ideals of a later era. He made solid arguments and counterarguments on these issues that applied well into the 1900s. For example, when Hayes entered the White House, the economy was heading into a depression, the American people were tired of military intervention in the South, and with a hostile House of Representatives that refused to fund the army, Hayes had no choice but to lift

⁸⁵⁸ Morgan, *McKinley and his America*, 527

⁸⁵⁹ Gary to McKinley, July 31, 1900, McKinley Papers

⁸⁶⁰ Hoogenboom, *Hayes: Warrior and President*, 536

the army from the South and ultimately end the Reconstruction era. What historians fail to grasp is that Hayes secured a pledge from South Carolina and Louisiana that blacks would have the right to vote if the troops were removed. Maybe Hayes was ignorant of this issue part as racism prevented blacks from voting, but he could not see a divided United States any longer. Hayes wanted to unify a country that bled through Civil War and suffered socially and economically during the Reconstruction Era. The Compromise of 1877 is ugly from today's point of view, but in the late 19th century this was a deal that had to be struck by both parties to move the country forward.

In sum, Rutherford B. Hayes was never an elitist and McKinley never the sneering jingoist. Many Americans today do not recall the accomplishments of Hayes or McKinley. The objective of this dissertation is to illuminate the great prominence that these two men deserve. Never in the history of the United States did one President mentor another in this unique way. That mentorship and camaraderie gave the United States two elected officials who weren't afraid to move the country ahead of its current time. Although critics might continue to bash Hayes and McKinley, this dissertation supports the great work of each as tried and tested soldiers, as leaders, and as statesmen.

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