

2016

Red, White, Red: Not So Subtle Protest in the Border States

Vicki Betts

University of Texas at Tyler, vbetts@uttyler.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.uttyler.edu/cw_newsttopics

Recommended Citation

Betts, Vicki, "Red, White, Red: Not So Subtle Protest in the Border States" (2016). *Special Topics*. Paper 21.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Civil War Newspapers at Scholar Works at UT Tyler. It has been accepted for inclusion in Special Topics by an authorized administrator of Scholar Works at UT Tyler. For more information, please contact tbianchi@uttyler.edu.

RED, WHITE AND RED: Not so Subtle Protest in the Border States

[BELLVILLE] TEXAS COUNTRYMAN, October 23, 1861, p. 2, c. 7

The tools of Lincoln in Ohio are becoming almost as tyrannical toward unprotected females who are compelled to travel through that State, as are his "dodge" police in Baltimore toward little school girls, when they arrest and carry off to the station house, because, forsooth, their stockings or dress "bear the combination of prohibitory colors."

[BELLVILLE] TEXAS COUNTRYMAN, February 22, 1862, p. 1, c. 5

The editor of the Pomeroy Telegraph has received a star taken from the apron of a "Secesh" lady, who had the boldness to cross the Ohio and flaunt it in the face of two or three Buckeye girls. They determined to capture the rebel emblem, and did so, the pretty Secessionist assailing them with stones and hard words during the engagement. No lives were lost.—[Cin. Commercial.

So it seems that our girls like the boys, can only be conquered by superior numbers of the enemy.

NEW ORLEANS DAILY PICAYUNE, October 20, 1864, p. 4, c. 1

A Grand Secesh Wedding Ceremony Spoiled.—A day or two ago, a beautiful young lady belonging to a wealthy secesh family of the city, made arrangements for celebrating her nuptials with one of the "chivalry," by a grand display of rebel colors and flags. Seven hundred invitations were sent out, embracing all of the respectable sympathizers of the city, and the union was to be celebrated by a brilliant demonstration against the Union. The military authorities got wind of the affair, and when the wedding night arrived, a force of detectives was stationed near the house, with orders to gobble the young couple, the "preacher man," and all the guests, provided the programme [sic] was attempted to be carried out. Each detective was to seize upon a wedding guest, and like the Ancient Mariner, "hold him with his glittering eye" and gleaming revolver. This catastrophe was prevented however. The bride received an intimation of the proposed descent, and instead of having a grand wedding jubilee, the seven hundred guests were notified to stay away, and the ceremony was performed in a private and unostentatious manner, in the presence of only some half dozen quiet spectators. The red, white and red roses, red, white and red wine, red, white and red flags, Confederate cakes and rebel creams, &c., were stowed away in dark closets, and remain unseen and untasted, save by a select and favored few.

[St. Louis Democrat.

CHARLESTON MERCURY, March 20, 1862, 1, c. 3

The ladies of Baltimore, notwithstanding Lincoln's proclamation, appear daily on the streets, in secession colors, to wit "red, white and red." Bonnets are so constantly trimmed with a red, a white, and again, a red rose, that even the manufacturers have been prohibited from making these rebellious flowers, in order "to support the Government." Yet, the ladies, who are equal to every emergency, were not to be out-done in this matter. The insulting Yankee soldiers, on several occasions, spoke to the traitorous demoiselles, and even went so far as to tear the trimmings from their bonnets.

SAVANNAH [GA] REPUBLICAN, March 22, 1862, p. 1, c. 3

The Sprit of the Ladies of Baltimore.

A Baltimorean, who recently came South, on the Underground Railroad, and in whose statement we have full confidence, sends us the following sketch of an amusing scene which actually took place at Fort McHenry a short time ago:--Charleston Mercury.

The ladies of Baltimore, notwithstanding Lincoln's proclamation, appeared daily in the streets, in secession colors, to wit, "red, white and red." Bonnets are so constantly trimmed with a red, a white, and again, a red rose, that even the manufacturers have been prohibited from making these rebellious flowers, in order "to support the government." Yet, the ladies, who are equal to every emergency, were not to be outdone in this matter. The insulting Yankee soldiers, on several occasions, spoke to the traitorous desmoiselles, and even went so far as to tear the trimming from their bonnets.

One day a party of four ladies, determining to wear the southern colors, arrayed themselves, and drove to Fort McHenry to see General Dix on the subject. Now, it is a fact, that General Dix is really in awe of the Baltimore ladies.—The sight of one at the fort generally brings on a nervous chill, which disables him for several days. Imagine, then, the effect of four, in rebellious array, before him. A clerical gentleman was talking with the General at the time, and the ladies were seated until the colloquy was over. The clergyman was from the South, had been North for his health, and was trying to urge General Dix to let him pass the Federal lines to reach his house.

"Sir," said the general, "I cannot accommodate you. I have not the power to grant passports."

"I have heard of an underground railway," said the clergyman. "Possibly you could give me some knowledge of its operations," etc.

"I, too, have heard of the same, sir," said the commander, "but with all my vigilance and detectives, I have been unable to discover the depot, or the conductor. Apply to any of the rebel ladies of Baltimore, they will send you or your letters; they seem more than equal to the exigencies of the times."

One of the ladies now stepped forward, and asked the clergyman for his name. Finding him a gentleman, and anxious to return home, she said, handing him her card: "Call on me to-morrow, at twelve o'clock. I can send you South. I am recruiting for the Confederate service, and have armed and equipped one hundred and eighty stout men, who will go South in a day or two; they will, no doubt, be glad of your company. I have, also, a daily mail South, so if you wish to send a letter, appraising your friends of your intention of joining them in the Confederacy, I can, as Gen. Dix says, send it for you."

The clergyman, amused at the young lady's independence, took a seat to hear her encounter with Gen. Dix. Turning to him, she said: "We are four rebel ladies of Baltimore, Gen. Dix; we have come to the fort to ask your permission to wear the bonnets we have on. You will see, general, they are very stylish and becoming, especially to the handsome brunettes before you. I am too Celtic for red, but my country's colors at this time enthuse me, so I wear them, although Madame Etoffe, my modiste, tells me my hat is in bad taste. Now, you will allow, general, that I am imbued with the purest patriotism, when I tell you I have sacrificed the becoming for my country."

The General, utterly confounded, made no reply, when the lady continued: "Do not keep us in suspense, Gen. Dix. Let us know your decision at once. You know we cannot trust

the miserable poltroons that now infest our beautiful city. I hear, sir, in case Gen. Beauregard attempts to relieve us, you have made arrangements to shell Baltimore. Do you know why this fort was built? For our protection, not destruction. How you have hated us; how jealous the Yankees have always been of us; even the Yankee ladies could never speak of the ladies of this city otherwise than invidiously. You know the Baltimore ladies are noted for a rare refinement and beauty, foreign to the daughters of your soil, hence their envy. You would like to destroy this "new Sodom," and fear is all that prevents you, for you think the Confederates would retaliate upon your "big Babylon," and other cities. If I had my way, I would send every Southerner away, and set fire to the city rather than have it, as it is, under Yankee rule. Since the 19th of April, that memorable day, when your Massachusetts troops were so enthusiastically driven back by our unprepared citizens, the Northern press has styled this city the "headquarters of mobocracy." We like the name; indeed any remembrance of the day that proved to the South we were theirs, though taken by surprise, and without arms, we were ready to shed our blood for their cause. Yes, any allusion to that day fills my heart with generous enthusiasm. Then we were free, now we are but galley slaves of the Abolition Administration. If we, the 'rebel ladies,' as you are pleased to style us, could have been armed, I believe the city at this time would be rid of the hostile troops that now surround it. But I have digressed, General Dix. Why do you not speak to me about the bonnets?" Before the General could answer, two sable maids came forward, one with some samples of red and white ribbon. Her mistress had sent to ask Gen. Dix if her little infant might be dressed with such trimmings; the other came on a similar errand relative to some red and white socks which little master Harry wished to wear. The General, overwhelmed by these weighty matters, sank back in his chair in utter hopelessness. The young lady aroused him by inquiring:

"Do you now feel debased when you reflect upon the miserable cause you have espoused? No wonder you dislike to see ladies here. They are apt to tell you of the shameful character of a government that causes infants to be arrested and taken to that diabolical stand—the office of the Provost Marshal—because they happen to have a red ribbon around their waists?"

The young lady's criminative attack proved too much for the veteran officer. He was carried to his private apartment, put to bed, and kept his room for a fortnight afterwards.

The young lady would now be in custody with Mrs. Greenhow and other lady prisoners, but that her father happens to be an Englishman. Since the Trent affair, the Yankees are very circumspect in their treatment of British subjects.

The clergyman called to see the lady next day at the appointed hour. She actually sent him South with the recruits to which she had referred, and, thanks to her daily mail, the Maryland soldiers constantly hear from their friends.

DALLAS HERALD, July 26, 1862, p. 2, c. 2

Secession Impudence.—A daughter of Capt. Semmes, commander of the famous rebel pirate Sumter, attended a wedding at St. Pauls' church in Newport, Kentucky, night before last, enveloped in a scarf of rich material, bearing the Confederate colors, red and white, arranged in bars or stripes.—Cincinnati Commercial 20.

NATCHEZ DAILY COURIER, August 12, 1862, p. 1, c. 3

The War on Women.

The Yankee authorities still continue to wage war upon the females, as will be seen by the following from the Baltimore News Sheet of the 18th instant:

Somewhat of an excitement was created yesterday afternoon on Baltimore street in the vicinity of Gay street, by the appearance of two young women on a promenade, both having upon their dresses rosettes of red and white silk, while one of them displayed a Confederate flag nearly a yard in length, waving it as she walked up the street. The police soon accosted them, and informed them that they were under arrest, escorted them to Marshal Van Nostrand's office, followed by a considerable crowd. Being presented to the Marshal they were informed that they had violated the laws, when they both asserted that they had no idea that they were doing anything wrong. It appeared the young women were sisters, daughters of Mr. John Gilpin, of Elkton, Maryland, and had arrived in Baltimore in the afternoon train intending to return by the 5 o'clock cars. They were quite prepossessing in appearance, and attracted much attention while in charge of the officers on the street. After a proper examination of the case, the Marshal decided to release them on security to keep the peace, which was secured. After being discharged, they proceeded, in company with some friends, to the depot, and left for home in the seven o'clock cars.

PEORIA (IL) MORNING MAIL, March 10, 1863, p. 2, c. 2

Beauties of the System.—The beauties of the Provost Marshal system is well illustrated by a circumstance that lately befell a lady, a resident of this city. She has a brother-in-law living in St. Louis, and a short time since paid him a visit. Preparatory to her going there she procured the usual female paraphernalia, among which was a bonnet, beautifully and tastefully trimmed by the delicate and loyal hands of some lady milliner of Peoria. In original and emphatic language, it was a "love of a bonnet," at least so thought the wearer, who, when arrived at St. Louis, may well be pardoned any little vanity she may have felt in wearing "that blessed bonnet," along the aristocratic avenues of that Provost Marshal governed city. She undertook to make a sensation and she did, for she had not proceeded above half a dozen squares before a representative of the Provost Marshal politely invited her to go with him to the office of his sublime principal. Another lady with her, was able to explain what was impossible for our Peoria belle to do, because of her affright. The damning offence against the majesty of the laws of which she had been guilty was found in that "love of a bonnet." The Peoria artiste, not being thoroughly instructed in the laws that govern the matter, had actually put something or other on the bonnet in which the argus-eyed official saw the colors of the secesh Confederacy. The lady, after much explanation was released. Our informant did not learn whether she had to take the oath of allegiance or not.