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Samuel Fleishman: Tragedy in Reconstruction-Era Florida

by

Daniel R. Weinfeld

On October 5, 1869, vigilantes seized Samuel Fleishman, a Jewish merchant who had lived in Florida for more than twenty years, escorted him out of Jackson County, and warned him never to return. A week later, Fleishman was shot along a country road about twelve miles from his home in Marianna. No one would be charged with Fleishman's murder.

Historians of Reconstruction in Florida have briefly noted the tragic story of Samuel Fleishman and have proposed various explanations for his murder. The earliest accounts focused on Fleishman having been expelled for expressing opinions "derogatory to 'white supremacy.'" Other historians referenced Fleishman's association with "carpetbagger" Republican officials and described him as encouraging blacks to avenge killings by murdering whites. Jerrill Shofner, the leading scholar of Reconstruction-era Florida, has emphasized that Fleishman was "disliked for advancing credit to Negroes."¹ These accounts have not, however, critically examined facts about Fleishman's expulsion and murder. Probing the sources raises questions concerning assumptions about Fleishman's last week of life and about the circumstances surrounding his death.

Historians have also failed to address the significance of the Fleishman story. The general consensus is that southern Jews in the nineteenth century almost universally complied with the prevailing societal mores regarding race and white hegemony, the major exception being the attention and treatment Jewish peddlers

and merchants gave to their African American clientele.² Fleishman's family life, business dealings, reaction to the Civil War, and relationships with Republican officials and the recently freed black population during Reconstruction challenge this perception. Fleishman chose not to conform to expected community behavior regarding politics and race and paid the consequences as a victim of politically motivated violence.

The Antebellum Period

Beginning in the 1820s, many Jews, often alone or with siblings, traveled in steerage from Bavaria, the Rhineland, and Alsace-Lorraine to America. Since 1813, Bavarian Jews had been subject to the *Matrikel*, mandating registration for marriage and livelihood and fixing the number of Jews who could settle in every town and village and the number who could marry. Young Bavarian Jews, oppressed by such restrictions, were drawn by the promise of liberty and economic opportunity to America.³ Samuel Fleishman, born in Bavaria in the early 1820s, joined this flow of Jewish immigrants to the United States. Filing naturalization papers in New York City on October 4, 1845, Fleishman listed his occupation as "peddler."⁴

Many German Jewish immigrants to the United States started out at the bottom of the economic ladder as itinerant peddlers.⁵ For young, unmarried men, peddling promised the most direct route to earning money.⁶ Peddlers, typically from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, obtained a small stock of dry goods, cloth, and cheap jewelry with a personal reserve of capital, or with a loan from a relative, or on credit, and set out with a pack for rural areas that they hoped were under-serviced. They learned English and appreciated the independence that peddling allowed whether they chose to wander on their own or in teams. These young men were optimistic that peddling was to be a first step leading to the establishment of retail and wholesale stores.⁷

Some peddlers found an open market for their business ambitions in the American South where they filled a useful economic niche and rarely competed economically with the established white society.⁸ Besides being appreciated for the novelty of their

visits to break the monotony of rural life, Jewish peddlers benefited from the fact that the racial bigotry and anxiety of their customers were focused on slaves and Catholics, not on the relatively few Jewish immigrants.⁹ Since the antebellum South was largely free of overt antisemitism, Jewish peddlers considered themselves accepted and even welcome.¹⁰ Many also profited from their willingness to trade with blacks. On their trips throughout the farming areas, they found customers among plantation-bound slaves.¹¹

Not long after arriving in New York City, Samuel Fleishman made his way to the small town of Quincy, seat of Gadsden County, Florida, adjacent to the Georgia border. With economic growth fueled by rapidly expanding tobacco cultivation, the county was a promising area to begin a career during the late 1840s and 1850s.¹² The 1850 Gadsden County census listed Fleishman as residing with a younger man, Philip Fleishman, presumably Samuel's brother.¹³

Still retaining frontier characteristics, Florida presented opportunity for the ambitious to rise quickly to wealth and status. The population had grown rapidly since the territory was acquired from Spain in 1821, but at the time it attained statehood in 1845, Florida still had only seventy thousand inhabitants split nearly evenly between blacks, virtually all of whom were slaves, and whites. The population doubled by 1860 but remained scattered primarily across the northern belt stretching from Pensacola in the west to Jacksonville in the east.

Eighty percent of Florida's cotton production took place in the plantation region that extended from the Suwannee River west to Gadsden County and its neighbor across the Apalachicola River, Jackson County.¹⁴ The money crop, short staple cotton, was cultivated on large plantations by "gangs" of slave laborers who outnumbered the white inhabitants.¹⁵ Entry into the elite came through investments in land and slaves and this elite controlled most of the state's wealth and dominated its politics during the antebellum period.¹⁶

Jewish settlement in Florida dated to the Spanish territorial period. Nonetheless, when the Fleishman brothers arrived, only

about fifty Jews lived in the new state. This tiny Jewish population, however, included David Levy Yulee, who served as one of Florida's initial United States Senators from statehood until 1851 and again from 1856 until secession.¹⁷ Approximately two hundred Jews migrated to Florida during the fifteen years between statehood and secession. These newcomers, mostly from the Germanic states, worked as merchants, peddlers, and farmers. Although many lived in Jacksonville, Tallahassee, and Pensacola, most resided in small towns scattered in between.¹⁸ Few records concerning these individuals survive.¹⁹

The Jews of Quincy were oriented toward the Jewish community in Bainbridge, Georgia, about twenty-five miles north.²⁰ Besides being home to a larger, more established Jewish population, Bainbridge was the terminus of the railroad to Savannah and, consequently, a link in the route traveled by the local merchants to their suppliers in New York. The few Quincy Jewish residents, all either merchants or peddlers, regularly visited Bainbridge while traveling this route.

Like many other single, young German Jewish immigrants who moved from the northeast cities to the rural Midwest and South, the Fleishman brothers likely loaded packs and peddled in the villages and farms until they settled in Quincy. Unlike fellow German-born Gadsden residents David and Jacob Strauss, and Solomon Levi, who were listed as peddlers in the 1850 census, the Fleishmans had already ascended to merchant status.

The Fleishmans likely operated a small general retail store. Southern storekeepers were integrated in the agricultural system where cash was rare and the need to extend credit to tide over the customer until the next harvest was inescapable.²¹ The merchants formed associations with mercantile firms at port cities, known as cotton factors or port merchants, whom the inland merchant supplied with cotton and, in return, received supplies bought in New York or New Orleans. While the town merchant provided credit to the farmer, he received stock also on credit from the factor in anticipation of the cotton bales the merchant would forward at harvest time. If the crop was successful, the farmer's debt to the merchant would be liquidated. If the crop failed, the debt carried

*Detail from map of Florida, published by
Asher & Adams, 1871, showing Marianna, Quincy,
Chattahoochee, Bainbridge, and their environs.
Fleishman was last seen alive walking
from Chattahoochee toward Marianna.
(Courtesy of the Special Collections Department,
Tampa Library, University of South Florida.)*

forward to the next year with interest. Similarly, the merchant was obligated to settle his open accounts with the port factor.²² In this system, immense amounts of trade took place with cash rarely changing hands. It facilitated the cotton economy but a crop failure spelled disaster for the entire community.²³

By 1853, Fleishman had purchased property in Marianna, where he made his home for most of his remaining years.²⁴ The town served as the social, economic, and political center of Jackson County where the populace gathered for “horseracing, circuses, political events and celebrations” on public holidays. High society consisted of planters, merchants, professional men,

and their families.²⁵ Although the total population numbered no more than three or four hundred, Marianna boasted several doctors and lawyers, at least two hotels and several stores attesting to its prosperity and status as the local hub.²⁶

Cotton, of course, was Jackson County's major crop. Because Marianna was situated about twenty-five miles inland from the Gulf Coast and the nearby Chipola River was not navigable, its growth was stymied by the lack of efficient transportation to market. Crops were shipped down the Apalachicola River, about twenty miles from Marianna, until the extension of the railroad from Savannah into southern Georgia in the late 1850s changed Marianna's market orientation.²⁷

Like other Southern merchants, Fleishman often traveled to New York City to replenish his supplies and avoid the middleman markup the port merchants added to goods.²⁸ During one of these trips in the mid-1850s, he found a bride. Sophia Altman, at least ten years younger than he, was born in the mid-1830s in the United States.²⁹ Her parents, Philip and Celia, were, like Fleishman, Bavarian immigrants. The Altmans had arrived in New York in the 1830s. By the time Fleishman became his son-in-law, Philip Altman was an established dry goods merchant in New York's Bowery district. Sophia's two younger brothers, Morris, born in 1837, and Benjamin, born in 1840, played significant roles in the story of the Fleishman family.

Fleishman returned with Sophia to Marianna where, during the late 1850s, his business prospered and their family grew with the births of William in 1857 and Benjamin in 1859. In addition to his store, Fleishman began operating a tavern in the Gulf Coast summer resort of St. Andrews.³⁰ In September 1859, Fleishman paid \$1,250 for a store and house on two acres of land in the hamlet of Campbellton, the center of a large plantation area eighteen miles northwest of Marianna near the Alabama border. Fleishman also acquired property deeds from other Jackson County residents from 1859 through 1861. As was customary in this cash-poor society, the deeds were probably transferred to satisfy debts owed him.³¹ Trips to New York continued and Sophia's presence on passenger lists suggests that, in addition to

purchasing provisions, visiting the Altmans was another objective of these journeys.³²

In 1860, the entire Jewish population of Gadsden and Jackson counties consisted of no more than fifteen men, women, and children. Samuel's brother, Philip, had remained behind in Quincy where his household included another Bavarian, Simon Fleishman, born in 1840. Ferdinand A. and Fannie Fleishman, their son Samuel, and another man named Benjamin Fleishman, had also established themselves as merchants in Quincy.³³ While no clear evidence exists, the household information from census records and typical family migration patterns make it reasonable to conclude that most, if not all of these Fleishmans from Bavaria, were related.³⁴

By the time Samuel and Sophia celebrated the birth of their third son, Albert, in 1861, the Civil War had begun. The events set in motion by the war led to disruption and tragedy.

The Civil War

Despite divisions among citizens over secession prior to the war, once military activity commenced in April 1861, Jackson County's young men enthusiastically mobilized, with more than five hundred serving in the Confederate army.³⁵ Their companies led by county officers fought in various theatres throughout the war.

In his study of Jewish Confederates, Robert N. Rosen states that out of a total southern Jewish population of twenty-five thousand, between two thousand and three thousand men, sons of Sephardic families that arrived more than a century earlier, as well as new immigrants from the German states served in all branches of the Confederate military.³⁶ Jews, like other southerners, were motivated to fight to "do their duty, protect their homeland, protect Southern rights and liberty and, after the war began, loyalty to comrades in arms." Ironically, many of the Jewish immigrant volunteers had fled the German states to avoid military service.³⁷ Neither Fleishman brother, however, joined the regiments organized in Jackson and Gadsden counties during the secession fervor of 1861.

Downtown Marianna, Florida, 1890.

Presumably not much had changed since Samuel Fleishman lived there.

(Courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection,

Florida State Archives, Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.)

The initial wave of volunteers did not satisfy the Confederate military's needs, and the Richmond government soon resorted to drafting its citizens. Samuel Fleishman was too old to be subject to the first Conscription Act of April 1862 that applied to men up to the age of thirty-five. When the act was amended in September 1862 to extend the age to forty-five, the Fleishman brothers were brought within its bounds. Philip reported for service in Florida's Fifth Cavalry regiment in March 1863 and presented a substitute to serve in his place, an option available until the end of 1863.³⁸ At some point during the fall or winter of 1862-1863, Samuel decided to escape conscription by leaving the South.³⁹

Fleishman lived in an area of the Confederacy where evasion of military service was not rare. While Florida's men were being sent to fight across the South, Jefferson Davis's government viewed Florida "as a sparsely settled appendage to the

Confederacy which did not justify the use of troops when they were so sorely needed elsewhere."⁴⁰ By the summer of 1862, Florida's long coastline was defended only by small, widely dispersed garrisons, leaving it virtually defenseless against the Union navy. All the major ports were quickly destroyed, blockaded, or occupied by Union forces. Since the Confederacy's armies were not defending their own homes, some Floridians felt little incentive to risk their lives to defend the homes of other southerners.

Several factors may have contributed to Fleishman's decision to leave home, his wife, who was likely pregnant, and three small children. Certainly Fleishman's businesses would have been nearly ruined by the war. Because of the Union naval blockade, Marianna had virtually no outlet for the cotton crop on which the local economy depended. St. Andrews Bay, the summer resort where Samuel had operated the tavern, was abandoned by the Confederates and destroyed by the Union navy. Sophia's father and brothers, successful merchants in New York City, could be expected to welcome Samuel. Moreover, Sophia, with two service-age brothers in New York, did not have a deep-seated attachment to the South that would have influenced her to encourage Samuel to serve the Confederacy.⁴¹

In the anarchic environment of the Florida Panhandle, Fleishman would have experienced little difficulty reaching the Union boats along the coast for transport to Union-occupied New Orleans or Key West and then to New York. Samuel may have followed the same route as Ferdinand Fleishman who, evading service in the Confederate army, left his wife and four children in Quincy to travel to Key West, where he swore an oath of allegiance to the Union in January 1864. From Key West, Ferdinand sailed to New York.⁴²

While the trip would have been relatively simple for an adult, it certainly would have been impractical to bring a pregnant wife and three small children. Samuel's brother, Philip, who was not married, remained in Florida and his presence may have eased Samuel's decision to leave his family behind. Perhaps in anticipation of his departure, Fleishman deeded the Campbellton property to Sophia in February 1862.⁴³

Around the time Fleishman left Florida in late 1862 or early 1863, Sophia's father died and Morris Altman succeeded him as head of the family business. The growing Altman Brothers firm probably made good use of Samuel, the experienced merchant and relative. Meanwhile, Sophia gave birth to her first daughter, Lulu, and endured the deprivations that afflicted Marianna and the Confederacy.

Jackson County's economy had been destroyed by the lack of able-bodied men and the naval blockade. Acts of the Richmond government that transferred supplies from private citizens to the government at set prices and imposed new taxes created hardship. A military hospital was established in Marianna in 1863, placing further demands on the town's residents.⁴⁴ Guerilla bands composed of deserters from the Confederate army and Unionists roamed almost at will.⁴⁵ In September 1864, Union forces raided Marianna causing substantial damage, killing nine Confederates, and carrying away a number of the town's citizens as prisoners. This raid, which appears to have been needlessly destructive, left behind a legacy of bitterness and resentment.⁴⁶ Perhaps under financial duress, Sophia sold the Campbellton property to Philip in the fall of 1864 for the same \$2,500 price listed on the deed from her husband.

Aftermath of the War and the Arrival of the Freedmen's Bureau

When Fleishman returned to Marianna at war's end, he found a society disrupted economically, politically, and socially. Like the rest of the South, Marianna and Florida had undergone dramatic changes. As many as five thousand of Florida's men, out of an 1860 total white population of 77,747, had died in the war from combat or disease. Land values had declined precipitously, capital was nonexistent, goods scarce, the state government was barely functioning and of uncertain legitimacy, and most dramatically, sixty-two thousand slaves, on whom the plantation system had depended, were now free.⁴⁷

Nonetheless, the situation in Florida gave some cause for optimism. The state government that operated under the Confederacy was displaced in May 1865 by the Union army and

Quincy Main Street, 1875.
(Courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection,
Florida State Archives, Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.)

martial law. Recognizing that the first priority was to plant crops, the army ordered planters to enter into contracts with the recently emancipated black laborers. With a successful cotton crop in 1865, the Florida economy enjoyed a revival, even though the harvest was only half the prewar level. Simultaneously, merchants increased their business operations.⁴⁸ Fleishman had returned at a propitious moment.

Soon after his return, Marianna became the residence of agents of the Freedmen's Bureau and a small garrison of black soldiers. Congress had established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (referred to by its agents as the "Bureau") in March 1865 to supervise and manage the matters mentioned in its title.⁴⁹ Bureau administrators from the Union army were assigned to each state and eventually to each county in Florida. While initially focused on ensuring fair labor contracts, the bureau provided relief and educational guidance and sought the impartial dispensation of justice by local courts. Understaffed and overwhelmed, bureau representatives quickly recognized the need to focus activities on protecting the rights of blacks from a white population intent on imposing a status on African Americans identical to slavery in all but name.

In February 1866, Captain Charles M. Hamilton assumed the post of sub-assistant commissioner for the bureau in Jackson and three nearby counties. Hamilton persuaded his boyhood neighbor and fellow veteran, William J. Purman, to resign his War Department job and come to Marianna to serve as Hamilton's assistant responsible for Jackson County.⁵⁰ Hamilton and Purman immediately began revising labor contracts that were grossly prejudicial against the usually illiterate black farm laborers. They also promoted the other main bureau goal of establishing a school system for the freed people and their children. Without official instructions, although with bureau approval, Hamilton and Purman initiated a program of lectures designed to educate the "almost helpless wards of the Government . . . on business, in their rights, on the laws of the State, and their duties and conduct under them."⁵¹

The white community quickly discerned the limits of the bureau's power and outmaneuvered the agents at nearly every turn.⁵² With the local courts refusing to seat black jurors, the judicial system became yet another powerful instrument of white domination and a tool to undermine the bureau agents and their goal of advancing the freedmen's position. Lamenting that their only means to enforce bureau directions was moral persuasion, Hamilton and Purman insisted in report after report that a troop of cavalry would do infinite good in Jackson County.⁵³

The enthusiastic approach of Hamilton and Purman to their tasks provoked deep animosity from most white citizens of Jackson County. The two men quickly found themselves isolated and ostracized. While the "better order of gentlemen" were friendly on the street, Purman complained, they would "never compromise their social standing by extending to the forlorn Agents an invitation or introduction to their homes and families."⁵⁴ He observed that the "tone of feeling" within the white community was "malignant and insulting to the extreme." Hamilton began to feel "well grounded fears" for his personal safety.⁵⁵

The agents succeeded in finding only a few white allies who were willing to express empathy publicly for their goals. Hamilton and Purman befriended Dr. John L. Finlayson, a Confederate veteran from a prominent slaveholding Marianna family. Finlayson risked the enmity of his community by providing medical service to freedmen and by teaching freedmen at the bureau school in Marianna.⁵⁶ Perhaps most scandalously of all from the point of view of the white community, Finlayson's two sisters became romantically involved with his new Yankee friends.⁵⁷ Hamilton found another sympathizer in Samuel Fleishman.

Fleishman in Reconstruction-Era Marianna

In the immediate wake of Fleishman's return, there is no evidence of resentment against him for evading Confederate military service and leaving the South during the war. On the contrary, Fleishman was readmitted to civic life and appeared on Marianna's grand jury rolls in 1866. He established a store operating under the name Altman Brothers without any great hindrance

and, for the rest of his life, identified himself as the “authorized agent” for the Altman firm.⁵⁸ Jackson County merchants, who had benefited from the cotton crop of 1865, found less success in 1866 and many failed with the dismal harvest of 1867.⁵⁹ Fleishman, however, stayed solvent through this difficult period. The Fleishman family also grew with Sophia giving birth to Carrie in 1867 and Henrietta (called Etta) in 1869.⁶⁰ Now consisting of eight members, it was likely the largest Jewish household in either Jackson or Gadsden counties during the 1860s.

Further evidence of Fleishman’s active participation in commerce is found in his frequent appearance in court as a litigant in his own name, the name of the Altman Brothers firm, on behalf of Morris Altman, and even in the name of Sophia’s deceased father, Philip Altman. A number of Marianna lawyers were kept busy with lawsuits brought both by and against Samuel Fleishman and the Altmans. Most were small claims for breach of contract and occasional garnishments. Few suits exceeded three hundred dollars in alleged damages. Surprisingly, early in 1867 Benjamin Altman brought a breach of contract action against Fleishman, initially in the amount of two thousand dollars. Fleishman did not contest this claim and Benjamin was eventually awarded \$1,073 plus costs from his older brother-in-law. The records of Jackson County’s courthouse from the late 1860s list numerous deeds to properties transferred to the Altmans probably in satisfaction of debts owed to the business.⁶¹

Fleishman courted notoriety by openly trading with and employing freed people. By seeking this business, Fleishman defied the credit system that many planters had established in league with merchants. The prominent African American journalist and civil rights activist Timothy Thomas Fortune remembered having worked as a “store boy” for Fleishman when he was a child and that Fleishman was resented for acquiring “most of the Negro trade.”⁶² This charge of trading with blacks was later raised publicly against Fleishman.

By mid-1867, Fleishman also openly associated with Charles Hamilton and became identified by both the bureau agents and the white conservatives as sympathetic to the bureau. Hamilton’s

regard is evidenced by his earnest recommendation that Fleishman be appointed Jackson County tax collector. "Mr. F. is a union man," Hamilton wrote "and has never given aid, counsel, or encouragement to the rebellion. He is a correct business and conscientious man."⁶³ For unknown reasons, Fleishman did not receive the appointment.

The somewhat neutral attitude with which Fleishman was received on his return to Marianna was subsequently supplanted by outright hostility. Together with other Republican sympathizers, Fleishman was subjected to the wrath of the white community. Finlayson, Fleishman, and other men who had taken "a firm stand in advocating the cause of Government," Hamilton observed, "are daily insulted upon the streets by such remarks as 'I smell a radical—and he stinks like a nigger'—or 'there's a republican—he's no better than a dog.'"

The harassment of Fleishman, like that of Hamilton, soon moved beyond verbal insults to vandalism. In mid-October 1867, Hamilton found that "some rebels" had entered his stables and shaved his horses' manes and tails. He discovered that Fleishman's horses had been subject to similar treatment and that two new buggies Fleishman had just received from New York were damaged "by having all the cushionings & leather cut up & disfigured." Fleishman assessed this damage at one hundred dollars.⁶⁴ Hamilton later suspected that Billy Coker, son of a leading Marianna merchant, and his group of "rowdies" were behind these acts, but he was unable to gather sufficient evidence to bring charges.⁶⁵ With prescience, Hamilton recognized that there was "no adequate protection for life and property of the friends of the Government."⁶⁶

Another example of harassment of Fleishman is found in the confusing, rambling narrative of Joseph Nelson, a young freedman. Before the U.S. House of Representatives' Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States (the "KKK Hearings") of 1871, Nelson recounted the events of Friday, October 1, 1869, that precipitated his own flight from the county. Nelson spoke about a store run by a Jew where Nelson obtained goods on credit and the storekeeper

allowed him "to go around in the store" including behind the counter.⁶⁷ Nelson told the investigators that while he was in the store, Billy Coker stormed in with a pistol in his hand. Coker approached the storekeeper, struck him over the head with the pistol, and threatened "if he said one word he would blow his damned brains out." Coker demanded that Nelson serve as a witness on behalf of Coker by stating that "the Jew had insulted him" and had drawn a gun when Coker entered the store. Coker threatened Nelson that, if he did not comply, Coker would blow Nelson's "God damned brains out." Coker then went around outside to the back of the shop where liquor was stored. As he left, Coker said to the storekeeper, "Good evening to you, God damn you; I will get you before the night is out." Nelson encountered Coker later that evening and Coker warned Nelson not to tell anyone that he had seen Coker. Coker declared that he was "going to kill that God damned rascal to-night."⁶⁸

Congressional Reconstruction Comes to Florida

With their triumph in the November 1866 midterm elections, "Radical" Republicans in Congress wrested Reconstruction policy away from Andrew Johnson. Southern white communities were stunned by the new Reconstruction laws and policies and particularly shocked by the requirement of black male suffrage. Encouraged by Andrew Johnson's example and preconditioned by their prewar states rights faith, white conservative Democrats in the region considered Congress' imposition of military control over their government and courts outrageous. The conservatives debated among themselves whether to participate in or boycott the new political system. Initially, some Jackson County whites, resigned to black suffrage, sought to win the confidence of blacks in order to advance their own interests at upcoming elections and even encouraged blacks to challenge potential Republican candidates from among the bureau agents and the white, southern-born "renegades."⁶⁹ To the dismay of the conservatives, however, the black population, which included 60 percent of those registered to vote for constitutional convention delegates in late 1867, aligned itself with the Republican Party.⁷⁰ Further feeding white fears,

*Quincy's nineteenth-century courthouse.
(Courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection,
Florida State Archives, Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.)*

many blacks became active in secret Republican societies such as the moderate Lincoln Brotherhood and the more radical Union League.⁷¹ Bureau agent William Purman noted that the “rebels” were becoming “more desperate and reckless” as their “political fortunes are made more and more desperate by the legislation of Congress.”⁷²

Realizing that they would not gain black support, white conservatives sat out the elections for the constitutional convention. To their chagrin, William Purman was elected as a convention delegate. Twenty-seven years old and with no political experience, Purman immediately assumed a leadership role in the moderate Republican faction battling the radical Republican camp for control of the convention. After much wrangling and chicanery, the moderate Republicans drafted a new state constitution that extended equal rights to all men and guaranteed suffrage to all males over twenty-one years of age.⁷³ The new constitution was narrowly approved by a majority of Florida’s registered voters in May 1868 and representatives were elected for the state legislature and Congress. Jackson County whites were further astonished when Charles Hamilton was elected Florida’s first congressman to sit in Washington since 1861 and Purman was sent by Jackson County voters as senator to Florida’s legislature in Tallahassee. Hamilton easily won reelection for a full two-year term in December 1868 over a Democrat also from Jackson County. Manifesting the new political order, two of Jackson County’s three state legislators, including Emanuel Fortune, Timothy Thomas Fortune’s father, were black.⁷⁴ Black candidates also filled, through election or appointment, local offices such as sheriff and constable. Finlayson became county clerk, and John Quincy Dickinson, a Union army veteran who had arrived in Marianna in September 1868 to replace Purman as bureau agent, was appointed justice of the peace.⁷⁵ With this political revolution of 1868, white forbearance reached its limit.⁷⁶

The Jackson County Reign of Terror Begins

In the late 1860s, secretive, organized bands, known variously as regulators, redeemers, Young Men’s Democratic Clubs, the

Ku Klux Klan, or the Invisible Empire, employed terror to drive out or eliminate Republican activists, intimidate blacks from political expression, and seize political power for white, conservative Democrats across the South.⁷⁷ In areas where racial minorities were small and there was no real question of political dominance, little violence was involved. In places such as Jackson County where the black population was marginally larger than the white population, blood was shed freely. The Republican administration that had gained control of the political apparatus of the state in the 1868 elections was unable to stem the onslaught of violence. The very effective "Ku Klux" organization, with widespread white support, made it impossible for the government to bring perpetrators to justice.⁷⁸

The same Republican ascendancy that enabled Florida to be readmitted to the Union also enabled conservative whites to reassert their power. The attainment of almost all elected and appointed political posts in the state in the summer and fall 1868 elections by white Republicans, who had come from the North in the wake of the war, and by freedmen, galvanized white opposition.⁷⁹ Concomitantly, with regained statehood under Republican leadership, the Federal government removed most troops and diminished the role assigned to the bureau to primarily supervising education. Without Federal backing on the local level, the nascent Republican organizations were in no position to contest control of divided communities such as Jackson County. Republican officials including Finlayson, Dickinson, and Emanuel Fortune, elected officeholders like Hamilton and Purman, and supporters such as Fleishman were subjected to persecution by white vigilantes and soon feared for their lives.

The Jackson County conservatives were led by middle-class Confederate veterans from Marianna referred to sarcastically by Hamilton and Purman as "the chivalry." The acknowledged leaders were James Coker, a prominent merchant, and Colonel James McClellan, an attorney.⁸⁰ The acts of intimidation and violence were perpetrated by young Marianna men, including Coker's son, Billy, who were, in Purman's words "always full of whiskey and passion."⁸¹ Notorious hired assassins roamed the countryside and

Marianna. Many older citizens, prosperous landowners prior to the war, many of whom had remained Unionists after secession, did not participate in or approve of the conservatives' tactics yet were intimidated into silence.⁸² The regulators were determined to drive out the radicals who had stirred up blacks against their former masters and led them politically. Purman, who had replaced Hamilton as bureau agent in January 1868, was the particular target of conservative wrath.⁸³ No one, however, who openly sympathized with the Republicans, would be spared.⁸⁴

A shotgun blast on February 27, 1869, signaled the beginning of the ruthless effort to eliminate Republican leadership and to resubjugate the black population. As they walked home after 10 p.m. from a concert in the town, Purman and Finlayson were ambushed. Purman was shot through the neck and severely wounded. Finlayson was struck in the temple and killed instantly. Rumors spread that armed blacks loyal to Purman were gathering to sack the town in revenge. Purman later took credit for persuading his supporters to refrain from violence. Recovering from his wounds about five or six weeks later, he left Marianna on senate business and returned to Jackson County only once.⁸⁵ Even though the identity of the assassins was openly discussed in Marianna and testified to before Congress, no charges were brought against the gunmen.

Several murders of blacks and whites occurred in the following months. Emanuel Fortune fled with his family fearing for his life. Dickinson assumed Finlayson's county clerkship and was soon subjected to the conservatives' ire. Despite these events, quiet prevailed during the spring and summer of 1869. Litigants, including Fleishman, pursued and defended claims. The Altman Brothers firm continued to assume mortgages and receive assignment of deeds from various property holders.

Chaos Reigns

An unprecedented wave of violence swept over Jackson County in late September 1869 as murder became a regular occurrence. With Purman now avoiding Jackson County in fear for his life and Hamilton away in Washington, the regulators next

targeted Calvin Rogers, a freedman who had been elected constable. On Tuesday morning, September 28, black women, children, and men including Rogers were ambushed en route to a picnic outside Marianna. Rogers was wounded and another man and a two-year old boy were shot to death.⁸⁶

After hearing about the shooting, Dickinson, serving as justice of the peace, summoned a grand jury to investigate. A fruitless day and night were spent following tracks in the countryside. Dickinson identified a suspect in a letter he sent to Hamilton that Thursday, but the grand jury ultimately returned a verdict of "shot by unknown." This verdict, the same determination reached by the grand jury investigating the Finlayson and Purman shootings, became a familiar refrain through the coming years. The evening following the picnic shootings, two men, one white and one black, hauling cotton in the countryside were ambushed and severely wounded. Anarchy ensued.⁸⁷

A rumor spread that on the day of the picnic murders Fleishman had advised blacks gathered at his store to avenge the slayings by murdering whites. Local newspapers carried different versions of the story. The anonymous author of a letter from Jackson County claimed that "Samuel Fleishman, a German, and an old citizen of the county, it seems . . . remarked publicly in the streets of Marianna, that six citizens of the county, (naming them) should be killed in retaliation."⁸⁸ The following week in the Tallahassee *Weekly Floridian*, "an influential citizen in Marianna" wrote that Fleishman, "an Israelite," found in the deaths at the picnic "an opportunity of stirring up strife and animosity between the two races, and he proclaimed on the public streets that the Republicans should kill the whites or rebs wherever they found them, whether guilty or innocent, and that they should kill several of our most prominent and quiet citizens, naming T. White, Judge Bush and others; and he has told colored people if they desired to kill the rebs or burn them up they could get powder and shot from him free of cost."⁸⁹ To add further confusion, Jacksonville's *Florida Union* did not mention Fleishman, but asserted that "the colored people swore then that three of the best citizens in Marianna should be killed in retaliation."⁹⁰

Whether or not Fleishman made the inflammatory statement,⁹¹ the damage to his standing in the community was irreparable and subsequent events made his living peacefully in Marianna impossible. On Friday, October 1, the same day Nelson suggested that Billy Coker assaulted and threatened Fleishman, more blood was shed. That afternoon, the grand jury investigating the picnic murders returned its empty verdict. About 9 p.m., James Coker and James McClellan were talking on the porch of the hotel in the Marianna town square. Between them sat McClellan's teenage daughter, Maggie. Gunshots burst from the darkness. Maggie was killed and her father wounded in the arm. James McClellan claimed he recognized the voice of Constable Calvin Rogers, the intended target of the picnic ambush earlier that week, commanding "fire." Nelson, visiting friends nearby, heard the gunshots and assumed that Billy Coker had murdered the storekeeper.⁹²

Saturday morning, Dickinson found the streets patrolled by fifty to sixty armed men, including Billy Coker and his friends. When Calvin Rogers was spotted in town that morning, the "rebel yell" reverberated. Throughout the day, more armed white men arrived from across the county. Marianna was now in the hands of "drunk and desperate" young men while "the elder and better men were afraid, and mostly kept out of sight."⁹³ Dickinson vainly attempted to maintain the rule of law, calling for inquests into the mounting number of murders. On Sunday night, Dickinson wrote to Hamilton that "terror reigns" and Marianna had become "a small hell on earth."⁹⁴ Small groups of white men from town rode out that night to isolated homesteads to terrorize African American Republicans.⁹⁵

Now it was Fleishman's turn. On Monday afternoon, Fleishman was visited at home by two prominent white citizens who informed him that James Coker, William Barnes (Hamilton's Democratic opponent for Congress in 1868), and others wished to see him. Fleishman thereupon proceeded to Coker's store and awaited Barnes' appearance. When it was nearly dark, Coker told Fleishman to leave and return the next day. On Tuesday morning, Fleishman found more than twenty "persons of influence in the

County assembled" at Coker's store, including Fleishman's clerk, Wilbur Jenkins. Coker stated that this group "represented the whole community and that it was the general desire of the community that I should leave for the good of said community." Fleishman was informed that "they were confident" that if he remained, he "should be killed on account of certain expressions made by [Fleishman] (as alleged) on Tuesday last." The committee told Fleishman that if he were killed, they feared "twenty or thirty others might be killed on account of it and to save bloodshed" he should leave.⁹⁶

Fleishman replied "that my business was such that it would damage me twenty thousand dollars" to depart. He continued: "if I had committed a crime I was willing to be tried and punished for it, but that it was impossible to arrange my business to leave before January 1st 1870. That I would rather die than leave." The committee insisted that "they had no desire to take my life, but on the contrary wished to save it and to do the best thing they could for the safety of the community." Fleishman, first given two hours to make arrangements and depart, successfully argued for a reprieve until 5 p.m. and then until sundown at which time the committee "would come after me and take me away."⁹⁷

After the meeting, Fleishman sought Dickinson, "the only officer of the law, in the town that I know of." Aware that Dickinson was powerless against the regulators, Fleishman had decided to establish a record of the events that occurred that day that foreshadowed the harm that might come to him. Fleishman "solemnly protested against the outrage threatened" and dictated a statement that Dickinson composed as an affidavit Fleishman swore to and signed.⁹⁸ At 4 p.m., three hours after signing the affidavit, Fleishman returned to Dickinson and dictated a second, shorter document. Fleishman reported that around 3 p.m., James Coker came to Altman Brothers and "asked for all the Guns and Pistols I had in the store . . . for the men in defense of the town during the present excitement." Coker stated that Fleishman's property would be returned, and Coker would be responsible. Jenkins handed the key to Coker who took eight guns, eleven pistols, powder, shot and caps. Fleishman added that there were about

The second affidavit "sworn and subscribed" by Samuel Fleishman to John Q. Dickinson shortly before Fleishman's expulsion on October 5, 1869. (Courtesy of the Deanne and Arnold Kaplan Collection of Early American Judaica.)

eleven thousand or twelve thousand dollars worth of goods in his store.⁹⁹

Fleishman did not meet the departure deadline. After 9 p.m., four men came to his lodging and forcefully took him about twenty-five miles to the Georgia border.¹⁰⁰ Now Fleishman began a weeklong, one hundred and fifty mile circular walk through the rural countryside and small towns of the Florida-Georgia border area with the ultimate aim of returning to his home and family despite the risk of death. Fleishman visited the places he had come to know in twenty years, first as a peddler, then as a merchant.

Fleishman arrived first in Bainbridge. The largest town in the rural area across the Georgia border from Jackson County, Bainbridge was an obvious place for Fleishman to seek food and shelter and to devise a plan of action. Fleishman had traveled to Bainbridge frequently to meet the train to Savannah en route to New York. The city also had a relatively large Jewish community and Fleishman may have hoped to find assistance from acquaintances. He was too well known, however, to travel unnoticed and encountered Louis Gamble, a Marianna merchant. Fleishman informed Gamble that he intended to go to Quincy and then back to Marianna in a few days.¹⁰¹ Gamble returned to Marianna and reported this information.

Fleishman next traveled the twenty-seven miles to his former home in Quincy, Florida, where he was certain to find his brother, Philip, or the other Fleishman men. None of them, however, appear in any of the accounts of Fleishman's last days. Fleishman soon left for Tallahassee. Perhaps as a Republican he hoped to find help from officials in the capital. On Saturday, October 9, Fleishman began the final seventy-five mile return to Marianna.¹⁰²

While Fleishman was wandering about the countryside, the swiftly spreading rumor regarding Fleishman's words grew more outrageous and inflammatory with each retelling, cementing the perception of Fleishman as a danger to the white community. The *Weekly Floridian* correspondent even held Fleishman responsible for the murder of Maggie McClellan and the wounding of her father. He was portrayed as "more dangerous to the peace of society than the midnight assassin." The paper's editors concluded that

the citizens of Marianna were justifiably incensed and "to have compassed his death then and there, though bad policy, would have been no more than he deserved."¹⁰³

The next eyewitness report of Fleishman's travels came from Chattahoochee, a Florida village along the Apalachicola River midway between Quincy and Marianna, where Fleishman visited Colonel Malachi Martin, warden of the state prison. In his testimony at the KKK Hearings two years later, Martin stated that Fleishman had asked for protection. Martin testified that he advised Fleishman not to go to Marianna, but Fleishman replied that "he was compelled to go; that all he had in the world was there; that he had a large amount out; that he had trusted the planters a great deal . . . they would gather their crop and sell it, and he would not be able to collect his money unless he was there; that his family were there; that his store and stock of goods and all his interests were there and he must go back." Martin and Fleishman then went down to the village of Chattahoochee where they asked for news from Jackson County. Communication had stopped, and no information could be obtained. They heard that "every one was afraid to go there, and no person would go except some one who supposed he would be safe, who was one of the white people who belonged to the party there . . . no one who was a republican would go." Despite this warning, Fleishman set off on foot on the remaining twenty-four miles to Marianna.¹⁰⁴

As evidenced by newspaper accounts and Dickinson's retelling of Gamble's encounter, Fleishman's travel was being monitored. According to Tallahassee's *Weekly Floridian*, with news of Fleishman's return, "fresh alarm was excited among the law-abiding citizens." He had returned "for no good purpose and would be a fire-brand in their midst."¹⁰⁵ Sympathizers in Gadsden County likely informed the Marianna regulators of Fleishman's progress as he walked from Quincy through Chattahoochee to Marianna. With sufficient notice to intercept Fleishman in the countryside, the assassin set the ambush.¹⁰⁶

Martin testified that en route from Chattahoochee to Marianna, Fleishman encountered a former employee named Sims, a white conservative, who warned Fleishman that if he

returned to Marianna he would be murdered. Sims offered Fleishman a ride in his buggy back to Chattahoochee, whereupon Fleishman insisted that he would return to Marianna. Fleishman continued his journey, and Sims, the last person to report seeing Fleishman alive, proceeded to Chattahoochee. About one-half mile from the spot where Fleishman encountered Sims, Fleishman's body was found "with several wounds."¹⁰⁷

Beyond the fact that Fleishman had been shot, the circumstances of Fleishman's murder are elusive. On Monday night, October 11, Dickinson wrote in his diary that a dead white man had been found lying in the road. The next morning, he added, he had learned that the man was Fleishman. Without citing a source, Dickinson wrote that Fleishman had been walking from Chattahoochee and identified the property where the body was found. Dickinson held an inquest and the grand jury promptly returned the familiar verdict of "killed by unknown, &c." Dickinson also reported that an armed party had set out from Marianna that same morning, and he had been warned not to retrieve Fleishman's remains. On Wednesday morning, October 13, Dickinson recorded that the body had been found.¹⁰⁸

Immediately after the murder, a strange and disturbing report came from the *Marianna Courier*. As the journal of Jackson County's opponents of Republicanism, and as a vigorous promoter of the conservative cause, the *Courier* could be depended on to report rumors, impugn the reputation of victims, and decry the assignment of political motivations to local crime.¹⁰⁹ Predictably, the *Courier* absolved Marianna's conservatives from accusations of premeditated murder of Fleishman. According to the *Courier*, "on his way to this place, on foot, [Fleishman] was overtaken by some unknown person thirteen or fourteen miles from this place and murdered and robbed." The *Courier*, in contrast with the other sources, informed its readers, "The perpetrator of this foul deed had walked in company with Mr. F. for over a mile and a half before committing the deed . . . There is no clue to his detection."¹¹⁰ The *Courier* steered its audience to the conclusion that the motive for the murder was robbery committed by someone known to Fleishman.¹¹¹

*The old Chattahoochee penitentiary, on the Apalachicola River.
Fleishman was last seen alive on the road passing the penitentiary.
This old drawing predates Fleishman's time.
(Courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection,
Florida State Archives, Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.)*

Two months after the initial inquest, the Jackson County grand jury reconvened to consider Fleishman's affidavits. At the bottom of the second affidavit the grand jury's foreman wrote, "We the Grand Jury have examined diligently into the within, [sic] and cannot find it A Case of Kidnapping."¹¹² The criminal file concerning Fleishman was closed. The ten thousand dollar reward offered by Governor Harrison Reed for the arrest and conviction of Fleishman's murderer went unclaimed. As with almost all other murders of Republicans in Jackson County during Reconstruction,

no arrest, let alone conviction, was ever made. The *Weekly Floridian* summed up the prevailing feeling among the white community of the Florida Panhandle about Fleishman's murder. Although regretting the murder "by rash and indiscreet persons upon their own responsibility," the editor commented that "when a man goes about the country endeavoring to incite a restless element to insurrection and bloodshed," he "takes his life into his own hands."¹¹³

Aftermath

The persecution of Republican leaders and politically active blacks in Jackson County intensified after Fleishman's murder. During the summer of 1870, Congressman Hamilton and State Senator Purman visited Marianna, but were compelled to arrange an escort of leading older citizens to escape the county alive. Neither returned. With the April 1871 murder of John Q. Dickinson, "the last plank that held together the republican party" in Jackson County, the Marianna regulators had achieved their goal of seizing control of county government.¹¹⁴ By late 1871, the speaker of the Florida House of Assembly reported that the Republican Party had no power in Jackson County. The Republican governor acceded to the dictates of the Jackson County population in selecting local officials since, the governor feared, Republicans would be killed "as fast as they could be appointed."¹¹⁵

During the turmoil that began with the 1868 election season and lasted through 1871, at least 166 people, mostly black, were murdered in Jackson County. In contrast, the second most violence-plagued county in Florida during this period counted no more than twenty murders.¹¹⁶ Adjacent Gadsden County reported no political killings during this time.¹¹⁷ James Coker and James McClellan, widely acknowledged as the leaders who directed the violent and decisive campaign to retake Jackson County from the Republicans, never stood trial for the crimes committed in Marianna. Instead, Coker remained in business as a merchant and storeowner and McClellan continued his law practice, even being elected to Florida's state assembly.¹¹⁸

Sophia Fleishman and her six children left for New York soon after her husband's murder.¹¹⁹ Because the Jackson County estate and probate records do not include any material relating to the Fleishmans, it is not known whether Sophia or the Altman firm were able to recover the thousands of dollars worth of merchandise in the store at the time of Fleishman's expulsion.¹²⁰ The Altmans maintained a business presence in Marianna for a time, receiving more mortgages in December 1869, and participated in property transactions there as late as the mid-1880s. The last remaining litigation involving Fleishman, an action brought by Wilbur Jenkins, was dismissed in April 1870.¹²¹ Fleishman's burial place has not been located.

The Issue of Antisemitism

While the extent of antisemitism in the nineteenth-century South is the subject of dispute among historians, most scholars have concluded that Jews were largely accepted in southern society, particularly in contrast with the North. In fact, religious intolerance does not appear to be a significant factor in Fleishman's murder. While Fleishman's Jewish identity was frequently mentioned, the only example in print of the invocation of ethnic slurs or traditional antisemitic imagery to describe him came when the *Weekly Floridian's* correspondent explained that Fleishman's acquaintances in Marianna supposed that he ingratiated himself with black customers because "he would sell his soul to Satan for money."¹²² At most, however, negative attitudes toward Jews may have eased the process in the minds of the Marianna conservatives toward rationalizing their persecution of Fleishman. Although he had been subject to harassment for at least two years, Fleishman was expelled and murdered only after dissemination of the rumor of his incendiary statement during the chaos of October 1869.¹²³ In the perception of the regulators, Fleishman's unforgivable crime was not his Jewish identity but the alleged incitement of racial hatred and bloodshed.¹²⁴

Nor did other Jews expect an antisemitic backlash following Fleishman's murder. Whereas Fleishman's death precipitated the departure of his wife, children, and brother from Florida, other

*From the Weekly
Floridian (Tallahassee),
November 9, 1869.
The same notice also ap-
peared on November 16
and November 23.
(Courtesy of Daniel
Weinfeld.)*

Jews in the area did not feel compelled to leave.¹²⁵ Nor did Fleishman's fate forestall growth of a Jewish community in Marianna and Quincy. Just over a decade after Fleishman's murder, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations reported that approximately thirty Jews lived in Marianna and seventy-five in Quincy.¹²⁶ In 1879, Marianna elected Henry Brash mayor, reportedly the first Jew to attain such an office in Florida.

Conclusion

While Fleishman's fate does not signal an eruption of southern antisemitism, his story does challenge certain assumptions about the activities of southern Jews. Scholars have argued that the price Jews paid for social acceptance and economic opportunity was silence or even complicity with the racist conventions of southern society. In this view, such abdication of moral standards with respect to the condition of African Americans was certainly ironic for a community that had come to America, in part, to find freedom from European persecution. Fleishman's story, however, complicates this compliant depiction of southern Jewish society.

Fleishman's business relationship with the local black community, although at odds with prevailing social mores, was not exceptional. Many Jewish merchants did business with blacks and treated them with greater consideration than the white community generally.¹²⁷ Jewish peddlers had been notorious for trading with slaves before the war. Many would continue to trade with their newly freed customers after emancipation. With the coming of the Civil War, Fleishman departed from the usual story, however, by evading service in the Confederate military. Upon his return, he associated with Republican officials.¹²⁸ Fleishman had to be aware that such behavior risked incurring the wrath of the white community.

Nor were Fleishman's nonconformist behavior and his fate unique among southern Jews during Reconstruction. In October 1871, M. H. Lucy, a Jewish merchant, was murdered in Alachua County, Florida. Like Fleishman, Lucy was known for having good relations with local blacks and for receiving "a great deal of

trade" from the black community. Also like Fleishman, Lucy was accused of being a Republican, although he was not politically active.¹²⁹ A year prior to Fleishman's murder, S. Bierfield, a Russian Jewish immigrant, was murdered in Franklin, Tennessee, also under circumstances very similar to Fleishman's murder. Isaac Mayer Wise's *The Israelite*, published in Cincinnati, reported that Bierfield, a store owner in the central Tennessee town, was known as a Republican, for being friendly with blacks, employing them, and having a large number of black customers. Bierfield and his African American clerk were attacked and brutally slain by the Ku Klux Klan.¹³⁰

Fleishman, like Lucy and Bierfield, was not constrained by public mores from trading with African Americans and associating with Republican officials. This willingness to flaunt the racial and political conventions that governed conservative white society suggests that Fleishman was motivated by more than just economic opportunity in his interactions with African Americans. Refusing to serve the Confederacy, taking an unpopular political stand, treating blacks fairly and acknowledging, at least on some level higher than his white contemporaries, their rights, Fleishman defied the compliant depiction of nineteenth-century southern Jews.

The exact circumstances of Fleishman's death will always remain murky. In contrast with the accounts of historians, the various sources combine to raise questions about whether Fleishman ever called upon blacks to murder whites in revenge and even suggest he may have been the victim of baseless rumor. Nevertheless, the perception that Fleishman did make such an incendiary speech focused the ire of the white community during the anarchic week in early October 1869. Driven by a mix of motivations, perhaps even personal or economic, Fleishman's persecutors seized the convenient opportunity to rid themselves of an individual whom some had harassed before and who was an irritant to many. Thus, rather than just the story of an isolated individual, the life of Samuel Fleishman provides an example of a Jewish southerner who acted courageously, perhaps recklessly, by rising

above the standards of conventional behavior and who paid tragically for such conduct.

NOTES

¹ William Watson Davis, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* (Gainesville, FL, 1964), 576; J. Randall Stanley, *History of Jackson County*, (Jackson County, FL, 1950), 210–211; Ralph L. Peek, “Lawlessness in Florida, 1868–1871,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 40 (1961): 177, 179–181; Stanley Horn, *Invisible Empire* (New York, 1973), 268–269; Jerrill H. Shofner, *Jackson County, Florida – A History* (Jackson County, 1985), 285–286. Samuel Proctor relied on Davis and Stanley for his account of Fleishman. Samuel Proctor, “Pioneer Jewish Settlement in Florida, 1764–1900,” *Proceedings of the Conference on the Writing of Regional History of the South* (New York, 1956), 99–101.

² Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear* (Athens, GA, 2001), xv, 1.

³ Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820–1914* (New York, 1994), 1; Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830–1914* (Philadelphia, 1984), 18.

⁴ The 1850 Census listed Fleishman as twenty-eight years old while in the 1860 Census he was described as thirty-five years old. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Gadsden County, Florida; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Jackson County, Florida.

⁵ Stephen Birmingham, *Our Crowd: The Great Jewish Families of New York* (New York, 1967), 32.

⁶ Barkai, *Branching Out*, 46.

⁷ Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 19–21; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 45. Barkai stresses that the peddling experience was not typical for this generation but has overshadowed other economic activity in historical association because of the well-known families that started out in peddling. Most Jews toiled in urban ghettos or operated wholesale or retail stores in towns across the country.

⁸ Thomas D. Clark, “The Post Civil-War Economy in the South,” in *Jews in the South*, ed. Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson, (Baton Rouge, 1973), 166.

⁹ Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 22; Webb, *Fight Against Fear*, 9–10; Clive Webb, “Jewish Merchants and Black Customers,” *Southern Jewish History* 2 (1999): 58; Louis Schmier, “Jews and Gentiles in a South Georgia Town,” in *Jews of the South*, ed. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier with Malcolm Stern (Macon, GA, 1984), 3. For southern bigotry toward Catholics, see Stephen J. Whitfield, “Jews and Other Southerners,” in *Turn to the South*, ed. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville, 1979), 86.

¹⁰ Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia, SC, 2000), 31; Clark, “Post Civil-War Economy,” 166.

¹¹ Barkai, *Branching Out*, 63; Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," in *Jews in the South*, 103-104. See also Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 62.

¹² David S. Avant, *Illustrated Index, J. Randall Stanley's History of Gadsden County* (Tallahassee, 1985), 58-59. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Quincy became home to a number of prominent Jewish large leaf shade tobacco growers. Rachel B. Heimovics and Marcia Zerivitz, *The Florida Jewish Heritage Trail* (Tallahassee, 2000), 6.

¹³ While the 1850 United States Census lists Philip as twenty years old, the 1860 United States Census and his 1901 New York City death certificate state that he was born in 1828. Seventh Census, 1850, Gadsden County; Eighth Census, 1860, Gadsden County.

¹⁴ Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida* (Coral Gables, 1971), 182. Significant cotton cultivation also expanded into pockets of north-central Florida.

¹⁵ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 66.

¹⁶ Tebeau, *History*, 184.

¹⁷ Yulee was born into a Sephardic family and became nationally known as an advocate of southern states rights. Yulee helped bring statehood to Florida by serving as a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1838 and then as territorial delegate to Congress from 1841 to 1845. He did not actively participate in the Confederacy and instead devoted the rest of his life to promoting railroad ventures. Chris Monaco, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier: Moses Elias Levy's Pilgrimage Plantation," *Southern Jewish History*, 5 (2002): 103-140; and Heimovics and Zerivitz, *Florida Jewish Heritage Trail*, 10; Leon Huhner, "David L. Yulee, Florida's First Senator," in *Jews in the South*, 52-79.

¹⁸ Samuel Proctor, "Foreword" to *Index to Florida Jewish History in the American Israelite 1854-1900*, by Yael Herbsman (Gainesville, FL, 1992), ix.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Even in towns, the Jewish population was miniscule. H. Loewenthal of Macon, Georgia, visited Tallahassee as a *mohel* and reported finding fifteen Jews out of a total population of about 3,500. *The Israelite*, December 21, 1860, 198.

²⁰ Gladys Friedman Paulin, "Jewish Genealogical Research in Florida," *Avotaynu* 16 (fall 2000): 9. The Jews of Quincy buried their dead in Bainbridge, Georgia, until consecrating their own cemetery in the 1930s.

²¹ Clark, "Post Civil-War Economy," 161-162.

²² Shofner, *Jackson County*, 69-70.

²³ *Ibid.*, 128-129.

²⁴ Glen Nobles, *Pioneers of Jackson County* (Jackson County, 2000).

²⁵ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 162-163.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 185, 188-190; U.S. Congress Joint Select Committee on the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States, [commonly referred to as the Ku Klux Klan Hearings] 42nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1872, House Report 22, v. 13, 283 (hereafter cited as U.S. House Report No. 22.)

²⁷ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 136-137.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

²⁹ The 1860 U.S. Census recorded Sophia as being twenty-five years old while the 1880 U.S. Census listed her birth year as 1838. Eighth Census, 1860, Jackson County; Tenth Census, 1880, New York, New York.

³⁰ Marlene Womack, "Out of the Past: Founders envisioned St. Andrews a bustling seaport," [Panama City, FL] *News Herald*, July 12, 1991, 5B. In 1927 St. Andrews was annexed by Panama City.

³¹ Jackson County Property Records, microfilm, Florida State Archives. Records of County Clerk's Office, Jackson County Courthouse, Marianna, Florida. In 1860, H. Loewenthal mentioned finding "Israelites" in, among other places, Campbellton, but does not list names. *The Israelite*, December 21, 1860, 198.

³² Passenger manifests from *New York Times* show that on February 17, 1858, "P. M. Fleishman, S. Fleishman and lady" arrived from Savannah. On July 16, 1858, "Mrs. S. Fleishman and child" and "F. A. Fleishman" sailed for Savannah. On September 13, 1858, "Saml. Fleishman and servant" left New York for Savannah.

³³ H. Loewenthal, in his capacity as *mohel*, called upon the family of Ferdinand Fleishman. Loewenthal wrote that he had "never met with a more liberal set of men and women than I found in those I there became acquainted with." *The Israelite*, December 21, 1860, 198. Ferdinand had married Fannie Davis, presumably a sister of S. M. Davis of Quincy, in Gadsden County, in November 1859.

³⁴ Between 1850 and 1860, the Strauss brothers and Solomon Levi had disappeared from Gadsden but were replaced by Isaac M. R. Rosenthal, age forty-two, described as a merchant from Prussia, and S. M. Davis, age twenty-two, a clerk from Hessia. Seventh Census, 1850, Gadsden County; Eighth Census, 1860, Gadsden County. In neighboring Jackson County, Samuel and his family were joined by German-born Simon Straus, a watchmaker, and two German-born salesmen, Samuel Hofheimer and Edward Opperheimer. Eighth Census, 1860, Jackson County.

³⁵ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 235.

³⁶ Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 162. The Confederacy mobilized between 75 and 85 percent of the available white male population of draft age. Thousands more participated in vital agricultural and industrial work or were exempt from service because of physical disabilities. Gary Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 28, 34.

³⁷ Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 49, 50.

³⁸ Philip enlisted with Company B of the Fifth Florida Cavalry in Quincy on March 10, 1863, and was discharged the same day after substituting A. D. McDonald. David W. Hartman and David Coles, comps., *Biographical Rosters of Florida's Confederate and Union Soldiers 1861-1865*, IV (Wilmington, NC, 1995), 1628, 1630. Simon Fleishman, who was living with Philip in 1860, enlisted in Company B of the Sixth Florida Infantry as a private in March 1862. Benjamin A. Fleishman, also of Quincy, enlisted as a private in the same company in June 1862. Both Simon and Benjamin were cited for distinguished service. Simon was captured at Missionary Ridge in November 1863 and was confined in the Union prison at Rock Island, Illinois, until he swore an oath of allegiance in June 1865. Benjamin Fleishman was wounded at Chickamauga, Georgia, in September 1863 and was captured at

Nashville in December 1864. Benjamin was confined in the Union prison at Camp Chase, Ohio, until he was released after swearing allegiance in May 1865. *Ibid.*, II, 592; Civil War Service Records. Although not appearing in the *Biographical Rosters*, Ferdinand Fleishman enlisted in Company C of the 6th Infantry Regiment and provided a substitute. National Park Service, Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System, <http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss> (accessed by D. Weinfeld on July 15, 2005).

³⁹ Charles M. Hamilton wrote that Fleishman had left the South to escape conscription. C. M. Hamilton to A. H. Jackson, May 31, 1867; Records of the Assistant Commissioner and Subordinate field offices for the State of Florida, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (BRF&AL) 1865-1872 (microform), Department of Special Collections, Smathers Library, University of Florida, Gainesville.

⁴⁰ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 225.

⁴¹ For a description of how Jewish mothers and sisters encouraged their husbands and brothers to fight for the Confederacy, see Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 50.

⁴² Ferdinand Fleishman's life ended tragically. From New York, he went to Cincinnati. In July 1864, the twenty-eight year old's body was found in his boarding house with a bullet hole in his head and a pistol in his hand. He had left a note for an acquaintance instructing him to find \$31 in his pants pocket and to inform his wife, Fannie. *The Israelite* reported that Ferdinand "was suffering from a depression of spirit, induced partly by the expected arrival of his wife and four children from Quincey [*sic*], Florida, where he resided and owned considerable property, and partly by his cold reception on his arrival in New York, by those whose duty and pleasure it should have been to give him succor and extend him the warm hand of friendship in this his hour of adversity." *The Israelite*, July 22, 1864, 22.

⁴³ Hyman Herzberg, a young Georgia merchant, paid for a substitute and twice made the arduous, dangerous journey by land across the picket lines to the North. In 1863 on his second trip, he brought his wife and child along to stay with his parents in Philadelphia. Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews 1775-1865*, III (New York, 1974), 120-121, 125-132.

⁴⁴ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 230, 236.

⁴⁵ Jerrill H. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (Gainesville, FL, 1974), 2.

⁴⁶ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 246.

⁴⁷ Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet*, 19, 25. In addition to the fifteen thousand Floridians who served in the Confederate army, about twelve hundred whites and one thousand blacks served in the Union forces.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 25, 29.

⁴⁹ Eric Foner, *Reconstruction* (New York, 1990), 68-69.

⁵⁰ Hamilton, a Pennsylvania native, had been wounded and captured by the Confederates at Fredericksburg. Robert B. Hamilton, Jr., "Hamiltons of Pine Creek, Pennsylvania." Typescript in possession of the Lycoming County (Pennsylvania) Historical Society.

⁵¹ Hamilton to J. L. McHenry, April 30, 1866, Records, Florida, BRF&AL. In February 1867, Purman wrote that in the previous ten months he had delivered forty-six public speeches to freedmen. W. J. Purman to E. C. Woodruff, February 28, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁵² After Hamilton established the practice of written labor contracts, the planters, in league with local merchants, undermined this gain by extending credit to the freedmen and encouraging them to overdraw their accounts. Hamilton to Jackson, August 31, 1867; Hamilton to Jackson, September 30, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁵³ Hamilton to Jackson March 31, 1867; Hamilton to Jackson, July 31, 1867; Hamilton to Jackson December 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁵⁴ Purman to Woodruff, February 28, 1867; Hamilton to Jackson, May 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL. Both men observed that this hostile attitude toward them was principally due to unforgiving "female influence."

⁵⁵ Hamilton to C. Munde, June 24, 1866, Records, Florida, BRF&AL. During a meeting at Campbellton, a hotbed of rebel sentiment that the agents referred to as "Camp Hell-ton," Hamilton believed he had narrowly escaped an attempt on his life. Purman to Jackson, September 9, 1867; Hamilton to Jackson, July 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁵⁶ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 266-267. After Florida was reconstituted as a state in 1868, Finlayson, who had received various bureau appointments, substituted as acting bureau agent when Purman was away on leave.

⁵⁷ Hamilton had married Martha M. Finlayson in 1869 shortly after her brother's murder. Charles M. Hamilton, Pension File, National Archives. Purman married Martha's sister, Leodora, in 1871. Purman to Jessie Hamilton Garverich, December 15, 1927, in Hamilton, "Hamiltons of Pine Creek, Pennsylvania."

⁵⁸ John Q. Dickinson, Affidavit of Samuel Fleishman, Deanne and Arnold Kaplan Collection of Early American Judaica. The New York City Directories of 1868-1869 and 1869-1870 listed Samuel Fleischman [*sic*], first under "drygoods" and then "merchant," with a business address at the Altman store at 39 Third Avenue. The latter directory listed a residential address for Fleishman at the home of his widowed mother-in-law, Celia, at 252 East Tenth Street.

⁵⁹ Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet*, 128.

⁶⁰ Tenth Census, 1880, New York, New York.

⁶¹ Records of County Clerk's Office, Jackson County Courthouse, Marianna, Florida. Early in 1867, Samuel even assigned a property deed to his mother-in-law.

⁶² Timothy Thomas Fortune, *New York Age*, August 21, 1913. Fortune's memory was confused since he actually referred to "the Benjamin Fleishmans." While Benjamin Fleishman of Quincy did have business in Marianna and served briefly as Jackson County treasurer, there is no evidence that he had a store in Marianna during the time that the Fortunes lived there. Fortune may have remembered the name of Samuel's son, Benjamin, who was about the same age as Fortune. Emanuel Fortune was closely aligned with Hamilton and Purman, and Timothy would benefit from Purman's patronage early in his career. William J. Simmons, *Men of Mark, Eminent, Progressive and Rising* (Cleveland, 1887), 786. See

also, U.S. House Report, No. 22, 94. Fortune, in the view of historian Arnold Shankman, never forgot Fleishman and "throughout his lifetime he displayed considerable sympathy for the Jews . . . strongly condemned anti-Semitism and urged blacks to imitate the thrift, sobriety and patience of the Jews." Arnold Shankman, introduction to Jessie Fortune, "Among the Children of the East Side Jews (1905)," *Jewish Currents* 29 (February 1975). After mentioning Fleishman in his column, Fortune wrote that the Jews "have been from the first, and still are, very helpful to the colored people, especially in the farming districts, and have helped and are helping thousands of colored farmers to 'get by' from crop to crop." *New York Age*, August 21, 1913.

⁶³ Hamilton to Jackson, May 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁶⁴ Hamilton to Jackson, October 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁶⁵ Hamilton to Jackson, December 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁶⁶ Hamilton to Jackson, July 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁶⁷ When specifically asked if the storekeeper's name was "Fleischman," [sic] Nelson initially responded negatively. Later, however, he stated that he did not remember the man's name. The description of the store, the events following, and the casual relationship between the Jewish storekeeper and the young freedman, however, strongly suggest that Nelson could not be speaking about anyone else. It remains difficult, however, to reconcile Nelson's detailed account of the incident at the store with his response when asked if the "Jew" he referred to was "Fleischman." Nelson said "No sir; he had been killed there; I saw the blood on the road where they had killed him." Nelson's testimony about Fleishman's body, however, lacks credibility when considering that Nelson fled Jackson County a week before Fleishman's murder. U.S. House Report No. 22, 137.

⁶⁸ U.S. House Report No. 22, 137-138. Nelson was later asked whether any harm was done to the proprietor of the store. He answered that nothing was "done to him that year; they went into the store and took what they wanted." *Ibid.*, 140. Nelson almost certainly departed from Jackson County before the committee's meeting with Fleishman and his subsequent expulsion. John Q. Dickinson, "Memoranda of Occurrences relating to the assassinations in Jackson County September 28th 1869 & following," Kaplan Collection.

⁶⁹ Hamilton to Jackson, March 31, 1867; Purman to Jackson, October 1, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁷⁰ Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet*, 164, 168; Ralph L. Peek, "Military Reconstruction and the Growth of Anti-Negro Sentiment in Florida, 1867," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (1969): 386-387.

⁷¹ Peek, "Military Reconstruction," 383, 386.

⁷² Purman to Jackson, July 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL.

⁷³ Although the moderate Republican faction depended on black voters, it hoped to gain white conservative support by organizing the state's political structure in a manner designed to prevent blacks from gaining unfettered control of state government. The constitution drafted by the moderates granted enormous power to the governor including the appointment of nearly all county officials. The moderates were also more lenient than

the radicals in restoring suffrage to former rebels. The moderates' voter districting plan watered down the power of the large, mostly black, plantation belt counties in relation to the rest of the state. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet*, 185. Ultimately, the moderates' attempts to win conservative support failed. Shofner, *Jackson County*, 274. The moderate faction, however, did continue to attract considerable black support and consequently triumphed in the 1868 elections described below.

⁷⁴ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 273.

⁷⁵ John Quincy Dickinson of Benson, Vermont, graduated from Middlebury College and worked as a political reporter for Vermont newspapers until he volunteered for the war. At the close of the war he remained in west Florida and obtained the bureau appointment to replace Purman. Dickinson's impeccable character and likable personality impressed nearly all he met and he even gained the grudging respect of many of the conservative Democrats, although he was constantly baited and subjected to death threats.

⁷⁶ Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet*, 227.

⁷⁷ Ibid.; Ralph L. Peek, "Aftermath of Military Reconstruction, 1868-1869," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 43 (1964): 131-132. The Young Men's Democratic Clubs operating in Florida were commonly regarded as being equivalent to the Ku Klux Klan. Stanley Horn described Jackson County as "a veritable hotbed of Ku Kluxism." Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 266, 268.

⁷⁸ Peek, "Lawlessness in Florida, 1868-1871," 165. William Purman explained how the "Ku-Klux" would "combine to prevent the arrest of any man; they will spirit him away or protect and conceal him and make it dangerous for officers of the law to attempt to arrest him . . . but the men get away, or it they do stand trial, as they have done . . . and any one of these men is on the jury, he will hang the jury, and you cannot convict any of them." U.S. House Report No. 22, 153.

⁷⁹ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 280; Jerrill H. Shofner, "Custom, Law and History: The Enduring Influence of Florida's Black Code," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 55 (January 1977): 284-285; Peek, "Aftermath of Military Reconstruction," 125-128.

⁸⁰ Purman stated that Coker was considered the "generalissimo of Ku-Klux" in Jackson County. Purman also described McClellan as "a man of bad eminence as an agitator and instigator." U.S. House Report No. 22, 150. They were "secret leaders in all these lawless movements, instigators, at least . . ." Ibid., 147. Hamilton to Jackson, July 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL. New York newspapers carried identical reports regarding the outbreak of "mob violence" in Jackson County in which Coker was characterized as "leader of the mob" and "a wealthy and influential man." [New York] *Daily Tribune*, October 23, 1869, 2; [New York] *Evening Post* October 22, 1869, 4. Henry Reed of Marianna identified James Coker as a leader. U.S. House Report No. 22, 112-113. Nelson claimed that James Coker directed the violence from his store. Ibid., 144. Col. Malachi Martin also described Coker as financially supporting the suspected assailant of Finlayson and Purman. Ibid., 191.

⁸¹ Purman to Jackson, July 31, 1867, Records, Florida, BRF&AL. Reed identified Billy Coker as responsible for specific murders. U.S. House Report No. 22, 112-113.

⁸² U.S. House Report No. 22, 147.

⁸³ Davis, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, 567.

⁸⁴ Emanuel Fortune stated that the conservatives spoke of a northern-born Republican as a "damned yankee, who came here to rule us" and a southern-born Republican as a "damned scalawag . . . a traitor to his country and his race." U.S. House Report No. 22, 100.

⁸⁵ U.S. House Report No. 22, 144. According to Davis, the attempted assassination of Purman was "planned deliberately and carefully even down to minor details" and Finlayson was not the intended target. Davis, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, 567.

⁸⁶ Almost all information about the events that ensued comes from the testimony taken by the U.S. House of Representatives during the Ku Klux Klan Hearings. This investigation convened in Florida in November 1871. While the primary focus of the inquiry was to verify the existence of the KKK, the questioners devoted substantial time to the incidents in Jackson, the most violent and bloody county in Florida. Committee witnesses were primarily northern-born Republicans and freedmen. None of the Jackson County conservatives were called to testify although a few Democrats from neighboring counties did speak. Testifying more than two years after the events, many recollections were confused. Prominent figures, including Purman and Fortune, who had left prior to fall 1869, merely repeated secondhand reports from friends and associates. Invaluably, however, Marcellus Stearns of Quincy, speaker of Florida's House of Assembly and future governor, presented the committee with John Q. Dickinson's diary from September 28 through October 29, 1869, found with Dickinson's possessions after his murder. Stearns also delivered two affidavits handwritten by Dickinson and signed by Fleishman that had been found with Dickinson's effects. These documents appeared in the printed edition of the committee report. U.S. House Report No. 22, 78, 290.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁸⁸ [Bainbridge] *Southern Sun*, October 14, 1869, 2.

⁸⁹ [Tallahassee] *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869, 2.

⁹⁰ [Jacksonville] *Florida Union*, October 14, 1869, 1. The *Florida Union* refers to Fleishman as a "Frenchman."

⁹¹ Whether Fleishman said anything like the incendiary statement attributed to him is questionable. There are no accounts or testimony by witnesses to Fleishman's supposed statement. In his affidavit dictated to Dickinson, Fleishman described the expressions attributed to him as "alleged." Col. Malachi Martin, a former Union officer serving as warden of the state prison in Chattahoochee, testified at the KKK Hearings in late 1871 that Fleishman admitted that he had been "greatly excited" after the picnic murders and "had no doubt that he did use this language: 'If the colored people are to be murdered in this way, for every black man that is murdered there should be three white people killed.'" Martin testified that Fleishman said, "he [Fleishman] made use of that expression in the street; they alleged that he did so." U.S. House Report No. 22, 190, 194. Anonymous correspondents sent local newspapers second-hand accounts, that vary in their details and the outrageous-

ness of the statement alleged. Dickinson's diary and private letters to Hamilton, the only detailed narratives by someone verifiably present in Marianna during the events, do not refer to a statement by Fleishman. Although spending time with Fleishman on the afternoon of October 5 while writing Fleishman's affidavits, Dickinson did not mention any news related to Fleishman in his diary entry that evening. Of the five blacks interviewed at the KKK Hearings who had lived in Jackson County in 1869, only two mentioned Fleishman in their testimony and neither recounted any statement by Fleishman. Dickinson, *Fleishman Affidavits*, Kaplan Collection; U.S. House *Report No. 22*, 82.

⁹² Dickinson Memoranda, Kaplan Collection; Dickinson to Hamilton, October 3, 1869, U.S. House *Report No. 22*, 78, 290, 137.

⁹³ Dickinson Memoranda, Kaplan Collection.

⁹⁴ Dickinson to Hamilton, October 3, 1869, in U.S. House *Report No. 22*, 290.

⁹⁵ Dickinson Memoranda, Kaplan Collection.

⁹⁶ Dickinson, *Fleishman Affidavits*, Kaplan Collection.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* Shofner wrote that Fleishman "spoke back from the grave" through his affidavits. Shofner, *Jackson County*, 285.

⁹⁹ Earlier accounts of the Fleishman episode have de-emphasized the second affidavit, most likely because in the transcribed version contained in House *Report No. 22*, Fleishman reported that the seizure of the arms had taken place on Sunday, two days earlier. Ralph Peek, for example, considered the seizure of arms from Fleishman's store during the weekend as evidence of rising tensions in the town. Peek, "Lawlessness in Florida," 179. The mystery as to why Fleishman would return to Dickinson to swear out a second affidavit relating to an event that happened two days earlier is solved by examination of the original affidavit manuscript. According to the manuscript, Coker came to Fleishman's store to take away the weapons at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, two hours after Fleishman dictated the first affidavit. The Sunday date contained in House *Report No. 22* is a transcription error. The author thanks Arnold Kaplan for providing copies of the original manuscripts of the Dickinson Memoranda and the two Fleishman Affidavits.

¹⁰⁰ Dickinson to Hamilton, October 7, 1869, in U.S. House *Report No. 22*, 291. *Florida Union*, October 14, 1869, 2. The editor of *Weekly Floridian* and its Marianna correspondent commended the town's citizens for choosing to expel Fleishman by escorting him out of the state for his own protection, rather than killing him outright. *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869, 2.

¹⁰¹ Dickinson Memoranda, Kaplan Collection. *Southern Sun* does not mention Fleishman's visit to the town in its brief and hostile account of his flight and murder.

¹⁰² The conservative Bainbridge newspaper's anonymous correspondent from Jackson County stated that Fleishman said he was going to Tallahassee to have troops ordered to Marianna. *Southern Sun*, October 14, 1869. *Weekly Floridian*, however, which reported Fleishman's departure from that city, and which was also conservative and antagonistic to

Fleishman and Republicans, did not mention a troop request. *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869, 2.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ U.S. House Report No. 22, 189–190.

¹⁰⁵ *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869, 2. Not all Marianna citizens, however, may have been hostile to Fleishman. Jacksonville's Republican newspaper, *Florida Union*, remarked that "the more respectable portion of the citizens of Marianna deprecated the actions of the mob and offered to protect the tradesman if he would remain." *Florida Union*, October 14, 1869, 2.

¹⁰⁶ The *Southern Sun* correspondent reported that Fleishman "was fired upon by some unknown party and instantly killed" without citing a source. *Southern Sun*, October 14, 1869, 2.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. House Report No. 22, 190.

¹⁰⁸ Dickinson Memoranda, Kaplan Collection. Another conflict appears between Dickinson's manuscript Memoranda in the Kaplan Collection and the transcription contained in House Report No. 22. In the entry for October 13, the manuscript states "Fleishman found" while the transcription states "Fleishman buried." Peek relies on the transcription when writing that Fleishman's funeral was on Wednesday. Peek, "Lawlessness in Florida," 181.

¹⁰⁹ After the assassination attempt on Purman, rumors spread that Purman had admitted that the motivation for the shooting was personal, not political. Purman vigorously denied having made this statement and insisted that the ambush was a political attack. Shofner, *Jackson County*, 281; U.S. House Report No. 22, 155. After Dickinson's assassination, McClellan, among others, stated that Dickinson had been shot by a black man whose wife and Dickinson had been involved. U.S. House Report No. 22, 216. All Republicans, black and white, who testified, angrily refuted this claim.

¹¹⁰ [Marianna] *Courier*, quoted in [Pensacola] *West Floridian Commercial*, October 12, 1869. Unlike the other sources, the *Courier* placed Fleishman's murder on Saturday. This report was printed in the Pensacola newspaper on October 12, the day that Dickinson, in Marianna, confirmed that the dead man found had been identified as Fleishman. The *Courier* printed this information and telegraphed it to Pensacola within twenty-four hours of the murder.

¹¹¹ Some guesses can be hazarded about the identity of Fleishman's murderer. In his diary entry on the Saturday prior to Fleishman's death, Dickinson observed that Billy Coker had disappeared. After a grand jury determination had implicated Coker and two associates in the murder of three members of a black family earlier in the week, the men were suspected to have fled the county. While the next Sunday and Monday were quiet in Marianna, Fleishman was murdered on one of these days. Alternatively, the ambush could have been set by one of the gunmen employed by the Marianna regulators who were connected to the attack on Purman and Finlayson.

¹¹² Dickinson, Fleishman Affidavits, Kaplan Collection. Because of the absence of public space, the grand jury rented James Coker's store for its meeting. Shofner, *Jackson County*, 298.

¹¹³ *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869. Governor Reed's proclamation offering a ten thousand dollar reward for the arrest and conviction of the murderers of the picnic victims, Fleishman, Maggie McClellan, and John Finlayson appeared in the *Weekly Floridian* on three successive weeks beginning November 9, 1869.

¹¹⁴ U.S. House Report No. 22, 155.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 89. Because of divisions in the Florida Republican party, Hamilton failed to be renominated for Congress in 1870. Hamilton's friends, however, ensured that he received federal appointments as postmaster in Jacksonville and then customs collector in Key West. In 1873, Hamilton resigned his post because of deteriorating health and returned to the central Pennsylvania town of his birth. He died in October 1875 at the age of 34. Hamilton, "Hamiltons of Pine Creek, Pennsylvania," United States Government Printing Office, *Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774-1961* (Washington, DC, 1961), 996. Though he avoided Marianna, Purman remained very active in Florida state politics, serving two terms as congressman from March 1873 through March 1877. *New York Times*, August 15, 1928. With the effective end of the Republican Party in Florida and throughout the South after the 1876 election, Purman left for Pennsylvania before settling in Washington D.C.

¹¹⁶ Shofner, *Jackson County*, 293. Davis calculated the total number of murders in Jackson County at 175. Davis, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, 582.

¹¹⁷ Avant, *Illustrated Index*, 111.

¹¹⁸ In the mid-1880s, both men served as delegates from Jackson County to a statewide constitutional convention that, among other initiatives, introduced the poll tax to Florida. Shofner, *Jackson County*, 328-329.

¹¹⁹ The family moved in with Sophia's mother on East 49th Street, just one block east of Philip M. Fleishman's new residence. Sophia and five of her children continued to live together for at least thirty more years, eventually moving to a midtown Manhattan townhouse. Tenth Census, 1880, New York, New York; Eleventh Census, 1890, New York, New York. Sophia, who never remarried, died in New York City in 1904. During the late nineteenth century, Sophia's youngest brother, Benjamin Altman, amassed a fortune through his department store B. Altman & Co. Altman's will revealed his attachment to Sophia's family. Three Fleishman children (Benjamin, Carrie, and Albert) had passed away sometime prior to Altman's death in 1913. For many years Altman had been quietly subsidizing the care of Sophia and Samuel's daughter, Henrietta Fleishman Fried, who had been committed to a sanitarium since the death of her only child in 1901. In the will, Etta and her older brother William, were each left \$50,000 in trust. The remaining Fleishman child, Mrs. Lulu Heymann, was her uncle's favorite relative and attended upon Altman at his death. Lulu received \$200,000 in trust, by far the largest bequest to an individual, and her uncle's household possessions and personal effects. *New York Times*, October 8, 1913. Last Will and Testament of Benjamin Altman, May 2, 1912, the Altman Foundation, New York, New York. Etta passed away in 1917 and William, who had worked as a jeweler and lived his last decade in a Manhattan hotel, died in 1922. Lulu survived her five siblings and had one child, Charles, Jr., who was the only known Fleishman grandchild at the time of Altman's death. *New York Times*, December 11, 1922. Altman's fame dominated the identity of the

Fleishman family. When an 1893 newspaper society item mentioned that "Misses Etta and Lulu Fleishman" had gone to Lakewood, New Jersey, for a few weeks, they were referred to as "nieces of Benjamin Altman, the dry goods merchant." *New York Times*, February 7, 1893. When Charles, Jr.'s son, William, was born in 1927, *New York Times* birth announcement referred to the baby as the great grand nephew of Benjamin Altman. *New York Times*, May 22, 1927. Charles, Jr., eventually became a Protestant minister and moved to Hendersonville, North Carolina, where he founded the First Congregational Church.

¹²⁰ This absence of probate or estate information in the Jackson County files is puzzling. The records are meticulously kept and include, for example, detailed records related to the disposition of John Q. Dickinson's property following his murder.

¹²¹ Jackson County Property Records, microfilm, Florida State Archives; Records of County Clerk's Office, Jackson County Courthouse, Marianna, Florida.

¹²² *Weekly Floridian*, October, 19, 1869. Of course antisemitism was not unknown. Robert Hilton, Florida's representative to the Confederate Congress, blamed Jews for high prices and fluctuations in the value of Confederate currency. Hilton deplored Jews whom he saw as flocking "as vultures to every point of gain." He also recommended that they "should be dragged into military services." Frederic Cople Jaher, *A Scapegoat in the Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA, 1994), 197.

¹²³ The "influential citizen in Marianna" writing anonymously to the *Weekly Floridian* informed the paper's readers that Fleishman had "deserted to the North, leaving his family in the county until after the surrender." *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869. The *Florida Union* described Fleishman's business as "chiefly among the colored people." The *Weekly Floridian's* correspondent claimed that Fleishman had abandoned the Democrats and had "identified himself with the Radical party for the purpose of getting the trade of the colored people." *Weekly Floridian*, October 19, 1869. *Florida Union*, October 14, 1869.

¹²⁴ After the Dickinson murder, Tallahassee's Republican newspaper remembered Fleishman and Finlayson as fellow Republican martyrs. *Tallahassee Sentinel*, April 15, 1871.

¹²⁵ Most of the Fleishmans of Marianna and Quincy left Florida by the end of the 1870s. Philip had departed for New York around the time of his brother's murder and died there in 1901 at the age of seventy-three. Ferdinand's widow, Fannie, married a Prussian immigrant in Gadsden County. Widowed again, Fannie lived in Brooklyn in 1880 with ten children. Benjamin died in the mid-1870s. Only Simon Fleishman remained in Florida. He became a prominent Quincy businessman with his own building on the town's main square. Avant, *Illustrated Index*, 126-127. In 1907, Simon applied for a Florida pension for his service in the Confederate army.

¹²⁶ Herbsman, *Index*, xii. *The Israelite*, inconsistently, had reported in September 1871 only one Jewish family in Quincy and none in Marianna.

¹²⁷ Arnold Shankman, "Friend or Foe: Southern Blacks View the Jew, 1880-1935," in *Turn to the South*, 107, 109.

¹²⁸ Fleishman's story contrasts starkly with his contemporaries Morris Dzialynski of Jacksonville, Florida, and Abraham Ehrlich and Bernard Kaul of Valdosta, Georgia. A Jewish immigrant and merchant, Dzialynski served with distinction in the Confederate army

and became active in the Democratic Party after the war, including being elected mayor of Jacksonville. Canter Brown, Jr., "Phillip and Morris Dzialynski: Jewish Contributors to the Rebuilding of the South," *American Jewish Archives* (fall/winter 1992): 530. Ehrlich and Kaul, also both Confederate veterans, were well received in Valdosta where they settled with their families immediately after the war. Schmier, "Jews and Gentiles in a South Georgia Town," 4.

¹²⁹ Lucy was identified as Jewish at the KKK Hearings by Lemuel Wilson, a white Republican from Florida, who stated that his niece was married to Lucy. In a scene reminiscent of Fleishman's encounter with Billy Coker described by Nelson, Lucy's murderer, a white man with a "very wanton" and murderous reputation, had evidently used some petty pretext related to his account at Lucy's store as an excuse to shoot him. Wilson contended that Lucy had been murdered for being a Republican and for associating with blacks. U.S. House Report No. 22, 197, 199-200. The local press, however, only reported that the murder arose from a business dispute. *Gainesville Era*, October 14, 1871, quoted in *Weekly Floridian*, October 17, 1871.

¹³⁰ Unlike Fleishman's death, Bierfield's murder was reported in the national press. A letter published in a Nashville newspaper justified Bierfield's murder by claiming that he had encouraged blacks in the revenge murder of a white man who had participated in an earlier lynching. The local bureau agent concluded, however, that this accusation against Bierfield was false. As with Fleishman's murder, no arrests were ever made in connection with Bierfield's killing. Morris U. Shappes, ed., *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States 1654-1875*, 3rd ed., (New York, 1971), 515-517, 717-718.