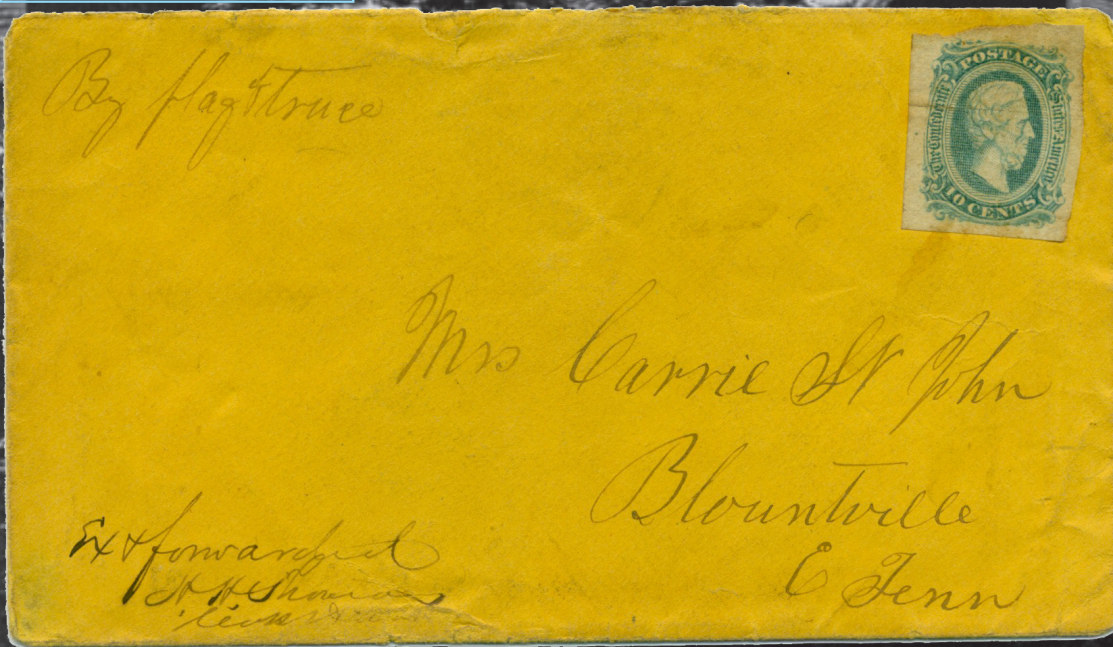


William G. Brownlow

**Figure 1**

Figure 1. Flag-of-truce cover addressed to Mrs. Carrie St. John, Blountville, E. Tenn.





**Figure 2**

District of East Tennessee  
Provost Marshal embossed  
seal applied to back flaps of  
flag-of-truce cover in Figure 1.



**By Patricia A. Kaufmann**

# Persecuted by the Provost Marshal of the District of East Tennessee





Figure 3

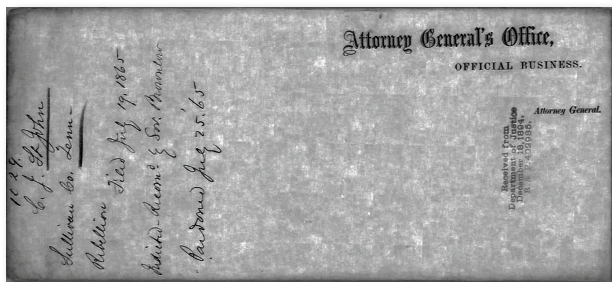


Figure 4

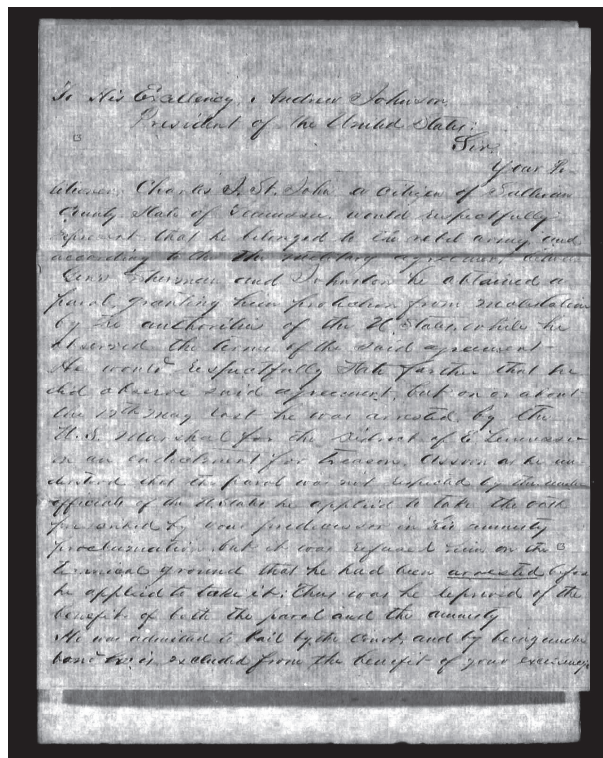
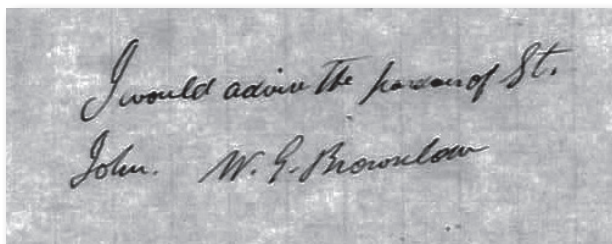
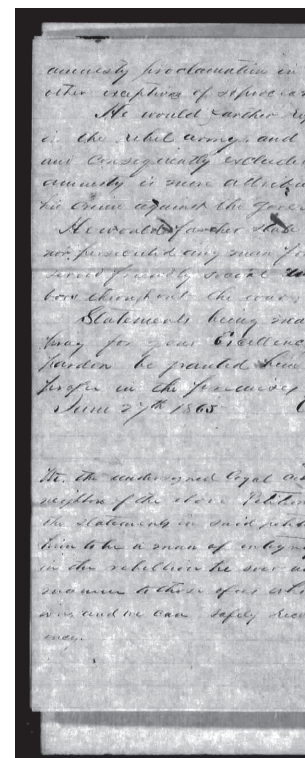


Figure 5



Fig

Shown in Figure 1 is a flag-of-truce cover addressed to Mrs. Carrie St. John, Blountville, E. Tenn. The sender's manuscript directive is at the top of the cover and a censor's manuscript examined marking at lower left. The cover is franked with an uncanceled 10¢ greenish blue (CSA catalog 11-ADc).

What makes this particular cover rare and unusual is not the front; it is the back upon which an extremely rare District of East Tennessee Provost Marshal embossed seal was applied, as shown in Figure 2.

Galen Harrison, the world class expert on the mail going to and from Civil War-time prisoners on both the Union and Confederate sides, lists only two examples of this embossed censor marking in his opus *Prisoners' Mail from the American Civil War*. **It is the only case of a censor marking applied by embossing.** Unsealed envelopes were embossed and sealed after examining the letter contents. The only other recorded use of this marking also bears uncanceled Confederate postage. We thank Mr. Harrison and admire his

broad and lifelong interest in this subject and for his opinions.

This envelope was addressed to Carrie St. John by her husband, Charles St. John. Sarah Caroline "Carrie" Dulaney (1838-1917) and Charles Johnston St John (1836-1893) were married April 30, 1861.

Charles J. St. John served as captain of Company C, 19th Tennessee Regiment (Blountville Guards of Sullivan County), as well as major and colonel of the 61st Tennessee Regiment. He was born in Smyth, Virginia, and she in Sullivan, Tennessee. His middle name is found in historical records as either Johnson and Johnston.

Charles St. John was born in Smyth County, Virginia, the ninth of thirteen children. He was educated at Liberty Academy in Smyth County, Va.. In 1839, he spent a year reading law at Jonesboro, Tennessee, and was admitted to the bar there, where he practiced until 1861. After the war, he practiced law for the law firm of Taylor and St. John, also becoming a judge.

Charles St. John's gravestone is shown in Figure 3. He died at age 56; he is buried in East Hill Cemetery in Bristol, Sullivan County, Tennessee.

The (Union) District of East Tennessee kept close tabs on the mail of families it considered dis-



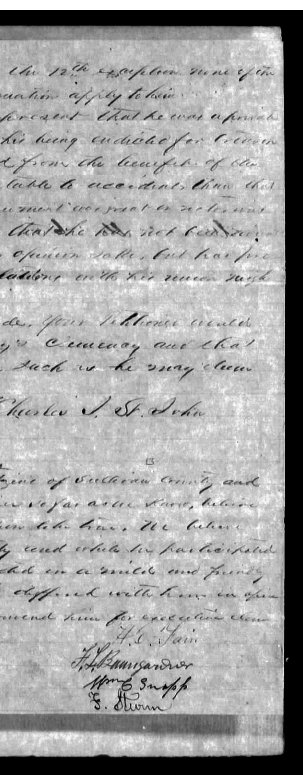


Figure 6

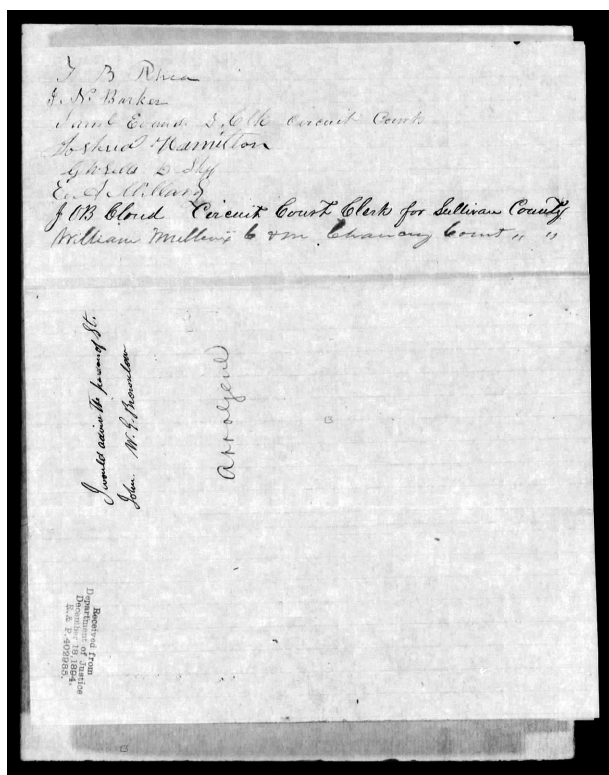


Figure 7

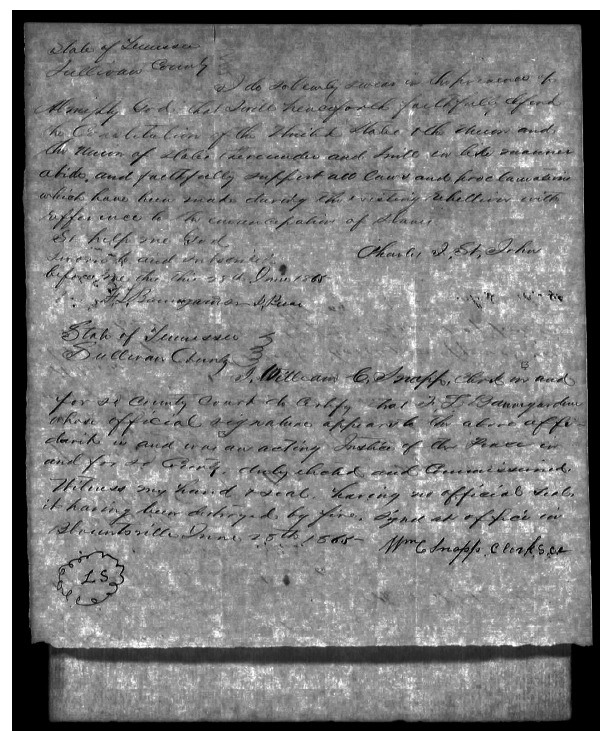


Figure 10

loyal, which clearly the St. John family was since St. John served in the Confederate Army.

Immediately after the war, St. John protested to President Andrew Johnson that he was being persecuted by the Provost Marshal of the District of East Tennessee. He applied for and received a pardon, having properly signed an amnesty oath after hostilities ceased.

Figure 4 is a microfilm copy of an envelope in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) with the imprint of the U.S. Attorney General's Office. It is docketed across the left end "(Case) 1029/C.J. St John/Sullivan Co. Tenn/Rebellion/Filed July 19, 1865; Indicted - Recomd } Gov. Brownlow/Pardoned July 15 '65."

Figure 5 shows the first page of St. John's letter "To His Excellency Andrew Johnson, President of the United States" in which states he belonged to the rebel army and, according to the military agreement between generals Sherman and Johnston, he obtained a parole granting him prohibition from molestation by the authorities of the United States.

St. John protests he was arrested on or about May 17, 1865, by the U.S. Marshal for the District of E. Tennessee on an indictment of treason. As soon as he became aware his parole was not

respected by officials of the United States, he "applied to take the oath prescribed by your predecessor in his amnesty proclamation" but it was refused him on the tyrannical ground that he had been arrested before he applied to take it.

Although written in the third person, the letter is signed Charles J. St. John and dated June 27, 1865. Below his signature on the second page is a signed statement by four citizens of Sullivan County attesting to his integrity and loyalty. More signatures continue on the next page. (Figures 6-7)

Across the end of the third page (Figure 7) is a signed statement from Gov. W.G. Brownlow recommending the pardon of St. John, as shown in Figure 8.

St. John's signed an amnesty oath dated June 28, 1865, in which he states he "will henceforth faithfully defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union and the Union States hereunder and I will in like manner abide and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves so help me God."

This last page, shown in Figure 10, is notarized by Superior Court Clerk Wm. C. Snapp. His pardon was granted.

# William Gannaway The Sidebar

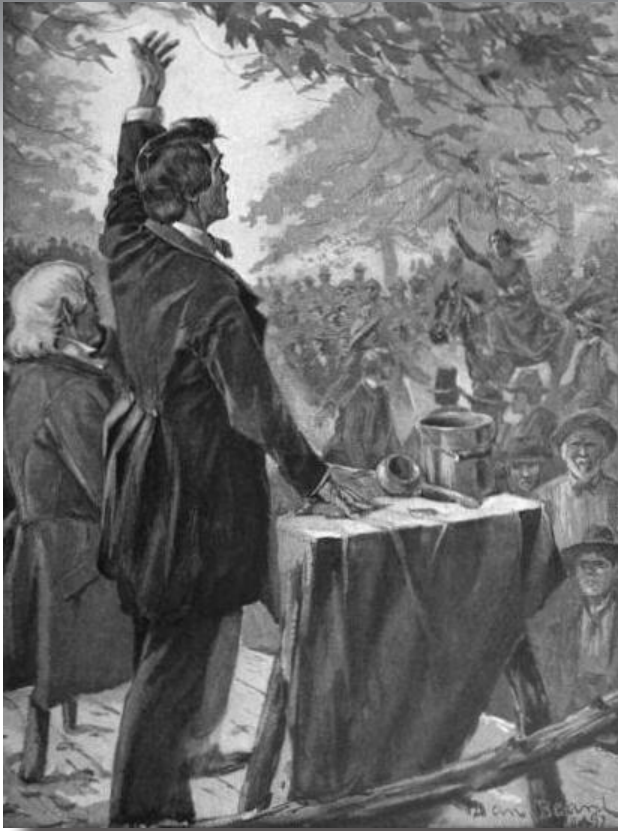


Illustration in Barton's *A Hero In Homespun*, showing Brownlow delivering a pro-Union speech in

**W**illiam Gannaway "Parson" Brownlow (August 29, 1805 – April 29, 1877) was an American newspaper publisher, Methodist minister, book author, prisoner of war, lecturer, and politician. He served as the 17th Governor of Tennessee from 1865 to 1869 and as a United States Senator from Tennessee from 1869 to 1875. Brownlow rose to prominence in the late 1830s and early 1840s as editor of *The Whig*, a polemical newspaper in East Tennessee that promoted Whig Party ideals and opposed secession in the years leading up to the American Civil War. Brownlow's uncompromising and radical viewpoints made him one of the most divisive figures in Tennessee political history and one of the most controversial Reconstruction Era politicians of the United States.

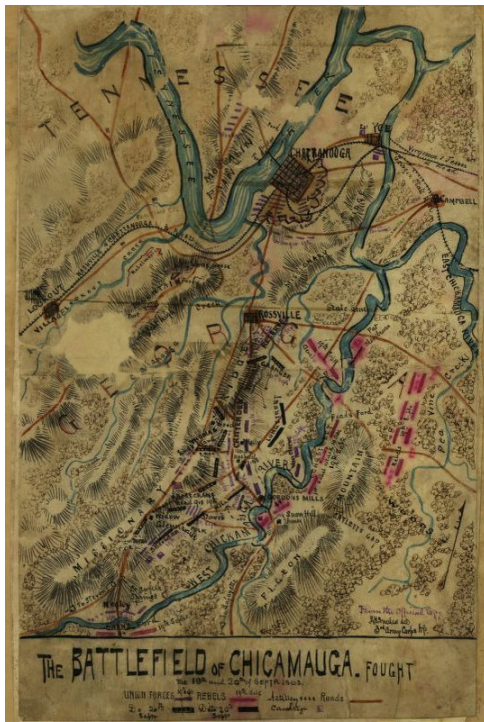
Beginning his career as a Methodist circuit rider in the 1820s, Brownlow was both censured and praised by his superiors for his vicious verbal debates with rival missionaries of other sectarian Christian beliefs.

Later, as a newspaper publisher and editor, he was notorious for his relentless personal attacks against his religious and political opponents, sometimes to the point of being physically assaulted. At the same time, William was successfully building a large base of fiercely loyal subscribers.

Brownlow returned to Tennessee in 1863 and in 1865 became the war governor with the U.S. Army behind him. He joined

Eastern Tennessee's participation during the Civil War was focused on several battles, including the pivotal Battle of Shiloh where Union General Ulysses S. Grant saw his career begin to blossom. However, the Battle of Chickamauga at the confluence of southeastern Tennessee and northwestern Georgia was the most important.

Here is a contemporary hand-colored battle map that is known for its accuracy with the actual battle on September 20-22, 1863





# away Brownlow

the Radical Republicans and spent much of his term opposing the policies of his long-time political foe Andrew Johnson.[1] His gubernatorial policies, which were both autocratic and progressive, helped Tennessee become the first former Confederate state to be readmitted to the Union in 1866, “exempting it from the lengthy federal military reconstruction inflicted on most of the South”.

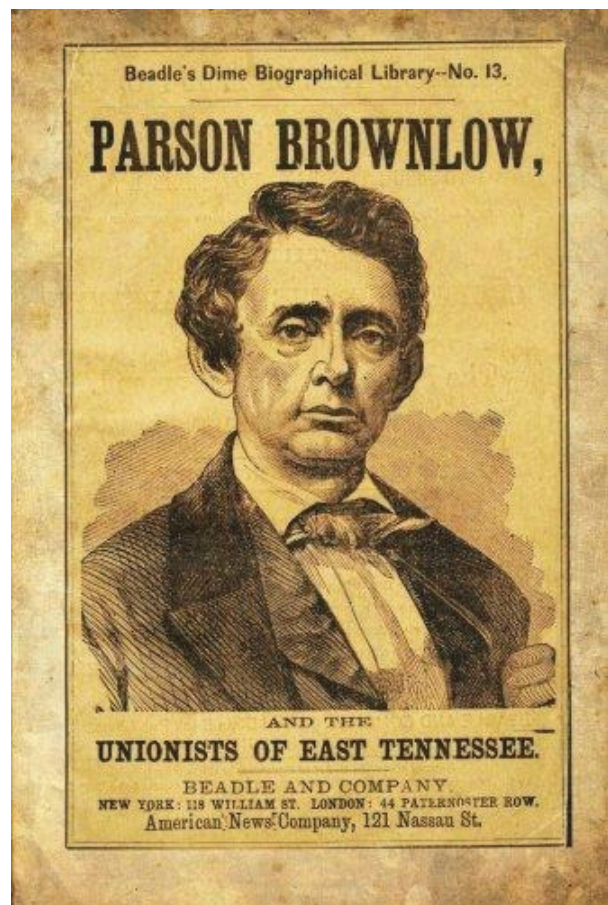
Brownlow utilized the Tennessee state government to enfranchise African-American former male slaves with the right to vote and to qualify as candidates for public offices in Tennessee elections soon after the Civil War. Soon after, ex-Confederate political leaders and military officers using the Ku Klux Klan and likeminded vigilante groups, worked to disenfranchise African-Americans.

What made the Parson stand out was, more than anything else, his vitriolic tongue and pen. Over the course of his long career, he took up many causes. These included not only Methodism, Whiggery, and the Union, but also temperance, Know-Nothingism, and slavery.

His favorite method of promoting those causes was to chastise and ridicule his opponents, and few men could do so with as much venomous wit as he. Baptists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Mormons, Democrats, Republicans, secessionists, drunks, immigrants, and abolitionists—all were at one time or another on the receiving end of Brownlow’s merciless broadsides. Not surprisingly, he made many enemies. A number of them replied in kind; some tried to kill him.



“Come on, Sirs, and take it down!” A depiction of Susan Brownlow [inset], daughter Brownlow, fending off Confederate soldiers who had threatened to take down the American flag flying over the Brownlows’ house on East Cumberland Avenue in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1861.



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