

**Learning How to Jim Crow:
Jacksonville, Florida's White Progressives, 1887–1892**

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Paper delivered at the American Historical Association

New Orleans, 4 Jan 2013

On the evening of April 4th, 1887, an interracial crowd surged through the streets of Jacksonville, Florida to the home of Colonel John Q. Burbridge, who had just been elected mayor, defeating conservative Democrat William M. Dancy by a vote of 854 to 644. At the head of the Citizen's ticket, Burbridge had the backing of a coalition of progressive Democrats, black Republicans as well as the Knights of Labor. A stunning and unexpected upset victory, the Citizen's ticket was elected to every office except one.ⁱ

From the porch of his home, Colonel Burbridge promised the jubilant crowd, "I shall know no one on account of his color and I shall make no distinctions. (Loud cheers and cries of 'Hurrah for Burbridge!')." Explicitly addressing his black supporters he declared that "the Colored man can get justice from me as well as the white Why? Because they have rallied around us in this fight and saved us from a government not of the people but of a clique. They have rallied around the standard of good government Had it not been thus, the opposition would have over-ridden us and driven us from the field."ⁱⁱ

The candor with which Burbridge acknowledged that the black vote provided his margin of victory must have unnerved many of Jacksonville's white citizens, although no black candidates had won, let alone run, for office. However, it was clear that Burbridge and the Citizens' Ticket could not have won without them. Twice previously, in 1884 and 1885, this group of reformers had tried to overcome the entrenched power of the local Democratic Party and met defeat both times.ⁱⁱⁱ What had changed their fortune was the arrival in town of the

Knights of Labor. In the year preceding the April 1887 election, the Knights in Jacksonville had grown from only one struggling local assembly, to ten assemblies in both the city and the suburbs, representing more than 3,000 workers.^{iv} For a time, the Knights of Labor temporarily became the gravitational center around which a labor-based interracial politics could orbit.

Once in power, this new government embarked upon an aggressive campaign of urban development aimed at attracting both tourists and investment. However, fears of crime and the ever present threat of yellow fever – which had already struck the city once in 1877 – had long hampered their ability to attract either.^v

Their first task was to gather the nearly \$30,000 in taxes that had gone uncollected from the city's elites over the last decade. This was crucial since the city passed a \$54,500 budget for 1887-88, most of which was earmarked for improvements in sanitation and repair of the city's old sewage system.^{vi} Yellow fever had recently struck Key West, Tampa and Palatka, a town less than a day's journey south by riverboat on the St. John's River. The new government also launched a moral hygiene campaign and during his first month in office, Burbridge cracked down on gambling, prostitution, and liquor sales.^{vii}

What most worried the new mayor and his supporters were the black suburbs of Springfield and La Villa. Closing down brothels, bars and pool rooms in Jacksonville wouldn't do much good if they could relocate just on the outskirts of town. Modernizing the city's sewer system would not protect Jacksonville's white population from diseases originating in the relatively underdeveloped black suburbs that surrounded the city.^{viii} Thus, with the blessing of the state legislature, the new administration rewrote the city charter and annexed the majority-black suburbs of La Villa and Springfield.^{ix} Not only would absorbing the city's outlying black

neighborhoods expand the city's tax base, it would also allow the new city fathers to extend control over what they saw as sites of urban disorder and vectors for disease.

However, annexation would also make Jacksonville into a majority-black city. As reformers equally committed to both white supremacy and urban progress, Jacksonville's white progressives would repeatedly confront the dilemma of how to maintain white supremacy while securing the health of the city and expanding the prerogatives of citizenship via urban development. They wanted the city to grow and develop, but they also feared any form of progress that would open up a path for black people to take power. As they wrestled with how to maintain white rule over a majority black city, these reformers would learn how to Jim Crow.

The first challenge these urban reformers faced was how to control the hundreds of black voters that annexation introduced to the city's electorate. Black voters now outnumbered white voters by 2,632 to 2,268 – a margin of 364 votes.^x They attempted to contain this potential threat to white rule by drawing a new electoral map that concentrated black voting strength in just three wards, leaving the remaining wards with securely white majorities.^{xi} The ultimate test of the effectiveness of this racial gerrymander would occur on Dec 13, 1887 – during the elections made necessary by the new city charter.^{xii}

As the second election approached, the white progressives who had helped elect Burbridge became uncertain over their ability to retain control over the city. They entered an uneasy alliance with their former foes and abandoned Burbridge to rally around the more reliably white supremacist Democrat, Frank Pope, who led a now lily-white Citizen's ticket. The black electorate and the Knights of Labor now rallied around progressive Republican C. B. Smith, a member of the Knights who had run as a Citizen's candidate back in 1884 and 1885.^{xiii} The

former Citizen's ticket alliance that secured Burbridge's victory had now split into two camps, with the former white Democratic Party dissidents on one side and the interracial labor-led alliance between the Knights of Labor and the local Republican Party on the other.

The turnout for the December election was more than twice that of the April election and in the mayoral race, the Knights of Labor buried the Democrats by a vote of 2,394 to 736. Ten black candidates ran for office and five won in four of the wards that had recently been added to the city.^{xiv} Members of the Knights of Labor won thirteen of the eighteen city council seats.^{xv} The white progressives lost control of the city, routed by their former allies. What had taken the Citizens' Ticket by surprise was the astonishing strength of the interracial coalition centered in the Knights of Labor, much of its membership concentrated in the recently annexed black suburbs of La Villa and Springfield.^{xvi}

Once in control of the city, the interracial labor-led government embarked on its own development program for the city. They raised the wages of municipal workers and made plans to extend the expanding network of paved roads and sidewalks beyond the business district to black and white working-class neighborhoods.^{xvii} The ways in which the new government divided up the appointed offices handed the African American members of the governing coalition significant control over the police and courts – long a flashpoint between black and white Jacksonvillians. By summer of 1888, the city had hired eleven black police officers and appointed Alonzo Jones, a prominent African American businessman, as one of the city's three Police Commissioners.^{xviii} Not only were African Americans concerned with the fair enforcement of the law, but they wanted to ensure that, before the court, black defendants would have a chance at a fair hearing and they appointed other black men to the positions of municipal judge and city marshal.^{xix} Though there were considerable tensions between the black and white

members of the coalition,^{xx} these appointments nonetheless indicated that the white members of the new Knights of Labor-led city government intended to share significant power with their black allies. For black and white Jacksonvillians alike, it was Reconstruction redux.

The Knights-led city government was only able to hold on to power until the end of the summer of 1888. Rumors that yellow fever had been spreading throughout Florida were a cause of perpetual anxiety over the summer.^{xxi} The terror that Floridians had of the disease was so great that after the fever struck downstate Plant City, Florida, the entire municipality was evacuated and burned to the ground.^{xxii} On 28 July the first case of yellow fever was reported in Jacksonville and within two weeks the city's health authorities uncovered eleven additional cases, two of which were fatal.^{xxiii} Within a month, more than 100 had perished and everyone who had the resources to flee and could evade the quarantine had left the city.^{xxiv} After the exodus, several thousand people – mostly white – had left, leaving behind 13,757, roughly three-quarters of whom were African American.^{xxv} By the time the fever had run its course, 4,656 had fallen ill and 430 had died. These numbers were surely under-reported, especially after the city began burning the homes and belongings of the deceased and infected, making it much harder to win the cooperation of the population in tracking the progress of the disease.^{xxvi}

Compounding the crisis was the virtual abdication of power by the duly elected city government. Mayor C. B. Smith was out of town when the epidemic struck and chose not to return to the stricken city.^{xxvii} Additionally, eight city councilmen fled Jacksonville ahead of the quarantine, leaving only ten behind.^{xxviii} Two members were stricken down by the fever in mid-September denying the city council the minimum required for a quorum. The city government was paralyzed.

At this juncture, the deposed white progressives attempted to push the elected city government to one side to assume control over the day to day operations of the city.^{xxix} Newly organized as the Jacksonville Auxiliary Sanitary Association, they would use their command over \$500,000 in relief funds raised in the wake of the epidemic to impose their agenda on the city.^{xxx} Although the duly elected city government still technically retained the sole power to pass legislation, the money controlled by the Sanitary Association allowed them to direct the development agenda of the city. With a budget ten times the size of city's, the Sanitary Association was able to employ as many as 2,000 workers per week grading and paving roads, improving the city's streetcar system, draining swampy areas, and beautifying the city all in the explicit name of public health, property values and attracting the tourist trade.^{xxxi}

At this point, it's unclear whether disfranchisement was on the Sanitary Association's agenda. However, with the bulk of the white voters having fled the region, local Democratic Party leaders began to raise the alarm that the outcome of the 1888 county and congressional elections would be "too close for comfort unless our people return in time to vote."^{xxxii} They even went so far as to allege that African Americans were refusing to leave the city in order to secure a Republican majority in the upcoming election and that relief funds were being diverted to the local GOP campaign war chest.^{xxxiii} What scared the white Democrats of Duval County was the possibility that black voters, now in possession of an even more secure majority following the white flight from the yellow fever, would expand their gains and threaten white Democratic rule *throughout* northeast Florida.

What followed was a power struggle between the remnants of the elected city government and the Sanitary Association over the question of the return of the refugees who had fled at the beginning of the crisis. The ability of the city to respond effectively to the return of

these refugees was complicated by the illness of yet a third councilman. Still lacking the quorum necessary to pass any binding laws, the city council first requested, then attempted to force the resignations of the absentee council members; however, only one of the missing politicians agreed to surrender his seat.^{xxxiv}

Meanwhile, as the fever seemed to be receding by the end of October, they faced considerable pressure to allow the returning refugees back into the city. In the interests of both preserving Republican gains and denying the disease new hosts to infect, the city Board of Health passed a resolution on 19 October 1888 prohibiting the return of the refugees until December and demanding that control of the city government be surrendered to federal authorities in order to enforce a sanitary cordon around the city.^{xxxv} The next day, the city council (still without a quorum) voted to “relinquish to Dr. Joseph Y. Porter, as agent of the United States Government, all our power to act ... at his discretion until such time as he may announce it safe for persons to come into the city.”^{xxxvi} Without the ability to exercise their own power, the city council instead “borrowed” both the medical and federal authority of the National Marine Hospital Service through its agent, Dr. Porter.^{xxxvii} Within days, Dr. Porter had set up a cordon around the city comprising 150 sanitary guards (50 mounted, 100 on foot) who had the authority to prevent the movement of people and goods in or out of the city.^{xxxviii} Finally, on 3 November, three days before the 1888 general election, the city council under Dr. Porter’s guidance, decreed that any refugee caught sneaking back into the city would face a fine of up to \$500 and 30 days in jail.^{xxxix}

Politically, the 1888 election returns suggest that this strategy bore fruit. According to the registrar, black registered voters throughout Duval County outnumbered white registered voters by 3,892 to 3,162.^{xl} In Jacksonville, Election Day returns showed Republican Benjamin

Harrison beating incumbent Democrat Grover Cleveland with 72% of the roughly 2,600 votes cast, winning every ward in the city but two.^{xli} Similar results were duplicated throughout the county, which had also been depopulated of white Democratic voters fleeing the disease. The resulting 2:1 registration advantage enabled the GOP to win every single office in Duval County.^{xlii}

By late November, with the coming of the first winter frosts, the fever finally began to die out. With the quarantine lifted and the port reopened, the refugees returned to the city on 15 December 1888.^{xliii} The end of the fever brought with it calls for the passage of a \$1,000,000 municipal bond to continue the work begun by the Sanitary Association, installing a modern sewage and sanitation system that would make the city a more attractive site for both tourists and northern investment dollars.^{xliv} Accompanying this call for bonding the city were increasingly open discussions in the pages of the *Florida Times-Union*, Jacksonville's paper of record, about how to solve the so-called "Negro problem" through disfranchisement.^{xlv} Some of this talk revolved around worries that the incoming Harrison administration would return the South to the dark days of Reconstruction; however, the more immediate concern was how to empower the city to address yellow fever and other threats to public health without also empowering the city's black majority.

What made this challenge especially tricky for the city's white progressives was their uncertainty over how the new administration would react to any attempts at disfranchisement. There were few other models to follow. After all, the Mississippi Plan of 1890 was still two years in the future; South Carolina's 1882 Eight-Box Law seemed unwieldy and perhaps a little too brazen; and the state legislature had successfully blocked the passage of enabling legislation that would have instituted the poll tax written into the state's 1885 constitution.^{xlvi}

Thus, short of devising a permanent solution to the “Negro problem,” Jacksonville’s white progressive Democrats experimented with a series of short term fixes, all of which depended upon their relationship with native son Francis P. Fleming, who had been elected governor in the recent election. Fleming remained so closely involved in city politics, he appointed former white Citizens’ Ticket leader, Eduardo J. Triay as his personal secretary.^{xlvi} Among the first things the new governor did upon taking office was move to prevent the Republican victors in the 1888 Duval County elections from taking their seats. To do so, Gov. Fleming invoked a clause written into the state constitution and raised the surety bonds required of all elected county officials to punitively high amounts.^{xlvi} Without the funds to post such high bonds before the state certified the election returns, no black Republican was able to take his seat.^{xlvi} Though the officials barred from office sued, the Florida Supreme Court ultimately decided against them, permitting the governor to appoint replacements.¹

That temporarily solved the problem of black political power in the county, but these measures were still unable to either unseat the interracial government of Jacksonville or change the fact that Jacksonville would remain a majority black city. For inspiration, city and state leaders looked to Memphis, another southern city with a significant black population and which had been struck by yellow fever in 1878.^{li} In the aftermath of the 1878 Memphis epidemic, Tennessee revoked the city’s charter in order to straighten out its finances and complete by 1890 what would become the one of the most advanced sewer systems in the nation.^{lii} The main purpose of revoking Memphis’s charter and replacing the city government with a commission appointed by the governor was to facilitate the needed sanitary improvements. It also had the added benefit of depriving black Memphians of any power over their city government –

especially following Tennessee's passage of an array of disfranchising legislation, including a poll tax and the Australian secret ballot.^{liii}

The first hint that Gov. Fleming and his Jacksonville allies may have been considering a similar plan appeared as a comment on the *Florida Times-Union* editorial page in early March of 1889 in which the editors praised the success of Memphis's "appointive system for municipal officials" at ridding the city of corruption.^{liv} Whatever plan existed, the duly elected government of Jacksonville was kept in the dark until just two weeks before the opening of the 1889 state legislative session, when the plot to remove home rule from Jacksonville was leaked to Mayor C. B. Smith by friends in the state legislature.^{lv} Soon thereafter, on 3 April 1889, House Bill No. 4 amending Jacksonville's city charter was introduced into the Committee on City and County Organizations.^{lvi} As originally drafted, Jacksonville's residents would still be allowed to elect the mayor, but all eighteen city council members would serve at the governor's discretion. Additionally, HB 4 raised Jacksonville's limit on bonded debt to the then astronomical sum of \$750,000.^{lvii}

The discussion of the bill in the state legislature reveals the clear connections that Jacksonville's white progressives made between disease, development and disfranchisement. In the House debate, Representative Frank Clark of Polk County, defended the bill declaring it was necessary to free Jacksonville, "that great city on the St. Johns, the metropolis of the State, from an *incubus* that has oppressed her people and paralyzed her interests for years."^{lviii} Clark's choice of the word "incubus" (a mythical male demon that preys sexually on sleeping women) could easily have described the specter of black political power as much as the recurrent threat of yellow fever. In the minds of his listeners, it likely evoked both. Meanwhile back in Jacksonville, the *Florida Times-Union* urged passage of the bill as a "wise and righteous

measure,” arguing that few “men of capital would lend a half a million or more ... dollars to any city subjected to the miserable ward system” of government.^{lix} The *Times-Union* expressed concern that any funds raised ought to be under the firm control of “men chosen for their pre-eminent fitness alone without regard to partisan influences.”^{lx} The racial subtext here was quite clear. The day before the bill was up for a vote in the state house of representatives, the paper declared that “under the present charter, there is no hope of electing honest, capable, faithful officials. An experience of two years has demonstrated this fact.”^{lxi} So long as there was the possibility that black men would have any influence over the dispensation of the “half million or more” dollars needed to modernize the city’s sewer system, fears of Jacksonville’s black majority would continue to trump the terrors of yellow fever. When the bill stalled in the state senate, the *Times-Union* demanded to know: “Shall the negro rule or shall the white man rule?”^{lxii}

On Monday morning, 8 April 1889, the Florida House passed without amendment, House Bill No. 4 on a vote of 55 to 7.^{lxiii} Once it became clear that the bill would soon be law, the racial subtext became even more explicit in letters to the *Times-Union*. “Five Ladies of Jacksonville” applauded the return of “decent government,” recounting their experiences of being “elbowed off the sidewalk by negroes walking three abreast, and defiantly refusing to give an inch of the way.” Another correspondent related how he had witnessed a seventy year-old lady elbowed off the sidewalk by “three negro women ... Do you suppose,” he asked, “if our day police force was not made up entirely of colored men, such astounding indecency would be permitted?” Yet a third letter writer described his hesitation at chastising a black paper boy for insolence due to the presence of a “colored policeman.”^{lxiv} Though white Jacksonvillians

certainly welcomed the promise of a healthier city, they also looked forward toward an urban future in which white supremacy was secure.

After a fierce month-long debate in which the state's Republicans attempted to derail the Jacksonville charter bill, on 8 May 1889 the state senate passed a slightly-amended bill on a final vote of 19 to 6.^{lxv} The next day, the house concurred with the senate's amendments.^{lxvi} When Gov. Fleming signed the bill into law on 16 May 1889, Jacksonville's interracial government would be no more.^{lxvii} Patrick McQuaid, the Vice President of the Sanitary Association became the new mayor and the governor's choice of eighteen of the city's leading white men would run the city.^{lxviii}

Home rule was restored to Jacksonville in 1893, but only after the passage of a series of disfranchising mechanisms including both a poll tax and the Australian ballot had ensured that black political power in Jacksonville had been broken for good.^{lxix} In that year, white progressive Duncan Upshaw Fletcher would be able to become mayor without having to appeal to black voters. By 1895, he managed to pass a \$1 Million dollar development bond – the largest in the nation to date. Jacksonville would be able to advance into the 20th century without also advancing the rights of its black citizens. The Negro Question had been solved for now.

Conclusion

I want to close by offering some tentative conclusions.

First, this story demonstrates just how tenuous and experimental the project of Jim Crow was in its early years, suggesting it was far less stable a social order in the urban South than has commonly been understood.^{lxx} While disfranchisement was at some point inevitable, it was by no means automatic and the seeming durability of Jim Crow in the late 19th century was more opportunistic and contingent than its seventy year ascendancy would suggest.

In the face of urban development, white supremacy could only be maintained by a series of *fixes* – that is, there was no permanent solution to the central crises and contradictions caused by the attempt to maintain white supremacy in the face of rapid urban development.^{lxxi} Jim Crow Progressives were continually forced to respond to these crises with a series of temporary *fixes* in order to maintain their power. Does this mean that there was an alternate history of Progressivism possible in the South? Not necessarily. Does it mean that urban Jim Crow was very unstable? Yes, especially in its early years, before the white supremacist city builders learned to consolidate their power. And, it is here where we find Jacksonville’s bi-racial city government. Exploring the instability of urban Jim Crow in the 1880s holds the promise of offering an even more detailed look at the radical forms of experimentation characteristic of black politics in that decade. Jim Crow was not imposed without fierce and creative resistance.

ⁱ “Victory!” *Florida Times-Union*, 5 April 1887, p. 1; “Yesterday’s Election,” *Florida Times-Union*, 5 April 1887, p. 4. For more on the election and the history of black political power in Jacksonville, see T. Frederick Davis, *History of Jacksonville, Florida and Vicinity, 1513 to 1924* (St. Augustine, FL: The Florida Historical Society, 1925), pp.298-299; and Wayne J. Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher: Dixie’s Reluctant Progressive* (Tallahassee, Florida State University Press, 1971), pp. 12-14; Edward Akin, “When a Minority Becomes a Majority: Blacks in Jacksonville Politics, 1887-1907,” *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 53 (1974), pp. 123-145; Abel A. Bartley, *Keeping the Faith: Race, Politics, and Social Development in Jacksonville, Florida, 1940-1970* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), pp. 1-19; Barbara Richardson “A History of Blacks in Jacksonville, Florida, 1860-1895: A Socio-Economic and Political Study,” Unpublished D. A. Dissertation (Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon University, 1975); and Patricia Drozd Kenney, “La Villa, Florida, 1866-1887: Reconstruction Dreams and the Formation of a Black Community,” in *The African American Heritage of Florida*, edited by David R. Colburn and Jane L. Landers (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), pp. 185-206.

ⁱⁱ “Victory!” *Florida Times-Union*, 5 April 1887, p. 1.

ⁱⁱⁱ The total number of voters in the two previous elections in which the Citizens’ ticket fielded a slate of candidates were 1,215 in 1884 and 1,327 in 1885. However, the total turnout for the 1887 election was 1,498. See Davis, *History of Jacksonville*, p. 298.

^{iv} *The Journal of United Labor*, Vol VIII, No. 6 (Aug. 13, 1887), p. 2472 and Vol. VIII, No. 10 (Sep. 10, 1887), p. 2488.

^v “Just Eleven Yrsae [sic] Ago,” *Florida Times-Union*, 18 November 1888, p. 8.

^{vi} Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher*, pp. 14-15.

^{vii} See for example, “In The Mayor’s Court,” *Florida Times-Union*, 24 April 1887, p. 5; “The Gamblers Must Go,” *Florida Times-Union*, 8 May 1887, p. 8; and “Moral Pestilence,” *Florida Times-Union*, 29 May 1887, p. 4.

^{viii} See for example “La Villa Health,” *Florida Times-Union*, 25 May 1887, p. 8; “Sanitary Affairs,” *Florida Times-Union*, 26 May 1887, p. 8; and “Guarding Against Yellow Jack,” *Florida Times-Union*, 27 May 1887, p. 5.

^{ix} Kenney, “La Villa, Florida,” pp. 201-203; and Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher*, pp. 14-15.

^x “New Jacksonville,” *Florida Times-Union*, 26 June 1887, p. 8.

^{xi} “New Jacksonville,” *Florida Times-Union*, 26 June 1887, p. 8; “City Politics,” *Florida Times-Union*, 27 June 1887, p. 4; Barbara Richardson, “A History of Blacks in Jacksonville, Florida, 1860-1895: A Socio-Economic and Political Study,” Unpublished D. A. Dissertation (Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon University, 1975), pp. 203-205.

^{xii} Charles D. Farris, “The Re-Enfranchisement of Negroes in Florida,” *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Oct., 1954), p. 262, n. 10; T. Frederick Davis, *History of Jacksonville*, pp. 287-288; Akin, “When a Minority Becomes a Majority,” p. 130.

^{xiii} Melton Alonza McLaurin, *The Knights of Labor in the South* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 94. For more on the role of the Knights of Labor in the December election, see the extensive commentary in the *Florida Times-Union*, Dec 5-8, 1887.

^{xiv} “Smith Wins,” *Florida Times-Union*, 14 December 1887, p. 8; Akin, “When a Minority Becomes a Majority,” pp. 131, 135.

^{xv} Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher*, p. 16.

^{xvi} Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher*, p. 13. One of the reasons they may not have feared the possibility of an interracial challenge arising from within the ranks of the Jacksonville Knights of Labor was that the recent Knights-led interracial ticket in Richmond, Virginia had ended in a similar victory for the union. However, once in power, the white members of the Richmond Knights forged an alliance with the remaining white Democrats on the city council and froze their black comrades out of any major decisions – most importantly, which workers were able to find employment building the new state capitol building. The Knights were by no means the natural allies of Jacksonville’s black citizenry. See Peter Rachleff, *Black Labor in Richmond, 1865-1890* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 143-201; and McLaurin, *Knights of Labor in the South*, pp. 89-92.

Though I have yet to find explicit evidence that the Knights intended to elect an interracial ticket, an examination of the election returns suggests a deliberate plan to do so. Under the new city charter, the electoral map was divided into 9 wards. In each ward, the top two vote-getters won terms of four years and two years respectively. Had the city’s electorate voted along strictly racial lines, the majority black districts would have elected two black candidates and the majority white districts, two white candidates. However, that’s not what happened in at least two the three wards (2, 6 and 8) that had been recently added to the city. In both wards six and eight, the voters elected two members of the Knights of Labor to the city council, one white and one black. See “Smith Wins,” *Florida Times-Union*, 14 December 1887, p. 8.

^{xvii} Akin, “When a Minority Becomes a Majority,” p. 135.

^{xviii} Richardson, “A History of Blacks in Jacksonville, Florida,” p. 206; Davis, *History of Jacksonville*, p. 309. Black political power in Jacksonville reached its height in 1887, when James Weldon Johnson was 16 years old. In his autobiography, James Weldon Johnson remembers that “most of the city policemen were Negroes; several members of the city council were Negroes” as well as “one or two of the justices of the peace.” There was also a fire station “manned by Negroes.” See James Weldon Johnson *Along This Way: the Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990 – originally pub. 1933), p. 45.

^{xix} Canter, Brown Jr., *Florida's Black Public Officials, 1867-1924* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1998), pp. 103-104; Akin, "When a Minority Becomes a Majority," p. 134.

^{xx} For example, the white police commissioners successfully maneuvered to kick Alonzo Jones off the police commission. See "Commissioner Jones Suspended," *Florida Times-Union*, 11 July 1888, p. 8; and "The Police Commissioners," *Florida Times-Union*, 12 July 1888, p. 8.

^{xxi} "Do Not Heed Rumors," *Florida Times-Union*, 17 July 1888, p. 8; "Mr. Waterman's Spell," *Florida Times-Union*, 19 July 1888, p. 4.

^{xxii} "Purging Plant City," *Florida Times-Union*, 14 July 1888, p. 8.

^{xxiii} "Off to the Sand-Hills," *Florida Times-Union*, 9 August 1888, p. 8; "A Look at the Situation," *Florida Times-Union*, 11 August 1888, p. 8.

^{xxiv} "Only Four Deaths," *Florida Times-Union*, 14 September 1888, p. 5. The society page of the *Florida Times-Union*, normally given to tracking the weddings and balls of the city's elite families, during the crisis was given over to tracking their departure and consequent activities in exile. See for example, "In The World of Society," *Florida Times-Union*, 12 August 1888, p. 5.

^{xxv} "Depopulate the City," *Florida Times-Union*, 8 September 1888, p. 4; "Executive Committee Work," *Florida Times-Union*, 8 September 1888, p. 8.

^{xxvi} "Executive Committee Work," *Florida Times-Union*, 18 August 1888, p. 8. On the numbers of dead and infected see Margaret C. Fairlie, "The Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1888 in Jacksonville," *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Oct., 1940), p. 95; and Margaret Humphreys, *Yellow Fever and the South* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), p. 5. African Americans may have feared vigilante disinfection as well. A mob unsuccessfully attempted to burn down a black church on the night of 23 August 1888 possibly fearing it as a vector of infection. See "City and Suburban News," *Florida Times-Union*, 25 August 1888, p. 5.

^{xxvii} "Mayor Smith's Poor Health," *Florida Times-Union*, 9 September 1888, p. 4; "City Council Meeting," *Florida Times-Union*, 13 September 1888, p. 8; "Did Mayor Smith Say It?," *Florida Times-Union*, 21 September 1888, p. 4. According to letters from his doctor published in the *Times-Union* the mayor had fallen ill with pneumonia while visiting Cincinnati. It remains unknown whether Smith was actually ill or seeking an excuse to stay away from Jacksonville, but the repeated reports of the mayor's poor health in the paper suggest that he may have had to respond to allegations that he had chosen to desert his post in the midst of the epidemic. After the fever had subsided, he faced charges of cowardice and abandoning his post, especially in comparison to the noble martyrdom of several members of the Sanitary Association who perished during the epidemic. See "Where Was the Mayor?" *Florida Times-Union*, 14 December 1888, p. 4; and "Mayor Smith Defended," *Florida Times-Union*, 15 December 1888, p. 4.

^{xxviii} "City Council Meeting," *Florida Times-Union*, 13 September 1888, p. 8. To their credit, four of the five black councilmen remained at their posts. Only Emmanuel Fortune left the city.

^{xxix} "At The Citizens' Meetings," *Florida Times-Union*, 12 August 1888, p. 1; "Council Meeting Yesterday," *Florida Times-Union*, 7 September 1888, p. 5; "City Items," *Florida Times-Union*, 14 September 1888, p. 8.

^{xxx} "Executive Committee Work," *Florida Times-Union*, 14 November 1888, p. 8; "Are We Forgetful?" *Florida Times-Union*, 10 March 1889, p. 4.

^{xxxi} "A Grand Transformation," *Florida Times-Union*, 11 November 1888, p. 8; "Executive Committee Work," *Florida Times-Union*, 17 November 1888, p. 8.

^{xxxii} "Democratic Duty," *Florida Times-Union*, 21 September 1888, p. 4.

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- xxxiii “Democratic Duty,” *Florida Times-Union*, 21 September 1888, p. 4.
- xxxiv “The City Council,” *Florida Times-Union*, 4 October 1888, p. 5.
- xxxv “‘Standing Off’ the Refugees,” *Florida Times-Union*, 20 October 1888, p. 5.
- xxxvi “Shutting Out the Refugees,” *Florida Times-Union*, 21 October 1888, p. 8.
- xxxvii The National Marine Hospital Service was established in 1798 to care for disabled seamen. Funded by a tax on seamen’s wages, it was the first publicly funded federal health care program in the United States and was a forerunner to the Public Health Service, now part of the present day Department of Health and Human Services. For a history of the National Marine Hospital Service, see John Duffy, *The Sanitarians: a History of American Public Health* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), pp. 157-174.
- xxxviii “City and Suburban News” and “Wanted,” *Florida Times-Union*, 24 October 1888, p. 8.
- xxxix “Fine or Imprisonment,” *Florida Times-Union*, 4 November 1888, p. 5.
- xl “To Duval’s Democracy,” *Florida Times-Union*, 6 November 1888, p. 4.
- xli “The ‘Straights’ Got There,” *Florida Times-Union*, 7 November 1888, p. 8.
- xlii “Good and Bad Government,” *Florida Times-Union*, 9 November 1888, p. 4; “The Complete County Vote,” *Florida Times-Union*, 17 November 1888, p. 8.
- xliii “A Happy Day!,” *Florida Times-Union*, 28 November 1888, p. 4; “Tardy, But Welcome,” *Florida Times-Union*, 5 December 1888, p. 4.
- xliv “Sanitary Work Imperative,” *Florida Times-Union*, 8 December 1888, p. 5; “Called Into Court,” *Florida Times-Union*, 13 December 1888, p. 4; “Build Up The City,” *Florida Times-Union*, 19 December 1888, p. 4.
- xlv “Hold What We Have,” *Florida Times-Union*, 12 December 1888, p. 4.
- xlvi On South Carolina’s 8-Box Law, see Thomas Holt, *Black Over White: Negro Political Leadership in South Carolina during Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), pp. 217-218; Michael Perman, *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 94; and, J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 50, 84-91. On the Mississippi Plan, see Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 35-71; Perman, pp. 70-90, and Kousser, pp. 139-145. On disfranchisement in Florida, see Perman, pp. 67-68 and Kousser, pp. 91-103.
- xlvii “City and Suburban News,” *Florida Times-Union*, 11 January 1889, p. 5.
- xlviii Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics*, pp. 96-97.
- xlix “Very Plain and Conclusive,” *Florida Times-Union*, 15 January 1889, p. 1.
- l “Why Roy Moody Got Left,” *Florida Times-Union*, 24 March 1889, p. 7.
- li For the history of the yellow fever epidemic of 1878 in Memphis, see John Hubert Ellis, *Yellow Fever and Public Health in the New South* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1992), pp. 37-59; and Humphreys, *Yellow Fever and the South*, pp. 60-81, 97-111. While both authors discuss the revocation of Memphis’s city charter in 1878, neither explicitly link that to the disfranchisement of the city’s black majority. Though it did deprive the city of its government, black Memphians – comprising 75% of the population – by necessity still had access to city jobs and

services, most significantly positions on the city police force. See Dennis C. Rousey, "Yellow Fever and Black Policemen in Memphis: A Post-Reconstruction Anomaly," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Aug., 1985), pp. 357-374.

^{lii} Werner Troesken, "The Limits of Jim Crow: Race and the Provision of Water and Sewerage Services in American Cities, 1880-1925," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Sep., 2002), pp. 734-772

^{liii} On disfranchisement in Tennessee, see Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics*, pp. 104-123; and Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, pp. 48-59.

^{liv} Untitled Commentary, *Florida Times-Union*, 2 March 1889, p. 4.

^{lv} "Mayor Smith Frightened," *Florida Times-Union*, 20 March 1889, p. 5; "Municipal Progress," *Florida Times-Union*, 22 March 1889, p. 4.

^{lvi} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 4 April 1889, pp. 1, 4.

^{lvii} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 4 April 1889, pp. 1, 4. By way of comparison, the entire outstanding bonded debt of the state of Florida stood at only \$382,300 as of April 1889. See *Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Florida Begun and Held at the Capitol in the City of Tallahassee, on Tuesday, April 2, 1889* (Tallahassee, FL: N. M. Bowen, 1889), p.14

^{lviii} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 6 April 1889, p. 1.

^{lix} "The Charter-Amendment Bill," *Florida Times-Union*, 6 April 1889, p. 4.

^{lx} "The Charter-Amendment Bill," *Florida Times-Union*, 6 April 1889, p. 4.

^{lxi} "The Jacksonville Bill," *Florida Times-Union*, 7 April 1889, p. 4.

^{lxii} Untitled Commentary, *Florida Times-Union*, 2 May 1889, p. 4.

^{lxiii} *Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Florida* (1889), p. 126; "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 9 April 1889, p. 1.

^{lxiv} All three letters published in the "T. U. Letterbox," *Florida Times-Union*, 10 April 1889, p. 4.

^{lxv} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 9 May 1889, p. 1.

^{lxvi} *Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Florida* (1889), pp. 626-628; "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 10 May 1889, p. 1.

^{lxvii} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 17 May 1889, p. 1.

^{lxviii} "The Legislature of Florida," *Florida Times-Union*, 22 May 1889, p. 1; "The New Council," *Florida Times-Union*, 22 May 1889, p. 4; "The Recent Appointees," *Florida Times-Union*, 23 May 1889, p. 4.

^{lxix} On the disfranchisement of African Americans in Florida, see Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics*, pp. 91-103.

^{lxx} Though popular understandings of Jim Crow often present it as monolithic and implacable, there is a broad historiography that focuses on its instability, particularly in the decades prior and during its imposition. See especially Howard N. Rabinowitz, "From Exclusion to Segregation: Southern Race Relations, 1865-1890," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (Sep., 1976), pp. 325-350; Eric Arnesen, *Waterfront Workers of New*

Orleans: Race, Class and Politics, 1863-1923 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Jane Dailey, *Before Jim Crow: the Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Daniel Letwin, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism: Alabama Coal Miners, 1878-1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Michael Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Reconstruction Mobile, 1860-1890* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002); Peter Rachleff, *Black Labor in Richmond, 1865-1890* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Blair L. M. Kelley, *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy v. Ferguson* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Robert Cassanello, "Avoiding "Jim Crow:" Negotiating Separate and Equal on Florida's Railroads and Streetcars and the Progressive Era Origins of the Modern Civil Rights Movement, 1882-1905" *Journal of Urban History* 34 (March, 2008): 435-457; and "Racial Etiquette, Violence and African American Working Class Infrapolitics in Jacksonville during World War I," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 155-169.

^{lxxi} I am indebted to Beverly J. Silver for this formulation. She makes a similar argument about the contradictions of capitalist development in her book *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).