# Part Four:

## FAREWELL

*John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave.*
. . . . . .
*John Brown is dead, he will not come again,*
. . . . . .
*Bury the South together with this man,*
*Bury the bygone South.*
. . . . . .
*Bury the whip, bury the branding-bars,*
*Bury the unjust thing*
. . . . . .
*And with these things, bury the purple dream*
*Of the America we have not been,*
*The tropic empire, seeking the warm sea,*
. . . . . .
*Bury this destiny unmanifest,*
*This system broken underneath the test.*

Stephen Vincent Benét.
*John Brown's Body.*

# 22. Washington Immolating Spartacus

Brownsville, Texas, across the Rio Grande from Matamoros, was named after Major Jacob Brown, hit by a Mexican shell and killed on the spot on May 5, 1846, at the onset of the Mexican War. Fourteen years later, the position of affairs on the Rio Grande frontier at Brownsville was "daily becoming more critically complicated," as it was "the scene of continual turmoil" which a *New York Herald* correspondent explained as follows:

> Our men and the Mexicans are natural enemies . . . It is part of the Texan's creed that what he takes from a Mexican is his, in payment for what the latter has taken from some other Texan. . . . one of the most common subjects of conversation in the saloons of Brownsville is the prospect of making a haul from some wealthy Mexican. The latter steals from us, and in return our men steal from them . . . We hate them and tell them so; they detest us, but dare not express the sentiment.[1]

One who dared express the sentiment was Juan Napomuceno Cortinas, a Rio Grande valley Mexican-American born at Camargo, Tamaulipas who resided after the war at his mother's ranch which straddled the new international border.

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[1] "Interesting from the Rio Grande," *New York Herald*, 5/2/1860, p.1, c.5.

Juan had enlisted and held the rank of captain in General Mariano Arista's army when defeated by Taylor at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma in 1846. In July, 1859, he shot and wounded the sheriff at Brownsville while resisting arrest, and on September 28 he led a band of guerrillas into the city, broke open the jail, freed all the prisoners, and killed five Americans in the process. The cause of the difficulty was said to be "a desire on the part of Cortinas, for revenge for injuries which he alleges he has received."[2]

Cortinas himself gave an explanation for his actions in a Proclamation he issued to the Mexicans of Texas:

> Fellow Countrymen--A feeling of profound indignation, the love and estimation which I profess for you, the desire that you should enjoy tranquility and the guarantees which they deny you, violating to that purpose the most sacred laws, is the motive which has caused me to address you . . .
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> Mexicans! when the State of Texas began to receive the new organization which its sovereignty demanded, as an integral part of the Union, bands of vampires, in the form of men, came and spread themselves through the towns, without any other capital than a corrupted heart and the most perverse intentions . . . with laughter in their countenances, vomiting forth that which their black entrails premeditate. Many of you have been robbed of your property, imprisoned, persecuted, assassinated, and chased like ferocious beasts. . . . for you even justice has retired from this world, leaving you to the will of your oppressors, who every day fall upon you with more fury . . . but for those monsters there is indulgence, because they are not of our race, which is unworthy, as they say, to belong to the human

[2] "Outbreak at Brownsville, Texas," *New York Tribune*, 10/11/1859, p.5, c.2.

> species. . . .
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> Mexicans! my side is taken. The voice of revelation tells me that I am appointed to perform the work of breaking the chains of your slavery, and that the Lord will provide me with a powerful arm to fight against our enemies in fulfilment of the designs of his Supreme Majesty . . .[3]

Cortinas set up camp in his mother's ranch at Río Grande, nine miles above Brownswille, and soon marshalled a force of 350 men--local Indians, Mexicans and negroes, who flocked to his banner. On October 24th he routed a party of 120 Texans that attacked his stockade, and captured their cannon and howitzer, but on December 20th, 300 United States Army troops and Texas Rangers defeated him and chased him across the river into Mexico.

The Cortinas uprising threw the border into a panic and mobilized Southern filibusters for the relief of Brownsville. Early in November, the New Orleans *True Delta* expected Walker to take command of a party, but the gray-eyed man's heart and mind belonged to Nicaragua, not to Texas. Col. S.A. Lockridge went instead, with twenty men from New Orleans, while hundreds of others were sent to Brownsville by a new organization called "American Legion, K.G.C.," or, at full length, "Knights of the Golden Circle."

In a June 13, 1859 article exposing the printed tracts of the K.G.C., which was then "in process of organization in the United States," the *New York Tribune* was the first newspaper to reveal "the existence of a new filibuster association of a formidable character, or at least an attempt

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[3]"Proclamation of Cortinas to the Mexicans of Texas," *New York Herald*, 12/27/1859, p.2, c.6.

to get up such an association."[4] Two months later, at the White Sulphur Springs in Virginia, a *Tribune* correspondent covered a preliminary "secret" K.G.C. Convention, attended by eighty to a hundred Southern military men and noted politicians. The reporter interviewed the K.G.C. American Legion commander-in-chief, General George Bickley.

In essence, Bickley proposed to conquer Mexico, establish Negro Slavery there, and either preserve the Union or break it in two, according to circumstances. He told the reporter that the K.G.C. American Legion "was organized in 1854, and has been quietly growing ever since, and that it is now strong enough to work out the destiny of the South, against every opposition."[5]

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[4]"K.G.C.," *New York Tribune*, 6/13/1859, p.4, c.2.

[5]"The K.G.C. in Action," *New York Tribune*, 8/18/1859, p.6, c.5.
The K.G.C.'s name symbolized the slave empire Bickley had in mind: a "Golden Circle," with Cuba at its center, embracing the South, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and part of South America.
The correspondent described Bickley thus: "He is about 35 or 38 years of age, about 5 feet 10 inches, with deep blue, sharp eyes, heavy beard, and looks as determined as man can. He will probably weigh about 150 lbs., is very erect and proud, yet one of the most affable men in conversation I have ever met with. He is well educated, thoroughly acquainted with the United States and Mexico, and has traveled much in Europe. He is a Disunionist in politics, and, if he succeeds, will do much to bring about a disruption of the Union, though he says his movement will alone prevent it. He is surrounded by his suite, and, I must say, they are fine-looking fellows. He talks very much, but if noticed closely it will be observed that he measures every word, and never refers to Mexico as his field of operations; but he draws dismal pictures of Spanish-American civilization --the dangers of the South--and argues strongly for the entire American control of the Gulf. Few young men will talk with him five minutes without catching his enthusiasm. There is that in his voice and mode of expression which is not easily forgotten. . . . I think him a most dangerous man."
According to the *Houston* (Texas) *Telegraph* (11/1/1860), the K.G.C.'s originated "in the deep and settled hatred of Bickley to Abolitionists," which "took possession of his bosom when he was only eleven years old, at which early age he saw his little brother and sister murdered by blacks, during a servile insurrection, urged on by Abolitionists." "The Knights of the Golden Circle," *New York Tribune*, 11/12/1860, p.3, c.6.
During the Civil War, the K.G.C. shifted its field of operations to the North and became the leading subversive organization for the Confederacy. Its founder passed into history as "George Washington Lamb Bickley, a

The Cortinas uprising and the simultaneous Harper's Ferry invasion in October 1859 (discussed below) aroused public sentiments in the South that favored the growth of Bickley's secret military organization. K.G.C. units began marching towards the Mexican border early in 1860. A company of thirty arrived in Brownsville all the way from Baltimore on April 19. It was estimated that there were then from three to nine hundred of the Knights in the Rio Grande valley. They were mostly camped on the river, and carried such utensils as rifles, revolvers, and bowie knives. They frequently exchanged fire with armed Mexicans across the river, who proclaimed their intention to resist and to destroy American influence in the valley.

Americans along the Rio Grande received the Knights with open arms, for they were eager to carve out another slice of Mexican territory, feeling strongly that the United States was "destined to extend very speedily to the mountains in the west." A Texas Rangers unit had remained in the valley, camped a short distance from Brownsville, "and I can assure you that their presence is no source of pleasure to the general run of Mexicans on either side of the river. They are a terror to the tribe of greasers."[6]

The Knights covered their filibustering scheme under the pretense of assisting the liberal government of Benito Juárez fight for full control of the country with the conservative government of Miguel Miramón. A K.G.C. commander assured the *New York Herald* correspondent, that the Buchanan administration was "thoroughly mixed up in the scheme,"

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rover, promoter, and charlatan. He had a glib tongue and facile pen and worked in Cincinnati as a lawyer, lecturer, writer, doctor, and teacher." Frank L. Klement, *The Copperheads of the Middle West*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 134.

[6]"Interesting from the Rio Grande," *New York Herald*, 5/2/1860, p.1, c.5.

which consisted of, "first, to assist Mexico, and secondly, to obtain a legitimate path to Cuba, by procuring a war between this country and Spain." The Rangers had remained in the valley "with the view that they might be able to participate in any filibuster movement made against Mexico."[7]

Slaveholders, specially, in Texas and the Southwest, demanded expansion, for they had lost $2,500,000 of slave property by the escape of 3,000 negroes into Mexico within the past few years. They envisioned that, by moving the border from the fordable river "to where nature has erected a natural impassable barrier to the escape of negroes, a small guard stationed in the passes of the Sierra Madre mountains will effectually check the flight of the blackbirds."[8]

But, in Washington, the administration well knew that, outside of "a few dissatisfied and reckless spirits" in northern Mexico, the entire population detested the filibusters, and that "General Bickley's plan of operations for southernizing Mexico" was "visionary."[9]

Fortunately for all concerned, Bickley's scheme to southernize Mexico never made it south of the border, because it was only "a filibustering fantasy of the first magnitude."[10] The Rangers were withdrawn from the valley in May, and the Knights followed suit and went back home.

Meanwhile at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, at the time of the Brownsville panic, John Brown --a Juan Cortinas of the North--became a martyr and kindled the violent fire that

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[7]"News from Northern Mexico," *New York Herald*, 5/23/1860, p.5, c.1.

[8]Ibid.

[9]"News from the National Capital," *New York Herald*, 7/20/1860, p.5, c.1.

[10]C.A. Bridges, "The Knights of the Golden Circle: A Filibustering Fantasy," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, January, 1941, p. 302.

broke the chains of slavery and destroyed the Old South.

"Terrible 'saint'" John Brown was born at Torrington, Connecticut in 1800. He was the grandson of "Revolutionary Brown," Captain of the "Train Band" of West Simsbury in 1776, who in turn was the great-grandson of Mayflower "Pilgrim Father" Peter Brown. John grew up at Hudson, Ohio, where his father was a prominent pioneer settler in 1805. At age 18 he traveled east to study for the Gospel ministry, but soon returned to Hudson, unable to complete his studies because of inflammation of the eyes.

John's first public appearance was in 1855, when he took his wife and children to Osawatomie, Kansas, determined to fight slavery in the ongoing Border Ruffian war. He believed himself commissioned by God to deliver the African race from bondage in the United States. He declared he had been impressed with that idea early in life, and stated that his object in going to Kansas was to distinguish himself in such a manner as to establish in the minds of the colored people confidence in his ability as a leader in the field.

He distinguished himself from the first skirmish to the last, and soon "Osawatomie Brown," "Fighting Brown," or "Old Brown" was synonymous of terror in the Territory:

> He seems to have been laboring under a religious hallucination to the effect that he was the appointed instrument of the Almighty for putting an end to human slavery. What time he and his handful of men in Kansas were not marching or fighting, they were praying and singing psalms--Brown himself passing many hours wrestling in secret prayer. His evident hallucination caused all the clear-headed men in Kansas to avoid him or to have as little as possible to do with him. The same feeling made him dreaded by the Missourians as a supernatural being. His name inspired the same terror on the border, as the "Nick of the Woods" among the

> Indians of Kentucky, or that of the Cid among the Moorish hordes of Spain. It was a name to fright children to bed with.[11]

Brown disappeared from Kansas in March, 1859. He concealed his movements so well that his most intimate acquaintances supposed him to be in England. He planned to carry on a sort of guerilla warfare in the South, drawing to his standard as many blacks and whites as possible, before attacking any opposing forces. But he was regarded as a madman and secured very few followers.

He attacked and captured the Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia at 9 p.m. on Sunday, October 16th, 1859. He had only twenty-one men, himself included, (seventeen whites and four blacks), and no one else came to take up the weapons he planned to distribute.

The U.S. Marines under Col. Robert E. Lee stormed the Armory at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, instantly killed twelve and captured five rebels, two of them (Brown and Stevens) seriously wounded. Another one escaped but was soon caught. Only three that had left on an errand on Monday remained at large.[12]

Old Brown had nine saber wounds on him. Two of his sons were among the dead; two more had been killed in Kansas. Strangely, a reporter who interviewed him in jail called him a filibuster when comparing his eyes to William Walker's:

> After some little delay we were introduced in the room where Brown and Stevens lay. We found the former to be a six-footer, although as he lay he had the ap-

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[11] "Osawatomie Brown," *New York Tribune*, 10/24/1859, p.6, c.3.

[12] "The Harper's Ferry Outbreak," *New York Herald*, 10/20/1859, p.3, c.2.

> pearance of being some six inches shorter than that. He had a rather peculiar shaped head, long gray hair, which at this time was matted, the sabre cut in his head having caused blood to flow freely, to the complete disfigurement of his face, which, like his hands, was begrimed with dirt, evidently the result of continued exposure to the smoke of powder. His eyes are of a pale blue, or perhaps a sharp gray--much such an eye as I remember his brother-fillibuster, Walker, to have. . . .
>
> Both men [Brown and Stevens] seem prepared for death--seemed to court it rather; perhaps under the idea that they will be acknowledged martyrs, but more possibly under the conviction of having performed a sacred duty.[13]

Brown did not value his life; or, at least, was totally unmoved at the prospect of losing it. When told that an attempt at rescue might be made, he calmly remarked: "I do not know that I ought to encourage any attempt to save my life. I am not sure that it would not be better for me to die at this time. I am not incapable of error, and I may be wrong; but I think that perhaps my objects would be nearer fulfillment if I should die."[14] And when a slaveholder Presbyterian minister wished to advise him spiritually, Brown repelled him, saying that they did not worship the same God.

When the State of Virginia swung Old Brown from the gallows on December 2d, 1859, his objects came closer to fulfillment. "Southerners thought of Haiti and shuddered," as they watched in fright

> . . . the admiration for a brave man that Northern opinion could not conceal. And the babble of shocked

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[13] "Brown's Appearance," *New York Tribune*, 10/22/1859, p.7, c.2.

[14] "John Brown's Invasion," *New York Tribune*, 11/9/1859, p.6, c.3.

> repudiation by politicians and public men was dimmed by one bell-like note from Emerson: "That new saint, than whom nothing purer or more brave was ever led by love of men into conflict and death . . . will make the gallows glorious like the cross."[15]

In France, Victor Hugo (of whom it was said, "When Victor Hugo speaks two continents listen") added insult to injury to Southerners as he commented: "There is something more terrible than Cain slaying Abel: it is Washington immolating Spartacus."[16]

The execution of John Brown instantly widened the North-South rift to a point that inexorably led to the Civil War. Blue-Eyed Man of Destiny John Brown (commissioned by God to deliver the African race from bondage in the United States) and Black-Eyed Man of Destiny Juan Cortinas (appointed by the Lord to break the chains of slavery for the Mexicans in Texas) had simultaneously placed the South, psychologically, under siege.

Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny William Walker (commissioned by Providence to introduce African slavery into Nicaragua), unmoved, went on with his mission.

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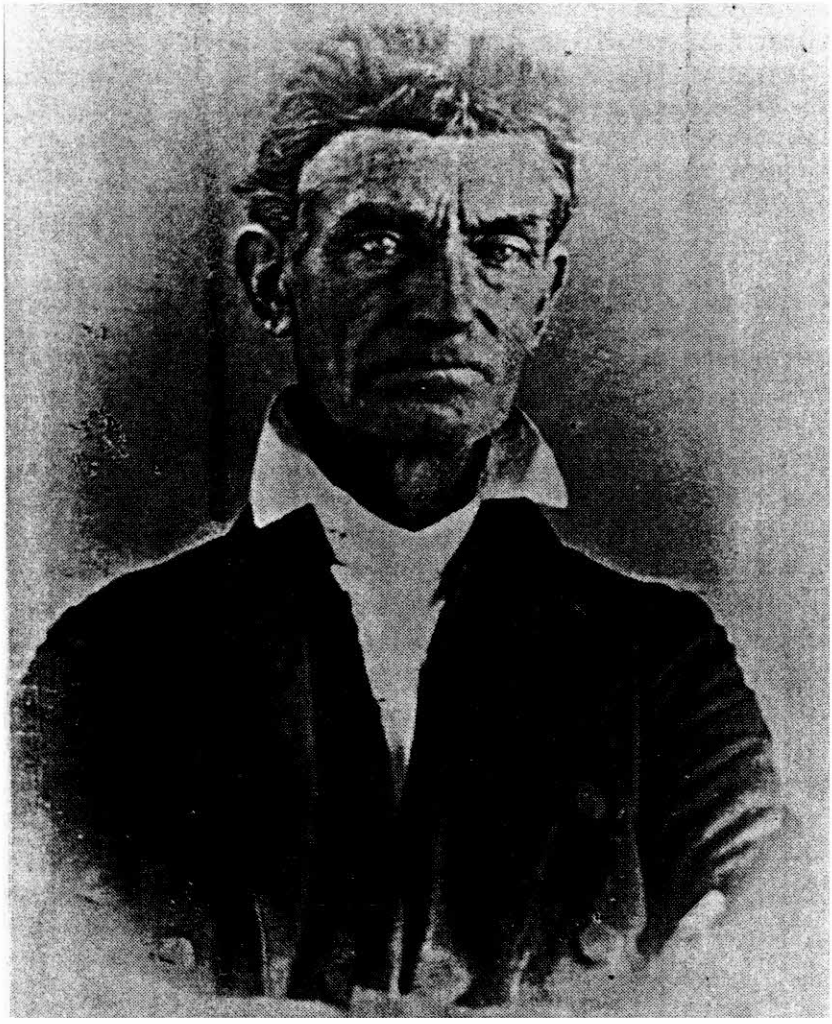
[15]Samuel Eliot Morison, Henry Steele Commager and William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Growth of the American Republic,* Vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 602.

[16]"The John Brown Dreamers in Europe," *New York Herald,* 1/7/1860, p.4, c.4. Henningsen responded for the South to the French poet: "To this suggestive sentence, which condenses into a few words a world of thought, I have heard a simple answer made by Southern men. To you it may appear flippant and frivolous, yet it embraces a whole theory on which tens of thousands not only conscientiously justify the course which you pursue and you condemn, but hold themselves in duty bound to follow it. It is simply this: 'That Spartacus struggled to free white men, not negroes.'" *Letter from General C. F. Henningsen in Reply to the Letter of Victor Hugo on the Harper's Ferry Invasion,* (New York: Davies & Kent, Printers, 1860), p. 6.



**John Brown**
*"Blue-Eyed Man of Destiny" (p. 227)*
*"synonymous of terror in the Territory" (p. 224)*

# 23. Time for Memoirs

The trial of Walker's filibusters for violation of the neutrality law in connection with the aborted *Philadelphia* expedition, took place at Judge McCaleb's Federal Court in New Orleans. On October 18th, 1859, four subordinates were charged--Col. Anderson and Captains Maury, Fayssoux and Scott--and the four underlings were acquitted on the 24th. The *Philadelphia*, libeled by the United States District Attorney, was later released by Judge McCaleb, who "luminously" reviewed "the facts and law of the case" and decided that "no decree of forfeiture can be rendered against this vessel, and that the libel must be dismissed."[1] It goes without saying that none of the leaders--neither Walker, nor Henningsen, nor White--had to face trial.

Enjoying liberty, but having reached the end of the line without minimal means at hand for another expedition, Walker spent his time writing. Thus, while Juan Cortinas created a panic at Brownsville, and John Brown made the South shudder with fear, William Walker calmly wrote his memoirs in New Orleans. He titled them *The War in Nicaragua*, covering events from his arrival in the country on the *Vesta* in June, 1855, to his departure on the *St. Mary's* in May, 1857.

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[1] "The Steamship Philadelphia," *New York Herald*, 3/6/1860, p.1, c.4. Anderson and Maury, and fellow filibusters, had also got off scot-free after the *Susan* expedition.

After four months of assiduous labor, on February 17, 1860 Walker took his manuscript to book dealer and publisher S.H. Goetzel & Co., at Mobile, to arrange its publication. Mr. Goetzel was enthusiastic, saying he could sell 20,000 copies in Alabama alone; the book would be printed in New York; he would go there with Walker to superintend the work; and he thought that he could get it in the market by the first of April.

Walker left Mobile for New York the next day, by way of Montgomery and Charleston. On February 27th, he handed the finished manuscript to Goetzel, in New York, and thereafter they both superintended the printing. On March 5th, Walker wrote to Fayssoux: "My business goes on well here. The book is to be ready by the 20th of the month; so you may have it by the first of April. The publisher insists on putting an engraved likeness of the Author in the book; and although it offends my sense of propriety I have to submit to it as a part of the 'humbug' of the trade."[2]

Walker finished proof-reading on Wednesday, March 14. Ten days later he was in Louisville with the first printed copies of his work, which he must have autographed for his father, sister and brother-in-law. On passing through Cincinnati, the press erroneously reported that Walker was on his way to the Rio Grande. When he arrived at New Orleans on board the riverboat *Diana,* in the morning of April 10, *The War in Nicaragua* was already on sale in the city.

No sooner landed, and walking down the street with Captains Fayssoux and Scott, Walker suddenly encountered an irate Colonel Lockridge who denounced the book as far as it related to him, "as being totally false in almost every particular." He informed Walker that he would hold him "responsible therefor at an early day." Walker simply

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[2]Item 68, Fayssoux Collection, Tulane.

answered, "When you please, sir."

A duel was averted at the last moment by the good sense of Lockridge's second, Col. R. H. Purdom, who convinced him to withdraw the challenge pending Walker's reply to a question: In criticizing Lockridge's actions in the book, did he intend to charge him with acting otherwise than as a gentleman of honor and courage? Walker said he didn't, and added: "When I aim to make charges against the character of any man, let me assure you that it shall be in words not easily misunderstood."[3]

In the three years following 1857, Walker's war in Nicaragua had become ancient history for a South already under siege, and Walker's book utterly failed to impact on current events. In the North its reception was naturally negative. Greeley's *Tribune* mentioned its publication, but neglected to include it in its weekly reviews, while Bennett, in the *Herald,* took advantage of the occasion to show clearly once again what he thought of the "little gray-eyed man":

> Books Received to April 15.
>
> THE WAR IN NICARAGUA. Written by Gen. William Walker. S.H. Goetzel, Mobile.
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> The man who is his own advocate has a fool for his client, says the proverb, and the axiom paraphrased may be justly applied to the author of this book. General Walker, surrounded by the reserve which he took care to maintain towards those who took service under him, was a personage of undefined and undefinable mental proportions, and he consequently passed current with the public for a certain amount of capacity. His memoir

[3] "Trouble Among the Filibusters," *New York Herald,* 4/21/1860, p.4, c.5. Although Walker in fact did not impugn Lockridge's honor or courage, he did accuse him of "weakness and incapacity" (p. 364), and comparing Rudler to him, stated: "merit is modest and unobtrusive, while pretension is forward and presumptive" (p. 355).

> will prove fatal to the reputation, such as it is, that he has acquired, inasmuch as it shows that a man may occupy a large space in the eye of the world without having much in him.[4]

American historians have been kinder, giving Walker high marks for his "passion for truth" and praising his *War in Nicaragua* for the "scrupulous accuracy" of the facts recorded. The four leading Walker researchers concur. The only fault detected is in his treatment of the slavery question, which they consider insincere propaganda:

> The facts are recorded with scrupulous accuracy, and the greatest compliment that could be paid him on this score has come from hostile Central American historians, who while impugning his motives and condemning his acts accept his version of the actual events without question. . . .
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> In Chapter VIII he poses as a potential saviour of the Southern cause, and asserts that the Nicaraguan movement offers the South a last and only hope for the safeguarding of her existing economic and social institutions. It is this chapter which has caused Walker to appear in the eyes of many students of his history as one of the chief apostles of slavery propagandism. Due regard, however, should be given to the circumstances under which the work was written.[5]
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> Factually, the book is so accurate that even Central American historians to whom Walker was the great enemy accepted it as a reliable source of data. But Walker's passion for truth was at odds with the practical need to raise money for a new expedition, and much of the book

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[4] "Notices of New Publications," *New York Herald*, 4/17/1860, p.7, c.3.

[5] William O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916; repr., Russell & Russell, 1969), pp. 380-381.

was an effort to reaffirm his devotion to the South and to convince readers of the importance of Nicaragua to the future of Southern institutions.[6]

Much of the honesty of the rest of the book is weakened by the chapter on slavery, for Walker did not believe in the institution and, by pretending that his intentions in Central America were entirely those of a champion of bondage, he revealed pitifully that his original idealism had given way to a heedless lusting after power. . . .

In the section of the work devoted to actual warfare, in the period between June, 1855, when the Immortals landed, and May, 1857, when Davis forced surrender, there is an honest effort to be accurate. Historians of Central America, although biased against Walker, have inclined to accept his statistics on battles in preference to the official reports of their own military men.[7]

Written in fluent disciplined prose, the book dispassionately described the magnificent landscape of Nicaragua, exposed the shoddy politics of Central America, and gave an accurate firsthand account of the filibusters' military campaigns in Nicaragua, including victories and defeats. . . . Then, leaving truthfulness to one side, he indulged himself in some far-fetched racist, proslavery propaganda, as he exhorted the South to introduce African slavery to Nicaragua immediately.[8]

In my opinion, Chapter VIII, "The Walker Administration," is perhaps the most accurate in Walker's book: his views on

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[6] Albert Z. Carr, *The World and William Walker*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963), p. 258.

[7] Laurence Greene, *The Filibuster*, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937), pp. 313, 315.

[8] Frederic Rosengarten, *freebooters must die!*, (Wayne, Pennsylvania: Haverford House, Publishers, 1976), p. 190.

slavery, expounded in that chapter, are precisely the same views he had repeatedly expressed before, already recorded in this biography. Chapter VIII is a remarkably truthful account of Walker's attempt to radically change the primary form of the crystal in Nicaragua, in complete harmony with the facts recorded here in Book Four and in the other volumes.

Consequently, the problem with Walker's book is just the opposite: he tried to conceal that slavery extension was his aim from the start. In so doing, he eliminated altogether the Know-Nothing connection, as I already pointed out in Book Three, Chapter 21. The case of Know-Nothing E.J.C. Kewen illustrates this point.

Kewen was not only a most valuable slavery enthusiast and Walker's agent in California in 1855-56, but he was also the agent who afterwards organized the South for Walker. At the time of the *Fashion* expedition in December, 1857, after Kewen had served a full year as Walker's "commissioner" in the South (see Book 4, pp. 152, 154), a *New York Tribune* correspondent reported from Washington:

> The general interest and sympathy manifested by the South in buccaneerism, under the late developments of its natural aim and purpose, the revival of the slave-trade, began with the travels of Col. Kewen, the agent of Walker and Henningsen, through the South during the past season.
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> *The entire system of the State committees organized by him, and who maintain an active correspondence, backed by pecuniary remittances, with the Central Committee of New Orleans, is based upon the idea of converting Nicaragua, not only into a slave territory,*

*but a slave mart.*[9]

The correspondent asserted that, as a result of Kewen's work, "the plan for the conquest and colonization of Central America by filibusters has been adopted by the South, and is represented in the Cabinet." The State committees organized by Kewen collected funds and recruited men for Walker, and two representatives from each slaveholding State met personally or by proxy at New Orleans, which gave to the *Fashion* expedition "the character and dignity of a political organization."

Then a problem arose when "the Committee of two from each one of the Southern States, after mature deliberation at New-Orleans, arrived at the conclusion that Henningsen was better qualified to head a military expedition than Walker, whose blunders at Leon, Granada, St. George and Rivas fairly exhausted the enthusiasm even of his Southern adherents."[10] That was apparently the reason for a sudden break in relations between Walker and Kewen, and for Kewen's departure from New Orleans, in December, 1857, never again to collaborate with Walker.[11]

Walker's treatment of E.J.C. Kewen in his book is tellingly

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[9] "The Central American Conspiracy," *New York Tribune*, 12/23/1857, p.6, c.1. On March 6, 1858, Walker was received "with great honors" on board the slaver yacht *Wanderer* at New Orleans, before its first trip to Africa. Thereafter, the yacht made regular voyages. In December, 1858 it brought a cargo of 420 "wild Africans" to a plantation in South Carolina. A year later its skipper, Captain J. Egbert Farnham, was imprisoned in Savannah, charged with piracy in connection with the slave trade (*New York Herald*, 3/9/1858, p.5, c.5; 12/22/1858, p.8, c.2; 12/14/1859, p.2, c.2; 4/17/1860, p.2, c.3). Farnham was a Walker filibuster, recruited by Parker H. French in New York in January, 1856 (Book 3, p. 259; Book 4, p. 221).

[10] "The Central American Conspiracy," *New York Tribune*, 12/16/1857, p.5, c.3.

[11] "The Difficulty between Gen. Walker and Col. Kewen," *New York Tribune*, 9/22/1857, p.5, c.1; "Personal Intelligence," *New York Herald*, 12/12/1857, p.8, c.3.

inadequate. He mentions but Kewen three times: as one of the commissioners "appointed to ascertain the amount due from the Canal Company to the State" (p. 153); as "a civil officer of the State" (p. 187); and as a "volunteer aid" who "acted gallantly during the day" in the April 11, 1856 Battle of Rivas (p. 200). By withholding from the reader all reference to slavery agent Kewen in California and in the South, Walker suppressed vital information and hence he produced sadly incomplete, inaccurate memoirs.

Other inaccuracies mar Walker's narrative of his war in Nicaragua, some of which were seen in the previous volumes. Walker himself admitted in the Preface that his work was not free from error:

> No history is so hard to write as that of our own times. . . . The task is even more difficult if a man attempts to narrate events in which he has taken part. . . . But if the memoir writer be fair and discreet, he may contribute materials for future use, and his very errors may instruct after ages. The author of the following narrative does not expect to attain perfect truth in all things; he merely asks the reader to give him credit of the desire to state facts accurately, and to reason justly about the circumstances attending the presence of the Americans in Nicaragua.[12]

But in order to comprehend Walker's memoirs--and to explain the errors which cropped up in his book despite his desire to state facts accurately, and to reason justly--the unconscious forces at work, that led him astray, must be taken into account. This will be done in the following section, by applying the Inner Crescent City concepts explored in Book One.

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[12]William Walker, *The War in Nicaragua*, (Mobile: S.H. Goetzel & Co., 1860), p. vii.

**William Walker**
*"engraved likeness of the Author in the book" (p. 230)*

## To My Comrades in Nicaragua

I dedicate this effort to do justice to their acts and motives: To the living, with the hope that we may soon meet again on the soil for which we have suffered more than the pangs of death—the reproaches of a people for whose welfare we stood ready to die: To the memory of those who perished in the struggle, with the vow that as long as life lasts no peace shall remain with the foes who libel their names and strive to tear away the laurel which hangs over their graves.

W. W.

# Dedication

*by the Author in Walker's memoirs*