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**THE PROCEEDINGS**

**of**

**The South Carolina  
Historical Association**

**2002**

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Robert C. Figueira and Stephen Lowe  
Co-Editors

The South Carolina Historical Association  
South Carolina Department of Archives and History  
Columbia, South Carolina  
*<http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/scha/scha.htm>*

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The SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION is an organization that furthers the teaching and understanding of history. The only requirement for membership is an interest in and a love for history. At the annual meeting papers on German, British, Asian, U.S., Southern, and South Carolina history are routinely presented. Sessions on race relations, gender issues and the teaching of history are standard. Papers presented at the annual meeting may be published in *The Proceedings*, a refereed journal.

Membership benefits include: a subscription to *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association*, notification of the annual meeting, the right to submit a proposal for a paper for presentation at the annual meeting, the quarterly *SCHA Newsletter*, and the annual membership roster of the Association.

SCHA membership is from January 1 to December 31. Student members must currently be enrolled in school. Regular members are those who are employed or are actively seeking employment. Life members are 10-year members of the organization who have retired. To renew or join, please return this application with your check to: William Brockington, Jr., Treasurer SCHA, Department of History, USC Aiken, 171 University Parkway, Aiken, SC 29801.

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- Student (\$5)
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## Program Questionnaire

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By completing this questionnaire you will assist future program committees in planning annual meetings of interest to Association members. The secretary will provide this information to the incoming chair of the program committee and to the editor of *The Proceedings*.

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Have you presented a similar paper at another professional meeting? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, give location and date \_\_\_\_\_

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Would you be willing to review papers for publication in *The Proceedings*? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, on what general subject \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Professor M. Ron Cox, Jr.  
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University of South Carolina at Salkehatchie  
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## Editor's Notes

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*The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association* is a refereed journal containing selected papers and abstracts of papers presented at the annual meeting. The editor and the Executive Board serve as the editorial committee in conjunction with members chosen for their expertise. The editor disclaims any responsibility for the scholarship, statements of fact or opinion, and the conclusions of contributors.

The editor is especially indebted to those colleagues who reviewed papers submitted for publication. In every case, their comments and suggestions improved the quality of the papers presented here. Reviewers for the 2001 volume were:

Katherine D. Cann, Spartanburg Methodist College  
Joel S. Cleland, Lander University  
James Dunlap, III, Limestone College  
James Farmer, USC Aiken  
Fritz Hamer, South Carolina State Museum  
Linda Hayner, Bob Jones University  
A. V. Huff, Jr., Furman University  
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Melissa Walker, Converse College

As I conclude a three-year term as editor of *The Proceedings*, I am deeply grateful to the authors who submitted papers for publication in the 1999, 2000, and 2001 volumes. Their cooperation in revising for publication papers written for oral presentation has made my task easier. Without doubt, reviewers frequently saved both authors and editor from factual or grammatical errors. The assistance of Dr. Rodger Stroup and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History has been invaluable. Every editor should be so fortunate as to have the final copy prepared by a person as gifted as Judy Andrews at the Archives Publications Office. Her contributions to the recent issues of *The Proceedings* are beyond measure.



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*Joyce A. Wood, Anderson College*



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## Building Bridges For The Next Millenia: Partnerships In The History World

Sam Thomas

There are two quotes that I believe best sums up the importance of history, and the responsibility that we, as historians, owe to society although neither of the writers was an historian. I will open with the first and close with the second.

The most effectual means of preventing tyranny is to illuminate, as far as practical, the minds of the people at large, and more especially to give them knowledge of those facts which history exhibiteth, that possessed thereby of the experience of other ages and countries, they may be able to know ambition under all of its shapes, and be prompt to exert their natural powers to defeat its purposes. *Thomas Jefferson*

Barnard Bailyn, former historian at Harvard University and past president of the American Historical Association states that, "history . . . is public knowledge, and the broader, the more popular the audience for accurate history, the better."

As we assembled here today know, history serves us in so many different yet interconnected ways. History informs and educates us by providing perspective and context that allow us to make informed, and, hopefully, intelligent, decisions about the future; but history does more than teach and prepare us. History also has both the power and the energy to entertain, to delight, to expand, and to intensify the experience of being who we are, of being American, of being South Carolinians.

All historians, whether teaching, writing, or presenting, work in teams all the time. Historians, history organizations, and history institutions working in partnership with each other and with their communities immediately rise to the top as the leaders in advancing the cause of the world of history. Simply, we are the keepers and compilers of our shared record of the past. We all must keep this in mind. We are the movers and the shakers of the future. Now, granted, we may not have the financial resources that many others do, but the research, the writing, the exhibiting, the interpreting we do, in the long-run, goes far beyond our present times.

By helping to save and keep history's resources we form a deeper connection with our culture, our heritage, our people, our nation. And we do this best by joining and sharing with others in sharing the evidence and engaging in the intellectual exchange of ideas in our chosen field. It is true that "Knowledge is Power"; and the

more knowledge we have the more power we have, but it is nearly impossible to increase that knowledge on an individual basis, whether as an individual researcher or an individual institution. None of us here today has ever completed a project completely on our own without additional assistance. That is the nature of history, and the nature of doing history.

By preserving and presenting the evidence of the past and by actively connecting past, present, and future through our writings, our exhibitions, our public programming, historians and history organizations pass along the gift of history to the future generations. We are the sentinels of the twenty-first century Enlightenment.

In Britain the chief “caretaker” of a collection, or collections, is called the keeper. I think that is a telling title. It is somewhat unfortunate we do not use that title more in this country. We historians are keepers. Through all the different facets of our jobs—writing, teaching, exhibiting, preserving—we are “keeping” history alive, and in so doing we “keep” the culture and heritage of our region, our state, our nation alive for those future generations.

In this process of keeping history alive, we must not forget, however, that there are many different facets to that history. I am reminded by something I once heard a good friend and fellow colleague remind me of when he said, “you know shared experience does not mean shared view.” That is something that I, as a curator and a historian, try to keep in mind every day, and I am constantly reminding my co-workers of it. Just because you and I were there at the same event, at same time, doesn’t mean we will come away with the same thoughts. As all of you already know, no two historians will *ever* totally agree on *anything*. But then that is something that makes this field so lively and keeps this study alive—and keeps conferences like this going.

By doing history we accept a great responsibility into our hands. It is a responsibility to those we work with, those we direct, those we train, and those to whom we present. We are a necessity for the future of South Carolinian and American generations. We are a positive good, to borrow a term from the nineteenth century.

As every one of you know, this state has a rich heritage. But despite that rich heritage South Carolina has been slow to embrace it. Since the recent success of *The Patriot* heritage tourism is beginning to take on a more important role in South Carolina. The potential financial benefits of heritage tourism brings with it an increased importance to preserve. We are losing many of our historic buildings and structures at such an alarming rate, particularly in my region with the rapid growth emanating from Charlotte. Our landscape, our historic landscape, is daily being altered.

Heritage tourism, according to the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (PRT), is the fastest growing portion of the state’s largest indus-

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try, bringing in 2.7 million visitors a year. What's more these visitors spend \$581 million and directly impact 13,570 jobs. But as Buddy Jennings, director of PRT has stated, "if we don't work to preserve our state's historic fabric now, we aren't going to have resources with which to build upon."

South Carolina used to be an agricultural state, but much of that look is quickly being lost to developers' bulldozers and urban sprawl. Homes and farm structures are being destroyed; historical and archaeological sites are being threatened. These are the very sites that support and promote heritage tourism.

The American Association of Museums published in 1999 the results of a comprehensive study the organization undertook on the state of museums in American society. The results were somewhat surprising. The report noted that the United States had more than fifteen thousand museums and approximately two-thirds of them are history museums. They average about 865 million visitors per year or 2.3 million visitors per day. This number represented a 50 percent increase in visitation in just one decade since the last survey.

Based on this survey, which involved a core group of 1,500 people from across the country from all segments of society, historians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen published that same year *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. In this publication the two presented a picture of how Americans view this nation's history organizations. They found that over 90 percent of the people surveyed engage regularly in history-related activities. They also found that 57 percent visit museums and historic sites on a regular basis. The interviewees were also asked when they feel most connected to the past. Second only to gatherings with their families, they cited visits to museums and historic sites most often as the situation that makes them feel most in touch with history.

The survey didn't stop here, however. When asked to identify their most trusted sources for knowledge of the past, again there was a surprising answer. They cited as first, museums and historic sites—ahead of eyewitnesses, family members, history books, movies, television shows, high school history teachers and college professors—those are not ranked from most trusted to least.

Even with this rather brightly colored view of the future of history in this country, there are some worrisome problems confronting those of us who struggle every day to preserve, present, teach, and interpret the past for our future generations. The greatest problem facing us in our struggle is, and probably always will be, financial. That is why creating partnerships within our world is becoming more and more imperative. As funds get tighter and tighter it is becoming increasingly more difficult to undertake the expanding demands that are increasingly being asked for in

public programming and education. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly evident that in order to survive as historians and in order to keep our field and “craft” alive, we must look more and more to creating partnerships both within and outside our world.

The same report I previously mentioned also found that the media and local officials in general believe that museums and institutions of higher learning primarily serve a limited segment of the population. This is a dangerous view, for it tends to contribute to the attitude that museums and institutions of higher learning—and museums should rightfully be included in that category—are already sustained by that limited segment. Therefore, it is becoming more imperative that we professional historians begin to roll up our pants legs and wade into the river of history. History is a craft, and as a craft it needs to be practiced. We need to be out in the field more in one way or another, as this will continue to build our audience.

Students are increasingly being turned off by history. They find it boring and dull. What is worrying me, however, is that an increasing number are showing that their knowledge and understanding of major leaders and key events is sketchy, but what I believe is even more dangerous is their methods of historical inquiry never seem to develop. These are the people who will be the voters and leaders of tomorrow. History must be brought alive to this future generation. Whether we are writing, interpreting, or presenting, it is our responsibility to help our younger audience make the connection between their present lives and their shared heritage. If we accomplish this then we are also creating a future generation of volunteers, patrons, and supporters. The key here is to make history come alive.

I must tell you of a personal incident that happened to me in my last US survey course I was teaching at York Technical College. I had a student who seldom missed class, but also seldom paid attention. Those of you who teach know that as you stand up there lecturing you notice the ones who are keeping up and those who are nodding off. Well, we were nearing the end of the first half of the US survey course, and this particular student, I’ll call him Harry, was constantly nodding off in class. This particular night we were talking about the Civil War—in only an hour and a half—and he was nodding off as usual. I decided to spice the lecture up a bit with a sidebar about Union General “Fighting Joe” Hooker and his attempts to restore the morale to the Union army following their disastrous loss at Fredericksburg. I was telling them that one of the ways General Hooker decided to bolster his men’s morale was to not only allow women to follow his army but to encourage it. Thus, these camp followers earned the nickname of “Hooker’s girls,” or “hookers.” Well, when I said this, Harry, who up to this point had been easing through the lecture, shot straight up in his seat, and only then did he realize he had moved so suddenly he had gained



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the attention of the entire class. For Harry, history was coming alive for the first time that entire semester. So, our audience has to find a connection.

Creating a connection with their heritage for our audience is not an easy task. In my own field as a museum curator, exhibition presentations are changing. It used to be fine to present an important document or object to the viewer with a bit of descriptive text, but that is no longer going to satisfy our audience. We are finding that we are now having to include more information to hold their attention—and the visitors who come through our doors are requiring and asking for more and more. They are no longer content to simply know what they have in front of them is an important cooking pot. They now want to know what is important about it and the context it fits within.

Whether we are writing books, producing course materials, or creating exhibitions, we are imparting to the world a knowledge of the events that transpired in the past. In doing this we carry a responsibility to accurately present the material in as lively and unbiased a manner as possible. Too often we get caught up in our “ivory towers,” looking down on the rest of the world; looking down on the folks, the organizations that are doing the real work—the people who are actually getting out there wading through history in their boots. This attitude was recently brought back to me over a group discussion with some revolutionary reenactors.

At Historic Brattonsville in York County we have a 1780 battle site called Huck’s Defeat. For the past ten years I have been researching and writing about the battle in one form or another. There are a number of different accounts of the battle, but not one of them agrees. Over the course of the ten years I had put together what I thought was the most accurate account of the battle. And then one Saturday as I took a couple of reenactors over the battlefield, they began to ask me some unusual questions and noticing some things I had not really thought about. After the tour, I gave one of the fellows copies of all the different accounts, and he began to assemble them into a “new” version of the battle—one that now makes a lot more sense.

I had never thought to include a lowly, common reenactor in any of the discussions on this battle, but I will from now on. What I learned from this is we can’t be snobs about our history. No ethnic group owns its heritage, just as no discipline owns its field. We must be willing to listen—from all directions. And we must be open to creating partnerships in areas we had not considered before. Only through these partnerships will we be able to add to our knowledge and research and to reach a larger audience.

There are great possibilities out there for us all if we can just raise the bar by trying to further the prospects of creating partners. The partners are also out there,

and in many cases they are just as willing to join with you as you are with them. In this way we reach a greater audience and sustain ourselves in the process, and, hopefully, in that process we create a greater connection between our audience and their heritage.

Only after our audience finds a connection and an interest to carry their personal attachment to history forward will we fulfill the responsibility of being true keepers. We have to keep in mind that no matter what we do within the field, it will all be for nothing if we don't have that audience. It is that audience that will sustain us—not we ourselves. We are the keepers who will interest and then train that next generation of keepers.

I will close with a few words from that eminent scholar and theologian, Dr. Russell H. Conwell, writing in the 1880s:

He or she who can give to the people better streets, better homes, better schools, better churches, more of religion, more of happiness, more of God; he that can be a blessing to the community in which they live tonight will be great anywhere; but he who cannot be a blessing where he now lives will never be great anywhere on the face of God's earth. . . . Your diamonds are not in the distant mountains or in yonder seas. They are in your own backyard, if you but dig for them. . . . Do what you can with what you have, where you are today, for there you have acres of diamonds. *Dr. Russell H. Conwell, "Acres of Diamonds," 1883.*

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## **In the Deep Mid-Winter: Fuel Prices in Seventeenth-Century London**

Linda Hayner

**W**hen North Sea winds ushered in winter's cold, families huddled close to stove and hearth. Sooty hands reached for the coal scuttle to build up the fire, and, for a moment, winter's discomforts were stayed.

The availability of heating fuel, always an important consideration of Londoners and their governors, had become more pressing during the late-middle ages as wooded areas around the city fell to fields and orchards. By 1375 London's Company of Woodmongers was bringing wood into the city from some distance.<sup>1</sup> By 1600 London's hearths and industries demanded more fuel than the England's forests could readily provide. The discovery of coal in Northumbria in the late-twelfth century, a mineral not mined in Britain since the Roman era, slowly filled the gap. The future of coal was assured when in 1486 at Finchdale (County Durham) pumps were developed to remove water from the coal mines. Soon English ships laden with Newcastle coal coasted south to London, the city whose demand for and dependence on imported fuel grew each year.<sup>2</sup>

Provision of coal for London and regulation of the market came under the supervision of the Court of Aldermen. The free and abundant flow of this fuel involved them in overseeing prices, guaranteeing weights and measures, and building and maintaining storage facilities at Bridgehouse, Bridewell, Duke's Place, and, later on, near Holborn Bridge. Supervision became intervention when the supply was endangered, when the price was unusually high, or when complaints grew regarding inaccurate measures and stockpiling (or engrossing) coal to drive the price up.

The economic depression of the 1620s and 1630s shows how volatile prices could be. The causes of the depression involved trade competition with the Dutch and currency manipulation in the German states, both factors that made British textiles more expensive than the cloths of their competitors. The resulting bankruptcies threw many laborers out of work just as a series of poor harvests substantially increased the price of food.<sup>3</sup> The price of coal also rose. By November 1627 a chaldron of seacoal went from twenty to almost forty and then to fifty shillings. Fuel bills for industries and households doubled and then rose some more.<sup>4</sup>

The Court of Aldermen, concerned because of the falling supply as well as the rising price of coal, discovered that the captains of the coal ships now refused to sail

up the Thames. Instead, they dropped anchor at Harwich and adjacent ports on England's east coast. The captains feared impressment. Any ships and crews coming to London were liable to be pressed into the royal navy as participants either in the trade war against the Dutch or in the Thirty Years' War.

The court's representatives went to Harwich to contract for the coals and secure some convenient way to transport them to London. In fact, the aldermen hoped to convince the captains to deliver their coals directly to London. To that end, they guaranteed that the coal ships could freely come up the Thames and leave without suffering any impediment. Their lordships averred that, if they could, they would free the coalships in the river already marked for royal service. The crisis soon ended, and in June 1629 the price of coal delivered to London fell to sixteen shillings six pence a chaldron.<sup>5</sup>

Barely ten years later, the civil wars again contributed to the volatility of coal prices. When royalist forces captured and closed the port of Newcastle from 1642 to 1644, fuel prices rose to exorbitant levels. When possible, the city and its parishes purchased and stockpiled fuel.<sup>6</sup> It was good that they did. Few ships made it through the royalist blockade. The price of a chaldron of coal in London climbed to forty-six shillings in spite of the city's attempt to fix the price at twenty-three shillings or less. Wharfingers selling coals at higher prices were warned. Orders went to ships lying in the Thames not to offload or sell their coals except at the price of twenty-three shillings per chaldron or suffer seizure of their cargo. The Aldermen backed this threat with a reminder that they had the support of the House of Commons. Indeed, Parliament had already instructed the Committee for the Navy to begin importing coal from Scotland to augment dwindling supplies in the south.<sup>7</sup>

By October 1644 fuel was so scarce that the poor were felling timber trees for firewood. A parliamentary ordinance of that month extended the limits of cutting felleable wood to a circuit of sixty miles around London and to the lands of any archbishop, bishop, dean, chapter, "papist," or other delinquent.<sup>8</sup> Parishes purchasing coal for their poor paid as much as fifteen and three-tenths pence per bushel of coal. When parliamentary forces retook Newcastle in November 1644 and coal flowed freely to the city once again, the price dropped by nearly 80 percent to three and one-quarter pence per bushel. A year later, the parish of St. Dunstan in the East still was not taking any chances and in June 1645 purchased twelve chaldron of coal for its poor against the coming winter.<sup>9</sup>

The trade war between the English and Dutch continued during the Interregnum. Parliament responded in 1650 with an Act calling for more ships to protect the coasts from marauders. To raise the money it levied duties, effective from 1651 to

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1654, of two shillings per chaldron on Newcastle coal, and two shillings six pence on Scottish coal. The money gathered between 2 April and 11 October of each year went to build forty-one new ships. The rest went to relieve the poor.<sup>10</sup>

The new imposition affected all coal coming into the city, including coal previously free from such duties and intended for the poor, such as that given by James I in 1606. He had granted to the mayor and citizens of London, free of custom or import, 4,000 chaldron of seacoals for the poor. The grant was confirmed in 1623 and entered into the city records in 1629.<sup>11</sup> The city asked Parliament to free “from all impositions and charges (as formerly) the 4,000 chaldron of seacoals” provided for the use of the poor of London. For the duration of the impost, the 4,000 chaldron of coal would remain exempt. The city even convinced the woodmongers to transport the coals assigned to the poor free of all charges.<sup>12</sup>

Like most city institutions, both religious and civic, the Court of Aldermen had a fund dedicated to the purchase of coals for the poor. These funds were usually raised through charitable gifts. When the fund became large enough, it was often invested in a company such as the British East India Company for a return of between 4 and 6 per cent per annum. In 1621 the city chamberlain in charge of these monies had a fund of £515 to purchase coal for the poor; in 1628 the amount had risen to about £600.<sup>13</sup> Whether this was from current contributions for the poor or from the interest from invested capital is not apparent from the sources. If it indeed was investment interest, then the capital invested would have risen from about £10,000 in 1621 to at least £12,000 in 1628.

The city commonly released each week fifteen chaldron of coal for sale to the poor for between six and seven pence a bushel. At first, the poor went to Bridgehouse or Bridewell where each presented a ticket from one of the parish churchwardens. A ticket-holder could then purchase up to one-half bushel of coal a day. The large numbers of poor who appeared soon created such disorder and violence that the coals were subsequently divided among the twelve wards of the city to be sold.<sup>14</sup>

Maintaining weights and measures for coal was another constant problem for the Court of Aldermen. The chaldron, the common unit of coal measurement, equaled approximately two tons or thirty-six bushels by Winchester measure, the common measure in London. Sacks were to be an ell (forty-five inches) in length and three-quarters of a yard in breadth, and hold three bushels of coals. A larger measure—the ffatt—each held nine bushels of coal. The smaller measures were the bushel, half-bushel, and peck.<sup>15</sup>

Cases of light weight and short measure were frequent.<sup>16</sup> In 1623 Thomas Hardwick, William Haselfoote, and John Dicke were convicted of purchasing smallcoal

by the sack and reselling it by the peck and half-peck at inflated prices to the poor. The court committed all three to Bridewell where they stayed until the aldermen decided to free them. As an afterthought the court ordered "that all the sacks and measures for coals that are already seized or hereafter to be seized within this city [as false measures] shall be brought into the Guildhall and there burned." On 10 July 1626, the court heard a case against several men making unsized sacks for carrying seacoals. The court called in the coalmeasures as well as the master and wardens of the woodmongers to examine the sacks and advise the court whether they would hold full measure or not. Perhaps the coalmeasures were not the best expert witnesses, for they themselves were sometimes accused of shrinking their own sacks. The warfingers and woodmongers also appeared on 19 April 1631, before the court over the size of a suspect ffatt. The warfingers claimed that the ffatt in question would not hold nine bushels by the city's standard. The woodmongers declared that if the ffatt was carefully filled, it would indeed hold nine bushels.

Another flurry of complaints in 1664 reached the royal court. Accusations of engrossing coals to raise prices as well as using deceitful weights and measures to defraud the poor flew thick and fast. Charles II commanded a speedy and effectual remedy. The aldermen set up a committee of inquiry whose report did not please the woodmongers.<sup>17</sup> On the issue of enhancing the price of seacoals, the committee laid the blame squarely on the company. Their actions alone resulted in the unnecessary rise of coal prices. In their defense, company members claimed they had heard rumors of a second Dutch war. Therefore they had laid in large stores of coals in view of the alleged potential threat to coastal shipping between Newcastle and London. To this point, the actions of the woodmongers were plausible and could even be considered laudable. Their next move, however, removed all doubt regarding their true purpose. After laying in their stores, the woodmongers withdrew from the city. Ever since their company's incorporation of London's carters in 1606 the woodmongers had controlled all commercial transport carts in the city. The city government had even increased that control in May 1661 when it passed the licensing of carts to the woodmongers and limited the number of carts for coal haulage to only 140.<sup>18</sup> By leaving the city, the woodmongers assured that no carts could be hired to move coal or offload ships. The Company of Woodmongers had by this time also assumed control of as many wharves as it could. As a result only the woodmongers had the facilities to unload and transport coal. To add insult to injury, in 1664 the woodmongers accused the warfingers and others who "buy [coal] to sell [it] again" of trying to corner the coal market.

The one hundred fifty vessels that arrived after the withdrawal of the woodmongers sailed into what the committee called a "dead market." The coal fleet

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lay in the Thames. And the woodmongers intended to leave the ships there until the season was too far advanced for them to make another trip to Newcastle and back. Without this last voyage London would have insufficient coals for the winter, and the value of the woodmongers' stockpiled coal would rise as supply dwindled.

The city's investigators declared that the Licensing Act of 1661 must be repealed or altered and went on to level another charge against the woodmongers. While the latter bought using lawful measure, they sold using sacks sized and licensed by themselves and sold to company members for twelve pence a set. "Upon trial [the sacks] are found extremely deceitful wanting four or five bushels in a chaldron." When challenged, the company would not allow its sacks to be measured. Anyone who tried to do so had his name passed among the company members and would have no coals sold to him.

Now on the defensive, the woodmongers charged the committee of trying to set an unfair price on seacoals to their disadvantage, and of keeping coals from landing in London. The committee was not amused:

We do first certify that we have neither intended nor had any discourse or mention of setting a price upon seacoals, but do conceive if any such report and rumor have been (which we undoubtedly believe) and have had any such effect, the same has been raised by the Woodmongers to keep out all supplies of coals til they have uttered their own stores at the present dear or dearer rates for we do not hear of any besides Woodmongers (but of them very many and often) that have made it their discourse and dispersal abroad the said report and rumor of setting a price on coals.<sup>19</sup>

The city government immediately advised the king of the situation and offered a solution, namely the suggestion that all importers of coals be allowed to dispose of them to their best advantage for the next full year, only reserving ten per cent for the poor. By this means the city's supply of coals could be most quickly augmented presently and during the following winter to the best benefit of the coal merchants, the fleet, and the inhabitants of London.<sup>20</sup>

The Court of Aldermen then charged the Company of Woodmongers with several abuses in the trade of coal. First, the court alleged that company members had used their position and power to engineer shortages of coal, and thereby had forced price rises to their benefit. Second, the aldermen further asserted that the woodmongers had also increased their incomes during years of normal supply by employing short weights and measures.<sup>21</sup> The court concluded that hardly a citizen in London had not suffered from the woodmongers' greed.

Whether the woodmongers made further protests before the aldermen is unknown. It is difficult to imagine that they quietly gave up their lucrative trade. In the end, however, the scandal brought the company down. By 1668 the company had surrendered its charter and ceased to function. The Carmen returned to their original status as a separate guild, which was active as late as the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>22</sup>

The demise of the Company of Woodmongers did not in itself subsequently guarantee adequate supplies of coals at reasonable prices at all times. Engrossing, i.e. stockpiling, by coal merchants remained a problem. Profiteering and short weights continued. Nevertheless, as guardians of the city the aldermen had moved to protect the health of London's economy. With the end of the Company of Woodmongers there was one less organization trying to make a profit at the expense of London's citizens.

#### ENDNOTES

1. An altercation between the woodmongers and John Baddeby of Taplow, Buckinghamshire, is the authority. Baddeby claimed a right to collect a toll on all vessels passing through his lock. The woodmongers disagreed. W. Carew Hazlitt, *The Livery Companies of the city of London, their origin, character, development, and social and political importance* (New York: MacMillan & Co, 1892), 151.
2. Clayton Roberts and David Roberts, David, *A History of England*, vol. I, 3rd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 101, 225, 227.
3. Roberts and Roberts, *A History of England*, 346–47.
4. *Repertories*, City of London Records Office (CLRO), vol. 42, fols. 13v, 312v. The chaldron was approximately two tons or thirty-six bushels by Winchester measure, the current standard.
5. *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 42, fols. 1r–v; vol. 43, fol. 186r.
6. *Journal of the House of Commons (CJ)*, IV, 75; The two parishes were St. Margaret New Fish Street (Guildhall Library MS 1175/1, no fol.), and St. Botolph Billingsgate (Guildhall Library MS 943A, fol. 34v.).
7. *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 56, fols 209r–v; *CJ*, III, 47, 68.
8. *CJ*, III, 68; Charles H. Firth and R. S. Rait, eds., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1640–1660 (A&O)*, vol. I (London: HMSO, 1911), 303–5.
9. St. Bartholomew Exchange, Guildhall Library MS 4384/2, fols. 1–2; St. Botolph Billingsgate, Guildhall Library MS 943/1, fols. 94r, 95r. St. Dunstan in the East, Guildhall Library MS 4887, fol. 510.
10. *A&O*, II, 505–9; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic (CSPD)*, 1654, 19.
11. Jan 19, 1629 “Whereas our late Sovereign Lord King James by his highness [letters] patents . . . the 29th of April in the 20th year of his reign did grant unto the Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of the city of London that they by their officers and ministers thereunto appointed should



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and might buy and provide yearly at Newcastle or elsewhere 4,000 chaldron of seacoals free and discharged of and from any import tallage and other charge whatsoever imposed or to be imposed or taxed for the relief of the poor of the said city according to which [letters] patents 4,000 chaldron of seacoals were this last year transported from Newcastle to the port of London and a warrant was obtained from the Right Honorable Richard Ld. Weston, Lord High Treasurer of England to require St. John Wildrun or any other whom it might concern to permit the said 4,000 chaldron of seacoals to be transported as aforesaid without paying the 2d due to be paid to his Majesty's patentees of the lighters for such chaldrons so to be shipped whereby the poor might have their coals free from charge." *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 42, fols. 285v–286r; vol. 44, fols. 95v–96r.

12. *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 61, fol. 106r; vol. 62, fols. 27v, 38v, 225v, 230r; vol. 63, fols. 25r, 180v.

13. *Ibid.*, vol. 35, fol. 198v; vol. 42, fol. 246v.

14. *Ibid.*, vol. 42, fols. 19r–v, 312v.

15. *Ibid.*, vol. 45, fol. 269r. An ell varied in length according to country. While it was a length of forty-five inches in Britain, it was only twenty-seven inches long in Holland.

16. *Ibid.*, vol. 37, fol. 216r; vol. 40, fols. 288r–v; vol. 41, fol. 314r; vol. 45, fols. 267r–268v.

17. This discussion is based on the report of the committee appointed by the aldermen to investigate the situation. *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 70, fols. 14v–15r, 41r–44r. The records of the Company of Woodmongers are no longer extant. As a result, the woodmongers' responses to the Court of Aldermen cannot be included, making this a lopsided presentation at best. Nevertheless, the Court of Aldermen amassed sufficient proofs of abuse by the woodmongers, that the company eventually surrendered its charter.

18. In 1606 the number of cars, or carts, was fixed at four hundred, including those in the borough of Southwark. In 1660 the number was raised to 420. Prior to this act, all carts had been available to transport coal. Hazlitt, *The Livery Companies*, 108–9.

19. *Repertories*, CLRO, vol. 70 fol. 44v.

20. *Ibid.*, vol. 70, fol. 108v.

21. Such monopolies were not unknown. James I granted vast monopolies to the Villiers family, and his son Charles I followed suit with monopolies for the production of products such as soap, salt, and bricks to raise income during the years he ruled without parliament. Consumers paid for the monopolies with higher prices. Roberts and Roberts, *A History of England*, 335–36, 344–45.

22. Hazlitt, *The Livery Companies*, 109. The woodmongers did not disappear forever. They were reconstituted separately from the Carmen by a resolution of London Common Council in 1694. The woodmongers were allowed 120 carts to conduct their own business. *Ibid.*, 153.



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## Voting for God: The Politics of South Carolina Camp Meetings

Dale Walden Johnson

After eight years as president, George Washington yearned for his freedom. He wanted nothing more than to leave politics and return to his beloved Mount Vernon. In September 1796 Washington reflected on his role as president and with the assistance of Alexander Hamilton, offered the nation some parting advice. His "Farewell Address" with four specific points of counsel was printed in newspapers throughout the country. Washington urged the infant nation to avoid entangling alliances with foreign powers that might draw it into a war it was ill prepared to fight. He warned of the growing danger of sectional rivalry in America. He instructed the citizens to avoid radical measures in favor of the avenues carefully crafted in the Constitution to bring about peaceful change in government. Speaking as America's elder statesman Washington feared that idealistic young radicals might follow a revolutionary path and overthrow this democratic experiment. The Constitution provided a means to alter the government through an orderly process. Finally, President Washington warned the nation to avoid the temptation to congregate behind a party faction or political ideology.

Washington had witnessed his own small cabinet plagued by party factions. He selected Alexander Hamilton, his aide during the War for Independence, as the nation's first secretary of treasury. Hamilton held his own lofty political aspirations but contented himself with close association with the president and leadership of the so-called Federalist Party. Washington chose fellow Virginian Thomas Jefferson to head the Department of State. Jefferson's diplomatic experience in France prepared him for this crucial post. Jefferson held a different vision for America from the Federalists and eventually assumed leadership of the Anti-Federalist or Democratic-Republican Party. A recent historian has captured the essence of the ideological divide separating the two men. "Hamilton feared anarchy and loved order. Jefferson feared tyranny and loved liberty."<sup>1</sup> Thus Washington's first cabinet contained not only members of two competing party factions but also the leaders of the respective movements.

The early-national period of our nation's history is much too early to think of the Federalist and Republican parties the way we conceive of parties today. They lacked structure, organization, and the well-oiled machinery we commonly associate with today's two-party system. What's more, the "original" Federalist and Anti-Federalist factions

developed over time. The ideological factions of 1789 had changed considerably by 1800. We cannot draw a direct line of descent between the early and later parties, but the linkage is still valid.

The roots of the two political factions developed in the debate over ratification of the federal Constitution. Before the Constitution became law it needed ratification by three-fourths of the states. Supporters of ratification styled themselves the Federalists as the power was centralized in the central government. Three leading Federalists—Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison—lobbied for ratification of the new government in a series of eloquent newspaper essays, which were later collected into book form titled the *Federalist Papers*.

The Constitution was formed in an effort to correct the weaknesses of our first government, the Articles of Confederation, which gave most of the power to the states. The Articles soon proved unworkable, and after a series of preliminary meetings, delegates were invited to Philadelphia with the express purpose of revising or amending the Articles. Representatives attending the convention did not revise the Articles but in fact created an entirely new system of government, granting many powers to the central government at the expense of the states and the people. This shift of power worried many of the founding fathers in Philadelphia. The Republicans considered the Constitution an imbalanced government because of the sweeping powers assigned to the three branches of the federal government. The Republicans refused to support the new system of governance in its present form and would urge their state's approval only if the Constitution guaranteed certain fundamental civil protections. Federalists, however, defended the Constitution in its unaltered form, arguing that the constitution of each state granted these basic protections. Debate centered around twelve freedoms, which were later combined in the ten amendments commonly called the Bill of Rights. Ratification of the Constitution in 1792 limiting the power of the central government did not end the ideological feuds of the two parties. In various names the parties became a permanent part of the political landscape in America.

George Washington did not run with any party affiliation in 1788 or 1792 but favored the Federalists' vision of governance. Washington, as noted above, selected a cabinet of both Federalists and Republicans. Hamilton and General Henry Knox, the head of the War Department, defended Federalism, while Jefferson and Attorney General Edmund Randolph were wary of giving too much power to a central government. Republicans jealously defended a decentralized government with power reserved for the states and individual citizens. Jefferson and the Republicans favored less rather than more government. They favored a nation of self-reliant farmers and

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small shopkeepers. Federalists tended towards aristocrats and attracted people of wealth. Washington's experiment in selecting a cabinet in an even-handed manner did not entirely succeed. The tension between Hamilton and Jefferson grew to outright hostility, prompting Jefferson to resign from the cabinet in 1794.

Having witnessed the heat generated by party factions in his cabinet, Washington counseled in vain against "the baneful effects of the spirit of the party" in his Farewell Address. Federalists held the office of president for twelve years through Washington and John Adams. The debate between the two parties smoldered in those years but burst into flames in the election of 1800 on the eve of the religious revival at Yale and the camp meetings in Cane Ridge, Kentucky.

### **The Jefferson-Dwight War**

Thomas Jefferson returned to the national spotlight in 1796 as vice-president and in 1800 when he again sought the presidency against the incumbent Federalist President John Adams. Federalists fought tenaciously to hold the reigns of power and warned in almost apocalyptic terms of the evils which would befall the nation if it foolishly elected Jefferson and his political ilk. Jefferson's own words were used against him to alert people to the dangerous anti-Christian views he held. Jefferson refused to affirm the basic Christian tenet of monotheism. He had written in 1784, "It does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg."<sup>2</sup> Federalists charged Jefferson with a lengthy list of offenses, including immorality and atheism. He allegedly held perverse opinions about the Holy Bible. Each charge contained a small seed of truth, and each needed extensive explanation beyond anything the Federalists chose to offer in the propaganda campaign of 1800. The argument proceeded along the predictable lines that America, singularly blessed by God, would sacrifice its biblical heritage if it elected an infidel president. God would turn his back on a prodigal nation. Jefferson, they warned, might use the power of his office to confiscate the Bibles in America and declare open war against God-fearing Christians.

True or not, fair or not, such were the Federalist charges offered for public consumption against candidate Thomas Jefferson in 1800. The *Federalist Gazette* reduced the election not just to good and bad choices but to a contest between God and atheism: ". . . the only question . . . to be asked by every American laying his hand on his heart is 'shall I continue in allegiance to God and a religious president or impiously declare for Jefferson and no God!!!'"<sup>3</sup> Incumbent President Adams had called the Bible "the best book in the world" while Jefferson rejected the miraculous accounts in the Gospels.<sup>4</sup> As a Deist who warmed toward rationalism, miracles simply made no sense. The Federalist arsenal against Jefferson also involved the Virginian's

friendship with and support of Thomas Paine. Paine's attack on Christianity in *The Age of Reason* shocked even some free-thinking skeptics.<sup>5</sup> Paine wrote:

Of all the systems of religion that were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself, than this thing called Christianity. Too absurd for belief, too impossible to convince, and too inconsistent for practice, it renders the heart torpid, or produces only atheists or fanatics.<sup>6</sup>

Jefferson's guilt by association with Paine, both intellectual and actual, cast deep suspicion over him in the minds of many Christians. In at least a superficial way, Federalists could make a case against the "infidel" Jefferson and his party. Federalist critics of Jefferson included Timothy Dwight, the grandson of Jonathon Edwards and president of Yale College.<sup>7</sup> His shrill warnings probably discredited the message he wished to communicate. Most historians have avoided the temptation to lump all Federalists into a one-size-fits-all union suit. John Adams is best allied with the moderate Federalists while the vituperative Dwight and his wing of the party are dubbed "arch-Federalists" or "High Federalists."<sup>8</sup> When Dwight assumed his duties at Yale in 1795 he found to his utter dismay only a handful of Christians in the student body. They mouthed the similar political and religious philosophy as Thomas Jefferson and lived openly immoral lives. They repeated the motto of the revolutionaries in France of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité*, and mocked biblical Christianity. They worshipped the cult of reason and free inquiry in place of biblical revelation.<sup>9</sup> Deeply wounded by the conduct and beliefs of the students, President Dwight did not despair. He resolved to meet the students' objections to Christianity in a frontal assault. He forced students to defend their views as part of his course requirements. Patiently, Dwight encouraged his students to give full voice to their philosophy and then critiqued their skepticism and Deism with an apologetic for Christian Theism. His persistence eventually paid evangelical dividends as revival broke out on the campus of New Haven. The backbone of skepticism was broken at Yale. The revival spread from Yale to other campuses in the East, and a generation of graduates carried the revival model to their homes and parishes throughout the country.<sup>10</sup> Those converted at the revivals at Yale and other eastern campuses helped form an army that promoted the Second Great Awakening in the next several decades. Dwight and others of like mind succeeded in making Deism a felonious crime in Connecticut. Dwight's version of the gospel included a mixture of Edwardian Calvinism and Federalist politics, earning him the title the "Pope of Federalism."

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Some of Dwight's students spread into the southern states a gospel according to the Bible and the political views of their mentor, the vicar of Federalism. Erskine Clark has argued in *Our Southern Zion* that the New England-style revival held greater sway in the genteel low country than the volatile camp meeting style that exploded in Kentucky. Revivalist graduates of Brown, Yale, and Amherst filled low country pulpits more often than the bare-knuckle preachers who first heard their call to ministry in the Cumberland and Piedmont. Clarke limits his remarks to Presbyterian and Congregational churches because to press the point further is to err.<sup>11</sup> Baptist and Methodist pastors in the South felt a greater affinity to the camp meeting style than the more refined New Haven model of revival.

In November 1800 five men, including Timothy Dwight's cousin, Aaron Burr Jr., sought the presidency. Despite their kinship, Dwight despised his cousin's politics. The two Republican candidates, Jefferson and Burr, tied with seventy-three electoral votes. The U.S. House of Representatives broke the tie for Jefferson, while Burr became vice-president. South Carolina was the pivotal state in this election. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, the candidate from Charleston, had promised the Federalist Party he would not participate in a split ticket. He honored his promise, while his renegade second cousin lobbied the legislature in Columbia on behalf of Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson called this momentous election "the revolution of 1800."<sup>12</sup> For all practical purposes the Federalist Party was dead. The consequences for Dwight's distinctive brand of politics appeared catastrophic. According to Timothy Dwight's apocalyptic world view, the cosmos was crumbling, Christians were on the run, and Thomas Jefferson was the Devil incarnate.<sup>13</sup>

After Jefferson's victory in 1800 Christopher Gadsen of South Carolina wrote to John Adams in utter despair over the death of political sanity in America: "Our planet [is] a mere bedlam. . . . Look around our whirling globe . . . east, west, north, or south, where is the spot in which there are not many thousands of mad lunatics."<sup>14</sup> Though the language sounds like the critics of later Kentucky-style camp meetings, Gadsen was referring to the preponderance of Republicans.

### **God and governance in the South**

In the ultimate form of one-upmanship, the Federalists had claimed that God was on their side. Good Christians, they argued, voted Federalist against the infidelity of Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and the godless philosophy that promoted the French Revolution. Can we thus conclude that the camp meetings, which originated in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, and spilled into the Carolinas in the early 1800s, were politically motivated? Did the collapse of the Federalist machine in 1800 contribute to the subsequent explosion of camp meetings and revivals in the South? Scholars have

found wide variations in the relationship between religion and politics, depending largely on the geographical region of the country. The New England states held the strongest link between church and party affiliation. The history of the Middle States shows a somewhat weaker connection with virtually no affiliation between church and politics during the Great Revival. John Boles, the leading historian of the Great Revival, found no "direct partisanship among the clergy and political organizations."<sup>15</sup> While Boles' sweeping survey is impressive, his thesis could be more nuanced. If he is arguing against a kind of organized conspiracy of camp meetings and revivals he is certainly correct. It is possible, however, to detect some examples of a fusion of religious and political goals through the medium of the camp meeting.

At first glance it may appear that the camp meetings were a Federalist crusade against the growing influence of the Jeffersonian world view. At least one scholar has made this claim though it is aimed only at Timothy Dwight and the New England revivals.<sup>16</sup> There is no southern equivalent to the New England "Pope" of Federalism, but it raises an interesting question. Were the camp meetings in reality a clever Federalist campaign for God and country? A letter to the editor in the *Charleston City Gazette* in 1802 raised this very question. The writer reported that those attending camp meetings debated whether the camp meetings were a "federal coal," presumably designed to fuel revival fires and bring the country back to God both spiritually and politically.<sup>17</sup> Though it appears tempting, we cannot jump so quickly to this conclusion. Such an assessment smacks too much of good guys and bad guys with corresponding white and black hats. The politics of the camp meetings are exceedingly complex and belie the simplistic equation of God, country, and Federalist politics.

The Federalists' worst fear came true when Thomas Jefferson won the presidency in 1800, but their most scurrilous predictions about a dreaded Republican president proved baseless. Jefferson did not confiscate all the Bibles nor did he promote a campaign against Christianity. Despite the God and country rhetoric spilling from Federalist pulpits and newspapers, numerical growth suggests that churches fared much better under the Jefferson administration than under the previous twelve years of Federalist leadership. Perhaps people were heeding the apocalyptic predictions of the Federalists. Perhaps the bad news of the Republican victory convinced people to seek the good news of the Gospel. Federalists lost the political war but perhaps unwittingly won a spiritual war for the hearts of the people. Richard Furman, the Baptist pastor in Charleston, delivered a cheerful depiction of conditions in the country in his 4th of July sermon in 1802. Certainly no shill for the Republicans, Furman assessed America's spiritual health a year and a half into both the Jefferson administration and the Great Revival in the Carolinas:



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God has also smiled on the United States, by granting the effusions of His spirit and grace to His churches among us; and by extending the influence of vital religion. Perhaps there never was a period, when the belief of the Gospel-truth, a just attention to the most important eternal interests of men, and to the honor of God, were more general on this continent, than at the present moment.<sup>18</sup>

Republicanism, or so it seemed, was good for churches and the spiritual well-being of the nation. Perhaps the election of the Devil incarnate drove Christians into the safe arms of the church. This interpretation of the revivals pictures a Federalist circling of the wagons in response to wickedness in high places. An editorial in the *Georgia Republican and State Intelligencer* in Savannah captured what Federalists could only have interpreted as ironic:

The Federalists are actually impostors and false prophets—they vowed and declared that if Jefferson was placed in the presidential chair, that our churches would be demolished, and religion banished from our happy land. How reverse is the fact? Every newspaper furnishes us with accounts of the revival of religion in different parts of the Union.<sup>19</sup>

The writer, after having made his point, could not help but rub some salt into the Federalist wound by paraphrasing the words of Jesus: “When shall we be purged of this race of vipers? These scribes, and pharisees, hypocrites, who make long speeches to scare women and children?”<sup>20</sup> The revival, which spread through the South after the election in 1800, deflated one of the Federalists’ most potent political issues, while churches in America flourished. The Republicans had unwittingly co-opted the religious banner. The country was reaping a spiritual harvest that the Federalists had sown in their jeremiads against the party of Jefferson.

Some Federalists, however, resisted the notion that the church prospered under the new Republican administration. As the two sides prepared for the Congregational elections in 1802, the Federalist newspaper in Savannah repeated the familiar refrain of Republican infidelity: “A conspicuous mark of distinction between the rank [Republican] and the Federalist is, the former’s deep rooted malice against the sacred doctrines of the Christian religion.”<sup>21</sup> The fact that the South found itself in the midst of a spiritual awakening weakened the Federalist argument, but it did not soften their attacks against Republicans. A South Carolina writer to the *Georgia Republican* found it a bewildering task to sort through the contradictory claims of the

rival newspapers. The reader seized on a clever political litmus test to guide his selection in the fall election. Who, the reader asked, did the old Tory party of the Revolutionary War period now support?

If you [republicans] claim them generally, I shall be made a fed; but if they are mostly found in the mass of feds, I shall be a true republican, as I never will confide in any party composed of them . . . nor will I ever trust my life and liberty in the hands of those who once fought to kill and plunder me.<sup>22</sup>

The *Georgia Republican* assured its readers that from New England to the South “with very few exceptions the old Tories were the most warm supporters of the last [Adams] administration and are equally enemies of the present.”<sup>23</sup> According to the Republicans, the Federalists tolerated old American traitors in their ranks. Could the Federalists still claim with sincerity that *they* were the party of God? The *Republican* also argued that they could rebut the charge of infidelity against them if a census were conducted in Georgia.

We shall merely remark, of the two persuasions of Christians generally denominated Baptists and Methodists, there are probably more than twenty thousand in the state alone, and these with few exceptions are [republican]. How they will receive the charge . . . that all [republicans] are infidels, we leave for them to determine.<sup>24</sup>

The cross-town Federalist rival the *Columbian Museum* was incredulous that the Republicans presumed to claim the Baptists and Methodists of Georgia in their ranks without any proof. Certainly these denominations that promoted revivals would balk at the Republican label. “Do you not know,” wrote the *Museum* editor, “that Baptists and Methodists are professors and believers of religion, and how then can a charge of infidelity apply to them [?]”<sup>25</sup> The editor conveniently ignored the fact that the evangelical denominations often co-existed, if uncomfortably, with the “infidels” in the Republican Party. Jefferson, in fact, attracted the allegiance of many southerners, not for his theology but for his view of governance. Jefferson’s vision of small government and an agrarian, pastoral nation resonated with the independent-minded population in the rural South. The shrill Federalist charges of “Republican infidelity” did not necessarily resonate with southerners.

Rev. Henry Holcombe, a Baptist pastor in Savannah, spoke out from both the pulpit and press against the anti-Christian bias of the *Georgia Republican*. His entry into the political fray is interesting because of his bold promotion of camp meetings and his partisan politics. Holcombe founded a journal titled the *Georgia Analytical*

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*Repository* in 1802 in part as a clearing house to promote camp meeting activities. This short-lived publication deserves a place in both literary and church history as the first religious periodical in the South and a significant recorder of camp meeting history.<sup>26</sup> John Boles has portrayed Holcombe as patriotic and civic minded but essentially non-partisan.<sup>27</sup> There are actually two Henry Holcombes, the journalist and civic-minded pastor on the one hand and the partisan citizen, whose fiery letters appeared in Savannah newspapers, on the other. Holcombe's vigorous defense of Federalism is consistent with his Calvinistic view of man's fallen nature.<sup>28</sup> A sinful nature passed from Adam to all his posterity necessitated a strong government to protect man from his inherent bent toward sin. Government must be strong enough to restrain sin as part of its mission under God. Perhaps Holcombe found the Federalist philosophy appealing because, like Calvinism, classical conservatism held a deep distrust of human nature, though not necessarily one based on scripture. After Holcombe's journal folded, his tone turned anything but non-partisan. Jefferson's optimistic view of human nature simply did not ring true with Holcombe or his biblical world view.

The religious debate between the party of Jefferson and the Federalists centered on definition. The *Georgia Republican* newspaper interpreted Christianity as a superior system of ethics, which encouraged morality, liberty, and the love of humanity. This was the true religion. Henry Holcombe believed that he could see through the deceptive veneer of his Republican opponents. "You speak of the ethics of the Gospel, and real faith, but is not this to deceive? The simple may think that by real faith you mean the Christian faith, but . . . you cannot say that you prefer the Christian's to the deist's."<sup>29</sup> Holcombe made it clear that Georgia Baptists were not in the Republican fold. "You will find thousands in Georgia who will resent the insult you have given religion. . . . [N]o one . . . can read your address without horror; it would shock Tom Paine."<sup>30</sup>

### **Camp meetings and civil religion**

In Charleston the two political parties squared off in the congressional election of 1804. Still smarting from the humiliating loss of candidate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney in 1800, Federalists hoped to recover their former glory. The camp meeting revivals would play an interesting role in Charleston and the low country in the 1804 election. The incumbent Federalist candidates in Georgetown and Charleston districts held their seats by a meager one-hundred-vote margin in 1802. With the decline of the Federalist party on the national scene it became increasingly difficult to field credible candidates in many races.<sup>31</sup> The party of Hamilton refused to cede America's political future to the infidels, however. In a bold offensive move, the

Federalists established their own newspaper in South Carolina, and the first issue of the *Charleston Courier* appeared 10 January 1803. Alexander Hamilton allegedly sent Stephen Cullen Carpenter as an editorial writer to the *Courier* to broadcast the Federalist message.<sup>32</sup> As the Fall elections approached, a contributor to the *Courier* brought the camp meeting revivals squarely into the political debate. A writer named "Mentor" warned the voters about the dangerous tactics the Republicans used to attract voters:

One method adopted to obtain popularity by some who are candidates for Congress from this, and probably other states was by attending camp meetings, mixing freely and indiscriminately with all enthusiasts, whether white or black, bond or free; embracing them with a 'holy kiss' and calling them Brother and Sister.<sup>33</sup>

"Mentor" identified an unusual role reversal. The Jeffersonian revolution of 1800 had produced a remarkable change. The Federalists, normally the defenders and promoters of evangelical religion, now condemned the revivals as thoroughly as they condemned the Republican candidate for attending camp meetings! The Federalists were now uncomfortable with the cozy alliance of church and politics by democratic campaigners. The party of Jefferson had succeeded in the disestablishment of religion, but was caught practicing a kinder, gentler form of church/state square dancing. According to the Federalist writer named "Mentor,"

. . . the Republican first endeavored to enlist as many influential characters in every neighborhood as possible in their interest; to make them friendly disposed to this enthusiasm, and to be the subjects of it: and when once they enlist in a cause of this kind they will not readily abandon it, for different reasons that are very obvious.<sup>34</sup>

"Mentor" confessed that he knew what he was talking about because of his own voyeuristic attendance at several camp meetings in South Carolina. Ten days later the *Courier* published another spirited epistle from "Mentor," which attacked both camp meetings and Republicans. He feared the Republicans were simply demagogues, using the enthusiasm generated at the camp meetings for political gain. "Mentor," in the second installment, took a more desperate tone:

The public mind—that is, the minds of the majority of the people, has lately been too much poisoned, and inflamed to admit of sober reasoning and calm reflection. A furious bigot, a hot-headed enthusiast, who has attended and promoted camp meetings, will

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be sent to Congress in preference to a man who has the welfare of his country at heart.<sup>35</sup>

“Mentor” attempted to link the bodily exercises, enthusiasm and sometimes chaos of the camp meetings with the anarchic spirit unleashed by the French Revolution. After his description of the “yoke of despotism” imposed on thirty million people in France, “Mentor” fused the camp meetings with political radicalism. According to “Mentor” support of camp meetings was to follow the treacherous path of French debauchery! Both movements allegedly supported brotherhood and equality. At the foot of the camp meeting cross, class and racial distinctions vanished. Similarly, French radicals abolished rank and privilege, though in a thoroughly secular spirit. “Mentor” continued with a warning. “God grant that such revolutionary scenes may not soon be realized and witnessed in this country; yet I am afraid that such are the degeneracy of the present times, that none but the most ambitious, hot-headed, and ignorant, will be sent to represent us in Congress.”<sup>36</sup>

Mentor’s warning was given not just to readers in the low country but throughout the state: “If such a contrast exists between any candidate for Congress from any part or parts of this state—let the people shew a spirit of independence and patriotism, in fixing their choice, and thereby prevent the reign of anarchy and despotism.”<sup>37</sup> The alleged hot-headed, camp meeting-attending-demagogue “Mentor” spoke of was none other than Robert Marion, the nephew of the famous “Swamp Fox,” General Francis Marion. Marion, running largely on his famous name, lost in the previous congressional race to Thomas Lowndes. Federalists had slandered Marion for his lack of political experience.<sup>38</sup> What he lacked in political experience, however, he made up for in his apparent ability to work a camp meeting crowd and mobilize it for political purposes. Perhaps the Federalists prompted the camp meetings, but now at least one Republican used the religious assembly for the promotion of his own political purposes.

The political use of camp meetings by Republicans in South Carolina paid off. They swept all eight of the congressional seats in October 1804, seven by default for lack of Federalist candidates. Robert Marion, the “hot-headed” demagogue, defeated Thomas Rhett Smith, the nephew of John Rutledge, by one hundred votes in a pitiful 38 percent turnout of eligible voters. Marion served the district without distinction until his resignation in 1810.<sup>39</sup> Just as Federalist fear mongering about the dangers of Jefferson failed to materialize in 1800, similar charges in South Carolina appeared to be so much crying wolf. Despite the high-octane rhetoric of “Mentor,” neither the country nor South Carolina collapsed under Congressman Marion and the Republicans. The New England and the Kentucky versions of revival prospered in the context

of the Jeffersonian revolution. The revivals also matured in the next decades into a humanitarian crusade called the “benevolent empire” by later historians. It began in the womb of the Jeffersonian revolution and prospered under the Jacksonian revolution.

Timothy Dwight’s worst fear in 1800 was a political revolution in America led by the infidel party of Jefferson. Dwight and the country indeed got a political revolution, and, in the process, the nation got a spiritual revolution at no extra charge.

#### ENDNOTES

1. George Brown Tindall, David E. Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Brief 3rd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1993), 1: 184.
2. Thomas Jefferson, “Notes on the State of Virginia,” from *Jefferson* (New York: The Library of America, 1984), 285–87. Quoted in Mark A. Noll, *One Nation Under God? Christian Faith and Political Action in America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 84.
3. *Gazette of the United States*, quoted in Noll, *One Nation Under God*, 79.
4. John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 25 Dec. 1813, L. J. Capon, ed., *The Adams-Jefferson Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 2: 412. See also Francis I. Fesperman, “Jefferson’s Bible,” *Ohio Journal of Religious Studies* 4 (October 1976), 78–86; and Edgar J. Goodspeed, “Thomas Jefferson and the Bible,” *Harvard Theological Review* 40 (January 1947), 71–76.
5. Eric Foner, *Thomas Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 246.
6. David Freeman Hawke, *Paine* (New York, 1974), 294, quoted in Foner, *Thomas Paine and Revolutionary American*, 247.
7. Edwin S. Gaustad, *Sworn on the Altar of God, A Religious Biography of Thomas Jefferson* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 215.
8. Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism, The Early American Republic, 1788–1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 691–94.
9. Stuart C. Henry, *Unvanquished Puritan: A Portrait of Lyman Beecher* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 34–43; and Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling, American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 35–36.
10. My narrative of the revival at Yale is the traditional view. Several scholars have questioned the alleged anti-Christian conditions at Yale and Dwight’s actual role in the revival. See for example Edmund S. Morgan, “Ezra Stiles and Timothy Dwight,” *Proceedings* (Massachusetts Historical Society) 72, (1963), 1–17, and Stephen E. Berk, *Calvinism versus Democracy: Timothy Dwight and the Origins of American Evangelical Orthodoxy* (Archon Books, 1974). Berk notes in his preface that he wrote the book as an atheist but was subsequently converted to Christianity. The experience tempered the rather harsh attitude he initially held toward Timothy Dwight. He titled chapter nine of this book, “The Contrived Awakening,” 161ff.

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11. Erskine Clarke, *Our Southern Zion: A History of Calvinism in the South Carolina Low Country, 1660–1990* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1996), 106–7.
  12. Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 691, 742–43; and James H. Broussard, *The Southern Federalists 1800–1816* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press), 1978.
  13. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling*, 35ff.
  14. Gadsen to Adams, 11 March 1801, Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams*, Boston, 1853, 9: 579, quoted in “Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 25 (October 1948), 465.
  15. John B. Boles, *The Great Revival, 1787–1805: The Origins of the Evangelical Mind* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1972), 165–82, cited in Broussard, *The Southern Federalists*, 393. In the paperback edition published in 1996, Boles changed the subtitle to *The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*.
  16. Berk, *Calvinism versus Democracy*, 161f. For an excellent survey of the Dwight historiography see John R. Fitzmier, *New England’s Moral Legislator Timothy Dwight, 1752–1817* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 15–22.
  17. Extract of a letter dated York District, 1 July 1802, *Charleston City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, Thursday 12 August 1802. The writer also gave Jefferson a backhanded compliment, suggesting that disestablishment of religion in the nation contributed to the revival: “Opposers and advocates are very warm on both extremes; and it is happy for our country, that the civil law interferes with no religious tenets, or fire or faggot would be distributed as freely as ever they were in Europe.”
  18. Richard Furman, *America’s Deliverance and Duty, A Sermon preached at the First Baptist Church in Charleston, SC on the fourth day of July, 1802 before the State Society of the Cincinnati, The American Revolution Society, and the Congregation* (Charleston: W. P. Young, 1802), 13, Special Collections, James B. Duke Library, Furman University (hereafter, JBDL). Timothy Dwight used the same biblical imagery in his 4 July oration in 1789 titled, *The Duty of Americans* (New Haven: Green, 1798). See Harry S. Stout, “Rhetoric and Reality in the Early Republic: The Case of the Federal Clergy,” in Mark Noll, ed., *Religion and American Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1989.
  19. *Georgia Republican & State Intelligencer*, 4 September 1802.
  20. *Ibid.*
  21. *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 11 September, 1802.
  22. *Georgia Republican & State Intelligencer*, 11 September 1802.
  23. *Ibid.*
  24. *Ibid.*
  25. *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 17 September 1802.
  26. Henry Smith Stroupe, *The Religious Press in the South Atlantic States, 1802–1865* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1956), 3–5, and John Boles, “Henry Holcombe, A Southern Baptist Reformer in the Age of Jefferson,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 54 (Fall 1970), 381–407. For an interesting contrast of a pious Presbyterian pastor near Charleston and a passionate defender of Jefferson see: Alan V. Briceland, “Daniel McCalla, 1748–1809: New Side Revolutionary and Jeffersonian,” *Journal of*

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*Presbyterian History* 56 (Fall 1978), 252–69. McCalla wrote numerous newspaper essays promoting Jefferson, but they virtually ended after the election of 1800. He apparently took little interest in the congressional races.

27. Boles, *The Great Revival*, 176, 182. Boles in “Henry Holcombe, Southern Baptist Reformer,” 383, 391, does suggest that Holcombe had held federalist views but was non-partisan in the *Repository*. My labeling Holcombe a Federalist is taken from his newspaper letter, which Boles does not cite. See the *Columbian Museum and Advertiser*, 21 September 1802.

28. Henry Holcombe, *A Sermon Containing a Brief Illustration and defense of the Doctrine Commonly Called Calvinistic*, 1793. A microfilm copy of this sermon is available at Special Collections, JBDL. Holcombe was a Regular Baptist, a branch of Baptists more Calvinistic in their theology than the Separate Baptists. See Boles, “Henry Holcombe, A Southern Baptist Reformer,” 404, note 8.

29. *Columbian Museum and Savannah Advertiser*, 21 September 1802.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Broussard, *The Southern Federalists*, 83.

32. John Harold Wolfe, *Jeffersonian Democracy in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 182–83.

33. “Mentor,” Addressed to Fellow-Citizens, *Charleston Courier*, 11 September 1804.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, 20 September 20, 1804. A Mentor’s charge that Marion campaigned at the camp meetings loses some credibility because the nearest revivals to the Charleston district were north of Georgetown and south in Beaufort. There was no record of camp meetings in the immediate Charleston district. If Marion campaigned he could not be sure he was addressing voters in his own district. It is also possible that Marion was campaigning at camp meetings for other Republican candidates or for the party generally.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*

39. Robert K. Ratzkaff, “John Rutledge, Jr., South Carolina Federalist, 1766–1819” (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1975), 260–61.

40. Broussard, *The Southern Federalists*, 84–85. For an endorsement of Smith as the best candidate to defend the three-fifth’s formula for slave ownership in the South see the *Charleston Courier*, 8 October 1802. There is also an interesting comment by William M. Kendree and itinerant Methodist reporting on the revival to his bishop. “According to reports, there is a great revival in the country; and we are very sincere Republicans: But alas! As yet their united strength is entirely too weak to abolish slavery in Kentucky and Cumberland.” *Extracts of Letters Containing some Accounts of the Work of God, since the year 1800 written by the preachers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church to their Bishops* (New York: Ezekiel Cooper and John Wilson, 1805), 43.



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## George Galphin: Portrait of an Early South Carolina Entrepreneur

Michael Morris

**H**istorians traditionally preferred to discuss European contact with North America's indigenous peoples through references to elite European males. In discussing Virginia conversations soon turn to John Smith and his adventures among the Powhatan Indians. For Puritan New England no proper review would be complete without mentioning Plymouth's William Bradford and Massachusetts Bay's John Winthrop. In Georgia James Oglethorpe is the standard reference to early contact between native peoples and Europeans.

Yet how limiting is this practice! It ignores the influence, good and bad, that an army of fur traders had on relationships with Native American peoples. These men, most of whom were not cultural elites, chose occupations that brought them into direct, daily contact with American Indians in the southern backcountry. The fur traders were hybrid diplomats, driven by the desire to both accumulate wealth and serve colonial governments in carrying out policy. Most of these trader-diplomats had Indian mates and, as with those Indian women, history has assigned little or no importance to the role of the backcountry fur trader. Years before the implementation of the British Indian superintendencies, however, the fur traders were the eyes and ears of the colonial governments, which often needed the trade with Native American peoples to survive. Colonial settlements, fearing for their safety, felt bound to monitor the various activities of surrounding Indian tribes through the employ of Indian traders.

Colonial governments first carried out their Indian policies through individual fur traders, who made reports to and received orders from governors. Few European males could have had greater contact with Native Americans or more influence over relationships between the two cultures than these forgotten men. George Galphin was one such player in the complex Anglo-Indian power structure of the backcountry. One colonial Indian agent with whom Galphin occasionally clashed dubbed the Silver Bluff, South Carolina, resident the "merchant prince of the Georgia forest."<sup>1</sup> His legendary trade influence extended from the centers of colonial power like Charles Town and Savannah to his base at Silver Bluff, near present day Augusta, Georgia, on down to Pensacola, Florida. At his death, his entrepreneurship had accumulated some forty thousand acres of land, a sizable collection of livestock, and 128 slaves, including some who were his own children.<sup>2</sup>

When these backwoodsmen were of good character, they were of invaluable aid to the colonial governments. Many of them came from Ireland or Scotland. Some observers have speculated that they fitted well into Indian culture because they understood concepts like clan responsibility and retributive justice. George Galphin, a partner in the trading firm of Brown, Rea and Company, illustrates how influential traders could be. Galphin was born in Tullamore County, Ireland, in the early 1700s to Thomas Galphin, a linen weaver, and Barbara Galphin. He was one of seven children.<sup>3</sup> In December 1736 he married Catherine Saunderson, a union that evidently resulted in no children.<sup>4</sup> Despite the marriage, Galphin left Ireland in 1737 for the American colonies without his new bride. By 1745 he was employed by South Carolina as an Indian interpreter.<sup>5</sup>

He was posted by Carolina first among the Lower Creeks based around the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers to keep government well informed about Creek activities. While among the Lower Creeks he cohabited with a woman, Metawney, and they had children.<sup>6</sup> Galphin's service was not always above reproach. When he presented a bill for £467 to the South Carolina Assembly for Indian trade goods, that body found overestimates of £114. The assembly also found he had spent another £83 to supply the Creeks with rum, an expense it did not reimburse.<sup>7</sup> Galphin and his employees broke colonial policy on more than one occasion when it came to trading rum to southeastern tribes and when profit was involved.

In the 1740s Galphin joined the Augusta-based trading firm of Brown, Rea and Company, a firm begun earlier in the century by Archibald McGillivray, an ancestor of one Lachlan McGillivray. Daniel Clark, Jeremiah Knott, William Sludders, and George Cussings were also original partners. The company employed about twenty packhorsemen and owned 123 horses. After 1741 the company was controlled by both Patrick Brown, who was licensed to trade with the Upper Creek towns, and John Rea, who, along with Galphin, was licensed to trade among the Lower Creeks.<sup>8</sup>

John Rea, also from Ireland, immigrated to America around 1730 and had made his way to Georgia by 1734. There he began running a trading boat from Augusta to Charles Town. By 1750 he had entered into partnership with Patrick Brown to create Brown, Rea and Company.<sup>9</sup> Despite the business, Galphin continued to work "as needed" for different colonial governments. In the fall of 1749 he reported to the commissioners that he had tried unsuccessfully to stop a party of Cussita (Creek) Indians from making war on the Cherokees. He also reported that the French were trying to make inroads among the Cowetas. Galphin noted that the Cowetas invited him into the square of their town, but he refused the invitation because they were flying French colors. In fact, Galphin refused to act as a mediator

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for them until they displayed proper British colors.<sup>10</sup> His influence among southeastern Indians was formidable and, fueled by his ability to treat them with gifts that often included rum, it only increased over the years,

Besides his trading firm and government service, Galphin's most ambitious scheme was one that brought him together with business partner John Rea in an effort to sponsor Irish immigrants to America with government assistance. In 1761 Rea, along with ten others, petitioned South Carolina for a grant of 40,000 acres to be used for townships for Irish settlers. When immigration enticements in South Carolina expired in 1765, Rea and Galphin began similar efforts in Georgia. The Georgia venture was timed to coincide with recent land acquisitions. The Creeks had ceded land to Georgia by treaty in November 1763, which gave the colony land between the Savannah and Ogeechee rivers, territory Governor James Wright was eager to extend to settlers.<sup>11</sup>

Rea and Galphin petitioned Georgia for a bounty payment to cover passage, settlement, and a ten-year exemption from taxes and rents. Galphin purchased 1500 acres on the Ogeechee River at the boundary of Indian territory. Here he established a herd of cattle and a trading post. He called the site "Galphin's Old Town." The bill covering the relocation project passed the Georgia General Assembly in February of 1764 and opened settlement to Protestant families, who arrived in groups of forty or more during the next three years.<sup>12</sup>

The plucky entrepreneur advertised back home in Ireland for immigrants willing to relocate to Georgia. A Belfast newspaper of March 1766 noted that Galphin had a 50,000-acre grant he was offering in 100-acre plots. Interested people were to sign up with a Mr. Robert Pooler. The settlers then would be transported from either Newry or Belfast to Charles Town. Once in the colonies, Galphin pledged to take the transplants to their plots in his ships free of charge.<sup>13</sup> Galphin business partner John Rea wrote to his brother Matthew back home in Ireland extolling the virtues of the new lands and asking his brother to spread the word. He told his brother in September 1765 that he would do everything within his power to help the immigrants, and he bragged about the enviable lack of taxes in the colonies. Rea asked his brother to encourage large families and tradesmen to immigrate. He recommended bringing along a cleric and a teacher, both scarce commodities in Georgia. While he sang the praises of Georgia, Rea was honest about its shortcomings. He told Matthew he would not "advise any person to come here that lives well in Ireland, because there is not the pleasures of society that there is there, and the comfort of the gospel preached, no fairs nor markets to go to but we have greater plenty of good eating and drinking. . . ."<sup>14</sup>

Relocation to the new lands in Georgia was slow, due to the rivalry of the South Carolina settlement plan. Galphin and Rea petitioned the Georgia Assembly for a three-year extension in 1768 partly because the immigration enticements of the rival Carolina settlement were due to expire in that year, and the partners felt their venture would then prosper. The home government actually began to discourage these ventures; they were luring Protestants away from their deliberate planting in Catholic Ireland and draining merchants and craftsmen away from the local economy.<sup>15</sup>

Settlers began to arrive in 1768, and Governor Wright of Georgia designated their land "Queensborough."<sup>16</sup> Galphin continued to advertise in Ireland for the Queensborough settlement. By 1768 he was describing it as a "growing and flourishing province, where industry is amply rewarded."<sup>17</sup> The resettlement offer now cost one guinea (twenty-one shillings) per passenger, but the standard plot remained 100 acres and was tax free for ten years. Galphin supplied each head of household with milk cows and horses until such time as they could buy their own. A subsequent ad mentioned his partner, John Rea, and noted that both he and Rea had done well by coming to America. They were, according to the ad, both men of "opulent fortunes." Galphin's business acumen was acute, albeit subtle. One can only imagine that many transplant families, when financially able, would prefer purchasing their loaned livestock from Galphin rather than starting out with new animals. The 1768 ad sought some two hundred persons anxious to come to Queensborough.<sup>18</sup> By June of 1768 twenty-six settlers had registered individual grants. Many evidently immigrated for the enticements mentioned in the ads. A group of Irish emigrants leaving Belfast in December 1769 aboard the *Hopewell* plainly stated their reasons for relocation; the taxes in Ireland were high enough to render pay for even the best jobs insufficient for living.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the eventual influx of settlers, the Queensborough settlement became problematic due, in part, to its location. The former owners, the Creeks, had no compunction about crossing over onto the land, which violated the Euro-American, but not Indian, concept of private ownership. Often the Creeks stole livestock, which subsequently made some interesting circuits through the backcountry. In 1772 an employee of the superintendent of Indian affairs, Creek agent David Taitt, wrote to Superintendent Stuart complaining about George Galphin's employees within his territory. He noted that Francis Lewis, a Galphin employee, plied the Creeks with rum, which he traded for deer skins, then used his deer skins to buy more rum. With rum, men like Lewis bought the horses the Indians had stolen from nearby settlements like Queensborough. Taitt complained bitterly that Lewis had kept the Creek town of Tuckabatchie drunk for a week and had used his drunken customers to rough up any rival traders in the area.<sup>20</sup> Thus Galphin's business associates were actually encouraging

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theft from his own Queensborough settlers, putting profit over regional stability. Not surprisingly the Queensborough Irish took matters into their own hands. In October 1771 settlers pursued the Creeks and detained them, killing one. In December of that year, a Creek man killed settler John Cary with whom the Indian had lodged for the night. Galphin himself tracked the assailant along with his slaves. The Creeks apprehended the murderer and put him to death in front of Indian traders.<sup>21</sup>

Not surprisingly, these events did not make it into Irish newspapers, which continued to advertise Queensborough. In fact 1772 was one of the years of heaviest migration, with some thirty ships transporting colonists. The last of these ships to reach Georgia was the *Waddell*, which landed at Savannah on 26 February 1774. Unfortunately Queensborough continued to struggle along until the American Revolution. The dislocation resulting from the war and from the sale of Loyalist lands spelled the end for the ill-fated community, although land from one settler was confiscated to build the new state capital, Louisville.<sup>22</sup>

Like all businessmen, Galphin had to worry about the competition. In this case the competition came from a younger generation of traders trying to make a profit in a glutted market. Members of this new generation of Indian traders were bold and unabashed in their determination to prosper. The older generation, however, was not without finesse. They often extended so much trade credit to the southeastern Indians that to pay their bills, the Indians were forced to cede land to the government. The government, in turn, would sell the land and direct the proceeds back to the traders. The Creeks and Cherokees owed several traders a debt of such magnitude that, to cancel it, the merchants proposed a sizeable cession of land from the Indians. Compounding the problem, the Creeks believed the Cherokees were offering to transfer land that really belonged to the Creeks.<sup>23</sup> In November 1771 the powerful "Gentlemen of Augusta," otherwise known as Brown, Rea and Company, got involved in the matter. George Galphin, Robert McKay, James Jackson, and Andrew McClean wrote to John Stuart, the superintendent of Indian affairs for the Southern District, warning that the overabundance of Indian traders in the 1760s had ruined the market and adding that unless it improved, traders would quit the backcountry, leaving the Indians under supplied.

Stuart was a representative of the British crown to Indian peoples. He was answerable to the commander in chief of British forces in America and was charged with an agenda alternating from maintaining the peace with tribes to mobilizing them for warfare against enemies of the British. Since it was trade goods that bound the tribes to British policy, diplomatic ties would be broken if trade goods and gifts ceased to flow. After giving voice to their leverage, the Indian traders stated their

wishes. They noted that the contested land was too close to Euro-American settlements to be of any use to either Cherokees or Creeks. They asked the government to accept the cession and to sell the land to Virginians who had been migrating south in growing numbers in search of fresh farm lands, their own having been drained by tobacco production.<sup>24</sup> Governor James Wright of Georgia lobbied the hardest to get the home government to agree to the cession. He told his superiors the area's notorious problem of horse theft was alone was reason enough to increase the buffer zone between Georgia settlers and the Creeks.<sup>25</sup> In December 1772 the government authorized him to sign such a treaty, and in June 1773 the treaty itself was signed in Augusta. With the cession, modern Lincoln, Wilkes, and Elbert counties and parts of Franklin, Greene, and Oglethorpe counties were all brought under Georgia control. George Galphin helped to ensure the cooperation of the Creeks in this matter,<sup>26</sup> fully planning to be among the traders to receive funds from government sales of that land. His share was £9,791. 15. 05.<sup>27</sup>

Problems on the ceded land did not abate. Vigilante action by the Irish settlers prompted a Creek retaliation in December 1773 and brought about the deaths of seventeen English subjects in the area. Governor Wright punished the Lower Creeks in a fashion readily understood by native peoples. To stop the flow of products on which the Indians were so dependent, he ordered a trade embargo. George Galphin chose not to comply with this order. A year later Creek agent David Taitt wrote to Superintendent Stuart telling him Galphin had continued to trade during the entire embargo.<sup>28</sup> For Galphin, business in the backcountry often superseded diplomatic concerns.

With the advent of the American Revolution, John Stuart's job changed dramatically. Before the war, the superintendent was in charge of enforcing trade regulations, handling disputes between the two cultures, and promoting peaceful relations between the southern tribes and Euro-American civilization. After the war began, the superintendent was expected to extinguish tribal conflicts and mobilize the Indians against the colonials, a difficult task after pursuing contrary goals for so long. As negotiations between colonial officials and the British government deteriorated, colonials began to spread rumors that Stuart was enlisting the help of both the Cherokees and Catawbas against the colony of South Carolina.<sup>29</sup>

The backcountry had been a training ground for many would-be Indian traders. Given the glut in numbers of traders reported by petitioners over the years, it is not surprising that many sided with Patriot forces. Like the Loyalist Indian traders, those who chose the Patriot side had lived and worked in the backcountry all their lives; when the war came, they, like the Loyalist traders, used their expertise with Native Americans in behalf of their cause. Such an occurrence posed yet another

threat for Stuart. In December 1775 Stuart notified Secretary of State Dartmouth that the Continental Congress had named three former traders to act as superintendents for the Patriot cause in the southern district. George Galphin, Edward Wilkinson, and John Rea, members of the powerful Brown, Rea and Company, had traded in the backcountry for years and were traveling to meet counterparts named as northern Patriot agents.<sup>30</sup> The Continental Congress also appointed John Walker and Willie Jones of North Carolina as the remaining agents.<sup>31</sup>

Initially, both sides tried to keep the southeastern tribes neutral in this conflict. Here Galphin may have felt conflict between his diplomatic function and his desire for profit on the trade. Like all savvy traders, he knew that only a steady flow of trade goods could maintain that neutrality. Galphin wrote to Continental Congress delegate Henry Laurens in February 1776 noting his dismay that the Congress had stopped the Indian trade. He bluntly reminded Laurens that without the deerskins, merchants would send no trade goods, and without trade there was no tribal loyalty. Galphin told Laurens he was “. . . very sensible that no individual shou’d reap a benefit at this time, but there is the greatest necessity for supplying the Indians at this time to keep them peaceable, . . .”<sup>32</sup>

Galphin further said that if he did not have sufficient merchandise, the Lower Creeks would view him as a liar and would eventually turn against the Patriots. Before he would allow that disastrous chain of events to occur, he would resign his position. The Patriot agent also reminded Laurens that John Stuart was Galphin’s enemy and had been looking for ways to strike at him since the 1773 Creek and Cherokee land cession. He closed by reminding Laurens of an upcoming meeting between Stuart and the Creeks and Choctaws in which he expected the Loyalist agent to hold sway with an impressive showing of gifts.<sup>33</sup>

Galphin’s message of potential disaster and of his own possible departure was not lost on Laurens, who responded quickly with a letter on 14 February 1776 noting his shipment to Galphin of a supply of gun powder to go along with whatever goods and rum Galphin could muster to maintain Creek loyalty. He heartily encouraged Galphin to retain his post despite the hardships and mentioned the future rewards of liberty and rest for all Patriots in a not-too-distant future.<sup>34</sup>

Galphin continued to discuss the dilemma of maintaining Indian allegiance without trade items. On 26 October 1776 he wrote to an acquaintance speaking of the difficulty of keeping the Creeks calm. Galphin, like all trader-diplomats, knew that regular gift dispersals helped ensure Indian cooperation. He believed that Loyalist agents were already at work mobilizing the tribes against his side.<sup>35</sup> Patriots in Carolina accused Stuart of manipulating Indians against the colonials as early as the

summer of 1775. In reality Stuart was not ordered to do so until September of that year by General Thomas Gage, commander-in-chief of British forces in America.<sup>36</sup>

In December 1775 Stuart passed those orders along to Alexander Cameron, his deputy among the Cherokees. Stuart said he had been ordered to use the various backcountry tribes to “distress” those colonies in rebellion, but he did not interpret this order as authorization to attack backcountry residents indiscriminately. Rather, Native Americans were to help Loyalist forces direct attacks on Patriots. Finally Cameron was given explicit instructions to counter at all costs the actions of Galphin, Wilkinson and Rea, the rival Indian agents, and to apprehend them if possible.<sup>37</sup>

Stuart’s apprehension at the threat posed by rogue Indian agents was well founded. Like all who trafficked in the backcountry trade, they knew what best motivated the Indians—the threat of cessation of trade. In fact in September 1775 George Galphin told the Creeks the Patriots were fighting the Loyalists because the “Great King” wanted to withdraw trade from the Indians. Further, Galphin told them their friend Stuart was old and sick, implying they could not count upon him much longer.<sup>38</sup> Stuart felt compelled to employ his own propaganda to offset the Patriot agent’s.

Through David Taitt, Stuart informed the Creeks that there was indeed a dispute between the Euro-Americans in their lands but that it did not concern Indian peoples. Taitt told them that Stuart promised to keep the trade open, but, in return, he expected them to remain loyal to the king and to ignore talks given by the Patriot agents.<sup>39</sup> In early September 1775 the Patriot agents tried again. Members of the Georgia Council of Safety told the Lower Creeks that the war had erupted because the “Great King” demanded more money from the colonists than they could pay and had sent soldiers to collect it.<sup>40</sup> Such a tactic may have been employed to strike a sympathetic chord with the Creeks by making Patriot problems analogous to Indian problems with credit and forced land cessions like the Queensborough settlement. Loyalist agents, however, were not unskilled at striking responsive chords with the Indians either. Alexander Cameron told the Cherokees that had it not been for the British government, the Patriots would have stripped the Indians completely of their land. Carolina Patriot Henry Laurens felt that Cameron could not have selected a more destructive charge to make to the Indians about the Patriots and so ordered Edward Wilkinson to do all in his power to counter Cameron’s efforts.<sup>41</sup>

In March of 1776 Stuart notified Major General Henry Clinton of the status of Indian affairs in the backcountry. He wrote that the race to control the Indian tribes was a swift one. Patriot Indian agents were just as familiar to the Indians as were his own men and were often better supplied with funds with which to treat them. Bitterness crept from between the lines of the letter as Stuart blamed the



success of the Patriot agents on the lack of power given his office in the years preceding the war. Speaking of Galphin specifically, Stuart noted he had amassed a sizable fortune from trading with the Lower Creeks for many years. Galphin's familiarity with them alone would not have been such a threat in the 1770s had "he not . . . been employed by Sir James Wright [of Georgia] and Lieutenant Governor Bull [of South Carolina] to interfere in Indian affairs, and to carry whatever point they had in view."<sup>42</sup> Stuart stated that Robert Rea, an Augusta trader licensed by Sir James Wright, was being employed by the Continental Congress to distribute ammunition among the Creeks. Finally he noted that Edward Wilkinson, a trader of long standing among the Cherokees, had been an employee of Lieutenant Governor Bull.<sup>43</sup> Colonial governors had stubbornly used traders as independent agents for years; now, as independent agents like Galphin became pivotal players in the Revolution in the backcountry, the chickens had come home to roost.

In January 1777 Stuart, in a letter to George Germain, noted the effects that both the competing Indian agents and the war were having on the backcountry tribes. He observed that the Creeks and Cherokees were prevented from hunting by rebel incursions into their homelands. Both were unable to pay old debts or to purchase new items, and both had become entirely dependent on the government dole. Stuart's expenses increased as he hired more agents to oppose Patriot agents like Galphin.<sup>44</sup>

Galphin worked to keep the Creeks loyal to the Patriots and invited them to Augusta regularly for conferences to strengthen ties to his side. Galphin's work was hampered by anti-Indian groups among his own Patriot side. The work of these groups often prevented him from obtaining the loyalty or at least neutrality of the Creeks. A group of Georgians led by Thomas Fee attacked a Creek delegation bound for Augusta and killed one of the tribe. The Creeks turned to George Galphin for satisfaction, and when he could not turn over or punish the murderer, some of the Creeks sided with Loyalists led by David Taitt.<sup>45</sup>

The merchant-turned-diplomat continued to pursue the Creeks. He invited them back for a second meeting at his Old Town plantation. His goal was to at least create factions among the Creeks if he could not separate them entirely from the British. On 17 June 1777 some four hundred Creek warriors met the Georgia Indian commissioners in conference. Loyalist agents like Taitt, Cameron, and Stuart often told the southern Indians that the Patriots had no gifts or merchandise to sell—the mark of an unworthy ally to many tribes. Indian delegates at the conference told Galphin they would require merchandise to take back with them to show their people that Loyalist propaganda was indeed false.<sup>46</sup> Galphin promised to send merchandise if the Creeks would drive Loyalist agents from their lands.<sup>47</sup> One delegate, Handsome

Fellow, declined a Patriot offer of a visit to Philadelphia but asked Galphin for a tour of Charleston, which the backcountry diplomat arranged under his protection.<sup>48</sup>

By the summer of 1777 the strain of trying to conduct Patriot diplomacy and earn some profit began to show in Galphin's correspondence. He wrote to Henry Laurens in July of that year complaining about Georgians who wanted a Creek war. Galphin estimated their reasons ranged from desires for pure revenge against the Indians over property losses to true Loyalist sympathies. He complained that "some of those villians has thretned to shute me as I went back & forwd to the frontier . . ." The Patriot agent waxed bitter when he told Laurens that his hopes for an easier life had been dashed by the war, which had brought him more trade problems than ever. Galphin noted that if it were not ". . . for these damed villians upon the frontier I should tacke plasure in serving my contrey ."<sup>49</sup>

George Galphin's influence and ability were both formidable and well known to both sides in the conflict. Loyalist forces viewed him as threat enough for Indian Superintendent Stuart to fund an assassination attempt on his life. In the fall of 1777 Lieutenant Samuel Moore led a group of Florida Loyalists who camped out near Silver Bluff awaiting the right moment to attack the Patriot agent. They struck an outbound Creek delegation, which they believed to be under Galphin's escort, as it headed for home. They mistook Captain John Gerard for Galphin and killed him. Their real target had remained at his Silver Bluff base. Similarly the Creek delegation survived the attack and made it back home to Oakfuskie.<sup>50</sup>

If the war effort endangered George Galphin's life and his fortune, Patriot authorities at least sang his praises as they updated him about the war effort. In a September 1777 letter Henry Laurens thanked him for his work on behalf of Georgia, South Carolina, and the United States and urged him to maintain the effort. To that end Laurens acknowledged Galphin's importance to be such that all Patriots had to pray for his continued good health and life.<sup>51</sup>

Attempts on his life did not deter the efforts of the Patriot Indian agent. He met the Creeks again at Old Town in November 1777 and treated some three hundred fifty people. Galphin praised them for driving Loyalists from their land and emphasized the need to maintain their vigilance. Galphin further reminded them of just how powerful the Patriot army was. In September 1776 it had leveled the Lower, Middle, and Overhill Cherokee towns in retaliation for their support of the Loyalists.<sup>52</sup>

Just prior to the British invasion of Georgia, Creek agent David Taitt dispatched a band of Loyalist Creeks to attack Patriots and their Indian allies. These Indians attacked Handsome Fellow's band, who turned to George Galphin for an explanation. Galphin told them that Loyalist John Stuart had ordered this Indian attack on

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Patriots to make the Georgians angry enough to turn against all Indians near Georgia territory. Galphin's words prompted Handsome Fellow's band to launch concerted attacks against Loyalist subjects and Indians to such an extent that they had to evacuate the backcountry for a time. It was never easy for Indian traders to sway a tribe—Galphin's presence and influence was remarkable if he could convince bands within the same tribe to fight one another.<sup>53</sup>

Ultimately any Indian agent, whether Patriot or Loyalist, was only as good as his supply line of merchandise. When the flow of Galphin's goods slowed to a trickle, Loyalist elements convinced the Creeks to attack Patriot targets. In July 1778 the Creeks attacked and killed numerous Georgia citizens of Queensborough. The Indians destroyed both homes and livestock before radiating outward to attack outposts along the Satilla and Altamaha rivers in Georgia.<sup>54</sup>

The Creek attack put George Galphin in an uncomfortable position and brought his diplomatic duties and his financial desires once more into direct conflict. Patriot officials ordered him to punish the Creeks by cutting off their already paltry stream of trade items. Galphin complied begrudgingly. He wrote Continental Congress delegate Henry Laurens and admitted that his settler neighbors, ". . . threatned to kill me & the Indians too if I supply them."<sup>55</sup>

Despite failed supply lines, his diplomatic skill and reputation was such that Loyalist officials dealt with him directly during the struggle for the southern backcountry. Britain's Lieutenant Archibald Campbell wrote to Galphin in 1778 asking for Galphin's renewed efforts to keep Indians loyal to him neutral. Campbell then put Galphin under surveillance and captured a Patriot party, which included Galphin's son, as it headed into South Carolina ostensibly to mobilize Indians against the Loyalists. On the couriers, the British found letters from Galphin to both the Creeks and other British subjects encouraging a general rebellion against the British. The dual role of merchant and Indian trader was often a conflicting and costly one for George Galphin. British forces in the southeast offered to manumit slaves who joined their cause. In 1778 some ninety slaves deserted the Galphin estate and joined Lieutenant Campbell's forces.<sup>56</sup>

Both sides competing for Indian loyalty experienced measures of success. In a letter to George Germain, Stuart noted that despite the efforts of George Galphin in the backcountry, the Loyalists had persuaded a group of Cowetas (Creeks) to harass Patriots on the Georgia frontier by attacking a fort there and driving off a herd of horses. Similarly, a group of Cherokees had gone to attack the Virginia frontier but had returned home in want of supplies.<sup>57</sup>

Ironically neither George Galphin nor John Stuart would live to see the war's end. Loyalist Indian agent John Stuart died on 21 March 1779. In the summer of

1779 Germain appointed Alexander Cameron and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown, a Loyalist from Augusta, Georgia, as dual superintendents for West and East Florida respectively.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, the war effort ended for George Galphin soon after as well. He died at Silver Bluff, South Carolina, on 1 December 1780.<sup>59</sup> Although Galphin died before seeing the war's end, his efforts had assured an incomplete loyalty between the southeastern Indians and the British. His death also provides a fitting opportunity to review a somewhat unusual family life as well as the impressive material possessions accumulated during a life's work in the backcountry.

The dual career of businessman and diplomat might lead some to imagine that George Galphin had little time for friends and family. Nothing could be further from the truth. No woman other than Catherine Saunderson claimed the legal title of Mrs. George Galphin. Despite that mere technicality, George Galphin cohabited with at least five women in the backcountry long enough to produce children. Rachel Dupre, a white woman, had two children by Galphin, a son named Thomas and a daughter named Martha, both with the surname Galphin. Sappho, a slave, was the mother of Galphin's daughters Rachel and Betsey, both slaves at Galphin's death. Rosa, a slave, was the mother of Barbara, who was also a slave at Galphin's death. Galphin also had children by at least two different Indian women. Metawney, the more well-known, gave birth to Judith, John, and George. Nitchuckey, the less well-known partner, was the mother of Rosa, also a slave at the time of her father's death.<sup>60</sup>

George Galphin rewarded his heirs in varying degrees of largesse. He was less generous with the mothers of his children than he was with his children. Thomas Galphin, son of Rachel Dupre, received 4350 acres of land plus £50 from sales of the ceded land. He inherited twenty-five slaves and both a grist and saw mill. Further, he inherited one half of the cattle at Galphin's Old Town and items of furniture. His sister, Martha, received two lots in Augusta, 1050 acres, the remaining one half of cattle from Old Town, fourteen slaves, eighteen horses, furniture, and one-third of the residue of the estate. Like her brother, she received £50 from the sale of the ceded land. Their mother, Rachel, received an inheritance tied to her status as a single woman and forfeited if she married.<sup>61</sup> She further received a suit of mourning clothes at the time of Galphin's death.<sup>62</sup>

Judith, John, and George, the children of the Creek woman Metawney, were also remembered in the will. Daughter Judith received the home in which she lived on Silver Bluff, 300 acres of land, £50 from the ceded lands claim, eighteen horses, seventeen slaves, and assorted furniture. John received 1700 acres and £50 of the ceded land money. He also received eighteen horses and half ownership in a saw mill on Town Creek. John inherited twenty-one slaves, assorted guns, furniture, and

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one-third of the residue of the estate. Galphin's namesake, George, received 2000 acres of land, £50 of ceded land funds, the old Brick house, seventeen slaves, eighteen horses, the other half of the saw mill on Town Creek, and assorted furniture.<sup>63</sup>

For Galphin's black family, the inheritance was slightly different. Rachel and Betsy were the daughters of Sappho. At Galphin's death any of his legatees who were enslaved were to receive their freedom. Rachel, who outlived her father, received her freedom at that time. Likewise Betsy was to be manumitted and receive, in addition, livestock, a pair of slaves, and land. A codicil in the Galphin will reveals that she died before her father, and he redirected her inheritance to others.<sup>64</sup> Barbara, Galphin's daughter by the then deceased slave Rose, was manumitted at her father's death and inherited twenty slaves, 300 acres of land, £50 from ceded land proceeds, eighteen horses, and assorted furniture.<sup>65</sup>

Daughter Rosa was Galphin's child by the Indian woman Nitchuckey. Despite her Indian heritage, she was enslaved during Galphin's life and only upon his death did she receive her freedom and a small inheritance.<sup>66</sup>

Galphin's will provided for certain heirs in other ways. Proceeds of the Galphin estate were to be used to clothe, feed, and educate Thomas and Martha Galphin, children of Rachel Dupre; Judith, John, and George, children of Metawney; and Barbara, daughter of Rose. They were to be sent to school in either Charleston or Savannah. Finally, Barbara, Galphin's daughter by Rose, was also to be educated out of her father's will, but Rachel, the daughter of Sappho, was not.<sup>67</sup>

Like most wills, the Galphin document contained contingency plans and codicils. If his primary heirs died, the estate was to be divided among his five sisters in Ireland. The will reveals a generosity somewhat at odds with his sometimes risky actions as an Indian trader. For example, he provided, at his death, £50 sterling to be divided among all widows within thirty miles of Silver Bluff. Galphin also provided the same amount to be divided among the poor of Enneskillen and Armagh in Ireland. Finally, he bequeathed £10 sterling each to the orphan children he raised.<sup>68</sup>

To summarize the life of such an individual is a daunting task. Galphin, the young man, left Ireland behind and entered colonial service, lured to new lands by low taxes and the opportunity for wealth. He began to acquire both land and powerful trade associates in Brown, Rea and Company. Galphin, the entrepreneur, was partner in not one but two settlement ventures to bring other Irish into South Carolina and Georgia, and he made profits from both these projects. As an Indian trader, he pursued policies that encouraged Indian indebtedness, which accrued to his own profit, and he sometimes hired disreputable subordinates, whose actions inflamed the south Georgia settlement of Queensborough. During the great war, he worked

to secure the loyalties of his associates, the lower Creeks, and his influence was such that the British could never fully count upon the southeastern Indians in their plan to reclaim the South. With such a life ordinary men might have found no time for a family—not so with George Galphin. Like his business ventures, his family life was a complicated affair. That family life is still legendary today in the central Savannah River area. Perhaps the most fitting characterization for George Galphin is indeed the one that British Indian agent David Taitt gave him so very long ago. What description could be more fitting than the title “merchant prince of the Georgia forest?”

## NOTES

Abbreviations:

*Richmond County Historical Quarterly* 13, Nos. 1–2 (1981): *RCHQ*

Great Britain, British Public Records Office, Kew: BPRO.

1. Newton D. Mereness, ed., “Journal of David Taitt,” *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1916), 505*n*.
2. Annie Blount Hamilton, “George Galphin of Silver Bluff,” *RCHQ*, 7.
3. Henry H. Claussen, “George Galphin in Ireland,” *RCHQ*, 13. There were two Galphin sons, George and Robert, and five daughters, Margaret, Judith, Susanna, Martha, and Barbara.
4. *Ibid.*, 13–14.
5. Fritz Hamer, J. Walter Joseph and James D. Scurry, *Initial Archeological Investigations At Silver Bluff Plantation Aiken County, South Carolina*, Research Manuscript Series 168 (Columbia: Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1980), 15. Galphin married Catherine Saunderson in 1736 prior to coming to Britain’s North American colonies.
6. Kathryn Holland, “The Path Between the Wars: Creek Relations with the British Colonies, 1763–1774” (master’s thesis, Auburn University, 1980), 4. Galphin was not the first Euro-American to cohabit with an Indian mate. Such occurrences were common whether the trader was married within his own culture or not.
7. *Ibid.*, 16.
8. Edward J. Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, *Indian Trader: The Shaping of the Southern Colonial Frontier* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), 34, 48.
9. E. R. R. Green, “Queensborough Townships: Scotch-Irish Emigration and the Expansion of Georgia, 1763–1776,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 17 (1960), 183.
10. George Galphin to William Pinckney, 18 October 1749, *Colonial Records of South Carolina: Documents Relating to Indian Affairs: May 21, 1750–August 7, 1754*, ed. William L. McDowell (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1958), 4–5.
11. Green, “Queensborough Townships,” 183, 184–85.
12. *Ibid.*, 184, 186.

13. Claussen, "George Galphin in Ireland," 14.
14. Green, "Queensborough Townships," 186–87.
15. *Ibid.*, 187–88.
16. *Ibid.*, 190.
17. Claussen, "George Galphin in Ireland," 14–15.
18. *Ibid.*, 15.
19. Green, "Queensborough Townships," 190–91.
20. Mereness, "Journal of David Taitt," 525.
21. Green, "Queensborough Townships," 194.
22. *Ibid.*, 194–96, 197–98.
23. *Ibid.*, 196.
24. George Galphin, Robert McKay, James Jackson and Andrew McLean to Stuart, 13 November 1771 (BPRO), CO5/73: 99.
25. Green, "Queensborough Townships," 195.
26. Hamilton, "George Galphin," 9. Ultimately, Galphin did not live to see his share of the claim, nearly £10,000. Under Loyalist control in 1780, Georgia's government branded Galphin guilty of high treason and denied the heirs the Galphin share. Interestingly, this court case was not resolved until 1850 when Georgia's Robert Toombs won a lawsuit for the Galphin heirs worth nearly \$191,000. See Hamilton, "George Galphin," 10–11.
27. "The Galphin Claim," *RCHQ*, 41.
28. John McKay Sheftall, *George Galphin and Indian-White Relations In the Georgia Backcountry During the American Revolution* (master's thesis: University of Virginia, 1983), 14.
29. Clyde R. Ferguson, "Functions of the Partisan-Militia in the South During the American Revolution," *The Revolutionary War in the South: Power, Conflict, and Leadership*, ed. W. Robert Higgins (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979), 247.
30. Stuart to Dartmouth, 17 December 1775 (BPRO), CO5/77: 22.
31. Sheftall, *George Galphin*, 16–17.
32. David R. Chesnutt et al., eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens: Jan. 5, 1776–Nov. 1, 1777*, II (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988) 93–94.
33. *Ibid.*, 95–97.
34. *Ibid.*, 101–3.
35. Hamilton, "George Galphin," 10.
36. Thomas Gage to Stuart, 12 September 1775 (BPRO), CO5/76: 187.
37. Stuart to Cameron, 16 December 1775 (BPRO), CO5/77: 22.
38. Stuart to Dartmouth, 17 September 1775 (BPRO), CO5/76: 172.
39. David Taitt to the Cowetas, Tallapoosas, Abechkas and Alibamous, 17 August 1775 (BPRO), CO5/76: n.f.

40. Helen Hornbeck Tanner, "Pipesmoke and Muskets: Florida Indian Intrigues of the Revolutionary Era," *Eighteenth Century Florida and Its Borderlands*, ed. Samuel Proctor (Gainesville: The University Presses of Florida, 1975), 20.
41. Henry Laurens to Edward Wilkinson, 29 October 1775 (BPRO), CO5/77: 79.
42. Stuart to Major General Henry Clinton, 15 March 1776 (BPRO), CO5/77: 105.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Stuart to George Germain, 24 January 1777 (BPRO), CO5/78: 83.
45. Edward J. Cashin, *Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1989), 46–47.
46. *Ibid.*, 67–68.
47. Sheftall, *George Galphin*, 33.
48. Cashin, *Thomas Brown*, 67–68.
49. Chesnutt, *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 402–3.
50. Sheftall, *George Galphin*, 36–37.
51. Chesnutt, *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 522–23.
52. Sheftall, *George Galphin*, 41.
53. Cashin, *Thomas Brown*, 70–71
54. Sheftall, *George Galphin*, 47.
55. *Ibid.*, 49.
56. Hamilton, "George Galphin," 10.
57. Stuart to Germain, 22 August 1777 (BPRO), CO5/78: 186.
58. Germain to Cameron and Thomas Brown, 25 June 1779 (BPRO), CO5/80: 123.
59. Cashin, *Thomas Brown*, 106.
60. Galphin's Will, *RCHQ*, 17. This volume contains a convenient alternative to the will at Edgefield County Courthouse. There is both a typed copy in modern English and an article summarizing major points of the will.
61. John Shaw Billings, "Analysis Of The Will Of George Galphin," *RCHQ*, 34.
62. Ninety Six District Will Book, George Galphin, *RCHQ*, 25. The will spells Rachel's last name as Dupee. Galphin's correspondence reveals a modest education, at best, with respect to literacy, and wide variations in spelling when compared with his correspondents—like Henry Laurens.
63. Billings "Analysis," *RCHQ*, 34.
64. Ninety Six District Will Book, George Galphin, *RCHQ*, 27.
65. Billings, "Analysis," 34–35.
66. *Ibid.*, 31.
67. *Ibid.*, 28–31.
68. Ninety Six District Will Book, George Galphin, 24.



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## The Dawn of Modern Electronic Television

Nat Pendleton

Television, like any modern invention of complexity, did not simply appear—it evolved. Much of its technology was and still is based on previous inventions as well as methods used by radio. It is not within the scope of this study to present the history of the telegraph, telephone and radio—suffice it to say that each of these technologies built upon its predecessor. That such was the case can be noted in the fact that the first telephones were briefly referred to as “speaking telegraphs.” During the first years of radio communication, terms like “wireless telegraphy” and “wireless telephony” had likewise been common. And in the 1920s, when experimenters first dabbled in transmitting moving pictures, the popular press and hobbyist magazines used names like “radio with pictures” and “radio movies.”

The beginnings of television make for a complicated yet fascinating story. Perhaps the story’s complexity is what has kept any details of television’s origins out of most of the textbooks, while histories of other inventions—like the telegraph, telephone or automobile—have been simplified, popularized, and turned into legend. It is not possible to attribute honestly the “invention” of television to a single individual or corporation, nor can one say that it was “invented” in a given year. Television’s evolution is marked instead by a series of milestones; several inventors, scientists, artists, financiers, corporations and even nations have contributed to its progress.

First, this study will focus on early international efforts to establish a functional television service that brought clear and steady black-and-white pictures to the public on a regular basis. Second, it will look at various stations, their programming, and the public’s reaction to “this new wonder.” Third, it will review both primary printed sources and recent scholarly research in order to present a brief synthetic overview of the pre-1950 history of the medium. Television with high-quality recognizable pictures and regularly scheduled broadcasting was achieved in the late 1930s. Great Britain, Germany, and the United States led the industry, followed by France, the Soviet Union, Italy, and Japan. In all of these countries limited experiments were conducted and sporadic broadcasts aired. The method used in each country’s system in the latter half of the 1930s was completely electronic. That is, the studio or other program images were scanned by an electronic camera, transmitted, and then received by cathode ray (picture tube) television receivers. Television today works

under these same principles, albeit using many improvements such as color, stereo sound, and closed captioning.

Before this modern, all-electronic system was developed, mechanical systems had been utilized. Based on series of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century inventions by such luminaries as Alexander Graham Bell, Paul Nipkow, C. Frances Jenkins, and John L. Baird, these mechanical systems used spinning discs with a spiral of holes passing in front of an electric eye to create a scanned image. The pulses were transmitted and received by a bulky set that used a disc with an identical spiral and a flickering neon bulb. The discs in both the studio's camera and in the receiving set would run at the same speed. The receivers produced images with anywhere from 30 to 60 lines of resolution—1 line per hole in the scanning spiral of the disc. In comparison to the 525 lines used by American television today, this was, needless to say, a very blurry and low-definition picture. But between 1928 and 1933 the novelty was so great that sets were actually sold and several businesses—mostly existing radio stations—set up studios and broadcast crude programs.

The mechanical system ultimately failed because the novelty of its low-quality pictures soon wore off. Low quality programming, with images that could not easily be seen and often looked like silhouettes, could not sustain the sales of new sets nor attract advertising dollars.<sup>1</sup> By 1933, during the depths of the Great Depression, the five-year experiment had come to an end as the last stations shut down their studios, and many television pioneers went back to their laboratories. Indeed, by the end of 1930 RCA had already seen the writing on the wall:

Television must develop to the stage where broadcasting stations will be able to broadcast regularly visual objects in the studio, or scenes occurring at other places through remote control; where . . . these objects or scenes . . . [will be] . . . clearly discernible in millions of homes; where such devices can be built upon a principle that will eliminate rotary scanning discs, delicate (temperamental) hand controls and other moving parts . . .<sup>2</sup>

Although many might view mechanical television as a “false start,” it laid much of the necessary groundwork, especially in studio design and programming concepts, for the future method of all-electronic, higher definition television. “In many ways, electronic television did not develop simply parallel to the mechanical method, but often climbed upon its shoulders.”<sup>3</sup>

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Electronic television also climbed on the shoulders of radio broadcasting. It comes as no surprise that British television became a state-run affair. Just as with the BBC state-run radio, no advertising was used, and revenue came instead from the listener and viewer who had to pay an annual licensing fee or tax to have their set. The case was similar in Germany for radio, but whereas the British had managed to sell about 20,000 television sets from 1936 to 1939 around the London area, the Nazi government, under the auspices of the post office, chose not to sell sets to consumers.<sup>4</sup> Germans could watch television in *Fernsehtuben*—special dimly-lit TV viewing theaters—located adjacent to several post offices around the Berlin area.<sup>5</sup>

In the United States television operations were at first subsidized by the corporate proceeds of their parent organizations but with the final intention of introducing advertising, as with radio, when the FCC gave its approval. Thus companies like RCA, GE, Philco, Dumont, or Zenith all ran television studios in the late 1930s and early 1940s financed by the proceeds of their radio and electronics industries. A total of nine television stations operated in the United States before its entry into World War II. Each station was considered an investment in future technology, and no profits were made until the late 1940s.

It is important to point out that, although in competition with each other, much of the early television technology and patents were shared among the various American companies, the British, and the Germans. One German technical journal illustrated how television cameras covered the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games.<sup>6</sup> The journal gives details of how both Vladimir Zworykin's Iconoscope camera pick up tube and Philo Farnsworth's Image Dissector camera pick up tube were adopted and operated in German cameras. In 1936 Zworykin, a Russian Jew, was working for RCA labs and Farnsworth, a Utah Mormon, was working with Philco. Both would have been persecuted for their religious and ethnic backgrounds in Nazi Germany, and yet their inventions made television cameras possible in all countries.

It has been reasonably argued that the Third Reich used the 1936 Olympics as a great propaganda stage. The presence of large *Fernsehkanonen* or "television cannons" at the side of the stadium's track could not help but attract international public attention due to their six-foot length. Although the all-electronic system had only been perfected to 180 scanning lines of resolution,<sup>7</sup> the Nazi government was eager to get their new, still-not-fully-developed technical achievement into public view. Whereas other countries confined their lower definition pictures and early experiments of the mid-1930s to the laboratory, the Nazi propaganda machine was willing to parade the crude 180-line pictures before the public.

The German system did improve, and by the fall of 1937 a 441-line system was in operation.<sup>8</sup> This standard remained in effect in Berlin until 1943, when the television tower there was destroyed in an air raid. Even more surprising is the fact that the Germans took their television system to occupied France. From 1942 until their retreat in 1944 the Germans broadcast live programs (mostly cabarets), newsreels, and short films from their confiscated French-made transmitter on the Eiffel Tower.<sup>9</sup> During the war both the Berlin and Paris transmitters were used almost exclusively to televise programs for wounded soldiers.<sup>10</sup> There were about five hundred French-made and about a hundred German-made television sets in Parisian hospitals.<sup>11</sup>

In England the BBC operated a 405-line station at the Alexandra Palace in northern London. Public programming started on 2 November 1936. The British claim this to be “the world’s first regular public high definition television service.”<sup>12</sup> The term “high definition” was used in contrast to the earlier low definition images achieved by the defunct mechanical scanning systems. In many ways the BBC’s claim is true. Although RCA and Philco in the United States were transmitting 343- and 441-line images from 1935 to 1938, the service was not yet public. No American sets went on sale until 1939. And the Germans, although they publicly demonstrated their system, continued to broadcast at 180 lines until late 1937, which did not qualify as “high definition” transmission. Because the British sold about twenty thousand sets all tuned to their single station, their service was truly public. Sadly, the station was ordered to shut down on 1 September 1939, at the outbreak of World War II. Fear that the *Luftwaffe* could use the BBC’s VHF transmitter as a homing beacon prompted this move. The station remained off the air until 1946, but during the war much of its staff remained busy as radar developers and technicians. Although Britain had only the one BBC television station in London, that station was an exemplary leader with many “firsts” in both programming as well as live, remote coverage:

Between 1936 and 1939 the English television audience had seen variety, drama, music, and educational programs from the television studios. They had seen the Coronation procession of King George VI, plays telecast directly from the stage of London theaters, the English Derby from Epsom Downs, the Oxford-Cambridge boat races, tennis at Wimbledon, and many other outstanding events.<sup>13</sup>

What set the United States apart from the other nations involved with television development was the fact that several competing companies with no governmental

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financing were involved. Whereas Germany, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union had only one government-run station each, the United States had a total of nine on the air shortly before and during the war; three in New York City, two each in Los Angeles and Chicago, and one each in Philadelphia and Schenectady.

As noted before, most of these early television stations, both in Europe as well as in the United States, had already conducted experiments during the late 1920s and early 1930s using mechanical scanning disc systems. As the science developed and improved, these stations switched over to all-electronic systems and concentrated on increasing both the number of lines and the rate of scanning to improve the quality of the picture. The first all-electronic American systems in 1932 used only 120 scanning lines at twenty-four frames per second. This produced a blurry image with visible, thick scanning lines and a noticeable amount of flicker. RCA transmitted from both their Camden, New Jersey, laboratories as well as from atop the Empire State Building to a handful of experimental television receivers located within a few miles of both areas.<sup>14</sup> Both Philo Farnsworth and the Philco Corporation operated stations in Philadelphia. Philco placed its studio and transmitter right in its Tioga Street radio factory, and Farnsworth eventually joined Philco. In Los Angeles Don Lee operated a private TV station that paralleled these experiments back east. He financed the operation from his nine-station radio network on the West Coast.

The number of scan lines quickly increased to 240 lines in 1933, and a great improvement was observed in 1934 when a system using 343 lines at thirty frames was introduced by RCA. This 343-line system—and Philco's slight variation of 345 lines—were the first to employ interlacing. By interlacing, first the odd numbered lines are scanned and then the even ones are scanned. By interlacing and scanning at the faster rate of thirty frames (or 30 complete scans of both odd and even lines), all noticeable flicker is removed.

The year 1936 marked the first public demonstrations of television. As already mentioned, the Germans televised the Olympic games of that year in Berlin using their 180-line system and the English inaugurated their 405-line service. In the United States RCA, Philco and Don Lee all started giving public demonstrations to the press and various radio executives. It had commonly been thought up until this time that television was a secret technology with many jealously guarded trade secrets and patents. It now became apparent that most of the patents were, in fact, shared. Although several components were indeed patented or secured through trade and purchase, it would have been as difficult to patent a television set or the concept of television as it would have been to patent an automobile.

The demonstrations of 1936 used the 343-line system and not more than 1000 people saw any of them. In July 1936 when RCA held its first demonstration exclusively for radio executives, there were only three television receivers in the area<sup>15</sup> outside of those few in the studio. By November 1936 there were only about forty to fifty experimental television sets in the New York area, and both Philadelphia and Los Angeles had even fewer. All public demonstrations were by invitation only, and from 1936 until the spring of 1939 the three pioneer television stations were literally broadcasting to themselves. When public demonstrations were given, it was usually the press, radio executives, and the FCC who were invited.

Not all the demonstrations went without criticism. Although the pictures were far superior to the outdated mechanical scanning systems seen only a decade or less before, they were still small. "The greenish-hued pictures measured 7½ by 10 inches on a screen called 'the largest yet employed which is capable of commercial adaptation.'"<sup>16</sup> The small "greenish-hued pictures" were a result of phosphors used in the early picture tube. It was always noticed by even the most casual of observers, most of whom had grown accustomed to large-screen black-and-white motion pictures. Although a green picture had been fine for laboratory experiments, public displays were another matter. One reporter observed the improvement made by Philco in February 1937 in Philadelphia:

Also, the greenish tint that has characterized television pictures in the majority of past demonstrations has been overcome. Black and white advances telepictures closer to the cinema, but television has a long way to go to equal the movies in clarity. The sound part of the television show, however, is already equal to the best broadcast receivers . . . [and] the pictures, now measure 7½ by 10 inches. There can be no doubt that television must eventually offer larger pictures to possess real entertainment value and to lure the eye as do the movies.<sup>17</sup>

The brighter, larger pictures did not come until the early 1950s. The early picture tubes were made of delicate glass and were limited to a small size due to their delicate structure, a vacuum, and risk of implosion. With few exceptions, a twelve-inch diagonal picture was the largest available, and many sets used nine- and five-inch tubes. Another reason early television may have failed to "lure the eyes as do the movies" was because of early experimental production values. The same reporter commented on this at an earlier demonstration made by RCA in November 1936:

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These modern television machines have entertainment value, all who watch agree, but even during a forty-minute demonstration it is noticed that spectators become restless, especially if an act is on the screen too long. The eye is not as easy to entertain as the ear.<sup>18</sup>

He went on to write that newsreels and short films were the most popular programs viewed. One can easily draw the conclusion that films were superior because they were previously edited and ready to show. Television performances, on the other hand, were live and did not flow as smoothly as film for several reasons, among them a lack of editing, too few cameras, long pauses, and lack of ability by production staff to keep the action moving. What resulted were often stilted images caused by not enough camera movements or changes. Viewers often saw the same person standing or singing with no change for several minutes. Eventually these criticisms made by viewers, especially newspaper reporters, were heeded, and the production quality increased dramatically in the subsequent years as television became available to the public.

Technical standards also improved. In late December 1936 Philco moved up to 441 lines, followed by RCA in January 1937 and Don Lee later that summer. This 441-line standard was adopted throughout the United States and remained in use until 1 July 1941, when the 525-line standard, still in use today, was adopted.

The original intent of these field tests and pioneering broadcasts was to establish a commercial television system. As the standards evolved, RCA and Dumont in New York were especially eager to manufacture and sell television sets. In 1939 RCA, GE, Dumont, and a handful of others introduced the first sets for public sale in the New York area. RCA, parent corporation of NBC at the time, announced that its station would initiate a regular telecasting schedule commencing with the opening of the New York World's Fair on 30 April.<sup>19</sup> With the gradual increase of the number of television sets, the interest in broadcasting spread to other corporations. Philco, which up to then only had conducted field tests, committed to a regular schedule in October 1939. General Electric, which had previously conducted mechanical television experiments in the 1920s, resumed broadcasting in Schenectady, New York, in November 1939 using the new 441-line standard. GE pioneered television relay and in 1940 joined RCA and Philco in the first network telecast—the Republican national convention in Philadelphia. The program was televised in Philadelphia by Philco, relayed over a coaxial cable by AT&T to New York City, and broadcast there by RCA's NBC station. General Electric picked up the NBC signal on a huge, rhombic antenna and retransmitted the program in Schenectady. Other uses of this pioneering

three-station network included coverage of King George VI's visit to New York City, parades, and sporting events.

Each station made a series of contributions to either the technology or studio production techniques or to both. RCA and Dumont led in technology and pioneered many firsts in the production field. The iconoscope pick up tube was one of the key devices used in most cameras until 1945, when RCA introduced the far more sensitive image orthicon. General Electric developed studio lighting. CBS in New York, WBKB (belonging to the Balaban and Katz theater chain) in Chicago, and Don Lee in Los Angeles all developed studio production techniques. Lee started sporadic broadcasts in the early 1930s, but maintained ten hours per week of live or film programs as early as 1939.

Philadelphia's Philco station added much to television circuitry technology, and along with RCA's NBC station in New York pioneered live remote coverage.<sup>20</sup> Starting with the 1940 fall season Philco covered all home football games played by the University of Pennsylvania at Franklin Field. It also placed cameras in Convention Hall, as previously mentioned, to cover the 1940 Republican national convention. Philco even installed a camera and relay in the tower of City Hall and broadcast the 1 January 1941, Mummies' Parade.<sup>21</sup> Although outdoor and remote coverage was only for special events, the five hundred to one thousand Philadelphians who did have a television set during the early 1940s were able to enjoy about ten and later twenty hours per week of programming, mostly consisting of films or amateur acts from the studio.

New York City was the most active place for prewar and wartime television. Not only did the city have a large, Broadway-based talent pool to draw from, but by 1941 it possessed three competing stations: CBS, NBC, and Dumont.

Thousands of set-owners throughout the world—in London, Berlin, Los Angeles, and other major cities, have witnessed television performances in their own homes, but last Tuesday [1 July 1941], for the first time in history, more than one program was available to any television audience.<sup>22</sup>

The first of July 1941 also marked the FCC authorization of commercial television and the full conversion to the 525-line standard. Most of the nine stations were now broadcasting over 20 hours per week and some had plans for expansion. Don Lee had filed for a permit to build in San Francisco and NBC had plans to go on the air in Washington, D.C., by 1 January 1942 and in Philadelphia by 1 June of that



same year.<sup>23</sup> Delays in paperwork and, more significantly, the United States entry into the Second World War postponed those plans. The circumstance that commercial service had started, however, and the fact that TV sets were being sold and existing stations were looking towards expansion and network-building all indicate that television had finally arrived.

Although World War II put American television on hold, it did not kill it. Stations were authorized to broadcast four hours of programming per week in an effort to keep the fledgling industry alive. Further, they “did their part” in the war effort by televising air raid drills, first aid lessons, military maneuvers, films, the occasional sporting event, and live drama. The war brought many technological improvements to television, mostly through radar and microwave developments. Starting in 1946 the number of stations and new television sets began to increase, and a boom followed that lasted well into the 1950s.

This is just an overview of television’s start. Although most of its prewar history remains hidden from the general public’s eye, the sources do exist. More research awaits, especially in areas that may highlight some of the lesser-known ventures such as the stations in Chicago, Los Angeles, or overseas. Each made their contribution and thrived on each other’s competition. More importantly, they set the foundation for what became nationwide and worldwide television.

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## The Value of Chinese Immigrants During the Building of the First American Transcontinental Railroad, 1852–1869

Grady Powell

In 1882 Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring Chinese immigration to the United States. In the debate over the bill, two distinct political sides emerged, both of which cited economic evidence to support their opinions. Exclusionists in favor of the bill argued that Chinese immigrants depressed regional wages and stole jobs from Euro-Americans. Opponents of the bill countered with evidence of the industrial advancement made possible by Chinese labor and contended that exclusion would only compound economic problems.

The economic discontent addressed by the bill originated in California, where the majority of Chinese in America had immigrated in search of gold. California was also home of the Central Pacific Railroad Company, the epitome of mid-nineteenth-century capitalism, and a firm that had employed 10,000 Chinese workers during the building of the first American transcontinental railroad from 1865 to 1869. It was against such capitalist conglomerates and the Chinese they employed that labor party leader Denis Kearney rallied a national exclusion campaign that eventually led to the Exclusion Act. But was exclusion of the Chinese economically justifiable? While the answer in 1869 depended greatly upon how one felt about the transcontinental railroad, contemporary labor theory suggests the Chinese did not cause the economic disruption that angered native workers. Rather the Chinese were a minority ethnic group falsely accused while the actual culprit, industrialization, went free.

Previous studies do support a claim that the Exclusion Act had little economic justification, but they do not offer a clear application of basic economic theory to Chinese immigration, nor do they show how this theory values Chinese participation in the labor market.<sup>1</sup> This study will use the modern labor theory of immigration economist George Borjas to evaluate the labor market impact of Chinese immigration in California and to test the anti-Chinese claims that led to the Exclusion Act.<sup>2</sup> Borjas posits that although immigration harms some laborers, it may ultimately result in a positive national economic return known as immigration surplus. Immigration surplus occurs only under specific labor market conditions, conditions that may be better understood in light of a brief historical background of the Chinese immigration to California and the building of the transcontinental railroad.

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### **Chinese Immigration**

Chinese immigrants began to arrive in California en masse in 1852, four years after gold was discovered in Coloma, California. Arriving in California they joined the thousands of Americans and new European immigrants who had rushed west struck with gold fever. Between 1850 and 1860 the state's total white population increased approximately 350 percent, from roughly 90,000 residents to over 320,000.<sup>3</sup> The gold rush was exceedingly welcome news in China, where, in the wake of the economic ravages of opium and the Opium Wars (1840–1841, 1856–1860), the average Chinese worker struggled to earn enough money to survive. These conditions made the risk of leaving China against an imperial ban worthwhile to thousands of men who could expect to earn a small fortune for their families after a couple of years of mining.<sup>4</sup> To leave China, emigrants sailed to Hong Kong where they booked passage to San Francisco, often on overcrowded merchant ships and mail steamers. Because so many emigrants could not pay for their tickets abroad, they signed contracts with mining companies that would deduct the cost of passage from future wages. Political opponents of the Chinese later construed this contract labor system as “coolie” or slave labor, but almost all Chinese came to America voluntarily.<sup>5</sup> The rate at which Chinese arrived in California fluctuated generally with the prosperity of the mines, but more immigrants arrived in 1852 (20,026) and 1854 (16,084) than in any of the other years in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Upon arrival in California the immigrants usually went straight to the mines. Although some did set up businesses to cater to their fellow foreigners, by 1860 approximately 62 percent of the Chinese in California (24,282 out of 39,433) were miners.<sup>7</sup> The majority of mines in the 1850s and early 1860s were small, easily accessible placer mines that could be worked by individuals or by small groups of men using rudimentary equipment like picks, shovels, and pans. Water was the most essential component, and although white miners initially accepted Chinese immigrants as their number increased along crowded riverbanks and streamsides, white hostility against the Chinese grew. To avoid the violent conflicts that often erupted, Chinese reworked mines white workers had abandoned.<sup>8</sup> In addition to such racial prejudice, the Chinese faced discrimination arising from laws that protected the rights of native white miners. In 1852 the California legislature levied a tax of three dollars per month on Asian miners. A year later this tax was raised to four dollars, and in 1856 a bill was passed that increased the tax by two dollars every two years.<sup>9</sup> Despite these economic setbacks, many Chinese, willing to work long days for relatively small profits, earned enough by mining to send money to their families back in China. Widespread profitability did, however, continue until 1863 when mine depletion

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and several years of severe weather caused a mass exodus from surface mining. Chinese and American miners alike flocked back to large cities like San Francisco and Sacramento in search of work.

### **The Transcontinental Railroad**

Work would be on its way, this time via the federal government, but Congress was still debating the amendment to a transcontinental railroad bill that would open up thousands of jobs. On 6 May 1862, ten years after the first legislation was proposed, Congress had passed the first Pacific Railroad Bill, ensuring federal financial support for the construction of a railroad that would unite the east and west coasts. The bill provided for the Central Pacific to build track eastward from Sacramento to the California border and simultaneously organized the Union Pacific Railroad Company to build westward from an undetermined location along the Missouri River. The Central Pacific Railway Company was originally organized by railway visionary Theodore Judah, primarily to receive the expected federal bid to build the western half of the railroad. The Central Pacific began construction as soon as the bill was passed. By the end of 1863 it had built track eighteen miles eastward. Due to the inception of the two railroad companies, costs of materials like iron rose significantly and almost caused bankruptcy from the start. Further government action would be necessary to relieve the companies' capital constraints, and in 1863, while thousands of miners were abandoning their exhausted claims, Congress was considering how to effectively amend the bill.

The original bill appropriated funds for the construction of the railroad almost exactly according to a plan introduced by Judah. The government would grant the railroad companies bonds valued at \$16,000 per mile for track laid on flat land, \$32,000 for track laid across foothills, and \$48,000 per mile for track laid across mountainous terrain. The bonds would be issued after forty miles of acceptable track had been laid. Furthermore, the Central Pacific would forgo its subsidies if it did not complete fifty miles in the first two years and fifty miles each following year.<sup>10</sup> The corporations were also granted 6,400 acres of adjacent land per square mile and mineral rights. To generate capital the companies were to sell bonds and were to repay them later partly by transporting federal mail and troops to fight the American Indian Wars.

In 1864, Congress agreed on an amendment that allowed government bonds to be issued upon construction of twenty- instead of forty-mile sections of railroad. The amendment also reduced the par value of stock from \$1000 to \$100, doubled land grants, and permitted the Central Pacific to build further east to an unspecified location.<sup>11</sup> The bill's vagueness in distinguishing beginning and ending points for the

railroad would engage the two railroad companies in a race for profit, a competition to see who could build the most track and secure the most federal bonds. So the Central Pacific was in a hurry to get construction underway. Immediately after the state of California agreed to purchase 1,500 Central Pacific bonds for \$1.5 million on 2 January 1865, J. H. Stobridge, the Central Pacific's construction superintendent, sent across the country advertisements for 5,000 white laborers to start building the railroad.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Central Pacific and the Chinese, 1865–1869**

Unfortunately for Stobridge only 800 half-hearted workers responded, hardly enough to start construction. The undersupply of workers was in part due to the high wages prevailing in the mining industry, a condition that was compounded by the general difficulty workers had in migrating west. It was the Chinese in California left unemployed by the mining exodus that would eventually fill the gap, but both Charles Crocker, a partner and construction supervisor, and Stobridge were hesitant to hire any Chinese. They feared they would drive off white workers and would be unable to bear the physical strain. Workers were necessary to continue though, and when a group of Irishmen threatened to strike, Stobridge agreed to hire fifty Chinese for a trial period. The trial proved a success, and over the next four years the Central Pacific relied primarily on Chinese labor to build the railroad. In 1869 Chinese employment peaked at 80 percent of the company's 12,500-man workforce.<sup>13</sup> On the line Chinese were initially employed at menial tasks, but after their assimilation to railroad work they were assigned more difficult and dangerous jobs.

### **Immigration Labor Theory**

The Chinese were essential for building the railroad, but from an economic perspective, it was their impact on the native labor market that is most important and the hot question that led to exclusion. Borjas's immigration surplus theory attempts to quantify the effect immigrants have on a native economy. His model is based on the basic law of supply and demand but extends to consider "all of the possible channels through which immigration transforms the economy."<sup>14</sup> Borjas stresses, "the skill composition of the immigrant population—and how the skills of immigrants compare to those of natives—determine the social and economic consequences of immigration for the country."<sup>15</sup> The model measures how immigrants affect national gross domestic product, or GDP. While GDP data was not recorded in the nineteenth century, the essential components of the model remain historically applicable.

Basic labor market analysis begins with an understanding of the supply and demand for labor. In a competitive labor market firms' demand for labor may be calculated by the number of workers they wish to hire at a given wage rate. Firms hire workers at a wage rate equal to the value of the productivity of the last worker

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they hire, or the value of the marginal product (VMP). Due to the law of diminishing returns to labor, a firm stops hiring workers when the value of a worker's productivity drops below the cost of hiring the worker. Therefore, in a static market, all workers are paid a wage equal to the VMP of the last worker. How immigration affects this equilibrium market depends on the skill level of the immigrants.

Immigrants are substitutes to native labor when their skill levels match those of natives. Substitute immigration redistributes wealth from "native workers who compete with immigrants to those who hire and use immigrant services."<sup>16</sup> This occurs in a series of sequential events. When substitute immigrants enter a country, competition for the number of available jobs increases. Average worker wages consequently fall because workers choose to accept less pay in order to secure scarce jobs. A drop in worker wages means less labor costs for firms that, in turn, realize greater profits. Increased revenue to firms tends to drive product prices down. Lower prices pass benefits on to natives who consume immigrant products and services. Although native workers who compete with the immigrants do lose income, firms and consumers reap greater benefits, and the nation as a whole experiences surplus of spending power.

These effects of substitute immigration, however, occur only in the short-run. In the long run firms and workers have time to react to changes in the labor market, a process Borjas describes as voting with their feet. For example, if one firm is highly profitable in a region where immigration has lowered the cost of labor, then more firms will relocate to that region. More firms, however, cause an increase in demand for workers, and wages are driven back up. Native workers also vote with their feet, moving away from regions where wages are depressed, again causing an increase in wages due to decreased competition for jobs. This reactionary behavior theoretically diffuses the impact of immigration across the nation and "in the end natives may neither be better off nor worse off because of immigration."<sup>17</sup> An immigration surplus may exist temporarily before all market participants have had time to adjust their behavior according to changes in the market. The question then remains; does immigration have any enduring impact on a native economy? Borjas posits, "Immigration surplus arises only when immigrants are sufficiently different from natives."<sup>18</sup>

Immigrants whose skills do differ significantly from those of natives are complementary to native labor. Complementary immigrants cause an increase in native wages due to specialization. Specialization occurs when generally less skilled immigrants replace skilled native workers who occupy unskilled jobs. As more unskilled immigrants arrive, the demand for skilled workers, like supervisors, increases. Native laborers therefore leave unskilled jobs and essentially become more productive as they fill newly-created skilled jobs that command a higher wage. For example, an

experienced native factory worker becomes more valuable to a firm when it begins to hire inexperienced immigrants. The native worker might be promoted to train or manage new workers and would most likely be paid more. Unlike substitute immigration, complementary immigration transfers wealth from the firm owners, who now pay a higher wage, to the native workers, who now earn more. The firm also experiences an increase in productivity because all workers produce at a level closer to their full-skill capacity. Increased productivity leads to economic growth, potential jobs, and greater wealth for a majority of market participants.

To summarize Borjas's theory, the economic impact of immigrants depends on the degree to which their skills differ from those of natives. If immigrants are substitutes to native labor then natives as a whole will experience a short run surplus. Owners who employ immigrants and consumers of immigrant services benefit while native workers who compete with the immigrants lose income. This surplus, however, theoretically dissipates as firms relocate to the region where labor is least expensive. In the case of complement immigration, the native country experiences an enduring surplus due to worker specialization. Specialization creates more wealth to distribute throughout the native country by increasing worker productivity. Although firms suffer short-term profit loss, in the long run everyone potentially benefits.

In 1998 Borjas estimated that the immigration surplus in America was about \$8 billion, or less than a \$30 increase in the yearly income of each native-born person.<sup>19</sup> He stressed that this surplus was nearly insignificant, concluding that the national economic impact of immigration is minimal. Two important factors weighed heavily on Borjas's 1998 calculation: not every labor market participant responded to recent changes in the market, and immigrant workers filled different roles in the economy, some as substitutes and some as complements to native workers. Any number of individual stories could be told, and Borjas admits:

In the end, *any* interpretation of statistical correlations between immigration and the labor market outcomes of native workers . . . requires a story. This story would indicate how immigration alters the economic environment, and thereby affects the employment opportunities of particular groups of native workers.<sup>20</sup>

In appreciating the value of Chinese immigrant labor, it is important to understand both the theory and the story to which it is applied.

The story of the Chinese employed by the Central Pacific actually begins in 1852 when the first Chinese arrived in California. The immigrants were relatively unskilled working-age males who had never worked on a railroad and could not speak English.



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By 1870 Chinese immigrants made up about 10 percent of California's population but nearly 25 percent of the labor force.<sup>21</sup> While the number of immigrants is significant, Borjas is chiefly concerned with how their skills compare with those of natives. Were Chinese immigrants substitutes or complements to native railroad workers?

### **The Chinese as Complements**

An analysis of the Central Pacific's work force before and after the entrance of Chinese immigrants in 1865 clearly shows that the Chinese were complements. First, consider the impact of Chinese on the demand for native workers. In a Congressional hearing called to address the immigration issue, Stobridge testified, "white labor increased very much after introducing Chinese labor." The number of white workers on the payroll increased from 800 to over 2,000.<sup>22</sup> More white laborers came to the railroad because the Central Pacific needed more skilled workers and in order to get them was willing to offer higher wages. Unskilled white workers earned \$35 a month plus room and board (Chinese only earned \$31 a month) while skilled white workers could earn between \$74 and \$130 per month.<sup>23</sup> This is a direct result of specialization, and in his testimony Stobridge exemplifies how it occurred: "We made foremen of the most intelligent of the white men, teamsters and hostlers."<sup>24</sup> Prior to the employment of immigrants these workers performed unskilled tasks that were eventually dominated by the Chinese.

While Seward goes so far as to say, "the white man in California will prove himself able to outdo his competitor in almost all, if not absolutely all, the fields of rivalry," the Chinese actually equaled the productivity level of white workers in all except for the most technical tasks, such as carpentry, masonry, and driving teams of horses.<sup>25</sup> The general physical stature of European workers alone distinguished them for the heaviest work, and the Chinese' lack of adequate English made organizing technical work, such as designing a bridge, difficult. This evidence suggests that the Chinese were considered less skilled than the white native workers and were therefore complements, a conclusion supported by the increase in demand for native labor and in native wage rates. The complementary relationship between Chinese immigrants and native white workers increased productivity of the Central Pacific and generated more wealth for the entire railroad industry. In this case railroad workers benefited relatively more than the railroad owners, who sacrificed profits to pay higher wages to specialized white workers.

This final conclusion is not readily apparent because the owners of the Central Pacific, nicknamed the Big Four, accrued fortunes from their railroad investments. According to complement immigration theory they should have profited less due to increased wages, and in relative terms, they did. The Central Pacific owners would

have profited more had the Chinese immigrants been substitutes to the white natives. All workers would have been more productive, and skilled worker wages would have been lower. Instead the owners lost potential profits in amounts that do not compare with the actual profits realized. These capitalists and other big business owners in similar labor markets understandably argued that the Chinese were absolutely necessary to the growth of the California economy. Richard G. Sneath, president of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, claimed, "Without Chinese labor, I don't think there would have been half of the material wealth in this state."<sup>26</sup> In 1862 the editors of the *Sacramento Union*, a major California newspaper, viewed Chinese as a "positive element that resulted in widened and multiplied forms of labor for whites" and often defended their economic role.<sup>27</sup>

### **Argument for Exclusion—The Chinese as Substitutes**

Native laborers and small producers on the other hand argued for the exclusion of Chinese, claiming they depressed wages and displaced native workers.<sup>28</sup> Early on these workers had the support of the California legislature, which passed legislation like the 1862, "Act to Protect Free White Labor Against Competition With Chinese Coolie Labor, and to Discourage the Immigration of the Chinese into the State of California." This act levied a capitation tax of \$2.50 per month on most Chinese residents.<sup>29</sup> Further racial prejudice stereotyped Chinese as enemies of native workers. "As soon as the Pacific Railroad is completed" a journalist in Chicago's *Workingman's Advocate* wrote in 1869, "Chinamen will begin to swarm through the Rocky mountains. . . . Men who can work a dollar a day. . . are a dangerous element in our country."<sup>30</sup> Such anti-Chinese sentiments were widespread in America up to 1869.

Economic theory has shown, however, that native railroad wages were not depressed but inflated. So on what economic ground did the agitated anti-Chinese workers stand? Racial prejudice was certainly a catalyst, but the fact that anti-Chinese fervor fluctuated in response to the strength of the California economy points to the actual cause of native unrest. During the building of the transcontinental railroad there were few collective uproars against Chinese labor. The California economy was relatively stable, and the Central Pacific employees were far from any population centers. In 1869, however, a minor recession struck causing mass unemployment among generally skilled white workers. This recession was closely followed by the completion of the railroad and the subsequent release of thousands of Chinese workers, who again returned to the cities. The Chinese though were not a cause of the recession but rather a visible minority caught in the middle of large shifts in the national economy. California was rapidly industrializing, and advancements in manufacturing technology had reduced the value of skilled labor. The fallout in demand

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for skilled workers was especially apparent in the mining industry where ownership of mines had shifted from independent placer miners to large companies that could afford capital to purchase heavy digging equipment.<sup>31</sup> The machines replaced the skilled workers and made room for more unskilled workers. So while many skilled white workers lost their jobs, Chinese immigrant wages actually increased.<sup>32</sup>

The fact that large manufacturers employed these Chinese did not escape Denis Kearney. In a fiery 1877 speech to the Workingmen's Party of California, he made an important emotional connection between Chinese labor and the growing capitalist economy: "The capitalists who employ Chinese are robbing the working people with their system." Kearney carried his "Chinese Must Go!" campaign nationwide, rounding up vote-seeking politicians who would eventually press the Chinese Exclusion Act.<sup>33</sup> It was this direct connection of Chinese workers to the evolving capitalist economy that was the economic basis of the anti-Chinese argument. The problem was compounded by the close association of the Chinese with the Central Pacific, the epitome of capitalism in the 1860s and 1870s due to "its virtual monopoly, . . . its gargantuan land grants, its incomparable economic power and political influence, and its rising revenue amidst general economic downswing, [which] made it a fitting target of social protests."<sup>34</sup> Native workers were suffering not at the hand of Chinese immigrants but rather at the invisible hand of capitalism.

### **Troubleshooting**

These conclusions do offer a modern perspective on the economic issues of the Chinese Exclusion Act, but we must keep in mind how different the modern American economy is from that of 1869. The most significant difference lies in labor mobility. Borjas's model assumes that participants in the labor market are able to vote with their feet, therefore diffusing the economic effects of immigration in one particular region throughout the national economy. During the building of the transcontinental railroad, however, few firms could afford to relocate, and few workers could afford to move, mostly because passage west was so difficult—a problem the transcontinental railroad would soon alleviate. Similarly, limited communication in the nineteenth century prevented more immediate responses to labor market fluctuations. The cost of transportation and communication kept not only workers and capital from flowing into California but also present workers and capital from leaving.<sup>35</sup> So had there been competition between Chinese and native workers, wage depression and native job displacement would have been more severe in 1869 than is shown by the data and observations Borjas's model is based on.

A lack of federal market regulation in the 1860s is another significant difference. It allowed the formation of a unique railroad industry in which the Central

Pacific acted as a partial monopolistic monopsony, or a firm without competition for its product or its workers. Another peculiarity was the company's labor supply of immigrants. At times it was nearly inelastic, meaning a large drop in wages would not affect the number of workers willing to work. This occurred due to the difficulty Chinese workers had in leaving the railroad labor camps. Once workers had traveled a hundred miles along the railroad bed there was nowhere to go, regardless of working conditions. In the one instance when Chinese workers went on strike, Crocker suspended rations for a week until the hungry strikers finally gave in.<sup>36</sup> An ironic consequence of the monopsony firm and an inelastic labor supply is that, although immigrant workers did receive lower wages than their white counterparts, the Central Pacific paid higher wages to Chinese workers than did any other industry.<sup>37</sup> This unique market structure, now prohibited by federal anti-trust laws, allowed the Central Pacific to employ the most efficient means of production despite economic and human rights violations. Remarkably the entire project was completed seven years ahead of schedule, on 10 May 1869 at Promontory Summit, Utah.

### **Conclusion**

The completion of the first transcontinental railroad marked a new era in America's industrializing economy, one that would bring more opposition to the Chinese who helped facilitate its growth. The Chinese immigrants who worked on the Central Pacific railroad were complements to native railroad workers, and their labor allowed native workers to realize higher wages through specialization. Market specialization stimulated the expansion of the railroad industry and the west coast economy. Furthermore, the Chinese played an irreplaceable role in the construction of the transcontinental railroad not only by providing their labor at a discounted wage but also by working under extremely harsh conditions. While whites handled much of the skilled labor, Chinese immigrants risked their lives and died to complete the hardest sections of the railroad. Their most courageous work was done while scaling the Sierra Nevada Mountains where they blasted roadbed along sheer cliffs, tunneled through solid granite in severe winter conditions, and cleared miles of forests and rocks to make way for the railroad that would later be heralded as the "greatest engineering feat of the nineteenth century."<sup>38</sup> When blasting the summit tunnel of the Sierra Nevadas, Chinese workers were put up against a team of imported Cornish workers. Although the Cornish workers were paid wage premiums, the Chinese accomplished more on a daily basis.<sup>39</sup> This is an example of the real contribution the Chinese made to the railroad, a contribution Leland Stanford, governor of California and Central Pacific partner, stood by: "Without Chinese it would have been impossible to complete the western portion of this great National highway."<sup>40</sup>

The railroad also brought more capital to California, and it aggravated grievances of the labor movement against the Chinese. Kearney and his Workingmen's Party proposed "to rid the country of cheap Chinese labor . . . by all the means in our power," and they did.<sup>41</sup> In 1882 the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed on a wave of unjustified economic claims that Chinese laborers were substitutes to native labor. The Chinese were scapegoats for the economic depression in California—a depression that followed the building of the first American transcontinental railroad and was caused by a reduction in the demand for skilled labor due to industrialization.

## NOTES

1. George Seward, *Chinese Immigration: Its Social and Economic Aspects* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881); Mary Robert Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Hold, 1909); Ping Chiu, *Chinese Labor in California, 1850–1880* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963); Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Tzu-Kuei Yen, "Chinese Workers and the First Transcontinental Railroad of the United States of America," (Ph.D. diss., St. John's University, 1977), 106; Terry E. Boswell, "A Split Labor Market Analysis of Discrimination against Chinese Immigrants, 1850–1882," *American Sociological Review* 51 (June 1986), 352–71.
2. George Borjas, *Labor Economics* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000). See especially Chapters 5 and 9; George Borjas, *Heaven's Door* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
3. Seward, *Chinese Immigration*, 351.
4. Jack Chen, *The Chinese of America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1980), 6–8.
5. *Ibid.*, 23–25.
6. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 498.
7. Chiu, *Chinese Labor in California*, 27.
8. Boswell, "Split Labor Market," 356.
9. Chiu, *Chinese Labor in California*, 18. In 1870, after they had become obsolete, these taxes were declared unconstitutional.
10. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nothing Like it in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863–1869* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 81.
11. *Ibid.*, 95.
12. George Kraus, "Chinese Laborers and the Construction of the Central Pacific," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (1969), 1: 42.
13. Seward, *Chinese Immigration*, 23–24.
14. Borjas, *Heaven's Door*, 88.
15. *Ibid.*, 19.
16. *Ibid.*, 90.

17. Ibid., 96.
18. Ibid., 95.
19. Ibid., 91.
20. Ibid., 85.
21. Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 79.
22. Seward, *Chinese Immigration*, 23–24.
23. Alexander Saxton, "The Army of Canton in the High Sierra," *Pacific Historical Review* 35 (June 1966), 149. Monthly values approximated on twenty-six working days per month.
24. Seward, *Chinese Immigration*, 23.
25. Ibid., 318.
26. Yen, "Chinese Workers and the First Transcontinental Railroad," 106.
27. Cheryl L. Cole, "The Capitalist Perspective of the Sacramento Union, 1850–1852," *California History* 57, no. 1 (1978), 16.
28. Chinese immigrants were complementary to white labor in the railroad industry as well as almost every other commercial sector of the economy where Chinese immigrants had a major impact, such as mining and shoe making. Chiu's *Chinese Labor in California, 1850–1880*, addresses the specific impact of immigrants on these industries.
29. University of California Berkeley Instructional Technology Program, "An Act to Protect Free White Labor Against Competition With Chinese Coolie Labor, and to Discourage the Immigration of the Chinese into the State of California," <<http://www.itp.berkeley.edu/~asam121/1862.htm>> (5 February 2001).
30. Workingman's Advocate, Chicago, 6 February 1869. Cited in Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 29.
31. Chiu, *Chinese Labor*, 33–34.
32. Ibid., 35.
33. Mary E. Brown, ed. *Shapers of the Great Debate on Immigration: A Biographical Dictionary* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999) 50, 54.
34. Chiu, *Chinese Labor*, 50.
35. Ibid., x.
36. Wesley S. Griswold, *A Work of Giants* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), 197.
37. Chiu, *Chinese Labor*, 45.
38. Stephen Ambrose, "The Big Road," *American Heritage* (October 2000), 56–66.
39. Ambrose, *Nothing Like It in the World*, 199–200.
40. Leland Stanford to Andrew Johnson, 1865, Cited in Ambrose, *Nothing Like it in the World*, 164.
41. Brown, *Shapers of the Great Debate*, 50.

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## The Memory Palace of Lorenzo Johnson: Pedagogy and the Art of Memory in the Nineteenth Century

Kevin Brooks Sheets

In 1846 Lorenzo Johnson published *Memoria Cyclopedia*, a manual for the art of memory.<sup>1</sup> His book included techniques to help the student and autodidact memorize mountains of information. The memory system that he advocated would, he said, help individuals remember such facts as the birth years and ages at death of all the founding fathers and the reigns of the kings and queens of England.<sup>2</sup> His technique used a system of sounds and articulations. He assigned numbers to each of the sounds of the English language. Thereby the numbers in a date, for instance, could be translated into their corresponding sound. From the sounds Johnson devised a simple phrase that reminded him of the event in question. For example, the sounds corresponding to 4-0-0-4 were, respectively, Re-Ze-Ze-Re from which Johnson constructed the phrase: "Arose the Sire." Hence, anyone desiring to remember the alleged biblical date of creation could simply recall the little phrase which reminded him of God's sovereignty, translate the sounds into their corresponding numbers, and arrive at 4004 B.C.

While Johnson's system seems cumbersome and labored, it nevertheless suggests the importance of memory training to nineteenth-century Americans. Johnson went on to write *Memoria Technica*, a manual for students, a year after *Memoria Cyclopedia* appeared.<sup>3</sup> No doubt he knew that the pedagogy in schools emphasized the ability of a student to memorize. Indeed, the recitation, by which a student recited the previous day's lessons, was the most common feature of the nineteenth-century classroom.<sup>4</sup> That education emphasized such skills reveals quite a bit about educators' notions of the brain's physiology. Johnson himself seems to have shared their ideas. His memory system therefore provides an inviting glimpse into the nineteenth-century science of the mind.<sup>5</sup>

Johnson's art of memory depended on two things: the "vivid impression" and "association." The ability to recall an event or other miscellaneous fact was, as he said, "in proportion to the strength of the impression it makes on the mind."<sup>6</sup> Memorization depended on how sensitive the mind's retentive faculty was. The stronger the impression a fact or event made, the more likely it was that the mind would retain it. Consequently his system's goal was to discover the "surest method of deriving the most vivid impression of all that we wish to retain."<sup>7</sup> Johnson meant by impression a

mental picture or some visual association. Hence the image of God in His glory rising to His majestic heights was a potent image that triggered a catchphrase (“Arose the Sire”) which, when translated, revealed the date of creation.

To illustrate his system of impression and association, Johnson constructed a memory palace, a mental visual world organized into what he called “rooms.”<sup>8</sup> Two rooms, one upon the other, each included four walls, a floor, and ceiling. He divided each into nine spaces, and each space was numbered. To help remember a space’s position, Johnson contrived a series of “prompters and symbols.” Using the system of articulations that was the key to his entire system, he assigned “tidy quail” to the first space on the first wall. The “te” and “de” sounds both represent one in his system, so “tidy” indicated that the quail was to be found in the first space on the first wall. Similarly, “shot eagle” indicated 61, or the first space on the sixth wall, the sixth wall being in the Upper Room directly above the first wall in the Lower Room. (The “sh” sound representing 6 and the “te” sound, again, representing 1). Johnson insisted that for the system to work, the symbols had to be made “perfectly familiar.”<sup>9</sup> The dividends for such training were “paid” in improved memory ability. For example, Johnson illustrated that in order to remember that Philadelphia had the nation’s second largest population, one need only associate a “new cricket” with the city, perhaps by visualizing a cricket hopping along the city’s famous Market St. or by having William Penn, the city’s founder, seated atop a cricket. The numeric correspondence for “new” was 2; in Johnson’s memory palace, he placed a cricket in the second space on the floor. Hence, a “new cricket” was always associated with 2. By imagining a “new cricket” participating in the 1787 Philadelphia Constitutional convention, for example, one could instantly recall that the city ranked second in population.<sup>10</sup> The memory palace, outfitted with all manner of crickets, ladders, quails, and larks organized into their proper spaces, provided a mental map for arranging information for quick recall.

No doubt there was a parlor game quality to demonstrations of astounding recall, but memorization was esteemed more for its instructional value than for entertainment. Johnson’s system, while complex and exhausting, nevertheless reminds us of the value educators attached to such skills. It is worth noting that Caroline Goodale’s education at the Newton Normal School (Massachusetts) in the late 1840s emphasized mastery of facts. The journal that she kept during the spring and summer of 1849 records the lectures she heard and the lessons she was taught. She reported in May that her “geography lessons are very interesting; Miss Henderson described Connecticut to us today.” In June she enjoyed a lecture on mahogany. Later, her teacher described to her class the physical features of North America and



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explained the derivation of the name of its sister continent in the hemisphere. "It was called South America," she learned, "because it is south of North America."<sup>11</sup> One probably did not need a memory system like Johnson's to master such facts, but that schools taught this way reveals the extent to which they esteemed an education of information. Not surprisingly, the demonstrations Johnson used to recommend his system included memorizing facts: the year of coronation of each of the English monarchs, for example.

Memory training was an important element of nineteenth-century pedagogy.<sup>12</sup> Teachers in common schools as well as in colleges taught by using the recitation. There were obvious practical benefits to recommend it. In the common school classroom of the early republic, as Carl Kaestle indicates, teachers resorted to memorization because it helped them keep order in the class. Students worked quietly memorizing passages from their reader in order to recite them before the class when called upon.<sup>13</sup> Lines of poetry, rules of grammar, and passages from the Latin and Greek classics were learned by this method. William Gardiner Hammond, a student at Amherst in the 1840s, described the routine used in his Latin class. "The students sit in alphabetical order," he began, and the roll is called at the commencement to see if all are present. As one or another is called by the tutor, he rises in his seat and goes on till the tutor bids him stop. The tutor marks each recitation with a number denoting its degree of merit, and the general average of these settles the student's standing. But this is kept secret from them.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1880s William Lyon Phelps described a similarly leaden experience in Greek. Boys recited their translations of Homer while the professor acknowledged their progress. Having spent a year in the "monotonous routine" translating parts of the Iliad, Phelps said the instructor surprised him when he ended the semester by saying, "again without any emphasis, 'The Poems of Homer are the greatest that have ever proceeded from the mind of man, class is dismissed,' and we went out into the sunshine."<sup>15</sup> Harvard students in the 1820s made similar complaints. One said that the "teacher was there, not to teach, but to give marks to each student."<sup>16</sup> The recitation was essentially a passive exercise for the instructor. He merely listened to hear if a student stumbled.

Historians have been inclined to use the complaints of students to indict the pedagogy of memorization common to nineteenth-century schools. Indeed the reputation of nineteenth-century education sank low in the next century as "progressives" like John Dewey disparaged rote training in favor of more active learning models.<sup>17</sup> Writing in the 1950s Richard Hofstadter characterized the era of the antebellum college as a "great retrogression" because of its moribund curriculum and its emphasis on

the rote memorization of Latin and Greek classics.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, historians have looked back with a bemused glance at the poor lads of the nineteenth century who endured such a harrowing and suffocating experience.<sup>19</sup> In this context Lorenzo Johnson looks less like a serious educator and more like a Barnum curiosity on display at the American Museum between the Feejee mermaid and General Tom Thumb.

Tossing Johnson's memory system onto the dusty relic shelf of a historical society, however, misses the point. Memory mattered to nineteenth-century educators, and not merely because it kept students silent. Memorization served a legitimate educational function and was in keeping with the expectation nineteenth-century educators entertained about the purpose of education. It is hubris to suggest that nineteenth-century educators emphasized the recitation (with its reliance on rote memorization) because they were not clever enough to imagine anything else. Rather, they esteemed memory training because they saw such skills as compatible with an essential educational goal: to "furnish the mind" with useful knowledge.

Educational reformers and polemicists spoke often about "furnishing the mind," a pregnant phrase they used to depict their pedagogical aim. Jaspas Adams, the newly-installed president of Geneva College, urged his students in 1828 "to furnish your minds with useful learning."<sup>20</sup> Educators envisioned the mind as an empty room into which knowledge would flow. Knowledge became part of a boy's "mental furniture," said Rev. Joshua Jones, principal of King William's College in the Isle of Man. It helped him to "expand and invigorate his mental powers."<sup>21</sup> Beginning with a Lockean blank slate, a boy pursued education to stock his mind with an inventory of useful facts. Of course, determining what knowledge was of most worth became the topic of considerable debate. One essayist worried that if the mind was not filled with "valuable furniture, it will be crowded with lumber, it will be the repository of trifles, of vanities, and perhaps of vices."<sup>22</sup> He urged boys to study the Latin and Greek classics. In any event, the impetus was to fill the empty vessel with knowledge, and a sure way to accomplish that task was to train the memory.

Johnson was versed in the language of "mental furniture." His language resonated with the psychology of the mind common among nineteenth-century educators. He wrote of the mind's "retentive faculties" and about the importance of "impressions" being made upon it.<sup>23</sup> Yet, while the mind became a warehouse for knowledge, it also actively organized the information it gathered. A person's ability to remember bits of poetry and Latin tags picked up from Cicero could be strengthened. The mind was often likened to a muscle; exercise made it stronger.<sup>24</sup> Johnson believed that this technique provided the "workout" necessary for the mind's continued growth.

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The importance of such an effort cannot be overemphasized. Formal institutions, including the schools and colleges, and informal pursuits of knowledge both cultivated the skill of memorization. The use of commonplace books is entirely understandable in this context. In the colonial period and well into the nineteenth century, students and self-improvers relied on the commonplace book to record quotations they liked and wished to use later. The pursuit of knowledge represented the effort of individuals to attain the distinguishing marks of a gentleman or lady. Their key characteristic, besides their moral grounding, was their sociability, a trait most easily demonstrated in the art of conversation. Young men and women vied for reputations among the drawing room set, and they cultivated their memories to supply themselves with afternoon eloquence. A person was judged by how well informed he or she was.

Richard Bushman has linked the wholesale consumption of printed material in the antebellum period with the cultural imperative to become "respectable." As he notes, the fictional Captain Truck was quite taken by his hostesses' familiarity with ships. "The cultivated person," Bushman said, "knew something of virtually everything."<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Joseph F. Kett links the same impulse to self-culture or self-improvement.<sup>26</sup> Young men, for instance, joined literary societies and debating clubs and attended lyceum lectures in the hope of adding to their stock of knowledge. As Kett suggests, it was the display of learning that motivated such young men as Isaac Mickle Jr. As a member of the Washington Library Society in the 1830s Mickle engaged in self-improvement by reading. In his diary he recorded useful quotations that he might later employ in his own writing.<sup>27</sup> Such motivation to respectability and self-culture encouraged young men and women to cultivate the powers of memorization. Their reputation for amiability depended on the effortlessness of their conversation.

While memorization was important to the art of conversation, its use in the nineteenth century was tied to the larger purposes of education. Education was about mastering the stock of the world's knowledge, or at least the choicest bits of wisdom that comprised the elements of civilization.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, an educated person was one who had mastered the store of knowledge that other educated persons considered worth knowing. It is telling that prior to the twentieth-century reform of college requirements, a bachelor of arts degree implied that its holder had mastered the classical curriculum. Often called the "cultural degree" by its partisans, the B.A. denoted a person with broad learning in the arts and sciences, an educated person in the sense that one knew certain things.<sup>29</sup> (By contrast, B.A. degrees since the early-twentieth century have been conferred on individuals who have accrued the requisite number of "credit

hours.”) As education became identified more with time spent sharpening intellectual skills and less about mastering specific bodies of knowledge, the importance of memorization declined.<sup>30</sup> This is to suggest not that memorization is irrelevant to contemporary educational schemes but only that the context that privileged memorization in the nineteenth century has evaporated.

Lorenzo Johnson’s memory system, while curious to our modern sensibility, was perfectly in keeping with the goals of nineteenth-century educators. Memory training was more than a novelty; it aided the student and autodidact. Schoolteachers imparted knowledge by requiring students to memorize their textbooks and recite lessons in front of their colleagues. The point was not to torture them but to “furnish their minds” with knowledge. It was a goal shared by self-improvers who pursued knowledge on their own. Such men and women embraced the art of memory because they needed such skills to help them accumulate information they could use in social settings. As respectability included the affability demonstrated by one’s easy but informed conversation, they would have found a system such as Johnson’s to be more help than hindrance. It is perhaps telling that we have made into a “trivial pursuit” the knowledge of miscellaneous fact that Johnson esteemed. His contemporaries no doubt used such miscellany as the “mental furniture” of a well-appointed mind.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Lorenzo Dow Johnson, *Memoria Cyclopaedia, or, the Art of Memory, Applied to Technicalities and Numbers in the Sciences, Based on the Analysis of Sounds and Articulations* (Taunton, MD: Samuel O. Dunbar, 1846).
2. *Ibid.*, 39–42 and 66–67.
3. Lorenzo Dow Johnson, *Memoria Technica, or, the Art of Abbreviating* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1847).
4. For the recitation as a common feature of nineteenth-century classrooms, see any one of several standard works on the history of American education: Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783–1876* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 395–96; Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780–1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 17–18; William J. Reese, *The Origins of the American High School* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 136–41. For the pedagogy of elite private schools, such as Round Hill, see James McLachlan, *American Boarding Schools: A Historical Study* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1970), 84–85.
5. Many, if not most, nineteenth-century educators embraced “faculty psychology,” a term used to define a particular science of the mind. Faculty psychology understood the mind to comprise discrete “faculties” or powers governing particular mental aptitudes, for instance, memory. As such, each of these faculties could be trained by exercising it as you would exercise a muscle. The Yale Report of 1828, for example, draws heavily on the theory of faculty psychology. Several

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recent works discuss faculty psychology and its relationship to the schools. See Reese, *The Origins of the American High School*, 100–101 and Kevin B. Sheets, “Et Tu America? The Rise and Fall of Latin in Schools, Society, and the Culture of the Educated Man” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 2000), 42–55 passim. See also Daniel Walker Howe, *Making the American Self: Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 5–10.

6. Johnson, *Memoria Cyclopaedia*, 73.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., 80–81.

9. Ibid., 76.

10. Ibid., 79. Had Philadelphia ranked ninth in population when Johnson made his example, one would have had to have pictured a “Bold Puma” running down Market Street or jumping on a table at the Philadelphia convention. Johnson linked bold and puma; the “be” sound in “bold” indicating 9.

11. Caroline N. Goodale, 2 May, 18 June, and 20 June 1849, “Diaries, 1849–1850,” Manuscript collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.

12. See note 4.

13. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic*, 18.

14. George F. Wicher, ed., *Remembrances of Amherst: An Undergraduate's Diary, 1846–1848* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 25.

15. Gilbert Highet, *The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), 491–92.

16. Quoted in McLachlan, *American Boarding Schools*, 76.

17. Progressive educators like Dewey esteemed a pedagogy that linked classroom activities to a child's daily experiences. Because they were interested in fostering citizenship and emphasizing public responsibilities, they put education in the service of democracy. As such, the student became a creator or discoverer of knowledge rather than a recipient, as they imagined had been the case in the nineteenth century. Mastering facts, therefore, was seen as less relevant to contemporary education than experiential learning. Dewey's writings are voluminous, but on this point, see Dewey's *The School and Society* (1899) and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902). For a searching analysis of Dewey's philosophy on education see Robert B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 98–101 and 150–94 passim.

18. Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College* (1955). For a recent antidote to Hofstadter, see the collection of essays edited by Roger L. Geiger, *The American College in the Nineteenth Century* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000). Geiger and others attempt to rehabilitate the reputation of the antebellum college by arguing for its compatibility with nineteenth-century society and culture. Moreover, they are empathetic to the college, seeing it as an institution per se, not as the problematic precursor of the university.

19. William Reese's new history of the public high school is typical of the mood modern historians have toward nineteenth-century pedagogical methods. While Reese is right in noting the emphasis on memorization, his tone reveals his impatience with what he no doubt considers to be an

- unfortunate waste of a student's time. For example, Reese characterizes as "mind-numbing" the catechistical textbooks used in the classroom: *The Origins of the American High School* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 137.
20. Jasper Adams, *Inaugural Discourse Delivered in Trinity Church* (Geneva: NY: James Bogert, 1827), 48.
21. Jones is quoted in Samuel Taylor, *Classical Study: Its Value Illustrated by Extracts from the Writings of Eminent Scholars* (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1870), 11.
22. [Vicesimus Knox], "On Learning the Classics by Heart," in *The Prize Book, no. 3 of the Publick Latin School in Boston* (Boston: Cummings & Hilliard, 1822), 24.
23. Johnson, *Memoria Cyclopaedia*, 73.
24. This theory persisted into the twentieth century until psychologists began to question it. For a summary of the "gymnastic" theory of the mind and its critique see John Dewey, *How We Think* (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1910), 45–46.
25. Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 286–87.
26. Joseph F. Kett, *The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties: From Self-Improvement to Adult Education in America, 1750–1990* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 48–51.
27. *Ibid.*, 50. Philip E. Mackey, ed., *A Gentleman of Much Promise: The Diary of Isaac Mickle, Jr. 1837–1845*, 2 vols., (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977). See also Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700–1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 219–27.
28. Laurence R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 197–203 and Julie A. Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual Transformation and the Marginalization of Morality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 22.
29. Veysey, *Emergence of the American University*, 184–203 passim, Frederick Rudolph, *Curriculum: A History of the American Undergraduate Course of Study Since 1636* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1977), 246–47, and Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 165–70.
30. On this shift in definitions of education as a result of the elective system and credits, see Reuben, *Making of the Modern University*, 62–64.

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## **The Emperor's New Clothes: President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, the 1968 Student Movement, and the Crisis of Mexico's Institutionalized Revolution**

Julia Sloan

**T**he “hegemony of the state is also exactly what is most fragile about the state, precisely because it does depend on people living what they much of the time know to be a lie. . . . ‘hegemony’ is the intellectual equivalent of the emperor’s new clothes.”<sup>1</sup>

The popular children’s story about an unsuspecting emperor duped by an unscrupulous tailor into thinking he had a fine new set of clothes is loosely analogous to the political situation in Mexico in 1968. Like the fabled emperor, the youth of Mexico had been led to believe something that turned out to be false. They had been led to believe that their president and their government embodied the promise of the Revolution of 1910 and continually endeavored to make that promise a reality for all Mexicans. When the politics of one man, President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, laid bare the dichotomy between this closely held belief and the true nature of everyday Mexican life in the 1960s, the hegemonic discourse of institutionalized revolution that sustained the post-revolutionary state became as transparent as the emperor’s new clothes. When this happened, the stage was set for a crisis.

That crisis came in the summer of 1968 when tens of thousands of university students, joined by representatives of several other sectors of Mexican society, took to the streets to protest the authoritarian nature of the Diaz Ordaz regime. This movement lasted for months and culminated in a brutal massacre by government forces of an estimated four hundred students in a public plaza just ten days prior to the opening of the Olympic Games in Mexico City. To comprehend the gravity of the situation, the level of student disillusionment, and the threat posed to the legitimacy of the Mexican state, we must juxtapose the values of Mexican revolutionary nationalism with the character and conduct of Gustavo Diaz Ordaz.

Implicit in the Mexican political system was a belief in progress through revolution, whether violent or institutionalized. In the decades after the armies had laid down their weapons, progress through revolution came to mean change undertaken through government action based on the ideals of 1910 to achieve what years of violence had failed to accomplish, namely social justice for all Mexicans. To that end, the “revolutionary family” fashioned a corporatist state in which key sectors of the Mexican population were brought into the government and given a vested interest in

its success. The peasantry and the working classes were central to this new corporate government, much as they had been to the course and character of the Revolution itself. Thus, much of the nationalistic rhetoric extolling the idea of institutionalized revolution concerned the historic role of these two traditionally oppressed groups and the commitment of the Mexican government to create for them a brighter future.<sup>2</sup>

The progress toward this brighter future encountered a series of stumbling blocks from the late 1950s through the 1960s as the political climate in Mexico changed. After reaching new heights of revolutionary nationalism in the mid-1930s and following a series of significant reforms that helped to legitimize the idea of institutionalized revolution, Mexico had entered a period of prosperity in the 1940s known as the economic miracle. During this boom revolutionary idealism had given way to fiscal conservatism as the leadership of the ruling party shifted toward the right and away from the foundations of its popular support. When the economic miracle began to wane during the late 1950s and early 1960s, public discontent with the government began to increase, as did conflict within the ruling party itself. Gustavo Diaz Ordaz situated himself squarely in the conservative, anti-reformist wing of the party, which put economic concerns above social programs, courted foreign investment, and suppressed labor agitation.<sup>3</sup> Though these efforts eventually would make Diaz Ordaz one of the most reviled men in Mexico, they first made him one of the most powerful.

Gustavo Diaz Ordaz's career as a conservative politician had begun long before he assumed the presidency in 1964. Born into a prominent but poor Oaxacan family, the ambitious young Diaz Ordaz went into government service after completing his education. His early career included a brief tenure—from 1938 to 1939—as vice-rector of the University of Puebla when, ironically, an episode of serious student unrest disrupted the university and troubled its young administrator. Diaz Ordaz's harsh handling of this student agitation and his unwavering assertion that the conflicts were started by outside agitators proved eerily prophetic of his later dealings with striking groups. Lacking a long-term interest in academe, however, this son of a schoolteacher moved into politics and won a congressional seat in the state of Puebla. From there he made his way up the political ladder, securing a position in the Senate and a series of cabinet posts, the most important of which was secretary of the interior in 1958.<sup>4</sup>

From this post as the most powerful person in the cabinet of President Adolfo Lopez Mateos, his long-time friend, Diaz Ordaz worked to limit the influence of organized labor through strict enforcement of a controversial article of Mexico's penal code, commonly known as the Law of Social Dissolution. Originally enacted in



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1941 to protect Mexico from fascists and nazis, this statute prohibited any activity that might undermine national sovereignty. Broadly construed, this law could apply to everything from labor union activity to works of art, and its language was vague enough to give those who used it the power to act unfettered by constitutional restraints. Diaz Ordaz used Article 145 most effectively against striking railroad workers whose work stoppage in 1958 threatened to cripple Mexico's transportation system. Diaz Ordaz's interpretation of the Law of Social Dissolution made union activity, collective bargaining, and strikes illegal because of their allegedly anti-government character. This enabled him to arrest the railroad workers' leaders and end the strike forcefully. Public outcry against such heavy-handed government repression was loud and long lasting, however, both because the Mexican constitution specifically protected the right to strike and because the plight of labor figured so prominently in the rhetoric sustaining institutionalized revolution.<sup>5</sup> A decade later, with the principal leaders of the railroad strike still languishing in jail, the students took up their cause as well.

Prior to the 2000 presidential election, the choice of a chief executive in post-revolutionary Mexico had always involved an electoral charade undertaken by the ruling party to confirm the incumbent's chosen successor. In 1964 Gustavo Diaz Ordaz was the chosen successor of Adolfo Lopez Mateos. He should have been able to win the presidency with widespread popular support and virtually no opposition. But his handling of the railroad workers' strike during his tenure as secretary of the interior, had earned him many enemies who proved quite vocal in their criticism of his candidacy.<sup>6</sup>

Diaz Ordaz's critics likened him to the hated Porfirio Diaz whose dictatorship had been overthrown by revolutionary forces in 1910. Implicit in this comparison was the suggestion that Diaz Ordaz, like Don Porfirio, worked against the Revolution and thereby against the people of Mexico. Such criticism could have been devastating for the official candidate of the Party of Institutionalized Revolution (PRI). Pointing out that a shared surname was not the only thing these two men had in common, leftists leveled serious charges against the validity of the electoral process and the implications for the future of democracy in Mexico. When Francisco Madero campaigned against Don Porfirio in 1910, he had raised the cry for "effective suffrage and no reelection." In 1964 journalists resurrected this revolutionary slogan and hurled it at candidate Diaz Ordaz in bitter condemnation of the hollowness of institutionalized revolution. The left-wing publication *Politica* led in this campaign against Diaz Ordaz, and its writers and cartoonists were merciless in their attacks. The historically powerful, highly symbolic, and strongly emotive phrase "effective

suffrage and no re-election” not only led people to associate Diaz Ordaz with Porfirio Diaz but also addressed the serious issues plaguing the Mexican political system.<sup>7</sup>

After nearly five decades of institutionalized revolution Mexico still lacked truly participatory democracy and an open and honest political process. Though Diaz Ordaz had not yet been elected president, his critics voiced a serious condemnation of the political status quo in likening his impending election to the protracted dictatorship of Don Porfirio. Critics believed that the voice of the people, if not their actual votes, had been taken away because the PRI had co-opted organized labor and peasant groups through corrupt party bosses and local officials. The underhanded tactics used to suppress the railroad strike and to reassert government control over the unions were still fresh in people’s minds and seemed parallel to their sense of disenfranchisement and ineffective suffrage. Similarly, the resurrection of the 1910 slogan “no re-election” reflected the need to inject new blood into the political system to avoid the abuses typical of the Porfiriato. Diaz Ordaz was certainly not new blood. Rather than representing a step toward a more democratic future, Diaz Ordaz’s candidacy personified a step backward into Mexico’s dictatorial past.<sup>8</sup>

In the tense political climate of the mid-1960s, any attempt to run a presidential campaign with this kind of negative press hitting newsstands weekly was no easy task. The result was a long embarrassing campaign. Diaz Ordaz was forced to hide his anger, defend the authoritarian policies in his past, and commit himself to a more democratic future. He believed strongly in the power of public office, however, and in the idea that public officials were above everyday citizens and thus deserving of absolute respect and obedience. He believed that to maintain a high level of respect and ensure domestic tranquillity it was acceptable and possibly even a good thing for people to fear their leaders. Thus, to be compelled to justify his actions and allow his critics to ridicule him represented an affront to the personal power and prestige he believed came with being the minister of the interior, the official PRI presidential candidate, and certainly the next president. Despite this, Diaz Ordaz did try to improve his image with well-crafted campaign speeches and carefully choreographed campaign stops. He embraced the ideals of institutionalized revolution, employed the mythic ideology of revolutionary nationalism, and endeavored to associate himself with the icons of each. He also published a series of pamphlets detailing his positions on a variety of topics, including the youth, women, and *lo mexicano*.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the hypocrisy of his public pronouncements vis-a-vis his private policies did not escape the attention of leftists, journalists, and students.

Despite the unprecedented level of criticism leveled against the official candidate, Diaz Ordaz emerged victorious in the 1964 election. His situation, however,

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failed to improve markedly. The respect that journalists, opposition groups, and political rivals had traditionally afforded the president eluded Diaz Ordaz, and his early days in office proved as trying as those on the campaign trail. The serious divisions that existed within the ruling party had been worsened by the contentious campaign, and Diaz Ordaz took office during a time of instability in Mexico and around the world. Both factors would affect his *sexenio*. It should be noted as well that many of the problems Diaz Ordaz faced had their origins in previous administrations. To blame him for these problems would be unfair, but to suggest that his handling of them only exacerbated pre-existing tensions and worsened already troublesome situations would not. The series of middle-class social protest movements that took place between 1964 and 1970 all stemmed from structural problems in the changing Mexican economic and educational systems. The severity of these protests, however, and the threat they posed to the legitimacy of the ruling party and its sustaining ideology of institutionalized revolution were the product of President Diaz Ordaz's authoritarian tendencies.<sup>10</sup>

Physicians comprised the first middle-class group to confront President Diaz Ordaz. During 1964 and 1965 doctors went on strike to protest low wages, poor working conditions, insufficient benefits, and the like. Doctors during this period worked for the state but were outside the government-sponsored labor unions because of their white-collar professional status. Despite this and despite their level of education and training, they took to the streets, demanding concessions not unlike those demanded years before by their blue-collar compatriots during the railroad strike. President Diaz Ordaz's response also was not unlike his response in 1958, the major exception being the absence of violent repression against the doctors. It was one thing to pummel the heads of working-class railroad men and quite another to do so to middle-class physicians.<sup>11</sup>

The doctors placed their demands in a revolutionary context. They praised the ideology that called for quality health care for all Mexicans. They extolled the advances in the post-revolutionary educational system that had allowed Mexico to develop a highly professional medical community. They criticized the government, however, for promoting an ideology that suggested institutionalized revolution would provide for the medical needs of the nation by training a generation of capable practitioners without creating the medical infrastructure to sustain their efforts. Institutionalized revolution had failed to live up to not only the needs of the poor but also the expectations of the middle class. In 1964, Mexico City doctors took President Diaz Ordaz to task for these shortcomings. Four years later university students would do the same. After refusing to negotiate with the doctors, President Diaz Ordaz

used the Law of Social Dissolution against them, declared their protest illegal, arrested their leaders, and appealed to their sense of Hippocratic duty to convince them to return to work. The strike accomplished little; only modest gains were made gradually through a series of negotiations.<sup>12</sup> After the strike ended Diaz Ordaz ignored the deepening structural and ideological fissures within Mexican society that the doctors' actions had exposed. In 1968 he would have to address these tensions again.

The origins of the youth rebellion grew from a number of political, economic, social, and ideological issues that by 1968 has become intolerable. Essentially the youth believed institutionalized revolution had failed them and indeed had failed all Mexicans. These failures were both individual and systemic. The personal ambitions of middle-class university students were unrequited, and the poverty, inequality, and injustice in their society continued. The idealism of youth combined with years of ideological education in the public schools ran headlong into the realities of life under an authoritarian President. The origins of the student crisis can be best characterized thus:

University students in particular do not belong to the ranks of the urban poor or the rural peasantry, and they do not protest because they are hungry or landless. But, their discontent is based in part on the fact that these conditions exist. Many of them have been indoctrinated thoroughly in the historical ideals of the Mexican Revolution and they become angry when they perceive the gap between the official professions of a revolutionary mystique and the performance of the national elite. It is indeed ironic that the Mexican leadership has been too successful in implanting revolutionary ideals in this generation of young students. The students are surrounded by slogans stressing revolution, reform, and social justice. They are steeped in an educational system and a social mythology which exalts Benito Juarez, Emiliano Zapata, and the oil expropriation of 1938. As they look around, however, they see their leaders following policies which are diametrically opposed to the professed ideals.<sup>13</sup>

For the students, Gustavo Diaz Ordaz came to symbolize all that was wrong with Mexico. They took up the rhetoric of institutionalized revolution, the call of

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such popular icons as Francisco Villa, Emiliano Zapata, and Lazaro Cardenas, and they pledged their solidarity not just with the railroad workers and the doctors but with all the people of Mexico. In this fashion the students began a popular insurgency against their government in general and their president in particular.

Student strikes had been common in Mexico from the late 1950s. They typically concerned only university issues and had minimal impact on those not directly involved. In 1968, neither the issues students raised nor the tactics they used were new. What was new was the violent repression by government forces under President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz. Deaths of classmates and the military occupation of campuses incited many students further, fueled their indignation, and deepened their disillusionment. Violence in the streets, beatings, deaths, and disappearances intensified the movement and channeled its hostility toward Diaz Ordaz and those who did his bidding.<sup>14</sup>

Protesting students were equally concerned with the constitutional implications of the brutal repression directed against them by the Diaz Ordaz administration. While the Mexican legislature, opposition politicians, law school professors, and countless journalists debated the validity of the Law of Social Dissolution, the students took to the streets demanding both its immediate repeal and the release of all political prisoners, including the leaders of the 1958 railroad strike, who had been incarcerated for more than ten years. To these two demands, the student leaders formulated four more. Two concerned the government's ability to repress its citizens, and two targeted the government's repressive activities to date. Specifically, they called for the disbanding of the hated corps of riot police known as the *granaderos*, the dismissal of the two officials in command of the *granaderos*, the government's acknowledgment of its guilt in precipitating the violence of the summer and fall, and the payment of restitution to all injured parties. Restitution included reimbursements to schools and universities for damages done to their campuses during *granadero* and army attacks and occupations, provisions for those injured during the street-fighting, and payment of indemnities to the families of those killed by government forces since July.<sup>15</sup> These six demands clearly show that while the students were concerned with the future of their nation, they focused their movement not on abstract ideals of democracy, social justice, and institutionalized revolution but rather on the tangible problems that resulted from the unfulfillment of such ideals.

Diaz Ordaz's response to these demands and to the student movement in general did little to help his political position or his personal reputation. He underestimated the intensity and influence of the student movement and responded inconsistently. He first refused to negotiate with the students and used force to

suppress them. When this failed, he became more conciliatory. Finally he reverted to repression. He tried to discredit the movement first by associating it with international communism orchestrated from Havana and Moscow and then by associating it with United States imperialism, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. These efforts had little impact on public opinion and likely harmed more than helped his administration. He then tried to convince Mexicans that the students intended to disrupt the Olympic Games and embarrass Mexico with the whole world watching. Though the student leaders publicly denied this, the alleged threat to the Olympic Games became the official justification for repression.<sup>16</sup>

From late July through September Mexico City police forces, then riot troops, and eventually federal army units from other parts of the country attempted to contain the student insurgency. But with each passing week the numbers of students who had been killed or wounded or who had disappeared increased, and the movement intensified. Workers, peasants, journalists, university faculty members and administrators, and especially middle-class parents began to question a government that attacked young people in the streets of the capital city. As casualties mounted and opposition grew, Diaz Ordaz's public position—the use of the Law of Social Dissolution and full-scale military repression to protect the Olympics—became untenable.

Finally Diaz Ordaz agreed to a public dialogue with the students in September. By later September, after much delay and wrangling over details, it appeared real progress would soon be made. Army troops withdrew from the campus of the National University, and a long-absent sense of optimism began to return. The students scheduled a public demonstration for the night of 2 October at the Plaza of the Three Cultures in the Tlatelolco district of Mexico City to discuss the events of recent days, celebrate the withdrawal of the army, and plan for the future. During the meeting, which was attended by thousands of people, including local residents, foreign journalists already in town for the Olympics, opposition groups, and students, military troops poured into the plaza firing automatic weapons. Helicopters overhead shot into the crowd, and snipers targeted their victims from the windows and rooftops of nearby buildings. When it was over, an estimated four hundred people were dead, hundreds more wounded, and more than one thousand arrested.<sup>17</sup>

President Diaz Ordaz made no official public comment about the massacre, and the government maintained a strict silence that only in recent years has been broken. Public opinion held the Diaz Ordaz administration responsible for the massacre, and the fragmentary documentary evidence available to historians today is

contentiously debated. What we do know is that the families of the dead and wounded subsequently began to rebuild their lives, the jailed student leaders eventually went free, the Olympics opened with a flurry of patriotic activity on 12 October, ten days after the massacre, and passed without incident, and in 1970 Diaz Ordaz's hand-picked successor, Luis Echeverria, won the presidency and became one of Mexico's most popular recent presidents by distancing himself from the person and policies of his predecessor.

In conclusion, the hegemonic discourse of institutionalized revolution that sustained the Mexican political system came under fire in 1968 in large measure because of the actions and persona of President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz. Student discontent with the government coalesced around Diaz Ordaz both because of his symbolic significance as the antithesis of a revolutionary leader and his use of authoritarian policies to stifle popular protest. The railroad strike, the doctors' strike, and the use of Article 145 were the sparks that helped to ignite a powder keg of pent-up hostility in 1968. The students rejected the hegemonic discourse of institutionalized revolution and refused to continue to live a lie. During the course of their movement the students exposed the dichotomies that existed between the rhetoric that legitimized Mexico's one party government and the reality of life under its rule. Thus, with the faith that sustained it gone, the illusory image of institutionalized revolution became as transparent as the emperor's new clothes.

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## DALTON AND THE REBIRTH OF THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE

Louis P. Towles

It was the afternoon of 25 November 1863, and the Confederate Army of Tennessee was in disorderly retreat into northern Georgia. The force that had previously contested the fields of Perryville, Stones River, and Chickamauga so stubbornly had collapsed now on the slopes of Missionary Ridge. The army's losses, 75 per cent of whom were prisoners, numbered nearly 7000 men. This exceeded the 6000 casualties suffered by the assaulting Union columns. Likewise devastating was the loss of more than a third of the army's artillery and the bulk of its caissons, wagons, equipment, and supplies. Even more shattering was the realization that the army's commander, General Braxton Bragg, was at fault.<sup>1</sup>

Earlier that fall of 1863, while in the midst of a campaign to capture Chattanooga, Bragg unwittingly had initiated the sequence of events that would lead to this defeat. A quarrelsome commander by nature and never inclined to forget a slight, he had implemented changes he felt would have reduced conflict within the army. He had transferred senior and popular commanders who disliked him, had reshuffled the composition of many of his brigades and divisions to undercut his chief detractors, and had sought to intimidate those opponents who remained with the army. Thus engrossed in a personal war he had failed to keep his men adequately fed and sheltered. Even worse, with morale dropping, desertions increasing, and units in disarray, he had divided his command and sent a part against Knoxville. As a result he had retained fewer than 35,000 soldiers to defend a seven-mile front against as many as 100,000 federals. He had also overlooked the most obvious signs of impending conflict—military actions on 27 and 29 October, increased enemy movements, and frequent shelling. Instead of recognizing the obvious, on 19 November he had signaled the end of campaigning by ordering the construction of winter huts and camps.<sup>2</sup>

"No one apprehends any danger of [the Union forces] attempting to advance," wrote Captain John S. Palmer of the 10th South Carolina. "General Bragg has begun to furlough pretty freely. I think it a capital idea." And when the battle came five days later no one was more surprised than Braxton Bragg. If being taken unaware was not serious enough, he compounded his errors by failing to lay out adequate defensive works, to give proper direction to his subordinates, and to coordinate the defense. As a result Union soldiers easily broke through hastily constructed works. "Gray clad men,"

wrote one Union combatant, "rushed wildly down the hill and into the woods, tossing away knapsacks, muskets, and blankets as they ran . . . in ten minutes all that remained of the defiant rebel army that has so long besieged Chattanooga was captured guns, disarmed prisoners, moaning wounded, ghastly dead, and scattered, demoralized fugitives." Only a stubborn defense by Patrick Cleburne's division at Tunnel Hill and Ringgold Gap saved the army from complete destruction.<sup>3</sup>

It now remained to be seen how many "demoralized fugitives" would make it to Rocky Face, a hastily selected natural abutment in front of Dalton, Georgia. For the soldiers who arrived at the destination, it was then a matter of what leader could keep them together, restore their faith in the "just & right cause," and rekindle the confidence of the army in itself. Would this reconstituted force be capable of defending Georgia and the all-important rail junction at Atlanta? And would the Army of Tennessee also be able to resume the offensive, drive Union forces back, and reassert control over Tennessee's grain fields and recruiting grounds, as Confederate President Jefferson Davis required?<sup>4</sup>

To examine the effectiveness of reconstructing the shattered army, the only such effort ever attempted by Confederate authorities, it would be necessary to analyze the entire army's conduct through the rebuilding process and to evaluate its actions in the Atlanta Campaign, which followed. Since such a task is too massive for a single article, a simpler path, the monitoring of one unit, has been taken. This study, therefore, follows Brig. Gen. Arthur M. Manigault's brigade, explores all available sources regarding its soldiers' actions and opinions, and determines both how the brigade responded to the rebuilding process and how it performed in the field.

Manigault's command, a composite brigade, was typical of the Army of Tennessee. Its regiments—the 24th, the 34th, and 28th Alabama and the 19th and 10th South Carolina—were recruited in 1861, brigaded at Corinth in 1862, and placed under the command of Colonel, later Brigadier General, Manigault in early 1863. A part of Thomas C. Hindman's division, this brigade was the best-drilled unit at Corinth, had fought well in the Perryville campaign and at Stone's River, and had drawn praise for its performance at Chickamauga. Yet these same troops were also implicated in the collapse of 25 November. Soldiers from the 24th Alabama had abandoned the brigade and their own position on the Ridge after Deas's and Holtzclaw's Alabama brigades had broken before advancing blue columns. Consequently Alabama troops and anyone associated with them were now indiscriminately labeled as cowards and greeted derisively by hoots of "Yaller-hammer, Alabama! Flicker, flicker, yaller-hammer!" Seeking to blame others for his own negligence and grasping at straws, Bragg placed on Manigault's men part of the blame for the debacle.<sup>5</sup>

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Contrary to Bragg's misinformation, the brigade, with the exception of members of the 24th, had neither broken nor abandoned the field precipitously. To the contrary, it was Col. William F. Tucker's Mississippi brigade and Brig. Gen. Zachariah Deas's Alabama regiments to Manigault's immediate left and right that had first given way. In the break that resulted, Manigault's men fell back a quarter mile only after Union soldiers turned Tucker's captured cannon on them. At this point the brigade reformed and remained in its position until dark, guarding one of the several avenues of escape. The survivors then forded Chickamauga Creek and joined the retreat. It was a sad occasion, for 634 members of the unit, many of them prisoners, remained behind.<sup>6</sup>

Because they were helping to cover the army's withdrawal, Manigault's regiments did not reach Rocky Face, forty miles distant, until the afternoon of 27 November. The men, part of the army's nearly 29,000 who successfully reached their destination, were tired, dispirited, and often without clothing, shoes, blankets, food, or weapons. Due to the almost constant rain they had struggled over roads that were little more than muddy quagmires by day and sheets of ice by night. The soldiers were also compelled to cross swollen rivers and creeks that were beginning to ice.<sup>7</sup>

Dalton, a small town on the Western & Atlantic Railroad, did little to relieve the feeling of despondency. The town was only a defenseless railhead ninety-six miles from Atlanta, bereft of food, ammunition, or shelter for the incoming soldiers. The brigade troops, like the rest of Bragg's men, had to sleep in the icy woods without tents and covering for weeks as they constructed shelters. An officer of the 24th Alabama was quick to note he was not very happy when he had "to sit up all night at the root of a tree by a sorry fire and a freezing rain falling upon me all the while." Still, Manigault's soldiers were more fortunate than most. At least they had arrived to find hot food waiting because their brigade commissary had heard the reports of the rout and had hastened his wagons and cooks to Dalton to prepare and cook rations.<sup>8</sup>

Although Joseph E. Johnston later observed that Dalton had "little to recommend it," for it had neither "intrinsic strength nor strategic advantage," the town nevertheless became the winter headquarters of the army. Campgrounds for each division were carefully selected within a three to five mile radius of the settlement to provide quarters for men and animals together with exercise yards for regiments and larger units. "Very comfortable quarters," wrote Capt. John S. Palmer, were constructed three miles south of Dalton to compensate for "the deficiency of tents." But the size and type of hut differed. Most resembled "chicken coops" with simple four-post construction. Because many companies did not possess a single axe, they had to borrow such tools and work, often at night, while others were not using them.

Each hut, however, possessed a good clay chimney and a large fireplace that made the "domicile as comfortable a place as one could desire."<sup>9</sup>

Bragg was relieved of his command in early December, and Gen. Joseph E. Johnston replaced him three weeks later. Johnston arrived to find his army much smaller than reported, poorly fed, and inadequately equipped. One veteran indicated that its primary fare, bacon and cornbread, was less nutritious than that normally given to slaves and would in time cause scurvy among the troops. The general was briefed on Bragg's failings, on the latter's attempts to discredit many of his officers, and on the discord among units. Like many others at Dalton and in Richmond, he was apprehensive about the "confidence level" (or morale) of the army and could agree with historian Irving A. Buck that "troops may be defeated without their morale being destroyed, so long as they have the consciousness that it was only the fortune of war and not for bad conduct on their part, or even that it was through mistakes by their leaders." Knowing that both of these things had transpired and that a "sullen, dangerous demoralization" could follow, Johnston moved as quickly as possible to restore the "élan and the self-respect" of the men. It was necessary, however, that he not be too openly critical of his predecessor because a number of his soldiers and officers still remained supporters of Bragg. Accordingly, when some brigades cheered the new commander, he acknowledged their accolade. But when the soldiers of Hindman's and Stevenson's divisions neglected to offer the same recognition, he feigned not to notice.<sup>10</sup>

Taken aback by the living conditions he saw, Johnston pushed for their improvement. He wired Richmond to expedite the shipment of additional food (rice, potatoes, and sugar) and clothing to Dalton. He sought the cannon, weapons, ammunition, and draft animals necessary to make the Army of Tennessee campaign-fit. In this fashion and by his frequent visits to the camps Johnston, or Old Joe—as he came to be called, gradually won the respect and often the admiration of his men.<sup>11</sup>

Families from across the South were even quicker to respond than the government in Richmond. By the end of December boxes of clothing, carpet, woolen blankets, shoes, nuts, and tobacco were arriving and continued to come until the need was met. "Treats," like sausage, spare-ribs, fresh hams, potatoes, dried fruit, coffee, onions, butter, fruits, brandy peaches, and cakes were much in demand; strangely enough, "a little salt and soap" were more sought after because "the latter is hard to be got while the former is dealt out very sparingly to us."<sup>12</sup>

As soon as adequate food and shelter were available, the preparation of the army began. Drill, previously little stressed in the Army of Tennessee, now received daily attention. Companies, battalions, regiments, and brigades were drilled twice a

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day for a total of three hours and were all inspected on Sunday. Divisions and corps with their artillery, ambulances, and supply wagons were reviewed at least once a month. Hindman's division, for instance, was maneuvered on 16 March. The entire corps under Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood (Hindman's, Stevenson's, and Stewart's divisions) went on display the day after. On 9 April Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee (an authority on drill) had his corps (Bate's, Cheatham's, Cleburne's, and Walker's divisions) perform a sham battle. "Solid lines of infantry would move up within a few paces of each other & fire whole volleys into each others face," wrote one observer from Manigaults Brigade. "It was very exciting & the soldiers enjoyed the sport very much."<sup>13</sup>

Even more impressive were the grand reviews. On 4 February Johnston exhibited his entire force for the first time. "It was the largest parade of troops ever had on one field in the Confederacy [to date]," wrote Col. Newton Davis. "It was truly a magnificent sight. The field was about two miles long & we had three lines across it." Still more majestic was the review of 20 April, when Joe Johnston paraded "forty to fifty thousand" infantry. "It is the opinion of all who are capable of judging that the Confederacy never had any better & perhaps never so good & well disciplined an army as we have here at present," wrote Davis. "All are in good health & fine spirits, cheerful & sanguine of success when they are brought to meet the enemy again on the field."<sup>14</sup>

While both the construction and maintenance of fortifications and the repair of local roads and bridges were also required, there was ample time for leisure. Reading (including newspapers and novels), socializing, games (including bull-pen, town ball, leap-frog, cat, wrestling, and baseball), and visits by family and friends were all encouraged. Because many of Manigault's officers were masons, the brigade constructed a lodge and met nightly. Singing was a frequent pastime, and it was not unusual for groups to go from cabin to cabin serenading the occupants. On the evening of 4 February, for instance, officers of the 24th Alabama and a "brass band from a Tennessee Brigade" (probably Brig. Gen. Alfred J. Vaughan's) provided Manigault with "some music."<sup>15</sup>

Snowball fights, including battles between regiments and even divisions, were another form of recreation. Among the most memorable of these was a mammoth struggle between Hindman's and Stevenson's divisions on 23 March. According to Robert A. Jarman, the day began when Edward Walthall's Mississippi brigade "routed" Zachariah Deas's Alabama brigade with snowballs and took possession of their camp. After a brief truce, the two brigades formed "in line of battle with field officers mounted" and attacked, routed, and captured Manigault's brigade. The three units soon united and moved against "Stevenson's division with a regular line of battle, skirmishers thrown out and all. . . . Charge after charge was made with only snowballs, and you could have

heard the yelling and hallowing for miles." Years later few would recollect that this was a winter of abnormally cold weather, with frequent snow storms, freezing rain, impassable roads, and bone-chilling winds. Instead, most soldiers joined Johnston in remembering Dalton fondly for its "pleasant days." It was, without question, the best winter quarters the army ever had, and the drill, work, games, and other activities were important factors in the rebonding of the army.<sup>16</sup>

Positive changes also enhanced confidence. Regiments that had lost heavily were reinforced, reorganized, and, if need be, consolidated. Brigades and divisions were restructured to reverse the damage done by Bragg's vendetta, and reinforcements allowed Johnston to create new commands. He upgraded the commissary, supply, medical, and transportation systems, reorganized the artillery, and improved unit marksmanship. In June 1864 Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, who had helped to create the Army of Tennessee, marveled that he had "never known the army to be so well clad and shod and fed . . . or so well organized or so easily handled." Lt. Col. Irvine Walker of the 10th South Carolina observed that the "discipline and organization [were] . . . perfected during this season of rest."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to logistical and organizational changes, Johnston won praise for his generous policy regarding furloughs. The plan allowed every soldier at least one ten-day trip home, with as many as 5000 men absent at a time. It also permitted Manigault, his regimental commanders, and his officers to take their first leaves of absence from the war. In the process, as Captain Palmer observed, the policy "brought in a good number of men" because it allowed an immediate furlough for anyone who could furnish a new recruit. Alongside these new men, the sick, the wounded, and even those who had "overstayed their leave" were welcomed back, and by late April 1864 these and many other small changes minimized dissension and divisiveness. Morale was dramatically improved, and even the staunchest pro-Bragg men, including Major Generals William H. T. Walker, Edward C. Walthall, and Joseph Wheeler, Brig. Gen. Manigault, and Col. Newton Davis, gave Johnston his due. "Our army here, I think, is in better spirits that I ever saw it," indicated Davis on 11 March, "and all seem to have the utmost confidence in their commanding general." Johnston, who had worked tirelessly to restore the army, was beginning to be compared to the much-lauded Robert E. Lee and was now cheered by troops whenever he appeared among them. Only one thing seemed to bother the men: "Genl. Johnston keeps his own secrets & no body here knows what he intends to do."<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, Johnston's policies had prepared the men. By 6 May 1864 (that is, at the beginning of the spring campaign) Johnston had roughly 45,000 infantrymen



and artillerymen, 4000 cavalry, and 111 cannon. His infantry was divided into seven divisions commanded by Stewart, Hindman, Stevenson, Bate, Cheatham, Cleburne, and Walker; each fielded 5000 to 7000 men. These divisions were combined into two corps, the first under Hood and the second under Hardee. A third corps under Polk, containing 20,000 men in three divisions (commanded by French, Loring, and Walthall), was expected from Mississippi within the month. All units were also approaching pre-1863 strength. Hindman's division, for instance, reduced to 4945 effectives on 3 December 1863, was back to 6760 soldiers by 30 April 1864. Of this number, 1838 men belonged to Manigault's brigade. To add to this, bragged one observer, there was "very little sickness," and the men were "better satisfied, more cheerful and contented than I ever knew them to be."<sup>19</sup> Thus in three short months Johnston was well on the way to accomplishing his major goal of refitting, reorganizing, and rebuilding the army. It remained to be seen, though, how well it would perform on campaign.

Unfortunately for Johnston, his opponent, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, had a force of 110,000 men in three armies that was better prepared, supplied, and equipped. In artillery Sherman possessed a two to one advantage in cannon, and if rifling and caliber were counted, the advantage was closer to three to one. In cavalry his edge was more than two to one, and in infantry, his strongest branch, the Union general possessed more than twice Johnston's initial manpower, with one of his three armies larger than Johnston's total force. Likewise, the equipping of some Union troops with Spencer, Henry, and Smith and Wesson repeating rifles (with magazines that held seven to sixteen shots) increased Sherman's advantage and made it more difficult for Johnston to engage the enemy on an equal basis.<sup>20</sup>

The campaign that began at Dalton (7–12 May) failed to produce a major tactical victory for either federal or confederate forces. Heedless of his own strength in troops and materiel, Sherman refused to engage Johnston's army at Dalton because it was too strongly fortified. Instead Union soldiers flanked the position by moving west of Rocky Face and south through Snake Creek Gap. To protect his supply line Johnston withdrew his army to Resaca (13–15 May) and prepared fortifications that Sherman assaulted on 14 May. Unable to capture these and stung by two counterattacks, one by Carter Stevenson and the other by Alexander Stewart, Sherman again resorted to a flanking movement, a maneuver that he subsequently utilized repeatedly during the campaign. This time he forced Johnston to retreat via Calhoun (17 May), Adairsville (18 May), and finally Cassville (19 May). When a battle failed to materialize at the latter town, the Army of Tennessee continued its retreat to Cartersville (20 May), Ackworth (23 to 24 May), and New Hope Church (25 May).

To redeem sullied reputations, Manigault's men, like the rest of the army, were anxious to engage their enemy, but they were remarkably patient. The men disliked "retrograde" movements, but they cast the blame on Sherman for trying "to avoid a general engagement" and for "making every exertion to get to our rear," instead of meeting them on an open field. Cassville, however, was a test of their revitalized will. Johnston announced on the 19th at Cassville that he was prepared to fight, but when Hood and Polk counseled retreat, he complied. Capt. John S. Palmer of the 10th South Carolina was stunned and angry that Johnston would again direct the "ill-fated" army south, and it made Newton Davis's heart "bleed to see the destruction of property [by Sherman's army]." He momentarily questioned what he was sacrificing his effort for. "I am completely tired out, dirty, sleepy & in a bad condition generally. It has been sixteen days since I changed my under-clothing & I reckon I am the dirtiest man you ever saw." Both men could only think "that Bragg would either have fought the enemy or been in Atlanta and fortified it by this time," and that "Johnston has been outgeneraled [again]." But confidence was so high that the Army of Tennessee did little more than complain. The men had confidence in their commander, a fact that Maj. Thomas Taylor of the 47th Ohio corroborated. "His [Johnston's] army exhibits less demoralization than any army I ever saw that has retreated so far," wrote Taylor. "We find very few stragglers, take very few prisoners."<sup>21</sup>

In the two months that followed, Johnston showed himself to be a master of retreat and trench warfare. Constant entrenching in red clay, a month of rain, deadly sniper fire, and minimal rations strengthened rather than weakened the will of the brigade to fight on. "We have learned to sleep in rainy weather, in mud and water as sound and well as in dry and pleasant weather," wrote one participant. Another commented that Johnston was managing "admirably" despite his limited resources and manpower; it was "perfectly astonishing how well our men have stood this trying campaign." Still another expressed himself even more forthrightly.

For nearly three months we have been retreating, but the morale of the army was better than when the campaign opened. . . . We had seen the retreat conducted without the loss of even a broken wagon wheel, and we had unlimited faith in the generalship of old Joe. . . . We were willing to fight at any time and place he said so, believing that he would not ask us to fight unless the advantages were clearly on our side.<sup>22</sup>

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Among the most difficult to convince, however, was the brigade's commander. Manigault admired Braxton Bragg's general efficiency and reluctantly gave Johnston credit for reforms at Dalton. As late as Resaca the general indicated that even though his current commander fought well, Bragg "would have managed the retreat [much] better." Still, the fact that Johnston's "superior generalship . . . proved correct in every point" at last brought Manigault into line with his men, and he, too, accepted that their commander "had given the men a reliance in their own superiority and a certain belief that they would eventually beat the enemy, save Atlanta, and recover the country as far north as Chattanooga."<sup>23</sup>

Less patient than his adversary, Sherman launched exploratory assaults on Stewart's division at New Hope Church and on Cleburne's division at Picketts Mill on 25 and 27 May. When these were repulsed, Johnston instructed William Bate to attack Dallas on 28 May. The failure of this thrust, even though well executed, discouraged Johnston, and he resorted to additional defensive lines, the first at Lost Mountain (4–18 June), a second at Kennesaw Mountain (18 June–2 July), and the third along Nickajack Creek (5–9 July). Two further battles, at Kolb's Farm (22 June) and at Kennesaw Mountain (27 June), were costly but inconclusive. By mid-July Johnston and his army were positioned just north of Atlanta.<sup>24</sup>

Johnston's plan "to keep up the spirit of his army" by a skillful defense had kept Sherman at bay but had failed to protect north Georgia or meet the offensive expectations of Jefferson Davis. Accordingly, on 17 July the commander was removed. It was a crushing blow to brigade and to army morale. "It seemed impossible," Capt. John Stoney Porcher penned, but "it was true." James T. Searcy could not understand the logic behind the action. "General Johnston knows best," he wrote. "As long as our armies are intact and effective we have a country. The territory is not the thing to judge by in regarding our strength." Yet while soldiers might protest, shun their new commander, and threaten not to serve, the deed was irrevocable. Richmond was not interested in the opinion of the army.<sup>25</sup>

It was even more of a "calamity," noted Manigault, that John Bell Hood replaced Johnston. Although brave, he was "totally unfit for command of a corps," much less an army, and to replace Johnston at a critical point in a major campaign was a "hasty and ill-judged" move that "contributed materially to the downfall of the Confederacy." Others expressed almost identical doubts. "Gen. Hood . . . was rash to a criminal extent," concluded Sergeant Pitt Chambers, and "we judged him to be lacking in those higher qualities that fit one for handling an independent army." When Robert E. Lee, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, was consulted on 12 July regarding the proposed change, he noted "Hood is a bold

fighter," but "careless." Lee added, "I am doubtful as to the other qualities necessary [for command]."<sup>26</sup>

Regretfully for Hood, the window of opportunity—eight days—was brief, and in that time he failed to win the confidence of the men. His credentials from Virginia, high casualties, and recent failures—Resaca, Cassville, and Kolb's Farm—preceded him, and his first order that "we would henceforth fight no more from breastworks and rifle pits," a way of saying that the men would attack, failed to "reassure" Johnston's soldiers. Hard-fought battles against the federals at Peachtree Creek on 20 July at Bald Hill on 22 July, and at Ezra Church on 28 July left nearly 12,000 dead, wounded, and captured, more than his predecessor had lost in the previous three months. The brigade, demoralized and disheartened, now began to conclude that their commander's "headlong way . . . costs more than it comes to." According to Col. Irvine Walker of the 10th South Carolina the "struggle . . . the lives lost, the suffering inflicted, had all been for nothing," and many men were coming to the conclusion that they had "done their best and lost." A fourth and final attack at Jonesboro on 31 August was little more than a sham. The men were used up, "wholly disorganized," and acted more like "a mob in an open field." According to Maj. Thomas Taylor of the 47th Ohio, the advance was "the least determined of any I ever saw them make." Manigault agreed, noting that the "men did not behave as well as on any previous occasion," and he continued, bluntly, "[the men] have long since lost confidence in their leaders."<sup>27</sup>

Although not destroyed, the Army of Tennessee was now all but finished as an effective military force. Reduced to less than 30,000 men, a force equal to that which had retreated to Dalton on 27 November 1863, it had lost over 30,000 men by death, capture, and desertion in less than two months, had been defeated in four open battles, and was again without equipment, food, and supplies. Even worse, it remained under the command of Hood, who would complete its ruin by December 1864 at the battles of Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville.<sup>28</sup>

A definitive history of the army or the entire Georgia campaign, for that matter, was not the purpose of this study. The real goal was to determine, in microcosm, how Bragg's shattered army was rebuilt and how effective it became. The evidence, as seen through the eyes of one brigade, suggests that the work at Dalton was well done, and that the Army of Tennessee improved as a fighting force while under Johnston's command. Although the testimony of those involved also suggested that Joseph E. Johnston was not able to develop the offensive potential of the army as well as he might have, most agreed that he had maintained his troops' morale and confidence in him, preserved the army, and kept casualties to a minimum.<sup>29</sup> Contemporary

Union and Confederate opinion agreed that his generals—Bate, Brown, Cheatham, Clayton, Cleburne, French, Hardee, Stewart, Walker, and Walthall—had performed well offensively during the campaign. Some historians suggest that if Johnston had been better served by two of his corps commanders, Leonidas Polk and John Bell Hood, the Confederate offensive capability would have enhanced.<sup>30</sup> By contrast, after Hood ultimately achieved complete command of the Army of Tennessee, he led it from one defeat to another and lost the confidence of the men. As Robert E. Lee had pointed out, Hood usually “tried to do too much with too little in too short a time,” was “careless,” and “lacked the high order of talent” to command an army. Those who remained with him did so for two reasons: for the cause, not the general,” and because Joe Johnston had, in retrospect, done his work well.<sup>31</sup>

#### END NOTES

1. General Braxton Bragg (1817–1876). Newton N. Davis to Elizabeth Davis, December 2, 1863, Davis Family Papers, Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.
2. James L. McDonough, *Chattanooga—A Death Grip on the Confederacy* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 20–40, 61–67; Peter Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of their Hopes* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 20–21; John Hoffman, *The Confederate Collapse at the Battle of Missionary Ridge* (Dayton: Morningside Press, 1985), 25–26.
3. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: Fredericksburg to Meridian*, II (New York: Random House, 1963), 856; John S. Palmer to Harriet J. Palmer, 17 October 1863; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 14 November 1863; Hoffman, 43–45, 70–73; Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne (1828–1865).
4. Jefferson Davis required Johnston to reoccupy “the country, upon the supplies of which the proper subsistence of our armies materially depends.” He was further to avoid attacking fortified positions and to fight in the “open field.” Joseph E. Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations* (New York: Appleton, 1874), 267–91.
5. Arthur M. Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War: The Civil War Narrative of Arthur M. Manigault* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1983), 4–21; Foote, II, 867. Brig. Gen. Arthur M. Manigault (1824–1886). Brig. Gen. Zachariah Deas (1819–1882). Brig. Gen. James Holtzclaw (1833–1893). Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman (1828–1868).
6. In a letter published in the *Charleston Daily Courier* on 16 December 1863 Manigault clarified a report of the Battle of Missionary Ridge (published by the *Courier* on 5 December 1863) that “Manigault’s Brigade on our right gave way on the 1st charge of the enemy.” He stated that it was “entirely incorrect” and that he would not comment further as he was unwilling to throw blame on others. *Charleston Daily Courier*, 16 December 1863, 1; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 29 November 1863 and 2 December 1863; Hoffman, *The Confederate Collapse*, 23–24.
7. Thomas L. Connelly, *Autumn of Glory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 271–77.
8. Moultrie Ball, *Colonel Julius Theodore Porcher and Captain John Stoney Porcher of the 10th South Carolina Regiment, Confederate States Army* (Charleston: n.d.), 65; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 29 November 1863.

9. Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations*, 277; John S. Palmer to Harriet J. Palmer, 22 December 1863; Manigault, 140–44.

10. Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations*, 261–302; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 24 December 1863; “News came last night that General Bragg is delivered. I pity and respect the old man, but most likely it is for the best. The majority of the army have lost confidence in him.” James T. Searcy to Stella Searcy, 1 December 1863; Irving A. Buck, *Cleburne and His Command* (Jackson, Tenn.: McCowat-Mercer, 1959), 172. General Joseph E. Johnston (1807–1891).

11. Foote, *The Civil War: Fredericksburg to Meridian*, III, 117–18; Craig Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston* (New York: Norton, 1992), 249–56; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 11 March 1864; Albert Castel, *Decision in the West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1992), 364.

12. On 3 December 1863 Col. James H. Pressley, commander of the 10th South Carolina Regiment, thanked the women of Darlington District for forty pairs of socks, twenty pairs of drawers, eighteen shirts, and “a lot of meal, bacon, hams, rice, peas, soap, pepper, etc.,” *Charleston Daily Courier*, 10 December 1863. On 12 December Corporal J. W. Jackson brought “boxes” of goods to the fourteen members of Co. K. in camp. “After distributing the clothing [each member] had several shirts and prs. Of pants and drawers . . . I have distributed the surplus blankets to Co. M. Have also loaned the surplus blankets to those who were entirely destitute.” John S. Palmer to J. S. Palmer, 14 December 1863. A week later the 10th and 19th South Carolina Regiments received “a bale of blankets, one hundred and sixty in number, one hundred prs. of shoes, a half box of tobacco, three barrels of ground nuts, two hundred prs. White flannel shirts” from the Central Association of South Carolina (a women’s relief organization). John S. Palmer to Harriet J. Palmer, 22 December 1863.

13. Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 4, 9, 14 February and 9 April 1864. Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood (1831–1879). Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee (1815–1873). Maj. Carter L. Stevenson (1817–1888). Lt. Gen. A. P. Stewart (1842–1908). Maj. Gen. William Bate (1826–1905). Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham (1820–1886). Maj. Gen. W. H. Walker (1816–1864).

14. *Ibid.*, 4 February and 20 April 1864.

15. Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*, 163; “History of the Twenty-Fourth Alabama Regiment,” Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama, 34; “History of the Twenty Eighth Alabama Regiment,” Alabama State Archives, Montgomery, Alabama, 50; Saul Emmanuel, *An Historical Sketch of the Georgetown Rifle Guards and as Co. A. of the Tenth Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers in the Army of the Confederate States* (Georgetown: 1909), 21; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 4 and 20 February 1864.

16. Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 23 March 1864; Robert A. Jarman, “The History of Co. K 27th Mississippi Infantry,” Jarman Papers, Mississippi Archives, Jackson, Mississippi, 26–27. Newton Davis’s description (23 March) is in some respects even more complete: “Snow falling commenced yesterday morning & has been kept up, justly generally ever since. It first commenced with two or three on a side & then increased to a company & from a company to a regiment from a regiment to a brigade & finally from a brigade to a division on a side. It was magnificent though to see two divisions arrayed against each other with banners flying & bugles sounding & the men all around with snow balls advancing to the charge. The fight between the divisions lasted two or three hours. It was the most exciting sport ever witnessed. First one line would be driven back & then

the other. Charge after charge would be made by the opposing forces with a yell that could be heard for miles around. Just imagine to yourself six thousand men arrayed against each other in a line half a mile long with snow balls flying incessantly from one end to the other.”

17. Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk (1806–1864). Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*, 163–68; Cornelius Irvine Walker, *Rolls and Historical Sketch of the Tenth Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, In the Army of the Confederate States* (Charleston: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1881), 107; Joseph H. Parks, *General Leonidas Polk, CSA: The Fighting Bishop* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), 380.

18. John S. Palmer to Esther S. Palmer, 1 January 1864; Parks, *General Leonidas Polk*, 380; James T. Searcy to George Searcy, 29 November 1863; Letter from Dalton, 25 February 1864; *Charleston Daily Courier*, 2 March 1864; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 4 February, 11 March, 6 April 1864; General Robert E. Lee (1807–1870). Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler (1836–1906). Maj. Gen. Edward C. Walthall (1831–1898).

19. “History of the Twenty-Fourth Alabama,” 36–37; Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*; 178; Castel, *Decision in the West*, 104–12; Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 11 March 1864. Maj. Gen. Samuel G. French (1818–1910). Maj. Gen. William W. Loring (1818–1886).

20. Castel, *Decision in the West*, 112–16. General William T. Sherman (1820–1891).

21. Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 17 and 21 May 1864; John S. Palmer to J. S. Palmer, 22 May 1864; Johnston, 320–24; Albert Castel, *Thomas Taylor's Civil War* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000), 119.

22. Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 19 June 1864; John S. Palmer to Esther S. Palmer, 19 June 1864; William Pitt Chambers, *Blood and Sacrifice: The Civil War Journal of a Confederate Soldier* (Huntington, W. Va.: Blue Acorn, 1994), 156.

23. Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*, 158, 183–84, 256.

24. Johnston's strategy from the beginning was “to stand on the defensive, to spare the blood of our soldiers by fighting under cover habitually, and to attack only when bad position or division of the enemy's forces might give us advantages counterbalancing that of superior numbers.” Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations*, 318. At Resaca on 14 May Carter Stevenson and Alexander Stewart, under Hood's direction, attempted to turn Sherman's left flank. The assault personified Johnston's view of the advantages to be gained from Sherman's “bad position.” A second assault, also under Hood, by Stewart on 15 May was in pursuit of the same aim. Neither was well planned. Fourteen days later William Bate sought to exploit a weak section of the federal line at Dallas but failed. Sherman's men, taken by surprise, referred to the probe as “a fearful assault” and reported that “Hardee's entire command, estimated by prisoners to be 29,000,” was in front of them. Castel, *Thomas Taylor's Civil War*, 123.

25. John F. Marszalek, *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 269; Castel, *Decision in the West*, 352–62; Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*, 192–206; James T. Searcy to Evelyn S. Searcy, undated; Hugo Black, a member of Hardee's Corps said that his men were “so opposed to the change” that “they will not fight under Hood.” Hugo Black to Mary A. Black, 20 July 1864, MSS, 31f, Atlanta Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia; Ball, *Colonel Julius Theodore Porcher*, 74.

26. Manigault, *A Carolinian Goes to War*, 200; Chambers, *Blood and Sacrifice*, 157; Castel, *Decision in the West*, 352–53.

27. Chambers, *Blood and Sacrifice*, 157; Walker, *Rolls and Historical Sketch of the Tenth Regiment*, 116, F. Jay Taylor, ed., *The Secret Diary of Robert Patrick, 1861–1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 199–200; Manigault, 246; Castel, *Thomas Taylor's Civil War*, 178.

28. Castel, *Decision in the West*, 542.

29. The purpose of this study is not to debate the merits or failings of Joseph E. Johnston; it is intended to reflect contemporary opinion. Suffice it to say, though, that the bulk of the officers and men in the Army of Tennessee endorsed Johnston and his strategy of retreat and army preservation, or had faith in their ultimate success in battle or in wearing Sherman down. Col. Newton Davis, on the other hand, initially welcomed Hood because he would fight. Yet Davis indicated ruefully on 17 August 1864 that "I had over three hundred men when we left Dalton and now I have but one hundred and twenty left," knowing full well that most were lost under Hood. Newton Davis to Elizabeth Davis, 17 August 1864. Most scholars (e.g., Albert Castel, Bruce Catton, Thomas Connelly, Nathaniel C. Hughes, Lloyd Lewis, John Marszalek, William Scaife, and Wiley Sword) agree in general that Johnston's work at Dalton and his handling of the Army of Tennessee inspired confidence among the troops. Although some scholars (i.e., Richard McMurry, Stephen Davis, and Steven Woodworth) point out Johnston's failings as commander, they are nevertheless unable to gainsay his effective control of his army.

30. Polk, Hardee, and Hood were personal friends of President Davis and assigned by him to the Army of Tennessee. Known as "Old Reliable," Hardee possessed ability and experience, while Hood, a proven and brave division commander, was unfamiliar with higher command responsibilities. On the other hand, Polk was an experienced soldier and beloved by his men, but he lacked drive. When Polk and Hood combined against Johnston and refused their full support to their commander, Hardee was effectively isolated. Lee and Stewart were able, active, and well-trained soldiers who executed their orders punctually. Had they served Johnston together with Hardee, the chances of the Army's success would have been improved. See Sam Davis, *Soldier of Tennessee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), Herman Hattaway, *Stephen D. Lee* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1976), Nathaniel C. Hughes, *Gen. William J. Hardee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1865), Craig Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston*, and Thomas L. Connelly, *Autumn of Glory*, regarding the Polk-Hood alliance and the abilities of Lee and Stewart.

31. Castel, *Decision in the West*, 352–53; Chambers, *Blood and Sacrifice*, 157.



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## History and the Persistence of Memory: Observations on the World War I Memoirs of Vera Brittain

Joyce A. Wood

Sources that provide rich fruit for the historian's work are found in personal memoirs. These accounts of historical events are a major underpinning of much historical work; yet questions of their reliability and accuracy persist. World War I memoirs have been an important element in the discussion focusing on the war myth that dominated much of the writing on World War I during the 1920s and 1930s. This paper will survey the thinking of prominent commentators on the subject of World War I memoirs such as Paul Fussell, Samuel B. Hynes, Peter Liddle and Modris Eksteins. It will then draw on the thoughts of these commentators to make some observations on memory and the most prominent women's war memoir of the interwar years, Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth*, published in 1933.<sup>1</sup> Was her memoir less reliable as an accurate rendition of the experience of volunteer nurses because it was so much a part of the literary fashion of the day? Did time alter her perspective?

### Memory in war literature

The British generation that participated in World War I was a largely literate group of people who made up the "immense civilian armies" who "were more articulate than actual fighters have ever been before."<sup>2</sup> Literacy of some fashion had reached much of the population of Great Britain, and people wrote letters and diaries, sustaining a wide-ranging newspaper and publishing industry.<sup>3</sup> This was the first time so many literate persons had personal experience of war.<sup>4</sup> Initially the recording of war experiences tended to be in the form of more-easily-managed short pieces such as poetry; longer prose works such as H. G. Wells' *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* were written by those not yet involved in active service.<sup>5</sup> Series of books treating the war as adventure or as a kind of travelogue were at times thinly veiled efforts to encourage people to support the war effort by contributing money or volunteering for some type of active or support service. Examples include Ian Malcolm's *War Pictures Behind the Lines* and E. Charles Vivian and J. E. Hodder Williams' description of Red Cross work, *The Way of the Red Cross*, both published in 1915, and Granville Barker's *The [British] Red Cross in France*.<sup>6</sup>

According to Grabolle, Spear and Wallace, accounts of personal experience in the war can be divided into "four distinctive periods," Accounts written during the first period, called "First Impressions," were overlaid by the emotional responses, the romanticized idealism and heroism, and the limitations such as censorship imposed by

the conditions of the war.<sup>7</sup> The second period, "Lull," followed the end of the war and lasted from 1919 to 1926 as people sought to put the experiences of the war behind them and return to what was called "normalcy." Such traumatic experiences could not be excised through suppression, however, so from 1927 to 1930 novels and published diaries began to appear, leading to what these authors called a "Boom" in public interest and in publications about the war. This third period, touched off by Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, included works by Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves as well as the first by a woman, *The Forbidden Zone*, in which Mary Borden described her nursing experiences.<sup>8</sup> Many of these books were pacifist in tone, characteristic of the books written in the fourth period, defined as "Aftermath," which ran from 1931 to 1938.<sup>9</sup> Historian Jay Winter identifies the works in the last category as "one of the most enduring legacies of the war."<sup>10</sup>

Personal accounts of war experiences such as memoirs or, more indirectly, novels produced in the "Boom" years raise an interesting question. How much of this writing accurately reflects the experience of the war and how much of it shows a developing mythology of the war?<sup>11</sup> Paul Fussell's study of war literature, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, ignited a searching appraisal of how accurately these literary products reflect actual experience.<sup>12</sup>

Following the war it was hard for many participants to remember the precise flow of events, even with the presence of letters and diaries. It is Fussell's characterization of personal accounts or memoirs that is particularly cogent to the argument of this study. He calls the memoir "a kind of fiction, differing from the 'first novel' . . . only by continuous implicit attestations of veracity or appeals to documented historical fact. . . . The further personal materials move from the form of the daily diary, the closer they approach to the figurative and the fictional." He warns that readers have overlooked the "fictional character" of memoirs because they are on a "knife-edge" between traditional war writing and a modern irony that creates a "renewed body of rituals and myths."<sup>13</sup> To look at Brittain's autobiography with Fussell's characterization in mind raises the question of how much of Brittain's wartime memoir reflects her actual experience and how much is part of the "ritual and myth" that built up in the literary world in the late 1920s.<sup>14</sup>

Fussell's "knife-edge" between "the realistic and ironic modes" is the basis on which Jay Winter evaluates Fussell's claims that this writing is a new kind of literature. Winter observes that popular books such as Robert Graves' *Goodbye to All That* were both autobiographical and fictional, dealing with the clash between the hopes, dreams, and expectations the soldiers carried into the war and the harsh, nearly-inexpressible realities they were trying to communicate through traditional means.<sup>15</sup>

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Rather than seeing one new form of literature, that of “modern memory” or “Modernism,” Winter sees two—a “literature of separation,” expressing the gulf between those who had experienced the war and those who had not, and a “literature of bereavement,” commemorating the people and the life they had left behind.<sup>16</sup>

Another perspective on modernism” and the myth is offered by Modris Eksteins who sees these ideas as products of the post-war period. He argues that postwar literature “is lacking in balance” and that the positive aspects of the war experience of the soldiers were subsumed by an overemphasis on negative disillusionment. This disillusionment came from the failure of the peace; from a sense of isolation on the part of the veteran, which was generated both by his experience on the front and by values on the home front that were changing and undermining the nineteenth-century verities that had motivated his sacrifice; and from the effects of wartime propaganda, which had blurred reality with utopian visions and imagination. Language suffered a loss of meaning, and irony became the means of expression for wartime experiences. Thus the soldier turned inward, and the war became an individual nightmare. The result was Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which Eksteins describes as “more a comment on the postwar mind” than on an entirely personal experience.<sup>17</sup> The flood of “Boom” books touched off by the success of Remarque’s book and a subsequent movie was a case of showing “how . . . many people shared his . . . postwar frustration” rather than exposing the “truth of the war” as so many avowed.<sup>18</sup> To put it another way, the war “was swallowed by imagination in the guise of memory.”<sup>19</sup>

Another contrast to the myth is clearly highlighted by Peter Liddle, who considers it a “serious mistake” to see the “hypersensitivity” and “universal disillusionment” of the war poets as typical of the attitudes of the men fighting the war. This concept:

may be politically and socially ‘attractive’ to support certain theses, but it is patently untrue. There were those of course who came to question their earlier high ideals, there was an almost universal war-weariness, and after the war, there was the depression of awakening to the fact that a better world had not been built. This certainly spawned retrospectively a bitter resentment at the waste of war, but the dominant characteristic in any general assessment of how the British soldier viewed his presence overseas 1917–18 would have to be his readiness to stick it out.<sup>20</sup>

Samuel Hynes’ study of World War I, *A War Imagined*, connects these various perspectives on war accounts and provides a thoughtful overview as well. Hynes emphasizes the war’s influence as an “imaginative event . . . that altered the ways in

which men and women thought not only about war but about the world” and was “perceived as a force of radical change in society and in consciousness.” The change was so deep it led to a sense of discontinuity between present and past to create what he calls the “Myth of the War,” by which he means :

not a falsification of reality, but an imaginative version of it, the story of the war that has evolved, and has come to be accepted as true . . . a tale that confirms a set of attitudes, an idea of what the war was and what it meant.

The “Myth of the War” came to full flower in the late 1920s, and, according to Hynes, changed little in subsequent years.<sup>21</sup> He summarizes its fundamental concepts in this fashion:

. . . a generation of innocent young men, their heads full of high abstractions like Honour, Glory, and England, went off to war to make the world safe for democracy. They were slaughtered in stupid battles planned by stupid generals. Those who survived were shocked, disillusioned and embittered by their war experiences, and saw that their real enemies were not Germans, but the old men at home who had lied to them. They rejected the values of the society that had sent them to war, and in doing so separated their own generation from the past and from their cultural inheritance.<sup>22</sup>

This becomes the critical component of the development of the definition of “modern” following the war.<sup>23</sup> Hynes, however, sees the pattern taking shape before the war began. A contentious spirit exhibited in the culture and events of the pre-war years belies the image of a stable, secure world, or, as Hynes observes, “nostalgia is bad history.”<sup>24</sup>

Hynes also sees a contribution to the development of the “Myth of the War” from women’s experience in the war. Many young women like Vera Brittain were eager to do their part as the war opened but were frustrated by their initial exclusion from the war effort. As their role, especially on the home front, took on occupations that had been largely closed to women, however, they were hopeful they would be rewarded with rights and a wider range of opportunities.<sup>25</sup> These rewards did not materialize as was hoped, and although there were greater opportunities and freedoms, Hynes observes that women’s writings were “bitter, sad, cynical, wistful, lost” with “a feeling of personal failure, of worthlessness and waste.”<sup>26</sup> Since there were by 1921 one and three-quarter-million more women than men, a traditional future of marriage and family was nebulous as well.<sup>27</sup>

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**Vera Brittain**

To “tell my own fairly typical story as truthfully as I could against the larger background. . . .” So Vera Brittain explains her agonizing decision to publish her war experiences in the foreword of her classic *Testament of Youth*, her account of one woman caught in the maelstrom of World War I. Since it was first published in 1933, this work has often headed the list of voices chosen to characterize the generation of men and women who lived through the “Great War” and struggled to come to terms with its losses and impact. Her chronicle of a sheltered Edwardian girl whose deeply affecting war experiences became the catalyst for the creation of the well-known post-war writer and public figure who was active in pacifist and feminist causes has retained its appeal.

Vera Mary Brittain, (1893–1970), was born at Newcastle-under-Lyme in Staffordshire, England. Ambitious and dissatisfied with the life of the typical middle-class young woman, she pursued her dream to attend Oxford University, where she began her studies at Somerville College in October 1914. In the meanwhile, her beloved brother Edward had introduced her to his school friends, Victor Richardson and Roland Leighton. The friendship with Roland blossomed into romance and by August 1915 the two were engaged. Meanwhile World War 1 had broken out in August 1914, and her brother and his friends enlisted in the army. Under these circumstances, Vera became restless with academic life and left Oxford in 1915 to begin nursing as a Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) volunteer, first in a hospital near her family’s home in Buxton, then at 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell.<sup>28</sup> An anticipated reunion with Roland for the Christmas holiday in 1915 turned into devastation when she received news of his death from wounds. Struggling with her grief, Vera returned to nursing and in 1916 volunteered for an overseas posting on Malta. In 1917 when she learned that Victor Richardson had been blinded in the fighting, she broke her contract and returned to London, determined to marry him. He, however, died shortly after her arrival, and her grief was further compounded by the death of Geoffrey Thurlow, another close friend of both Vera and Edward. Because Edward had been sent to the Western Front in France, Vera then went to France to nurse at 24th General at Étapes. In April 1918 she again had to break her contract, this time to return home to care for her sick mother. While there, news came that Edward had died in action in on the Italian front in June. Heartbroken, Vera went back to nursing, signing on at Queen Alexandra’s Hospital in England, where she remained through the end of the war and until her contract expired in April 1919. Later that year she returned to Oxford, and following her graduation, she established a literary career in London and married George Caitlin in 1925.

When war memoirs became popular in the late 1920s, she used her diaries and letters to write *Testament of Youth*, which has remained the most acclaimed and best known of her numerous publications.

### **Conclusion**

Vera Brittain's publishing experience follows the literary pattern previously described. During the war she wrote diaries, letters, and poetry, even publishing a volume of verse entitled *Verses of a VAD* in 1918.<sup>29</sup> The period after the war when she was completing her degree at Oxford she later described as a time of isolation in which her war experiences hung heavily on her life amidst disinterest among those around her. She expressed these experiences in an unpublished novel,<sup>30</sup> but it was during the 1928–1929 “Boom” period previously mentioned that she decided to write her autobiography with its pacifist overtones.<sup>31</sup> It was published and, according to Robert Wohl, well received by the public because “it made explicit, as no other war book had, the narrative sequence within which many English survivors of the war had come to perceive their past.”<sup>32</sup>

Since Brittain's *Testament of Youth* is considered part of the “Boom” and myth literature, can its reliability be questioned by the aforementioned criticisms? Certainly the book shows a heavy dependence on her wartime letters and diaries—many of which are still extant in the Vera Brittain Archive at McMaster University and are printed in published editions as well<sup>33</sup>—and she uses extensive quotations to support her account. There are, however, discrepancies. For example, in the book, she speaks caustically of the rules and regulations aboard the *Britannic*, in contrast, in a letter to her parents written at the time, she voiced agreement with those rules.<sup>34</sup> In her letter, she may have been obscuring her true feelings to reassure her parents. On the other hand, when she wrote the book, she may have been reflecting a mind changed by her overall war experience. Nevertheless, these are opposite positions.

One of the readily visible features of Brittain's account is the bitter and disillusioned tone. This can be discerned in the following passage:

Only gradually did I realise that the war had condemned me to live to the end of my days in a world without confidence or security, a world in which every dear personal relationship would be fearfully cherished under the shadow of apprehension; in which love would seem threatened perpetually by death, and happiness appear a house without duration, built upon the shifting sands of chance. I might perhaps have it again, but never again should I hold it.<sup>35</sup>

The negative, inward-looking, and gloomy atmosphere of her account spends little time on the positive aspects of her experience, which shows, according to Jean

Pickering, that the perspective of 1929 “predominates” despite Brittain’s efforts “to indicate her youthful outlook.”<sup>36</sup> A personality study done by Abigail J. Stewart, Carol Franz, and Lynne Layton comparing *Testament of Youth* with its source documents found that Brittain’s account accurately reflected “her major preoccupations at the time.” The “course of her experience did differ,” however, for they found that there were more “‘ups and downs’” than she remembered and that her preoccupations were not necessarily focused in the direction she remembered. For example, “she underestimated the consequences of Roland’s death for her preoccupation with identity.” The authors go on to observe that “it may always be that the past appears—or even should appear—as more coherent and consistent than it felt at the time.”<sup>37</sup>

Henriette Donner, on the other hand, attributes the tone of *Testament of Youth* as less a product of the “transforming force” of the war than one of hindsight or the feeling of let-down that follows the cessation of an intense commitment.<sup>38</sup> Overall it would appear she is not as guilty of creating Fussell’s “fictional character” or using Eksteins’ “imagination in guise of memory” as she is of filtering her experience through the lens of the “Myth of the War” vision of her day.<sup>39</sup>

Interestingly, Brittain herself increasingly became distanced from the powerful emotions that fueled her war memoirs. As early as around 1939, in preparing a foreword for an attempted publication of her diaries, she observed that:

To-day I feel only a remote family relationship with the girl who lived in Buxton & went to Oxford . . . I have survived the sad little ghost of 1917 sufficiently long to know that the blackest night—though it never ceases to cast its shadows—may still change, for long intervals of time, to the full sunlight of the golden day.<sup>40</sup>

In conclusion, in assessing the reliability of memoirs, one should beware of the twentieth-century tendency to see “negative appraisals . . . [as] the only honest ones.” Dorothy Goldman echoes that warning in *Women Writers and the Great War* when she speaks of the “danger for the postwar critic of privileging the cynical above the sentimental as a vehicle for truth.”<sup>41</sup> As seen in Brittain’s case, memoirs can be shaped by the literary fashions of the day, and the prudent historian considers this when using the obvious riches of this resource.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth: An Autobiographical Study of the Years 1900–1925* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989, reissued in 1994), 12. This edition includes a preface by her daughter,

Shirley Williams. Brittain came up with the title in 1931 after reading Robert Bridges' poem, "The Testament of Beauty." Paul Berry and Mark Bostridge, *Vera Brittain: A Life* (London: Chattus and Windus, 1995), 241.

2. Vera Brittain, "A Poppy for Her Cot. Some Armistice Reflections." *Manchester Guardian*, 11 November 1930, Vera Brittain Archive, William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, Mills Memorial Library, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada, hereafter cited as VBA.

3. Peter Simkins points out that "the successive Education Acts after 1870 made it more likely that British soldiers of the Great War would be abler writers than their counterparts in earlier conflicts," note no. 17 citing Denis Winter, *Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War* (London, 1978), 16–17. Simkins adds that a "wider cross-section of society than hitherto" provided abundant personal material from the war. Peter Simkins, "Everyman at War: Recent Interpretations of the Front Line Experience," in *The First World War and British Military History*, Brian Bond, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 293–94.

4. Andrew Rutherford, *The Literature of War: Five Studies in Heroic Virtue* (London : Macmillan, and New York: Harper and Row, Barnes and Noble Import Division, 1978), 65.

5. Harro Grabolle, Hilda D. Spear, and Ian Wallace, "British and German Prose works of the First World War: A Preliminary Comparative Survey-I." *Notes and Queries* 29 (August 1982): 329.

6. Ian Malcolm, *War Pictures Behind the Lines* (London: Smith, Elder and Company, 1915); E. Charles Vivian and J. E. Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross* (London, New York and Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915); and, Granville Barker, *The [British] Red Cross In France* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1916).

7. Grabolle, "Prose Works," 329, 330.

8. *Ibid.*, 331–32; Mary Borden, *The Forbidden Zone* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1930).

9. Grabolle, "Prose Works," 334.

10. Winter identifies three phases in the literature of World War I. The first period saw the publication of extensive poetry and fiction in all the major countries during the war; it was followed by a second period in which "pulp literature and few enduring novels and memoirs" were published; the third period was launched by Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* in 1929 and lasted until 1935. Jay Winter, *The Experience of World War I* (New York: Oxford, 1989), 226. Hereafter cited as *Experience*.

11. For an excellent summary of this development in literature, see Janet Sledge Kobrin Watson, "Active Service: Gender, Class, and British Representations of the Great War" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1996), 3–9.

12. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1975), ix.

13. Fussell, 310, 312.

14. Jean Pickering follows Fussell's lead in explaining the structure of Brittain's memoirs. She notes that "With her dichotomizing vision strengthened, if not actually caused by the war, Brittain



felt a strong competitive urge when she came to write her autobiography. The male memorists were already in print before she visualized her plan, so her work clearly stands in a dialectical relationship to theirs." "On the battlefield: Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth," *Women's Studies* 13(1986): 76.

15. The three modes of imaginative literature are divided by the perception of the main character's freedom of action in comparison to ours. The epic has greater freedom of action, the realistic about the same level as ours, and the ironic has less. Winter, *Experience*, 226–27, 227–28.

16. *Ibid.*, 229.

17. Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 184, 190, 207, 213, 218–19, 229, 233, 237, 234, 236–37, 253, 282, 293.

18. *Ibid.*, 286–87. In the article "All Quiet on the Western Front," Eksteins asserts that the attitudes of the book and the movie "were not representative of the prevailing sentiments of soldiers during the war," *History Today* 45 (November 1995): 34.

19. Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 297.

20. Peter H. Liddle, *The Soldier's War 1914–18* (London: Blandford Press, 1988), 207.

21. Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (New York: Atheneum, 1991), xi, xii.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, xiii.

24. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 4–7, 10. Vera Brittain comments that "The belief that individuals were entitled to expect peace and happiness as their normal fate took so long to die that remnants of it still came to life even when the First War had been over for years." "War Service in Perspective," in George A. Panichas, ed., *Promise of Greatness: The War of 1914–1918* (New York: John Day, 1968), 371.

25. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 379. Nosheen Khan observes that women's poetry during the war, as an expression of what they were thinking, was conservative, traditional, and supportive of the war effort. Women's disenchantment came earlier than men's, however. Nosheen Khan, *Women's Poetry of the First World War* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1988), 5, 16.

26. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 378.

27. The 1921 census counted 19,803,022 females and 18,082,220 males in England and Wales, *Ibid.*, 379. Hynes uses a poem by Brittain, "The Superfluous Woman," as an illustration of their feelings. *Ibid.*, 380–81. This poem, dated 1920, was published in Vera Brittain, *Poems of the War and After* (New York: Macmillan, 1934), 70–71.

28. The Voluntary Aid Detachments were known as VADs during the war. The term also came to be applied to individual members as well.

29. Included in Vera Brittain, *Poems of the War and After*.

30. The 1918 manuscript, "The Pawn of Fate" later retitled "Folly's Vineyard," utilized her nursing experiences; A-28, VBA.

31. Grabolle, "Prose Works," 332, 334. See Vera Brittain, *On Becoming A Writer* (London and New

- York: Hutchinson, 1947), 178–87 for an introspective view of the process by which she came to write the book. For a study of how her war experience shaped Brittain’s pacifism, see Rita Miriam Kissen, “Vera Brittain: Writing A Life” (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, 1986).
32. Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 111.
33. See Vera Brittain, *Chronicle of Youth: The War Diary 1913–1917*, edited by Alan Bishop with Terry Smart (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1982); and, *Letters from a Lost Generation: The First World War Letters of Vera Brittain and Four Friends: Roland Leighton, Edward Brittain, Victor Richardson, Geoffrey Thurlow*, edited by Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999; Great Britain: Little, Brown, 1998).
34. Brittain, *Testament of Youth*, 294–95; Brittain, letter to Mother and Daddy, 2 October 1916, VBA.
35. Brittain, *Testament of Youth*, 469–70.
36. Pickering, “On the battlefield,” 77.
37. Abigail J. Stewart, Carol Franz and Lynne Layton, “The Changing Self: Using Personal Documents to Study Lives,” *Journal of Personality* 56.1 (March 1988): 67–68, 70.
38. Henriette Donner, “Under the Cross—Why V.A.D.s Performed the Filthiest Task in the Dirtiest War: Red Cross Women Volunteers, 1914–1918,” *Journal of Social History* 30.3 (Spring 1997): 700.
39. Fussell, *Great War*, 312; Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 297.
40. Vera Brittain, Notes for “Introduction to War Diaries” (about 1939), in *Chronicle of Youth*, 16.
41. James Fallows, “Outlook: 1997,” *U.S. News and World Report* (30 December 1996/6 January 1997): 38; Dorothy Goldman, Jane Gledhill and Judith Hattaway, *Women Writers and the Great War* (New York: Twayne Publishers, an imprint of Simon and Schuster Macmillan, 1995), 74.

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## A Notice to Contributors Concerning Style

The editorial committee invites submission of manuscripts from authors of papers presented at the annual meeting. On the recommendation of reviewers and editors, manuscripts may be published in *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association*.

In general, manuscripts should not exceed 4500 words, about eighteen pages (double-spaced) including endnotes. As soon as possible after the annual meeting, authors should submit two paper copies and one electronic copy to the editor for review. The electronic copy must be submitted on a PC-compatible diskette written in MS Word 6.0+ for Windows or WordPerfect 5.2+ for Windows. The electronic text should be flush left, unformatted, single spaced, and saved as "text only." Paginate your paper, double space the text, and indent the first word of a new paragraph only on the paper copy. All copies should use 12 point type in the Times New Roman font. Do not include a title page, but instead place your title and name at the top of the first page. Please use margins of one inch throughout your paper and space only once between sentences. Indent five spaces without quotation marks all quotations five or more lines in length.

Documentation should be provided in endnotes, not at the foot of each page. At the end of the text of your paper double-space then type the word "endnote" centered between the margins. List endnotes in Arabic numerical sequence, each number followed by a period and space, and then the text of the endnote. Endnotes should be flush left and lines single-spaced. If your word-processing program demands the raised footnote numeral, it will be acceptable. Foreign words and titles of books or journals should be italicized. For the rest, *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association* adheres in matters of general usage to the fourteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.



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## Minutes of the seventy-first annual meeting of the SCHA 3 March 2001

The seventy-first annual meeting of the South Carolina Historical Association convened on the campus of the University of South Carolina in Columbia on Saturday 3 March 2001. Registration opened at 8:30 A.M. at the South Caroliniana Library.

Approximately seventy (70) members and guests registered for the meeting on an unseasonably warm, rainy day in the Palmetto State's capital city. The presentations sessions, organized by Calvin Smith, began at 9:00 A.M. in Flinn Hall, adjacent to the USC Horseshoe.

### Session 1 (9:00–10:00 A.M.)

**A. Reconstruction and Civil War.** Louis P. Towles' "Manigault's Stalwarts: The 10th South Carolina in the Atlanta Campaign." Ron Cox served as session chair.

**B. Colonial Era: Traders, Pirates and Ideas** included three papers: Michael Morris presented "George Galphin: Portrait of a Carolina Indian Trader and Entrepreneur," Michael Smith presented "Blackbeard and the Meaning of Pirate Captainty," and Judkin Browning presented "Creating a Rhetorical Currency: The Dissemination of Enlightenment Thought in Colonial Newspapers before the Revolution." The session was chaired by Charles Lesser.

**C. History and Memory** was chaired by Fritz Hamer and included "History & the Persistence of Memory: World War I Memoirs of Vera Brittain and Ruth Whitaker" by Joyce Wood, "Roll of Honor: World War II Stories of Piedmont's Greatest Generation," by Don Roper and "The Memory Palace of Lorenzo Johnson" by Kevin Sheets.

**Morning coffee break** was held from 10:00 A.M. until 10:15 A.M.

**The Poster Session** commenced at 10:15 A.M. and lasted until 12:30 P.M. in the MMS Reading Room of the Caroliniana. Exhibits included "Promoting History through WEB-based Audio-Video Programs" by Bill Schmidt and "Columbia, SC" in the *Black America* Series (Arcadia Publishers) by Vinnie Deas-Moore.

**Session 2 (10:15–11:15 A.M.)**

**A. Politics, Piety and Plagues** featured “Voting for God: The Politics of South Carolina Camp Meetings” by Dale W. Johnson and “Charleston Catholics and the Yellow Fever Epidemics of 1838 and 1854” by Susan King. Sean Busick chaired the session.

**B. Women, Students, and Reform**, chaired by Lisa Steffen, included “Alice Norwood Spearman Wright’s Network of Lady Activists and Clubwomen” by Marcia Synnott, “To Whom Much is Given, Much is Expected: White Southern Women’s Activism in the Civil Rights Movement, 1950–1965” by Courtney Tollison, and “The Emperor’s New Clothes: President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, the 1968 Student Movement, and the Crisis of Mexico’s Institutionalized Revolution” by Julia Sloan.

**C. Gilded Age and Populism** featured papers on “The Value of Chinese Immigration during the Building of the 1st American Transcontinental Railroad” by John Powell and “Maintenance of Honor & Manhood: Southern Conservatism & Agrarian Protest in SC, 1870–1890” by Scott Poole. The session was chaired by Michael Nelson.

**D. Medium, Message, and Segregated Sports** was chaired by Joseph Stukes and featured papers on “The Dawn of Modern Electronic Television” by Nathaniel Pendleton and “Intimacy and Subordination: Southern College Football and the Culture of Segregation, 1890–1930” by Andrew Doyle.

From 11:15 to 11:30 A.M., participants enjoyed a **coffee break**.

**Session 3 (11:30 A.M. –12.30 P.M.)**

**A. South Carolina and Slavery** was chaired by Ken Peters and included papers on “Urban Slavery: Slave-Hiring in Charleston, 1800–1860” by Jackie Booker and “Manumission in South Carolina: the Carmille and Irvine Experience” by Alexia Helsley.

**B. Identity, Names, and Remembering** was chaired by David Hess. Papers presented were “From Agrarian to Industrial Emphasis: A Model for the New South” by Wayne Chilcote, “Eighteenth & Nineteenth Century SC Names Transferred to West-Central Alabama” by Stanley Rich, and “Memory Jugs: Memorial or Whimsy?” by Rodger Stroup.

**C. European Transformations: Ancient and Modern** featured papers on “The Last Will and Testament of Remigius of Reims” by Chris Beckham and “The Creation of Considerable Bad Feeling: Effect of the Soviet Abduction Campaign in Allied Occupied Vienna

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on American-Soviet Relations, 1945–1950” by Ralph Brown. The session was chaired by Robert Figueira.

### **Luncheon and business meeting (12:45–2:15 P.M.)**

Following the morning session, the SCHA held its annual luncheon and business meeting at the Clarion Town House Hotel, located at 1615 Gervais Street in Columbia.

### **President’s report**

SCHA President Fritz Hamer called the business session to order at 1:15 P.M. He welcomed all attending, apologized for the rain, but noted that at least it was not too cold. He then offered thanks to those who helped organize today’s meeting, especially Allen Stokes of the Caroliniana Library. He also thanked Nat Pendleton, Robin Copp, and Jane Hamer. He reminded everyone of the reception in the Reading Room of the Caroliniana following the afternoon session.

Fritz noted that Marvin Cann was unable to be present today but pointed out that he has served as editor of the SCHA *Proceedings* for the past three years, and the organization certainly owes Marvin much thanks for all of his hard work in putting them together. He also thanked Stephen Lowe and Robert Figueira for taking over as co-editors for next year. Rodger Stroup of the SC State Archives has volunteered his staff to help with the process.

Fritz concluded by thanking all who presented papers today, and expressed his hope that presenters will submit them within next couple of months to get the editing process going.

### **Treasurer’s report**

Barely able to conceal his glee, Bill Brockington admitted that he stood before the group with mixed emotions . . . joy and happiness. After ten years as treasurer of the Association, he announced that he is stepping down and turning his duties over to Rodger Stroup. Thus, he noted, “I have no real report.”

Members received the annual report in their last newsletter, and should notice that we took in as much as we spent. Bill noted with satisfaction that when his tenure began, the Association had between five and six thousand dollars and today has around \$17,000. He refused to take credit for the fiscal soundness of the Association, however, “‘cause all I do is process info you give me.”

The Association should be proud, he continued, noting that he is a member of another organization that folded due to lack of continuity, lack of new blood. “As long as you encourage your colleagues and students to participate,” he said, “we will

be vibrant and viable. No organization is stronger than its members, but it's up to you."

"I truly believe there is a place for the SCHA," he continued, "but it's up to you. Our membership presently fluctuates between one hundred and one hundred fifty. This is partly due to the US Postal Service's inability to handle bulk mail. We have made constant effort to keep you informed, but again it's up to you. That's the network we hope the SCHA will be for you. I have enjoyed being treasurer. I'm not going away, but it's been a real pleasure."

Fritz then reiterated his thanks to Bill for his work over the last decade.

### **Secretary's report**

Ron Cox gave a rather disjointed, rambling report, having had difficulty with his laptop computer in keeping up with the happenings of the meeting. He apologized again for the "missing" winter newsletter, although some members raised their hands when he asked if said issue had been received. It is still a mystery as to what happened to that particular bulk mailing.

The summer issue of the newsletter will be out in late June. Ron encouraged members to keep sending him information (*roncox@gwm.sc.edu*) because this is an excellent way of letting our colleagues know what we all are up to. Although we are a small state, we need to keep our connections with one another.

Ron thanked everyone who has submitted such information and who has made comments—pro or con—about his publishing of the *Newsletter*. He concluded with a promise to continue to give it his best efforts.

### **Old and new business**

Fritz discussed the location of next year's SCHA meeting. We have been deliberating on this, and financial issues have been a primary concern. The meeting will be in Charleston, and we have been talking with the College of Charleston. Amy McCandless has suggested that we might be able to have the meeting at the Lightsey Center in Charleston, and is hoping to get some backing from the college to hold it here. "Plan B" would be to use classrooms. Amy has assured Fritz that she is in a better condition as Associate Provost and that may influence the decision on getting funding from the college. We should know for sure by mid-to-late spring. Fritz then offered thanks to Amy for trying to coordinate all of this despite her other duties. The date for the meeting should be 2 March 2002.

Fritz then announced the SCHA prize awards for best paper, which the association awards every two years. One award is given to a graduate student and the other



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to a professional member of the association. The committee was headed by Roger Stroup and Robin Copp. For the period 1999–2000, the graduate student prize was awarded to Harry Lesesne for his “With Common Courtesy and Effort from Everyone: Southern Identity and School Desegregation in Spartanburg, 1964–1970.” The professional member prize was awarded to Janet Hudson for her “Ben Bess and the Dictates of White Supremacy: The Unpardonable Crime.” Special presentations were made at the reception.

The Association recognized Bill Brockington and Calvin Smith for their decades of service to the SCHA, noting that Calvin had been secretary for close to a decade (and will be President after today). Bill has served as treasurer for a decade if not longer. Thanks for their solid and dedicated work to this organization over the years.

Calvin noted that the Association has a web page/web site which has been coordinated through USCA for last four years. We are going to work and see if Archives can take over the site in the near future. Members are encouraged to use this site to help keep members informed. The address is *www.aiken.sc.edu/scha* [see end note of minutes for actual address].

Nat Pendleton noted that the Association needs to thank Fritz for his hard work this year and for “getting this thing to work.” He has been “very good at cutting through the red tape.”

A question was raised about the election of officers. It was determined that this will be done following the day’s presentation.

Fritz introduced the speaker, Sam Thomas of the York County Culture and Heritage Commission, who spoke on “Building Bridges for the Next Millennium: Partnerships in the History World.”

Following the speaker, the Nominating Committee presented its slate of candidates for the Election of Officers for 2001–2002. Because of vacancies there was discussion of the need for a public historian on the board as this person would be replacing Fritz Hamer. There were nominations and volunteers with the final decision being that the current executive board should “hash this out” and inform the membership.

[The Executive Board met briefly after the session and determined the following slate of officers for 2001–2002:

President: Calvin Smith (USC Aiken)

Vice President: Linda Hayner (Bob Jones University)

Secretary: Ron Cox (USC Salkehatchie)

Treasurer: Rodger Stroup (SC Archives & History Center)

At Large: J. Tracy Power (SC Archives & History Center)  
Sam Thomas (York County Culture & Heritage Commission)  
Robin Copp (South Caroliniana Library)  
Co-editors for the *Proceedings*: Robert Figueira (Lander University)  
Stephen Lowe (Presbyterian College)]

Fritz relinquished the podium at 2:12 P.M., at which point Calvin took over. Calvin noted that the actual web address for the site is [www.usca.sc.edu](http://www.usca.sc.edu). "If all else fails," he said, "point your browser to USCA and press the 'what's hot' button."

With no additional business or announcements, the president declared the meeting adjourned at 2:14 P.M.

**Session 4 (2:30–3:30 P.M.)**

**Doing Local History in South Carolina: Three Perspectives** was chaired by James Farmer and included panelists Wayne King (Francis Marion University), Allen Charles (USC Union), and James Farmer (USC Aiken).

**17th Century British History** was chaired by Amy McCandless and featured papers on "A Study of Sovereignty and Allegiance: *Calvin's Case*, 1608 by Lisa Steffen and "In the Deep Mid-Winter: Fuel Price in 17th-Century London" by Linda Hayner.

Following the afternoon session a reception for SCHA members was held in the Reading Room of the South Caroliniana Library from 3:45 until 4:30 P.M., at which point the 2001 Annual Meeting of the SCHA was officially adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Ron Cox, Jr.  
USC Salkehatchie  
Secretary, SCHA