

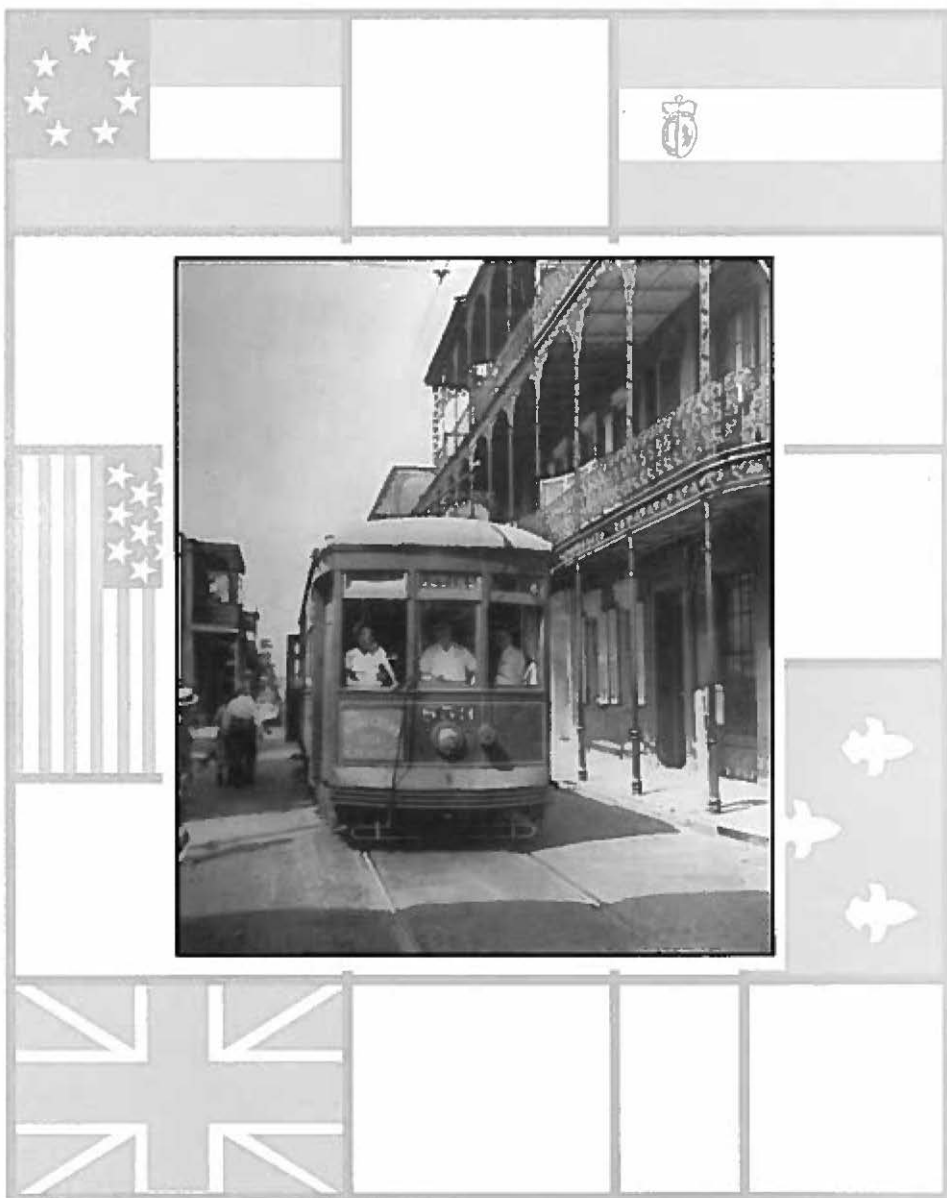
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Gulf South Historical Review

Vol. 17

No. 1

The Journal of the Gulf South Historical Association



DOWN THE YEARS
ARTICLES ON
MOBILE'S HISTORY

Michael Thomason, Editor



MOBILE
TRICENTENNIAL
300 Years of America

G/C Gulf Coast
H/R Historical Review

Edited by Michael V. R. Thomason

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our journal over the years. This volume, which compliments the tricentennial history, was made possible by the financial support of the Friends of the University Archives, especially the Rev. Mr. George Schroeter, and the University of South Alabama. Thus, thanks to help from the Tricentennial Committee, the Friends, and the University, we have two fine historical publications to celebrate the city's three centuries. Both will be on sale at the October conference, and there is an order form for *Down the Years* in this issue of the journal. We have been busy around here, and now you can see for yourself what we have been doing. Come join us at the Admiral Semmes in October and get the full treatment!

Michael Thomason

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The “Disturber” of the Democracy: John Forsyth and the Election of 1860

Lonnie A. Burnett

On the weekend before the 2000 presidential election, an article appeared in the *Mobile Register* entitled “Alabama off stage amid campaign drama.” Making note of the fact that (due to its relatively low number of electoral votes and predictable electorate) the state was fairly insignificant in presidential politics, the writer referred to Alabama as the “Maytag repairman state.”¹ This was certainly not the case in the months prior to the most important presidential election in United States’ history—the election of 1860. Most students of Alabama history know of the “fire-eater” William L. Yancey-led walkout at the Charleston meeting of the National Democratic Convention and the subsequent split of the Democratic party. Much less is understood about the role of Yancey’s primary antagonists—the supporters of Stephen A. Douglas. Even less obscure is the role of the leader of Alabama’s Douglas forces in those fateful days—John Forsyth of the *Mobile Register*.

John Forsyth was born in Augusta, Georgia, on October 31, 1812. His father was one of the most distinguished men in the early history of that state. John Forsyth, Sr. (1780-1841) served in the United States Congress, as governor of Georgia, United States minister to Spain, and secretary of state under presidents Jackson and Van Buren.² The younger Forsyth benefitted from the best education and Democratic party political training the nation had to offer. In 1832 he graduated (as class valedictorian) from Princeton and soon gained admittance to the Georgia bar. On April 22, 1834, Forsyth married Margaret Hull of Augusta. The couple moved to Columbus, Georgia, and then to Mobile, Alabama, the following year. In 1836 he received an appointment to the office of United States attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. Forsyth’s first foray into what became a four-decade editorial career came in 1837 when he bought an interest in the *Mobile Daily Commercial Register*. During interruptions in his journalistic endeavors, Forsyth served as United States minister to Mexico, Alabama state legislator, mayor of the city of Mobile, Confederate peace commissioner to the Lincoln administration, Civil War field correspondent, and national Democratic party official. Forsyth used the *Register* as his personal organ to present his views on what he believed to be the best course of action for the Democratic party and the nation.³ Upon his death in 1877, the *New York Times*

National Convention. Prior to this gathering, the Alabama Democracy met in Montgomery. Two future foes—Forsyth, elected chairman of the instructed delegation, and Yancey, in charge of the committee on resolutions—worked in relative harmony. Yancey pushed for the Alabama Platform provisions with Forsyth's acquiescence.⁸ At Cincinnati, the debate concerning the nominee and the adoption of a platform took on a sectional tone. The quest for the nomination was between Douglas and the Pennsylvanian, James Buchanan. Buchanan was openly friendly to the South and sympathetic to her institutions while Douglas was already notorious among many Southerners for his popular ("squatter") sovereignty position. With his eyes on 1860, the ambitious Douglas reluctantly conceded the nomination to Buchanan, who pledged to serve only one term.

The adoption of a platform was somewhat more complicated. Facing increased pressure at home while at the same time trying to win a national election, delegates from both the North and South, including Forsyth, sought words that would please their constituents. As a result, the final platform was intentionally vague. While the document forcefully stated the principle of "non-interference by congress with slavery in state or territory or in the District of Columbia," it did not clearly spell out if a *territorial* government could or could not exclude the institution. Thus, in 1856 the Democratic party sustained the principles of non-intervention and popular sovereignty. The ambiguity satisfied political leaders in both the North and South since they could interpret the document as they pleased.⁹

With the election of Buchanan, Southerners had a president who was sympathetic to their cause. A favorable ruling in the 1857 *Dred Scott* case (which rendered the Missouri Compromise as well as the Kansas-Nebraska Act invalid) also solidified the southern position regarding the territories.¹⁰ Why then was the South in such a political uproar before the election of 1860? One must first determine how Stephen A. Douglas, a man jeered in northern cities for his *pro*-southern views, became the epitome of abolitionist-like evil in the southern mind. This vilification of Douglas mystified Forsyth. In a series of letters between Forsyth and William F. Samford, candidate for governor of Alabama in 1859, the Mobilian stated: "When in the autumn of 1856, I sailed from this port, I left Judge Douglas the most popular northern statesman in the South. When I returned, in the fall of 1858, he was the best abused man in it."¹¹

At least three actions by the Illinois senator in the late 1850s contributed to his fall from grace. His rejection of the pro-slavery

thing as “squatter” sovereignty. This term could only apply to an unorganized public territory. The “squatter” in this sense was merely an occupant with no power of self-government. However, once a territory became more formally organized, the term “popular” sovereignty was accurate since the settler was now a citizen of the United States. Forsyth agreed with Douglas that the Lecompton constitution was a good example of unabashed squatter fraud and, as such, deserved rejection. Forsyth wrote to Samford: “The Constitution by that [Lecompton] name came to Congress, the most atrocious and bare-faced emanation of ‘Squatter Sovereignty’ that has even been presented to the public eye.”¹⁷

Just as the transformation of Douglas in the southern mind amazed Forsyth, so too was he baffled by what he perceived as the metamorphosis that prompted avowed advocates of states’ rights to push for congressional supervision of the territories. How could men, many of whom were willing to dissolve the Union over any perceived threat to their rights, not concede to the citizens of an organized territory the sovereignty over their own affairs? In a lengthy speech before the Alabama House of Representatives, Forsyth explored the irony of the notion that an “extreme southern rights friends claims *jurisdiction for Congress over the question of slavery in the Territories.*”¹⁸ Although Forsyth tried to draw a (politically useful) distinction between his own and Yancey’s views of states’ rights, the two positions were actually not contradictory. Yancey’s call for federal protection simply meant federal protection for what the individual states already guaranteed—the protection of property (here meaning slaves). While often espoused as a cause of the eventual war, the states’ rights question was merely one facet of the underlying issue of slavery.¹⁹

While an ideological kinship certainly existed between Forsyth and Douglas, political factors also played a role. In March of 1859, Forsyth, who had officially resigned his diplomatic post a month earlier, wrote Douglas to explore his position on popular sovereignty and slavery in the territories. Before being assured of an ideological compatibility, Forsyth in essence promised his unconditional support. Apparently, political and practical concerns weighed heavily on the editor’s mind. On the practical side, Forsyth felt protective legislation had little chance of passage and, even if passed, would serve little purpose in a territory where the people were against slavery or where climate or other geographical factors made the institution unfeasible.²⁰ Forsyth knew a split in the Democratic party would most likely turn the federal government over to the “Black Republicans.” In pledging his support,

Samford ran against Andrew B. Moore. Samford was a devoted states' right Ultra who routinely referred to Douglas, Forsyth, and others of like persuasion as "semi-abolitionists." The east Alabama penman was also an unflinching supporter of Yancey's ambitions, as well as a proponent of the Alabama Platform. Samford attacked Moore, a conservative states' rights Democrat, for refusing to call a state secession convention after Congress had passed the Kansas Conference Bill.²⁶ A second race—the contest for the Mobile district seat in the United States Congress—was no less divisive. This race pitted James A. Stallworth, a friend of Forsyth, against F. B. Shepard. Stallworth, the incumbent, faced criticism for his vote on the "Kansas matter." In June 1859, Stallworth and Shepard met in a debate at Bladen Springs. The questions centered on the Douglas dilemma. Shepard spent much of his debate time in a verbal assault on John Forsyth (Forsyth reported to Douglas that he and Shepard narrowly escaped a duel), while Stallworth used equal efforts to defend his editor-friend.²⁷ The third canvas, which directly involved Forsyth, was the selection of four representatives from Mobile County to serve in the Alabama house. On July 9, the Mobile Democracy met in the city amphitheater to nominate their ticket. The assembly selected Forsyth (who reportedly declined a nomination to run for the United States House of Representatives), Percy Walker, Alexander B. Meek, and G. Y. Overall to run for the four spots. A rival Democratic group in Mobile, billing themselves as the "Democratic States' Rights Party," also met to select an opposing slate.²⁸

With the voters of Mobile scheduled to go to the polls on the first Monday of August, the contest was limited to only four weeks. The campaign's intensity more than compensated for its brevity. Nightly speeches, culminating with boisterous demonstrations and fireworks, pierced the usually placid port city evenings. As the rival tickets polarized opinions, the attacks became more vicious and sometimes even physical. The *Register* contained reports of threatened duels between Forsyth and several of his critics. Forsyth and his staff used the same logic in the campaign that had originally helped convince the editor to support Douglas. To his legion of antagonists, Forsyth reasoned: "You charge me with Douglasism, we charge you with Sewardism" (a commonly used synonym for Republicanism).²⁹

The election results seemed to bode well for both Forsyth and Douglas. An overwhelming statewide majority re-elected Governor Moore. In Mobile County, the total was 2,047 to 1,290 in favor of Moore. Likewise, Stallworth turned in a strong performance, outpolling

As the senatorial vote drew near, the *Montgomery Mail* wrote a blistering editorial condemning John Forsyth specifically. The journal questioned the loyalties of anyone who would dare support Fitzpatrick. Calling Forsyth the "leading Douglas man in the state," the paper referred to the upcoming senatorial vote as a roll call of the *true states'* right men, asking, "Who will choose to record himself once and forever opposed to the States Rights party of the South?" The implication that only supporters of Yancey could wear the robes of loyal southerners clearly offended Forsyth. He challenged the *Mail's* editor (Johnson Jones Hooper, a Yancey loyalist) to compare credentials:

He [Hooper] must compare records with me, and show that while the richest years of my manhood have been devoted to the cause of States Rights Democracy, while for twenty years I have sacrificed fortune, lived precariously, and more than once risked my life for it, he was *not* during that whole period, a steady soldier in the ranks of its enemies.³⁵

The ultimate rejection of Yancey in the contest seemed to again indicate that the Forsyth/Douglas cause was gaining momentum. This victory, however, would prove to be the last one Forsyth would enjoy in a united Democratic party.

The second key legislative issue involved contingency plans in the event of a Republican victory in the presidential election. In October 1859, the influential *Charleston Mercury* published several "principles" for southern Democrats. The main thrust of the article was that state legislatures should make provisional plans in the event of a victory by a Republican or (in an unmistakable reference to Douglas) an *unacceptable northern candidate*.³⁶ The Alabama legislature considered a resolution authorizing the governor to call a state convention to determine the course of action in the event of an unfavorable election result. While practically all the legislature, Forsyth included, agreed on the unacceptability of a "Black Republican" administration, opinions differed concerning what to do if Douglas was the Democratic nominee. Forsyth delivered a speech from the floor of the house in which he staunchly defended his friend from Illinois. Satisfied with his effort, he wrote Douglas that only one of the legislators would admit that he would not vote for Douglas if nominated.³⁷

State business soon took a back seat to preparations for the Alabama State Democratic Convention scheduled to meet in the capital city in January 1860. Before this assembly, the various counties selected delegates. The heated discussions that took place in many of these usually routine meetings suggest the gravity of the national conflict.

Forsyth led the feeble minority opposition to the committee's action. He offered his own set of conciliatory resolutions as an alternative. The Mobilian felt the state delegation should go to Charleston with a spirit of cooperation in order to defeat the "Vandal hordes of Black Republicans." Like the committee, Forsyth favored the re-adoption of the Cincinnati Platform, but with the insertion of the principles of the *Dred Scott* ruling (as opposed to the Alabama Platform) as a guide for the territorial question. In the final vote, Forsyth was one of only three members who voted against the majority resolutions dealing specifically with the issue of slavery in the territories and the threatened withdrawal from Charleston. He then stubbornly insisted that the official proceedings record his name as a negative vote. The convention adjourned with Alabama committed to a platform that, according to Forsyth, would hasten the disruption of the Democratic party and, ultimately, the Union.⁴³

We now turn to our primary concern—Forsyth's role in the national election process. Forsyth spent much of the next three months relentlessly criticizing the actions of the state convention. He also spent many hours pondering an alternative strategy that he hoped might secure the nomination of Stephen A. Douglas. The hostile reaction he faced led Forsyth to compare himself to a captain who, upon pointing out dangers ahead, faces a mutiny from the crew.⁴⁴ However, in this case, feelings were so strong that the "captain" appeared to be serving in a foreign navy. Day after day, the *Register* commented on the folly of the late state meeting. Forsyth continued to insist that winning the election should be the ultimate goal of the party. This objective, he thought, should supersede all desires to make a statement on "abstract" issues such as protectionism and states' rights. At one point he warned that if the Alabama delegates insisted on going to Charleston with their strict anti-Douglas resolutions, the state might as well go ahead and leave the Union beforehand. In the longest and most emotional speech of his brief legislative career, Forsyth warned his house colleagues that if they divided the Democracy on "barren and abstract issues," they would make the "million of abolitionists two millions, and enable them to ravish the Federal government from our hands."⁴⁵

As the ominous gathering in South Carolina drew near, the attacks became more personal. Forsyth printed a letter written by Yancey to one James Slaughter, in which the Ultra leader stated:

But if we could do as our fathers did, organize 'committees of safety' all over the cotton States (as it is only in them that we can hope for any effective movement), we shall fire the Southern heart, instruct the

January he wrote, "If you are nominated at Charleston, I believe Alabama will give you [a] 20,000 majority." The next month, responding to continued reports that the senator was receiving advice to withdraw, Forsyth insisted that Douglas stay the course and, "tell your friends that you must be nominated—It will be the very best thing for the Democracy of the South."⁵⁰ Through March and into April of 1860, Forsyth regularly corresponded with Douglas, consistently imploring the champion of popular sovereignty to "stand firm," even if advised otherwise by his associates. The optimistic editor claimed that Douglas was "stronger, a thousand times, with the Southern people, than the superficial currents set in motion by the Politicians would indicate."⁵¹ Certainly a man involved in Democratic party politics his entire life knew the implausibility of such statements. Even as Forsyth outwardly exhibited a wall of confidence, he, for the first time, pondered what to do if Douglas did not receive the nomination. He assumed Douglas could still influence the platform and nomination even if he himself was not the nominee.

Gavelled to order on April 23, 1860, the National Democratic Convention met at Institute Hall of Charleston College. The building, designed to hold eighteen hundred delegates, uncomfortably accommodated upwards of three thousand. An early spring heat wave (that pushed the South Carolina temperature near the one-hundred-degree mark) made matters more uncomfortable for the delegates, floor leaders, and gallery spectators.⁵² The official delegates belonged to one of three groups, each on its own mission.⁵³ Douglas supporters composed a slight majority but knew they could not produce the two-thirds majority necessary for nomination. Their only hope of success depended on a southern walkout and a favorable two-thirds vote of those who remained. They did, however, have a strong enough voice to control the crucial platform vote. William A. Richardson, a United States representative from Illinois, was their floor leader.⁵⁴

Yancey reigned supreme over the second group—a sizeable faction of the Southerners, particularly the "fire-eaters." Determined to secure the main provisions of the Alabama Platforms, they were willing to withdraw to prove their resolve. Numerically, they were a minority of the total body with only about forty votes. Yancey hoped his actions could "nudge the party a bit further along the road to an open acceptance of southern equality." After the walkout occurred, one southern leader noted that the Yanceyites believed that "reflection would induce the majority to retrace their steps and to present to the retiring states a platform which they could accept with honor."⁵⁵

in Charleston and adopted their own platform. They then adjourned with instructions to reconvene in Richmond on June 11. Meanwhile, the nomination scenario that Forsyth envisioned failed to materialize (due to an interpretation of the convention rules that required a two-third vote of the *total* number of delegates—not just the *remaining* number). After the remaining delegates conducted fifty-seven ballots, Douglas still could not muster a two-thirds majority. Without a nominee, the regular Charleston convention likewise adjourned, to meet again in Baltimore on June 18.⁶¹

Although the final disruption of the party was still a few weeks away, in Alabama the rush was on to claim the vacated seats for the upcoming Baltimore convention. In Mobile County, the Yancey wing of the party met and selected delegates to a new state convention scheduled to meet on June 4 in Montgomery. Forsyth, through the *Register*, advertised a competing convention that would meet in Selma (later moved to Montgomery) on the same day, for the same purpose.⁶² Forsyth wrote to Douglas—clearly defining his inflexible plans. Sending the senator a copy of his printed convention “call,” the editor stated, “We have just begun the fight [and] mean yet to drive the Yanceyites to the wall—They are very uneasy [and] we shall not spare them. We treat them as aliens, Bolters separated from the Democracy and refuse to join them in the same convention.”⁶³

No action in Forsyth’s life ever drew so much political and personal hostility. The *Advertiser* referred to Forsyth and his associates as “reckless and ambitious third rate politicians” and “puny braggarts.” The editor was singled out as a “vainglorious boaster.”⁶⁴ Many old party regulars viewed Forsyth as a “disturber” of the Alabama Democracy. The Yanceyites could not fathom why the idea of congressional protection of slavery in the territories, once generally accepted, was now deemed revolutionary. The leading Yancey journal mocked Forsyth when it noted that all *true* Democrats in Alabama held to protection of slavery except the editor of the *Mobile Register*. “He—‘wrapt in the solitude of his own originality’—he *alone* had ‘Squatter’ imprinted on his brow, as, ‘gloomy and peculiar,’ if not ‘grand,’ he mournfully gazed across the peaceful waters of Mobile Bay towards Mexico, and querulously wrote of ‘Old Buck.’”⁶⁵ Yancey’s nineteenth-century biographer claimed that Forsyth’s “self-conceit led him to attempt to overthrow the Democratic Party.”⁶⁶

The competing state conventions met and selected their delegates. The “Bolters” convention sent their members to Richmond, where they planned to regroup and then present themselves for admission at

Baltimore. The "squatter" convention sent Forsyth, Seibels, and others directly to Baltimore as replacements for the delegates who, they felt, had resigned at Charleston.⁶⁷ Regardless of their open disgust with Forsyth and the other Douglas men, the Yanceyites understood the odds that awaited them at the upcoming convention. The *Advertiser* (correctly) predicted that "Forsyth will carry his delegation from Selma to Baltimore, and mark the prediction that if the Montgomery Convention sends a delegation to Baltimore, it will be ruled out by the Baltimore Douglas Convention (for it is nothing more, nor nothing less) and the Forsyth bogus Douglas delegates under the false name of Democrats will be accepted."⁶⁸

An air of tension settled over Baltimore as the meeting opened on June 18, 1860, at the Front Street Theatre. One delegate brought a prizefighter along to serve as a personal bodyguard while he was on the convention floor. Reports of numerous duels and several fistfights made the newspapers even before the opening session. Murat Halstead noted that the Douglas forces, which now smelled victory, assumed a tone of arrogance. He reported that they were "encouraged by the presence and support of Pierre Soule of Louisiana, John Forsyth of Alabama, and other strong Southern men."⁶⁹ After taking care of minor business, the convention selected the crucial committee on credentials. Of the delegations that retired from the Charleston meeting, only Alabama and Louisiana now returned with competing delegations. The pro-Douglas delegations from the two states argued that they had fulfilled the request of the Charleston Convention by selecting a new delegation for Baltimore. They also claimed that since the Yancey group was selected for a convention in Richmond, they had no legitimacy in Baltimore.⁷⁰

As the committee deliberated, the convention and the city filled with wild speculations and quarrels. By now word had leaked out that Douglas was seriously considering withdrawing his name. Before the final report of the committee became known, Douglas sent a letter to Richardson authorizing him to withdraw his name if the situation warranted. Rumors were also rampant that the New York delegation, with their thirty-five votes, was about to sell out the Illinois senator. Forsyth worked furiously behind the scenes to make sure Douglas held his ground and cast aside any thought of withdrawal. The credentials committee presented its report on June 21. With symbolism perhaps divinely inspired, the floor of the convention hall literally fell out shortly after the morning call to order. After hasty repairs, John Krum of Missouri presented the majority credentials report. The committee

After the grueling nomination and platform adoption process, the subsequent summer and fall campaign had the potential to be somewhat anti-climatic for Forsyth. A fierce war of words carried on between the *Montgomery Advertiser* and the *Register* quickly dispelled any quietude. As the Democratic Party went in separate directions, the Yancey journal fired away, claiming that “we have no hesitancy in saying that the *Mobile Register* had been more unscrupulous in its abuses and misrepresentations of those who would not bow to the wishes of its demagogical chief than any journal that has ever been published in the State of Alabama.”⁷⁶ These critics dismissed Forsyth’s support for Douglas as blatant opportunism since he, they claimed, hoped for a future appointment in the new administration. Another chance at a ministry, perhaps to Britain, was the carrot, they felt, that Douglas dangled in front of Forsyth’s eyes.⁷⁷ Yancey, in a Memphis campaign speech for the Breckinridge ticket, asked the assembled crowd: “Will you put those broken down politicians, Soule, Forsyth, [Jere] Clemens, and your [Henry] Footes against this mighty array of genius?”⁷⁸ The Douglas men were almost universally labeled traitors to the southern cause and to the principle of states’ rights.

By October Douglas, aware of Republican victories in several state elections (most notably Pennsylvania), knew he could not win the election. He now devoted his energies to the preservation of the Union. Forsyth, however, was not yet ready to give up. The editor implored Douglas to make a campaign swing through Alabama. He promised a warm welcome in Mobile and an assurance of two thousand Douglas votes on election day.⁷⁹ Douglas agreed and planned to arrive in Mobile on November 5, 1860. Even the choice of which steamer Douglas would take from Montgomery to the port city involved political decisions. Forsyth advised the senator to take the *Duke* since its captain was a known Douglas supporter. A delegation, led by the editor himself, met Douglas upriver and accompanied him on a triumphant entry into the city.⁸⁰

On the evening of November 5, Forsyth introduced Senator Douglas from the courthouse steps. The Little Giant, exhausted and only a few months away from death, delivered a two-hour speech to an enthusiastic crowd of around (a reported) five thousand people. A fireworks display officially ended the 1860 campaign for Douglas and Forsyth as they retired to the Battle House Hotel. The two men spent election day receiving supporters and discussing the national situation.⁸¹ That evening, the pair huddled in the offices of the *Register* to await any election news that might come by wire. Knowing the battle was

lost, the two warriors turned their hearts to the future—how would the South react to the election of Lincoln? Forsyth showed Douglas an editorial he had already written and planned to run in the event of Lincoln's victory. The article urged the immediate calling of a state secession convention to discuss the grave situation. Over Douglas's strong objections, the editor made preparations to insert the message into a coming issue of the *Register*. Douglas left Mobile the following day bound for New Orleans.⁸² He and Forsyth met only once more physically (while Forsyth was in Washington serving as a Confederate peace commissioner), and never again philosophically.

Over the next several days the election results confirmed Forsyth's fears. The split Democratic party handed Lincoln and the Republicans a solid electoral majority. In Alabama, Douglas finished a distant third, behind Breckinridge and Bell. Mobile was one of only five Alabama counties (and the only one not in the Unionist Tennessee Valley) that produced at least a plurality for the Illinois senator. The final tally in the county was 1,823 for Douglas, 1,629 for Bell, and 1,541 for Breckinridge.⁸³ Although Forsyth boasted of the local triumph, the poll in Mobile County could be attributed to the large number of temporary northern residents. Almost immediately, plans began to take shape for the calling for a state secession convention. Forsyth closed ranks with the southern secessionists and served the Confederate cause with distinction.

What then, in conclusion, was the significance of John Forsyth and the other Douglas managers in the disruption of the Democratic party, the election of 1860, and the ultimate secession of the southern states? To fully answer these important questions, one must investigate the motivations of both the Yancey and Douglas forces in the nomination and platform adoption processes as well as the legality of the Forsyth "replacement" delegation at Baltimore. We turn first to Yancey. It is certainly no secret that the great orator longed (prayed?) for a separate southern nation. Historians must note, however, that a *desire* for something that eventually happens does not necessarily constitute a *cause* of the happening. Although Yancey was obviously ready for secession, and wanted Alabama to likewise be ready, he did not expect the event to happen in 1860, nor can it be proven that he even desired such an event at that moment. Yancey's stand on the withdrawal resolution at the Alabama State Democratic Convention was not an effort at disunion, but an attempt to prepare the state should such an event become likely in the future.⁸⁴ Likewise, Yancey did not go to the Charleston Convention to "precipitate" a revolution, but rather to

second walkout would have occurred anyway. Still, it would have most likely been to Yancey's advantage to work out some type of compromise—thus being able to claim that he had molded the national party to his own image.⁸⁹ The seating of the Forsyth delegation ended any chance for a solution to the Democratic nomination and platform dilemmas. Had Forsyth not led a move after the Charleston breakup to select a pro-Douglas replacement delegation, the Baltimore seats would not have been in question. Without the second "bolt," Douglas still would not have had the numbers necessary for a two-thirds majority. The senator may have then withdrawn his name, which would have pressured Yancey to compromise on the platform. A united Democratic party, while certainly not assured of a victory, would have offered Lincoln a more formidable challenge.

In his masterful study of antebellum Alabama politics, J. Mills Thornton concluded that while Yancey and the fire-eaters usually receive the scorn for the breakup of the Democratic party and, ultimately, the Union, Senator Douglas and his managers must assume their share of the blame.⁹⁰ Likewise, Roy Franklin Nichols noted that when the southern Democrats encouraged Douglas to step aside, he was willing, but his followers were not. Such managers, he concluded, "forced Douglas to permit the destruction of the Democratic party."⁹¹ Certainly few managers were more instrumental in that "disturbance" than John Forsyth of Mobile.

¹²Potter, *The Impending Crisis*, 337, 402. See also Robert W. Johannsen, "Stephen A. Douglas, *Harper's Magazine*, and Popular Sovereignty," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 45 (March 1959): 606-31.

¹³William B. Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln: Murat Halstead Reports the Caucuses of 1860* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1960), 5; Robert W. Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," in *Politics and the Crisis of 1860*, ed. Norman A. Graebner (Urbana, IL, 1961), 64-67.

¹⁴During the election campaign of 1860, Ultra newspapers often printed lengthy samples of Forsyth's earlier writings. For examples, see *Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, October 30, 1860, and November 7, 1860.

¹⁵*Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, March 28, 1860.

¹⁶*Mobile Register*, February 8, 1860.

¹⁷Forsyth to Samford, October 5, 1859, *Letters of John Forsyth*, 10.

¹⁸*Mobile Register*, February 25, 1860.

¹⁹For a brief treatment of the states' rights/slavery issue, see Eric Foner, "Slavery and the Origins of the Civil War," *Social Education* 62, no. 6 (1998): 333-37.

²⁰John Forsyth to Stephen A. Douglas, March 31, 1859, Stephen Douglas Papers, University of Chicago Library (hereafter cited as Douglas Papers); Forsyth to Samford, September 13, 1859, *Letters of John Forsyth*, 3-4.

²¹Forsyth to Douglas, March 31, 1859, Douglas Papers.

²²*Mobile Register*, January 27, 1860.

²³*Ibid.*, December 9, 1859.

²⁴*Ibid.*, January 17, 1860. See also Kenneth Stampp, *American in 1857* (New York, 1990), 292-92. For a detailed treatment of Forsyth's Mexican mission, see Burnett, "The Pen Makes a Good Sword," 65-98.

²⁵*Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, May 23, 1860.

²⁶Ollinger Crenshaw, *The Slave States in the Election of 1860* (Baltimore, MD, 1945), 250; Lewy Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860* (Wetumpka, AL, 1935), 148.

²⁷*Mobile Register*, July 2, 1859; Forsyth to Douglas, July 30, 1859, Douglas Papers.

- ⁴⁷Forsyth to Douglas, January 31, 1860, Douglas Papers (italics added).
- ⁴⁸Ibid., February 4, 1860.
- ⁴⁹Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln*, 36.
- ⁵⁰Forsyth to Douglas, January 6 and February 4, 1860, Douglas Papers.
- ⁵¹Ibid., April 5, 1860.
- ⁵²Lindsey S. Perkins, "The Democratic Convention of 1860," in *Anti-Slavery and Disunion, 1858-1861*, ed. J. Jeffery Auer (New York, 1963), 172.
- ⁵³For an excellent summary of the opposing factions, see Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," 76-77; Perkins, "The Democratic Convention," 173-75.
- ⁵⁴Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln*, 12.
- ⁵⁵Perkins, "The Democratic Convention," 184; Thornton, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society*, 383; Phillip G. Auchampaugh, "The Buchanan-Douglas Feud," *Illinois Society Journal* 25 (April 1932): 37.
- ⁵⁶Perkins, "The Democratic Convention," 184; *Charleston Daily Courier*, April 25, 1860.
- ⁵⁷Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln*, 3.
- ⁵⁸Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," 80.
- ⁵⁹McKee, ed., *The National Conventions and Platforms*, 108; Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," 82; Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln*, 79-80.
- ⁶⁰Johannsen, "Douglas at Charleston," 85-86.
- ⁶¹See Halstead's accounts of days seven through ten of the convention in Hesseltine, ed., *Three Against Lincoln*, 108-9.
- ⁶²*Mobile Register*, May 15, 1860.
- ⁶³Forsyth to Douglas, May 9, 1860, Douglas Papers.
- ⁶⁴*Montgomery Weekly Advertiser*, May 23, 1860.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., May 30, 1860.

⁸³For complete Alabama county returns, see Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama*, 176-77.

⁸⁴Thornton, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society*, 390-91.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 382-83.

⁸⁶Forsyth to Douglas, April 5, 1860, Douglas Papers; Thornton, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society*, 392-93.

⁸⁷Nichols, *Disruption of American Democracy*, 313. It is interesting to note that "bolters" from several other states were seated by the committee.

⁸⁸*Wilmington Journal*, June 28, 1860.

⁸⁹For a detailed explanation of this argument, see Thornton, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society*, 396.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*

⁹¹Nichols, *Disruption of American Democracy*, 320.

Lonnie A. Burnett received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is chairman of the history department at Satsuma High School, Satsuma, Alabama.

Dixie Knights Redux: The Knights of Labor in Alabama, 1898-1902

Matthew Hild

During American labor's "Great Upheaval" of 1885 and 1886, the Order of the Knights of Labor swept across the nation like no labor organization had ever done, claiming over 700,000 members by July 1886. After that peak, the Order declined swiftly, claiming less than 100,000 members just six years later.¹ By then, according to historians, the Knights of Labor was for all intents and purposes finished. Bruce Laurie has asserted that "the Knights hardly mattered" by the early 1890s.² Melton McLaurin has contended that by the end of 1889, "the southern order, like the order nationally, had declined to the point that its critics regarded it with ridicule rather than fear." Thus, according to these accounts, the continued existence of the Knights of Labor through the 1890s and into the early twentieth century meant little. In northern Alabama, according to McLaurin, by the turn of the century the Knights merely "functioned as a social club which memories prevented [members] from disbanding."³

A close look at the activities of the Knights of Labor in Alabama between 1898 and 1902 suggests, however, that historians have been too quick to dismiss the Order as insignificant after 1890. During this four-year period, the Knights of Labor made a remarkable resurgence in Alabama in which the organization enlisted about as many members in the state as it had during its national heyday of the mid-to-late 1880s while achieving greater success as a collective bargaining agency. By 1902, the Alabama Knights succumbed to the same problems that always seemed to plague the Order—a loss of effectiveness in collective bargaining, rivalries with American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions, disputes among Knights over politics as well as the Order's internal affairs, and the race issue, a perpetual problem for the Knights in the South. Nevertheless, during these four years, a period of weakness and internal conflict for the Knights' national organization, the Alabama Knights of Labor managed some significant accomplishments. These accomplishments challenge the generalizations that historians have made about the Order's insignificance after 1890. Moreover, the revival of the Knights in Alabama suggests that the Order could still function effectively at the local or even the state level after the national organization had lost much of its former membership and strength.

Formed in Philadelphia as a secret organization in 1869, the Knights of Labor did not enter the South until 1878.⁴ The Knights

Birmingham, claimed to encompass twelve local assemblies with prospects of adding more.¹⁰

The impetus for the revival of D.A. 22 seems unclear. Michael T. Judge probably deserves much of the credit; a Knights organizer since 1880, Judge was what McLaurin called one of a "dedicated handful of 'true believers' [who] provided the order with leadership and a will to survive."¹¹ Judge devoted more than twenty years to the Knights' cause, and in 1902 the Order finally rewarded him with a place on its General Executive Board.¹²

In northern Alabama, the revival of unionism among coal miners sparked the reemergence of the Knights of Labor. The United Mine Workers (UMW), not the Knights, had led Alabama miners in the infamous strike of 1894.¹³ For several years after that strike, the UMW hung on in a weakened state while the Knights claimed no presence in the Alabama coal fields. In May 1898, however, Alabama coal miners reestablished District 20 of the United Mine Workers of America.¹⁴ The organization of Alabama coal miners into the Knights soon followed. Historian Daniel Letwin has observed that "the differences between the two organizations" are "difficult to discern from the record," but nevertheless a fierce rivalry soon developed between UMW District 20 and Knights of Labor District Assembly 6.¹⁵

In December 1899, a third Knights of Labor district assembly entered Alabama. District Assembly 15 actually originated and maintained its headquarters in Pensacola, Florida, but it included local assemblies in south Alabama as well as west Florida.¹⁶ District Assemblies 15 and 22 were both "very largely composed of [workers in] the lumber industry," and the former soon overshadowed the latter in south Alabama.¹⁷ The largest local in D.A. 15, in fact, was Local Assembly 2022, a biracial assembly in Brewton (Escambia County), Alabama. Longtime Knight Arthur McConnell of Pensacola organized this local in August 1899 while Brewton lumber mill workers were in the midst of a dispute with the Cedar Creek Mill Company. The local assembly won a complete victory. In September the mill rehired previously dismissed Knights, granted workers a 25 percent raise, and replaced the company store and check system with weekly payments in cash. As the Knights spread throughout the county, other mills followed suit, enabled and enticed to do so as the market rate for sawn timber in Pensacola reached fifteen-and-a-half cents per cubic foot, its highest price in at least a decade.¹⁸

Such success in collective bargaining distinguished the turn-of-the-century Alabama Knights from their counterparts of the 1880s.¹⁹ In part this success reflected the general economic upturn in Alabama, as the

The K. of L. can and does secure better conditions and more money [than the UMW]. For instance, at Brookwood, the K. of L. secured an advance of 25 percent, the U.M.W. of A. got nothing, but have been dragging along, until the company has, as a matter of charity, gave [*sic*] a portion of them the K. of L. scale of prices, and their union has made no effort to bring the balance of their people up to the higher K. of L. scale. Now this looks bad for somebody, when we are all working on the same company's works.²⁷

Ross also claimed that at Galloway (Walker County), UMW miners offered to dig coal for five cents per ton less than the Knights of Labor contract price. "Now Mr. U.M.W.," Ross chided, "don't you think that job looked kinder 'smutty' for a labor union?"²⁸ UMW workers may have felt the same way in January 1901 when E.M. Collins, a Knight employed by the Republic Iron and Steel Company at Sayreton, had seven members of the UMW arrested. Collins charged that the UMW men had been harassing and threatening him since learning that he was a Knight in an effort to force him to join their union instead. When Collins swore a complaint against the UMW men, the local constable arrested them for preventing Collins from engaging in peaceful work or lawful industry, a violation of state law.²⁹ Several miners' strikes in the Birmingham district apparently resulted from the battle between the Knights and the UMW for exclusive recognition in the mines.³⁰ The south Alabama Knights faced obstacles of other sorts. In March 1900, the Horse Shoe Lumber Company of River Falls locked out its newly organized Knights of Labor work force, demanding that workers disavow the union. When the workers refused, the company replaced them with convict laborers. Adding injury to insult, the company's president, E. L. Moore, shot and wounded a member of Knights of Labor Rising Star Lodge No. 2075 after what the local Knights' newspaper deemed "trivial provocation." Twenty members of the local assembly were then reportedly arrested and jailed without being shown a warrant or allowed bail. District Assembly 15 hired a Pensacola lawyer to represent the Knights, nine of whom went on trial in November 1900 for interfering with the company's business. The cases were ultimately nol-prossed (dropped), and in January 1901, the company finally agreed to recognize the Knights, employ only Knights in the running of its timber, and discontinue the use of convicts upon the expiration of its convict lease in March.³¹

The River Falls case notwithstanding, District Assembly 15 achieved great success in south Alabama in 1900. In January, for example, the Knights won monthly cash payments and a 10 percent raise for workers at the Findlay Lumber Company in Pollard after a

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L.A. 2022, reprinted charges from another Brewton newspaper that District Master Workman Arthur McConnell had accepted \$75 in bribes from south Alabama mill owners to settle labor troubles. The editor of the *Banner* claimed that he had heard these charges before the district assembly meeting, along with charges that district officers had donated some of the district assembly's funds to municipal candidates in Pensacola. The *Brewton Standard Gauge* claimed that the opposition of the Brewton delegates to the reelection of certain district officers (such as, the *Banner* admitted, McConnell) explained why those delegates were not seated.⁴⁴

Denouncing Arthur McConnell's alleged acceptance of bribes and theft of the district's treasury for "contemptible [political] ends," the *Laborer's Banner* called for the formation of a new district assembly in Alabama. The call went unheeded, however, and soon the *Banner* began touting the arrival of a new labor organization in Brewton, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association (WBA). Organized by state American Federation of Labor organizer J. H. Leath, the WBA soon affiliated with the AFL. The Master Workman of Brewton Local Assembly 2022 became the president of the WBA, and L.A. 2022 recording secretary and *Banner* editor Leslie McConnell (apparently no relation to Arthur) became the new organization's recording secretary.⁴⁵ Arthur McConnell, by now a national Knights of Labor officer (General Worthy Foreman), resigned as Master Workman of D.A. 15 in December 1901, weeks after lumber mill owners in Monroe County, Alabama, threatened his life. His resignation hardly solved the district's problems. Instead, it brought a perpetual problem for the southern Knights—racial tensions—to the forefront in D.A. 15.⁴⁶ When the district assembly held a meeting at Flomaton, Alabama, in January 1902 to choose McConnell's successor, delegates discovered that the Order's constitution required the District Worthy Foreman to fill the remainder of the Master Workman's unexpired term. The District Worthy Foreman, J. H. Harrison, was an African American. This created a furor within the district.⁴⁷ Many of the local assemblies attached to D.A. 15 stopped paying per capita taxes to the district assembly. The problem reached a resolution of sorts in September, apparently with the election of a white District Master Workman, but D.A. 15 had lost much of its membership by then.⁴⁸

After 1902, the Knights of Labor once again faded from Alabama. D.A. 6 briefly retained strength in Walker County, signing contracts with the Galloway Coal Company in April 1902 and March 1903.⁴⁹ Michael T. Judge, District Master Workman of D.A. 22, attended the Knights' General Assembly in Niagara Falls in November 1902 and was

yet local and district assemblies flourished in Alabama. The presence of dedicated, experienced organizers, favorable economic conditions in not only the nation but also in the state's leading industries, and workers who were drawn to the Order by its local rather than national effectiveness all allowed the Alabama Knights of Labor to overcome, for four years at least, the dismal fortunes of their organization at the national level. On the other hand, in the end the Alabama Knights could not overcome the problems that had always vexed the Order—internal dissension, racial tensions, disputes over politics, and the inability to retain its membership after suffering setbacks in collective bargaining. Nevertheless, as in the case of the Knights of Labor as a whole, the ultimate collapse of the Knights' revival in Alabama should not obscure its significance.

Notes

The author would like to thank Mel McKiven and this journal's anonymous reader for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.

¹For a general account of the Great Upheaval and the accompanying growth of the Knights of Labor, see Craig Phelan, *Grand Master Workman: Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor* (Westport, CT, 2000), chap. 5. For national Knights of Labor membership figures, see Richard Oestreicher, "A Note on Knights of Labor Membership Statistics," *Labor History* 25 (winter 1984): 106-8.

²Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 1989), 175.

³Melton A. McLaurin, *The Knights of Labor in the South* (Westport, CT, 1978), 174 (first quote), 180 (second quote).

⁴Norman J. Ware, *The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1895* (New York, 1929), 23; McLaurin, *The Knights of Labor in the South*, 43.

⁵John H. Abernathy, Jr., "The Knights of Labor in Alabama" (M.S. thesis, University of Alabama, 1960), 30-53, 58, 61-63, 145-47. Abernathy's study includes a nine-page section entitled "The Liquidation of the Order, 1894-1917," 85-93, but this focuses as much on national as Alabama developments, sees little of a turn-of-the-century revival of the Alabama Knights, and does not utilize the *Laborer's Banner*, official organ of the Alabama Knights during 1900-1901 and a chief source in this article.

⁶*Ibid.*, 65.

⁷*Ibid.*, 65-74, 85-86; Holman Head, "The Development of the Labor Movement in Alabama Prior to 1900" (M.B.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1955), 68-72, 74-78.

²¹Letwin, *Challenge of Interracial Unionism*, 128; Head, "Labor Movement in Alabama," 168-69; Henry M. McKiven, Jr., *Iron and Steel: Class, Race, and Community in Birmingham, Alabama, 1875-1920* (Chapel Hill, 1995), 98.

²²Oestreicher, "Knights of Labor Membership Statistics," 106.

²³On the low number of members paying dues to the national Order during this period, see *ibid.* For a more general picture of the national decline of the Knights during this period, see Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, 2d. ed., (New York, 1975), 2: 168.

²⁴On the growth of the United Mine Workers of America during the late 1890s and early 1900s, see Maier B. Fox, *United We Stand: The United Mine Workers of America, 1890-1990* (Washington, D.C., 1990), 60.

²⁵*Journal of the Knights of Labor*, May, December 1899 (quote from December issue). For reports on the Knights' resurgence in the Walker County coal mines from a more neutral source, see the *Birmingham News*, July 5, 19, 21, 24, 25, August 10, 1899.

²⁶Quoted in Head, "Labor Movement in Alabama," 170.

²⁷*Laborer's Banner*, October 13, 1900.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Birmingham Age-Herald*, n.d., reprinted in the *Laborer's Banner*, January 19, 1901.

³⁰Head, "Labor Movement in Alabama," 172.

³¹*Laborer's Banner*, March 17, 31 (quote), April 7, 14, May 19, 26, November 24, 1900, January 26, 1901.

³²Brennan, "Sawn Timbers and Straw Hats," 57; *Laborer's Banner*, March 3, October 6, 13, 1900. The population of the Brewton "precinct" in 1900 was 3,240, while the population of Brewton "town" was 1,382, according to the *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900: Population*, part I (Washington, D.C., 1901), 57. Local Assembly 2022 undoubtedly included people, such as its farmer members, who lived beyond the "town" limits.

³³Brennan, "Sawn Timber and Straw Hats," 57; *Laborer's Banner*, September 8, 1900, April 27, 1901; *Record of the Proceedings of the Special Session, 1900*, 11.

³⁴The *Laborer's Banner*, September 8, 1900, reported that D.A. 15 consisted of 130 local assemblies. District Master Workman Arthur McConnell claimed in February 1901 that D.A. 15 included seventy local assemblies in south Alabama; see the *Laborer's Banner*, February 9, 1901.

⁴⁶*Record of the Proceedings of the Regular Session of the General Assembly [of the Knights of Labor], at Birmingham, Ala., November 13-17, 1900*, pp. 65-66; *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, Twenty-Fifth Regular Session, Held at Indianapolis, Indiana, November 12-16, 1901*, 3; *Laborer's Banner*, December 21, 1901; *Pensacola Journal*, October 30, 1901, reprinted in *Laborer's Banner*, November 2, 1901. Surveys of race relations within the Knights include Sidney H. Kessler, "The Organization of Negroes into the Knights of Labor," *Journal of Negro History* 37 (July 1952): 248-76; Melton A. McLaurin, "The Racial Policies of the Knights of Labor and the Organization of Southern Black Workers," *Labor History* 17 (fall 1976): 568-85; Kenneth Kann, "The Knights of Labor and the Southern Black Worker," *Labor History* 18 (winter 1977): 49-70.

⁴⁷*Laborer's Banner*, February 1, 1902; Brennan, "Sawn Timber and Straw Hats," 59.

⁴⁸*Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1902*, 27-28.

⁴⁹*Journal of the Knights of Labor*, May 1902, March 1903.

⁵⁰*Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1902*, 59.

⁵¹*Laborer's Banner*, June 23, 1900; *Proceedings of the Special Session of the General Assembly, 1900*, 3, 45; *Proceedings of the Regular Session of the General Assembly, 1900*, 2; *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, Twenty-Eighth Regular Session, Held at Washington, D.C., November 10-13, 1908*, 2.

⁵²The *Laborer's Banner*, May 17, 1902, contains an announcement to this effect. The newspaper was absorbed by the *Brewton Standard Gauge*.

⁵³Brennan, "Sawn Timber and Straw Hats," 61.

⁵⁴On the activities of the AFL in Alabama during the 1890s, see Head, "Labor Movement in Alabama," 135-44, 174-87.

⁵⁵Alabama farmers could no longer turn to the Farmers' Alliance; the State Alliance folded in 1896, and the few remaining local chapters were "moribund" by the following year. William Warren Rogers, *The One-Gallused Rebellion: Agrarianism in Alabama, 1865-1896* (Baton Rouge, 1970), 318-19.

⁵⁶See the *Laborer's Banner*, February 15, 1902, regarding the Farmers' Union.

⁵⁷McLaurin, *The Knights of Labor in the South*, 180.

Matthew Hild is a graduate student in the School of History, Technology, and Society at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Race Relations on New Orleans Streetcars: Reinforcing and Challenging White Control of Public Space, 1930-40

Michael Mizell-Nelson

Mr. Mizell-Nelson was the 2000 winner of the William Coker award for the best graduate paper given at the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference in Pensacola Beach, Florida. Editor

During the Jim Crow era, streetcar and bus rides in southern cities provided relatively intimate, everyday experiences between blacks and whites. Among the many symbols of black subordination, urban transit segregation stands out as the most participatory form of racial segregation. Unlike segregated railroad coaches, the absence of separate vehicles or any fixed barrier on streetcars forced black and white passengers to police themselves, and thus, interact with one another.

In New Orleans and most southern cities, a small moveable (or sometimes fixed) wooden sign served to maintain a “colored compartment” and a “white compartment” on each vehicle.¹ Blacks and whites would often squeeze tightly against one another in the aisles during rush hours—allowable for efficiency’s sake—but when seats came available, everyone knew to retreat to the appropriate side of the sign. As streetcars continually discharged and took on passengers, the shifting racial composition forced riders to engage in the ritual of “moving the screens” or “boards” in order to maintain segregated seating. Black and white New Orleanians daily navigated the fluid, permeable boundary between the races. A 1902 state law required that transit workers in Louisiana cities maintain segregated conditions; however, white passengers—even more than transit operators—actively reinforced the race screen ordinance by either directly confronting black and white passengers who deviated from the Jim Crow norm, or behaving in ways meant to humiliate them.

Well before and long after Gunnar Myrdal’s benchmark *An American Dilemma*, observers and scholars of the Jim Crow era have noted the many instances when white transit workers in southern cities and towns used their quasi-police powers to harass and intimidate and often assault or initiate the arrests of black passengers.² Dramatic examples of transit operators invoking their powers in order to maintain Jim Crow, especially during periods of crisis, have won scholarly attention for years.³ Focusing upon such extraordinary instances obscures the more mundane and often more complex realities associated with urban transit segregation.

or city officials to keep pace with changes made in most Jim Crow transit systems, along with working class black resistance and aggressively racist white operators, may have been partly responsible for the violence Kelley found in Birmingham.

Where Kelley finds evidence of resistance in Birmingham in the 1930s, one finds fascinating contradictions in New Orleans. Never formally recorded, the following incident witnessed by a streetcar employee in the early 1930s demonstrates how quickly even silent, individual protests could lead to physical violence:

You had some mean lines in those days. South Claiborne was a bad one. After it passed Napoleon Avenue coming in [to town] it was all colored. And the Clio started on Washington and Broad. Started off being white, then all of a sudden it was all black. And that was a mean line: little bitty streetcars. We had one of our men on there one night making a special check, and this colored man came up and sat ahead of the screen. [The Checker] was an old redneck boy from Mississippi, too, so he just took the seat—you know, the seats were reversible—and he rammed it back and knocked the Nigger man flat on the floor and kicked him—gave him a kick to the side. So, he came up with a razor in his hand, and he cut the top of this boy's hat off.⁸

The Clio and the South Claiborne streetcar lines both exemplified what transit workers termed “mean lines” because they served highly segregated neighborhoods at both ends of the line. Racial commotions took place more frequently on the South Claiborne line, for example, after streetcars crossed Napoleon Avenue, which roughly demarcated black from white neighborhoods. When traveling down river from the white section, few seats remained for black passengers; the reverse was true when the car headed upriver. Penned into the bench or longitudinal seats and standing space in the aisles, the racial group shortchanged of seats often engaged in verbal and sometimes even physical confrontations with one or more riders from the other group.⁹ Most racial commotions on these “mean lines” remained at the level of exchanged dirty looks and brief verbal and physical encounters initiated by members of the racial group left without seats. The story also illustrates a trend that fully developed during World War II: the arrival of rural-born Louisiana and Mississippi transit workers introduced a rawer dynamic to race relations on the cars. White passengers and employees native to New Orleans tended to engage in subtler forms of discrimination and enforcement.

Street railway employees working in the 1930s describe general compliance with the race screen on the part of both whites and blacks.¹⁰ So do African Americans who blame conflict on perceived injustices

in the division of the rider space or the bumping together of blacks and whites, and compliance meant that the conductors intervened relatively infrequently. Policing oneself took a severe toll on black passengers' psyches:

It was nerve wracking. You got to look around and see where you're going to sit. Everything you did, you had to watch. [Looking around] 'Is this the right place? Am I right here?' Who needs that [pointing to his head]? I ain't going to be here that long—just go on, do what ya gotta do and [kisses two fingers with a smack] good-bye.¹¹

Direct defiance of segregation was infrequent, and young black men were the ones that most operators remember challenging the law openly: "Some bull—or, smartass, we used to call them niggers at that time—would go up there and sit down there anyway. If there was a cop in sight, they'd stop the car and the cop would take him off the car. That was very simple."¹² Conductors and motormen referred to such rebels as "bull niggers," while some blacks termed them "crazy Negroes," but the result was the same: swift arrest.¹³

Unlike Birmingham, New Orleans' sizable black Creole population brought unique types of resistance. Light-complected blacks could define themselves as white in the public space of the streetcar in order to secure jobs reserved for whites in downtown New Orleans. Sitting ahead of the screen required the complicity of their darker-complected neighbors seated behind them.

Danny Barker: Most of them "passed" to get a job. What you call *passer blanc*: pass for white. "Oh, she's a *passer blanc*. She pass for white because she had a white job." In the five and ten stores, you know, ten percent of the workers sometimes would be black whites, *black whites*.

Blue Lu Barker: ...So you make like you don't know them.

DB: Nobody ever squealed on you because it was a chance to get a better job or make more money.¹⁴

Most conductors recall attempting to force light-complected blacks to move into the white compartment on more than one occasion. Such passengers generally responded: "I know where I'm supposed to sit."¹⁵ The conductors who had attempted to move light-complected blacks vividly remember feeling embarrassed about their action. The experience of trying to move someone who had sat in the proper section generally caused the conductors to become more reluctant in the future. Only when they felt certain that someone was in the wrong section would they attempt to move the passenger.

Brenda Quant: Auntie, you were telling me about how sometimes the white people would put the screen way in the back. What was that like?

Philomene Guillory Allan: Well, that was because, I guess, they were mean.

Viola Guillory Dunbar: Keep the black people from having a place to sit.

PGA: That's right.

BQ: So they would pick the screen up and put it way in the back?

VGD: Yeah.

BQ: And what would that leave?

PGA: No seats.

VGD: We had that long bench back there. That's the only seats that were available to you. Because there wasn't no place to put—

BQ: So what did the people do when that happened?

PGA: They had to stand up. It didn't matter if you stood up all the way up to the [motorman]. They didn't care.

BQ: You could stand all the way in front.

PGA: [chuckles] That's right.

BQ: As long as you didn't sit.

PGA: You couldn't sit, that screen—

BQ: Did you ever see a conductor get up—when that happened, did you ever see a conductor get up and move the screen?

PGA: No, no, never did.

VGD: I saw that *one* time. I don't remember what line it was on, but there was a vacant seat, almost one [white] person in a seat from the front to the back, and that conductor went up there and he got that screen, and he told them that they would have to move [up], because too many people standing in the back with all those vacant seats.¹⁷

Informal yet collective acts of disregard for black passengers reinforced white supremacy in public space. By simply remaining seated and either feigning ignorance of the black riders' presence or quietly expressing disdain, white riders could infuriate numbers of blacks forced to stand in the aisles—sometimes almost up to the front of the car. The conductors often neglected to adjust the screen, since they would rather not anger white riders. The original intent of the 1902 Jim Crow ordinance to provide wholly separate compartments had dissipated by the 1930s. Blacks were allowed to stand in space reserved for whites, but the former could not sit.

When Marian Anderson performed in New Orleans in 1940, a joke circulated among local whites that she was paid hundreds of dollars, "plus carfare."¹⁸ Something as troubling to whites as the performance of a celebrated black vocalist could be leveled by alluding to the main occupation available to most black women in the city and the tradition of white employers paying their transit fares.

By the 1930s, segregation on the streetcars had fully matured. The tradition of "passing" enriched the personal fortunes of black Creoles, but not even the public protests of "Cotton" and other Creole women

American History 75 (Dec. 1988): 786-811; see also, Richard Dalfiume, "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution," *Journal of American History* 55 (June 1968): 90-106; Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue* (New York, 1978); and Peter J. Kellogg, "Civil Rights Consciousness in the 1940s," *The Historian* 42 (Nov. 1979): 18-41.

⁵Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Working Class* (New York, 1994), 17-76. The chapters covered were adapted from Kelley's "'We Are Not What We Seem:' Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* 80 (June 1993): 75-112.

⁶An investigation of primary sources throughout much of the twentieth-century history of New Orleans' segregated streetcars reveals that not only was conflict omnipresent, but that outright, individual protests were quite frequent. Although the transit records of New Orleans Railway and Light and New Orleans Public Service, Inc. were never made available to the public, there are many other sources. Newspaper articles, editorials, and letters to the editor published in the *Louisiana Weekly* and the *Picayune* document dozens of such incidents throughout the Jim Crow era. The Street Railway Union Collection at Tulane University Special Collections contains newspaper clippings and other miscellaneous documents related to segregated transit. The papers of Daniel Byrd and A. P. Tureaud at the Amistad Research Center, and the New Orleans Branch of the NAACP at the University of New Orleans Special Collections, provide information regarding both racial incidents and law suits springing from segregated seating. Rare company pamphlets and employee newsletters published during World War II afford important glimpses into the company's responses to the rising number of incidents associated with the screens. Photocopies of these are in the possession of the author. Videotaped and audiotaped interviews conducted by the author with more than three dozen streetcar employees and black and white passengers (who experienced the segregated era from the 1920s through the 1950s) provide invaluable insight into specific instances of racial conflict and the overall pattern.

⁷Charles Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation* (New York, 1943), 49. See also Lynne Feldman, *A Sense of Place: Birmingham's Black Middle-Class Community, 1890-1930* (Tuscaloosa, 1999).

⁸John Bagot, retired streetcar scheduler and former line checker, New Orleans Public Service, Inc., Transit Division, to author, February 1993.

⁹Following the demise of the Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees of America, Local 194, in the wake of the 1929 streetcar strike, New Orleans Public Service, Inc. quickly recruited men from rural Louisiana and Mississippi to replace hundreds of the workers of French, German, and Irish ancestry whose families had dominated the industry for decades. In addition to severing long extant relations between riders and workers, the advent of self-described "rednecks" signaled a coarser brand of discriminatory treatment of African-American riders.

¹⁰Clarence Reyer, former conductor and retired supervisor, and Arabella Barn to author, September 1992; Pierre Jeansonne, former conductor and retired instructor, to author, September 1993; Lionel Comeaux, former conductor and retired bus driver to author, August 1995; Arthur Kern, retired Superintendent of Schedules,

Book Reviews

H. Parrott Bacot, Barbara SoRelle Bacot, Sally Kittredge Reeves, John Magill, and John H. Lawrence. *Marie Adrien Persac: Louisiana Artist*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000, 135 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 0-8071-2642-X.

“Every Persac painting is a document of fencing.”

This phrase of Barbara SoRelle Bacot’s jumped off the page when I read it in the second chapter of *Marie Adrien Persac: Louisiana Artist*. But I would be remiss if I began my brief review anywhere else than with praise for this elegantly produced and beautifully and thoughtfully written volume. *Marie Adrien Persac: Louisiana Artist* was the catalogue of an exhibition organized to celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Louisiana State University’s campus in Baton Rouge. The exhibit appeared first in the Louisiana State University Museum of Art in the fall of 2000 and then in the spring of 2001 at the Historic New Orleans Collection. The exhibition was monographic in scope, covering the major phases of Persac’s life through the genres of drawing and painting: views of plantation houses along the bayous of Louisiana; the notarial drawings for property sales in the city of New Orleans after the Civil War; and the late views of Canal Street also in New Orleans, perhaps designed in part “for a commercial publication that was never realized.”

After an introductory chapter by H. Parrott Bacot on the “Persac Family History,” the book is composed of a series of synthetic essays that places Persac within a larger frame of reference. For instance, Barbara SoRelle Bacot reads the plantation pictures not only in terms of the minutiae of architecture and daily life in the nineteenth century, but also as a chapter in a history of landscape that embraces such figures as Alexander von Humboldt and Frederick Church. Sally Kittredge Reeves’s essay is a model of historical reconstruction and art historical acumen, in which Persac’s notarial drawings emerge as masterpieces. Both John Lawrence and John Magill adduce photography in a fertile way in order to frame and discuss Persac’s Canal Street drawings. Born in France in 1823 and naturalized in Louisiana in the 1840s, Persac had a career that spanned some of the most tumultuous events of the nineteenth century. He would never have considered himself a practitioner of the “Fine Arts,” but his work—often serene, always technically accomplished and supremely pragmatic in its goals—constitutes one of the extraordinary visual records of nineteenth-century America.

Philip D. Beidler. *First Books: The Printed Word and Cultural Formation in Early Alabama*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1999, 171 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8173-0985-3.

The fact that the United States had declared its independence in 1776 and that it had drafted and ratified a constitution which established the republic did not deter Sydney Smith from inquiring in 1820: 'In the four corners of the globe does anyone read an American book?' Its independence notwithstanding, the United States battled in the early years of the nineteenth century to establish its credibility. If it did nothing else, Smith's barb rallied the literati of the United States to assert more fully its cultural independence by refining and marketing its burgeoning national literature.

In *First Books* Philip Beidler proposes to 'show how the literary and political culture of an early nineteenth-century Deep South state created itself out of its first books. Living up to this promise, the author analyzes a variety of antebellum texts published by Alabama writers between 1815 to 1860 which established the state's identity. Because of the unique character of the United States, Alabama's search for its essence speaks also to the blossoming nation's search for self.

Beidler arranges *First Books* chronologically, a pattern which complements well the underlying purpose of the work. Following an introduction which surveys the development of Alabama from territory to state, the author discusses first *The Last Campaign of Sir John Falstaff the II: or, The Hero of the Burnt-Corn Battle* by Lewis Sewell. Published anonymously in 1815, this satirical poem pre-dates Alabama's statehood by four years. Sewell's work is important in the development of the state's cultural development because it recounts an 1813 skirmish with the Creek Indians.

Some readers might be disconcerted that Beidler would include the first volume published after Alabama gained statehood because of its non-literary substance. Henry Hitchcock's *Alabama Justice of the Peace*, which appeared in 1822, though, fits well into the scheme of Beidler's study. On the surface Hitchcock, who served as Alabama's first Attorney General, produces a guideline for justices of the peace to follow in the administration of their duties. The legal system in the Alabama frontier, especially on the local level, was not as sophisticated as the ones in the original thirteen colonies. The need arose quickly, therefore, for devising a reasonably consistent legal code. Hitchcock filled this need with *Alabama Justice of the Peace*.

Both *The Last Campaign of Sir John Falstaff the II* and *Alabama Justice of the Peace* serve as models for the development of antebellum

beyond being mere regional oddities. With its substantial notes, copious bibliography, and useful index, *First Books* complements the work of literary historians seeking to expand their knowledge of print culture both in nineteenth-century Alabama and the United States.

E. Kate Stewart

University of Arkansas at Monticello

Michael T. Bertrand. *Race, Rock, and Elvis*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000, 311 pp. \$32.95. ISBN 99-050895.

Race, Rock and Elvis by Michael T. Bertrand pulls back the curtain on a basic reality about which everyone knows but no one wishes to speak, namely that we live in a caste system that is virulent and enduring. The fact that this system is no longer (or not completely) defined by race does not make it any less real. In the United States, class divisions are often defined and expressed by musical tastes (as the recent Eminem Grammy controversy vividly illustrates), and it is Bertrand's thesis that rock music disrupted the racial hegemony of the 1950s and thus expedited and strengthened the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The embarrassing class revelation documented in this excellent social history is that while the academic/intellectual elite was doing all within its power to perpetuate racial segregation, working class people were helping to create an environment where racial equality and harmony would be possible.

Filled with shocking and overlooked quotes, this well-researched and scholastically written history reveals a political, journalistic, and intellectual elite combining their forces against the perceived threat to their assumed power by poor and uneducated working-class Americans. This quote Bertrand lifts from the academic *Virginia Quarterly Review* is typical of elite sensibility: "The mass of Southern Negroes and the majority of the whites are incapable of directing their own affairs... [and] are biologically inferior." Everywhere in his text the ruling class is presented as paternalistic and condescending to the working class, condemning the new music (and the people who loved it) as ignorant, bestial, and a threat to social order. According to Bertrand, when the attempt to eradicate the independent working class voice failed, the tactics changed to buying out and sanitizing the product.

In contrast, he shows how rock and rhythm & blues musicians admired, imitated, and played music with one another across the color line. While telling this story, Bertrand destroys a couple of still-prevalent myths in the academic world. First, it is commonly held that rock music was (and still is) a product created by cynical marketing

and, for that reason, if for no other, they are both worthy of examination.

Independent scholar Richard Bricker's *Wooden Ships from Texas: A World War I Saga* tells the story of the last great wooden ship construction program along the Gulf Coast. Starting in 1916 as a result of the shipping shortages created by World War I, Texans constructed seventeen four- and five-masted sailing ships as well as several wooden steamships for the American war effort.

Although the Texas coast appears an unlikely location for a major ship construction program, there had been a long established tradition of boat and ship building along the gulf. East Texas had a plentiful supply of longleaf pine, oak, and cypress. The region also had experienced carpenters and shipwrights who had used their talents to create homes along the remote Texas frontier. By the last half of the nineteenth century, East Texas had also become a major lumber exporting region, and shipyards quickly emerged in Galveston, Indianola, Matagorda, Sabine Pass, and Orange, where they built a wide-range of schooners, tugs, and steamboats to transport Texas lumber to the outside world. The Texas coast also had a vibrant fishing industry that needed shallow draft vessels that could traverse the winds and currents in the gulf.

Italian-born naturalized American Henry Piaggio, owner of a lumber export business in Mississippi and president of the International Shipbuilding Company in Orange, Texas, started the World War I shipbuilding boom in Texas. Piaggio laid down wooden ships' hulls in the summer of 1916, as an inexpensive and quickly-built alternative to steel vessels. Being based out of Orange also provided Piaggio with other advantages. The city had an abundance of skilled labor and a mild climate that permitted year-round work. Moreover, Orange was twenty-five miles inland from the gulf, which meant that the city was protected from storms. It also had a twenty-six-foot-deep channel that was necessary for large, deep-draft vessels. In fact, it was Piaggio's foresight that allowed Texas to emerge as a major shipbuilding contributor two years before the traditional East Coast schooner shipyards acknowledged the extreme shipping shortages brought about by World War I.

From 1916 to 1919 Piaggio's yard built fourteen ships, twelve of which were barkentines (ships with square-rigs on the foremast and schooner-rigs on the remaining masts). The first, the *City of Orange*, was a five-masted motor schooner whose gross tonnage was 1,632.52. Launched in November 1916, as the pride of the city, she made her maiden voyage to Genoa, Italy, carrying a cargo of Texas pine lumber.

According to Brouwer, the maritime historian at the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City, the minimum size for inclusion in this register is forty feet overall length of hull. Anything with smaller dimensions is considered a small craft. Brouwer makes an exception to his rule. The Isle of Man schooner *Peggy* is included because of age and because in 1791, when she was built, the size of ships differed so much. One restriction is that ships included in the registry should also be complete hulls. Once again Brouwer makes an exception for the British warship *Mary Rose*, constructed during the reign of Henry VIII in 1510. This ship has no completed hull but does have one completed side, from keel to rail.

Another valuable addition to the book is an appendix that lists vessels by type, a list of remnants of historic vessels, and an indication of changes in ships' status since the publication of the second edition. Abundantly illustrated, this volume also provides updates on restoration projects, lists the remains of historic ships preserved in museums and in private hands, and even offers a list of addresses for many of the owners of vessels.

This volume is an invaluable reference tool for anyone interested in or planning to visit historic ships. It offers a brief, succinct base of information from across the world, including material about historic vessels in the former Soviet Union and in Soviet-bloc countries. In many respects, this alone confirms the value of this book.

Both of these books have great intrinsic value. They open our eyes to the growing importance of the sea and alert us to an area of scholarship that will become increasingly important in the future. Since the Gulf South is brushed by the Gulf of Mexico, we would be wise to acknowledge the relevance of the seas, as these two books aptly do.

Gene A. Smith

Texas Christian University

Canter Brown, Jr. *Florida's Black Public Officials, 1867-1924*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1998, 312 pp. \$44.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8173-0915-2; \$22.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8173-0916-0.

In *Florida's Black Public Officials, 1867-1924*, Canter Brown Jr. continues his study of Florida history, focusing specifically on black officeholding during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Concentrating primarily on the "most significant elective and appointive offices," Brown identifies roughly six hundred different black office-holders. Brown's book adds greatly to the scholarship that

to exercise influence and hold offices at the city and county level well into the twentieth century.

Perhaps the principal strength of Brown's essay lies in its careful documentation of the struggle of newly franchised black voters and politicians to pursue their interests in the swirl of Florida's post-Civil War politics. This pursuit required negotiating the complex and varied currents created by a multitude of adversarial groups including statehouse officials, federal officials, northern Republicans, carpetbaggers, southern loyalists, and former Confederates. Additional complicating factors were divisions in the black community, in particular among the leadership of the African Methodist Episcopal church who, for the most part were more radical than their homegrown Baptist brethren. Continually looming over and against black participation was the ever-present threat and actuality of violence. In this context, Brown's portrait of black political participation and office-holding in Reconstruction Florida depicts the dogged determination of blacks to exercise their rights. Ultimately, the return of the Democratic Party to power brought widescale black office-holding in Florida to an end, although in individual cases this end was postponed by some years.

Although the overall usefulness of Brown's study is undeniable, the essay portion of the book does require close reading and frequent backtracking to keep the multitude of names, identities, and factions in order. Brown's work might also have been improved by the inclusion of one or more maps of Florida during the period in question. Often specific areas and regions of political support were noted, but without adequate visual aids the reader must rely on personal resources to complete the picture. Small quibbles aside, Canter Brown Jr.'s study is a welcome and valuable addition to the literature and research documenting the complex struggle of black men and women to exercise their political rights in the days following the Civil War.

G. Pearson Cross

University of Louisiana at Monroe

Edwin L. Brown and Colin J. Davis, eds. *It is Union and Liberty: Alabama Coal Miners and the UMW*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1999, 208 pp. \$39.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8173-0999-3; \$19.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8173-1000-2.

The miners of the Birmingham District coalfields were important to the New South for their role in transforming the region's economy and for their intermittent effort to bridge racial differences, primarily

face to those outside the mines, but Kelly shows that company towns were governed more by the coercion of armed guards, or “shack rousters,” than by the enthusiastic cooperation of miners living there. Peter Alexander narrates the resurgence of the UMW in the 1930s and pays attention to the interaction between southern and northern mines and the role of the federal government. Strengthened by New Deal protection for unions, Alabama miners walked out *en masse* in the spring of 1934. That grassroots job action along with better-known strikes in other industries in the North and West radicalized the labor movement and pushed the Roosevelt administration to enact more powerful labor legislation. Alexander thoughtfully analyzes why the 1934 strike succeeded when earlier ones failed.

The post-depression Era history of District 20 was, according to Glen Feldman, “decidedly brighter” although problems with mine safety, union recognition, and racial division persisted. The wartime demand for coal brought wages up, but mechanization in the 1950s and 60s eliminated jobs especially ones held by African Americans. In his analysis of union protection for whites at the top of the skill ladder, Feldman contends that “while UMW biracial cooperation may not have been ideal, it was a far sight more advanced than the racial policies of Alabama’s leading coal operators.” Feldman also discusses the advent of strip-mining and briefly notes that the UMW sided with coal operators in defending the practice against criticisms by the press and environmentalists. The book concludes with Robert H. Woodrum’s account of the strike of 1977-78, a walkout generated by operator efforts to roll back union health care and pension benefits and a harbinger of employer initiatives in the 1980s. Some elements of conflict in Alabama mining had not changed: the governor called out state troops, mine operators used coercive tactics, union members—sometimes wildcatting against the directives of national leaders—also went outside the law, and as in many earlier confrontations District 20 miners failed to claim victory after a long and bruising conflict. For those unfamiliar with UMW politics, more context on District 20’s opposition to national union president Arnold Miller is in order as is a fuller explanation of their relationship with George Wallace. Woodrum, like his co-authors, seeks to show how miners were the agents of their own history rather than “victims,” and he argues that earlier strikes “inspired the militancy” of 1977-78 and implicitly of miner activism for generations to come.

other works have documented the varied accounts and the horrors of lynching, for example Arthur F. Raper's *The Tragedy of Lynching* (1933) and Walter White's *The Rope and Faggot* (1929), perhaps none, save Brundage's own *Lynching in the New South* (1933), have so clearly and richly revealed the sociological dynamics of lynching in a historical continuum.

Careful reading of the eleven essays in this work results in a gut-wrenching reaction to the American race-control phenomenon of lynching. Although some of the studies trace lynching and the presumed roots of lynching to antebellum days, most of them concentrate on the two thousand reported lynchings that occurred from 1880 to 1930. The sociological case study approach of this volume offers a felicitous example of how white social control mechanisms in America have translated into a horrible symbolism for black Americans. Lynchings have varied in motivation and style in different geographical regions, but always this form of summarily executing blacks demonstrated which group in America controlled power and which group remained powerless. Lynching established, in short, America's particular form of race oppression. Often historians attributed lynchings to conservative southern aims, but this collection of essays shows that lynching and the culture that produced them grew from more complex sociological and multi-regional beliefs on the "proper place" of the races.

The essays are well written, fountainheads of data and theories for historians, but they are not without drawbacks. Scholars may find the book deficient in a number of theoretical and methodological areas. For example, the work could benefit from more discussion on black political opposition to lynching and more analysis on the different professed and underlying reasons given by whites for lynchings from county to county, from state to state, and even from sub-region to sub-region. The terrible episode in Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1898 might be better used to construct models and theories of lynchings. How did southern-style lynching comport with such incidents in the North and West, and even in other nations, would prove a fruitful topic. The role of black religious leaders in all manners of protest against and coping with lynchings might be explained further. Robert L. Zangrando sheds light on many of these topics in his *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (1980), which, curiously, is missing from almost all of the footnoted material in this collection of essays.

Although some readers may find minor flaws in *Under Sentence of Death*, the work itself is an ambitious and admirable attempt to frame one of the most disturbing, if not the most disturbing, aspects of

And yet not a word of this is breathed in Bartram's *Travels*. How could this keen observer of the world remain so aloof and dispassionate?

To make his case, Cashin presents an alternating narrative to good effect. He describes one particular excursion of Bartram into the wilderness. Then, based on a connection to the place or a person Bartram encounters, Cashin describes proximate historical events. For example, he describes, with a measure of incredulity and astonishment, Bartram's 1774 renderings of St. Simons Island off the coast of Georgia. The place was the site of an extraordinary battle known as Bloody Marsh (venerated by Georgians much like San Jacinto is by Texans). Bartram sees the battlefield and is hosted by none other than the son of the hero of the battle, and yet describes the visit in the prose of the botanist, with no mention of the local solemn history. Further, he mentions the hero's son and host, not by name, but as simply "my sylvan friend." One would never draw from Bartram's writing the sacredness of that hallowed ground. Juxtaposing the idyllic world of this romantic naturalist to the bleak world of frontier revolutionary violence (replete with Indian massacres, rampaging mobs, state sanctioned murder) is an effective device and makes Bartram's *Travels* all the more remarkable.

Cashin closes the gap by explaining Bartram's world, and makes an interesting contribution to American intellectual history. In 1739, William Bartram was born of John Bartram, a Philadelphia Quaker and himself a naturalist/botanist. The last half of the eighteenth century was the zenith of the Enlightenment in America, and the Bartrams embodied this new way of thinking about God, nature, and humanity. Fascinated by the power of reason, the Bartrams believed that nature—the unexplored frontier—would reveal the mysteries of God. "[I]t is through [the works of God] that...I see God in all his glory" wrote John Bartram, sentiments his son would echo scores of times in his *Travels*. William Bartram, like his father, pursued that same faith—nature, the embodiment of reason, balance, and perfection, was part of a divine plan and held secrets useful for the advancement of man. Indeed, *Travels* was a paean to this creed.

All around Bartram swirled the unpleasant imperfections of human events. Cashin ably presents the frontier tumult of contestants locked in frequently violent conflict—Celt pioneers versus English colonials, whites versus Indians, Cherokees versus Creeks, Spanish versus English, and the mischief and crimes of land grabbers, squatters, frontier murderers, and renegades, red and white. Cashin explains that none of this reckons in Bartram's *Travels* because Bartram "intended

The Southern Albatross focuses on the importance of identity, myth, and the imagination in southern culture. Its essays probe the nature of race and ethnicity to illuminate the on-going struggle over collective identity and southern social boundaries. The topics include the contest between whites and Native Americans in the antebellum period, race in the Reconstruction era, race and gender in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the significance of these subjects in the late twentieth century. Specifically, the authors address the Seminole Wars, the Texas Indian conflicts, the black family, the myth of black solidarity, domestic violence, lynching, the Atlanta child murders, and the mysterious literary figure Asa/Forrest Carter. Several of the articles cover portions of the Gulf South, but all of them touch on issues and topics relevant to the entire South. The general argument of these essays is that myths, stereotypes, and identities are created, fought over, and transformed over time as individuals and communities struggle with the meaning of events and the definition of who they are in relation to others.

The first section of the book is about Native Americans. Samuel Watson examines the complex perspectives of army officers during the Second Seminole War. The soldiers entered the conflict viewing Indians as savages and whites as superior to them. However, rising professional standards and the hardships of irregular warfare in Florida often changed their minds. Divisions between civilians and the military, differences between classes, and the greed and bloodlust of citizens who wanted the Seminoles destroyed so they could take their land convinced many soldiers that the Indians were more noble than the whites. The result was respect for the Native Americans and disdain for many settlers. The Indian wars taught soldiers valuable lessons and promoted nationalism among many southern officers. In another article Clayton E. Jewett argues that the bitter conflicts between Texans and Indians had ironic implications during the Civil War. Although the Texans stereotyped the Indians as bloody savages, Anglos often committed acts that were just as brutal as did the Indians. The hatred between Indians and whites brought warfare on the Texas frontier throughout the antebellum period and into the early years of the Civil War. When the Confederacy negotiated an alliance with the Five Civilized Tribes, Texans still fought them, and the treaty weakened the state's connection to the Confederacy. Ironically, as Indians and Texans fought one another, the Civil War rapidly changed their world.

The second section of *The Southern Albatross* deals with race in the Reconstruction era. David H. McGee's article on black families in Wake County, North Carolina, explores the nature of African-American

scare tactics designed to curb the growing political power of blacks in the city. In the last article in the book, Jeff Roche analyzes the character of Asa/Forrest Carter, a white Ku Klux Klan organizer and speechwriter for George Wallace, who created a completely new identity for himself. The “new” man claimed to be a Native American who had worked as a cowboy. He wrote books that became bestsellers, including a supposedly autobiographical story of his childhood and the famous *Gone to Texas* that served as the basis for Clint Eastwood’s popular movie *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. Roche argues that Carter’s transformation was a deft move that left behind his dark, southern past and embraced another American myth, that of the West, complete with the life of an Indian cowboy. The identity switch allowed Carter to promote a conservative agenda, but from within the more secure Western image of rugged individualism rather than his own racist, southern persona. Carter reinvented himself and became a westerner when his southern identity was no longer politically and economically useful to him. He was an example of how powerful and complex myth and identity are in American culture.

Ersuline Clarke’s *Wrestlin’ Jacob* is a classic work that helped start several decades of scholarship on southern religion. This reprint of the 1979 book is as fresh and relevant today as it was when it was first published. Its influence is made all the more apparent by Clarke’s excellent introduction to the new edition, which guides the reader through the historiography of the field in the time since the book’s appearance. Clarke analyzes the efforts of whites to evangelize blacks in the antebellum South. His work examines both the urban and rural areas of the low country in Georgia and South Carolina, focusing on the role and careers of white ministers. He argues that the good intentions and often distorted perspectives of the preachers combined with the oppressive conditions and perseverance of the slaves to create a distinctive form of African-American Christianity in the South. This interpretation fits well with other studies on slave religion, including Sylvia Frey and Betty Wood’s recent book, *Come Shouting to Zion*, and Albert J. Raboteau’s classic on the subject.

The first part of Clarke’s book looks at the interesting career of the Reverend Charles Colcock Jones. This Presbyterian minister was the most famous evangelical preacher who spread the Gospel among slaves. Clarke carefully analyzes Jones’s efforts, noting how the good reverend hoped to make the slaves obedient, productive workers, as well as Christians. The second part deals with the work of the preachers at Charleston, South Carolina. There, in the cosmopolitan, cultural center of the South, ministers also tried to convert and control slaves via

1763). I mention this because this conflict was one of the pivotal points in the history of eighteenth-century Europe and the Americas. In the aftermath of the war the victorious British government asserted more control over its North American colonies, leading to the American Revolution. The French lost territories in North America. Spain initiated reforms in its American territories.

One episode in the war was the British occupation of Cuba in 1762, an event that precipitated a major military reorganization by the Spanish government when hostilities ended in the following year. Spain ceded Florida to Great Britain as the price of having Cuba returned. France, having lost most of its American empire, handed Louisiana over to Spain. Spain ruled Louisiana for nearly four decades, until returning the territory to France in 1801. France in turn sold Louisiana to the United States in 1803.

The topic of the book reviewed here is Spanish policy towards Louisiana slavery. The French introduced slavery into Louisiana in the early years of the eighteenth-century, and by the time Spain took charge of the colony in the late 1760s slaves constituted a significant percentage of the non-Indian population of Louisiana. Spain never dedicated significant resources to Louisiana, and the Spanish governors of the colony had to survive on shoe-string budgets. The Spanish introduced a different philosophy regarding the treatment of slaves from the prevailing views of the French inhabitants of Louisiana. The Spanish advocated humane treatment for slaves, whereas the French slave owners were more concerned with maintaining control. The Spanish believed in converting the slaves to Christianity, whereas the French had been lax in this regard.

The Spanish governors also had to deal with difficult and complex issues in dealings with the French planters. One was the problem of maronage fugitive slaves establishing communities of runaway slaves), and compensation for runaway slaves either maimed or killed. The New Orleans *cabildo* taxed slave owners to create a fund to compensate owners for their losses. However, the fund was generally empty. A second difficult problem was how to pay for expeditions to recover runaway slaves. During the American Revolution, Bernardo de Galvez headed a campaign that occupied West Florida. Slaves ran away. Small expeditions eventually tracked down most of the large groups, but the question of who would pay the costs remained unsolved for some years.

A third serious challenge followed the French Revolution and the great slave uprising in Saint Domingue in 1791. The radical rhetoric of the revolution penetrated even Louisiana, and inspired the so-called Pointe Coupee slave conspiracy. Spanish officials uncovered the

chest and her lips are pursed in annoyance. The bottom half of the photo is entirely taken up by the fragment of what might have been the word "GAMES" painted on a wall—but Evans crops it to read "MES." The result is a clever pun—at once an ungrammatical plural of "me" and a mis-spelling of "mess." Each person has adopted a posture of detachment: the hands in the pockets, the crossed arms, the stony faces. This is gambling: a self-indulgent "mes."

The circus photos receive the most attention in Plunket's light but entertaining essay. Sarasota was once the winter resort of the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus. With his usual fondness for dilapidation, Evans documents the decline of the circus: run-down wagons, a wagon-side wooden relief of a woman (perhaps Aphrodite) that has been chiseled by time; a poster of a once ferocious tiger with the most ferocious portion torn away. In a series of fifteen images Evans captures the lusterless and demystified side of the circus in winter. Stripped of its baroque hyperbole and glamour, the circus wagons and trains seem gaudy and gauche—but also pathetic. The result is something like meeting a movie star on the street who is several years past his prime and realizing just how short he is and just how much the make-up and camera conceal. In one resonant shot an elephant lumbers away from the camera lead by a circus worker. An anemic palm tree stands in the foreground. It is a sad image, one that sensitively captures the gradual departure of the circus—itsself a lumbering, lovable relic of a more ornate era.

In the most important photograph in the book Evans captures a different sort of carnival: the slickness and faux-sophistication of twentieth-century commercialism. The subject is a resort photographer and her client. The client, a frumpy older woman with a sour expression, sits on a low wall facing Evans's camera, her profile toward the resort photographer. The arrangement implies that Evans treats the subject more honestly and directly than the resort photographer who has constructed a Florida scene not of local flora and fauna but of plastic palm trees, a wooden cut-out of a ship, a fake (perhaps stuffed) alligator—even fake pelicans. The photographer's posture is also unnatural. She is contorted into a macabre curve as she stoops to peer through her camera. Her feet, which have been twisted into three or four inch heels, add to the impression of scoliosis. The photo is a commentary on photography. If, surrounded by the realities of life, one chooses to deal in fabrication and falsehood one becomes part of that falsehood. Tellingly, Evans keeps his distance.

The book includes numerous gems. We find Evans at his most ironic: a proud and elderly woman sits on a city sidewalk knitting and

this collection is an attempt to fill in some of the gaps. As might be expected, the bulk of the essays focus on urban institutions, both public and private, since those are where the documents lie, while rural and more informal networks of social welfare remain to be discovered.

What is perhaps most surprising to learn from these essays is that though the South was seldom in the forefront in creating social welfare institutions, in some cases it was not far behind the North. Peter Wallenstein's article on state welfare institutions in Georgia from the 1830s to the 1880s, which opens the volume, describes how Georgia had established institutions for the blind, deaf, and mentally handicapped for whites by the 1850s, and by the 1880s for blacks as well. Interestingly, the Bourbons who replaced the Republican regimes actually increased the state's commitment to the already existing institutions and extended their services to blacks, forcing us to rethink the conventional wisdom about Bourbon tight-fistedness in the arena of social welfare. How representative Georgia was of other southern states, however, Wallenstein does not speculate.

Wallenstein's article shares with four others a focus on the state of Georgia, which is perhaps unsurprising as this volume is published by the University of Georgia Press. Kathleen Gorman examines the case of Georgia in an article on Confederate pensions as a system of social welfare, while Lee Polansky writes about the Georgia Training School for Girls during the Progressive Era. In a lengthy and informative article about Atlanta's charity, welfare, and public health organizations at the turn of the century, Georgina Hickey looks at the relationship between the different races and classes involved in benevolence. Poor women, she points out, were rarely "passive clients for charity workers." Demanding dignity as well as material support, poor women, who were largely black, used the attention being focused upon them by social workers, who were largely white, to "bargain for care and support that most closely met their own values, needs, and conceptions of the city." At the same time, middle-class black women founded charity organizations to serve the poor in their own community. They worked assiduously to fight the negative stereotypes promulgated by racist and condescending white social workers by encouraging black women to live clean, moral and temperate lives and to cultivate middle-class manners and morals. The effect of this, however, Hickey argues, was to encourage women to assume subservient roles in a patriarchal family structure, which Hickey sees as intrinsically undesirable.

The book is divided into two sections. The first focuses on state policies and includes an article on a state poor house in Alabama from 1885 to 1945, and another about a home for needy Confederate women

The first four essays explore historical aspects of African-American religion, described as especially significant to the black South. Alonzo Johnson's essay, "'Pray's House Spirit': The Institutional Structure and Spiritual Core of African American Folk Tradition," discusses the "Pray's House," similar to traditional African "sacred spaces," where slaves could sing, pray, shout, and testify, as well as plan their escape. The "Pray's House" provided slaves a place where they could be completely in control of their spirituality. Many times, slave masters would allow senior slaves to use their own cabins for these meetings. Slaves who attended these meetings were said to be "seekin' the Lord." If they were serious and avid attendees of these meetings, "seekin' mothers" would pray for these people, sing songs, and encourage them in their spiritual life until they had a conversion experience and confessed their faith publicly. The "seekin' and prayin'" experience brought a new spirituality, ethical responsibility, and sense of mission to the believers.

"The Rhythms of Black Folks," by Jon Michael Spencer, explores the continuity of rhythm between African life and black life in the New World. The rhythm of drums and dance, particularly the "ring shout" dance, carry over to the New World from African celebration rituals. Spencer links this rhythmic quality of the African soul to the spirituals, blues, sermons, and lives of African Americans and other African descendants in the Americas. According to Spencer, "Rhythm has set the black soul free and taught it to survive and to transcend the limits of its freedom.

African-American folk tales of Brer Rabbit are analyzed by William Courtland Johnson in the article, "Trickster on Trial: The Morality of the Brer Rabbit Tales." Johnson proposes that the trickster figure of Brer Rabbit "gives us a fictional glimpse into the moral and spiritual center of African-American life in the face of brutality, triumph, and tragedy in this country." Jacqueline D. Carr-Hamilton also discusses the spiritual life of African Americans in "Motherwit in Southern Religion: A Womanist Perspective." According to Carr-Hamilton, motherwit is a collection of female wisdom passed on from generation to generation. She also states that it is "a pan-Africanist spirit binding women of African ancestry together in a way they are not linked to other peoples." This wisdom and experience helped black women survive their diaspora experience in the Western World. Womanist God-talk, emerging from the womanist theology of the 1980s that included motherwit wisdom, is religious reflection drawn from the distinct social plight of black women. Realizing that life can be oppressive or liberating, many black women believe that "God does as

Stanley S. McGowen. *Horse Sweat and Powder Smoke*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1999, 229 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 89096-903-5.

Brandon H. Beck, ed. *Third Alabama! The Civil War Memoir of Brigadier General Cullen Andrews Battle, CSA*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000, 180 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 0-8173-1001-0.

With all of its complexity, its huge scale, and its great impact on the course of United States history, the Civil War continues to be a bountiful field of historical research. Historians continue to uncover in its thousands of pages of human testimony the sorts of new and compelling stories told in these two books. Each of these works tells the story of a Confederate regiment from a gulf coastal state, but the manners of telling the stories are as different as were the experiences of the regiments involved.

Stanley S. McGowen tells the story of the First Texas Cavalry, a unit whose muster roll included one of McGowen's ancestors. He discusses the regiment's various predecessor units, including the First Texas Mounted Rifles and the Third and Eighth Texas Cavalry battalions. The Mounted Rifles had the most colorful background, serving on Texas's northwestern frontier during the first year of the war, fighting off the incursions of the bloodthirsty Comanche and Kiowas. Under the firm command of Col. Henry McCulloch, a former Texas Ranger, the Mounted Rifles became a tough and efficient fighting force. It also learned hard riding and fighting from its Indian adversaries.

In April 1862, the regiment's initial one-year enlistments expired. Four companies re-enlisted, and became part of the Eighth Texas Cavalry Battalion. The remainder of the battalion was a company of German immigrants. Their presence in the Confederate army is noteworthy in that the Texas Germans are usually regarded as heavily Unionist. Many of them were, but McGowen points out that a surprising number of the Germans served the Confederacy. The Eighth Battalion, now headquartered near San Antonio, had a new mission: to patrol the strategically important overland trading route to Mexico. That duty also involved suppressing the Unionist Germans. When a band of the latter attempted to make its way out of Texas and get to Mexico, a detachment of the Eighth, carefully selected to include no Germans, was in pursuit along with an independent company of partisan Rangers. The Unionists were caught and defeated after a hard fight, and in a shameful episode, the Confederate Texans massacred some of the German wounded.

Pensacola, Florida, where the Confederacy briefly entertained the hope of taking Union-held Fort Pickens. When the impossibility of that task became manifest, there was a reshuffling of companies, and these ten found themselves bound together in the new Third Alabama Regiment and on their way to Virginia. Battle was the regiment's first major.

The Third served under Maj. Gen. Benjamin Huger on the Virginia peninsula. Their first major combat came in the May 1862 Battle of Seven Pines. They did well, and Battle makes the most of their good performance. The army next came under the command of Robert E. Lee, for whom Battle felt profound life-long admiration. The Alabamians—rougher, dirtier, but now toughened by battle—had their next serious encounter with the enemy at the disastrous Battle of Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862. As their division commander, Maj. Gen. D. H. Hill, described it, "It was not war; it was murder." The Third Alabama suffered more casualties in that sad affair than any other regiment.

Battle related the regiment's part in Lee's audacious summer campaign, with victories at Second Manassas and the invasion of Maryland. He has high praise for Stonewall Jackson and deep loathing for Union general John Pope who planned to treat hostile Virginians like rebels taken in arms. Pope's discomfiture at the hands of Jackson and Lee is a source of mirth to Battle who quips that the unhappy Union general "needed to have headquarters in the saddle, and the saddle on a fast horse." On the other hand, Battle is not at all amused with John Greenleaf Whittier's poem "Barbara Frietchie" because it gives an untrue account of Confederate severity against a loyal northern civilian. Truth to tell, however, despite his rage at northern propaganda, Battle at various places in his book credulously accepts and repeats elements of southern propaganda with as little basis in reality as Whittier's poem.

Back to Virginia went Lee's army, and the Third Alabama during the September 1862 Battle of Sharpsburg suffered severely in the "Bloody Lane." At Chancellorsville the follow May, the Third Alabama, and the rest of its division (Rodes's) led Stonewall Jackson's dramatic flank attack on Gen. Joseph Hooker's Union army. Battle exults in the fact that one of Jackson's last official statements after having been carried from the field wounded was to commend Rodes's division for its performance in this attack.

Rodes's division did not fare so well at Gettysburg the following summer. Several of its brigades were poorly handled by their commanders, including that to which the Third belonged. Battle, however, who was now colonel of the Third, was detached with his regiment and ordered to operate on his own responsibility in supporting a neighboring brigade. Its commander praised Battle highly in his

belt by the 1930s. This slim volume tells a familiar story but draws upon a vast array of primary and secondary sources from several disciplines including history, geography, sociology, agronomy, and ecology.

In the 1880s, those who sought to grow cotton in the alluvial bottomlands of the lower Mississippi Valley faced a variety of daunting obstacles. Dense vegetation, susceptibility to flooding, malaria, physical isolation, and poor transportation all stood in the way of successful cotton farming. These conditions hardly encouraged settlement, and in 1880 the bottomland counties of the aforementioned states contained only sixteen people per square mile. This low population density created still another problem for the region's cotton planters—a labor shortage.

A significant increase in railroad construction in the southern bottomlands during the 1880s solved some of the region's problems. The delta regions of all four states added hundreds of miles of trackage that allowed planters and timber companies to ship to distant markets. The railroads also opened many isolated areas to the bottomlands in considerable numbers. Subsequently, African-American families migrated to the bottomlands in substantial numbers, “[d]espite the threat of debt-slavery and malarial fevers.” Some became landowners, particularly along the Louisville, New Orleans & Texas Railroad in the Mississippi Delta. (The subject of black landownership in the Mississippi Delta receives further treatment in a newer book by John C. Willis, which Otto cites in his dissertation form.)

The construction of levees accompanies that of railroads. Floods continued to plague the region, however. The flood of 1927 would be “the most destructive in the history of the southern bottomlands.” Federal aid provided under the Jones-Reid Act of 1928 led to the construction of levees that kept the Mississippi River in check. Federal efforts also helped to solve other problems that confronted the region. The United States Public Health Service (as well as the Rockefeller Foundation) contributed to a mosquito control experiment in Arkansas in 1916 in hopes of eradicating malaria, although the continued drainage of swamplands for cultivation ultimately did the most to solve that problem. The United States Department of Agriculture addressed still another one of the region's issues when it introduced calcium arsenate in 1918 as a pesticide against boll weevils. Railroad trackage continued to increase in the delta from 718 miles in 1900 to 1,019 by 1920, by which time paved roads emerged as an alternate transportation route in the Mississippi and Arkansas Deltas.

George F. Pearce. *Pensacola during the Civil War: A Thorn in the Side of the Confederacy*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000, 304 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 0-8130-1770-X.

One of the more fruitful recent trends in Civil War historiography has been combining social and military research with the study of specific cities or regions, measuring the effects of war upon a community. In past years, this genre has included studies of such cities as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Richmond, as well as Culpeper County Virginia. George F. Pearce has added Pensacola, an often under appreciated and overlooked region of the Civil War. Because Florida served as the scene for very few battles or campaigns during the war, such an oversight is common, but Pearce demonstrates in his study that it is also inaccurate. *Pensacola during the Civil War* corrects this mistake.

Pearce's study of Pensacola, however, is not simply a local or regional history of a western Florida town during the Civil War. He investigates Pensacola as a microcosm of the larger war, in which the city experienced most of the usual traumas and boredom of wartime, including occupation by Union and Confederate forces, periodic skirmishing, and the general disruption of civilian lives and the community's promising economic development of the antebellum years.

As the site of a newly completed U.S. Navy shipyard, as well as four federal partially completed fortifications, and the Alabama and Florida Railroad, Pensacola and the rest of western Florida were not without military significance. Indeed, these developments in the decade prior to the outbreak of the war promised an unparalleled era of economic and political expansion for the geographically isolated and sparsely inhabited region. Optimism about the area's potential growth, however, quickly turned sour as rising sectional tensions gave way to war in the spring of 1861.

Western Florida soon found itself in the early spotlight of the war during the tension-filled stalemate that characterized the negotiations for Fort Pickens, located on Santa Rosa Island just south of Pensacola at the entrance to Pensacola Bay. Pensacola's most prominent native son, Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory, played a leading role in this drama. Pearce agrees with historians Grady McWhiney and Bruce Catton that, by remaining in federal hands, Fort Pickens became a symbolic "thorn in the side of the Confederacy" that could not be removed. As a result of this loss, he argues, the Confederacy lost an important opportunity to gain a base of operations for blockade runners that offered advantages not found at such ports

Glenda Alice Rabby. *The Pain and the Promise: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Tallahassee, Florida*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999, 330 pp. \$40.00. ISBN 0-8203-2051-X.

This is an excellent book. By focusing on one small city the author allows readers to experience "the pain and the promise" of the civil rights movement through the lives and experiences of the participants. She brings the people to life and goes beyond the headlines to let us see the consequences, good and bad, of the movement in Tallahassee.

In the 1950s and 1960s the Florida panhandle was as much a part of the Deep South as Alabama and Georgia, and almost as resistant to change. Even with the combined weights of the U.S. Supreme Court, a mobilized black population, and a few moderate whites, desegregation took several decades to achieve and came largely at the expense of the black population, particularly its youth and community leaders.

As in Alabama, the first public protest was over buses. And as in Montgomery, the incident that precipitated it was not planned. In May 1956 two young women sat down next to a white woman and were arrested. Inspired by the six-month-old boycott in Montgomery, Tallahassee's ten thousand black citizens refused to ride the buses until they could sit in any available seat. Although the boycott ended the following year without a clear-cut victory or a court order, it empowered the black community.

The national civil rights organizations were quick to see the possibilities and to offer support. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) became the principle direct action organization while the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) supplied lawyers to handle the many criminal cases that came with mass protest. But it was the local Inter-Civic Council that provided the leadership and the students, mostly from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), who provided the bodies, gave generously of their time, and took the risks.

Among the students two sisters, Priscilla and Patricia Stephens, became the key organizers. They mobilized the FAMU students, encouraged them to stay in jail when arrested, and kept up their spirits when suspended from school. Under their leadership FAMU students participated in the boycott, freedom rides, and sit-ins. They also worked with some bold white students from neighboring Florida State University to begin the slow process of integration.

Unlike Alabama and Georgia, Florida governor Leroy Collins believed the state should follow the law as mandated by the Supreme Court. Serving from 1953 to 1961, he looked for ways to make the

on industry, newspapers and radio, music, and arts and crafts give added information about the state, as do census figures, restaurant listings, bus schedules, and calendars of events. Over 120 illustrations and photographs provide compelling images. Of course, 1930s Alabama does not exist anymore, and for some the book may suggest a quaint anachronism.

At first one might question the necessity, even the wisdom, of re-issuing *The WPA Guide*. The U.S. guidebooks, written usually by committees of people of various (or dubious) writing skills and commissioned as a type of government relief, are mostly prosaic, lacking the rigorous scholarship of an historical text or the aesthetic quality of a literary work. They are certainly outdated regarding most of the statistical information about each state. Some guidebooks were updated to provide accurate details of locales, events, population, and industrial figures, and to correct undesirable stylings, particularly stereotypical and/or racial references. Such was the case with Alabama's guide, which was updated and revised in 1975. However, the University of Alabama Press decided to re-issue the original.

To whom is this work valuable? Its language seems at times artificial, colloquial, apologist (for example, refusing to refer to the Civil War as anything other than the War Between the States). Note the tone of the following passage: "Legal slavery, along with most of the progress made by the State, was destroyed by the War Between the States." The next sentence asserts how Alabama pulled itself up "from scratch"—raising itself by "main strength and awkwardness." Historians and other scholars would scoff at such claims in a history book. Thorough documentation of sources was not a priority. For example, the sections entitled "History" and "Folklore and Folkways" (like the other sections) contain no clear reference to sources. The entire text is bereft of footnotes. A helpful chronology is included, and there is a bibliography, but no indication of how and to what extent sources were used. Studying the work for its literary merit is also inappropriate. While the prose is generally readable, it is clearly lacking a memorable and compelling style. Instead it is reminiscent of secondary school textbooks or junior level encyclopedias.

One answer to its value is that it does exist as a document to its era. Thus, for historians it provides a primary source of how middle-class Alabamians viewed their state in the 1930s. Cultural historians can see the biases and inaccuracies of the writers even as they strive to maintain a polite and varied picture of the state. Jackson points out that the editors felt it necessary to note that the "Foot Washing and

Short Notices

James B. McSwain

Paul M. Pruitt, Jr. and David I. Durham. *A Guide to the Howell Thomas Heflin Collection*. Occasional Publications of the Bounds Law Library. Number One. University of Alabama School of Law, 2001, 16 pp.

This free pamphlet succinctly surveys the approximately one thousand cubic feet of private and public papers, documents, video tapes, awards, cartoons, interviews, artifacts, and photographs deposited in 1996 in the John C. Payne Special Collections of the Bounds Law Library at the University of Alabama School of Law (Tuscaloosa), by former U.S. Senator, Alabama state supreme court justice, and successful lawyer, Howell Thomas Heflin (b. 1921).

Pruitt and Durham, librarian and archivist respectively at Bounds Law Library, supply the text. Pruitt outlines Heflin's tenure in Alabama law circles, his advocacy of revising the judicial article of the 1901 constitution, his decision to seek the position of chief justice of the state supreme court, and Heflin's successful run for the U.S. Senate in 1978. Durham describes the subgroups of the Heflin Collection employing useful and well-chosen photographs marking highlights of the senator's legal and political careers. He concludes that the collection illuminates Heflin's progressive and non-traditional leadership on "legal reform, civil rights, and ethics" in the context of Alabama history and politics.

This booklet introduces scholars, historians, and graduate students to the research and interpretative potential of this large source of archival material, and will no doubt spur skillful and productive exploitation of the Heflin Collection. Ironically, on the bottom recto of the back cover of this attractively designed and informative guide, there are seven lines of Orwellian legal-speak, a small and unwitting tribute to Heflin's role in the transformation of liberty into vice.

James B. McSwain is a professor of history at Tuskegee University and book review editor of the *Gulf South Historical Review*.