GSHR

Gulf South Historical Review

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From the Editor . . .

This issue is a little larger than usual because I couldn't bear the thought of cutting anything out! There are four articles and thirteen book reviews, so there should be lots for everyone to sink their teeth into. Even those of us who do not live for the carnival season know it is one of our region's most distinctive features. Our first article, written by Lee Farrow, looks at the origins of Rex in New Orleans from a rather different angle that ties it into Reconstruction, not Medieval Europe. Oh, what would grandmother have to say? Speaking of shocking the matriarch, Michael Fitzgerald looks at Mobile's African-American and Creole communities and their political fortunes in the post-Civil War world. This article is an excerpt from Fitzgerald's upcoming book due out this fall from LSU Press. He combines careful research with an engaging writing style. You will read this article and want the whole book...and that is just fine! Grandmother may take a little convincing, however. Jeff Frederick examines the support George Wallace received from women in Alabama in his early years. He has carefully crafted an account of the governor's appeal and the reasons for it. Finally, we bring you last year's William Coker Award winner from the Gulf South History and Humanities Conference in Mobile. Mark Wilson's excellent paper on the relationship of black and white Baptists in Mobile deserved to win the prize and represents the high level of scholarship our region's graduate students are doing. We are happy to publish Mr. Wilson's paper, and trust it is the first of a lifetime of valuable historical publications he will provide. As always, we have a group of excellent and diverse book reviews to keep us abreast of the latest scholarship.

This fall's Gulf South History and Humanities Conference will be in Galveston, Texas, October 17-19. Our host hotel is the Hilton Galveston Island Resort. You can make room reservations by calling 1-800-475-3386. Tell them you are with the Gulf South Historical Association. The reserved room rate for us is $76.00 per night. Texas A&M at Galveston and Texas Christian University are co-hosting the conference. This is our first foray into the Lone Star State and we are all very excited by the prospect. I hope you will make plans to join us as the Gulf South Historical Association continues to grow and expand. As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions about the *GSHR*, and hope you enjoy this issue.

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Cover Photo: *Women of all ages were attracted to Wallace rallies and appearances.* Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov and General George Custer.
Mercaldo Collection, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming.

Grand Duke Alexei and the Origins of Rex, 1872: Myth, Public Memory, and the Distortion of History

Lee A. Farrow

In November, 1871, the Russian Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov arrived in the port of New York to much excitement and fanfare. The twenty-two-year-old Grand Duke was the son of the current tsar, Alexander II, and New York was but the first stop on a grand tour of the United States that would take him from the east coast to the wild west, from the snowy scapes of Canada to the reconstructed South. His itinerary was impressive, including such places as Washington DC, Boston, Montreal, Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans. Along the way, he attended receptions, balls, the theater and opera, and even went buffalo hunting with General George Custer and Buffalo Bill Cody; but it was his appearance at the New Orleans festival of Mardi Gras which has been most remembered and has given him a permanent place in the history and lore of that annual event.[1]

Grand Duke Alexei's presence during the carnival festivities of February 1872 has become a staple of the historical literature of Mardi Gras. Most histories of Mardi Gras make some mention of Alexei and many credit his visit as the inspiration for the birth of Rex and the Krewe of Rex.[2] Others go even further, arguing that Alexei traveled to the Crescent City in pursuit of the popular burlesque performer, Lydia Thompson, and that it was his fascination with her which prompted Rex to play, and later adopt as its theme song, one of her musical pieces, "If Ever I Cease to Love." In fact, Alexei has been so tightly entwined in Mardi Gras history that several carnival krewes have been named after him.[3] What is interesting about Alexei's prominent place in Mardi Gras lore is that much of it remains disputed and shrouded in uncertainties. For example, popular chroniclers of Mardi Gras disagree on Alexei's role in the creation of Rex; some argue that Alexei's visit inspired the creation of Rex, while others see no connection between the two events. Moreover, at least one part of the Mardi Gras legend about Alexei—the romantic link with Thompson—is based on misunderstanding and misperception. Thus the central place of Alexei in the literature on Mardi Gras is an interesting example of how public memory and popular culture can influence and distort written history. Also, the traditional focus on Alexei in the Mardi Gras legend has obscured more significant discussions about the real reasons behind the founding of Rex.

The Grand Duke Alexei arrived in New York on November 20, 1871. From the time of his arrival in New York, the New Orleans press followed Alexei's travels closely, reporting almost daily about the Grand Duke's latest adventures and future plans. In December, for example, the *Daily Picayune* reported on Alexei's visits to West Point, Philadelphia, Boston, Niagara Falls and Buffalo, New York.[4] Although he apparently had a planned itinerary of some sort, the specifics of this itinerary are not clear.[5] It does seem, however, that New Orleans was part of his original route, thus immediately invalidating any suggestion that he followed Miss Thompson there. Soon after Alexei's arrival, the Washington press reported that the Grand Duke planned to visit "some of the Southern states" during his trip. Then, in early December, the *Daily Picayune* reported that the Russian fleet would be leaving for New Orleans on the following day to await the conclusion of the Grand Duke's tour.[6] Moreover, New Orleanians themselves clearly viewed these announcements as indication of a likely visit. On November 26, 1871, an editorial in the *New Orleans Republican* discussed the possibility of Alexei's visit and whether the South was equipped, or inclined, to fête him properly.[7]

The first article in the local press which spoke with some certainty about Alexei's intended visit to New Orleans appeared in mid-January 1872. Interestingly, this article was also the one that first linked Alexei and Lydia, and was probably responsible for the belief that Alexei was pursuing her to New Orleans. The article reported that the Grand Duke had been "captivated" by Miss Thompson, presenting her with a bracelet, and hoping "to pay the performance of the company another visit in New Orleans."[8] The following day, the New Orleans *Bee* reported that the Grand Duke would visit New Orleans, arriving by river on the steamer, the *Great Republic*. Once this news broke, the New Orleans press began providing daily coverage of Alexei's travels, sometimes including two or three reports in each issue.

Public reaction to Alexei's proposed visit varied considerably. Merchants viewed it as a great advertising opportunity. Indeed, in December 1871 Rice Brothers and Company placed the following advertisement in the *Daily Picayune*: "The entertainment at the Revere House, Boston, in honor of the Russian Grand Duke, is universally conceded to have been a magnificent affair...it could scarcely have been...otherwise, every dish being cooked in a Charter Oak stove," which just happened to be sold in their store on Camp Street.[9] As the Grand Duke's visit grew nearer, the number of such ads increased and grew more preposterous. One ad, for example, claimed that "the Grand

Duke thinks his trip and trouble richly rewarded since he saw the Orient safety lamp, from 62 Camp and 15 Dauphine streets."[10] Two others advertised the sale of "the Grand Duke Alexis kid gloves" and the "Alexis hat."[11] Finally, one ad made the following pitch: "It is not supposed that the Grand Duke does his own washing; but if he did it is certain he would do it with the Ringen washer, which is sold by Mr. Haller, the sole agent, at No. 49 Camp street."[12]

This apparent excitement by city merchants, however, was not shared by city officials who seemed undecided, even uninterested, in how to best welcome their royal guest. Although the official announcement of Alexei's visit reached New Orleans in mid-January, the city council did not discuss the matter until January 26, when the *Daily Picayune* reported that members "had some talk about the reception of the Grand Duke Alexis, without reaching any conclusion." While the mayor proposed setting up a committee to consider Alexei's reception, one council member "was against the city spending a dollar."[13] Three days later, the staff of the *Daily Picayune* weighed in on the matter: "We join heartily in the generally expressed opinion that our city should not be lacking in a display of hospitality to the Grand Duke Alexis."[14]

Perhaps because of this public urging and with Alexei's visit less than two weeks away, the city council finally appointed the mayor, Benjamin Flanders, and the Administrator of Assessments, Mr. H. Bonzano, to select citizens to make arrangements for the Grand Duke's reception. The following day, the *Bee* reported that city officials had reserved rooms for Alexei and his entourage and that a ball was being planned at the Opera House.[15] Still, city officials seemed reluctant to go to any further trouble for Alexei's visit. Indeed, the press reported that "city authorities...have concluded to appoint no committee of citizens to receive His Imperial Highness, nor do they intend to make any grand hurrah upon the occasion."[16]

What happened next is still a matter of debate among popular chroniclers of Mardi Gras. On February 1 the first announcement appeared in the papers that a self-proclaimed "King of Carnival" named Rex would be organizing the Mardi Gras festivities and, therefore, requested that "all parties desirous of taking part in the celebration...report to him immediately through their Marsalis, stating character of display, probable number, and whether with or without music."[17] The following day, Rex issued the first of a series of edicts that asked for the cooperation of Mardi Gras revelers, the mayor and the superintendent of police. Over the next days, Rex issued more

proclamations to various officials and businesses, including Governor Henry Clay Warmouth, to "refrain from the exercise, or attempt to exercise, any gubernatorial privileges or duties" on Mardi Gras day, and "in order to better preserve the peace and maintain the dignity of the realm...disperse that riotous body known as the Louisiana Legislature."[18] Other edicts requested that officials shut down schools, the post office, the Louisiana State Lottery office and the customs office for the port of New Orleans.[19] Even the Congressional Investigating Committee, in New Orleans to scrutinize Louisiana politics, was asked to temporarily cease its investigation. Surprisingly, all governmental bodies agreed to these requests.[20]

Alexei and his entourage, which included George A. Custer and his wife Elizabeth, arrived in New Orleans on Sunday, February 11, 1872, on the steamer *James Howard*. Despite invitations to come ashore, Alexei chose to spend the night aboard the steamer. Upon disembarking the following day, the Grand Duke was greeted by city officials, an excited crowd of about three thousand people and a thirty-gun salute; thereafter, he set up headquarters at the St. Charles Hotel. That evening, he attended the opera and was honored by a rendition of the Russian National Anthem. On Fat Tuesday, Alexei was given a place of honor in the reviewing stand at city hall and later attended the Mistick Krewe ball at the Varieties Theatre. On Wednesday, he met with a delegation of foreign consuls, and also with a committee from the St. Trinity Greek Church who invited Alexei to attend mass. After these meetings, Alexei visited Washburn's photographic gallery, where he posed for a number of portraits.[21] During the remainder of his stay, he attended the opera, Dan Rice's circus, the Louisiana Jockey Club, and the actress Lotta Crabtree's performance at the St. Charles Theatre. Although the local papers reported that Alexei intended to see Miss Thompson's troupe, and allegedly had even requested his favorite song, he never made it to her show during his stay in the city.

When it was all over, the New Orleans papers deemed Mardi Gras and Alexei's reception a sweeping success, noting the Grand Duke's approval of all the festivities. "Mardi Gras has come and gone," reported the *Daily Picayune*, "and our Imperial guest has seen the Crescent City in the zenith of her glory and to best advantage."[22] In reality, Alexei's sentiments about New Orleans were not all favorable. Alexei's letters reveal that his feelings about New Orleans were mixed. On the one hand, he was intrigued by the city's European flavor and commented on the excellent French opera and the multitude of theaters. He was not, however, impressed with Mardi Gras. He noted that the

procession of maskers, on foot, on horseback and in carriages, was accompanied by music and screams, but observed that "all the same, some kind of stiffness governs all this happiness, as if someone ordered them to dress up and pretend to be happy," an ironic comment from the son of an absolute monarch.[23]

Alexei's visit was undoubtedly an important part of the history of New Orleans and carnival, but the question is, how important? Why did Alexei come to New Orleans and what role did his visit have in the creation of Rex and his theme song? Popular chroniclers of Mardi Gras have answered these questions differently, but the subject has not been treated in a scholarly manner, nor have the primary sources been adequately explored. A thorough examination of the primary sources of the period, particularly Russian sources, sheds new light on the traditional story of Alexei, Lydia Thompson, and Rex.

Legend has it that Grand Duke Alexei added New Orleans to his itinerary with a specific goal in mind, that of rendezvousing with the burlesque performer Lydia Thompson. This was first hinted at in a dispatch from St. Louis in mid-January, which reported that Alexei had been captivated by Lydia and hoped to see her perform again in New Orleans. It was undoubtedly this report that inspired the belief that Alexei was following Lydia to New Orleans. Only a few days later another St. Louis dispatch fueled the flames of speculation and rumor when it reported that "the Duke sent a costly diamond bracelet to Lydia Thompson in acknowledgment of her entertainment."[24] In fact, although Alexei may have found Lydia Thompson entertaining and charming he was not in love with her, as his letters to his mother reveal. Nor was Lydia in love with Alexei; it is true that when their paths crossed in early 1872 she was divorced, but she was already involved with her next husband, whom she soon married.[25] Thus it would seem that Alexei's alleged infatuation with Lydia was based on nothing more than misperception and the rumor-mongering of the American press.

The myth that Alexei had some sort of romantic interest in Lydia Thompson has been accepted and perpetuated by much of the subsequent literature on Mardi Gras. The earliest incorporation of the notion appears in Perry Young's, *Carnival and Mardi Gras in New Orleans*, published in 1939, which claimed that Alexei decided to visit New Orleans because "he was fond of Lydia Thompson's song that she had sung to him in other towns, 'If Ever I Cease to Love.'"[26] The story was perpetuated and expanded upon by other histories of Mardi Gras, but perhaps the most exaggerated version appeared in a 19 article by Harnett Kane in the *American Weekly*. Accompanied by

illustration worthy of a modern romance novel, the article takes the Alexei/Lydia myth to the next level, portraying the Grand Duke as a flirtatious ladies' man, "bored by committees, which seemed intent on showing him all of America; while Alexis wanted to see only one part of America, the girls." His first encounter with Lydia is similarly exaggerated: "As he listened to La Thompson, the duke's mustachios twitched, and he had to meet her."[27] In the last fifty years, other books and articles have perpetuated this myth to varying degrees, as has Arthur Hardy's annual Mardi Gras guide.[28] Most New Orleans travel guides also include some version of the Alexei/Lydia legend, and more recently, it has spread to the internet as well.[29] Although in recent years a few studies have questioned this romantic story, distortions persist.[30] Errol Laborde, for example, cast doubts on the Alexei/Lydia romance, yet no sooner does he dispel one myth than he buys into another: "Alexis may have become infatuated while in New Orleans, but with a different woman...Lotta Crabtree."[31]

The truth is that there was no romance between Alexei and Lydia, not even a one-sided infatuation on the Grand Duke's part. This myth was simply the product of a sensationalist American press and the understandable misinterpretation of Alexei's generosity and his gracious public persona. The perpetuation of this myth by so many Mardi Gras writers is simply due to a failure to consult the necessary Russian and English sources, for a careful examination of these documents reveals the impossibility of any romantic link between Lydia and Alexei.[32]

First of all, Alexei's gift to Lydia of a fifteen hundred dollar diamond bracelet was hardly unique. In fact, Alexei distributed gifts and money throughout his journey in America. For example, while in New York and Chicago he contributed five thousand dollars for poor relief, and upon his departure from Mobile, he presented a diamond ring to the local steamer captain.[33] Moreover, Lydia Thompson was not he only performer to be honored by the Grand Duke. Before ever eeing Miss Thompson in America, Alexei had presented the opera inger Euphrosyne Parepa Rosa with an expensive necklace.[34] Even an rticle in the *Daily Picayune* commented on Alexei's generosity, tating, "The Grand Duke Alexis is profuse in his gifts to actors and ctresses." Indeed, the Russian duke had also given a male performer a beautiful sapphire ring, with a stone of unusual size, surrounded by vo rows of diamonds."[35] Furthermore, Lydia was not the only woman erforming in New Orleans to receive a gift from Alexei. No sooner ad Lydia's troupe left the city than the press was linking Alexei with e popular actress Lotta Crabtree. "It would appear that His Imperial

Highness the Grand Duke fell a willing victim to the magnetic charm of the admired Lotta," the *Daily Picayune* reported, "who numbers her slaves by the thousand." After attending her performance at the St. Charles Theatre, Alexei requested a special introduction and later sent her a bracelet inlaid with turquoise, small diamonds and two large pearls.[36]

Thus there was no hidden message in Alexei's gift to Lydia; it was just one of many tokens of admiration that he distributed to popular performers. Its significance was inflated by the American press, eager for a story—so eager, in fact, that it had repeatedly reported of Alexei's popularity with, and pursuit of, American women. For example, in December 1871 the New Orleans *Republican* reported that, "St. Louis girls are in a fearful way to know if they will get a chance to dance with Alexis." The following month, another newspaper reported that a young lady near St. Louis had "fallen madly in love with Alexis" and followed him to Omaha, intent on becoming his wife."[37] One newspaper went so far as to allege that Alexei had an infatuation with the sister of his Indian guide and appreciated "the charms of American chambermaids."[38]

Finally, Alexei's own letters dispel the myth of any romantic link with the burlesque performer. Although Alexei wrote frustratingly little about his travels in America, his letters do make one fact abundantly clear: Alexei was miserable. In a letter to his mother from early 1872 Alexei wrote, "You can imagine how sad I was to greet the New Yea alone, in a foreign land for the first time in my life without all o you. My birthday occurred during a hunt in a camp and no one knev about it, that is, of the Americans. How many more New Years wi I have to greet without you?" He continued, "Yes, it is difficult t be alone, difficult to be among strangers, always alone in your sorro and smiling, when you are crying inside."[39]

The fact that Alexei was able to hide his intense sadness from h American hosts explains, to some degree, why they, and even th American press, might assume that Alexei was having a wonderful tim and even pursuing the flights of a young man's fancy. The reality, o course, was that Alexei understood the importance of his visit whic both Russia and the United States viewed as a positive step towa building and maintaining friendly relations between the two countries Alexei recognized that as a representative of Russia, and a son of t current tsar, it was his duty to be a gracious guest and to appear enjoy the hospitality which was being presented to him. Still, Alex found this duty tiresome. As he explained to his mother, "I will

glad when we finish our journey because I am terribly tired of all the ceremonies and celebrations and it makes me sad to play this role for so long, especially when this is not really what is on my mind."[41]

What was really on the Grand Duke's mind was a forbidden love back home in Russia, a woman named Alexandra Zhukovskaia, of whom his parents disapproved. Indeed, Alexander II sent his son on this journey, in part, in the hopes that he would forget Zhukovskaia.[42] Alexei's letters, however, make it clear that even such great distances did not cool his ardor. "The farther I go and the more I think," he wrote on February 9, "the stronger and stronger my love takes root in me." Recognizing that this was a sore subject with his parents, the dutiful son reassured his mother, that "I will not take one step without your approval."[43] He also emphasized that any rumors linking him romantically with American women were untrue. Although he found American women to be well-educated and beautiful, he stressed that his "success among American women," reported in the newspapers was "entirely nonsense."[44] There can be no question, then, about Alexei's feelings toward Lydia Thompson, and any intimation that he had romantic intentions was probably due to his generosity, his ability to be gracious even when he was lonely and sad, and the eagerness of the American press and the American public to discover something scandalous about their royal guest.

This entire episode raises interesting questions about the intersection, or lack thereof, of history, public memory and popular culture. In this case, popular culture and public memory combined with the American fascination with foreign royalty to create a story of romance so appealing that it has persisted for over a century. The fact that there has been little evidence to support this legend has done nothing to hinder its dissemination; attempts by Mardi Gras writers to dispel the myth have had no impact on the popular literature and, one suspects, neither will this article. The strength and perpetuation of this myth is testimony to the power and influence of public memory on written history. Much like the place of George Washington and the cherry tree in American history, the story of a lovesick Russian prince pursuing a burlesque performer across America has so firmly implanted itself in Mardi Gras history that it will be difficult, if impossible, to extract.

Equally entrenched in Mardi Gras lore is the notion that Alexei's visit was the primary, or even sole, reason for the creation of Rex, significant event in the evolution of Mardi Gras. As early as the late eighteenth century there is evidence of some type of Mardi Gras

celebration in New Orleans. These first festivities, however, were spontaneous and unorganized, and often resulted in drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and even violence. It was in response to this disorder that a group of men in 1857 organized the Mystick Krewe of Comus, the first Mardi Gras krewe. That year, on Mardi Gras night, Comus held its first parade and ball night and a new tradition was born. By 1871 Comus had been joined by the Twelfth Night Revelers, who paraded on the evening of Twelfth Night, the first day of the season. Despite these organized evening festivities, Mardi Gras was still not considered a genuine holiday.[45] Rex's creation and the first Rex parade are significant because they initiated another new tradition, that of the daytime Mardi Gras celebration. Unlike its predecessors, the Krewe of Rex chose to stage its parade on Mardi Gras day, thereby expanding the celebration and creating a new holiday.

The debate among Mardi Gras writers concerns the true origins of, and inspiration for, Rex's creation. Although Rex's edicts made no specific mention of Alexei, much of the secondary literature on Mardi Gras has concluded that the appearance of Rex in February 1872 was directly connected to the Grand Duke's visit. These sources argue that it was apathy by city officials that prompted a number of prominent citizens to take matters into their own hands and to form the carnival king and the Rex organization.[46] There are, however, dissenters. Reid Mitchell, for example, argues that 1872 was not the first year in which an attempt had been made to organize carnival festivities, though he provides no evidence for this claim. Moreover, he emphasizes that two of the original founders of Rex themselves failed to credit Alexei's visit for the celebration. In his 1882 description of the founding of Rex, J. Curtis Waldo gave only passing mention of Alexei, while Lewis J. Salomon, the first Rex, failed to mention Alexei at all in his account of 1921. Mitchell himself, however, provides an explanation for this omission: "Salomon remembered Rex as the first true Carnival parade which suggests either that he forgot Comus altogether or that he thought of it as belonging to a different category. Since Salomon was in his eighties at the time of the 1921 interview, it is certainly possible that his memory was unreliable, and that this accounts for the absence of both Alexis and Comus in his tale."[47]

More recently, the well-known Mardi Gras writer Errol Laborde has contributed to this debate with his new history of Rex, *Marche the Day God*, in which he argues that any connection between the founding of Rex and Alexei's visit was purely coincidental; Rex was born of Reconstruction and Alexei's visit "gave a reason to hasten the

undertaking of a parade that might have happened anyway." He points out that a carnival monarch, King Felix, was also created that year in Mobile, a city that was not expecting Alexei's presence at Mardi Gras. Moreover, he argues, even New Orleanians were not certain of Alexei's arrival date, citing a newspaper article of February 1872 which seemed to imply some uncertainty about Alexei's presence at the Mardi Gras festivities.[48] This last facet of Laborde's argument is the weakest. In fact, many newspaper articles in February expressed uncertainty about Alexei's schedule because when these reports were being published, it was still unclear how the Grand Duke was going to get to New Orleans. His chartered steamer, the *Great Republic*, was trapped in ice above Columbus, and the ducal party in Memphis was waiting to see if it could be freed. Even on February 7, the same day as Laborde's cited article, the *Daily Picayune* reported that it was not clear whether Alexei would be arriving by river or rail. Four days later the *Bee* reported that the Grand Duke and his party would be departing Memphis, and "if no mishap occurs, they will be in New Orleans in good time for Mardi Gras."[49] Thus, any doubt expressed in the local papers about Alexei's presence at Mardi Gras were likely referring to his transportation problems and the potential havoc these might wreak on his plans while in the city. These articles in no way prove Rex's creation was unconnected to Alexei's visit. In fact, a thorough examination of newspaper articles from the winter of 1871-1872 reveals that the press was frequently unsure about the Grand Duke's exact departure and arrival dates, primarily because Alexei's schedule was flexible and changed frequently.[50]

One significant element in this debate over the connection between the creation of Rex and Alexei is Rex's selection of the song, "If Ever I Cease to Love." In Rex's pronouncement of February 10, the King of Carnival ordered that all buildings along the proposed marching route be decorated and that "all organizations provided with music must instruct band masters to play while passing in review the Royal Anthem, 'If ever I cease to love.'"[51] The selection of this song has been repeatedly offered as evidence that the actions of Rex were, in part at least, a response to Alexei's impending arrival. "If Ever I Cease to Love" was a song from Lydia Thompson's burlesque musical, 'Bluebeard," and by the date of Rex's pronouncement, there had already been several newspaper reports which linked Alexei and Lydia. Many sources, therefore, claim that the selection of "If Ever I Cease to Love" was based on Alexei's supposed pursuit of Thompson; from this mistaken belief came the theme song of the Krewe of Rex, which is still used today.

More recently, this dimension of Mardi Gras lore has also been called into question. Both Mitchell and Laborde, for example, claim that "If Ever I Cease to Love" was never played for Alexei; instead, the Russian National Anthem was. However, their source for this assertion—an edited compilation of unidentified contemporary newspaper articles—is weak at best, and thus not entirely convincing.[52] More persuasive is Laborde's evidence that the song was both known and popular in New Orleans long before either Alexei or Lydia set foot in the city. Laborde cites a poem published in the *Times* on November 6, 1871, which is obviously derived from the famous song. Since Alexei did not arrive in New York until two weeks later, this poem demonstrates that the popularity of the song predated Lydia's and Alexei's visits of early 1872. At least one other newspaper reference to the song confirms Laborde's point.[53] Moreover, in a February 6 interview with Rex, the *Times* reported that "the national air or anthem of the Carnival Dynasty, for many centuries past, has been, and is at present, 'If ever I cease to love.'" This article, according to Laborde, is significant in that "it alone disproves the legend that 'If Ever I Cease to Love' spontaneously evolved as Rex's anthem when on Mardi Gras day bands began to play it for the Grand Duke."[54]

Although Laborde's findings are significant, they do not unequivocally disprove the legendary connection between Rex, the famous song, and Alexei. The fact that the people of New Orleans were familiar with "If Ever I Cease to Love" does not mean that Rex could not have selected it with Alexei in mind. Nor does Rex's statement of February 6 about the historical past of the song as the anthem of the "Carnival Dynasty" rule out this possibility. The "Carnival Dynasty" was fantastical—it could claim to have any past that it creators chose. Moreover, this statement came after the press's announcements about Alexei's visit to New Orleans and Rex's initial proclamations. Therefore, when Rex made his statements about the historical past of the Carnival Dynasty, he already knew about Alexei's visit and supposed infatuation with Lydia. Laborde's conviction tha the song was not chosen for Alexei must, in part, come from hi interpretation of the words "Royal Anthem," from the February 1(proclamation, to refer to the "Carnival Dynasty" discussed in th February 6 article. There is, of course, another possibility: that, havin already decided to honor (or mock) Alexei, Rex intentionally chose th words "Royal Anthem" to refer, not to himself or the Carnival Dynast but to Alexei. Thus, Rex still could have selected "If Ever I Cease t Love" specifically with the Grand Duke in mind.

How then can we explain the appearance of Rex in 1872? Several possibilities must be considered. First of all, both Mitchell and Laborde are likely right in associating the creation of Rex with Reconstruction and the political tensions of the post-Civil War era. The early 1870s in Louisiana and, in particular, in New Orleans were tense times. Though Henry Clay Warmoth had been a powerful governor, by 1870 his power was fading and his Republican party was split. This led to increasing disorder and corruption within the legislature, violence and the misuse of both federal troops and local police by governing officials and, ultimately, a disputed gubernatorial election. This political crisis soon resulted in the creation of a congressional investigation committee. Racial tensions complicated the political situation.[55] These conflicts did not escape the notice of the national press. Northern newspapers, in particular, reported on the political chaos in Louisiana, often in condescending language. The citizens of New Orleans took note of this negative portrayal. When the New Orleans *Times* reported that several Northern papers had written on "the decay of New Orleans," one reader agreed and asked, "Is it any wonder that the decay of New Orleans should be a frequent theme with the correspondents of Western and Northern newspapers?"[56]

In the midst of this chaos, it can easily be understood why certain individuals would have sought to improve the image of Louisiana and New Orleans, and the visit of Russian royalty served as the perfect catalyst for action.[57] Rex's organizers understood that, with the lone exception of Mobile, New Orleans was unique in its celebration of Mardi Gras, and thus this holiday offered a rare opportunity for the Crescent City to distinguish itself and deliver a message of southern pride and self-confidence to the North. The presence of the Grand Duke would give this celebration greater legitimacy and would draw positive attention to the city and state. Indeed, a number of newspaper articles expressed a competitive resentment toward the North. As the Grand Duke's arrival in the United States approached, the New Orleans *Times* mocked the impatience of the New York aristocracy, those "delicate creatures...who, like 'lilies of the valley, toil not.'"[58] Once Alexei had arrived in the United States, the New Orleans *Republican* disapproved of the way in which the Grand Duke was being fêted by "half the wise people and all the fools at the North," and criticized the "flunkyism" and adulation being lavished on Alexei by those in the North who think they cannot go to breakfast unless dressed in furs and blazing with diamonds." In the end, the *Republican* concluded that Alexei should not visit New Orleans, in order to "escape the comparison which the

Russian might make between the progress visible in the North and the stagnation apparent in the South."[59]

Once Mardi Gras was underway, however, a decidedly different tone can be detected in the press. Universally, the New Orleans press deemed Mardi Gras a success, describing it as one of "the finest and most artistic displays" which they hoped would bring even more visitors to the city the following year.[60] The papers also repeatedly linked the presence of the Grand Duke with Mardi Gras, calling it a "double event" and a "two-edged sword' which offered a more substantial reason for celebration and an enticement to visitors.[61] All of these articles are tinged with a distinct tone of pride, often aimed directly at the North. "Mardi Gras is a festival with which our brethren of more Northern climes have little or no acquaintance," wrote the *Daily Picayune*.[62] Indeed, when the New York *Herald* called for the young men of that city to conceive of something that might eclipse New Orleans' Mardi Gras celebration, the *Picayune* responded confidently "It cannot be done. New Orleans is the only city on the continent tha can reach perfection in this elegant and classical pageant."[63]

This desire by New Orleans elites to demonstrate their region' equality with or superiority to the North can be viewed as part of th creation of the New South myth. The defeat of the Civil War and th humiliation of Reconstruction prodded some young Southerners t conceive of a new order, a new definition of the South, one of whic they could be proud, one that promised to restore the power ar prestige of the region and one that could replace the old econom system without sacrificing the much-revered memory of the "O South." Over time, these hopes were transformed into a powerful soci myth about the ability of the South to regenerate itself, and the wor "New South" came to symbolize that transition from one kind society to another.[64] Although the focus of Rex's founders may ha been more narrow than those who constructed the New South my their contribution to a "showing up" of the North was embraced a appreciated by many of their local contemporaries who clearly tc pride in the uniqueness of Mardi Gras and the opportunity it offe New Orleans and the South.

The message that Rex's creators hoped to deliver to those at hoi of course, is a different matter. The founders of Rex are usu described in secondary sources as "prominent citizens." More precis they were white, upper-class men; the first Rex, Lewis J. Salomon, the son of a private banker.[65] In a time of social, political and ra upheaval, when the primacy of the elite was perceived to be u

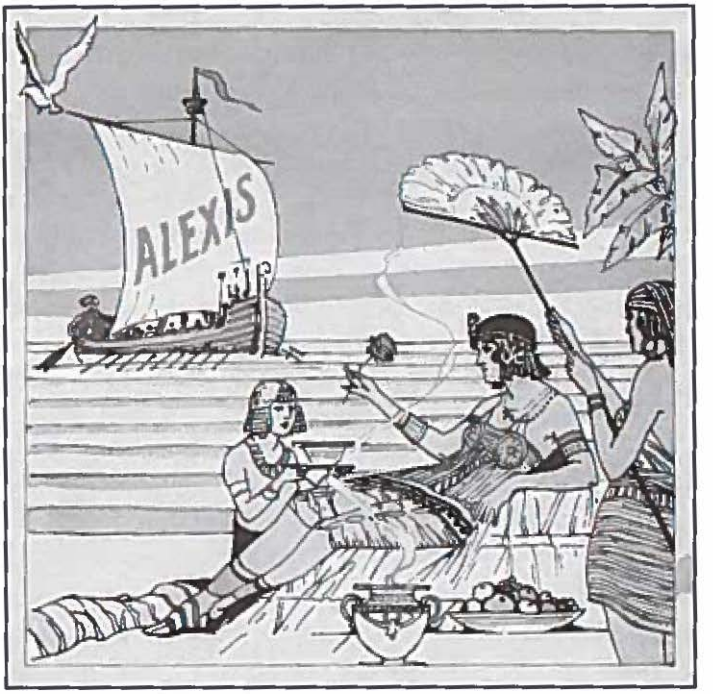
threat, it hardly seems surprising that these men chose to create a new tradition which emphasized social preference. As Eric Hobsbawm has noted, invented traditions often emerge when a society undergoes a rapid transformation that weakens or destroys the social patterns for which older traditions had been created. These invented traditions can "foster the corporate sense of *superiority* of elites, particularly when these had to be recruited from those who did not already possess it by birth or ascription."[66] Significantly, the period of 1871-1872 falls within the time frame of what David Cannadine calls "the heyday of 'invented tradition'" in Europe and America.[67] Thus, it is conceivable that the upper class created Rex in part as a vivid display of social superiority in an era of great change and uncertainty.

Lawrence Powell explains in much the same way the legends and traditions surrounding the Battle of Liberty Place, also known as the Battle of September Fourteenth, which took place in New Orleans in 1874. The Battle of Liberty Place had been several years in the making, the result of political and racial tensions and the disputed gubernatorial election of 1872. When these tensions eventually erupted into violence, the result was a short, armed clash in which the extralegal militia called the Crescent City White League quickly defeated the racially mixed force of city police and state militia.[68] With the victory of the White League, the battle became part of a popular legend among white elites in the city. As Powell has demonstrated, the legend and popular memory of the battle are considerably different from what actually happened. By combining the use of myth and invented tradition—and erecting a monument and celebrating the battle's anniversary each year—white elites in New Orleans were able to convey the meaning and experience of this event to younger generations. Significantly, Powell notes that there was "a striking overlap between the membership of the city's exclusive gentlemen's clubs, carnival krewes, and the Crescent City White League."[69] Even if Rex's founders did not belong to the League themselves, they were likely friends and relatives of members. Indeed, the volatile issue of race did creep into the celebration of Mardi Gras and the reception of the Grand Duke. One newspaper commented, for example, that Alexei had seen many sites in America, and all that remained was for him to "view a Southern Ethiopian-African Legislature," and then his trip would be complete. Another compared the emancipation of the Russian serfs to the freeing of the American slaves, remarking, "Though the serfs were emancipated...Russia was not idiotic enough to make them either rulers or slaves."[70] More significantly, the New Orleans *Republican* accused Mayor

Flanders of failing to invite any member of the legislature to participate in the carnival festivities or the reception of Alexei because "if the white members were invited he would also have to invited the colored members and their families."[71]

There has always been an element of racial and social exclusivity in the organized celebration of Mardi Gras. When Comus was first created in 1857, for example, its membership consisted almost entirely of white Americans, thereby excluding New Orleans' Creole population, which had dominated the Mardi Gras celebrations in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Later, racial, social, and religious discrimination became standard features of the old-line Mardi Gras krewes. Although the first Rex was Jewish, that precedent was never followed, and other groups, such as blacks and Italians, were excluded as well. Other krewes were equally guilty of discrimination. For most of the twentieth century, then, the upper echelons of New Orleans society embraced the cause of white supremacy and gave it an air of respectability. It is important to emphasize, however, that race or ethnic background was not the only criteria for exclusion. Wealth was also an issue. The founders and members of these old-line krewes were all drawn from the most elite gentlemen's clubs and the wealthiest and most prestigious families. Because these groups tended to admit only family members and close friends to their ranks, they necessarily excluded all those who could not afford to socialize with them. As James Gill aptly described, though Mardi Gras may appear just a public festival to the rest of the world, to the upper class of New Orleans, "its real significance lay in the annual reaffirmation of social eminence over merit."[72]

The founders of Rex may have had another motive in creating a new Mardi Gras tradition as well. Laborde has indicated that these men were outsiders, several of them originally from the North.[73] Moreover, they were men whose wealth and position came from non-agricultural pursuits: banking, publishing and other mercantile, financial and administrative/bureaucratic activities. In other words, these men were not the traditional southern agricultural elite and, although they had joined New Orleans' various prestigious societies, they were certainly conscious of their relatively new and weak Creole elite ties. Indeed, throughout the South, this transplanted elite desperately tried to link itself to the Old South or the Confederacy to strengthen their legitimacy even as they were fundamentally changing the region.[74] What better way to demonstrate a continuum with the old New Orleans elite than to stage a Mardi Gras parade?



Krewe of Alexis invitations, 1925 (below), and 1928 (above). Special Collections, Tulane University Library, New Orleans.

The choice of Rex's creators to embrace symbols of royalty and nobility is significant as well. The title "Rex," of course meant king, and in the press, "Rex" was used interchangeably with "King of Carnival." Moreover, Rex's proclamations were designed to mimic royal edicts, and were sometimes issued in the name of other imaginary nobles as well. Meanwhile, other press releases referred to the "Carnival Dynasty."[75] Finally, it is telling that as Salomon, the first Rex, worked to solicit money from his friends to stage the first daytime procession, he promised to make each of them "a duke in the Carnival."[76] This conscious use of such powerful titles and symbols suggests several things. Most obviously, it points to a desire to demonstrate, or emphasize, social superiority and the traditional predominance of white elites in New Orleans. However, the invoking of royal symbols and noble titles is also indicative of local reaction to Alexei's visit, as both an effort to emulate the prestige of social status which they themselves desired and to mock the adulation which was being lavished upon the tsar's son, both at home, but especially, in the North. These desires were not necessarily mutually exclusive, but represented an inner conflict among white elites regarding their position in relation to the Grand Duke. Thus, white elites were both fascinated by the idea of royalty but at the same time, repelled by the displays of deference by their Northern brethren and local politicians.[77] At the same time, by embracing the trappings of royalty for their own purposes, they found yet another way to deliver a message of superiority to the North.

These conflicting feelings about Alexei's presence in New Orleans can be found in a number of newspaper articles. On several occasions the New Orleans press spoke out against, or mocked, the desire of some groups to fawn over the Grand Duke. The most vitriolic of such criticism came in the New Orleans *Republican*, which, in addition to criticizing the North for its toadysim and rejecting Alexei's proposed visit, firmly stated that "the Southern people have no desire to see him and that "our means are not so plentiful that we can afford to spare the money to entertain him." The Grand Duke "will be so thoroughly fêted and toasted in the North," the *Republican* continued, that "the inattention of our people, who are but poorly given to entertaining royalty, would seem like animosity beside the adulation which is being lavished upon him in the most prosperous sections of the Union."[78] As Mardi Gras approached, the *Republican* increased its disapproval of the city's attention toward Alexei's arrival, repeatedly complaining that it was taking precedence over all other matters at city hall: "It even takes precedence of Mardi Gras, and the officials, destined to serve the

country beneath the smile of imperial condescension, have been busily engaged in studying 'Chesterfield' and the 'Court Journal' for a week past."[79]

The appearance of Rex in 1872, then, was likely the product of a complex set of factors and it would be an oversimplification to ascribe it to one reason alone. Rex's founders, perhaps both consciously and unconsciously, created a new organization and a new tradition deeply encoded with messages of social, racial and regional superiority for both the North and their southern contemporaries. The arrival of Alexei, though perhaps not the only impetus for Rex's creation, was certainly a contributing factor, and certainly more than mere coincidence. Though New Orleans elites mocked the kowtowing to royalty, they were still fascinated by the arrival of the tsar's son, and utilized the same symbols to create their own local royalty. Their intent may have been to mock, but on some level they were also displaying their own desire for social preference.[80]

Notes

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This article is the first step in a book project to tell the entire story of Alexei's tour of the United States. Thus far, no account has been written on the Grand Duke's trip. The only published source is a compilation of unidentified newspaper articles; *The Grand Duke in the United States of America*, with an introduction by Jeff Dykes (New York, 1972).

A "krewe" is the traditional name for a club or organization that stages a Mardi Gras parade.

See, for example, the invitations and related items contained in the Louisiana Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University.

Daily Picayune (New Orleans), December 2, 6, 10, 12, 14, 19, 23, 24, 27, 1871.

An article of January 31, 1872, in the New Orleans *Bee* refers to "the original programme prepared by the Czar before the party left St. Petersburg."

Daily Picayune (New Orleans), November 25, 1871 and December 3, 1872.

[7]New Orleans *Republican*, November 26, 1871.

[8]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 13, 1872.

[9]Ibid., December 31, 1871.

[10]Ibid., February 9, 1872.

[11]Ibid., February 11 and 13, 1872.

[12]Ibid., February 14, 1872.

[13]Ibid., January 27, 1872; New Orleans *Times*, January 31, 1872.

[14]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 31, 1872.

[15]New Orleans *Bee*, February 2, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 2, 1872.

[16]Ibid., February 7, 1872.

[17]New Orleans *Bee*, February 1, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), Februar 1, 1872.

[18]New Orleans *Bee*, February 2 and 3, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans) February 3 and 7, 1872.

[19]Ibid., February 7, 1872; New Orleans *Republican*, February 7, 1872.

[20]Ibid., February 6, 1872.

[21]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 13, 1872; New Orleans *Bee*, Februa 13 and 14, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 15, 1872.

[22]Ibid., February 15, 1872.

[23]Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov to Maria Alexandrovna Romanov, Januar February 1872, Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossisskaia Federatsiia (GARF), (Sta Archive of the Russian Federation), f. 641, op. 1, d. 34, l. 125.

[24]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 17, 1872.

[25]Kurt Ganzl, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre* (New York, 1994), 1449-5

[26]Perry Young, *Carnival and Mardi Gras in New Orleans* (New Orleans, 1939), 44.

[27]Robert Tallant, *Mardi Gras* (Garden City, NY, 1948), 129-38; Harnett Kane, "Romances of Old New Orleans," *American Weekly* (April 16, 1950): 22. A more recent article with a similar tabloid tone appeared in a 1997 Mardi Gras guide; see, Judith Fischer and Nikita Dolmatoff, "Was the Duke Grand?" *Arthur Hardy's Mardi Gras Guide 1997* (New Orleans, 1997), 40-44.

[28]See, for example, Joan B. Garvey and Mary Lou Widmer, *Beautiful Crescent: A History of New Orleans*, 3rd ed. (New Orleans, 1988), 130; Thomas di Palma, *New Orleans Carnival and Its Climax Mardi Gras* (New Orleans, 1953), 48; Arthur B. LaCour, *New Orleans Masquerade, Chronicles of Carnival* (New Orleans, 1957), 41; Errol Laborde, *Mardi Gras! A Celebration* (New Orleans, 1981), 56; Henri Schindler, *Mardi Gras, New Orleans* (Paris and New York,1997), 48; Liz Scott, *The Reach and Screech Manual or How to Survive Mardi Gras* (Meraux, LA, 1979), 34; and James Gill, *Lords of Misrule: Mardi Gras and the Politics of Race in New Orleans* (Jackson, 1997), 96, 99. Also, see, "Musically Yours," *Arthur Hardy's Mardi Gras Guide, 25th Anniversary Collectors Edition* (New Orleans, 2001), 66.

[29]See, for example, Honey Naylor, *The Insider's Guide to New Orleans* (Boston, 1994), 99; Mary Herczog, *Frommor's New Orleans, 2001* (Forest City, CA, 2000), 10; Eva Zibart and Bob Sehlinger, *The Unofficial Guide to New Orleans*, 2nd ed. (Forest City, CA, 2001), 59-60; Bethany Ewald Bultman, *New Orleans* (Oakland, CA, 2000), 164; Becky Retz and James Gaffney, *Insider's Guide: New Orleans* (Helena, MT, 2000), 210. For internet examples, see, <www.fattuesday.com> and <www.tamnet.com>.

[30]The literature on Lydia Thompson either fails to mention the link with Alexei or dismisses it as myth. See, Robert C. Allen, *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture* (Chapel Hill and London, 1991); Ganzl, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre*, 1449-50; Bernard Sobel, *A Pictorial History of Burlesque*; Edward Van Every, *Sins of America*; Marilyn A. Stolzman Moses, "Lydia Thompson and the 'British Blondes' in the United States (PhD diss., University of Oregon, 1978), 138-40. Some Mardi Gras writers have also questioned this story. See, Gill, *Lords of Misrule*, 96; Mitchell, 55; Laborde, *Marched*, 25-26. Most recently the romantic link between Alexei and Lydia was questioned by a columnist in *Times-Picayune*; Theodore P. Mann, "Carnival Anthem is Love Story with City, not Duke," *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), February 25, 2001.

[31]Laborde, *Marched*, 25-26.

[32]Admittedly, it is difficult to find reliable biographical information about Alexei, particularly regarding his personal life. Some useful sources are Petr Grebel'skii and Aleksandr Mirvis, *Dom Romanovykh* (St. Petersburg, 1992), 148; *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar, dopolnitel'nyi tom 1* (St. Petersburg, 1905), 81; *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History* (Gulf Breeze, FL, 1976-), 1:114-15; Sidney Harcave, *Years of the Golden Cockerel: The Last Romanov Tsars, 1814-17* (New York, 1968), 221-22, 251, 281, 287, 353-54. None of these, however, shed significant light on the questions about Alexei's romantic pursuits.

[33]New Orleans *Republican*, December 15, 1871, January 12, 1872, and February 28, 1872.

[34]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), December 27, 1871.

[35]Ibid., January 21, 1872.

[36]Ibid., February 18, 1872 and February 20, 1872. The Grand Duke's supposed infatuation with Lotta has also been repeated in the secondary literature; see, for example, Kane, 23; Schindler, 48; and, LaBorde, *Mardi Gras*, 56 and *Marched*, 26.

[37]New Orleans *Republican*, December 28, 1871, and January 19, 1872; Kansas City *Times*, January 19, 1872. See also, New Orleans *Republican*, January 25, February 1, 18, and March 13, 1872; New Orleans *Times*, December 23, 1871.

[38]For the rumor about chambermaids, see, *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 2, 1872. I have not yet found the primary source responsible for the story about the Indian maid, but several secondary sources, without footnotes, have repeated it. See, Tallant, 130 and Kane, 22. Moreover, there were other articles which hinted at Alexei's love of women or his romantic life; see, the New Orleans *Republican*, February 18, 1872. Even more interesting, both the *Daily Picayune* and the New Orleans *Republican* reported that a rumor was spreading through St. Petersburg that Alexei had married a Russian woman while in America; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 18, 1872; New Orleans *Republican*, February 18, 1872.

[39]Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov to Maria Alexandrovna Romanov, January-February 1872, GARF, f. 641, op. 1, d. 34, ll. 120-120 ob.

[40]See Grant's annual message, reprinted in the New Orleans *Times*, December 5, 1871.

[41]Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov to Maria Alexandrovna Romanov, January-February 1872, GARF, f. 641, op. 1, d. 34, l. 122.

[42]Anna Pavlovskaia, *Rossiia i Amerika* (Moscow, 1998), 46; *Memuari grafa S. D. Sheremeteva* (Moscow, 2001), 569. Zhukovskaia was the daughter of the Alexander II's tutor, the Russian poet Vasilii Zhukovskii; Pavlovskaia, 46, and *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History* (1987), 46: 67-70.

[43]Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov to Maria Alexandrovna Romanov, January-February 1872, GARF, f. 641, op. 1, d. 34, l.126-126 ob.

[44]Alexei Alexandrovich Romanov to Maria Alexandrovna Romanov, January-February 1872, GARF, f. 641, op. 1, d. 34, ll. 121 ob-122.

[45]Gill, *Lords of Misrule*, 30-46, 86; Errol Laborde, *Marched the Day God: A History of the Rex Organization* (New Orleans, 1999), 11-13, 17.

[46]Gill, *Lords of Misrule*, 94; Samuel Kinser, *Carnival American Style: Mardi Gras at New Orleans and Mobile* (Chicago and London, 1990), 102; Leonard J. Huber, *Mardi Gras: A Pictorial History of Carnival in New Orleans* (Gretna, LA, 1994), 13-15.

[47]Reid Mitchell, *All on a Mardi Gras Day* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1995), 54-56. See, J. Curtis Waldo, *History of the Carnival in New Orleans from 1857 to 1882* (New Orleans, 1882), 14-15, and "First Rex Tells How It Began," *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), February 25, 1938, Mardi Gras Supplement, 18. Interestingly, although Salomon does not mention Alexei, two other articles in the same Mardi Gras supplement, on pages 39 and 51, do mention Alexei and link him with the appearance of Rex.

[48]Laborde, *Marched*, 5-6, 17-18. There are also some secondary sources which mention Alexei only in passing; see, for example, Henry Rightor, "The Carnival of New Orleans," in *Standard History of New Orleans* (Chicago, 1900), 636-37; Frank L. Loomis, *A History of the Carnival and New Orleans* (Published by the author, 1904), 7.

[49]*Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 3, 1872; New Orleans *Bee*, February 7, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 7, 1872; New Orleans *Bee*, February 11, 1872.

[50]For example, although Alexei only arrived in late November, the Washington press reported on October 21 that he was "momentarily expected"; New Orleans *Republican*, October 22, 1871. Then, in the following months, a series of articles and poems expressed concern and even frustration with the Grand Duke's delayed arrival; New Orleans *Times*, November 7, 8, 13, 17, 19, 21, and December 4, 1871. Moreover, though Alexei may have had an itinerary for his travels in America, it was by no means a strict schedule, as numerous press reports indicate; New Orleans *Times*, November 29, 1871.

[51]New Orleans *Bee*, February 10, 1872.

[52]*The Grand Duke in the United States of America*, 216.

[53]Laborde, *Marched the Day God*, 31-32; New Orleans *Times*, February 6, 1872; see, also, New Orleans *Republican*, December 10, 1871.

[54]Laborde, *Marched the Day God*, 31-32.

[55]Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1974), 209-41; Bennet H. Wall, ed., *Louisiana: A History*, 3rd ed. (Wheeling, IL, 1997), 187-93; New Orleans *Times*, January 8, 1872.

[56]New Orleans *Times*, December 5, and 8, 1871. See, also, Kansas City *Times*, January 5, 1872; New Orleans *Times*, January 8, and 15, 1872.

[57]Other groups similarly seemed to have viewed Alexei's visit as an opportunity to put forth extra effort in the carnival celebrations. The American Union Club, for example, declared that its ball at he Odd Fellows' Hall would "present an unusual brilliancy," since it was expected that Alexei would be in attendance; New Orleans *Republican*, January 25, 1872.

[58]New Orleans *Times*, November 13, 1871.

[59]New Orleans *Republican*, November 26, 1871. For other examples of negative and sarcastic references to the North, see, New Orleans *Republican*, December 7, 1871 and February 4, 1872.

[60]New Orleans *Times*, January 5, 1872; New Orleans *Semi-Weekly Louisianian*, February 15, 1872; New Orleans *Republican*, February 12, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 15, 1872.

[61]New Orleans *Republican*, February 12, and 13, 1872; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), February 14, 1872.

[63]Ibid., February 14, 1872.

[63]Ibid., February 22, 1872.

[64]Paul Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York, 1970), 3-7.

[65]"First Rex Tells How It Began," *Times-Picayune*, February 25, 1938.

[66]Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge and New York 1983), 4, 10.

[67]David Cannadine, "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition,'" in *The Invention of Tradition*, 108

[68]See, Lawrence Powell, "Reinventing Tradition: Liberty Place, Historical Memory and Silk-stocking Vigilantism in New Orleans Politics," *Slavery and Abolition* 20: (April 1999): 127-49. For more general treatments of the battle, see, Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1974), 291-96, and Judith Schafer, "The Battle of Liberty," *Cultural Vistas*, 5 (Spring 1994): 8-17

[69]Powell, "Reinventing Tradition," 131.

[70]New Orleans *Times*, January 5, 1871, and December 22, 1871.

[71]New Orleans *Republican*, February 13, 1872. In response, the New Orleans *Times* argued that other reasons had dictated the mayor's decision about who would be invited to greet Alexei; New Orleans *Times*, February 14, 1872. Incidentally, New Orleans was not the only city where race became an issue in Alexei's reception. In Philadelphia, a free man of color claimed that he was denied a ticket to a ball honoring Alexei because of his race; *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), December 22, 1871; New Orleans *Semi-Weekly Louisianian*, December 17, 1871.

[72]Gill, *Lords of Misrule*, 35-44, 93-97.

[73]Laborde, *Marched*, 6.

[74]Laborde notes that many of these Northern transplants fought in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy; Laborde, *Marched*, 6-10.

[75]New Orleans *Times*, February 6, 1872.

[76]"First Rex Tells How It Began," *Times-Picayune*, February 25, 1938.

[77]See, for example, the disgust expressed in the following articles; New Orleans *Times*, December 15, and 16, 1871.

[78]New Orleans *Republican*, November 26, 1871.

[79]Ibid., February 11, and 5, 1872, and December 7, 1871.

[80]The overwhelmingly white and wealthy composition of the traditional Mardi Gras krewes even today, and the attempts at government intervention and forced desegregation in the 1990s, is evidence that modern-day Mardi Gras still retains some of these original tendencies of social and racial distinction; see Gill, *Lords of Misrule*.

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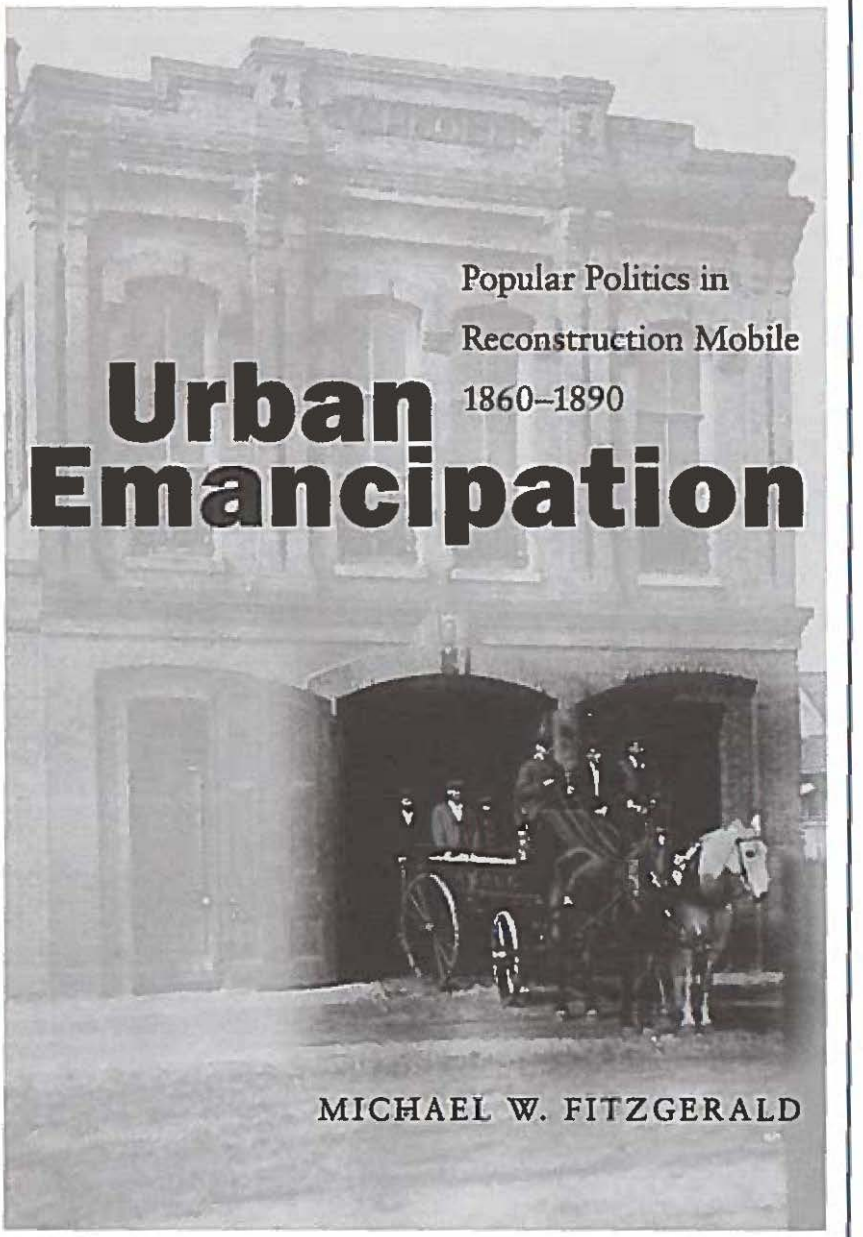
Emancipation and its Urban Consequences: Freedom Comes to Mobile

Michael W. Fitzgerald

This article is an excerpt from the author's forthcoming book *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Mobile, 1860-1890*, which will be published this fall by the Louisiana State University Press. The work examines urban political mobilization after the Civil War, exploring how class and caste tensions within the African-American community encouraged social turmoil and rampant Republican factionalism during and after Reconstruction.

This study has an overarching theme: the centrality of African-American internal divisions for understanding grassroots Reconstruction, both in this one city and by extension more broadly. African-American factionalism became a pervasive urban reality, one deeply rooted in the city's history. Emancipation lumped together as a racially identified group people whose experiences were thoroughly dissimilar, effacing previous distinctions of caste and color. The origins of Reconstruction political disunity thus extend into the antebellum decades, and in social terms it makes little sense to talk about a single population, so diverse were the backgrounds of people of African descent. Divisions among political activists reflected these differences, which echoed broadly through their popular following as well. When the freedpeople were thrust onto the political stage, these realities largely determined the shape of the popular movement in support of Reconstruction.

As Alabama's one large city in a predominantly rural state, Mobile provided a distinctive context for the emergence of black popular politics. In 1860 the city was Alabama's commercial center, socially and politically dominated by its merchant elite. Mobile had little industrial activity, but it boasted the third largest value of exports of any city in the United States.[1] Even under slavery, African Americans in this leading cotton port demonstrated unusual diversity. Out of a total population of about 29,000 in the city of Mobile, some 8,400 were African American. Of these, over eight hundred were free people of color, with nearly four hundred more living in the surrounding countryside. Mobile County possessed nearly one-half of the state's free black population in 1860, thus the city's free people of color comprised a sizable presence. After the war they would provide a disproportionate share of Mobile's black political leadership offering their distinctive experiences and attributes to their formerly enslaved fellows after emancipation.[2]



Lousiana State University's book cover. Photo courtesy of the University of South Alabama Archives.

Among free African Americans before the war, the most distinctive portion was the "Creole" population, as it was described in Mobile parlance.[3] This group would become the most contentious element in postwar Mobile's black political scene. Afro-Creole numbers are variously estimated, some imprecision being evident in ascription of the status, but there must have been hundreds in the vicinity, representing perhaps one-third of all the free people of color. The Creoles claimed a mixture of French or Spanish and African ancestry, tracing their forbears back into the colonial era. The descendants of liaisons between masters and their slaves, the Creoles' traditional status reflected the Latin cultural acceptance of interracial relationships; the Creoles often maintained the Catholic religion and linguistic heritage of their European ancestry. Light-skinned and often prosperous, they were generally assigned as a third racial category, as was the case in Louisiana and the Caribbean region more broadly. Creoles enjoyed a distinctive legal status, dating from the Louisiana Purchase and Adams-Onis treaty of the early nineteenth century; those who could claim descent from French or Spanish settlers were to enjoy basic civil rights. As the only segment of the (acknowledged) African-descent population to enjoy any significant privileges, their loyalties were necessarily complicated.[4]

The Afro-Creole population maintained a distinct social position into the nineteenth century, as American cultural influence overran the Gulf region. For some, their economic success was such that the overriding goal was to maintain their now anomalous status. In northern Mobile County, along the river, several long-established families owned plantations and slaves, most prominently the Chastang, Dubroca and Collins clans.[5] Seldom did the offspring of these planter families show interest in Republican politics after the war. Other Creoles, however, had a different social profile, and many were drawn to the city in search of economic opportunity. Such less established individuals faced a more fluid situation in negotiating their economic and social status. As with plantation societies elsewhere, free people of color found an urban niche in Mobile's slave economy and often prospered. In the case of the Creoles these advantages were compounded by the favorable legal status of the "treaty population," which approached civil equality in all respects save suffrage. As one postwar Radical observed, the Creoles "always enjoyed certain privileges which were denied to the rest of the colored race.. [T]hey could stay out as late as they pleased at night, could smoke cigars on the streets, could testify in courts of justice." They were also the only persons of African descent who could legally sell liquor.[6] These exemptions were evident throughout state and local laws. In 1848, for example

the legislature passed a bill banning free blacks and unsupervised slaves from the trade of cotton sampling, but in response to local protest the lawmakers later exempted Mobile County Creoles explicitly.[7] By the 1850s, the city's Creoles actually enjoyed government-supported schools. Their public presence was augmented by the sponsorship of powerful whites in the community, especially established Catholics, who viewed them as a sort of a quaint carryover of Mobile's Latin heritage. The Creoles' toleration also humanized the harshness of the racial order, so long as their loyalty was unambiguously demonstrated.[8]

The Creole leadership sought public acceptance, manifesting their solidarity with the white citizenry, though they perceived racial slights readily enough. Their public persona combined community spirit with social exclusiveness. The Creole Fire Company dated from the 1820s, being one of the first founded in the city. It was represented on the city firemen's association, admittedly by a white proxy, but the members insisted on separate public activities.[9] Every April the company held a large procession in which city dignitaries toasted the members' contribution to the community. By the late-1850s, a more exclusive Creole Social Club formed, limited to forty members. One of the younger officers of this club, Ovid Gregory, would become a Republican legislator, and his social profile perhaps represents the aspirations of his fellows. A native of Mobile County, Gregory's parents were born free. He spoke "three different languages, English, French and Spanish," and was considered well educated.[10] He was also well traveled, having visited Mexico, Latin America, and the western United States. If not rich, he certainly enjoyed social advantages denied most of the free black population, not to mention the slaves themselves. While some studies have found egalitarian tendencies in the Afro-Creole community of Louisiana, based on cultural adherence to French political radicalism and literary romanticism, in Mobile's small Creole community the evidence of this is sparse.[11] Mobile's Creoles had few incentives to associate themselves with the rest of the African-American population, and there is only limited suggestion of psychological identification with their enslaved brethren. Creoles were occasionally arrested for socializing with slaves, and the Creole Fire Company actually considered fining members for undue fraternization.[12] One Creole politician, Philip Joseph, later claimed that his mother had liberated hundreds of slaves in Cuba, having inherited them from her white father. In Mobile, however, Joseph's relations were among the wealthiest Creoles, and they owned slaves and made few slaves. During Reconstruction, political rivals accused Joseph of spying for the Confederacy and poisoning black prisoners of war, charges that,

however unlikely, suggest something about the repute of such Creoles among the freedpeople. It is difficult to find evidence among Creoles of even private misgivings over slavery, these sentiments being dangerous under the circumstances.[13]

As Civil War approached, the Creoles confronted increasing challenges. The arrival of large numbers of Irish and German immigrants brought competition for positions as skilled tradesmen. In the 1850s immigrants represented much of Mobile's adult male population. Their arrival provoked a nativist backlash which promoted racist legislation against African Americans as well.[14] The treaty population escaped many of these laws, but the political climate deteriorated as the sectional crisis placed their loyalties under more scrutiny. In 1861, for example, the Creole Social Club suspended operations for the duration of the war, a precaution reflecting the consciousness they were under suspicion. After Fort Sumter, Mobile's organized Creole community boldly proclaimed southern loyalties, and to the last days of the war, Creole fairs were held to benefit Confederate soldiers.[15] White notables repeatedly tried to raise a Creole battalion for the army, assuring Richmond that Creoles were "mostly property-owners, owning slaves," who were "as true to the South as the pure white race." Confederate General Dabney H. Maury commanding the city's defenses, pointed out that Mobile's Creoles did not stand "on the footing of negroes" and were anxious to serve.[16] Confederate authorities in Richmond turned them down, but Alabama did sanction a Creole unit for local police purposes. The actual state of Creole loyalties is perhaps not clear; the organization was denounced in the press for insufficient drill, so the recruits may not have served with that much enthusiasm. Even so, during the final siege of Mobile, all male Creoles were ordered to report for local defense, along with other free blacks. The Native Guard, composed of Creoles, actually served in the fortifications before the city, risking their lives in defense of the old order.

Emancipation eliminated the Creoles' privileged legal situation, but their ambiguous racial status would make them problematic allies for the multitudes of freedpeople. During Reconstruction, Creole leaders often emerged on the losing end of Republican popular politics, which suggests some estrangement from the black population. However, the rest of the antebellum free black population had a different social profile, for nontreaty free blacks were the scapegoats of prewar politics. By state law these less privileged free people of color were barred from all forms education, much less public schools. During slavery, non-Creole free blacks were also excluded from various occupations.[18] Black sailors couldn't even enter Mobile under state law, having to remain on boa

ship three miles out in the bay. Mobile's municipal legislation was even more rigorous, as reflected in the city code of 1859. All these free blacks had to register a personal description and place of residence each year. They also had to put up a good-behavior bond on pain of up to four months in jail. No free black could be on the streets after ten in the evening without permission of city officials, and even then no later than midnight. No free black could hold a dance or ball at night, under any circumstances, or attend such an illicit gathering. There were also restrictions on contact with slaves, however difficult these would have been to enforce in practice. The evident assumption was that these free blacks, unlike their Creole peers, represented a threat to the slave system.[19]

All free African Americans remained socially distinct from their enslaved fellows, most tangibly in physical appearance. Around 80 percent of slaves in the city were described as "black" rather than "mulatto" in the 1860 census, but mixed ancestry predominated among their free counterparts. A full 88 percent of free people of color were listed as "mulatto," a figure which would incorporate Creoles as well as other free African Americans.[20] Phenotypic differences reinforced the other forms of social hierarchy, strongly if not uniformly. Light skin color became the visible manifestation of an interconnected network of caste, class and educational advantages. These ethnic patterns notwithstanding, the circumscribed legal status of non-Creole free blacks encouraged relatively intimate ties to their enslaved brethren. Material circumstances heightened this identification, as racial status was reflected in terms of property.[21] The upper end of the wealth scale was dominated by known Creole families, along with the apparent mistresses of rich whites and their offspring. By contrast, many other male free blacks were common laborers, with most of the employed women doing similar tasks as well. Occupational patterns, then, placed the nontreaty free population in closer association with the bulk of the slaves. Perhaps this was by choice, especially among the minority who faced social discrimination as darker-skinned people. They lacked the network of exclusive institutions that exemplified the Creole community.[22]

Non-Creole free blacks become the obvious source of leadership for the freedpeople. Ex-slaves had some cause to view the Creoles as racist and elitist, but they had more reason to trust the remainder of the free blacks, many of whom were themselves once slaves. Religious loyalties encouraged such attitudes, for the Creoles' traditional status was bound up with Catholicism, a reflection of their Latin heritage. The other free blacks, by contrast, chose Baptist or Methodist churches, a preference they shared with the mass of slaves. As antebellum black congregations formed

under white sponsorship, the Protestant free-black community did not aspire to separate religious institutions. Their numbers were too small even had they been so inclined. Free black men instead assumed prominent roles in the black Protestant congregations dominated numerically by their enslaved brethren. Several of these individuals went from antebellum church leadership to postwar political activism. For example, the postwar officeholder Jacob Anderson helped establish the Franklin Street Colored Church.[23] A semiliterate carpenter before the war, he bought his freedom and then aided similar self-purchases by his friends, hoping that they could go to Liberia together. Emigration sentiment among these free blacks doubtless reflected a sense of racial persecution reinforced by religious enthusiasm for the redemption of the homeland. Several future Republican activists involved themselves in African missionary work. The identification with African heritage and emigration among these free black activists was avoided by the Creoles, none of whom were prominent in the effort.[24]

For some free future politicians, the evidence suggests they held strong emotional ties to their enslaved brethren. John Carraway, for example, would become the leading black politician of the late-1860s, an eventual city official and Republican state representative. He was the son of a North Carolina planter and slave mother. Carraway was freed in his father's will but fled in fear of a legal dispute with his white relations. He left his still-enslaved mother behind in the early 1850s, to become a tailor and then a sailor, and eventually an equal rights activist in New York.[25] When the war broke out, he volunteered for Colonel Robert Gould Shaw's famous Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment, though ill-health forced his resignation.[26] He made a musical contribution to the war effort, the specifics of which are murky. A contemporary biographical sketch awards him authorship of the politically astute anthem "Colored Volunteers."[27] The song told African Americans to "never mind the past/we've had a hard road to travel but our time is come at last." It urged blacks to ignore Lincoln's half-hearted emancipation policies and seize the moment, for only black military prowess could save the nation and kill slavery forever. Whether or not Carraway wrote the song, this pragmatic advice to utilize even imperfect white allies was thoroughly representative of him. John Carraway's personal odyssey was not typical of the enslaved population, but it does suggest that his unusual preparation for leadership was joined with genuine personal engagement with the plight of the freedpeople. He also demonstrated a testy resentment of the social pretensions of the Creole elite and distaste for their Catholic faith, which he regarded as socially retrograde.[28] Less privileged free blacks like

Carraway commonly distrusted the Creoles for their accommodation to the status quo.

During the Civil War, Mobile's civil authorities demonstrated little confidence in the Confederate loyalties of these non-Creole free people of color. With the secession crisis, there were aggressive moves to expel the free black population to the point that several individuals voluntarily reenslaved themselves to stay with loved ones or simply out of a reluctance to leave.[29] Unlike the Creoles, no one suggested enrolling other free black volunteers in the army, that is until the end of the war, when they were rounded up wholesale for the fortifications. The city council voted to raise a special tax on free blacks living in the city with the evident intention of driving them elsewhere. Even parties and ostentatious dress became subject for anxious public criticism. Authorities stepped up prosecution of free blacks for consorting with slaves, fearing abolitionist designs. These concerns were not necessarily misplaced, especially as Yankee victory loomed. Late in the war, for example, a free man of color named Sylvester received five years in jail for helping slaves escape to Union lines, an effort undertaken with an enslaved co-conspirator. Likewise the free barber Major Lankford was tried for "enticing slaves to leave masters and harboring runaways."[30] Lankford's wartime actions proceeded directly to postwar militancy, for during the early years of black suffrage, he was a constant presence on the streets. He would lead those Republicans most inclined toward direct physical confrontation with white authority.

Important as the free people of color were in terms of postwar leadership, they comprised only a fraction of the overall black population. The bulk of Mobile's African-American residents, about nine-tenths, were enslaved. Their security remained an abiding concern of city leaders, though as one might expect, urban masters generally possessed modest holdings of human property. The average slaveholder owned five slaves, the bulk of slaves living in holdings of less than ten. Slavery nonetheless represented a significant economic presence in the city, with the value of slaves comprising around one-fourth of that of real estate. Antebellum Mobile had little industry, which meant that the slave population lacked the occupational range evident in some other urban centers.[31] The women were mainly domestics, while the men were largely unskilled laborers servicing the cotton trade, but both sexes at least gained experience in the urban environment, which would serve them well after emancipation. As one Confederate officer observed, in Mobile his servant Henry learned "the habits and airs of a town darkee very fast." Moreover, a substantial number of slaves functioned quite independently long before the war. In the 1850s the city government estimated that one thousand slaves lived

away from their masters. Officials discouraged this practice, attempting to register such slaves, but by all accounts these provisions were widely evaded when masters found them inconvenient. Newspaper reports suggest that because it was difficult for masters to free people in the face of restrictive legislation, a sort of nominal slavery was common. Thus, even within the enslaved population, gradations existed in status and background that would be significant as Reconstruction unfolded.[32]

City officials obsessively safeguarded the peculiar institution. Slave access to alcohol was strictly limited, though without much success if the court records are any indication. Legislation directed at slaves was severe and often petty, outlawing everything from owning dogs and cows to smoking in the streets. The city code prohibited slaves from renting out their own time on pain of twenty lashes. Those slaves who were permitted to work by the day had to wear a metal tag issued by the city. The evident concern was that urban slaves had learned dangerously much, but even those newly arrived from the countryside were fully capable of forming subversive ideas. Allen Alexander, a domestic servant, offered one striking illustration. His master once saw Alexander speaking to poorer whites and forbade him from doing it again. "Before the war," Alexander recalled, "a poor white man was not looked upon as being as good as a nigger." Alexander drew the obvious political conclusion, that the system oppressed both slaves and non-slaveholding whites, and after emancipation he emerged as combative Radical activist. Other slaves could not have missed the wider point, that racial oppression was as much a matter of state power as the force individual masters could employ.[33]

The outbreak of Civil War promised deliverance, but it only worsened slaves' circumstances in the short term. The number of runaways jailed by local officials declined sharply during the secession crisis and the early war years, which likely reflected heightened vigilance in a militarized society.[34] City officials and community sentiment called for stern measures, including an augmented citizens' patrol and further proposals for restrictions on slaves living separately.[35] In 1863, for example, one newspaper correspondent called for action against ostentatious religious festivals, on the ground that they would make poorer white residents jealous. Besides, "the negro to be useful to himself and his master must be kept in his place—nothing could be plainer than that." The Mobile Committee of Safety actually petitioned the governor to prevent publication of the Emancipation Proclamation. Even with the increased scrutiny, bread riots, invasion scares, and the tumult of war destabilized the system. For example, the slave Lawrence S. Berry was owned by a prominent Alabama jurist. Early in the war, he was sent to the Confederate

salt works many miles upriver in Clarke County, working under conditions widely reported as severe. He stayed for three years, and his difficult service presumably encouraged his pronounced postwar militancy and also fitted a more worldly Berry for later political agitation in the interior.[36]

This slave's experience, repeated a thousandfold, tattered slavery's bonds. In February 1865 about 900 impressed blacks were working on the fortifications at Mobile, with 263 absent without leave. Anecdotal reports suggest that some hid in the city, while many others made it to the Union lines. Even Confederate officials admitted the laborers were poorly fed and housed, and the final Union offensive on the eastern shore only increased the work demands. As the Yankee threat loomed, slavery's disintegration became increasingly obvious. The number of jailed runaways from outside Mobile spiked sharply, both as a proportion and in absolute numbers, the harbinger of the stream of postwar rural migration into the city.[37] By the war's final days, the Confederates' own actions disrupted slavery thoroughly. In late March 1865 the army ordered all able-bodied male slaves in Mobile sent into the interior on pain of being enrolled as military laborers. In early April owners were told to deliver all remaining slaves, and the press predicted the authorities would "indiscriminately lay hands upon all able-bodied darkies for the objects in view." The male slave population, at least, was uprooted by the war's final phases, which contributed to sweeping postwar changes in urban residence patterns.[38]

The book's remaining chapters trace the changes emancipation brought to the city's economy and race relations: a brief sketch of crucial postwar social developments will facilitate the subsequent discussion. With peace, dramatic transformations followed in just about every aspect of city life, while emancipation revolutionized the social geography of urban Mobile. The city's eastern edge lay along the Mobile River, with the commercial district and businessmen's wealthy homes downtown nearby the water. While antebellum domestics lived everywhere, free blacks had always concentrated in the outlying wards, a pattern that intensified with emancipation. Mobile, like virtually every other southern city, confronted a huge influx of African-American migrants, and as was the case elsewhere, residential segregation increasingly characterized the city. Prodded by overcrowding, ex-slaves left the downtown, while African-American populations skyrocketed on the city's periphery, especially inland, or west, of Broad Street. The Seventh Ward, in the northwest, more than doubled its black population and soon possessed an African-American majority. The black population of the city increased from 8,400 in 1860 to 12,400

in 1866, contributing to the city's postwar total population peak of nearly 41,000 in the latter year. As Mobile's ex-slaves moved to the cheap housing going up on the edge of town, they were joined by new black residents, often politicized former soldiers, and successive waves of refugees from the countryside.[39]

The new migrants became the engine driving Mobile's political development. The flow of poverty-stricken rural refugees exacerbated intraracial class divisions, overshadowing other older social divides. In 1866 the city census taker observed a dramatic range of social conditions among African Americans. He conceded that one-third of that population were doing well, were thrifty and prosperous, having often purchased newly-constructed homes. Simple arithmetic suggests that most of these several thousand fortunate residents must have been former slaves, likely those already established in the community. The remainder of the African-American population, however, appeared to be "literally worthless" to the city official. This class would "work only by the job or day's work, and can hardly be said to have any permanent or fixed place of residence." The census taker found this population clustered together in revolting and disease-ridden conditions. Seduced by the allure of urban life, these people refused "to go back to the plantations of the interior," however wretched they were in Mobile. The clear implication was that these were recent rural migrants, and the investigator concluded that the chain gang was the most effective remedy.[40]

In subsequent years the African-American influx continued, reaching 13,900 in 1870, a 65 percent increase in a decade. "Soon after the war," one newspaper recalled, the city was "infested by large gangs of negroes from the country" whose ranks were "constantly recruited from the same source." By contrast, the white population plummeted from 28,500 in 1866 to a reported 18,100 in 1870.[41] Ten thousand whites fled postwar economic stringency, while rural repression sent a continuing stream of freedpeople into Mobile. One desperate father in the countryside manifested the human cost of this in-migration, asking for the police to detain his runaway fifteen-year-old son, last seen as a vagabond about the city. Such new residents only dampened prospects for the legions of unskilled laborers already there. A local freedwoman denounced the "ignorant country darkies" coming to Mobile.[42] These migrants knew nothing and were "only fit" to be slaves," the woman reportedly told her ex-mistress. The city's troubled economy could generate few jobs for the poorer newcomers settling in the expanding northern and western suburbs. Mobile lacked industry and it was physically isolated from the inland plantation belt, so the decline of the city's cotton trade left the new

residents few job alternatives. These underemployed—and often stranded—multitudes became a central feature of postwar Mobile's life.

Enfranchisement ensured that this restive social constituency would not be ignored, but their privation would complicate Reconstruction politics, particularly the effort to stabilize Republican rule. Basically, the influx of rural population generated a fertile mass of discontent that roiled black politics at moments of confrontation. That social reality combined with normal leadership rivalries for political office to encourage internal factionalism in this crucial urban center. With the grant of suffrage, the most privileged segments of the African-American community would assert their leadership, based on educational qualifications and social prominence. This fueled ferocious personal resentments that compounded the political task posed by Reconstruction. Leadership challenges came especially from those disposed by background or inclination to speak for the rural migrants, gathering in stark agony on the city's outskirts. The newcomers' poverty ensured that insurgents always had a constituency for confrontational measures. Thus the social process of urban emancipation, combined with Mobile's postwar economic decline, promoted endemic factionalism within the African-American leadership and the Republican party as a whole.

Notes

[1]Alan Smith Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861: Economic, Political, Physical, and Population Characteristics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1979), 105-6; Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill, 1990), 63-65.

[2]U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population, Eighth Census,* (Washington, D. C., 1864), 8; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Compendium of the Ninth Census* (Washington, D.C., 1872), 1:81; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C., 1860), 245.

[3]Mobile *Nationalist*, April 26, 1866 [hereinafter cited as *Nationalist*]. Throughout the South, the term "Creole" was frequently used in reference to whites of French or Spanish descent in the Louisiana Territory. In Mobile, however, the Afro-Creole community appropriated the term to themselves. Local usage of "Creole" designated some African ancestry, to the frequent comment of confused visitors.

[4]Christopher Andrew Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County, Alabama" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1990), 63; Lois Virginia Meacham Gould, "'In Full Enjoyment of Their Liberty': The Free Women of Color of the Gulf Ports of New

Orleans, Mobile, and Pensacola, 1769-1860" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1991). Christopher Nordmann, the scholar whose dissertation most exhaustively examines this topic, was kind enough to share his research with the author. He counts some 295 adult free-black males in Mobile County, with two-thirds living in the city. Of these, Nordmann finds some 110 to have had Spanish or French surnames, which should provide some notion of the Creoles' probable numbers in the vicinity. A majority of these men lived in the city itself. Nordmann to author, February 13, 2001.

[5]Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County," 151; Marilyn Mannhard, "The Free People of Color in Antebellum Mobile County, Alabama" (masters thesis, University of South Alabama, 1982), 78. On a lesser scale, these families' status seems analogous to the rural Louisiana Afro-Creole enclave described in Gary B. Mills, *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color* (Baton Rouge and London, 1977).

[6]*Nationalist*, April 26, 1866; Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County," 106-7.

[7]Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County," 74. According to the census, free blacks numerically dominated the trade by 1860. These employees presumably would have been Creoles rather than non-Creole free blacks, given the legal ban. See Thompson, "Mobile," 243.

[8]Harriet E. Amos, *Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile* (University, Ala., 1985), 104, 185; Gould, "In Full Enjoyment," 268.

[9]*Nationalist*, May 3, 1866.

[10]Montgomery *Daily State Sentinel*, November 22, 1867.

[11]Caryn Cossé Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge and London, 1997).

[12]Amos, *Cotton City*, 101.

[13]*Mobile Daily Register*, February 21, 1907; *Livingston Journal*, October 18, 1872.

[14]Alan S. Thompson, "Southern Rights and Nativism as Issues in Mobile Politics, 1850-1861" *Alabama Review* 35:2 (April 1982): 129; Thompson, "Mobile," 170-71, 326.

[15]Records of the Creole Social Club, October 1861-July 1865, The Museum of Mobile; *Advertiser and Register*, February 5, 8, 1865.

[16]U.S. War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C., 1880-1901), ser. 4, 1:1087-88, 2:941 [hereinafter cited as *OR*).

[17]Mobile *Tribune*, July 12, 1863; *Advertiser and Register*, March 30, 1865; Arthur W. Bergeron Jr., *Confederate Mobile* (Jackson, Miss., 1991), 105-6; Mobley, "Siege of Mobile," 262.

[18]Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom: The Responses of Alabama's Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Westport, Conn., 1971), 79; Nordmann, "Free Negroes of Mobile," 106-7.

[19]Alexander McKinstry, comp., *The Code of Ordinances of the City of Mobile, Alabama* (Mobile, 1859), 17, 119-20.

[20]Thompson, "Mobile," 365-67.

[21]Population Schedules, Mobile County, Ala., Manuscript, *U.S. Census for 1860* (M653) RG 29, reel 17, National Archives and Records Administration [hereinafter cited as NA]. Examination of the census reveals that seventy-five of the eighty wealthiest free African-American families were described as led by "mulattoes" rather than by "blacks."

[22]Mannhard, "Free People of Color," 75-76.

[23]John A. Calametti Jr., "The Catholic Church in Mobile during Reconstruction, 1865-1877" (masters thesis, University of South Alabama, 1993), 16; Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County," 166.

[24]Carter G. Woodson, *The Mind of the Negro As Reflected in Letters Written during the Crisis* (1926; reprint, New York, 1969), 53-55; Mannhard, "Free People of Color," 41.

[25]*Nationalist*, March 23, May 31, 1866, September 12, 1867; Montgomery *Daily State Sentinel*, November 22, 1867.

[26]For Carraway's service record, see Records of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, 1863-1865 (M1659), "Records of the Adjutant General's Office, NA, reel 2

[27]The extent of Carraway's patriotic song writing is unclear. One source says he wrote a work called "No Slave Beneath This Starry Flag." But a newspaper biographic sketch, presumably written with his cooperation, allocates him primary authorship of the famous song "Colored Volunteers." One version of the song itself

refers to "the gallant company A" of the Fifty-fourth, which was Carraway's company. The political sophistication of the verses also points to him, though musical historians generally list another as "anonymous" or credit others. See *Nationalist*, September 26, 1867; Montgomery *State Sentinel*, November 27, 1867; Irwin Silber, comp. and ed., *Songs of the Civil War* (New York, 1960), 293-96; Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War* (Cambridge and New York, 1998), 55; Richard Bailey, *Neither Carpetbaggers Nor Scalawags: Black Officeholders during the Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867-1878* (Montgomery, 1991), 9; Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction* rev. ed. (Baton Rouge and London, 1996), 41.

[28]*Nationalist*, February 6, 1868. After Military Reconstruction began, Carraway would serve in the first Republican legislature along with the Creole leader Ovid Gregory. Despite being political allies, the two men did not get along, engaging in prolonged mutual recrimination. At one point, Gregory denounced racial segregation in schools. In response, Carraway pointedly remarked the "inconsistency of his position." It seems that Gregory had previously "headed a committee to send a member to the old legislature to make a law to prevent the going together of colored children and his race the [Creoles]." Carraway was eventually called to order for his personal remarks (Montgomery *Advertiser*, October 3, 1868).

[29]See Petitions to Become Slaves, Records of the Probate Court of Mobile County, Mobile County Courthouse.

[30]*Mobile Evening News*, January 29, 1864; *Advertiser and Register*, February 6, 13, 22, 1865; *Advertiser and Register*, March 1, 3, 1865, quoted in Joe A. Mobley, "The Siege of Mobile, August 1864-April 1865," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 38 (winter 1976): 264. The article text misidentifies Lankford as white.

[31]Thompson, "Mobile," 306-9, 331; Barbara Joan Davis, "A Comparative Analysis of the Economic Structure of Mobile County, Alabama, before and after the Civil War, 1860 and 1870" (masters thesis, University of Alabama, 1963), 7-8.

[32]S. Croom to "Mother," September 7, 1862, Velma and Stephens G. Croom Collection, Correspondence, University of South Alabama Archives, Mobile; Gould, "In Full Enjoyment" 137-38; McKinstry, *Code of Ordinances*, 171-73; Thompson, "Mobile," 315, 318; Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County," 54, 88; Amos, *Cotton City*, 89; Ira Berlin, *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York, 1974), 148; *Mobile Army Argus and Crisis*, December 3, 1864.

[33]Amos, *Cotton City*, 144; McKinstry, *Code of Ordinances*, 171-73; *Nationalist*, July 28, 1869; U.S. Congress, House, *Affairs in Alabama*, 43d Cong., 2d sess., H. Rept. 262, 345.

[34]By my count, in 1859 some eighty-one slaves were jailed as runaways in the county jail, but in 1860 the number was forty-eight, and in 1861 the figure declined further to forty-two. During the secession winter, especially, the number dropped. See Record Book of Run Away Slaves, 1857-65, Records of the Probate Court of Mobile County, Mobile County Courthouse.

[35]Board of Common Council, Minutes, December 17, 1861, February 4, 1862, Mobile Municipal Archives, reel 17.

[36]Mobile *Tribune*, July 3, 1863; Executive Committee of the Mobile Committee of Safety, Minutes, December 20, 1862, Manuscript Division, New York Public Library; *Advertiser and Register*, October 26, 1862, February 25, 1863; Mobile *Daily Register*, January 19, 1869.

[37]The number of jailed runaways from outside Mobile County went from nineteen in 1862, to thirty-seven in 1863, to sixty-four in 1864. In early 1865 the rate was even higher. See Record Book of Run Away Slaves, 1857-65, Records of the Probate Court of Mobile County.

[38]*OR*, ser. 1, 49 (1): 1055-56; Bergeron, *Confederate Mobile*, 110-14; *Advertiser and Register*, April 7, 1865.

[39]Thompson, "Mobile," 206; Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890* (New York, 1978), 97-124; *Advertiser and Register*, September 6, 1866.

[40]*Advertiser and Register*, September 7, 1866.

[41]Mobile *Daily Register*, January 19, 1869; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census*, 1:81. The census figure probably understates the white population due to seasonal migration patterns, whites being more able to leave the city during the unhealthy summer.

[42]W. H. Jones to C. A. R. Dimon, January 2, 1867, Mobile City Police Records, W. S. Hoole Special Collections, University of Alabama; Kate Cumming, *Gleanings from Southland: Sketches of Life...* (Birmingham, 1895), 267.

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"Stand By Your Man": Race, Alabama Women, and George Wallace in 1963

Jeff Frederick

By any objective measurement, 1963 was a pivotal year in the history of the state of Alabama. On April 12, civil rights leader the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King was arrested and jailed in Birmingham. Six days later, his now famous "Letter From A Birmingham Jail," was released to the press, telling the entire nation that the legions of protestors were not law-breakers, but rather men and women of character "standing up for what is best in the American dream...." On May 2, the tide in Birmingham began to change with the juxtaposed images of the children's crusade: fresh-faced youngsters in starched Sunday church clothes being blasted by fire hoses and gashed by trained police dogs. Eight days later a negotiated truce was announced only to be shattered by a bomb blast at the demonstrator's hotel which spawned a bloody outburst. On June 11, James Hood and Vivian Malone integrated the University of Alabama. A day later, Dave McGlathery integrated the University of Alabama at Huntsville without fanfare and without wholesale federalization of national guard troops. On August 28, at the conclusion of the March on Washington, Martin Luther King's stirring speech rang echoes of promise throughout the nation. Just over two weeks later, the contrast was palpable; four innocent black children were murdered by cowards who exploded a bomb at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.[1]

Nineteen sixty-three was also the most important year in George Wallace's political career. In the span of twelve months, Wallace was inaugurated as governor, became a universally recognized figure throughout the region and nation, and began plotting the first of his four presidential campaigns. By the end of the year, Wallace was well on his way to leading what historian Dan T. Carter has called a transformation in American politics. Just a year earlier, Wallace was a two-term Alabama legislator and circuit judge who had already lost one gubernatorial bid. John Patterson, riding on the coattails of his father's martyrdom and his own middling reputation as state attorney general, thrashed Wallace in the 1958 election. Appealing to social conservatives and benefitting from Ku Klux Klan support, Patterson coasted to a comfortable win in the Democratic run-off leaving Wallace a loser for the first and only time in his Alabama political career. Wallace's last chance to be governor, the job he had coveted all his

White Alabamians of all ages and incomes saw Wallace as a defender of their traditions and a protector of their children. Alabama Department of Archives and History.

life, was in 1962. A loss would leave him politically dead, or worse yet, reduce him to being a perpetual candidate like Shorty Price that voters would not take seriously.[2]

In a campaign familiar to many Alabamians and students of the South, Wallace won the 1962 gubernatorial campaign by pulling hard to the political right on issues like segregation and federal intervention. Along the way, he steered clear of a potential divorce from Lurleen Burns Wallace, his first wife, a past alliance with racial moderate and former Governor Jim Folsom, and the considerable threat posed by thirty-six-year-old Tuscaloosa native Ryan deGraffenreid. In chronicling the campaign, most have described the segregationist bent of the Wallace appeal, the influence of the Ku Klux Klan or its members, or Wallace's "team of advisors comprising several unbending racists."[3]

Unfortunately, Wallace's supporters in the 1962 race have usually been identified in generalities or stereotyped as hillbillies, rednecks, Klansmen, or the like. Journalist Stephan Lesher documented Wallace's trips to all sixty-seven Alabama counties and the vituperative nature of Wallace's attacks on Federal Judge Frank Johnson, "an integrating, carpet-bagging, scalawaging, race-mixing, bald-faced liar," but never assessed exactly who the true believers were. Similarly, Carter identified Wallace's ceaseless attacks on the judiciary and the federal government. Indeed, Wallace never mentioned anybody by name in his standard stump speech except for Judge Johnson and occasionally President John F. Kennedy. Withal, except for geographic descriptions of Alabama voters and his constant description of Wallace as a racist, Carter never identified the types of people who supported him. Journalist Marshall Frady described Wallace supporters as farmers and people who wore "coverall bibs," and chronicled campaign rallies which took place in cow pastures and cornfields. Wallace would stop, according to one of Frady's unnamed sources, "anyplace they had three buildings." In his doctoral dissertation, historian James Cooper noted the strong support of Wallace in rural counties, including the Black Belt, and that Wallace extended his support in 1962 beyond the "friends-and-neighbors base that he had established in 1958." Cooper also reached the predictable conclusion that deGraffenreid, comparatively more urban and urbane than Wallace, fared better among blacks and affluent whites.[4]

In analyzing Wallace's rhetoric, Donald Roseman Ranish has concluded that the governor appealed to a "traditional working-class constituency...and has been expanding to include greater numbers of middle-class white-collar persons." Martha Jean Womack Haun has also

assessed Wallace's speaking and determined similarly that he "identifies solidly with the common man and creates for him a new sense of dignity and importance." Because exit polling was not conducted in the 1962 race and the Wallace campaign did no polling of its own, it is impossible to rely on contemporary sources to explain exactly who did support Wallace and why.[5]

What is most clear from the current literature on Wallace and Alabama in 1963 is that there is almost no analysis whatsoever of the response of white women to either the governor, the tumult rumbling throughout the state, or the portent of future social conditions. In actuality, white women were among the most vocal and staunchest supporters of George Wallace in the most important year of his political career. Conditioned by a Lost Cause civil religion, challenged to be steadfast on southern social traditions from the pulpit, and indoctrinated by more than a century of both real and imagined sexual fear, many white women applauded the style and actions of George Wallace and his defiance of segregation as heroic, necessary, and honorable. More than just casual supporters, Wallace women took demonstrable action in group and individual ways which reveal the scope and motivations of their allegiance.

That Alabama white women would take conservative social positions and be supporters of George Wallace should not be surprising. Throughout the twentieth century, women were active agents for maintaining traditional social practices. The shibboleths of dogmatic southern traditionalism, white superiority, racial separation, black inferiority, marauding Negro sexual aggression, Confederate reverence, state's rights rationality, and religious conservatism are evident in the organizations women joined, the actions they took, their reaction to events across the state, and the public correspondence they wrote. Work by historian Elna Green and others has reminded us that female agency is not exclusive to progressives or causes which seek to expand traditional spheres of control.[6]

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) took a strong public role in Alabama. Founded in 1896 by Miss Sallie Cargill Jones, the Alabama Division of the UDC was heavily immersed into the mainstream of society. The national UDC's official history indicates the organization was formed because "an invasion, dynamic and ruthless, set aside the old order in the South. The flood gates of battle and bloodshed were opened and evil days of suffering and political privilege lengthened into years." The official salute to the Confederate flag included the responsive pledge: "I salute the Confederate Flag with affection, reverence, and undying remembrance."[7]

UDC members were likely to be heavily involved in other organizations as well. Auburn resident Annie Terrell Basore was active in the UDC, the Lighthorse Harry Lee Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Auburn Motor Corps, the Garden Club, the Chi Omega Alumni Association, the Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs, the Auburn Women's Club, the Home Demonstration Club, and numerous others. A cross-reference of the membership lists reveals that, other members of the UDC, including Mrs. Ralph Brown Draughon—the wife of the president of Auburn University, were as active in other groups as Mrs. Basore.[8]

The UDC in Alabama was active in promoting its own agenda and conservative interpretation of history. In 1947, state President Harriet Kinnaird Privett distributed a memo to all the affiliated chapters encouraging using radio to spread the word of "our beloved cause and its noble leaders." That same year, the Auburn chapter vowed that "emphasis has been placed on putting our traditions and history before the young of the community and college." In 1948, Privett reminded the chapters that their purpose was of a higher order. "In taking part in patriotic activities of any sort you are representing Southern Woman hood in its noblest endeavor."[9]

The UDC's membership and media campaign was extensive. Over the course of 1963, the Alabama UDC had grown to 2,508 members, garnered specific mention in 27 different newspaper and magazine articles, received publicity in 54 different television and radio programs, not including spot announcements, sponsored 187 separate talks in front of a combined audience of 10,082, and aided 109 individual college students with scholarships. As part of the frequent Civil War centennial activities of the early 1960s, the UDC developed a common prayer which was often uttered in unison by the Children of the Confederacy. "We thank Thee for its (the Confederacy) pure record of virtue, valor, and sacrifice and for the inspiring reflection that...we came through its years of trial and struggle with our battered shields pure, our character as a patriotic and courageous people untarnished and nothing to regret in our defense...of the Southland."[10]

Crafting collective memory required more than just the UDC; white women worked individually and in other groups and associations tc make the present honor a sanctified past while seeking to prevent a bleak future. Historian W. Fitzhugh Brundage has suggested that the entire process of shaping memory "reassured white men of their manliness and authority, and of feminine deference." Separate spheres reinforced traditional race, class, and gender constructs while at the

same time castigating certain aspects of the southern past, such as Reconstruction, where barriers were less absolute and relations more fluid. To that end, conservative white women took on public roles if only for the purpose of crafting a tranquil and Christianized depiction of slavery, eliminating undesirable textbooks, shouting down trained scholars with dissenting views, and molding as many aspects of society as possible to the greater good of white supremacy and black inferiority.[11]

Wallace stoked the smoldering embers of the Lost Cause through persistent references to the horrors of Reconstruction. "We were the most oppressed people and now that we have shaken off those economic shackles, they are trying to get at us by unsettling our social relationships." In fact, in his speeches touting his industrial development programs, in his rebukes of the interventionist federal government, and in his defense of traditional southern social practices, Wallace was wont to indict Reconstruction as an era of great tragedy. Even his 1963 inaugural address was laced with a Reconstruction diatribe. "The South was set upon by the vulturous carpetbagger and federal troops, all loyal southerners were denied the right to vote at the point of bayonet, so that the infamous, illegal 14th amendment might be passed."[12]

The merging of religious practices such as prayer with the Lost Cause is indicative of what historian Charles Reagan Wilson has called "Southern civil religion." Wilson has suggested the educational efforts of Lost Cause advocates resulted in discouraging an objective depiction of the southern past and thus, a distorted view of the present. Clearly, the UDC and other practitioners of the Lost Cause mantra perpetuated specific images of southern womanhood, white paternalism, black inferiority, and, most importantly, the honor and glory of standing up for the traditions of the South. Concomitant to the Lost Cause mythology was the accompanying belief that Reconstruction was a horrifying experience, wrought by the combined forces of incompetent and corrupt blacks and vengeful Yankees, and supported and encouraged by the full backing of the intrusive federal government. Even if Alabamians had forgotten their front porch indoctrinations concerning the nightmares of Reconstruction, school textbooks and print media were often only to willing to blame Reconstruction for current Deep South economic and social woes. Historian A. B. Moore of the University of Alabama wrote his *History of Alabama* in 1934 and characterized slaves as "contented and carefree and (were) sentimentally attached to their masters and their plantations," masters as "elegant knights whose duty was it was to protect the weak instead of oppress them," and planters

wives as "veritable Samaritan(s) and at all times a mediator between the wayward slave and the rigor of plantation discipline." Moore's work, was still the definitive history of the state in 1963. Alabama, of course, had its own Civil War Centennial Commission and memorial services, dedications, and monument-raisings were legion during Wallace's first term. At one such event, Sons of Confederate Veterans official Martin J. Johnson identified the cause of the war as "preservation of the right of the state to exercise those powers not expressly reserved to the federal government." Later in his remarks, Johnson noted a similar environment of federal encroachment. "Today...our Southland is facing unfortunate incidents. But we do ask that we be allowed to work out our own salvation in our own way." George Wallace coopted these visions of Confederate resistance and Reconstruction tragedies in his defiance of integration. Alabamians would not have to look very far or strain too hard to hear Wallace blasting the federal government for intruding into matters of the state, just like they had in the years surrounding the Civil War.[13]

Throughout the twentieth century, conservative influences on Alabama women other than Lost Cause fervor were present. Elna Green has determined that the Alabama Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage was the most active of all the women's organizations dedicated to resisting the franchise. Underlying the fear of female suffrage was the concept of race and fears that black women with the vote could overturn white supremacy. Klan activity reinforced the notion of pure white womanhood. Virginia Foster Durr's memoirs reveal the prevailing imagery of her youth. "I thought of the Klan as something noble and grand and patriotic that had saved the white women of the South. I remember seeing *Birth of a Nation*, and oh, I thought it was the most thrilling, dramatic, and marvelous thing in the world when the Klan rode in there and rescued the poor white girl from the black soldier."[14]

The Daughters of the American Revolution were at least as socially conservative as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, though not quite as widespread. At the Tristan de Luna Chapter in Mobile, Mrs. Carroll Smith warned her charges that "it does not take a super-patriot to observe today a tremendous drive to increased centralization of power in the hands of the executive. To win the Cold War of ideas against the communists, the people of the US must know what our system is, have passionate faith in it, and be prepared to defend it." Smith's rhetoric is emblematic of prevalent fears of communism in the wake of changes in Cuba, and the lingering Cold War hysteria which

hardly died with the demise of Senator Joe McCarthy. In April 1963, a Mobile area PTA meeting was called to alert the assembled to communist brain-washing. A few months later in July 1963, the DAR publicly declared that "Americanism is being taken out of school textbooks." For his part, Wallace was quick to identify at every opportunity what he considered to be the clear connection between the Civil Rights Movement, its leaders and supporters, and the Communist party. Needless to say, Wallace was hardly the first in the state to identify agitation for social or economic change with communism.[15]

Some Alabamians were convinced that the Civil Rights Movement was more concerned with interracial sexual relationships than ideology or integration. Early in the student response melee at the University of Alabama during Autherine Lucy's February 1956 integration attempt, speakers spoke of the ultimate goal of the outside agitators being not integration, but rather intermarriage." This same theme of sexual mixing was a popular reprise in many letters to the editor published in state newspapers and written by men. Thomas Greaves declared "one objective of having separate schools is to prevent interracial marriage and amalgamation of the races such as has already started in a large part of the Western Hemisphere." Black men were certainly aware of the sexual demonology. In oral history, Dr. S. Q. Bryant noted the prevailing social stigma of being seen with a white woman. "When I first came [to Alabama A & M] you couldn't hardly have drug a white woman coming across this campus alone. She would have been afraid. She was so drenched so much in this propaganda the white man has set up that she would have believed some black boy over here would have eaten her up." The state's tragic history of lynching and lingering stigma of the Scottsboro Boys case indicate that sexual demonology was a thread running throughout Alabama history.[16]

Perhaps the most conservative influence in the state was its churches. An examination of the *Alabama Baptist*, the weekly periodical of the state's largest denomination, reveals an evolution of anti-integration statements by editor Leon Macon. Early in 1962, in a message which discussed doctrinal differences with liberal Baptists and could also be viewed as a veiled reference to civil rights activism, Macon warned, "we live in a time when minority groups are very aggressive.... Minority groups have no right to superimpose their positions on the majority." By mid-1963, Macon noted, "real alarm is growing up in our country over the new civil rights laws proposed by President Kennedy." In August, Macon called for resisting social

change. "Many of the things we wanted solved at once would have been a tragedy for us if they had been resolved quickly." By September, in the wake of the bombing at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Macon was referring to the governor by name. "Governor George Wallace has declared himself for law and order and has said he is against violence. We certainly agree with the governor and we do not believe that any of our people have taken part in this violence."[17] It seems a certainty that many of the sermons preached from Alabama pulpits utilized even harsher language.

The contrast between the use of Christianity as a platform for change in black neighborhoods and its mission in many white churches as a bulwark of biblical imperatives to maintain the status quo was indeed palpable. To be sure, the paradox of competing visions of Christianity, black and white, liberating and restricting, could be found across the Deep South and into other regions of the nation as well. Even while the rafters of black Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal churches were echoing with Paul's admonishment against division to the Church in Galatia, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus," white pastors were sounding forth the same apostle's charge to the church in Ephesus for "slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ." Alabamian Catherine E. Patrick was troubled by the differences between a Christianity which empowered its faithful to press for change and a faith which called for the preservation of the status quo. "Since so many observers have come into our state with all this freedom talk and use of the Bible for a cover-up, I really don't know" (if Alabama is still a good place to raise children). In June of 1963 the American Baptist Association approved a formal measure identifying "integration of the races (as) morally wrong."[18]

Though Baptists churches are the state's largest denomination, they are hardly the only place to find religious conservatism. Sociologist John Shelton Reed has identified a persistent thread uniting Southerners of all social classes in a shared and abiding passion for conservative religion. Historian Samuel Hill identified the evangelical focus of mainline southern denominations; this soul-saving ethos generally subsumes calls for social justice or community action. Not coincidently, the title of the sixteenth Annual Alabama Baptist Conference in 1963 was "Evangelism is First." Historian Wayne Flynt has concluded that women far and away outnumbered men in church membership, attendance patterns, and devotion to the faith throughout the history of the

Alabama Baptist church. Thus, Alabama women were even more likely than their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons to receive a steady diet of conservative religious doctrine about racial separation.[19] Conservative Alabama women and their churches took a leading role in congratulating Wallace on his public announcement against the consumption of alcohol in the governor's mansion. Mrs. L. E. Miles of the Central Park Chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union wrote Wallace in appreciation for his "Christian stand." Though the governor himself might be described as an indifferent Methodist at this time, he was quick to appeal to conservative Christians whenever possible as they were regular voters if nothing else. Wallace's chronic mocking of the Supreme Court included regular references to the removal of prayer and Bible reading from the schools. Alabama women responded to Supreme Court decisions in writing. Mrs. Jacquelyn Bailey wrote to express "my despair and grief, because the Supreme Court would make such a ruling as to omit the Word of God and the talking to God in our schools." Mrs David R. Hoye thought it was "incredible that the Supreme Court does not want the scripture read to our children."[20]

Biblical imperatives prescribing certain roles for the sexes were not confined to Alabama's churches in the early 1960s. A *Mobile Register* article by Ruth Millet entitled "Hubby still head of the Household," echoed New Testament ideology about wifely submission in order to maintain domestic tranquility. "If a young man agrees with you that a wife should be her husband's full and equal partner, let some other girl have him...it is only right and proper for a wife to be more dependent on her husband than he is on her." The conflict between modernity and tradition, according to Millet and other mainstream newspaper writers, was in full siege. "Just recall that as we got more and more togetherness in marriage and less division between the responsibilities of a husband and those of a wife, we started getting more and more broken homes and more neurotic women and problem children."[21]

All of these traditional influences were converging at a time when many young white women were leaving the state in pursuit of opportunity, education, and change. Economic push factors include the paltry Alabama per capita income, which in 1963 was a scant $1,749, far below the national average. Wage and earnings statistics for women were even worse. From 1960 to 1970, Alabama suffered a net migration loss of 230,000 individuals, with the highest rates found in those 20-29 years of age. While these migration rates have been

historically and accurately identified with African Americans, it is also true that white women were also leaving the state. White women over the age of thirty in the state actually experienced a net-positive migration at the same time those from fifteen to twenty-nine were leaving. In other words, many of the younger, more activist women were leaving while older Alabama women, many of whom had been awash in a sea of conservative influences since their formative years, were staying.[22]

As a result of all these collective traditional, secular, and religious influences, white Alabama women were particularly receptive to George Wallace, his style and method of fighting integration, and his interpretations and explanations of the events of 1963. The story of white female support for Wallace begins during the campaign of 1962. The field that election cycle included a number of candidates with political experience including former Governor Jim Folsom, Lieutenant Governor Albert Boutwell, Ryan deGraffenreid, a state senator from Tuscaloosa, sitting Attorney General MacDonald Gallion, Birmingham Director of Public Safety Eugene "Bull" Connor, cattleman and Citizens' Council leader J. Bruce Henderson, and Huntsville educator Preston T. Farish.[23]

The most significant of the early challenges to Wallace in 1962 came in the form of two-term Governor Jim Folsom. Folsom was indeed a towering figure in Alabama politics who was willing to challenge petrified social traditions and offer graduated opportunities to blacks. Though his two terms in office are almost universally regarded as programmatic failures and were significantly tarnished by corruption and patronage scandals, Folsom's larger-than-life persona resonated in rural North Alabama and other old Populist enclaves throughout the state. Though Folsom had been sufficiently moderate on segregation to invite black New York Congressman Adam Clayton Powell to stop by the governor's mansion for a cocktail, by 1962 he sensed the shifting winds since *Brown v Board of Education*, Little Rock, and the James Meredith integration fiasco in Mississippi, and turned back to the political right on race. He even told racist jokes while on the hustings. If his waffling and glaring inconsistencies were not enough, Folsom was finally finished as a significant candidate in Alabama after a drunken performance on live television on the eve of the primary. "Big Jim" could not remember the names of his children, could not enunciate much of his speech, was reduced to mouthing cooing noises, and generally appeared sloppy and unprepared.[24]

On a day when private detectives were hired to prevent voting chicanery, Wallace carried 32.5 percent of the vote to lead in the May 1

primary, and deGraffenreid nosed out Folsom by 1,064 votes to make the run-off. After initially demanding a recount, an investigation of supposed fraud, and vowing to be in the run-off no matter what, Folsom eventually dropped his hyperbolic ramblings and bowed out as a candidate. Most contemporary analysis of the primary indicated that the vote, more than anything else, was a referendum on Folsomism. Clearly, Jim Folsom evoked a connotation of corruption, insufferable patronage shenanigans, and personal foibles, namely alcoholism. But, Folsomism also carried an overture of racial equality, or at least racial change, and most Alabamians wanted nothing to do with it.[25]

The run-off, scheduled twenty-nine days hence, would pit the youthful and charismatic deGraffenreid, a former football star from Tuscaloosa, against the fit and combative "Fighting Judge," a Golden Gloves boxer from Barbour County. Most chroniclers of Alabama politics have determined that deGraffenreid was a racial moderate. Frady has called deGraffenreid "an articulate moderate on segregation." Lesher has noted that "deGraffenreid was viewed as a racial moderate in comparison to Wallace." Political scientists Anne Permaloff and Carl Grafton have simply dubbed deGraffenreid a "moderate." Perhaps, at the time of his tragic plane crash in 1966 when deGraffenreid was suggesting a "cooling off" period on racial matters, that case could be effectively argued. But, in the gubernatorial election of 1962, deGraffenreid was clearly not a moderate on the issue of segregation. The only difference between him and Wallace was their method of fighting integration.[26]

Though the Wallace campaign leaked unfounded rumors that his opponent was an atheist, had represented Autherine Lucy in her attempt to integrate the University of Alabama in 1957, and was otherwise unsound on segregation, deGraffenreid, for his part, was vocal throughout the month before the run-off on his views concerning segregation. On May 10, in an homage to his own work on a senate committee that approved state laws maintaining segregated schools, he suggested "our segregation laws are the finest in the land." The next day he claimed "there's not a man in Alabama who wants to preserve segregation more than I do. I'm southern and I'm Alabamian from the tips of my toes to the roots of my hair." On May 16 the deGraffenreid campaign ran a large advertisement in the *Huntsville Times* promising a "workable plan—an Alabama Department of Rights—to stand guard and defend our way of life all the way and all the time." This Department of Rights would assemble the "state's best brains" to devise successful ways to fight integration. In that same ad, he accused Wallace of receiving the

notorious "bloc Vote" in 1958—a reference to the votes of blacks—and voting against Macon County state legislator Sam Englehart's plan to withhold state funding from integrated schools. Finally, deGraffenreid claimed Wallace had "no WORKABLE plan to keep segregation." In a speech that same day he blared, "no one believes in segregation more than Ryan deGraffenreid." The next day he swore, "I believe in segregation. I believe in it as strong as any man can believe in anything." On May 27 he warned that Wallace's radical ideas would spell the end of segregation in Alabama and "bring us to wreck and ruin." One day later on the eve of the election, deGraffenreid declared "I'm a devil of a lot better segregationist than Bull Connor or George Wallace."[27]

The reality is that the only difference between the two candidates on the issues of segregation was style and method. Wallace was more defiant, more confrontational, and used more physical imagery. "Over in Georgia they decided they wanted a little integration, so what happened? They've had riots and killings and sit-ins and kneel-ins. But they've kept the peace in Mississippi. I'll go by Mississippi's plan when I'm governor." Wallace, in fact, repeated the theme of Mississippi, with its forceful, defiant, and violent imagery, as a successful model of resistance throughout the campaign. On other occasions, he used other imagery evocative of physical defenses. "I believe in blacks in black schools and whites in white schools and anyone who believes differently should have their head bored for a hollow horn." In echoes of southern states rights from a century before Wallace pounded the theme that "I don't want the federal government trying to lead my life." Though he never referred to his opponent by name, Wallace tried to distance himself from deGraffenreid by claiming that his supporters were "softies, sissy-britches, moderates, liberals, and NAACP members." Wallace was fond of repeating that the NAACP was against him; the obvious concomitant was that they must be supporting deGraffenreid.[28]

In contrast, deGraffenreid suggested what he termed "a more positive approach," which was a comparatively more cerebral and legislative-based path of resistance. "Chaos and turmoil and threats will only serve to speed up that which we dread most—integration of out schools." In addition, deGraffenreid favored legislation and legal jockeying to keep cases out of court because "I don't want to look at television and see people fighting in the streets of Alabama." On several occasions, deGraffenreid berated Wallace for making threats and "stirring up violence and chaos." When Jim Folsom endorsed deGraffenreid,

something that was more of a detriment than anything, the giant former governor noted, "we preach law and order, Wallace preached lawlessness and disorder."[29]

By viewing letters-to-the editor to the *Birmingham News*, *Montgomery Advertiser*, *Mobile Register*, and *Huntsville Times*, and correspondence from Alabama women to George Wallace, it seems clear that ordinary Alabama women, from all over the state, detected the differences in the style and method of the two candidates. Methodologically, this article will only consider correspondence that seems undeniably gender-specific, is not from chronic letter writers, and reflects the prevailing sentiment of all the letters received by Wallace. When all the correspondence to Wallace is assembled, it is clear that they come from all regions of the state, from both rural enclaves and big cities, and from all socioeconomic strata. Some of the letters to Wallace are literally written in crayon in broken script, while others are typed on business letterhead.

Concerning the 1962 gubernatorial election, the letters reflect some widely held perceptions about President Kennedy which directly echo themes from Wallace stump speeches. Mrs. Kay G. Dickens was obviously persuaded by Wallace's attacks on the Kennedy administration. "Who would Bobby Kennedy like least to be our governor? In the final analysis we do not have a choice—we can and must elect George Wallace as our next governor." Mrs J. E. Grunthal felt similarly. Like Wallace, she believed the Kennedy administration was destroying "the constitutional rights of our citizens and (they) are being destroyed almost daily through the misuse and misappropriation of legislative, judicial, and executive powers." Mary Williamson called for a reduction in presidential power because the Kennedy's were a "threat to free enterprise."[30]

Alabama women were incited to write to Wallace by other characteristics of his campaign. Mrs. Millar Bowden proclaimed that, "now that Big Jim and deGraf[fenreid] have joined hands in the run-off, I'm again for Wallace." Bowden was so energized by the campaign that she wrote letters that were published in both the *Montgomery Advertiser* and *Birmingham News*. Mrs. James Frederick encouraged deGraffenreid to "join the rest of us who want to get rid of Folsomism and cast his vote for George Wallace." Vallie McGowan concluded that "George Wallace has conducted a brilliant campaign for governor. He has accentuated the positive and eliminated the negative." Presumably, Ms. McGowan viewed Wallace's vocal stand on segregation as a positive approach. Fannie Sledge, in response to a *Birmingham News*

editorial asking "Can you Afford a Black Belt Governor?" declared that, indeed, she wanted Wallace, who she considered a Black Belt governor. Echoing the same theme, Mrs. Mary L. Harold posited that many would vote for a particular candidate just because he was not endorsed by the *"Birmingham News* and all for which it stands"[31]

Ryan deGraffenreid also elicited a written response from Alabama women, though in much smaller numbers. As with the letters to Wallace, it is clear that Alabama women noted the difference between the style and method of resisting integration. Mrs. Morris Prestwood observed that "those of us who have heard Wallace screaming his hatred of federal judges along with hatred of other things in our great state, see in him a fanatic who has no rightful place in the governor's mansion." Elaine Hobson declared her intention to vote against Wallace because of his track record of voting against reapportionment, a constant theme in deGraffenreid stump speeches. Mrs A. J. Marson termed deGraffenreid a "clean-cut, Christian young man who will lead Alabama as she should be led."[32]

A handful of female observers of the campaign wrote letters but did not take a specific side in the governor's race. In response to Wallace not agreeing to a debate because of alleged schedule conflicts, Camille Crotwell cautioned voters to "stop crying over the debate that will never be" and listen to their speeches. Mrs. Julia Davis seemed content that whomever is elected will "represent us to other sections of the nation as a true gentleman and not give the impression that we are country bumpkins or intellectual nincompoops." Mrs. Edwin Griffis is representative of many who wrote urging the passage of tax referenda for education in Jefferson County.[33]

Other subjective criteria indicate the level of interest of women in the Wallace campaign. Campaign insider and press secretary Bill Jones remembers a large contingent of women attending public speeches and appearances. "There were always a lot of them around the campaign and at rallies." Wallace never conducted polling on women voters or attempted to specifically reach out to them in the 1962 campaign. So why did they come to hear him with such regularity? Historian Dan Carter has documented Wallace's spiraling number of extramarital affairs and his interest in campaign-stop conquests. Clearly, both Lurleen, his first wife, and Cornelia, his second wife, had their suspicions about Wallace's marital infidelity. Surely some women were attracted to his campaign, as they are to current politicians, because of the allure of power. Others were drawn to Wallace because of their husbands or fathers or out of a genuine interest in politics.[34]

Reflecting on the campaign of 1962, women today identify different reasons for their support of Wallace. Emma Hall, who lived in nearby Albany, Georgia, during the election, remembers the racial rancor of the day and notes that many, herself not included, were attracted by their perception of Wallace's racism. June Smith, who lived in Macon County at the time of the election, thought Wallace was a "good man" and she greatly admired him for his courageous stand. Smith thought her personal friend Lurleen Wallace "was the best wife anyone could have," and that many women were attracted to the governor in 1962 because of the charm of his spouse and immediate successor. Though she does not remember discussing the civil rights protests and the associated turbulence occurring in Alabama with other women, Smith overwhelmingly approved of Wallace's conduct as governor relative to the movement. North Alabama folk artist Myrtice West was so captivated by the governor that she made him one of the principle subjects of her work. Jean Jones, wife of press secretary Bill Jones, speculated that Alabama women were supportive of Wallace because of his plans for education, including free textbooks. This seems hardly plausible because of the paucity of discussion of such topics in stump speeches and media coverage. Further, the textbook plan, which was especially popular with Alabama women, was enacted by the legislature in 1965 at the governor's behest, several years after Wallace had already established his massive resistance reputation. Jane Dunkleberger, an Auburn University resident and employee at the time of the election, recalls that most of the women in the university community viewed Wallace as crude and preferred deGraffenreid. Nevertheless, Wallace won Lee county with ease.[35]

Current recollections of Alabama women concerning Wallace's first term are excellent examples of the pitfalls of oral history. Many women flatly deny that they supported the governor; others suggest that only racists voted for and approved of Wallace, though they were surely not in those ranks. The circumstantial evidence, conservative nature of many Alabama women, and mathematical realities of election returns indicate that, memories notwithstanding, Wallace was popular with many Alabama women. The question of why Wallace earned support is easier to decipher than determining how much support he received from women at the ballot box. Unfortunately, no gender-defined election results, exit polling, or campaign polling exists to define the level of support for Wallace by women. Newspaper accounts reveal no information about female voting, and, in fact, women are hardly mentioned in press reports at all. Women are discussed only in the

handful of state races which they entered, or shown in photos like the one of Mrs. Martha Sadler of Selma, applying a Wallace bumper sticker to her vehicle. Finally, women garnered some attention when a candidate referred specifically to his spouse or mother. Vaunted political reporter Bob Ingram described state house of representatives run-off candidates Mrs. Elizabeth Edward and Mrs. Edmund B. Miller as "standard bearers for the weaker sex." Three other female candidates, who did not make it to the run-off in their races, were, according to Ingram, "dispatched back to the kitchen or bridge table by the voters." Mrs. Verla Jones was documented as making a sizeable contribution, fifty dollars, to the Wallace campaign. Wallace occasionally referred to his mother, Mrs. Mozell Wallace, as a state employee, in trying to woo votes in and around Montgomery. "If I don't do something for state employees, mother would never forgive me." On another occasion, Wallace promised "my mother is going to hold my hand as I place it on the Bible and swear to uphold the constitution." Other than these, women are strikingly absent from reports of the campaign. Simply put, women did not register prominently on the electoral radar screen in 1962.[36]

Despite the lack of attention paid to them during the 1962 campaign, Alabama women continued to show support for their new governor in written correspondence throughout 1963. Some joined conservative organizations such as Women for Wallace or sought a more political role within existing social organizations. Some Alabama women joined the Women for Constitutional Government group which backed the so-called Liberty amendment. The amendment called for selling off all federal programs not strictly enumerated in the Constitution and repealing the Sixteenth Amendment, or federal income tax. But, within organizations, woman could remain relatively nameless, faceless, and obscure. It is in their individual actions, public correspondence, and signed letters to the governor that women cast themselves into an identifiable and recognized role on behalf of George Wallace and his actions. A March 20 letter from Stella N. Huger encouraged Wallace to keep fighting for segregation. In his brief reply, the governor responded by vowing to "fight against any further federal encroachment." During the contentious events of April in Birmingham, Ethel B. Riper and Ernestine Warren Davis wrote to the *Birmingham News* blasting an article which condemned the actions of the conservative John Birch Society. Jane Cameron decried the Kennedy Administration's threat to remove federal grants from Mississippi because of civil rights infractions. In response to the prospect of

quickie-divorce mills setting up shop in Alabama, Mrs. William Bacon Oliver opined "there is nothing more important than a moral climate in Alabama. We must outlaw lying lawyers and lying judges." Mrs. T. E. Bridges, concerned that Anniston teenagers were fleeing to Georgia for quickie-divorces, wrote such a passionate letter to Governor Wallace that he got Georgia Governor Carl Sanders involved. Marion S. Jacks offered a letter of general praise for Wallace.[37]

As the events in Birmingham grew more traumatic through May 1963, the volume and nature of the correspondence from women took on a new dimension. On May 7, the same day that press reports indicated that "white women shoppers, many of them with children, had to run out of the path of the oncoming marchers," and "one white woman and her small child were knocked to the pavement," a letter to the editor from Nell Carter lauded Wallace for being "a governor with principles and ideals.... Let's stand up with him, or shut up, or move out." After Martin Luther King announced a truce on May 10, Wallace claimed credit for the negotiations. "This so-called truce has come about because of the show of strength of state and local government police forces. The state forces arrived Tuesday and the demonstrations stopped last Tuesday." Mrs. Curt Wasson Jr. took offense at outside critics who claimed Birmingham was living in the past. "Birmingham is one of the most moral large cities in America."[38]

In June, Wallace achieved his first national media exposure on *Meet the Press* and fulfilled his campaign promise to "stand in the schoolhouse door." A June 6 letter to the editor from Mrs. H. K. Lassiter gushed, "I don't think that there is a state in the union that can compare with Alabama when it comes to having the finest law enforcement that can be had." Just two days before the integration of the University of Alabama, a letter Janice Mae wrote on June 8 informed the governor of "how proud we are of you and we especially pray for your safety and success Tuesday at the University." Three days later, Mrs. Jim Parker expressed her "gratitude and great respect for...a man who has the nerve and backbone to stand up for something that means so much to our state and nation."[39]

In the weeks immediately after the scene at the University of Alabama, women increased their public support for Wallace. On June 14 the *Birmingham News* published Mavis Jernigan's lengthy letter to the editor which enumerated several reasons why Alabamians backed their governor. Jernigan praised Wallace as "a man who thinks as the people of this state think...we support him because he stands for what we believe is right and to the best interest for everyone." Jernigan,

apparently a realist, closed her letter by noting, "we have to face the fact that eventually we will integrate—and it is a pitiful thing. However, perhaps we can do something to prevent it for a certain amount of time." On the same topic of the stand at Tuscaloosa, Mrs. Margaret Eskridge determined that "close examination...certainly gives sanction and support to the stand of this well-chosen leader of the State of Alabama. The people of Alabama have a right to be proud of their governor." Mrs. J. B. Thomas railed against John Kennedy's federalization of troops at Tuscaloosa and Mrs. Janis Massey called for less complaining about the president and more registering and voting to remove him. Mary Gibbons criticized the civil rights leadership as seeking "glory and fame." She also hoped that "the people of other nations and in some parts of our nation will see that men like Governor Wallace are not afraid to stand up for the rights of the true American people."[40]

After the integration of the University of Alabama on June 10, the integration of the University of Alabama at Huntsville a day later, and the June 12 murder of Mississippi civil rights leader Medgar Evers, events cooled for a short time until the August March on Washington and the September tragedy at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. In response to the June 17 Supreme Court decision ruling Bible reading in schools unconstitutional, Mrs. Hunter S. Allen wondered in a letter to the governor, "how can we go about impeaching Earl Warren and Hugo Black?" Wallace responded by declaring that through our children, "our country shall get back on the right road and back to its traditions." Mrs. Ruby Jones objected to the Supreme Court ruling as well. "No one has ever found anything in the Bible or Lord's Prayer that could possibly harm a child." Evelyn Hardy was worried about Marxist implications in the high court decision. "Communist doctrine (declares)...God will be banished from the laboratories as well as from the schools."[41]

During the rest of the summer and into the early fall, white Alabama women continued to criticize the impending social changes. Mrs. Annie White was disgusted by the entire civil rights movement. "The Negro has been exploited by that power-crazy, vote-groveling gang in Washington. They are hurting their cause irreparably by demonstrating for this and that instead of proving themselves worthy of their demands." Mrs. Tom Ward expressed similar sentiments. "Taken as a whole, they (Negroes) have not progressed yet to a state where they can be accepted for their own merits.... If they would strengthen their race mentally, morally, and spiritually, their ascent up the ladder would naturally follow." Mrs. Hobson Adams thought the

media was missing the big picture. "Why do you not suggest on the front page of your paper that with all the millions that the Kennedys and integrationists are spending to demonstrate and keep Negroes in previously white schools, they could build the finest institutions...and anything else they desire on a segregated basis and the majority of whites would be very pleased." Mrs. J. B. Thomas also blamed the media for missing the real troublemakers. "I suppose too, the commentator has conveniently forgotten, as our loyal Democrats here have, the telegram Kennedy sent Martin Luther King when he was here last year praising his gang for stirring up racial hatred." Mrs. Ellar East blamed the Kennedy's for all the trouble. "I am all for Governor Wallace in what he is trying to make us see. I only wish that clan of Kennedy's was this intelligent. They are the ones that have blood on their hands."[42]

The vast preponderance of the correspondence to the governor and to state newspapers was exceedingly complimentary to Wallace. Mrs. Belle Cook was pleased with the governor's performance. "Here in our beloved South, we are besieged on all sides by devilish forces going up and down our land. God give us more men with the character, principle, and intelligence of Governor Wallace of Alabama." Mrs. Tom Richardson wrote to the governor concerning supposed violations by the Kennedy's of the nation's constitution. "We have never needed more a man of courage and convictions. I am very proud of you." Mrs. V. J. Baker, poor and physically handicapped, wrote the governor offering to use her talents at cost, since she had no money to contribute. Some of the correspondence was both humorous and pathetic at the same time. Geraldine Chafin Moore wrote the governor to provide vital information on the identity of the Anti-Christ. Mrs. H. D. Lassiter wrote for advice on correcting the chronic overflow of her neighbor's septic tank, but also paused to add, "you have done a wonderful job. You are what we need in the White House."[43]

Two letters in particular are emblematic of the tone of nearly all the correspondence from women in the period after the stand at the University of Alabama. Daisy Segal was very pleased with her governor. "The great majority of the people of this state appreciate the stand Governor Wallace has taken and are proud that the governor of this state has the intestinal fortitude to stand up and say no." Mrs. Alice Starr's thoughts are similar. "Cheers for George Wallace. We know that Governor Wallace is an upright and courageous man and is fighting for the things we believe in. Not to stand with him now is shameful and cowardly. We know it is not education they want, but race mixing."[44]

Alabama women were not just complementing their governor, they also took action. When a handful of Birmingham's schools were integrated in 1963, some of the most unabashed critics were school girls. An unidentified sixteen-year-old walked out of school on the first day commenting, "I'm sorry this happened but I'm not going to school with niggers." Cheerleaders at the West End School in the Magic City greeted two Negro girls with the chorus, "Two, four, six, eight, who do we appreciate? Wallace, Wallace, Wallace. Two, four, six, eight, we don't wanna integrate." Days after the integration of a handful of Birmingham schools, Mrs. Ray McFall spearheaded a committee to meet with Wallace to discuss forming a private school. On the same day as the meeting, a group known as West End Women presented a petition to the school board asking it to close the schools, rather than integrate them.[45]

Though the tone never turned against Wallace personally, a significant change, albeit a brief one, came in the weeks immediately after the bombing at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church killed four children. Mildred McMurray, Chairman of the North American Baptist Women's Union, suggested adding blacks to the police force in Birmingham. Mrs. Victor H. Wood, President of the Florence District Women's Society of Christian Service, was obviously moved by the bombing. "It is my belief that by far the majority of Alabamians, both white and Negro, are God-fearing, responsible citizens who are sickened and ashamed by the senseless deaths of innocent children in a house of worship." In a speech to the Birmingham Woman's Society of Christian Service, Mrs. Laurence L. Jackson was one of few to spread the blame for the tragedy around. "We stand shamed when we realize that the Christian influence in our area has not been such that would have made it impossible for such things as church bombings and killing of innocent children to happen—and we are all guilty." Nina F. Cohen felt the shame of the bombing. "I've lived in Birmingham all my life but I'm ashamed of my home town now and I hope that with all the peoples of this community working together, we can make it great again." Even with the outrage at the bombing, no white Alabama woman, used the state's major newspapers to blame the bombing on Wallace or his actions during the preceding nine months.[46]

Margaret Trammel was one of few who continued to tow the Wallace hard-line even in the immediate aftermath of the bombing:

> Martin Luther King has a lot of gall to put the blood of those children on anyone. He should ask himself, "Who started this mess?" Gov. Wallace has done nothing but try to enforce the laws of this state, while King

runs to the federal government to have them broken. Gov. Wallace has repeatedly told all the people of Alabama not to have any violence, and he has backed up his pleas with the power of the state troopers. On the other hand, who has instigated the troubles? Was it the white couple from Chicago looking for a place to eat? Was it the fire department, called out to extinguish a fire of "unknown origin." Was it the police department, dedicated to the protection of life and property? We all regret, and are deeply sorrowed by the tragedy at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church: we hope and pray that the culprit or culprits meet their just judgements, according to law. But the white population should not have to suffer for a crime not proven against them, individually or collectively. May I add that the whites have not been rocking Negro cars, as a class, simply because a white boy was the victim of a thrown rock by "persons unknown."[47]

Another woman who questioned white involvement in the bombing was Mrs. H. A. Torbert, who responded to a *Montgomery Advertiser* editorial which speculated on who might have done the bombing. "Your believing the bombed church was the work of a white man shows little thought. Such bungling would naturally be done by Negroes. Surely whites would not cross their wires to the extent a bomb set to go off at a certain time would explode twelve hours later."[48]

By late fall of 1963, any semblance of reflection and soul-searching was apparently over. Mrs. Louise Hide wrote the governor to inform him of her desire to "spearhead a movement of the citizens...requesting that the name of our state be changed officially from Alabama to Wallace." Suzanne B. Johnston, a northerner by birth but southern in sympathies, hailed the governor for his "courage and convictions" and requested he look into suspected mail fraud violations committed by the NAACP. Mrs. Sara Crawford was thoroughly disgusted with "JFK's dictatorial powers" and wanted "to strike at this business but don't know where or how."[49]

All of the public correspondence of 1962 and 1963 share two common features. First, the letters were almost universally in support of Wallace. Overwhelmingly, women viewed the governor as the right man for the job and were specifically encouraged by his particular style and method of resisting the forces of social change. Whether it was their perceived correlation between the governor and their considerations of the origins of the Civil War, their adherence to the Lost Cause civil religion and prevention of another Reconstruction debacle, their categoric assumption of race, or their lingering sexual fears, many white women in Alabama thought Wallace's rhetoric, laced with physical references, and his confrontational actions were appropriate responses to the events of 1963.

The second feature common to a significant portion of the public correspondence was the presence of religious symbolism and rhetoric. Many viewed the struggle to maintain segregation as something akin to a holy war. References to scripture are included in many of the letters written to the governor. Many of the women expressed a commitment to pray for the governor and wished God's blessings upon him. Alabama women derided the religious credentials of protestors, demonstrators, and leaders of the movement and instead blamed them almost exclusively for the violence of the times. For many Alabama women, the Civil Rights Movement was part of a sweeping attack on traditional moral values and George Wallace was a defender of the faith. Sinful modernity was encroaching on their lives and it was most unwelcome.

This religious component would appear consistent with what historian Wayne Flynt has called the "profound religious irony" of the era:

> On one side were nearly half a million black Baptists for whom the gospel proclaimed freedom, liberation, social justice, full human dignity, and economic, political, and educational equality. On the other side were equal numbers of white Baptists who affirmed the moral and intellectual inferiority of blacks...and fiercely defended separation of the races.[50]

In many churches, Baptist and otherwise, white women were the most faithful in attendance and performed a variety of semi-public and public roles. Perhaps more than anything, these repeated scriptural references should remind students of southern history of the powerful role religion, not just race and class and gender, has played in shaping the nation's most distinctive region.[50]

Alabama white women were not afraid to speak for themselves about Governor George Wallace. And, it is clear that many white Alabama women were extremely receptive to him in the most important year of his political career. In fact, Wallace's support among Alabama women was not limited to just the first year of his first term. His policy initiatives throughout his first term, such as the extensive junior college and trade school system and free textbooks for public school children, were exceedingly popular. Alabama women overwhelmingly supported his wife, Lurleen, in her 1966 election as his stand-in and they preferred George Wallace to Albert Brewer in 1970.

While it is clear that some white women were sympathetic to the Civil Rights Movement and opposed George Wallace in 1963, we must take a full measure of history and not just identify those women or

men of whom we are most proud or who actively worked for the cause of social justice. To some degree, the worst fears of a century of crafting a specific collective memory were coming true in 1963. A liberal Massachusetts president was inviting blacks to step outside their mandated southern roles and enter the public domain as full partners. Years of gender, race, and religious assumptions were fraying. Based on a history of traditional southern stereotypes about the Civil War, the Lost Cause, the purity of white womanhood, conservative theology, and outrageous sexual fears about blacks, a significant number of Alabama women were conditioned to view the events of 1963 as fulfillment of prophetic fears about the moral and physical breakdown of the South. As a result, white Alabama women saw George Wallace as a heroic defender of their most treasured heritage.

Nearly four decades after the first year of George Wallace's first term, a movement to rewrite Alabama's infamous 1901 constitution gained enough momentum to attract the attention of the media and much of the general populace. Leading the charge against updating the conservative document which prevents home rule, allows for regressive taxation, reeks of turn-of-the-century racism, and has been almost universally regarded as a major impediment to state growth, were two white women—Sandra Smith of the Association for Judeo-Christian values and Kayla Moore, wife of Supreme Court Justice Roy Moore of Ten Commandments fame. Perhaps, in Alabama at least, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Notes

[1]Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill, 1997); *Birmingham News*; *Montgomery Advertiser*; Martin Luther King, "Letter From Birmingham Jail," in *The Oxford Book of the American South*, eds. Edward L. Ayers and Bradley C. Mittendorf (New York, 1997), 447-61.

[2]Numan V. Bartley and Hugh D. Graham, *Southern Elections: County and Precinct Data, 1950-1972* (Baton Rouge, 1978), 4; Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (Baton Rouge, 1995); Sandra Baxley Taylor, *Me 'n' George* (Mobile, 1988); Author interview with Bill Jones, March 1, 2000; Stephan Lesher, *George Wallace: American Populist* (New York, 1994), 117-27. Patterson polled 55.7 percent of the vote, Wallace earned 44.3 percent. Jones has concluded, as

have others, that Wallace wanted to be governor of Alabama more than he wanted anything else in his life.

[3]Lesher, *George Wallace: American Populist*, 161-63.

[4]Ibid., 155-63; Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 104-9; *Birmingham News*, May 6, 1962; Marshall Frady, *Wallace* (New York, 1970), 129-35; James Pershing Cooper Jr, "The Rise of George C. Wallace: Alabama Politics and Policy, 1958-1966" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1987), 58-81. Even the *Birmingham News*, May 2, 1962, a vocal critic of Wallace during the campaign, noted that Wallace "refrained from attacking any of his opponents, even when attacked by others...."

[5]Donald Roseman Ranish, "The Rhetoric of a Rebel: George C. Wallace—Campaign Themes and Constituency Responses, 1958-1974" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1975), 210; Martha Jean Womack Haun, "A Study in Demagoguery: A Critical Analysis of the Speaking Style of George Corley Wallace in the 1968 Presidential Campaign" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1971), 162; Author interview with Bill Jones, July 8, 1999, and March 1, 2000.

[6]Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question* (Chapel Hill, 1997).

[7]*United Daughters of the Confederacy Magazine*, 1947, RG 623, Box 1, Gladys Stewart Personal Papers, Auburn University Archives, Auburn, Alabama [hereafter cited as AU]; Mary Poppenheim et al, *The History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1894-1955* (Raleigh, 1956), 1; "Program of Confederate Memorial Day, April 26, 1964," RG 658, Box 5, Basore Family Papers, AU.

[8]Basore Family Papers, RG 658, Box 5, 6, AU.

[9]Memorandum from UDC President Harriett Kinnaird Privett to Chapter Presidents, September 1, 1947, RG 623, Box 1, Gladys Stewart Papers, AU; Minutes of the May 7, 1947 Auburn, Alabama, UDC Meeting, RG 623, Box 1, Gladys Stewart Papers, AU; Memorandum from UDC President Harriett Kinnaird Privett to Chapter Presidents, March 1, 1948, RG 623, Gladys Stewart Papers, AU.

[10]Division Reports in the Minutes of the 70th Annual Convention in Richmond, Virginia, November 10-14, 1963, Program of Confederate Memorial Day, April 26, 1964, RG 623, Box 1, Gladys Stewart Papers, AU.

[11]W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "White Women and the Politics of Historical Memory in the New South, 1880-1920," in *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights*, eds. Jane Dailey, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, and Bryant Simon (Princeton, 2000), 117, 115-39.

[12]*Mobile Register*, November 29, 1962; "The 1963 Inaugural Address of Governor George C. Wallace" January 14, 1963, SG12678, Reel 1, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama [hereafter cited as ADAH].

[13]Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: the Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens, 1980) 13, 159; Albert Burton Moore, *History of Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, 1934), 367, 364; *Mobile Register*, April 29, 1963. One example of the media reinforcing a specific interpretation of Reconstruction can be found in the *Montgomery Advertiser*. Editor Grover Hall frequently blamed southern economic malaise on the lingering effects of unfair rail rates, northern economic discrimination, and other unfair practices which began during Reconstruction. For his part, Wallace was fond of pointing out alleged social, political, and economic Reconstruction atrocities committed at the point of a bayonet. In a November 30, 1962 speech, Wallace remarked concerning Reconstruction: "We were the most oppressed people and now that we have shaken off those economic shackles, they are trying to get at us by unsettling our social relationships."

[14]Green, *Southern Strategies*, 102-18; Virginia Foster Durr, *Outside the Magic Circle: The Autobiography of Virginia Foster Durr*, ed. Hollinger F. Barnard (Tuscaloosa, 1985, 1990), 44.

[15]*Mobile Register*, January 11, April 18, and July 20, 1963.

[16]E. Culpepper Clark, *The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation's Last Stand at the University of Alabama* (New York, 1993, 1995) 67-68; Statewide Oral History Project, Alabama Center for Higher Education, Interview #148, Dr. S. Q. Bryant interviewed by Robert Parker, Hollis Burke Frissell Library, Tuskegee University Archives, Tuskegee, Alabama; *Mobile Register*, January 25, 1963; Joel Williamson, *A Rage for Order: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York, 1986), 84; Dan T. Carter, *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South* (Baton Rouge, 1969, 1979).

[17]*Alabama Baptist*, May 31, 1962, June 27, August 15, and September 19, 1963.

[18]Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 6:5; *Mobile Register*, April 13, June 20, 1963. Although the King James Version would have been used at the time, these quotations come from the New International Version. According to that translation the passages read respectively, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ." Southern Baptists were the most dominant convention.

[19]John Shelton Reed, *The Enduring South: Sub-cultural Persistence in Mass Society* (Chapel Hill, 1975); Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis* (New York, 1967); *Mobile Register*, January 20, 1963; J. Wayne Flynt, *Alabama Baptist: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie* (Tuscaloosa, 1998).

[20]Administrative files of Governor George C. Wallace, SG22370, ADAH; Ed Ewing Papers, LPR 72, Box 1, ADAH; *Mobile Register*, June 23-24, 1963.

[21]*Mobile Register*, January 20, 1963.

[22]"Regional Economic Profile: Alabama," in State Personal Income, 1929-1997, SPI-RCN0208, U.S. Department of Commerce: Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of Economic Analysis; Joseph J. Molnar and Calvin Vanlandingham, "Population Migration in Alabama, 1960-1975: Trends and Implications," Auburn: Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin #507, 1978, 8-16.

[23]Cooper, "The Rise of George C. Wallace," 50-81; *Montgomery Advertiser*, May 10, 1962.

[24]Carl Grafton and Anne Permaloff, *Big Mules and Branchheads: James E. Folsom and Political Power in Alabama* (Athens, 1985); George E. Sims, *The Little Man's Big Friend: James E. Folsom in Alabama Politics* (Tuscaloosa, 1985); Cooper, "The Rise of George C. Wallace" 57-64; Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 108; Lesher, *George Wallace: American Populist*, 157-58; *Montgomery Advertiser*, April 28-May 5, 1962.

[25]Bartley and Graham, *Southern Elections*, 4; *Birmingham News*, May 1-6, 1962; *Montgomery Advertiser*, May 1-7, 1962; *Huntsville Times*, May 1-5, 1962.

[26]Frady, *Wallace*, 132; Lesher, *George Wallace: American Populist*, 157-60; Anne Permaloff and Carl Grafton, *Political Power in Alabama: The More Things Change...* (Athens, 1995) 157; Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 276-80.

[27]*Birmingham* News, May 10-11, May 13, and May 27, 1962; *Montgomery Advertiser*, May 16-17, May 24, and May 28, 1962; *Huntsville Times*, May 13, and May 16, 1962.

[28]*Birmingham News*, May 10, 1962; *Montgomery Advertiser*, May 22, and May 23, 1962; *Huntsville Times*, May 13, 1962.

[29]*Birmingham News*, May 16, 1962; *Montgomery Advertiser*, May 19, and May 22-23, 1962.

[30]*Montgomery Advertiser*, May 12, and May 18, 1962; *Birmingham News*, May 3, 1962. All letters-to-the-editor were selected only if their first names seemed undeniably feminine. This reduced an already significant number of written responses because I elected not to include any gender-nonspecific names such as "Pat" or "Taylor." In addition, many letters were signed only with initials, and none of those entries are used in this manuscript. It is likely that some women signed their husband's name to their letter. The letters selected are representative of all the correspondence and do not include any of the more outlandish entries.

[31]*Montgomery Advertiser*, May 25-26, 1962; *Birmingham News*, May 13, May 17, May 28, and May 31, 1962.

[32]*Montgomery Advertiser*, May 27, 1962; *Birmingham News*, May 28, and May 25, 1962.

[33]*Birmingham News*, May 22, May 21, and May 13, 1962.

[34]Author interview with Bill Jones, March 1, 2000, July 8, 1999; Author interview with Jean Jones, July 8, 1999; Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 104; Taylor, *Me 'n' George*, 94-109.

[35]Author interview with Emma Hall, February 8, 2000; Author interview with June Smith, March 7, 2000; Oral History, Myrtice West as interviewed by Carol Calhoun, 1999; Author interview with Jean Jones, March 1, 2000; Author interview with Jane Dunkleberger, February 9, 2000; Bartley and Graham, *Southern Elections*, 15. Wallace won Lee County with 57 percent of the vote.

[36]*Montgomery Advertiser*, May 13, May 20, and May 28, 1962; *Birmingham News* May 25, 1962.

[37]*Mobile Register*, August 1, 1963; Stella N. Huger to George C. Wallace, March 3, 1962, SG22366, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH; *Birmingham News*, April 18, April 23, April 20, and April 29, 1963; Governor George C. Wallace to Mrs. T. E. Bridges, March 11, 1963, SG22377, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH. Press Secretary Bill Jones notes that not all correspondence to the governor was kept. A staff of varying size, but usually eight employees or more, processed the daily correspondence. Again, the correspondence, both to the governor and letters to the editors, is presented in a representative fashion. No attempt could be made in the space of this article to identify every piece of correspondence. What is being presented, is representative of the tone of all the letters in the governor's files and published in the *Birmingham News, Huntsville Times, Montgomery Advertiser,* and *Mobile Register.*

[38]*Birmingham News*, May 7, May 12, and May 23, 1963.

[39]*Birmingham News*, June 6, and June 11, 1963; Governor George Wallace from Janice Mae, June 8, 1963, SG 22366, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH.

[40]*Birmingham News*, June 14, June 17, June 18, and June 25, 1963.

[41]Mrs. Hunter S. Allen to Governor George S. Wallace, June 17, 1963, SG22366, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH.; Draft of Letter from Governor George C. Wallace to Mrs Hunter S. Allen, undated, SG22366, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH; *Birmingham News*, June 27, and June 29, 1963.

[42]*Birmingham News*, September 27, September 9, September 21, September 20, and September 11, 1963.

[43]*Birmingham News*, September 28, 1963; Mrs. Tom Richardson to Governor George Wallace, September 30, 1963, Mrs. V. J. Baker to Governor George Wallace, September 12, 1963, Geraldine Chafin Moore to Governor George Wallace, September 28, 1963, H. D. Lassiter to Governor George Wallace, August 16, 1963, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH.

[44]*Birmingham News*, September 21, and September 13, 1963.

[45]*Mobile Register*, September 11, and September 20, 1963.

[46]*Birmingham News*, September 27, September 24, and September 28, 1963.

[47]Ibid., September 23, 1963.

[48]*Montgomery Advertiser*, October 2, 1963.

[49]Louise Hide to Governor George Wallace, November 29, 1963, Suzanne B. Johnston to Governor George Wallace, November 20, 1963, Mrs. Sara Crawford to Governor George Wallace, October 29, 1963, SG22377, Governor George Wallace Papers, ADAH.

[50]Wayne Flynt, *Alabama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie* (Tuscaloosa, 1998), 457.

[51]Ibid.

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The Rev. S. D. Malone. University of South Alabama Archives.

The Relationship between Southern and National Baptists in Mobile, 1930-1960

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In 1964 Alabama's port city, Mobile, gained national attention for something other than its mystical Mardi Gras parades, sweat-filled shipyards, or Azalea Trail. In July of that year a *New York Times* article proclaimed Mobile, "An island of tranquility in a region seething with racial unrest...."[1] The peaceful island deep in the South had already been awarded an article on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* almost to the day one year earlier. That article stated, "While tensions between Negroes and whites have exploded into headlines elsewhere in the nation, Mobile has achieved a remarkable degree of racial harmony."[2] Both articles provided substantial evidence for their claims.

The *Wall Street Journal* article presented an image that illustrated well the city's approach to changing times. On the same day, in 1963, that George Wallace positioned himself in the doorway of the University of Alabama to make a stand against integration, a group of white parents met in Mobile to discuss ways they could insure the peaceful opening of schools in the fall if the federal court mandated desegregation. Indeed, in most cases Mobile prepared for a peaceful reaction to court decisions regarding integration and sometimes beat the courts to the verdict. In 1953, the city hired its first African-American policeman. In 1954, Spring Hill College, a Jesuit university in Mobile, admitted African-American students. By 1961, the bus system, municipal golf course, and most of the downtown lunch counters had been integrated peacefully. While both of the articles applauded Mobile for its progressive nature, they did not portray the island to be free from occasional storms of racial tension; occasional violence had also been a part of its history, but for the majority of its life during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s, Mobile had fared well and deserved the favorable attention it received.

The articles gave several reasons for Mobile's success. The city benefitted from a diverse heritage; early French and Spanish settlers established a relatively high level of social tolerance and endowed the city with a cosmopolitan flavor.[3] Religious diversity was also present,

and the Catholic Church received due credit in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal* for its role in encouraging peace and justice.[4] Above all, both articles revealed that harmony in Mobile had been achieved by dialogue between the races. Mayor Joseph Langan said, "[unlike other cities in Alabama] this city has carefully avoided a breakdown in dialogue between the white and Negro communities."[5] Mobile achieved harmony because voices were heard.

Two particular voices left a lasting legacy on Mobile's interracial dialogue: John L. LeFlore and Joseph N. Langan. John LeFlore (1903-1976), mail carrier in the daytime and secretary of the Mobile chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at night, earned the title "quiet revolutionary" because of his gentle yet radical approach to race relations and civil rights.[6] Joe Langan, Alabama congressman and then Mobile mayor from 1953-1969, argued for equality and open dialogue with the poise of the stereotypical southern gentleman.[7] These two leaders, whose stories are filled with episodes of tragedy as well as success, are the main characters in the story of race relations in Mobile in the twentieth century. Their leadership, along with Mobile's diversity, fostered communication between the races and allowed the city to earn its reputation as the "island of tranquility," so that when one thinks of civil rights struggles in the state of Alabama, the cities of Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery come to mind rather than Mobile.[8]

In all events and periods of history, agents of change are more numerous than the few who reach the attention of historians. Naturally, in Mobile many individuals contributed to the positive dialogue between the two races before and during the mid-century movements for civil rights. This article explores one particular religious group in Mobile, Southern Baptists, to see if and how their efforts in the arena of race relations contributed to the positive reputation Mobile earned in the 1960s.

Southern Baptists are the subject of this article for several reasons. First, the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, and in the two decades preceding the date of this article had increased in membership by more than 34 percent.[9] Secondly, race is an issue that has historic roots in Southern Baptist history; in fact, the Southern Baptist Convention was formed in 1845 when Baptists in America, who were united under what they called the "Triennial Convention," split into northern and southern conventions over the issue of slavery, a division that has never healed.[10] Lastly, scholars are fascinated with the Southern Baptist Convention

and its relation to southern culture, and have formed the general consensus that the SBC and its constituents have demonstrated continuity rather than discontinuity with southern culture on most social issues including race. In other words, Southern Baptists did not challenge the racial status quo of segregation.

For example, John Lee Eighmy titled his study of the history of the social attitudes of Southern Baptists *Churches in Cultural Captivity*. The work showed successfully, according to southern religion historian Samuel S. Hill, "that Southern Baptist churches tend to reflect the values held by their surrounding culture rather than to prompt critical assessment of those values."[11] Of course with any generalizations there are always exceptions, but for the overwhelming majority of issues the historical record is consistent with Eighmy's thesis, most certainly on the issue of race.[12] Very few examples exist of Southern Baptist leaders who challenged the South's racial status quo before the introduction of federal legislation, and not many more thereafter; the burden of Southern Baptist history rests on the fact that the South's largest Protestant denomination conformed to, if not helped shape, the Jim Crow South.[13]

However, before resting completely on the above interpretation of Southern Baptists and race, it must be realized that most, if not all, scholarly work has relied heavily, if not fully, on the records of national or state convention meetings and agencies and the newspapers and publications of the same two groups. These sources, while they may describe accurately the denomination's bureaucratic workings, have the potential to guide the historian away from the masses, local pastors, and church members.[14] These sources tend to blur any regional differences in thought or action that may exist among Baptists because their goal is to present one united voice. With these principles in mind, this study will seek to understand the thought and action of a group of Southern Baptists, the Mobile Baptist Association, in their relationship to African Americans in a city that had the reputation, at least in 1964, of being progressive on the issue of race. In 1930, African-Americans totaled 36 percent of Mobile's 118,000 inhabitants.[15] Early in December of that year, the organized ministry to African-American Baptists through the Mobile Baptist Association began.

On December 9, 1930, a group of African-American ministers approached the Executive Committee of the Mobile Baptist Association with a request for help. The African-American ministers had already appointed a committee to seek out the prospect of having one of the white ministers, Rev. S. D. Monroe, become a full-time worker

involved in training their denomination's pastors and laity, and they wanted the white Association to appoint a similar committee to help with the arrangement of the work.[16] The Executive Committee approved the request and appointed a committee, but, as a result of the financial depression that ravaged the nation, would not commit the Association to any financial obligation concerning the work.[17] Despite this financial fact, the ministry began and the worker would work for a year without a wage.

At the age of seventy-one when the work began, Rev. Monroe could certainly offer years of ministerial experience if nothing else. He had pastored several churches in Mobile County and evidently sensed that his work in the city was not yet done. In his first report to the Association in the fall of 1931, Monroe revealed that conversations concerning the ministry had reached back as far as a year, and that presently the work was quite successful. "Ask them what they think of the work and worker," he said to the crowd who had never been a part of such an organized endeavor.[18] Monroe gave several reasons for the need of such a project, principles that would guide the work for years to come.

"No race has ever made such rapid progress as the negroes in the past 60 years," Monroe pointed out. Booker T. Washington had been followed by scores of African Americans who had achieved success in the arts, science, and literature. The progress of African Americans led to fifty thousand churches with only four hundred educated pastors, a number Monroe received from the research department of Tuskegee Institute. Training church leaders would fulfill the evangelical vision while also promoting good will between the races, a gesture already being made by a competing group. While Southern Baptists nationwide only had one worker, said Monroe, "Roman Catholics are spending a million and a quarter dollars annually and have about 1,200 full time workers among the Negroes.... The negro is easily influenced right or wrong, which increases our responsibility." Monroe appealed to his constituents for help based on these principles and the assurance that the ministry would be a success.[19]

In that first year's report, Rev. Monroe failed to mention, perhaps from fear that his ministry might be deemed too political in nature, an incident concerning African-American Baptists and Mobile's young chapter of the NAACP. John Leflore had begun the process of reviving the NAACP in Mobile in 1925, but success came slowly. "Most of our people down here are heart and soul for such an organization as the NAACP, and will support it, but for fear of some kind of reaction

from whites," wrote Leflore to Robert Bagnall, the Director of Branches.[20] Leflore endured the timidity of his potential constituency and worked painstakingly to arouse in Mobile's African-American community the support a new branch would need. His efforts were not in vain. "It happens that Mobile is the one vigorous branch we have in Alabama," Bagnall wrote to Leflore three years later. In fact, if the other city branches in Alabama survived, he said, it would be due to the example and leadership of the Mobile group.[21] In the summer of 1931, the branch showed its vitality by inviting Illinois Republican Congressman and Alabama native Oscar DePriest to Mobile to deliver a speech.[22]

Evidently the proposed engagement did not fare well among the white citizens of Mobile, causing the branch to send a letter to the mayor arguing that Congressman DePriest's visit was perfectly legitimate and would cause no harm.[23] DePriest spoke to a crowd of three hundred on August 7 and to the satisfaction of the white community he denounced "communistic doctrine" and reassured his hearers that his goal was not to cause friction between the races in Mobile.[24] According to a press release sent to the national office by John LeFlore, friction had occurred among African Americans prior to the visit. Some blacks, he said, "were bowing to the will of their white masters." LeFlore praised Rev. John Albert, a Roman Catholic priest, who though under pressure from whites, allowed the use of the Catholic auditorium for the speech, but blasted certain African-American Baptist ministers who reneged on their similar invitation.[25]

The Baptist ministers had succumbed to a speech by "an insignificant white minister," said LeFlore. LeFlore's vitriolic condemnation suggests that the white minister's actions were quite significant. One week before the arrival of Oscar DePriest, the local African-American National Baptist Association of churches, the Sunlight Association, met for their annual meeting. Rev. Monroe, an invited guest, spoke at the meeting and declared, according to the local newspaper, "that the white man and the negro of the south know better how to work out their own problems than any outsider from the north, not needing anyone coming in and telling them how to live and how to do."[26] The association endorsed the work of Rev. Monroe, vowed to contribute willingly to the ministry, and passed a resolution against any movement that would strain the peaceful relations between the races in Mobile. John Leflore stated that the African-American community was "highly indignant" over the audacity of the resolution, and that the Mobile branch was preparing a counter resolution.[27] Rev. Monroe

had certainly divided the black community and, if only for a moment, defused the power of the NAACP in Mobile.

The interracial work begun by Mobile Baptists in 1930 was the practical application of the newly aggressive philosophy of race relations espoused by Southern Baptist Convention elite progressives. The theme of the June 1930 Southern Baptist missions magazine, *Home and Foreign Fields*, was race relations and ministry to African Americans. Will Alexander, director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation in Atlanta, wrote an article in which he boldly encouraged Christians to act through deeds and not merely words to heal racial barriers because the white community, by and large, had never given African Americans reason to believe that friendship could exist. With all capital letters he stated emphatically, "IF WHITE AND NEGRO PREACHERS KNEW EACH OTHER AND WORKED WITH EACH OTHER AS DO WHITE AND NEGRO BOOTLEGGERS THERE WOULD BE NO RACE PROBLEM IN THE SOUTH."[28] Few preachers besides Rev. Monroe chose not to be outdone by bootleggers.

According to the 1932 report to the Association of the "Work Among the Negroes," Monroe's ministry to African Americans was said to be the only full-time work that had a systematic program that, free of charge, gave adequate training to black ministers and other church workers.[29] In this report, the longest he would ever submit, Monroe reminded the Association of the Roman Catholic program of proselytization and also included Communists as another agency that was active among African Americans who, he said, were "leading many away from the truths of the old Book and the Baptist faith which is nominally theirs."[30] Monroe assured the audience that he was serious about the work; since the last meeting he had taken no vacation, had traveled 5,000 miles, preached 178 sermons, held 6 training schools, and had spoken in several black institutions. In other words, Monroe was certain that the ministry would last. The Alabama Baptist State Convention confirmed his work by contributing annually through its budget to Monroe, making him the Convention's only white missionary to African Americans.[31]

For the next several years, the only negative aspects of Monroe's reports concerned the complaints about the loss of time he frequently endured because of his poor health, some tendency of anti-missionary groups to be a hindrance, and of course the usual woeful plea for more funds. He successfully reported that there was less tendency for African Americans to join the Catholic Church and that the work was endorsed by the general conference of Mobile Protestant Ministers. In 1933, he

opened a library in the African-American St. Louis Street Baptist Church, and in 1935 a community center for African Americans was secured with help from the federal government, which spent $50,000 in renovations on the building, that would be used for recreational, social, educational, and religious purposes.[32] The litany of accomplishments included numerous training sessions, many conversions, several children's Vacation Bible Schools and tons of religious literature distributed. The greatest commendation to the work came from the newly hired Home Mission Board missionary Noble Y. Beall.

In 1934, the Home Mission Board hired Noble Y. Beall and Lou Wilkins as the first white Southern Baptist Convention missionaries to African Americans. Ms. Wilkins would continue the work with African Americans in Texas that she began as a seminary student, while Beall would assume the directorship of the newly created Department of Negro Work and begin his work in Alabama where he had previously pastored churches.[33] Beall visited the work in Mobile and participated as a teacher on several occasions and admired the work that was being accomplished. The Negro Training Committee reported to the Association that "as far as he [Beall] has been able to learn, Brother Monroe has the distinction of being the only White man who has been successful in leading Negroes to an acceptance of the Saviour."[34] While the veracity of this statement could perhaps be contested, it does show the respect that Monroe's work warranted among the bureaucracy of the Convention.

The Mobile Baptist Association in the 1930s rarely discussed in its annual meeting social or political issues that pertained to the city, except for the issue of prohibition which was discussed each year. Therefore any reference to a social situation that did not directly involve alcohol is of great importance. In 1939, the Association passed a resolution concerning law enforcement. Because "sin and lawlessness" were rampant, the Association approved a resolution encouraging every law officer to "discharge faithfully the duties" which had been assumed under oath.[35] Little did they know that Mobile's social stability was just beginning to be shaken by World War II.

With two shipyards and one new aluminum plant, Mobile was destined for growth during the wartime boom. As sharecroppers and tenant farmers waved goodbye to the soil and became acquainted with steel, the New South began.[36] Mobile was the fastest growing city in the country during this period, experiencing 61 percent growth from the years 1940-43.[37] Unfortunately, the population influx stretched the old southern city to its limit. Without proper housing, many workers

slept in boarding houses where the beds never received any rest from workers who occupied them in three different shifts. But problematic sleeping arrangements were only the beginning of the problems. *Washington Post* reporter, Agnes Meyer, toured the nation's wartime centers beginning in 1943. Mobile came to epitomize the title of her book, *Journey Through Chaos*. After describing the city's alarming rates of vagrancy, burglary, juvenile delinquency, child prostitution and other examples of social chaos she concluded, "The beautiful old city of Mobile is up to its ears in trouble. The moss-hung trees seem to be mourning its fate."[38] The city, up to its ears and stretched to its limit, released its frustration in many ways, including racial violence.

On the night of August 17, 1942, an African-American soldier in uniform died instantly from three gunshot wounds delivered by a white city bus driver, with whom the soldier allegedly had an argument.[39] Believing that the incident was racially motivated, the Mobile NAACP threatened a boycott, sent a letter outlining several demands to the bus company, and held a mass meeting one week after the murder.[40] The demands included the immediate disarming of bus drivers, an ordinance forcing drivers to display their names, better treatment of African-American passengers, the use of black drivers on predominantly black routes, and the immediate dismissal of driver Grover Chandler, the alleged murderer.[41] The bus company conceded to all but the last two demands, thereby quieting the plans for a city-wide bus boycott by the NAACP, who gained over a hundred new members because of the incident. This event, which could have resulted in a divisive boycott similar to Montgomery's bus boycott over a decade later, ended relatively peacefully due to the stern yet reasonable response of the Mobile NAACP, whose statement on the issue included a proposed meeting between the two races "in the hope," the statement read, "that the policy of the Golden Rule may be advanced."[42] The next major racially motivated disturbance in Mobile would not end in death, but had a slightly longer road to peace.

In 1941, President Roosevelt outlawed, by executive order, discrimination in the nation's defense industries and created the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) to deal with allegations of unfair hiring practices. The Alabama Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Company complied with the order to upgrade black workers by promoting twelve men from unskilled labor positions to skilled positions as welders. The twelve men worked their first night shift as welders on May 24, 1943, in a segregated section of the shipyard and attracted little attention. The next morning, however, while there were

no black welders on the job, white workers erupted in violence against all the black workers present. John Leflore's telegram to NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall reported "more than a score" injured, including one female incapacitated by a pelvic injury and two other females brutally beaten with steel pipes.[43] The *Mobile Register* and city leaders chastised all involved in the riot, forcefully reported that there were no deaths involved, and demanded that all rumors be laid to rest.[44] As for the reasoning behind the riot, Bruce Nelson states, "It is reasonable to conclude that the age-old taboo against the physical proximity of black men to white women was the most combustible ingredient in the riot."[45] His conclusion is quite plausible since recruitment of women into the workforce by war industries in Mobile began heavily just a few months before the riot.[46] A few days after the riot the city's emotions settled down and returned to its breakneck speed of production and goal of defeating the enemy across the sea.

During the war years, Mobile Baptists had little to say at their annual meeting about the monumental social changes that were occurring around them and did not comment on the examples of racially motivated violence. The interracial work continued throughout the war years and Rev. Monroe, in his 1941 report, for the first time situated the ministry in a larger cultural framework:

> It is claimed by many, some of our best businessmen, that our labors and influence among the Negroes have been of more value to the city than a half dozen policemen, and that there is better feeling, less agitation, and trouble between the races than in any city in the country of like population and conditions. Our opportunities and responsibilities increase with the population....[47]

Interestingly, for the first time this statement posits success for the ministry in social rather than strict religious terms. In other words, in addition to the 175 conversions and 4 Vacation Bible Schools reported in 1941, the strength of the interracial ministry was praised in terms of its effectiveness as an agent of peace in the community, a quality in this case noted by Mobile businessmen.

The rising population of the war years brought many potential preachers who desired training, and both African American and Southern Baptists stepped up their service together by pooling their resources into the Cedar Grove Academy Bible College, a school begun by the African-American Mobile Sunlight Association and housed in an African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church north of the city. Monroe reported in 1941 that classes were conducted five nights a week with

white pastors lecturing twice a week on a rotating basis. This truly interracial educational endeavor trained many ministers including young Fred Shuttlesworth, who would later become the hero in the movement for civil rights in Birmingham. Shuttlesworth, in an interview with his biographer exploring those early days of ministerial preparation, noted the particular influence of two pastors who taught at Cedar Grove, one of whom was Rev. L. F. Maynard who chaired the Interracial Work Committee of the white Association.[48] Little did Mobile Baptists know their education efforts would be a stepping stone in the life of one of the most productive leaders of racial equality.

The overwhelming majority of reports given by Rev. Monroe to the Association, not surprisingly, presented the ministry in a favorable light. However, in 1943, Rev. Monroe issued an honest and blunt chiding to his hearers. Monroe had challenged each white church in the Association to hold a Vacation Bible School for a neighboring African-American church. He stated, "These suggestions failed to get results, so the secretary turned to the women."[49] Perhaps after asking the women to take a more prominent role in the ministry, he wished he had asked them sooner. Monroe reported several successful schools organized and implemented by women and praised their involvement. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to see the prominent role one woman would take in the life of the interracial work.

On September 2, 1944, Rev. Monroe died at the age of eighty-three. The void in leadership did not last long. Rev. L. F. Maynard, who had chaired the committee that supported the work of Monroe several years earlier, took over the leadership role, but this time in a different capacity. By the time Monroe died, the SBC's Home Mission Board had established a significant and growing office for interracial work and hired Maynard as a full-time "goodwill" missionary. A delegation of pastors from the Sunlight Association was present for Maynard's first report and expressed their appreciation for the work and the need for greater Christian fellowship between the races.

In his work John Egerton calls the day World War II ended the turning point for the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement or the "invisible hinge" between the inauguration of President Roosevelt and the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954, the date generally used by historians as the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement proper.[50] Certainly after 1945, the rhetoric used to describe the interracial work of Mobile Baptists contained a slightly different vocabulary, a result of being on the other side of the hinge. For example, in 1946 Rev. Maynard stated in the report, "Our nation and

L. F. Maynard. University of South Alabama Archives.

our Christianity faces no more vital questions today than those pertaining to racial misunderstandings and consequent tensions...."[51] While the goal of evangelization stayed at the mission's forefront and as race relations became more strained, Maynard pointedly called his constit-uency to rid themselves of all prejudice and become living proof that the two races could live in harmony. The goal of the work moved from being simply an evangelistic effort to becoming a symbol of peace and expression of goodwill in a land of misunderstanding and resulting racial tension.

In 1948, Rev. Maynard challenged the Association to take a bolder step in professing goodwill to African Americans by recommending that committees from both white and black Associations be formed to look into purchasing a building to be used as a "Negro Baptist Center."[52] The fact that committees from both associations would be involved from the start shows a tremendous change in attitude on the part of white Baptists. The relationship between the two groups became more dialogical and moved away from the simple instructive approach embraced before the war. In 1949, the report read, "In the work of assisting to build Goodwill and understanding, arrangements have been

made at times for Negro Baptist workers to speak to white Baptist groups, or for white Baptist groups to speak to Negro groups."[53]

Rev. Maynard's recommendation concerning the Baptist center did not fall on deaf ears; unfortunately, however, he did not live long enough to hear the final reply. L. F. Maynard died in the Spring of 1950; his wife who assisted him in his work, Addine Maynard, gave the report to the Association that fall. She stated that the work would continue on a temporary basis until a suitable minister was found by the Home Mission Board to replace her husband. Evidently, Ms. Maynard became that suitable replacement because she led the ministry as the executive director for the next seven years.

Addine Maynard, the lady whom S. D. Monroe had approached previously in his "turn to the women," had been quite active in Association and state Woman's Missionary Unions, and claimed to have her own distinct calling to the area of interracial work. In 1947 she wrote an interesting article for a denominational publication and proved herself an inspirational and persuasive writer who deeply cared for the welfare of African Americans. She included in the article a poem in which an unnamed author portrayed the Klan as crucifying Christ over again, except this time Jesus was black, an unfamiliar image not normally welcomed in white Protestantism. She also provided the reader with the text of "Incident," a poem by Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen. The poem describes an eight year old child's lasting impression of being called "nigger" during a trip to Baltimore. Maynard included her own version of the poem, one in which the child is greeted with a smile instead of a slur.[54] The transparency of Ms. Maynard's personality is evident in her writing, a quality that certainly helped the interracial work among Baptists reach its height in 1953.

In a special called meeting on June 23, 1953, the Mobile Baptist Association voted to purchase a ten-room brick house on Lafayette Street in Mobile for $14,750.[55] The building would be used as a central location for the interracial ministry, a feat made possible largely by the fundraising of the Association's Woman's Missionary Union. All sixty-six churches affiliated with the Association were given a monthly apportionment; by October of that year twenty-seven churches had paid either part of or more than their apportioned amount, and since only eighteen churches were represented at the special called meeting a few months earlier, it seems that there was a vigorous response to the new phase of the work and the financial responsibility it demanded.

While the purchase and renovation of an old Mobile home into a Baptist Fellowship Center to promote cooperation between the races

The Mobile Baptist Association house on Lafayette Street. University of South Alabama Archives.

was a positive and important gesture of kindness, one hint from the 1953 report indicates that the interracial work *had* to create a new avenue for ministry because of growing tension in the black Baptist community. Ms. Maynard reported, "These [Black Baptists] are eager to promote with us a program of enlightenment and development, in a location where they will not be restricted by the lack of understanding now in their own congregations."[56] Of course, the next two years, with two Supreme Court decisions concerning segregated schools and the nationally noted Montgomery Bus Boycott, race relations in all cities became more tense. Ms. Maynard saw the edifice of the Fellowship Center not only as a way to strengthen African-American churches, but viewed the work as a statement of comfort to African Americans who had been hurt by those who expressed ill-will toward them during the particularly disturbing time of unrest.

The citizens of Mobile made an adventurous decision in 1953 by electing Joseph Langan as Place 1 Commissioner over an incumbent who had served in that position for twenty years. Although Langan, a devout Catholic, supported segregation he ran on a platform of progressivism for all of the city's citizens regardless of race. Langan,

determined to capitalize on the city's willingness to work through its racial tensions peacefully, established biracial committees to enhance and further communication. Despite objections from the city's two other commissioners, the city overwhelmingly supported the idea and followed Langan's leadership in making Mobile a city of communication rather than conflict.[57] While Langan was certainly not a racial liberal, a White Citizen's Council formed in Mobile in 1956 made him their first political target for his alleged radical stance. Yet despite this and other pockets of racial tension, Langan worked tirelessly for peace. In 1957 Langan won re-election and continued his program of progressivism.

In the same year, after seven years of dedication, Ms. Maynard retired from the Home Mission Board as Goodwill Missionary to the Negroes and Director of the Baptist Fellowship Center in Mobile. Her age of sixty-five necessitated retirement from the Board's payroll, but her work in Mobile did not revolve around a monthly paycheck. In fact, her successor as director, T. W. Thompson wrote after her death that Ms. Maynard aggressively fought retirement. He said, "She was not altogether happy about being replaced. She showed remarkable Christian grace in giving up leadership, but remained involved and interested in the Center."[58] Maynard's tenure as director of the Center certainly provided an unusual example of a female in a leadership position. In 1951 the Home Mission Board listed seventeen workers involved in African-American Mission Centers spread over the South with Addine Maynard being the only female worker listed.[59] Perhaps she did land into the ministry on the coattails of her husband, but the excellent work she accomplished through the Center and subsequent years she spent in community service in Mobile proved the hidden potential of Southern Baptist women in leadership roles.[60]

T. W. Thompson served only a couple of years before the atmosphere surrounding the work became divisive. In 1959 he stated, "There seems to be increased opposition on the part of some colored Baptists to the work of the Center."[61] His report the following year revealed the situation only to be worse. Considering the Center's work helped ease racial tensions in the city, he encouraged the Association's continued support even though, he said, "During such times it is a temptation to withdraw or curtail our ministry to Negro Baptists."[62] The next year's report was drafted by Thompson but read by someone else; Thompson had accepted a teaching job in Texas. The Association did not succumb to temptation and continued to use the Center for nearly two more decades. The winds of hurricane Frederick damaged the Center in 1979, and it was sold some years later.

In his study of race relations and southern culture since 1940, David Goldfield states that even though the two races shared much in common (e.g., poverty, health, religion, etc.), the supreme irony of their relationship is that they hardly knew each other at all.[63] The history of Baptists in the South is a part of this irony; once the Civil War ended the two groups parted company and built their separate denominational institutions.[64] The formal relationship that began in 1930 between black and white Baptists in Mobile was unique in that it preceded any interracial work of its kind among Alabama Baptists and was recognized by the Southern Baptist Convention representatives as a work worth repeating. However, the principle that drove Mobile Baptists to formally organize and support a ministry to African-American Baptists in Mobile is not unique and has been identified by historians of southern religion as the identifying characteristic of southern evangelical theology: white paternalism, the primacy of conversion, and the relationship of the individual before God.[65]

Mobile's Southern Baptists funded and participated in the interracial work because their theology mandated the conversion of all persons. Since society was racially segregated, the best way to evangelize and disciple African Americans was through the training and educating of African-American pastors and laity. Racial harmony was an important byproduct of the interracial endeavor, and, they said, if white Baptists would be sincere in the relationship, harmony between the races would continue indefinitely. After World War II and the transformation it brought to the African-American quest for freedom, the work in Mobile emphasized equally, if not more, the desire for interracial work to promote goodwill and genuine understanding.

The motive for interracial work in Mobile, however, was more complex than simply the conversion of the community. The religious landscape of Mobile was unlike any other city in Alabama and most cities in the South because of its relatively large Roman Catholic population. For example, the four religious censuses taken between 1906 and 1936 show Mobile's Catholic population always larger than that of Birmingham, even though Birmingham's total population rose dramatically in the first few decades of the twentieth century, to the point where in 1930 Birmingham's count was nearly four times as large as Mobile's population.[66] With the presence of such a large and thriving Catholic population and the fact that in the 1920s anti-Catholic sentiment ran rampant among southern white Protestants, along with the belief that African Americans could easily be persuaded by Catholics and Communists, one can easily see why Mobile Baptists were the first

in Alabama, and perhaps all of the South, to begin and support a mission of its kind to African Americans.[67]

One central issue in the historiography of religion in the South that has produced disagreement between its scholars is the extent to which the "social gospel," begun in the North at the turn of the twentieth century, existed in the South.[68] Historians generally ask the following questions of faith communities as they discover how the community realized their mission in society. Did the group exhibit social concern by expressing a general interest in society's problems? Or, did the group organize at any level with the purpose of seeking to change social conditions to bring society more in line with the mandates of their faith? Or, did the group participate socially by ministering to those persons harmed by the social conditions, seeking to alleviate the effect without challenging the cause?[69] The story of the interracial work of the Mobile Baptist Association from 1930-1960 answers best the last question. The ministry of white Southern Baptists to African-American Baptists did not challenge the culture of the Jim Crow South, but did seek to provide racial uplift by helping to strengthen African-American churches, their central institution. While no formal attempt was made by these Baptists to change the social conditions that oppressed African Americans, they did create an important atmosphere of dialogue and communication that certainly contributed to the positive relationship between the two races in Mobile. Sometimes, however, institutions do not allow space for dissent, forcing those persons who desire to act in a way different from the majority to find space for their convictions elsewhere. In this story of Mobile's Southern Baptists one act of dissension from the majority is not found in the annual meeting minutes but is revealed in the *Mobile Press Register*. In 1958, two Mobile Baptist pastors took an uncommon stand on an issue that polarized the races.

On March 4, 1958, four African-American ministers delivered a petition signed by themselves and thirty-three others to the Mobile City Commission requesting the removal of the statute that required segregated seating on city buses.[70] The petition stated that a voluntary end to segregated seating would be a responsible Christian approach that would allow the city to follow "the law of the land" while providing an atmosphere that would continue harmonious race relations in Mobile. One day later, thirty-one white ministers issued a statement commending the approach given by their African-American counterparts. Methodist ministers made up the majority with seventeen pastors' signatures, creating a storm of controversy among many of their parishioners.[71] Only two Baptist ministers signed the statement, one

being the pastor of the city's oldest white Baptist church, The First Baptist Church of Mobile.

Dr. Howard Reaves, who by no means was a racial liberal or a radical progressive, spent some of his time in the interracial ministry of the Association and served on the committee that recommended the purchase of the Fellowship Center in 1953. Signing the bus desegregation statement in 1958 was not his only courageous stand. Over a decade earlier he sent a letter to one of the city commissioners announcing his displeasure concerning an incident in which an elderly African-American man was the subject of police brutality. Reaves stated, "I deplore any incident which creates friction between the races and which does injustice to any individual," and argued for strong disciplinary action against the officer should an investigation prove the accusation true.[72] Also, in 1963, Reaves was the only Baptist minister who signed a statement issued by fifty-three area ministers concerning the peaceful desegregation of Mobile public schools.[73] While the majority of Mobile Baptists were either silent or in vocal opposition to progressive racial stands that attracted the attention of ministers of other denominations, Reaves courageously found commonality with leadership outside of the Mobile Baptist Association.[74]

Mills Thornton states that civil rights historiography, as told from a national perspective, fails to deal "with the question of why certain cities and towns in the South erupted into racial strife and other comparable ones did not."[75] Without a doubt the question raised by Thornton is a proper one. The city of Mobile fell into the latter category, did not suffer any sustained acts of violence or protest, and received attention by nationally read newspapers in the 1960s for its achievement. Reasons behind the peaceful changes in Mobile include its history, its leadership, and its community. Leaders like John LeFlore and Joseph Langan worked relentlessly as progressive agents, always mindful of the tragedies that could occur should the city not act responsibly and congenially. Mobile's community worked in several ways to establish harmony between the races, not the least of which was the white Mobile Baptist Association and their formal ministry to African-American Baptists beginning in 1930.

In his 1952 dissertation entitled "Southern Baptist Thought and Action in Race Relations, 1940-1950," Davis Hill stated that the best example known to him of a cooperative ministry between Southern Baptists and African-American Baptists was the ministry of the Baptist Fellowship Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Hill praised the work in Louisville, saying, "members of the two races have a new and better understanding and appreciation of each other."[76] Since Hill studied at

Southern Seminary in Louisville, not far from the Fellowship Center, it is not surprising that he did not know of the two-decade-old interracial work among Baptists 620 miles south of Louisville in Alabama's port city. Had he known of the work of Rev. S. D. Monroe, Rev. L. F. Maynard, Mrs. Addine Maynard, and scores of other Mobile Baptists, his conclusion most certainly would have been the same. The interracial work of Southern Baptists and African-American Baptists in Mobile beginning in 1930 contributed to communication and understanding between the races, one of the primary reasons Mobile became the island of tranquility in a land that seethed with racial unrest.

Notes

[1]Homer Bigart, "Mobile Finds Way to Racial Accord," *New York Times*, July 12, 1964.

[2]Burt Schorr, "Harmony in Mobile: An Alabama City Builds Racial Peace as Strife Increases Elsewhere," *Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 1963.

[3]To evidence early racial tolerance, the *Wall Street Journal* article cited above states, "Eighteenth century maps show the residence of whites and Negroes side by side—a situation that persists on some Mobile streets today."

[4]The 1936 *Religious Census* reveals the Roman Catholic Church to be the largest religious body in the city with 26 percent of the total number of church members for the city. Comparing this percentage to Catholic inhabitants of Birmingham and Montgomery, 8 percent and 4 percent respectively, puts Mobile's Catholic population in perspective. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Religious Bodies: 1936* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927).

[5]Bigart, "Mobile Finds Way," *New York Times*, July 12, 1964.

[6]For information on John Leflore, see Herb Jordan, "From Postal Worker to Legislator, LeFlore Championed Rights," *Mobile Press Register*, February 12 and 13, 1981; *A Quiet Revolutionary: The Story of John LeFlore* (Mobile, 1999), video recording; Eric D. Duke, "A Life in the Struggle: John L. Leflore and the Civil Rights Movements in Mobile, Alabama (1925-1975)" (M.A. thesis, Florida State University, 1998).

[7]For information on Joseph N. Langan, see *Conversation about Mobile with Joseph N. Langan*, 3 vols. (Mobile, 1994), video recordings, Mobile Public Library, Local History Division; Patsy Busby Dow, "Joseph N. Langan: Mobile's Racial Diplomat" (M.A. thesis, University of South Alabama, 1993).

[8]In the context of this paper, "races" will always mean whites and African Americans.

[9]George B. Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge, 1967), 197.

[10]H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Nashville, 1987), 382.

[11]Samuel S. Hill, "Conclusion," in *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists*, by John Lee Eighmy (Knoxville, 1987), 207-8. Samuel Hill wrote the introduction and conclusion for Eigmy's work after Eighmy's untimely death in 1970. For a similar demonstration of the "captivity thesis" see Rufus Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Nashville, 1967), 214.

[12]See Keith Harper, *The Quality of Mercy: Southern Baptists and Social Christianity, 1890-1920* (Tuscaloosa, 1996), 112-19. Harper argues that Southern Baptists in the designated period progressively shaped southern culture through the establishment of mountain schools and orphanages, but states that concerning social and economic uplift for African Americans they failed. For specific studies on Southern Baptists and the issue of race, see the following: Foy Dan Valentine, "A Historical Study of Southern Baptists and Race Relations, 1917-1947" (Th.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1949); Lee Porter, "Southern Baptists and Race Relations, 1948-1963" (Th.D. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1965); Davis C. Hill, "Southern Baptist Thought and Action in Race Relations, 1940-1950" (Th.D. thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1952); Rufus B. Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Nashville, 1967); Edward L. Queen III, *In the South the Baptists are the Center of Gravity: Southern Baptists and Social Change, 1930-1980* (Brooklyn, 1991); Mark Newman, "Getting Right With God: Southern Baptists and Race Relations, 1945-1980" (Ph.D. diss., University of Mississippi, 1993); Mark Newman, *Getting Right with God: Southern Baptists and Desegregation, 1945-1995* (Tuscaloosa, 2001).

[13]In Mark Newman's important study listed above, he argues that the "cultural captivity" thesis is only partly true because of the work of some important "progressive elites" who pushed the Convention forward in race relations. However, even Newman admits that the elites followed behind secular develop-ments (205).

[14]The inherent problem of using national or state records to describe Baptists in a particular location or region is the same problem Anne Firor Scott speaks to in the introduction to her book on women's associations in American history, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana, 1991), 5. Summary annual reports of any national association, she found, often contain the perception from the national office of what locals are doing, while in reality the opposite may be true.

[15]U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census, 1940* (Washington, D.C., 1942).

[16]Wayne Flynt, *Alabama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie* (Tuscaloosa, 1998), 393. Flynt incorrectly identifies S. D. Monroe as an African-American.

[17]*Minutes of the Mobile Baptist Association, 1931*, 8, Samford University Archives. (hereafter cited as *Minutes*).

[18]Ibid., 26.

[19]Ibid.

[20]John H. Bracey Jr. and August Meier, eds., *Papers of the NAACP*, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1913-1939, Series A: The South (Bethesda, 1998), microfilm, Letter to Robert Bagnall from John Leflore, January 20, 1926.

[21]Ibid., Letter from Robert Bagnall to John Leflore, January 24, 1929.

[22]*American National Biography*, s.v. "DePriest, Oscar Stanton."

[23]John H. Bracey Jr. and August Meier, eds., *Papers of the NAACP*, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1913-1939, Series A: The South, Letter from NAACP Committee to Mayor of Mobile. Perhaps some of the animosity toward Oscar DePriest stemmed from an incident concerning the visit of Mrs. DePriest to the White House upon the invitation of Mrs. Hoover in 1929, an episode that George Tindall, in *Emergence of the South*, 252, says "confirmed the worst fears of many Southerners."

[24]"Oscar De Priest Denounces Red Doctrines Here," *The Mobile Register*, August 8, 1931.

[25]John H. Bracey Jr. and August Meier, eds., *Papers of the NAACP*, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1913-1939, Series A: The South, "Press Release," August 14, 1931.

[26]"Negro Baptists Condemn Moves to Stir Strife," *The Mobile Register*, August 9, 1931.

[27]John H. Bracey Jr. and August Meier, eds., *Papers of the NAACP*, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1913-1939, Series A: The South, "Press Release," August 14, 1931.

[28]Will Alexander, "Southern Christians and Their Negro Neighbors," *Home and Foreign Fields*, June 1930, 7. For more information on Will Alexander and the CIC, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching*, revised (New York, 1993), 62-65.

[29]Interestingly, because of the scarcity of funds, all general reports were omitted from the printed *Annual* except Monroe's report because he paid for its inclusion. It happened to be, at four pages, the largest report he would ever submit. *Minutes, 1932*, 14-18.

[30]Ibid.

[31]*Annual of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1932*; In 1936 the Executive Committee of the Convention stated, "The only direct work being done by our Board for the colored Baptists is that of the Rev. S. D. Monroe of Mobile. He is giving most of his time to teacher training and evangelism among the Negroes in Mobile County." *Annual of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1936*, 28.

[32]*Minutes, 1935*, 22-23. Unfortunately, this is the only report in which the community center is mentioned and neither the address nor owner of the building is mentioned in the report. Monroe was allowed some space in the center to conduct his ministry. Whether or not the Catholic Church was allowed the same privilege in this, I assume, public space presents an interesting question.

[33]Wayne Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 354. Flynt presents Beall as one Alabama Baptist who "took the most unorthodox stance on race." For more information on Beall, see *Home and Foreign Fields* July 1933 and October 1934.

[34]*Minutes, 1940*, 35.

[35]*Minutes, 1939*, 48.

[36]Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980: The Story of the South's Modernization* (Baton Rouge, 1995), 11. Bartley states, "From 1940 to 1945, approximately one-quarter of the region's farm population—some four million people—left the land."

[37]David R. Goldfield, *Promised Land: The South Since 1945* (Arlington Heights, 1987), 8; Bartley, *The New South: 1945-1980*, 10; Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*, 698-702; William Warren Rogers et al., *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (Tuscaloosa, 1994), 512-13.

[38]Agnes F. Meyer, *Journey Through Chaos* (New York, 1944), 210. For a similar account, see John Dos Passos, *State of the Nation* (Boston, 1943), 92-3.

[39]For more details concerning the altercation and the response by the black community, see Bruce Nelson, "Organized Labor and the Struggle for Black Equality in Mobile during World War II," *The Journal of American History* 80 (December 1993): 968-69.

[40]*Mobile Press Register*, August 16, 1942; John H. Bracey Jr. and August Meier, eds., *Papers of the NAACP*, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1940-1955, Series A: The South, Flyer and Letter to Byron Pickering from Mobile NAACP; *Mobile Press Register*, August 24, 1942.

[41]Duke, "A Life in the Struggle," 53.

began during Reconstruction. Lawsuits challenged the legal and social de jure and de facto hierarchy of these groups that existed before the Civil War. African Americans filed suit to challenge racial discrimination in Louisiana. Some plaintiffs won small monetary awards, but judges disallowed larger damages because they felt too little time had elapsed since the abolition of slavery for discriminatory legal and social customs to change. *A Law Unto Itself?* investigates these Louisiana issues in the larger context of the southern and national effort to enforce segregation.

Fernandez issued a call-to-arms for researchers to revise further Louisiana's legal history. The New Louisiana Legal Historians eagerly await the inclusion of new researchers who will expand their historical revision. The New Louisiana Legal Historians want to capitalize upon legal history's popularity and attract new researchers to their ranks.

A Law Unto Itself? is an intellectual history of Louisiana law. The clear and concise writing style, organization, and persuasive arguments combine cultural, social, political, and legal history into a streamlined interpretation. The writers present an interpretive original study of Louisiana legal history that breaks new ground in the study of Louisiana, American, and southern history. The Gulf South and national themes, studied as a microcosm in Louisiana, place the book in historical and regional context within nineteenth-century legal history.

The study of Louisiana's legal relationship with other American jurisdictions requires more investigation. The essays define the common legal ground Louisiana shares with the nation. However, the articles stop short of completely integrating Louisiana into the mainstream of American and Southern legal historiography. These essays should be viewed as a primer of Louisiana's inclusion in national legal history. Expect more penetrating studies from the New Louisiana Legal Historians in the near future.

A Law Unto Itself? takes readers on a journey through Louisiana's fascinating legal and historical evolution. Unlike many historians who publish promising original treatises that descend into esoteric theories only practical for academia, the New Louisiana Legal Historians produced a legal history that will be enjoyed by readers both inside and outside academia. The book's profound revision will provoke debate between those who cherish Louisiana's civilian tradition as a distinct feature in America's legal evolution and those who agree with the New Louisiana Legal Historians' revisionism.

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John Buchanan. *Jackson's Way: Andrew Jackson and the People of the Western Waters*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001, 448 pp. $30.00. ISBN 0-4712-8253-7.

Mel Steely. *The Gentleman from Georgia: The Biography of Newt Gingrich*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000, 442 pp. $29.95. ISBN 0-8655-4671-1.

It is a monumental task when a book reviewer is asked to write a single review on two dynamic political figures that had such an impact on the history of our country and our region. Two such volumes have recently been published addressing the lives of Andrew Jackson and Newt Gingrich that are worthy of careful examination.

John Buchanan has already distinguished himself as a writer and scholar. His work, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, established his reputation as an expert on the American Revolution. His recent work on Andrew Jackson solidifies that reputation. Buchanan's focus is the period of westward expansion into the Ohio River Valley. As a young nation, the United States was considered "a honey of a place," and was struggling to survive. Its small boundaries were bursting at the seams. People were obsessed with land, making conflict with Native Americans inevitable. The resulting hostilities between the new settlers and Indians lasted nearly thirty years. It is against this backdrop that Buchanan describes the exploits of Andrew Jackson as Indian-fighter and reassesses his reputation, which prominent historians have challenged because of Jackson's policy toward Native Americans.

Buchanan's work is considered popular history. In fact, it reads like a historical novel. It introduces readers to the individuals who formed the character of Andrew Jackson throughout his public career. Speaking in the first person, Buchanan provides the reader with graphic accounts of Indian massacres of white settlers, of mass migrations of people across a lawless land, and the determination of two groups of people to fight until one or the other prevailed. Additionally, we learn of Jackson's deep hatred for the British—who had killed his mother and brothers. Buchanan also describes Jackson's early life including his work as a public prosecutor and member of Congress.

Although Andrew Jackson lacked formal military training, Buchanan describes him as the epitome of the battlefield commander, having "willpower that has been called superhuman in its tenacity." Jackson gains victory after victory, from his defeat of the Chickamauga Cherokees and the Creek tribes that claimed sovereignty over the

southeastern United States to his ultimate triumph at the Battle of New Orleans during the War of 1812. This battle, according to Buchanan,

> was one of the most important ever fought in the New World. It effectively ended the British threat to Young America. It rendered irrelevant London's opinion on the legality of the Louisiana Purchase. It also made certain before too long that Spain would eventually lose Florida and it proved to the world that the United States had come of age.

John Buchanan has done an admirable job of examining Andrew Jackson during the formative years of the United States. His skills as an archivist and historian are reflected in his use of records from the Tennessee State Library, numerous state historical societies and archives, as well as the resources of the National Park Service. Buchanan's book is illustrated with numerous line drawings and maps that guide the reader through the migrations of settlers, Indian resistance, and military campaigns. It is a work worthy of examination by scholars of America's National Period as well as the amateur military history buff.

Dr. Mel Steely is well qualified to write a biography on Newt Gingrich. They were colleagues at West Georgia College during the 1970s, and Steely later served on Congressman Gingrich's personal and campaign staff. The image of Gingrich presented by Steely is much different than the image we remember from news events surrounding this former Speaker of the House of Representatives. One is impressed with the breadth of knowledge possessed by Gingrich and the manner in which he went about gaining that knowledge to make informed decisions affecting the nation. Steely makes several references to this in the way Gingrich learned about national defense issues in the early 1970s. Gingrich firmly believed in a strong and prepared military, but by the late 1970s the modern U.S. Army was at its nadir.

Newt Gingrich also had a desire to change the way Congress went about its business. Steely tells us "Newt reorganized the Office of the Minority Whip by broadening its traditional role and later, as Speaker, changed the role of the Speaker. He wanted to redirect the course of American history away from the liberal welfare state model." In his remarks to the Washington Research Group Symposium in 1994, Gingrich told conference attendees "we have to replace the welfare state with an opportunity society and a culture of productivity." A savvy politician, Newt warned everyone in 1992 not to be fooled by Democratic presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, calling him "one of the greatest campaigners I've seen. Don't take him for granted." As the

November 1992 presidential election approached, Gingrich again warned associates that "we could lose this thing if we aren't careful." In a memorandum to President George H. W. Bush dated September 7, 2000, Gingrich made some suggestions as to how Bush might improve his campaign rhetoric. According to Steely, the memorandum "'screamed out for leadership and action,' and cited the aimlessness of the Republican administration.'"

Among Gingrich's greatest accomplishments, the "Contract With America" is conspicuously missing from Steely's work. The November 1994 midterm elections were considered a watershed event for the Republican Party. Newt Gingrich would lead a crusade effort along with Representative Dick Armey to propose a bold new strategy for America, a ten-point program which addressed policy issues such as balancing the federal budget, crime, welfare reform, families and senior citizens, national defense, cutting government regulations, legal reform, term limits, and tax reduction. The "Contract With America" more than anything else, successfully articulated the differences between the Republican and Democratic parties during the mid-1990s.

In all, Steely has produced a fairly balanced work on the gentleman from Georgia that will be of particular interest to the south's political scientists and historians. The book contains several photographs taken throughout Newt's public career and concludes with an interview between Steely and Gingrich in May 1999 that outlines Mr. Gingrich's personal thoughts as well as his vision for the future of America.

Michael E. Long Pasco-Hernando Community College

Joe and Monica Cook. *River Songs: A Journey Down the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press (in cooperation with the Historic Chattahoochee Commission), 2000, 224 pp. $39.95. ISBN 0-8173-1034-7.

With water wars being waged among Georgia, Alabama, and Florida; with the future of metropolitan Atlanta at stake—not to mention that of other down river towns; with talk of power shortages, talk of lake front property values falling with dropping water levels, and talk of a tri-state recreational industry threatened, it is good for us to pause and consider just what all this is about. It is about rivers. And if you are still not sure, this book will bring you back to reality.

On April 1, 1995, at the headwaters of the Chattahoochee, where the stream was too small to float a canoe, the team of Joe and Monica Cook set out walking. Two and one half days later they were off their feet and on the water. Three months later and 535 miles downstream they reached the Gulf of Mexico.

Part travelogue, part photo essay, this is an attractive book about a timely and timeless subject. Following the river from its source, the authors first take readers through one of the most beautiful sections of the southeast if not the nation, out of the hills of Habersham County and down through the valleys of Hall (to borrow from the poet, Sidney Lanier), along a stretch of stream where many canoeists (this one included) learned to play with whitewater at Smith Island and Horseshoe Rapid. Then on to Lake Lanier, where the river gets lost in a whole new environment, only to emerge below the dam and follow, once again, its natural course to Atlanta.

Almost anything that can happen to a river happens to the Chattahoochee in and around Atlanta. There the (mostly) dark green water changes to a muddy brown, but before it does, it slides by the cliffs of the Palisades, past "diving rock," where city folks still play on weekends and where fishermen catch fish seldom found in an urban environment. Few cities enjoy such a resource, and few cities treat it so well, and so badly.

Below Atlanta, actually just below Peachtree Creek which drains much of the metropolitan center, the Chattahoochee becomes another river, more an "open sewer" than a stream. With no affluent suburbanites on the southside to protest the desecration, the river runs its smelly course between muddy banks and through industrial parks. Finally, back out into the country, the water and the air clear a bit, and the Chattahoochee is a river again.

From that point on south the authors carry us through more lakes, by mill towns like Columbus, over dams, and finally into the Apalachicola and its bay. It is an amazing trip, made all the more so by insightful commentary and stunning photographs. But don't get the idea that this is just a "coffee-table book," though anyone would be proud to display it there. Divided into fifteen chapters that catalog the trip, the book contains well-researched and well-written essays that touch on topics as different as the racially charged environmental politics of Atlanta and the inclination of Georgians to pick on Alabamians. The result is a book that is both interesting and informative, entertaining and enlightening.

More than anything else, *River Song* reminds readers just how the same river is so different, and how that difference shapes what takes

place on its shores. While we make much of how people change streams, we must remember that streams change people. All along their trip the authors met folks who proudly called themselves "river rats." Whether they lived in a cabin along the rapids and shoals in White County, in a lakefront home on Lanier or West Point or Walter George, in a northside Atlanta suburban mansion with lawns that run down to the water, or in a one of the towns sprinkled along the stream, these people share a attachment to their river that is deep and abiding. They may congregate in riverfront parks or in fishing camps. They may wade out among the rocks to cast for mountain trout or sit on the bank waiting for the catfish to bite. They come in a variety of shapes, sizes and opinions. This is their story as well. And as the authors make it clear, in words and in pictures, it is upon their love for the river that the future of waterways depends.

Harvey H. Jackson Jacksonville State University

Jack E. Davis. *Race Against Time: Culture and Separation in Natchez since 1930.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001, 351 pp. $39.95. ISBN 0-8071-2585-7.

Race Against Time is an original and thought-provoking contribution to existing civil rights studies. Jack Davis examines race relations in Natchez, Mississippi, from the 1930s to the 1990s and distinguishes his from numerous other community racial studies by focusing on why whites segregated blacks and aggressively resisted integration. Davis contends that white racism "is deeper than the political economy and the racial dynamics of sex" and declares the preservation of a distinct white culture formed concepts of superiority, inferiority, and separation in Natchez.

The author maintains that, by the mid-1950s, culture had replaced biological explanations as the basis of white racial identification. Whites now defined their cultural superiority through behavioral traits and physical qualities such as dress, speech, music, food, and religious expression. They viewed similar black cultural expressions as inferior and subordinate to the dominant values which whites both created and designated as the social norm. The book analyzes racial struggle in Natchez from the white point of view and argues that social harmony existed as long as blacks maintained both physical and cultural distance from white society. Integration, therefore, meant more to local whites than economic or political change. It represented the cultural collapse

of southern society. Davis proposes a new direction in the examination of twentieth-century race relations and, for the most part, fulfills his ambitious goal in the study of one Gulf South city.

One of the book's strongest points is its focus on history as the core of supposed white cultural superiority in Natchez. Davis convincingly argues that after the Civil War ended, local white elites restored lost status and self-esteem through the insistence of their cultural superiority represented by their manners, intelligence, wealth, and familial values. In contrast, black culture was portrayed as inferior, ignorant, and deserving of social separation due to its corrupting nature. These elements became indispensable aspects of the Natchez Pilgrimages that began in 1932. The annual celebration, which Davis deemed "a public-sanctioned affair for white self-indulgence," highlighted the progress and civilization white elites believed their culture best symbolized. The pilgrimages offered "proof of the ascendancy of southern white civilization over all other" groups, particularly blacks. The Natchez tours, therefore, justified the separation of a supposedly inferior black culture and legitimized segregation for local whites.

Another positive feature of Davis's work is his use of oral history to illustrate many larger points. He begins most of his chapters with the observations of a contemporary Natchez resident who introduces a larger theme the following section addresses. The recollections of black laborers who worked in a local factory, for example, demonstrate the importance of Natchez industry to increased black activism more convincingly than other evidence the author employs. The contemporary interviews are particularly crucial in understanding white historical memory, social changes, and racial conflict in Natchez during the period. *Race Against Time*, therefore, possesses several laudable features in its focus on the centrality of culture in civil rights struggles. Yet, it also contains elements that require clarification.

Davis's chapters concerning increased black activism in Natchez during the 1960s are interesting and well-written but complicate his emphasis on cultural struggle as the most important factor in local race relations. For instance, many who participated in the area movement came from outside Natchez and sought employment in city factories. They belonged to a working class that had different interests from the white elites who defined and promoted the cultural values central to the pilgrimage's success. Violent resistance from white supremacist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan characterized the Natchez movement during the mid-1960s and occurred primarily in response to black economic demands. Davis, however, continuously asserts that cultural elements formed the basis of both black demands and white

resistance throughout the movement, while most of his evidence suggests that economic and political interests meant more to each race's middle and lower class. Ideological motivations clearly inspired white elites more than their working class counterparts who dealt with more direct and practical challenges to their dominance of blacks. A more thorough explanation and exploration of class divisions among white Natchez residents, therefore, is needed to understand completely the importance and limits of cultural preservation in white resistance to racial equality.

Perhaps most intriguing is the city Davis uses in his monograph and the implications it has for future studies. Davis cites several examples that demonstrate the uniqueness of Natchez within the region, the most important of which is the city's peculiar use of history and memory as primary factors in its tourist economy. Is preservation of white culture, therefore, more important in Natchez than other southern locales? In other words, does the basis for white resistance to black equality in Natchez represent the norm or an exception for southern whites? Davis suggests that his findings apply to whites throughout the region, but the degree of local uniqueness implies that he may have overstated his conclusions. Yet, despite the few concerns it raises, *Race Against Time* is an outstanding contribution to the understanding of southern race relations. It offers a fresh perspective on why whites fought so strenuously to maintain segregation and also stresses the continuity of racial conflict in the contemporary South. Davis demonstrates that until the dominant white culture acknowledges the numerous characteristics it shares with blacks, racial equality will remain unrealized in America. The emphasis on cultural definitions, therefore, will undoubtedly enrich future research of civil rights struggles.

J. Michael Butler South Georgia College

Carl Elliott Sr. and Michael D'Orso. *The Cost of Courage: The Journey of an American Congressman*. New York: Doubleday, 1993. Reprint, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 2001, 314 pp. $19.95. ISBN 0-8173-1105-X.

"All bravery," Sir Francis Bacon wrote in 1625, "stands upon comparisons." Courage is judged by different standards on a battlefield than on a baseball diamond. It is weighed in relation to motive and risk.

Carl Elliott regards himself as a courageous man. We glimpse him for the first time in the pages of this book as he accepts the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for his "integrity and sacrifice" in politics. He credits childhood training for the fact that he fears "nothing in this world, not in heaven or hell or anywhere in between." In the 1930s, at the University of Alabama, he was "radical" and "threatening" to southern racist traditions. That institution's website hails him as "a powerful voice for change" in Congress, where he served from 1949 through 1964. Elliott calls himself "a fellow who didn't go along with the crowd" on white supremacy. His proud career ended tragically because he would not compromise with racist Governor George Wallace.

But is that picture accurate?

The virtue of this memoir is that Elliott writes nearly as much about his troubled state as about himself. A son of tenant farmers, he was raised in northwest Alabama, a stronghold of Republican Unionist sentiment since 1860 where blacks were scarce and the only one Elliott met in childhood was affable "Nigger Shorty." A born politician, Elliott was captivated by the divergent styles of Alabama's victorious senatorial candidates in 1926. Like most winners that year, both were members of the Ku Klux Klan, although their robes were cut from different cloth. Hugo Black quit the Klan to become an authentic liberal, molding the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown* decision on school desegregation. Tom Heflin chose a different path, excoriating Catholics and Jews until the state legislature condemned him as a public nuisance and weary voters sent him home. Of the two, Heflin made the strongest impression, Elliott vowing to emulate his hell-fire style.

In time, that style took Elliott to Congress—but to what result? Although he calls himself a liberal, that label must be judged by Alabama standards of the time. Elliott consistently voted against every civil rights bill proposed during his tenure. His swing vote defeated John Kennedy's bid to create an urban affairs department in Washington. It was "understood by everyone involved," we are told, that Elliott was required "to vote with the standard Southern position" on race in order to continue his great work elsewhere.

Unfortunately, Elliott contradicts himself, admitting his belief that civil rights laws were "dead wrong." He blasts nonviolent demonstrators as "opportunists eager to provoke and bring out the worst side of the South." Elliott "resented" the Freedom Riders for "fanning the flames" of white violence in Alabama—and while those attacks "sickened" him, he maintained sufficient composure to cancel a

Washington flight that would have placed him on the same airplane with battered demonstrators. Even now, he downplays the extent of Klan violence in Alabama, reporting that the Birmingham riots of May 14, 1961 involved "forty whites, including some with Klan connections." In fact, more than one thousand rioters participated, nearly all of them Klansmen protected by advance agreement with the FBI and police commissioner "Bull" Connor. When Elliott denounced hate groups in 1963, he singled out the Massachusetts-based John Birch Society, thus maintaining the fiction that all race conflict emanates from "outside agitators."

Elliott's relationship to George Wallace is equally fraught with contradictions. He reportedly spurned Wallace at their first meeting, telling Wallace they were on "completely different sides," but Elliott later opted for "humiliating" accommodation. In January 1964, although it "ate at [his] insides," he joined fellow congressmen for a command visit to Wallace's office. Four months later, in "one of the lowest points of [his] life," he graced a stage in Maryland while Wallace campaigned for president. Elliott says he was forced to appease Wallace or "lose any chance to...work for anything more"—and yet, in the very next sentence he proclaims: "I stood against civil rights, believing it was too much too soon."

Which is the truth? We never learn from this volume whether Elliott opposed civil rights legislation on principle or from expediency. He seems intent on having it both ways. In 1966, as one of ten hopeless candidates competing with Lurleen Wallace for the governor's mansion, Elliott opened his campaign with a speech blasting "extremists of both sides," thereby equating black civil disobedience with white terrorism. He blames his defeat on Martin Luther King for endorsing opponent Richmond Flowers, the state attorney general who risked his life to prosecute Klan assassins in "Bloody Lowndes" County. Without King's interference, Elliott implies, black voters might have ignored his segregationist record in Congress and put him over the top.

The Cost of Courage ends on an ironic note, Elliott quoting John Kennedy on the "moral crisis" of race, proclaiming that "it is time to act in Congress...and, above all, in our daily lives." Elliott reminds us that "the crisis remains," citing Los Angeles police for their brutality and forgetting his own opposition to change on Capitol Hill. No one disputes Elliott's observation that "many good, sensible people" reside in Alabama and the South at large—but too many, like Elliott, were silent when it mattered. They went along to get along. Indeed, the very tone of such a statement, tacitly excluding blacks as "people," suggests

unconscious racism at once more devious and hurtful than the faded image of George Wallace standing in a schoolhouse door.

Michael Newton Nashville, Indiana

Robert F. Himmelberg. *The Great Depression and the New Deal.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001, 184pp. $45.00. ISBN: 0-313-29907-2.

The Great Depression and the New Deal is an addition to Greenwood Press' series, "Guides to Historic Event of the Twentieth Century." It is designed for the beginning history student, as well as the general reader seeking an introduction to the topic. With that in mind, Robert Himmelberg, a longtime New Deal scholar and Fordham University professor, has written a book that clearly and concisely outlines the causes of the depression, examines government attempts at relief, with an emphasis on New Deal programs, and explains the social and political impact of the depression on American life.

Himmelberg begins with an overview of the subject. This first chapter covers the entire topic briefly, laying the foundation for a more detailed discussion. Here, as well, the reader is shown the state of America prior to 1929. In the second chapter, Himmelberg discusses the Great Depression in particular, beginning with its unique nature in American history. He then turns to the various theories about the depression's cause such as the Great Crash as prime cause, underconsumption and overproduction, Keynesianism, and later monetary theories.

The third chapter examines the government's efforts at relief and recovery. Himmelberg begins with Herbert Hoover's reliance on recovery efforts based on a belief in the power of government-business cooperation. The failure of these efforts led to the election of Franklin Roosevelt and the implementation of the New Deal. The author deals with each New Deal package separately, and outlines the political opposition to both the programs and the president. Finally, Himmelberg shows the decline of the New Deal and the disappearance of the depression in the flood of wartime government spending.

The next two chapters discuss the Great Depression's impact on American politics and society. The significant political impact, for Himmelberg, is the creation of the New Deal coalition that combined longtime Southern Democrats with working-class Northern voters. This coalition came to fruition in the 1936 election and declined thereafter,

though it was strong enough in 1940 to win for Roosevelt an unprecedented third term. Himmelberg sees the social impact of the depression and New Deal falling mainly on women and blacks, while influencing the growing radio and motion picture industries.

Himmelberg concludes the narrative portion of the book with an evaluation of the New Deal. Clearly, he sees the New Deal as the most important change caused by the depression. Like many historians, Himmelberg judges the New Deal a failure in both the short and long term. However, this failure does not take away from the value of the effort, which gave America the ability to survive the Great Depression and to prepare for the coming war.

As *The Great Depression and the New Deal* is intended in part for students, Himmelberg includes several components designed to aid in the understanding of the depression and New Deal. These include a list of abbreviations for the various New Deal programs, photographs of key individuals and events, a detailed glossary, an annotated bibliography, and a chronology including the key moments from Hoover's election in 1928 to the depression's end in 1941.

Following the text, Himmelberg includes a section of biographies and primary documents. The biographies go into substantially greater detail than the main narrative, in an effort to avoid bogging down readers within the narrative. The selections include the main actors on the New Deal stage such as Brain Trust members Adolph Berle and Rexford Tugwell, opponents Father Charles Coughlin and Huey Long, and New Dealers Francis Perkins and Harold Ickes.

The primary documents are an invaluable resource for the student reader, providing a wide variety of sources on the depression and New Deal. Each of the ten documents is prefaced by an explanatory section to give its context. Himmelberg's choices include excerpts from Senator Robert LaFollette's speech on the opening of debate for relief in 1932, Franklin Roosevelt's inaugural addresses and third fireside chat, key Supreme Court decisions affecting the New Deal, and a *Life* magazine article on Eleanor Roosevelt.

The Great Depression and the New Deal is not intended to open new doors for the depression or Roosevelt scholar. Only eighty pages of the text are devoted to the narrative. However, for its intended audience, Himmelberg's book is an excellent introduction to the topic. The inclusion of thoughtful extra-narrative sections provides a way for students and general readers to come to terms at their own pace with the key events and individuals dominating the 1930s. Himmelberg writes in an uncomplicated style that is both brief and complete without

being intimidating. The text's organization allows the narrative to build upon itself, first in general and then in increasing specificity. By and large Himmelberg avoids the debates surrounding the depression and New Deal, focusing on first the chronology and then topical examinations of the decade. This book is recommended for anyone interested in gaining a basic knowledge of the period and for instructors seeking a work to assign students new to the topic.

Brian Stanford Miller University of Mississippi

Roy Hoffman. *Back Home: Journeys through Mobile.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001, 380 pp. $29.95. ISBN 0-8173-1045-2.

Roy Hoffman's *Back Home: Journeys through Mobile* has the temper and pace of a happy and comfortable homecoming. Though old, difficult problems are given even-handed attention, the selection of subjects regularly concerns honor for worthy Mobilians of every sort, and loving recollections of people and places that are changing, going, or gone.

Hoffman returned to his Mobile birthplace, having accepted an offer to leave New York City, his home of twenty years, and become a writer-in-residence for the *Mobile Register*. He originally prepared all but a few of the stories in this book for the *Register*. Accordingly, the language of the book is clear and resilient, conforming closely to the matters at hand: humorous, warm, and vivid.

The stories are "not meant to be definitive of anything, except my own interests as a writer," says the author in his introduction. "Rather than a continuous movie, [the book] is akin to a photo album." The "album" is divided into nine parts: "Going Downtown," "On the Dock of the Bay," "Through the Countryside." "Colorful Competitions" (baseball, boxing, wheelchair basketball, and anvil shooting!), "Tangled Legacies" (legacies of the slave trade), "Newcomers Among Us" (Latin and Southeast Asian immigrants), "Intriguing Portraits," "The Seasonal Round," and "Mardi Gras Drums." The subtle thread running through these snapshots of Mobile is the ongoing importance of time, place, and human intimacy in a community graced by natural beauty and a benign climate. A brief glimpse of Hoffman's vignettes makes this clear.

Old downtown Mobile, currently estranged from its glory days, is to be the warm heart that keeps the author attached to his city. His

grandparents had a furniture store there with a balcony overlooking Dauphin Street. His father's law practice was on Dauphin as well, a few steps from Bienville Square. On the day of the great Mobile Mardi Gras parade, his sisters and his boyhood friends camped out all day on the furniture store balcony. There, the Mardi Gras parade—the drums "flashy, rhythmic, heart-thumping"—made its way beneath his youthful review. "From the balcony of my grandfather's store," Hoffman writes, "the parade seemed all for me."

The waters on which Mobile grew, the bay and the river, the resort towns and the commerce that those waters supported, and the Alabama countryside surrounding Mobile, are important elements of the city's history and character, and receive extended attention.

Fairhope Pier on Mobile Bay's eastern shore has been, right up to the present, a catalyst for the formation of communities. The original residents called themselves Fair-hopers, and were a band of "single-tax colony idealists from Iowa." Fairhope became a restful and culturally progressive resort, home of the Colony Hotel (among whose famous visitors was Clarence Darrow). The Casino—"not the gambling kind"—sat at the entrance to the pier. A ferry from Mobile took one across the bay to Fairhope in those days. The community was a remote and romantic outpost for dancing under the stars on balmy Caribbean nights. *Going Home* introduces us to some of the people who enjoyed the Fairhope Pier in bygone days.

Mobile Bay is an important docking station for international trade. The officers of ocean-going vessels cannot, by law, navigate the waters of the bay. Hoffman reports on a night spent aboard a 10,000-ton freighter which one of eleven legally commissioned pilots, despite malfunctioning navigation equipment, brought safely to the docks.

In the 1950s, "cotton left Baldwin and Mobile counties," to be replaced by grain. But in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with "the defeat of the boll weevil, genetic engineering of plants, and the decline of grain prices," cotton came back to life, a triumph Hoffman sets in the context of the cane syrup trade, the pecan industry, and other south Alabama agricultural activities.

Hoffman drove old U.S. Highway 90 from its appearance at the Florida border to its Alabama terminus at the Mississippi state line, stopping at the small towns, stores, and diners that most southern travelers hustle past, and reports on the people he found and the stories he heard.

Along the way he learned that slavery's legacy survives. He introduces us to a proud and elegant seventy-four-year-old furniture mover who is convinced that his grandfather was a prominent white

Mobilian who died in 1915. (Photographs prove helpful in our consideration.) The grandson has no interest in the Mobilian's estate, nor in any other claim of family relation. He cares who he is and where he comes from, and Hoffman's telling of his story honors the man's integrity and good sense.

Other honored Mobilians are Will Armbrecht, a U.S. Attorney who fought tirelessly and ultimately successfully to bring to justice those responsible for a Mobile lynching; James Franklin, a hard working black physician who served the Plateau community of Mobile; Ben May, the quiet philanthropist whose funding opened the Ben May Institute for Cancer Research in Chicago; and Alma Fisher, an Auschwitz survivor, who, as a girl, was a neighbor of Hitler's companion Eva Braun.

The printing of the book is first rate, with generous spacing and clean Galliard typeface. The black-and-white photographs are mostly helpful and interesting. Some of the historical photos, probably acute and sharp in the large format of their original production, are slightly blurred when reduced for reproduction here. Finally, a map or two showing the layout of old downtown Mobile and the harbor would have been very helpful. Good book, good stories, good reading for everyone interested in Mobile.

Gregory Irwin — Duluth, Georgia

Raymond D. Irwin. *Books on Early American History and Culture, 1986-1990: An Annotated Bibliography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001, 311 pp. $85.00. ISBN 0-313-31430-6.

This is the second work Raymond D. Irwin has done in the Greenwood Press series of bibliographies and indexes in American history. His previous title covered books published during the years 1991 to 1995. Now he has moved back to publications in early American history and culture for the previous five years. The format is a series of annotated bibliographies on works covering the years 1492 to 1815. Each entry lists the author or editor, publisher, date of publication, ISBN or OCLC number, and the Library of Congress call number. The work is then briefly summarized, followed by a listing of journals in which the book has been reviewed. Included are monographs, reference works, exhibition catalogs, and essay publications. Altogether, this bibliography covers 1097 items. A subject and author index is included.

Irwin has broken these works into thirty-two topical or thematic chapters. Not surprisingly, these chapters reflect the newer trends in American history. Race, gender, Native Americans, environment, families and children, and ethnicity are prominent in the historiography of the late 1980s. For example, eighty-nine books are listed under Native Americans, with several of the entries anticipating the forthcoming five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's exploration. Race, gender, families and children, and ethnicity comprise eighty-one items.

Older, traditional social history includes religion, where there are ninety-nine books listed. Labor and class and economics and business constitute sixty-six entries. A somewhat nebulous topic, "Society," a sort of catch-all heading, lists an additional forty-one books. Only six books are listed under education, sixteen under science and medicine, and eleven under performing arts. However, visual arts and material culture comprise fifty-nine entries.

In reviewing a half decade of writing covering the late 1980s, one finds that traditional history still comprises the bulk of the historiography. The American Revolution was the subject of seventy-nine books, and the Constitution generated seventy-six works. By far the most extensive chapter are all of the works listed under politics and government. There are 153 items, suggesting that the trend towards social history at the end of the twentieth century is more illusory than real, but more probably that the older generation of traditional historians produced by graduate schools in the post-war 1950s and 1960s were in their prime. While thirty-four books were written on military history, another disturbing trend is reflected by the fact that only ten books are listed under diplomacy. Intellectual history, listed under ideas, literature, and communication, comprises a healthy seventy-two works.

The annotations are very brief and do not provide detailed information for each item. The author has obviously relied upon jacket covers and introductions. A large number of the annotations are a single sentence, but some works are given a full paragraph treatment. The average length is probably three sentences.

Scholars can use this book to find what has been published on a particular topic (at least for the five-year period from 1986 to 1990), and then to pursue further whether the book is useful for scholarly research. This kind of book, thus, has limited value. Even so, we should credit the author with a prodigious amount of work and for making such a resource available to scholars.

C. Edward Skeen The University of Memphis

Michael Perman. *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1909.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001, $49.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8078-2593-X; $24.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8078-4909-X.

Reviewers enjoy books with a clear, easy to encapsulate thesis, but Michael Perman's *Struggle for Mastery* is not that kind of work. As the author concedes, "generalization of the sort that historians like to produce" might prove "difficult in this case." Still, if one perseveres through the avalanche of political detail, one will find a reasonably persuasive account of African-Americans' exclusion from the southern body politic.

The book's core argument is that no easy explanation for the genesis of disfranchisement is possible. Perman acknowledges that the process of disfranchisement shared certain common traits in the eleven ex-Confederate states, most notably an overriding desire to subordinate blacks politically. Beyond this, however, "the sequence and process of disfranchisement varied considerably." More crucially, "the configuration of political groups and elements" backing disfranchisement also "varied from state to state." In Mississippi (1890), the process antedated the full agrarian revolt and came at the behest of the Farmers' Alliance. Likewise in South Carolina (1895), agrarian-tinged Democrats like Ben Tillman saw disfranchisement as a weapon against conservative supremacy in their own party—fraudulent or legitimate black votes being the Bourbon conservatives' weapon of last resort. In both, disfranchisement prevented the possibility of a radical third party challenge to the established order, even as it ensured white agrarian influence within the Democratic party. On the other hand, in Louisiana (1898) and North Carolina (1900), a powerful Populist movement achieved "fusion" with the black Republican base and grappled for power. Hard pressed Bourbon Democrats seized on the regional vogue of disfranchisement to eliminate this threat, relying on violence and outright fraud to overcome widespread opposition.

As should be evident, disfranchisement meant different things in different places, and the rapid rise and decline of the Populist revolt transformed the political context drastically within a few short years. Even after the Populists' defeat, the movement's followers remained crucial players in what transpired. In Georgia (1908), the former Populist firebrand Tom Watson led the effort for disfranchisement, depicting the measure as a clean-government move that would facilitate other reforms. The diversity of these few examples illustrate Perman's essential point about disfranchisement: one size does not fit all. This

observation is "less satisfying than a single generalization" that would cover the whole South, but it has the advantage of being "more accurate."

What makes the disfranchisement process all the more striking, in Perman's view, is that the more drastic forms of constitutional revision were largely unnecessary. As Georgia had demonstrated decades before, the poll tax alone was effective in reducing black turnout, and when combined with the secret ballot, would have nearly eliminated the black electorate. Understanding clauses, literacy tests, grandfather clauses—all these varied and imaginative refinements were superfluous, and in fact they increased the risk of northern interference. Their appeal, it seems, was in their very redundancy, in their open rejection of subterfuge. Thus, beyond the byzantine political calculations behind disfranchisement, there existed a social movement propelling change, a desire to settle the race issue once and for all. "Elimination, not just restriction, was the goal that had captured their imagination." Here, as elsewhere, the book supports C. Vann Woodward's insight that something fairly drastic happened in southern society at the turn of the century, as the Jim Crow order solidified.

As the previous remarks should suggest, I found the author's conclusions reasonable and would applaud his insistence that readers confront a complex reality. However, the book could have eased the reader's task of synthesis by engaging more fully with the historiography. J. Morgan Kousser's *The Shaping of Southern Politics* is the pivotal previous work in the field. One might have expected more explicit discussion of Kousser's argument that black belt conservative Democrats drove suffrage restriction, and also some critique of the quantitative analysis that underlay his conclusions. While Perman resists any single explanation for what happened, he does conclude that "disfranchisement rarely, if ever, happened unless the Democrats of the black belt concurred." Perman is also receptive to Kousser's emphasis that Democratic politicians knew that disfranchisement would reduce turnout among poorer whites, and that this was welcome to them. Kousser and Perman may not be that far apart on these issues, but the author should have addressed the question more forthrightly.

In conclusion, I found Michael Perman's *Struggle for Mastery* a difficult but enlightening book. It will not do as an undergraduate textbook, though the author might consider an edited version for that purpose. For scholars I recommend it as an important contribution on this crucial subject in southern history.

Michael W. Fitzgerald St. Olaf College

Larry Eugene Rivers and Canter Brown, Jr. *Laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord: The Beginnings of the AME Church in Florida, 1865-1895*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001, 244 pp. $34.95. ISBN 0-8130-1890-0.

The three decades following the end of the Civil War ushered in a fresh and exhilarating era for most Americans. For black Floridians, freedmen and free born alike, it was an unprecedented time of jubilation, expectation, and frustration. In their book, *Laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, historians Larry Eugene Rivers and Canter Brown Jr. chronicle the history of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Florida during the post war era.

The authors contend that although there have been some scholarly works that have examined African-American religion during Reconstruction throughout the South, the state of Florida has escaped close investigation. They maintain that crucial issues such as "questions of ministerial involvement in politics; the effects of the temperance movement on the church and its members; the impact of personal affinities and dislikes of church leaders; the traits and facets of Episcopal leadership that aided or hindered church development; and rivalries between local church authorities and bishops" have been neglected.

Employing a variety of primary and secondary sources, Rivers and Brown follow a chronological approach in telling their story. They begin the narrative with an overview of slave religion and the origins of the AME Church before 1865. The saga concludes with the church facing dramatic changes and monumental challenges. The authors note that the year 1895 "marked the end of a remarkable age and the commencement of a distinctly different era."

Emancipation brought towering hopes to black Floridians. They believed that real freedom would only be attained when they gained political and legal rights, such as the right to vote and to hold public office. In the post-war era, the church became politicized with the clergy leading the way. The focus of this multifaceted study is the political activism of prominent leaders and its effect on personal relationships and church life. The authors introduce the theme of political activism with the advent of Charles H. Pearce. Referring to the presiding elder's resolve, Rivers and Brown declare, "Once a proper foundation of church and school had been laid, Pearce determined to plunge the church deeply into state and local politics." Although there are many protagonists in this story, Pearce permeates the work to such

a degree that one wonders at times whether the study is a religious history or a biography of a religious leader.

In the last four chapters the authors do a superb job of developing the theme of church growth and the denomination's struggle to achieve respectability. By the early 1880s the AME Church along with the rest of the nation enjoyed a measure of economic prosperity. The church showed many signs of affluence and a concomitant struggle to cope with modernity. This is perhaps illustrated best by the emergence of two types of ministers: "old style" and "new style." As the authors point out, "A better-educated clergy and middle class had sought to bring order, symmetry, and quiet respectability to the church and its services."

Prosperity and affluence also resulted in class-consciousness. This can be seen in the critical reception of the attitude and leadership style of Bishop Daniel A. Payne. To many ministers, Payne had "an air of superiority" about him. Rivers and Brown bolster this point by arguing that, "he associated in Florida mostly with the well-educated, prominent, and affluent segments of the African American community and ministry." Leaders such as Payne became known as "black princes." This conflict became even more pronounced during the economically depressed 1890s. The authors declare that "rank-and-file clergymen and members felt distanced, if not alienated, from a leadership headed by 'black princes' and staffed by well-compensated college graduates." Charges of elitism and remoteness shook the church to its core.

The division of the church into two factions, criticism of the past, demand for change, and struggle for respectability illustrate the AME Church's endeavor to cope with modernity. The church suffered from growing pangs while trying to find its place in society. Despite the changes, conflicts, and challenges that faced the AME Church by 1895, its leaders and members looked to the future with hope. As Rivers and Brown note, "Millions would toil long in the vineyard, but better times would arrive, for black Floridians generally and the AME Church in particular."

Laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord is a well-written study of the AME Church during the post-Civil War era. The authors make a significant contribution to our understanding of the leadership role played by prominent clergymen in Reconstruction politics. Although the authors use a variety of primary sources, including public documents and records, newspapers, and periodicals, there is very little if any use of official papers of the key players. Noticeably absent are the papers of Charles Pearce and Robert Meacham. The addition of

these and other collections would have added immeasurably to the investigation. The study also includes almost no discussion of the role of females during this formative period. Although the contribution of females was vital to the success of the church, the authors address this issue as a brief afterthought. Despite such flaws and omissions, *Laborers In The Vineyard Of The Lord* is a valuable work and essential for those who are interested in religious and political history.

Mickey Crews Troy State University

Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., ed. *Here and There in Mexico: The Travel Writings of Mary Ashley Townsend.* Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2001, 332 pp. $39.95. ISBN 0-8173-1058-4.

There are so many pleasant reasons to like this book that a reviewer is hard-pressed to pick which category recommends it most. Suffice it to say that anyone building a library concerned with southern women writers, or with nineteenth-century travel writing, or with Mexican history or Mexican-American relations, or even with the Spanish borderlands will find this book merits a spot on the shelf.

In a happy coincidence, I was already acquainted with Mrs. Townsend. She was the founder, in the 1880s, of a still-existing New Orleans women's literary club of which I am a member. But it is thanks to Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., that I know her better now. Woodward is the Neville G. Penrose Professor of Latin American Studies at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. He discovered Mrs. Townsend's unpublished writings on her travels in Mexico in the 1880s and 1890s in her papers at Tulane University.

In his foreword Woodward not only gives a biographical sketch of Mrs. Townsend, but also places her work in the context of contemporary travel accounts and assesses its worth. "Although her descriptions of places and sights are fascinating, much more valuable are her perceptive and observant comments on people and their manners," he notes.

Mary Ashley Van Voorhis was born in Lyons, Wayne County, New York, in 1832. She married a cousin, Gideon Townsend, and, by 1860, they had moved to New Orleans to raise their family of three daughters. Mrs. Townsend was a writer, primarily a poet, under the pen name Xariffa. She became prominent in her field in a city where a number of other women were earning money by writing: novelist Grace King,

poet and newspaper publisher Eliza Jane Poitevent Nicholson, journalists Betsy Bisland and Catherine Cole, and newspaper journalist and columnist Dorothy Dix among them. (Novelist Kate Chopin and African-American writer Alice Dunbar-Nelson were among others who would use that era in New Orleans as material for works published elsewhere.)

Mrs. Townsend published three volumes of poetry and was often asked to pen appropriate verse for such occasions as the laying of the cornerstone of Tulane University or the opening of the 1884 Cotton Centennial Exhibition, New Orleans' first World's Fair. Among other articles, she had published "Life in a Trunk," a newspaper series of letters on her summer travels.

When her daughter Cora married a Mexican citizen, Mrs. Townsend's visits to Mexico began. Soon she was chronicling her trips, and eventually she gathered them into a publishable collection. Although she had written several newspaper articles on Mexico, the book was still unfinished when she died in 1901, after suffering injuries in a Texas train wreck.

Beginning with a graphic account of a rainy drive to the New Orleans docks and a dreary sea voyage to Tampico, Mrs. Townsend carries the reader along on her adventures with verve. Traveling with Mrs. Townsend is rather like taking along an aunt who was an English teacher—there's an appropriate quote for most situations, and its often from Shakespeare. (The literary club she founded started out as a Shakespeare class.) And, if there's a flowery way to say something, Mrs. Townsend finds it: a household patio is "a dear little isle all its own, a region of delight." If you were a childhood fan of Louisa May Alcott, Mrs. Townsend's voice will sound normal. Plus, she is a good storyteller and can hold your interest. Dr. Woodward's notes provide a connection between Mrs. Townsend's allusions to personalities and Mexican political history, and the index is useful (although the literary quotations are not cited).

As a guidebook author, Mrs. Townsend conscientiously relates her journey to the route of Cortez on his way to confront the Aztecs, and when she reaches a spot with historical significance she puts the facts (and her opinions) before the reader. Thus, one may learn that a blonde ghost who is said to haunt the presidential palace at Chapultepec is the Louisiana-born wife of Don Bernardo de Galvez, once governor of Louisiana and briefly viceroy of Mexico before his untimely death.

It would be a pleasure to retrace Mrs. Townsend's route and compare her view of Mexico with what can be seen today (as when

she speaks of watching from a rooftop of Mexico City while "a pillar of smoke shot up from one factory to be followed by another and another and another"). Her descriptions of folklife are as charming as her bigotry can be appalling. But, this text is so rich, and so ripe for deconstruction, that those wanting an example of nineteenth-century American attitude toward Mexico should welcome this material.

On a more positive note, Mrs. Townsend stressed to her readers how safe she and her daughter felt in their travels—noting that most Americans would believe otherwise. She is pure Progressive booster when she tours factories and mining schools and discusses the many economic opportunities available in Mexico—with the understood fact that Americans would be energetic enough to profit where the locals were not. She built a home in Mexico, lived there off and on for years, and obviously loved the country.

Even in the constraints of a collection of florid travel pieces, an intelligent woman's voice comes through. Mary Ashley Townsend may speak from another age, but she still has something rich to tell us. It is thanks to Dr. Woodward that she has found her voice again.

Carolyn G. Kolb University of New Orleans