GCHR Gulf Coast Historical Review

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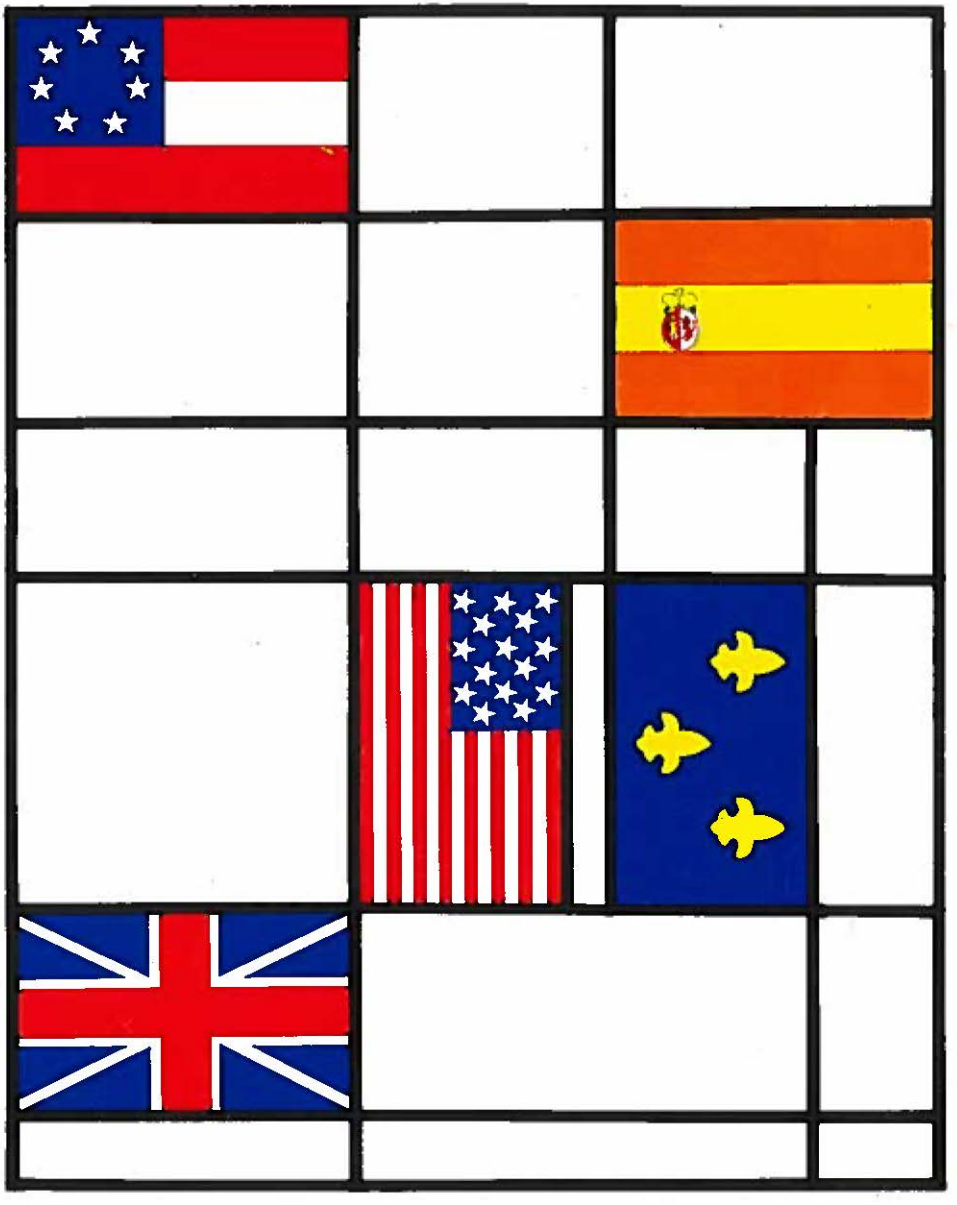

GC HR Gulf Coast Historical Review

Vol. 10 Spring 1995 No. 2

Cover design by
Marilyn Thomason

From the Editors . . .

With this issue we introduce a new kind of article, one which profiles a major contributor to the study of Gulf Coast history, Robert Right Rea. In his long career as a professor at Auburn, Dr. Rea has practically single-handedly rescued the history of British West Florida from oblivion and has had a profoundly positive influence on his many students and colleagues. One of the former, John Sledge, contributed the article on Professor Rea which highlights some of his many contributions to historical study. Dr. Rea is in good company as he is joined by articles on Civil War slave revolts in Louisiana, a virtually forgotten astronomical project in Cedar Key, and the visit of a president to Mobile seven decades ago. A diverse group of articles, reflecting the diversity of Gulf Coast history.

After missing an issue due to the publication of the proceedings of our last Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference, our book reviews are back in full force. As four years have gone by since our first index, we also bring you an update which covers all the issues of the journal since then. We conclude this issue with a visit to the remarkable Newcomb Archives at Tulane University in New Orleans.

Before diving into this issue, don't forget to mark your calendars for October 5-7. That's the date for the next Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference. Its subject will be the Roaring Twenties on the Gulf Coast, with one session on the 150th anniversary of Florida's and Texas' statehood. The program is shaping up nicely and you won't want to miss all that the folks at Pensacola Junior College have in store for us. So, mark those calendars and then get back to reading the latest issue of the *GCHR*!

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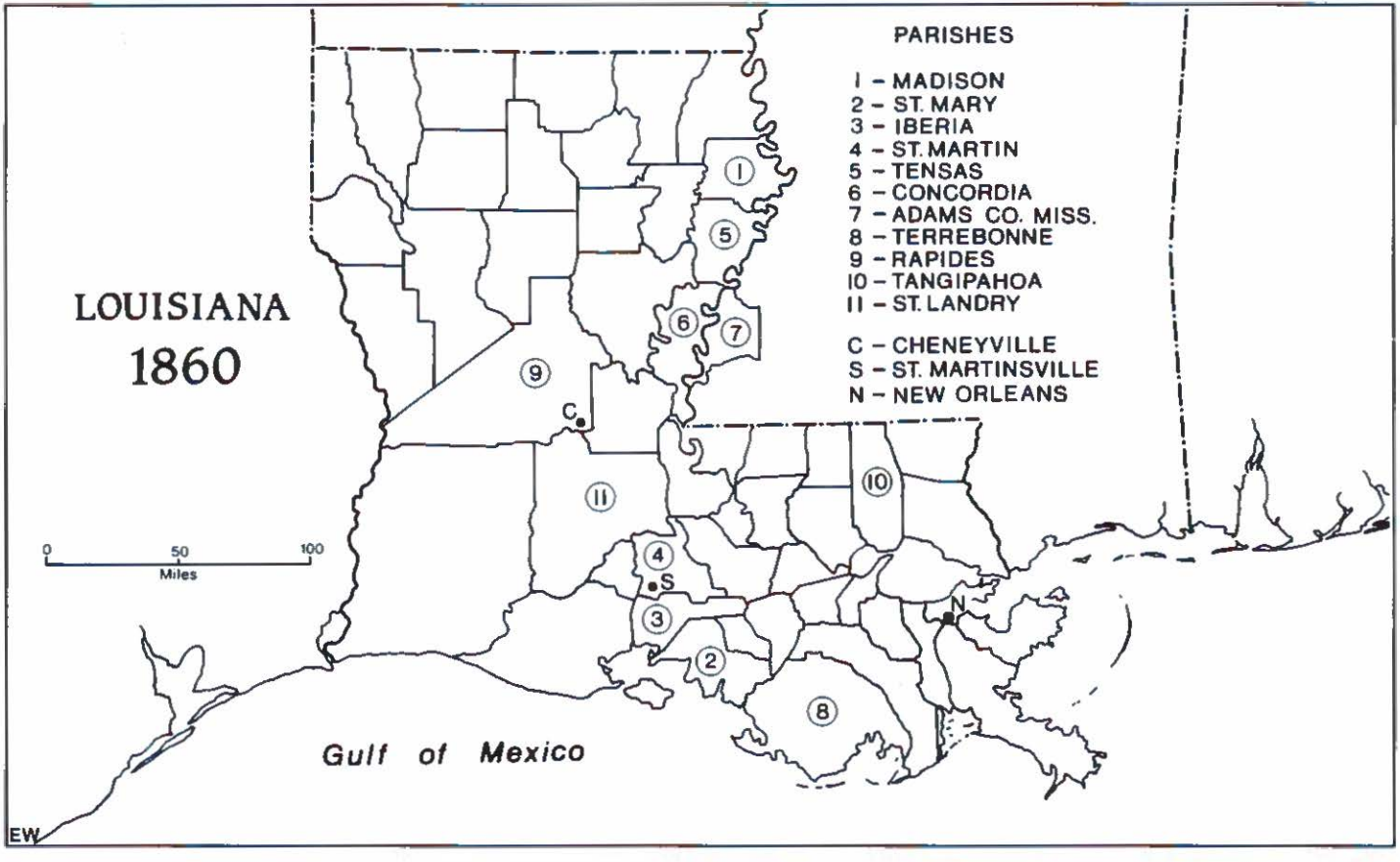
LOUISIANA
1860
PARISHES
1 – MADISON
2 – ST. MARY
3 – IBERIA
4 – ST. MARTIN
5 – TENSAS
6 – CONCORDIA
7 – ADAMS CO. MISS.
8 – TERREBONNE
9 – RAPIDES
10 – TANGIPAHOA
11 – ST. LANDRY
C – CHENEYVILLE
S – ST. MARTINSVILLE
N – NEW ORLEANS
0 50 100
Miles
Gulf of Mexico
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"We'll Hang Jeff Davis on the Sour Apple Tree": Civil War Era Slave Resistance in Louisiana

Junius P. Rodriguez

In a letter written shortly before the 1860 presidential election, Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney speculated upon the South, its institution of slavery, and the grave prospects that Republican victory might have upon both. The aged jurist wrote, "I am old enough to remember the horrors of St. Domingo, and a few days will determine whether anything like it is to be visited upon any portion of our own southern countrymen." Stirred by the passionate intensity of painful remembrance, Taney mused, "I can only pray that it may be averted and that my fears will prove to be nothing more than the timidity of an old man."[1] Justice Taney's words, tinged with the grace of reflective eloquence, convey the weariness of an observer concerned that a generation, unacquainted with history, might precipitate actions that could invite servile war. Yet among those who experienced life amidst a black majority and lived in fear of slave unrest, the portent of Republican victory and the triumph of abolitionism were concomitant evils of the highest order. The "only wish" that one Baton Rouge resident mentioned in an October 1860 letter was that "black republican candidate Lincon [*sic*] will be *beat*."[2]

Despite southern efforts to avert the abolitionists' political assault and its anticipated social consequences, the Republican Party triumphed by plurality and elected an avowed "free soiler" as president. For southern states with black majorities, Abraham Lincoln's election on November 6, 1860, was the catalyst for secession. Prompted by South Carolina and Mississippi's decision to secede from the Union, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, in rapid succession, also withdrew allegiance to the United States Constitution and laws. On January 26, 1861, Louisiana became the sixth state to secede, joining the other seceded states in forming the Confederate States of America on February 18, 1861.[3]

Louisiana Senator John Slidell shared concerns about secession, civil war, and the inherent danger of slave rebellion with President James Buchanan in hopes that reason and compassion might prevail. This conversation influenced the tone of Buchanan's annual message to Congress on December 3, 1860. The President said, "no political

union...can long continue if the necessary consequence be to render the homes and the firesides of nearly half the parties to it habitually and hopelessly insecure."[4] In early January 1861, shortly before the state's decision to secede, Slidell addressed colleagues again cautioning against any invasion of the South for fear that it might induce a massive slave rebellion. The northern press admonished Slidell for using such inflammatory rhetoric, but the senator recognized Louisiana's previous pattern of slave unrest and could easily speculate what the advance of an invading army might do to stir that rebellious tradition.[5] Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis defended Slidell's stand, calling it courageous, and noting similarities between the French army's foray into Santo Domingo and a potential northern invasion of southern territory. Remarking that "history does not chronicle a case of negro insurrection," Davis argued that insurrection was not an act of spontaneous slave resistance, but rather, a response engendered by governments "sending troops among them [slaves]" to inspire unrest.[6]

Jefferson Davis's vision of slave rebellion did not correlate with views of Louisiana planters living in black-majority parishes. Understanding that war pressures would further dilute population by removing young white males for military service, residents suddenly realized that slave rebellion was a real and immediate danger. C. J. Mitchell, a Madison Parish cotton planter, wrote Davis to express common concerns about the domestic security crisis that civil war entailed. Mitchell informed the Confederate president that on the home front the threat of slave revolt "has produced a sense of insecurity here which has already brought men to think of their women and children." The planter speculated, "should even a John Brown raid occur, what with the sparse population and deep seated anxiety in regard to Negroes, such a panic would ensue as would be ruinous to our cause."[7]

While internal developments were alarming, the constant threat of importing slaves tainted with a rebellious spirit continued to plague the state. When Texas planters discovered dangerous conspiracies, many chose to sell their unmanageable slaves at New Orleans rather than "risk them in the scales of justice at home." Apparently the lure of compensation was greater than any ethical constraints for immediate justice since both sellers and buyers negotiated for the best bargains, regardless of social consequences in either state. An anonymous Texan, recognizing the dangers of *caveat emptor*, warned, "I would caution planters and others purchasing negroes not to touch

any from the tainted district of this State at any price." The writer cautioned, "many of them have been so tampered with that it would be folly to place them in a position to contaminate others."[8] Yet the opportunity to purchase cheap slaves during an expensive market period convinced many to forego security considerations and bargain with the Texas traders.

The April 1861 attack upon Fort Sumter marked an epiphany of unrest across Louisiana as signs of servile disorder soon began to appear. Officially, the southern attitude remained optimistic, focusing on a short war with no real problems of internal security. An editorial in *The Daily Picayune* acknowledged, "The civilized world has not ceased shuddering at the recollection of the infernal massacre of St. Domingo. It will not allow the age to be disgraced by one in the Confederate States of America."[9] Yet, signs of tension manifested themselves as the spectre of slave violence, both real and imaginary, emerged and white society responded.[10] In May 1861 New Orleans police arrested Dr. Thomas Jinnings, a free black physician who attended a charity bazaar sponsored by the local white Episcopal Church. Officials charged the doctor with "intrading [*sic*] himself among the white congregation...and conducting hisself [*sic*] in a manner unbecoming the free colored population of this city." The arrest report also mentioned the unforgivable transgression, that Jinnings planned these actions "to create insubordination among the servile population."[11] Although such an incident appears trivial and almost amusing by modern standards, it was a serious affair in the emotionally charged wartime atmosphere of 1861.

The day of Dr. Jinnings's arrest at New Orleans, a rural newspaper reported, "Our servile population remains perfectly quiet, happy, and contented, with plenty to eat, drink, and wear, and nothing to disturb their thoughts by day, or dreams by night."[12] Taken at face value, the report suggests an idyllic setting where contented servants labored happily in a land of plenty, but closer inspection, suggested by the revealing article title "Keep Your Eye on Your Neighbors," exposes a region fearing itself to be on the brink of massive slave insurrection. In June 1861 Louisiana's coastal residents in St. Mary, Iberia, and St. Martin Parishes prepared to defend themselves against an expected invasion by abolitionist mercenaries. Public hysteria rose as the local press mentioned "rumored gatherings of slaves in considerable numbers on the banks of a certain bayou between sea marsh and main land, soidisant [it is said], to be drilled for unrighteous work." Iberia Parish officials

ordered Charley Miller, a German immigrant suspected of abolitionist leanings, to leave the community and warned that "Lincoln sympathisers" might become "a different flower" swinging from the boughs of local magnolia trees. Swift actions taken by the parish patrol prevented the spreading of the conspiracy, but the imprudent reporting of slaves' misdeeds to owners probably tempered the dispensation of justice. The *Attakapas Register* criticized the "improper step" that "to advise the owners of the slaves, of the deeds of the latter" meant "to put a man's interest in direct opposition to the course of legal proceedings in such cases."[13]

Despite suspicion of any moderating influences, local magistrates imparted punishment upon many slaves believed guilty of a role in a St. Martin Parish conspiracy. Those slaveowners who felt financially victimized by the execution or imprisonment of their slaves submitted requests to the state's compensatory fund for monetary redress. Ten slaveowners received a total of $8,500 in compensation for seventeen slaves implicated in the conspiracy. St. Martin Parish officials hanged six slaves on June 24, 1861, and the remaining eleven received sentences of imprisonment for life at hard labor.[14]

Residents of north Louisiana parishes were not immune to conspiracies and threats of slave rebellion like those that plagued the state's southern parishes. In May 1861 Isaac Harrison, a Tensas Parish planter, hid in the crawl space beneath a slave cabin to overhear a conspiratorial meeting. Assuming the rapid advance of federal forces, several slaves, supported by five local abolitionists, planned a revolt to begin on July 4, 1861, when they would "march up the River to meet Mr. Linkum." Early detection of the plot prevented any disturbance from occurring, but one observer noted "there are many who live in great fear."[15]

Tensas Parish officials used the heightened state of public anxiety as the perfect occasion to remedy an annoying problem. Having free persons of color living within a slave society was generally considered dangerous, since the presence of free blacks might encourage slaves to seek their own liberty. Many assumed that free blacks could provide a leadership role usually missing from most slave conspiracies and that this fact alone justified social separation of slaves from free blacks. Within weeks of the failed conspiracy, Tensas Parish officials arrested three free men of color on horse-stealing and larceny charges and set excessive bonds to guarantee their lasting imprisonment. Since Tensas Parish recorded only eight persons of color in the Eighth Census, the imprisonment of Judson

Hardin, Daniel Gaiter, and Frank Lockett, Tensas Parish's only free black males, eliminated them as a leadership source should other conspiracies arise.[16]

Both Concordia Parish, Louisiana, and Adams County, Mississippi experienced a coordinated slave disturbance in the summer of 1861.[17] Planters organized a patrol to capture the slave conspirators and then established an extralegal planter's court at Jacob Sugrets's Ashley Plantation in Concordia Parish to try the accused.[18] As one planter who was serving as clerk transcribed the incident, those sitting in judgment allowed each slave to testify and confess involvement before sentencing the accused to death. The planters, sitting as judges, sentenced ten slaves from three plantations to death by hanging. They cited the authority of "orders of the committee." One Louisiana planter who witnessed the trial remarked, "from what I learned, I think the testimony was sufficient to justify the action of the committee."[19]

The testimony of the ten convicted slaves is quite revealing since their gallows confessions show no remorse, but rather, indicate a passionate, albeit convoluted, hatred of white society. Boasting "if the black folks were turned loose with hoes and axes they would whip the country," one participant's naivety proved the insurrectionist's simple logic. The slave Harry Scott's testimony mentioned a threefold strategy among conspirators to "kill old master and take the ladies for wives and ride [with] the leaders" as the insurrection progressed. The slave Orange's statement suggested that conspirators also intended to steal their masters' money after killing them. The testimony of certain conspirators showed that sexual fantasy was a significant motivating factor in uniting the plotters. The slave George Bush predicted that "white women would run to the black men to hold them" once the rebellion began, and another slave's assertion, "Simon be damned if he don't have one too," reflects the societal taboo that sexual conquest epitomized the ultimate upheaval of white society.

Besides the stereotypical words and phrases that usually outraged southern whites, the confessions included occasional germs of revolutionary rhetoric and suggested that slaves had rudimentary understanding of sectional politics. The plotters convinced a runaway slave with a double-barreled gun to join the conspiracy and this convert's fierce loyalty showed in a pledge to be "kicking ass" when the rebellion commenced. Unshaken by the terror of vigilante justice and inescapable death, the slave Simon exposed the fallacy of

U.S. Senator John Slidell feared northern invasion of the South would spark a slave rebellion. Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection, 1974.25.27.401.

southern manhood with the crude assertion that "Northerners make the South shit behind their asses." The testimony suggested a martial sprit among the plotters that encouraged the recognition of compatibility between goals of northern armies and insurrectionists. Equating their conspiracy with formation of a strike force to "help old Lincoln out," the plotters predicted that joint operations between the regular army and slave rebels could speed the day when General Winfield Scott "would eat his breakfast in New Orleans." Additionally, the conspirators mentioned that encouraging news from Kingston [Jamaica], where "the negroes had got up an army" set into motion the original plans for an armed insurrection in Louisiana.[20]

Under normal circumstances, blacks constituted 90.9 percent of the Concordia Parish population, but the exigencies of civil war, especially the insatiable demands for troops, would only exacerbate fears among the remaining white minority. White residents gloomily noticed the steady population decline and prayed that slaves would not seize the opportunity to rebel. Yet Bill Postlewaite, one of the convicted slave conspirators, mentioned the population differential during testimony and confided that insurrection was "an easy job now as so many men had gone away."[21] Southern governors understood this danger and purposefully withheld local troops to defend against possible internal slave violence. Historian Armstead L. Robinson noted that one-half of the Confederacy's forces were unavailable to commanders in July 1861 since local officials, preoccupied with preventing slave revolts, demanded their services at home.[22] For southern field commanders, soldiers' preoccupation with maintaining domestic security at the homefront created a morale problem of immense proportions. News about incidents of slave unrest at home did little to encourage military order, but rather, made soldiers reconsider their commitment to states' rights when self-preservation and individual rights appeared endangered.[23]

Even the northern press recognized that slave rebellion, either provoked or spontaneous, was a distinct possibility as the war progressed. A New York journalist wrote, "I see the Inevitable Horror–awful to me as to the South–creeping up sluggishly from the swampy poison-land–the dim devil-spectre of SERVILE REBELLION!" The knowledge that many slaveowners in upper-South states like Virginia had sent slaves southward to avoid the financial loss that capture and liberation entailed, only heightened confidence and focused speculation among Northerners as to when and where the inevitable outbreak would occur. Although northern Virginia was the

focus of battlefield action, many realized that "the devil is raising his head away down South in Dixie."[24]

In April 1862 as federal gunboats steamed past the Forts Jackson and St. Philip guarding the Mississippi River's mouth, the impending capture of New Orleans excited servile passions to heretofore unparalleled heights. On several Louisiana plantations, anticipation of liberation prevailed as slave intransigence predated the arrival of federal troops. Local commanders warned Confederate military headquarters of a "very marked sign of discontent" among Louisiana slaves and predicted inevitable disturbances of public security.[25] Describing a region burdened by "pillage and desolation," an observer echoed these apprehensions by acknowledging "the negroes, for more than fifty miles up the river, are in a state of insubordination."[26] At one plantation above New Orleans, slaves constructed a gallows and then issued the ominous warning that former masters and drivers would eventually swing from its gibbet. As these disturbing signs became manifest and the future appeared uncertain, one New Orleans diarist felt compelled to admit "there was a speck of servile war in the lower part of the city."[27]

Slaves abandoned the plantations and flocked to join their liberators so rapidly that Union forces, unaccustomed to detaining large numbers of refugees, were powerless to stop the exodus and ill-prepared to handle the growing crisis of the newly dispossessed. Unable to feed, clothe, house, or employ the multitude seeking succor at Union lines, federal military commanders contemplated the vengeful fury that such an unruly mob might release upon former oppressors unless conditions improved immediately. This alarming prospect positioned federal forces in a curious dilemma in which they found themselves protecting Louisiana's slaveowners against the anticipated wrath of liberated slaves.

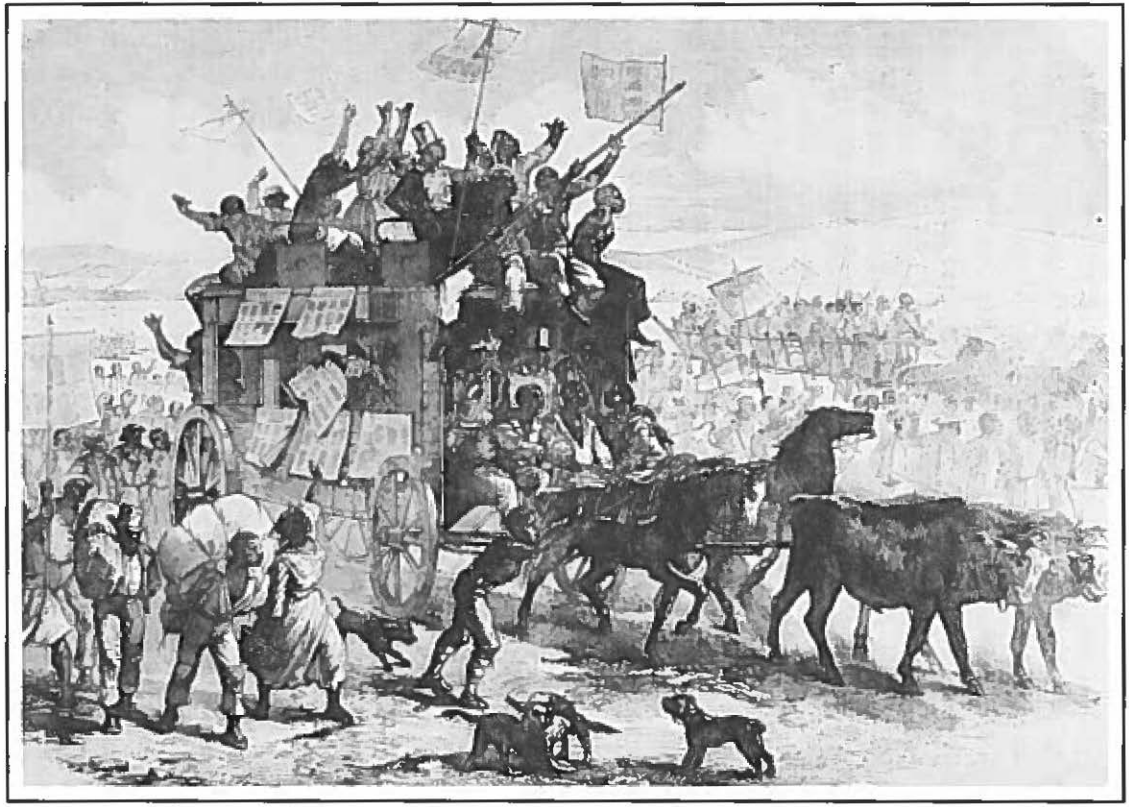
General Benjamin F. Butler, federal commander of occupied New Orleans, recognized the precipitous danger of servile war in Louisiana and used all commissioned powers to prevent racial hostilities from developing. Butler informed Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase that "a single whistle from me would cause every white mans [*sic*] throat to be cut in this city."[28] In a letter to his wife, the general stated that a risk of impending slave insurrection prevailed in Louisiana and that the uncertainty of time or place only exacerbated the anguish, making one unsure "whether he wished it more than he feared it."[29]

General Benjamin Butler, federal commander of occupied New Orleans, shown here addressing a hostile white audience, recognized the danger of slave unrest in Louisiana. Courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1974.25.9.233.

Butler, who had advanced active abolitionist sentiments before arriving at New Orleans, allowed the pressures of maintaining public order to direct military policy, thus modifying long-standing personal antislavery views. The general understood the military's twofold role in occupied Louisiana and recognized that "to have every species of disorder quelled" was not inconsistent with the other basic directive "to restore order out of chaos."[30] Butler's new conservative racial attitude often clashed with the active abolitionist sentiments championed by some federal officers. General John Wolcott Phelps, assigned to help Butler in the Gulf Department, was an early proponent of arming blacks as a preemptive measure to avoid the potential rebellion that idle, unemployed blacks might incite. Viewing labor as a redeeming social force, Phelps warned, "the danger of a violent revolution, over which we can have no control, must become more imminent every day," and asserted that the rigorous demands of military training, with its inculcated patriotic fervor, would prevent any manifestation of insurrection. He was decried as an "outlaw" by the Confederate Congress for "arming and training slaves for warfare against their masters." Phelps's ideas produced an expected chorus of criticism from Confederate circles, but also engendered reproach from General Butler. Calling Phelps "mad as a March Hare on the 'nigger question,' " Butler refused to adopt the "vexed question of arming the slaves," thereby giving tacit support to Louisiana's slaveholders who feared the consequences of such actions. This ideological rift produced no clear winners as Phelps resigned from the Army on August 21, 1862, and on December 16, 1862, the War Department reassigned General Butler to other duties in Virginia.[31]

As civil war progressed and southern will stiffened, the exigencies of political reality forced Abraham Lincoln to redirect the war's aims by focusing the conflict as a liberating crusade to end slavery in the United States. With the Emancipation Proclamation's promulgation on September 22, 1862, Lincoln finally grasped the moral momentum of the abolitionist movement and tried to make that cause's fervor unify northern resolve to continue the increasingly unpopular struggle. Yet, by declaring the intention to free all slaves in areas in rebellion on January 1, 1863, Lincoln inadvertently heightened southern resistance by raising the ugly spectre of slave rebellion.[32]

General Daniel Ruggles, Confederate Chief of Staff, had warned political leaders that the unending demand for white males to fill Confederate armies produced situations where absence of "the ordinary



Sketch of slaves leaving plantations for Union lines after the Emancipation Proclamation. Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection, 1974.25.9.326.

and necessary control of the white man" created "pernicious influences" among slaves.[33] The Confederate Congress reacted swiftly to the threat that notions of emancipation might ignite a latent spirit of rebelliousness among slaves by passing a controversial measure to expand police protection on southern plantations. On October 11, 1862, Confederate President Jefferson Davis signed "An Act to Exempt Certain Persons from Enrollment for Service in the Army of the Confederate States," ignominiously dubbed the "Twenty Nigger Law," enacted as a wartime measure designed to protect certain plantation districts against threatened slave insurrection by augmenting white population in those regions. The new military exemption act's most controversial aspect was a clause excusing masters and overseers who supervised twenty or more slaves from active service in the Confederate army, an indiscreet admission that many plantations faced great danger.[34]

Facing the related crises of conscription demands and insurrection anxieties, most people agreed that the pressures of impending emancipation would ignite servile war in certain parts of the Confederacy. *The Times* of London predicted that in places like Louisiana, "where the negro race is numerous," slave insurrections "would extirpate the white population as completely as in St. Domingo."[35] The activities of Louisiana's delegates within the Confederate Congress suggest their understanding of the potential disaster to befall their state if massive slave unrest prevailed. Representatives Duncan F. Kenner and Lucien J. Dupré, apparently recognizing the significance of their efforts to Louisiana, worked tirelessly to enact the military exemption bill that allowed greater policing of plantations. President Davis, immediately after signing this measure, responded negatively to a supplementary request by Confederate Congressman Dupré asking for special permission that some Louisiana regiments return to their home state to increase domestic defenses against possible disturbances.[36]

Within Louisiana, white residents at all levels of public and private life anticipated slave disturbances in the final months of 1862. Count Mejan, French Consul at New Orleans, reported noticing "unmistakable signs" of upcoming slave unrest in Louisiana.[37] Confederate General Daniel Ruggles raised the issue of war crimes by accusing Federal General Benjamin F. Butler of encouraging "war on human nature" by "innaugurating, deliberately, servile war, by stimulating the half civilized African to raise his hand against...the Anglo-Saxon race."[38] Robert R. Barrow, a Terrebonne Parish planter,

political leader, and prolific letter writer, attempted to rally fellow citizens to "expose and drive out from our country all sulking enemies who are here but to betray us."[39] New Orleans matron Julia LeGrand, acknowledging that "many are in great alarm," understood the immediate cause of public concern and admitted "it is scarcely human to be without fear." A neighbor named Mrs. Norton nervously awaited New Year's Day 1863, the announced arrival of emancipation, by waiting with "a hatchet, a tomahawk, and a vial of some kind of spirits" in dire expectation of an outbreak of hideous crimes against white residents.[40]

The uneventful passing of January 1, 1863 did not calm Louisiana residents' fears of slave insurrection. One resident commented that the tenuous and often indefensible position of white society's public safety generally required "Machiavellian diplomacy" toward Louisiana's blacks.[41] The promise of emancipation encouraged slaves to take a more active role in achieving their own liberation. One observer noticed that Louisiana slaves often gathered in canebreaks at night and "talked of the Yankees, and prayed for them and for the flag of the free."[42] Patrols prevented local conspiracies from expanding in Madison, Rapides, and Tangipahoa Parishes, but brazen attempts at servile revolt only became more frequent.[43]

In April 1863, a force of forty armed blacks marched upon the town of St. Martinville. These insurrectionists battled sixty white residents near a bridge at the town's entrance in full view of the 52d Massachusetts Infantry. After killing four blacks and capturing several others, the victorious whites offered the captives to the federal regiment's provost marshal who refused to accept the prisoners. Interpreting this refusal as an invitation for vigilante justice, local residents hanged the captured slaves from the Bayou Teche bridge in hopes of discouraging future slave unrest. Within a few days, the town again faced attack by insurrectionists, and a combined force of residents and federal troops dispersed the motley army that disbanded and fled to nearby swamps.[44]

Unable to discount news of any conspiracy from the ridiculous to the substantive, Louisiana's white residents suffered a precarious existence in a world where anything could occur. Accordingly, citizens responded both to rumors and actual violent outbreaks by honing local defenses and remaining vigilant. The St. Landry Parish Police Jury, responding to an incident in nearby Cheneyville, revised its slave patrol ordinance to provide greater security against possibile plantation restlessness.[45] In July 1863 James A. Seddon, Confederate

Secretary of War, alerted Louisiana Governor Thomas O. Moore to recently discovered intelligence suggesting a massive federal scheme to foment slave revolt across the South on the night of August 1, 1863. Such a conspiracy seemed realistic to Governor Moore who received coincident details from Confederate commanders that Union advances in north Louisiana "turned the negroes crazy."[46] Evidence suggests that servile loyalty was a mere chimeric hope of white society since most slaves made "preparations for immediate skedaddling [*sic*]" when given an opportunity to escape.[47]

During the final months of the Civil War, thousands of Louisiana slaves abandoned their plantations and made the treacherous journey to the safety of Union lines. This final exodus, often misunderstood in the simplistic expression of the "jubilee spirit," represents the slaves' ultimate revolutionary sentiment, the manifestation of self-worth. Moved perhaps by religious fervor and imbibed with biblical notions of deliverance, these self-emancipated slaves were radicals–as evidenced by the lyrics "we'll hang Jeff Davis on the sour apple tree" sung to the tune of a Methodist anthem. Recognizing that the plantation South could not survive without their labor, these economic insurrectionists made the leap of faith necessary to achieve freedom and in so doing, hastened the fall of the Southern Confederacy.[48]

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, psychiatrist Frantz Fanon argued that "the oppressed, in order to prevent themselves becoming total victims, lashed out against their oppressors and in doing so, created their humanity."[49] The Civil War presented Louisiana slaves with the opportunity to employ their revolutionary tradition of insurrection, thereby proving their humanity. These slaves did not sit by as passive recipients of emancipation, but rather, they shared an active participatory role in gaining freedom. These men and women struggled together, planned work slowdowns together, conspired together, escaped together, revolted together, and fought and died together. They created their own humanity and recognized their own self-worth out of the formidable legacy of intolerance and subjugation that was their reward for misfortunate birth and they proved that a people ripe for revolt could endure in the social tinderbox of Louisiana.

Notes

[1] Roger B. Taney to J. Mason Campbell, October 19, 1860, Benjamin C. Howard Papers, Maryland State Historical Society, Baltimore, MD; Don E. Fehrenbacher,

"Roger B. Taney and the Sectional Crisis," *Journal of Southern History* 43 (November 1977): 556-57.

[2] H. B. Jolly to Father, October 28, 1860, George H. S. Jordan Papers, Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge, LA.

[3] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., ed., *The Almanac of American History* (New York, 1983), 277-78.

[4] James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (New York, 1897), 3158.

[5] James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress: From Lincoln to Garfield* (Norwich, CT, 1884), 253.

[6] Jefferson Davis, *Jefferson Davis Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches*, ed. Dunbar Rowland (Jackson, MS, 1923), 5:30.

[7] C. J. Mitchell to Jefferson Davis, April 27, 1861, Jefferson Davis Papers, Rice University, Houston, TX; Armstead L. Robinson, "In the Shadow of Old John Brown: Insurrection Anxiety and Confederate Mobilization, 1861-1863," *Journal of Negro History* 65 (Fall 1980): 279.

[8] *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), August 18, 1860; William W. White, "The Texas Slave Insurrection of 1860," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 52 (January 1949): 279-80.

[9] *Daily Picayune*, May 8, 1861.

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Bulletin of the Southern Commercial Congress, April 1913. Library of Congress.

"Without Conscious Hypocrisy": Woodrow Wilson's Mobile Address of 1913

Gordon E. Harvey

In the fall of 1913, barely seven months after taking office, President Woodrow Wilson confronted the threat of European economic expansion into the Western Hemisphere, particularly in Mexico. Porfirio Diaz, Mexico's president until overthrown by Francisco Madero, had granted economic concessions to Great Britain in order to create competition between the U.S. and Britain for Mexican favor. These concessions created an international struggle over Mexican oil. Wilson looked upon this struggle as the result of European intrusion which challenged the Monroe Doctrine and American influence in the Western Hemisphere.[1]

In a precedent-setting speech, Wilson addressed this problem before the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Southern Commercial Congress, held at Mobile, Alabama in 1913. With representatives of all the Latin American republics attending, Wilson used the meeting to enunciate a new policy of "morality."[2] He warned Great Britain that whereas the original intent of the Monroe Doctrine only closed Latin America to formal colonization and conquest, he intended to close it to the Old World's informal and immoral expansion into Latin America as well.[3] "Wilsonianism" subsequently would be used to describe this general approach to American foreign affairs. The president's desire to do good for Latin America came from a missionary and evangelistic outlook rooted in the progressivism of the day. The United States' mission was to aid the world in finding progress and good government.[4] Thus, Wilsonianism would save the "benighted" people of Latin America "from themselves for themselves." However, this benevolent aim soon would give way to a more assertive interventionist policy. More to the point of this essay, it would raise the question of how a president so full of altruism could embark on a policy seemingly so hypocritical.[5]

Much has been written about Wilson's implicit interventionism in this case, especially his motivations, with interpretations falling into three schools of thought: "materialist," "idealist," and a "compromise." In William A. Williams's *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1972), Sidney Bell's *Righteous Conquest: Woodrow Wilson and the Evolution of the New Diplomacy* (1972), and Lloyd C. Gardner's *Safe For*

Democracy: The Anglo-American Response to Revolution, 1913-1923 (1984) one can see clearly the materialist approach, that is, Wilson's interventionism as resulting from economic motives. Wilson as an idealistic interventionist is shown in Arthur S. Link's *Wilson*, 5 vols. (1947-1956) and in Kenneth J. Grieb's *The United States and Huerta* (1969). The compromise position, an approach which finds a middle ground between the idealist and materialist, has been offered by N. Gordon Levin, Jr. in *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics, America's Response to War and Revolution* (1968) and by Mark T. Gilderhus in *Diplomacy and Revolution: U.S. Mexican Relations Under Wilson and Carranza* (1977). These analyses all have great merit. On the other hand, all give only cursory attention to the Mobile speech and likewise fail to address Wilson's southern heritage and close ties to the Progressive Era South as a factor in the address and surrounding events.[6] Indeed, whether a reflection of Wilsonian idealism, materialism, or something in between, this first formal statement of Wilsonianism in American foreign relations occurred in a striking way at Mobile. The occasion was one of the great gatherings of New South business leaders, the Southern Commercial Congress. The reasons for this address and its delivery in a quintessential "New South" setting, as well as the "hypocritical" actions of its messenger, have significant implications for United States diplomacy and the American South.

Founded in 1908 in Chattanooga, the Southern Commercial Congress was a fitting event for the unveiling of Wilsonian diplomacy. The congress sought to improve the South's standing in the nation and the world, embracing the idea that "through a greater South must rise a greater nation"–a classic "New South" outlook committed to United States' nationalism and patriotism and an expanded United States' role in world affairs. The organization consisted of many rank-and-file southern businessmen, people such as Albert P. Bush, Jr. of Mobile, T. P. Jennings of Pensacola, and Harvie Jordan of Georgia. Numerous southern governors were also included. These and other New South advocates were excited about the prospects of a fellow Southerner, Woodrow Wilson, once again in the White House. To them Wilson's presidency demonstrated that the South, defeated in 1865, had returned to the mainstream of national and international affairs. They also wanted Latin American markets. Wilson, they hoped, could assist in this effort. Moreover, Mobile's proximity to the Panama Canal, now a year from completion, made this city a logical place for Southerners to convene. As

Alabama Senator John Tyler Morgan had argued for some thirty years, a transoceanic canal could bring great trade to southern ports.[7] To heighten the drama, in an unprecedented move the Pan-American Union, maintained by the Latin American nations to promote bilateral trade with the United States, decided to have its biennial meeting one year early and in conjunction with the Southern Commercial Congress in Mobile. The Women's Auxiliary of the Southern Commercial Congress would also meet as part of the convention. Speakers scheduled for its session included Lady Aberdeen of Ireland, social reformer Jane Addams of Hull House in Chicago, and Chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau Julia Lathrop.[8]

It would be a singular accomplishment if President Wilson, born in Virginia and raised in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, could actually attend the meeting. On August 7, 1913, Clarence J. Owens, director of the Southern Commercial Congress, led a delegation to Washington to offer the formal invitation for President Wilson to address the opening-day festivities. Owens received only a tentative acceptance. Tentative or not, Wilson's acceptance aroused the hopes of Mobile and the Southern Commercial Congress and led to major preparations. On September 24 the White House announced that Wilson definitely would be able to attend, making him the first Democratic president ever to set foot in Mobile. Wilson emphasized that his schedule permitted only a stop in Mobile. He would leave soon after the address because he did not wish to overshadow the congress. Yet it is clear that he valued the opportunity: in scheduling the visit he broke his own rule of declining such invitations.[9]

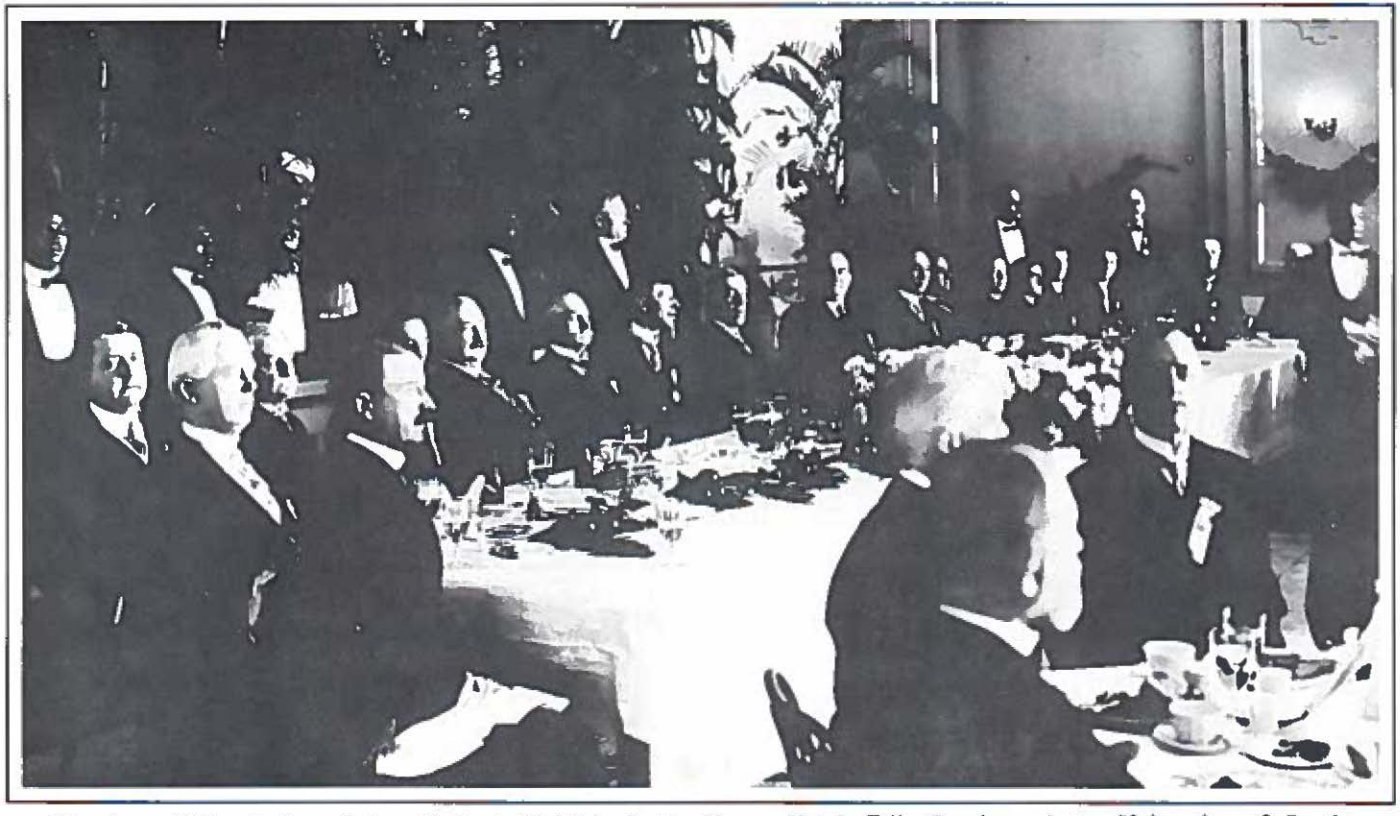
Why would Wilson make such an exception? The meeting of the Southern Commercial Congress received widespread coverage not only in the U.S. but in Latin America and throughout the world. Over two hundred national daily newspapers provided full-page ads placed at no charge to announce the coming meeting, saving the congress and the city of Mobile more than twenty-five thousand dollars in promotion costs. In addition to using the newspaper coverage, Owens and the director of the Pan-American Union, John Barrett, a long-time U.S. diplomat in the Far East and Latin America, spent three weeks traveling to southern state capitals attempting to raise awareness of the meeting and its significance to the area. Louis C. Irvine, president of the Alabama Farm Land Company and member of the Mobile Chamber of Commerce, was responsible for the overall organization of the 1913 meeting which eight governors and representatives of sixty "first-class cities of the South" were to attend. With delegations

from all the Latin American republics expected at the meeting, newspaper representatives of those countries would be there as well. Of course, the international press would also cover the event–if not in person then by printing the wire service stories. Therefore, any address or comments by President Wilson would be worldwide news. Along with this media coverage Mobile expected at least ten thousand active participants for the congress and no less than twenty thousand visitors on the day of the president's address.[10] Equally important, the occasion permitted Wilson a chance to further his support among Southerners who had voted solidly for him in 1912 and whose congressional delegations Wilson would need for passage of his domestic reform program. Indeed, this southern support would become invaluable to Wilson in the years following the Mobile address. Southerners were the most powerful block of the Democratic party, not to mention its congressional leadership. So for all the reasons, domestic as well as international, Wilson could not pass up the opportunity to go to Mobile.[11]

Although the theme of the Southern Commercial Congress for 1913 was "The Relation of the United States to the Panama Canal, Latin America, and the World Commerce," Wilson had initially intended to speak on "Rural Credits." The Southern Commercial Congress had been instrumental in the creation of a U.S. congressionally sanctioned commission to study the rural credits system in Europe, and Wilson had great interest in the subject because of its importance to farmers of the South. A system of rural credits would allow farmers to borrow money not only on the value of their land but on the future value of their crops as well.[12] On October 21, Joseph F. Tumulty, Wilson's private secretary, sent a telegram to Owens noting Wilson's approval of the program for the congress and confirming his topic of rural credits.[13] But as late as October 26, one day before the Mobile appearance, the speech had not been prepared.[14] Little doubt remains, accordingly, that Wilson changed his topic twenty-four hours before his appearance in light of the growing Anglo-American rivalry in Latin America. The new president had yet to outline formally a Latin American policy. Further, Wilson increasingly was concerned with the unstable political situation in Mexico. With the large press assemblage in Mobile, there would be no greater opportunity than the one before him to send a message to the world. Rural credits could wait. As the *Mobile Register* noted, "He had a greater message to give."[15]

Even before the change of topics the fact that the world's attention would be turned to Mobile, and to Wilson, energized Mobile's preparations. It only took a few words of flattery and the confirmation of Wilson's attendance to send Mobilians into a frenzy. The Mobile Chamber of Commerce met at the Lyric Theater on September 24 to plan for the event. Both Owens and Barrett addressed members of the chamber on plans for the meeting and Mobile's golden opportunity to display itself to the world. As he told so many New South audiences, Barrett advised the chamber that Mobile had a "God-given" position in the Western Hemisphere and that his only concern was whether Mobile was going to "help God out." Barrett said he had been around the world three times and had not seen a city with greater potential for world trade than Mobile's. He also offered advice about how Mobile and other United States cities could improve their influence in Latin America. He urged Mobilians not to focus merely on selling to the Latin Americans, but to consider buying from them as well in order to enjoy the fruits of mutual trade. Barrett pointed out that the great powers of Europe enjoyed larger shares of the "patronage" of Latin America because they also purchased the largest amount of Latin American goods. Barrett's encouragement had a genuine impact: the Chamber of Commerce raised commitments for over three thousand dollars in just a few minutes at a meeting of its Ways and Means Committee, including one thousand dollars from the Mobile & Ohio Railroad where the chamber's Entertainment Committee chairman, Richard V. Taylor, served as vice president.[16]

Other Mobilians clamored to support the project as well. Up to the day of the address, the *Mobile Register* ran almost daily pleas for contributions and sleeping accommodations. The housing situation caused many headaches for the Chamber of Commerce because Mobile's hotels could house no more than two thousand people. Therefore, the chamber was forced to embark on a campaign to encourage Mobilians to open their homes to the many guests expected for the congress. By October 21 almost five thousand rooms had been supplied to accommodate ten thousand visitors, with over seven thousand reserved by the day of Wilson's visit. William H. Armbrecht, president of the Chamber of Commerce, even suggested the city stamp all outgoing business envelopes with an announcement of the coming congress and of the president's visit. The entire city went on a cleaning and decorating spree to make a favorable impression upon President Wilson, the visiting delegates, and press.[17]



Woodrow Wilson's formal breakfast at Mobile's Battle House Hotel. Erik Overbey photo, University of South Alabama Archives.

After traveling the Southern Railroad line direct from Washington through Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, Wilson arrived in Mobile at 3:30 A.M. on October 27. He was accompanied by North Carolinian Josephus Daniels, secretary of the navy, as well as Tumulty, who likely helped Wilson write the Mobile speech en route. Despite the hour of their arrival, a rousing welcome greeted the presidential party. Wilson rested in his luxurious private car, the "National," until 8 A.M., then proceeded to the Battle House Hotel on Government Street for breakfast with 180 honored guests of the Chamber of Commerce. He sat at the head of the main table flanked on either side by chamber president Armbrecht and by entertainment chairman Taylor. After eating a breakfast of broiled squab, fried hominy grits, and corn pones–for which each of the 180 guests paid seven dollars–all dignitaries, including the president of the Southern Commercial Congress, progressive reformer Duncan Upshaw Fletcher of Florida, proceeded to the docks to greet the officers and crew of the U.S. cutter *Winona*. The *Winona* took Wilson out to the middle of the Mobile River and back to port while President Wilson stood on the hurricane deck and waved at admirers gathered along the docks and in boats around the cutter.

Then, just before 11 A.M., Wilson arrived at the Lyric Theater to deliver his address. Red, white, and blue bunting, plus the flags of the sixteen member states of the Southern Commercial Congress and flags of the twenty-two Latin American states represented at the meeting covered the theater.[18] Alabama's governor, Emmet O'Neal, turned his introductory duties into an oration lasting longer than thirty minutes. O'Neal addressed the "commanding position" Mobile had as one of the "principal gateways of that greater commerce which will follow the completion of the Panama Canal...." The governor then heaped praise on "one of Alabama's greatest sons," Senator Morgan who had died six years earlier. Preeminent leader of post-Civil War southern expansionist sentiment, Morgan had led the push for an isthmian canal. He had hoped for a Nicaraguan cut that would guarantee increased trade to Mobile, but he still got credit among many Southerners for the new Panamanian route. Said O'Neal:

> Now that the hour of final success has almost struck, we can proudly proclaim that it was John T. Morgan of Alabama who loosened the stone from its seat on the mountain, and that looking wisely into the future, he but uttered the language of prophecy when he triumphantly

> declared that no obstacle can long prevent its removal through its own gravity.[19]

O'Neal then turned to praising Wilson. He spoke of Wilson's "superb statesmanship and his masterly leadership." He urged the president to continue in his fight for the "restoration of industrial freedom and social justice." The governor took heart that Wilson would not "lay down his arms until he has broken the chains of monopoly and given us a currency system freed from the domination of the selfish special interests...." He then, finally, yielded the podium to President Wilson.[20]

Though potent, Wilson's speech lasted only a few minutes. As he talked he constantly turned to the representatives of Latin America seated on the stage behind him, speaking to them in almost conversational tones. He declared that the future of U.S-Latin American relations would be much different from the past. Whereas people of Latin America had always been neighbors of the U.S. citizens, Wilson hoped the two would become even closer by common understanding. "Interest," said Wilson, "does not tie nations together; it sometimes separates them. But sympathy and understanding do unite them...."[21]

Next followed the central theme of the speech, an attack on foreign concessionaires or monopolies in Latin America. Wilson warned that nations which granted concessions to foreign investors only opened the door to trouble because of the ease with which the foreign country could come to dominate the domestic affairs of the borrowing nation. As he put it:

> What these states are going to see, therefore, is an emancipation from the subordination, which has been inevitable, to foreign enterprise and an assertion of the splendid character which, in spite of all these difficulties, they have again and again been able to demonstrate. I rejoice in nothing so much as in the prospect that they will now be emancipated from these conditions, and we ought to be the first to take part in assisting in that emancipation.

Wilson then outlined the goal of his new policy in saying the U.S. had to prove itself to Latin America as "friends and champions upon terms of equality and honor."[22]

Wilson shocked the Mobile crowd and the world when he stated the United States would never again seek "one additional foot of

Woodrow Wilson acknowledging his welcome on the way to deliver his address at the Lyric theater. Overbey photo, USA Archives.

territory by conquest...and she must see that from no quarter are material interests made superior to human liberty...."[23] Then, in closing, he asserted that the questions of the day were not merely questions of politics and diplomacy, but "shot through with the principles of life." He waxed eloquent about how the nineteenth century had helped mankind forge ahead on the tedious climb upward to see the "ultimate duties of mankind" and how soon mankind would "come out upon those great heights where there shines, unobstructed, the light of the justice of God."[24]

After the speech Wilson, a man known for his love of automobiles, traveled in a seven-passenger touring car provided by the city and led a presidential motorcade that included thirty-five other cars for a brief tour of Mobile. The motorcade moved down Government Street to a viewing stand in front of the City Bank and Trust Company on the St. Joseph Street side of Bienville Square. In clear reflection of the racial practices of the times, Wilson also stopped the motorcade en route at Broad Street and took an "unusual interest" in a parade of Mobile's black citizens. Almost three thousand marchers, mostly children, displayed signs cheering the president and conveying such messages as, "Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, San Juan, and if necessary Tokio [*sic*] and Mexico." Other signs included pictures of Lincoln and Wilson side by side and banners saying "Hail, the President." After enjoying this "separate parade" of African American citizens, Wilson then traveled to the viewing stand to watch the other parade in his honor which numbered two thousand marchers, one including industrial, fraternal, educational, and civic groups and over a half dozen bands–the white group. This parade bannered the New South theme, "The Spirit of Progress of the South," and moved up Government Street "under two miles of electric floral arches." After enjoying these festivities for a short time, the president, accompanied by Tumulty, returned to the Mobile & Ohio station and departed for his return trip back to Washington, D.C. Secretary of the Navy Daniels stayed behind as the president's representative and viewed the remainder of the parade. Many marchers did not know the president had left and believed they were still looking at Wilson himself.[25]

Wilson's address received varied reaction across the United States. The editor of the *Mobile Register*, Erwin Craighead, one well educated in international law, declared the speech worthy to be considered a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and said that it cleared up the "vague" document written by Monroe. No doubt unaware of

the full significance of Wilson's message, the *Register* nevertheless expressed Mobile's happiness to have been chosen as the birthplace for such an address and policy. Craighead also wrote Tumulty two days after the conference, enclosing a copy of his editorial and expressing the general Mobile opinion of the president that "we have so sincere and clean a man as president of the republic." The *Birmingham Age-Herald* called the speech "epoch making," while the *Atlanta Constitution* expressed doubts that the Panama Canal would cure "dollar diplomacy," although it did say Wilson exposed the "nerve" of the Latin American situation that "must have made staid old Europe wince." The *New York Times* said the president "merely reflected the true sentiment of the nation" and that his remarks would be "accepted as having a significance of immediate import."[26]

Others expressed reservations. The *New Orleans Daily Picayune* urged: "If Mr. Wilson thinks he can drive these powerful influences from Mexico by polemical utterances and advice he has read history awry." The *Washington Post* and *Detroit Free Press* both expressed disdain at the president's binding strictures on U.S. expansion in obvious referral to Wilson's promise of no more territorial expansion. Mobile's future mayor, Richard V. Taylor, though a Wilsonian Democrat, had similar views. Taylor found it disturbing that Wilson would make such a claim when everyone knew that future intervention would occur, given the volatile situation in Latin America. Taylor had been seated near Wilson during the speech and recalled that when he heard Wilson promise never to acquire another foot of territory he leaned over to a friend and whispered that Wilson should have added, "As far as I know." Oscar W. Underwood, U.S. congressman from Alabama's ninth district and chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, was more optimistic. Also seated on the Lyric Theater stage with Wilson at the time of the talk, he showed great prescience when he later remarked that the speech "will go out to the world...and be known in history as the Mobile speech."[27]

Certain Latin American responses also were mixed. Granted, on Tuesday night, the second day of the congress, John Barrett suggested that if Wilson had given his address in Latin America he would have been "heartily approved and lauded." Barrett even had one thousand copies of the speech printed in both Spanish and English distributed among businessmen and leaders throughout Latin America. However, unbridled approval was not to be found in Latin America. For example, Policarpo Bonilla, the former president of Honduras, praised Wilson and saw the address as a new direction in foreign policy that

canceled out all "arbitrary amplifications and interpretations" previously added to the original Monroe Doctrine. But Bonilla cautioned this policy still had to be proven and that Wilson could prove his sincerity by practicing what he said. Latin America, said Bonilla, had "lost faith in the messages of Presidents because they often do the opposite of what they say."[28]

As might be expected, the address did not find hearty approval in Great Britain either. One British paper compared Wilson to former prime minister William E. Gladstone, who, after many lectures on the wickedness of a "spirited" foreign policy, proceeded to bombard Alexandria and then add the Nile Valley to British rule. The paper concluded that "declared men of peace" were most conducive to foreign complications: "It tempts other people to take chances and ultimately cross the limit which no degree of self-restraint can allow to be unfringed."[29]

Perhaps the most biting attack from across the Atlantic came from the editorial page of the *Times* of London. Robert Fleming, an English citizen writing to the editorial page of the *Times*, criticized Wilson for making unfair characterizations of foreign concessionaires. He argued that two U.S. railroads, the Mexican Central Railroad and the Mexican National Railway, had received Mexico's greatest concessions. Fleming also defended European capital as responsible for many of the modern elements of Mexican life such as electric light companies, gas companies, docks, and railroads. Fleming's "parting shot" came in his comment on Wilson's idealism: he expressed admiration for Wilson's high ideals but said "ideals must be tempered by knowledge"–the U.S. was being guided by "one whose feet are hardly on this Earth."[30]

In the years immediately following the Mobile speech Wilson's policy in the Caribbean confirmed President Bonilla's fear, namely, that yet another U.S. president would go back on his word to the Latin American people. The most glaring example, rooted in the previous presidential administration of William Howard Taft, surfaced in Nicaragua. Before leaving office in 1913, the Taft administration drew up a draft treaty with Nicaragua which gave the U.S. a ninety-nine-year renewable lease on the Great and Little Corn Islands of the Caribbean and the option of establishing a naval base in the Gulf of Fonseca. It also gave the U.S. exclusive option in perpetuity to a prospective canal route through Nicaragua. For all this, the U.S. would pay only three million dollars which would be used by Nicaragua to pay its debts to American lenders. On first assuming

office Wilson had openly denounced such "dollar diplomacy" associated with the Republican Party. Nevertheless, Wilson's practical side subsequently would not allow him to pass up such a grand opportunity. In 1916, in obvious resumption of a policy he once condemned, Wilson had Secretary of State Bryan close this deal which was thereafter known as the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty.[31]

Wilson had still other chances to make good on his Mobile promises. One opportunity came soon after the address. Secretary Bryan urged that the U.S. lend large sums of money to Latin American nations to help them clear their debts with and break free from the "amoral" financial interests of Europe. Wilson labeled this policy as too "radical."[32] His reluctant resumption of "dollar diplomacy" and the "moral fervor" with which he applied it constituted the only policy difference between him and his predecessor, Taft. Indeed, Wilson eventually carried out more armed intervention in the region than many of the more jingoistic presidents he had succeeded.[33] So while many applauded the idealism of the Mobile address, the caution others showed ultimately seemed justified. According to Wilfrid Henry Calcott in *The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1870-1920* (1966), the Wilson policy taken as a whole reflected intervention in Latin America rationalized as "necessary discipline and aid to good government." In turn, many in Latin America branded Wilson a hypocrite.[34]

Thus a basic question remains. How could someone so full of goodwill and righteousness as was Woodrow Wilson at Mobile embark on a policy that seemed so blatantly hypocritical? One possible explanation lies in an assessment of the real audience Wilson sought to address in Mobile. If Latin America had been the single targeted audience for the address, then there was indeed hypocrisy. It must be reiterated, however, that Wilson saw his *overall* goal as the protection of the *American* sphere of influence in Latin America.[35] Above all, he designed his policy to accomplish that aim. If Wilson could rid Latin America of the "amoral" financial interests of Europe and replace them with "moral" American aid, he would simultaneously help the entire Western Hemisphere prosper. More to the point, however, is another question. Within Wilson's goal of protecting the American sphere of influence in Latin America, was the address intended solely for Latin America or perhaps for the intruding Great Britain as well? The answer is both. Arthur S. Link, esteemed authority on Wilson, suggests that the Mobile address in one sense articulated a Latin American policy but that this policy has to be

read in the context of the growing Anglo-American crisis in Mexico.[36] Indeed, this reading helps explain Wilson's sudden change of topic for the Mobile address.

A few days before the address, Secretary Bryan suggested to Wilson that the Monroe Doctrine as traditionally applied and interpreted did not fully cover the actions of foreign economic interests. Bryan said,

> It had long been evident that foreign influence exerted through private individuals and private corporations can as effectively overthrow popular government in the Latin American republics as when that influence is exerted directly by foreign governments. I laid the matter before the President and was pleased to have my suggestion favorably received.[37]

Bryan then recalled that a few days later Wilson outlined this new interpretation which would also be the basis for the Mobile address.[38] Also, in a circular note to the Great Powers sent three days before the speech, Wilson hinted at his new policy: "As in Cuba, the United States was willing to lend its assistance in the securing of independence from a foreign political power, so in Mexico this nation is willing to assist in maintaining Mexico's independence of foreign financial power."[39] Wilson believed that Great Britain posed a threat to Mexican independence. Britain ranked second only to the U.S. in Mexican investments with $500 million, and its heavy dependence on Mexican oil made interests there crucial. The Royal Navy had recently converted from coal to oil burners, and Mexico supplied most of the English oil requirements.[40]

One last development helped to single out Britain as a key target for the Mobile address. Less than two weeks after the address, anonymous sources in Wilson's confidence declared that the U.S. government had obtained information about British financial aid allegedly funneled to the Victoriano Huerta government of Mexico. They stated that Wilson had this "phase" of the situation in mind when he delivered the address at Mobile.[41]

Still, there is no question that Wilson also intended the address for Latin America. He sought to rid the area of foreign financial interests and what he saw as their corrupting influences in order to keep constitutional government from being subordinated and ultimately destroyed. This does not contradict Link's British–strategy theory if examined from Wilson's point of view. Although Wilson had the interests of the U.S. foremost in his plans, he also genuinely desired

progress and good government in Latin America. In his Mobile address, he condemned the entire foreign concessionaire system in Latin America. This condemnation included U.S. concessionaires as well–though certainly not bilateral trade between the U.S. and Latin America. While the financial interests of the U.S. rested within his sphere of influence, those from Europe did not. Therefore, if U.S. financial interests operating in bilateral trade displaced British competitors in Latin America, Wilson believed he could play a greater role in ensuring the safety of democracy in that region. He would possess some form of control over these interests due to their U.S. origins. Wilson hoped that one day Latin American republics could handle foreign investment with authority and without being duped. But until then, he deemed it necessary to embark on a paternalistic policy of protection. This also explains Wilson's resumption of "dollar diplomacy." Until he could overcome the "bumps in the road" toward true financial independence and self-determination for Latin America, he believed he had to assume a paternalistic role with the "benighted" people of Latin America.[42]

Such paternalism, a key to Wilsonian foreign policy of then and later, can be understood more fully with reference to Wilson's views on race. Social reformers of the early twentieth century differed greatly from their late twentieth-century counterparts in at least one major respect, their views on racial equality. Most American progressives and liberals of 1913, especially those with southern roots like Wilson, did not believe in racial equality. Rather, they embraced Social Darwinism and white supremacy. Woodrow Wilson's views followed this pattern. Like other progressives, he saw the white races of Teutonic and Aryan origin as having achieved the greatest progress in society, and those non-Teutonic and non-Aryan races still living in an inferior state. In keeping with the progressive spirit, however, Wilson did not want to repress these "colored peoples." He wanted to aid "benighted" ones in finding as much progress as their perceived "inferior" racial origin would allow, though their progress would always remain short of Causians.[43]

For Wilson the Mobile address and the events surrounding it probably represented neither hypocrisy nor contradiction. He was merely reflecting the unique duality of American purpose, a dualism arising from the American tendency to operate simultaneously, motivated both by practicality and idealism. This duality has been labelled "unique versatility" by friends of the U.S. and "hypocrisy" by its enemies. But perhaps closer to the truth are the words of literary

critic Harold Stearns: "In President Wilson we have seen its ultimate culmination in a man who talks like a Transcendalist and who bargains like any huckster, although..., probably, without conscious hypocrisy." So it was "without conscious hypocrisy" that the president used "Wilsonianism" to block the threat of European economic expansion in Latin America, its high ideals ultimately giving way to the practical reality of paternalistic intervention. In this sense the Mobile address and events following it signaled the beginning of the Wilsonian approach to American foreign policy that would be a major factor not just with Wilson but with succeeding presidents, too.[44]

The Mobile address and the intervention which followed also holds great significance for the South. Throughout this chapter in American diplomacy Southerners, long interested in United States' expansion, were aided in their belief that this "southern president" would halt European economic threats to one of their most valued market areas, Latin America, using the earnest rationale of helping fellow citizens of the Western Hemisphere. In the process, though some people in the South anticipated contradiction as a part of reality, Wilson undoubtedly endeared himself further to many. He reinforced what they thought about themselves and their world–their ideals and self-interest and their renewed patriotic spirit. This surely affected Wilson himself by solidifying his support in an already southern-dominated Congress which soon passed much of the president's domestic reform agenda. In short, besides forecasting much of twentieth-century American foreign policy, the Mobile address contributed to the "growing spirit of nationalism and patriotism" in Dixie. It was this spirit of national pride which accompanied the return of the South to "the saddle" of American political power.[45]

Notes

[1]Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American* People, 9th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1974), 554-55; The Madero revolt began in 1910 and received support from American oil interests and the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson. In turn, British oil interests supported the overthrow and alleged murder of Madero by one of his generals, Victoriano Huerta. For full studies of the Mexican situation and its results see Robert E. Quirk, *An Affair of Honor: Woodrow Wilson and the Occupation of Vera Cruz* (New York, 1962) and Friedrich Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution* (Chicago, 1981); Mark T. Gilderhus, "Wilson, Carranza, and the Monroe Doctrine: A Question of Regional Organization," *Diplomatic History* 7 (Spring 1983): 103-15.

[2] By Wilson's inauguration in March of 1913, Latin America had received over one-half of the total U.S. foreign investment, most of which rested in Mexico. Over 50,000 Americans resided in that country and had invested over one billion dollars,

a figure more than all other investing countries combined. The massive American presence in Mexico created a nationalistic and anti-yankee sentiment as well; Sidney Bell, *Righteous Conquest: Woodrow Wilson and the Evolution of the New Diplomacy* (Port Washington, NY, 1972), 54; Although Wilson had released statements to the press outlining his Latin American policy on March 11 and 18, 1913, he had yet to expand on those thoughts specifically; Harley Notter, *The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson* (Baltimore, 1937), 266-67, 270, as well as the *Mobile Register*, October 28, 1913.

[3] The concept of "formal" and "informal" empire is developed in Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, 1963); LaFeber defines formal empire (or colonialism) as a "policy which attempted to obtain both formal and political control of a given area and which especially aimed to use this area as a source of direct economic benefits." He defines informal empire (or expansion) as the effort "to find trade and investment opportunities in areas where formal political control was not desired," *viii*; Mark T. Gilderhus, *Diplomacy and Revolution: U.S. and Mexican Relations Under Wilson and Carranza* (Tuscon, AZ, 1977), 8.

[4] This missionary altruism toward other nations so drove Wilson that it led him to interfere in the affairs of other nations on a scale unprecedented in American foreign policy and gave him the idea that he comprehended the peace and well-being of those countries better than did the leaders of those countries; Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The New Freedom* (Princeton, 1956), 277-79; and Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917* (New York, 1954), 81-82.

[5] Wilson and Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan saw the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine as justification for the U.S. to interpose itself between European investors and Latin America. It also allowed them to attempt to replace European capital with that of the U.S.; Bell, *Righteous Conquest*, 47, 54, 57; Samuel F. Bemis, *The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation* (New York, 1943), 185; Mark T. Gilderhus explores Wilson's initiatives for Pan-American cooperation and partnership, concluding that these initiatives "failed in the end." See "Pan-American Initiatives: The Wilson Presidency and 'Regional Integration,' 1914-1917," *Diplomatic History* 4 (Fall 1980): 410.

[6] An excellent discussion of the idealist-materialist dichotomy can be found in Gilderhus, *Diplomacy and Revolution*, especially the bibliographic essay beginning on p. 117. According to Walter Lafeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York, 1983), 49-54, Wilson "reverted" from friendship-making and high ideals toward Latin America to what he knew best: "the virtue of order, the evil of revolution, and the benefits of North American–as opposed to foreign or European–enterprises." Emily S. Rosenberg in *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York, 1982), sees Wilson as "upholding a liberal economic order that advanced American interests in the long run," 64-94.

[7] This organization was also called the "Southern Renationalization Congress." *Mobile Register*, October 27, 1913; Leon F. Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects of the Mobile Meeting of the Southern Commercial Congress," *The Alabama Review* 6 (July 1953): 176. See also George C. Osborn, "Woodrow Wilson Visits Mobile," *Alabama Historical Quarterly* 19 (1957): 157-69. Both articles discuss the Mobile meeting including the address. However, Sensabaugh only gives a cursory examination of the international implications and Osborn is inaccurate on events of the day. For a thorough discussion of expansionist foreign policy sentiment in the postbellum south, see Tennant S. McWilliams, *The New South Faces the World: Foreign Affairs and the Southern Sense of Self, 1877-1950* (Baton Rouge, 1988), 140-47. Although Wilson drew his political philosophy from the urban northeast, Southerners viewed him as one of their own because of his roots in the South. McWilliams, 89; and Arthur S. Link, "Woodrow Wilson: American as Southerner," *Journal of Southern History* 36 (February 1970): 3-17. For a complete organizational roll of the Southern Commercial Congress in 1913 see its *Monthly Bulletin*, April 1913, copy in Woodrow Wilson

Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Wilson Papers). For a full discussion of Morgan's urgings for a canal see Joseph A. Fry, *John Tyler Morgan and the Search for Southern Autonomy* (Knoxville, 1992).

[8] *Mobile Register*, October 25 & 28, 1913. "Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the Southern Commercial Congress, Atlanta Georgia, March 1911," Washington, 1911, *v.* Cited in Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 176; Southern Commercial Congress, Press Release, October 17, 1913, copy in Wilson Papers.

[9] *Mobile Register*, September 24-26, 1913; October 7, 12, & 13, 1913. See also Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 176-77; and Osborn, "Woodrow Wilson," 157-58 as well as Rudolph Forster to Clarence J. Owens, October 8, 1913, Wilson Papers. Osborn gives Alabama Governor Emmet O'Neal credit for the initial invitation to Wilson. Neither the *Mobile Register* nor Sensabaugh mention O'Neal at all, both giving credit to Owens for persuading the President to attend. O'Neal's effort seems to have been a letter to Wilson urging his attendance sent three days before the formal committee of invitation met with the President. Emmet O'Neal to Wilson, August 4, 1913, Wilson Papers.

[10] *Mobile Register*, September 25, 1913; October 8, 1913. John Barrett was a career diplomat and commercial publicist. He served as an American minister in the Far East and Latin America for eight years before becoming Director General of the Pan-American Union for thirteen years. See Salvadore Prisco III, *John Barrett, Progressive Era Diplomat: A Study of a Commercial Expansionist, 1887-1920* (University, AL, 1973). John Barrett to Joseph F. Tumulty, October 5, 1913, Wilson Papers. The *Register* does not mention Irvine's role in preparing for the conference. David Ernest Alsobrook, "Alabama's Port City: Mobile During the Progressive Era, 1896-1917" (Ph.D diss., Auburn University, 1983), 107.

[11] There is considerable scholarship on Wilson's southern support including Dewey W. Grantham Jr., "Southern Congressional Leaders and the New Freedom 1913-1917," *The Journal of Southern History* 13 (November 1947): 439-59; Richard M. Abrams, "Woodrow Wilson and the Southern Congressmen, 1913-1916," *The Journal of Southern History* 22 (November 1956): 417-37; Arthur S. Link, "The South and the New Freedom," *American Scholar* 20 (Summer 1951): 314-24. Two dissertations also shed light on southern opinion and support for Wilson's policies. These are Robert Hoyt Block, "Southern Opinion of Woodrow Wilson's Foreign Policies" (Ph.D diss., Duke University, 1968), and Timothy Gregory McDonald, "Southern Democratic Congressmen and the First World War, August 1914-April 1917: The Public Record of their Support for or Opposition to Wilson's Policies," (Ph.D diss., University of Washington, 1962).

[12] *Mobile Register*, October 7, 8, 9, & 13, 1913. Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 178. Sensabaugh cites a letter to him from Arthur S. Link saying that he knew of no reference to a change in topic until the day of the address. Owens was a member of this commission on rural credits along with fellow Southern Commercial Congress members Senator Duncan Upshaw Fletcher and Col. Harvie Jordan; Owens to Wilson, March 24, 1913, Wilson Papers.

[13] *Mobile Register*, October 8, 21, 1913.

[14] Josephus Daniels, *The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917* (Chapel Hill, 1944), 183, cited in Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 178-79.

[15] *Mobile Register*, October 28, 1913.

[16] *Mobile Register*, September 25, 1913; Tennant S. McWilliams, "The City of Mobile, the South, and Richard V. Taylor," *The Alabama Review* 46 (July 1993): 163-79.

[17] *Mobile Register*, September 25 - October 28, 1913. Almost daily pleas appear in the paper for contributions, housing, cleaning, and decorating. Armbrecht was U.S.

Attorney in Mobile and one of Mobile's "intellectual leaders" being well read in law, literature, and history. Alsobrook, "Alabama's Port City," 101, 350.

[18] *Mobile Register*, October 27-28, 1913. The *Register* compared Wilson's welcome to that of "conquering heroes" received in ancient Rome. Sensabaugh "Some Aspects," 178-79; Osborn, "Woodrow Wilson," 165-67. Osborn's sequence of the day's events does not match with that of the *Register* or Sensabaugh. The Southern Commercial Congress rented Wilson's rail car from the Pullman company for fifty dollars a day plus food costs. It had two private rooms, brass beds, a sitting room, and could sleep ten. D. E. Kinsey to Owens, October 10, 1913, Wilson Papers. Fletcher not only helped organize the Congress in 1908 but also served as its president from 1911 to 1918. Wayne Flynt, *Duncan Upshaw Fletcher: Dixie's Reluctant Progressive* (Tallahassee, 1971), 77.

[19] "Address of Welcome: Delivered Before the Southern Commercial Congress, Mobile, Alabama, October 27, 1913," Emmet O'Neal Papers, Articles and Speeches, 1913, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL; McWilliams, *The New South Faces the World*, 9. See also Fry, *John Tyler Morgan*, 39, 95-96, 198-99, 202, 206-47, 261.

[20] Ibid; *Mobile Register*, October 28, 1913.

[21] The full text of this address is in Woodrow Wilson, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (Princeton, 1973), 28: 448-50. Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 180.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] *Mobile Register*, October 28, 1913. Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 182; Clarence J. Owens to Rudolph Forster, October 7, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Alsobrook, "Alabama's Port City," 109.

[26] *Mobile Register*, October 28-29, 1913; Editor-in-chief of the *Register*, Craighead was an advocate for many progressive reforms in Mobile and wrote the editorials for the paper. For an exploration of his career and influence at the paper see McWilliams, *The New South Faces the World*, 47-67, as well as Alsobrook, "Alabama's Port City." Alsobrook calls Craighead "one of the most representative boosters" of Mobile between 1896 and 1917. Erwin Craighead to Tumulty, October 29, 1913, Wilson Papers. *Atlanta Constitution*, October 29, 1913, quoted in Osborn, "Woodrow Wilson,"167; *Birmingham Age-Herald*, November 1, 1913; and *New York Times*, October 28, 1913, quoted in Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 183.

[27] *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), October 28, 1913, quoted in Osborn, "Woodrow Wilson," 167; *Free Press* (Detroit), October 28, 1913, quoted in Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 183; Richard V. Taylor was the Chairman of the Entertainment Committee for the Mobile Chamber of Commerce. In his autobiography he speaks fondly of the president's visit. Taylor recorded memories of great interest to today's preservationist movement in Mobile: memories of riding in the president's car and hearing Wilson urge him not to let "any one destroy the iron verandas so freely in evidence and which speak eloquently of its ancient inhabitants." Richard V. Taylor, "A Voice From Alabama: An Autobiography Which Includes a Record of a Journey from a Cooper's Bench to a Seat on the Interstate Commerce Commission," unpublished manuscript in possession of Tennant S. McWilliams, Birmingham, AL, 102-3; *Mobile Register*, October 28, 1913. Speaking later that night before the Southern Commercial Congress, Underwood said "The Panama Canal is a bag of gold at your feet.... But you must pick it up or someone else will. This country needs ships: Mobile may become one of the world's greatest ports if she will grasp her opportunity." Ibid. The best study of Underwood's career is Evans C. Johnson, *Oscar W. Underwood: A Political Biography* (Baton Rouge, 1980).

[28] *Mobile Register*, October 29, 1913; Barrett to Rudolph Forster, November 11, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers; Policarpo Bonilla, *Wilson Doctrine: How the Speech of President Wilson at Mobile, Alabama, Has Been Interpreted by the Latin American Countries*, (New York, March 1914), 5-7.

[29] *New York Times*, October 28, 1913. This comparison contains much irony. While in law school, Wilson expressed admiration for the statesman Gladstone. Harley Notter, *The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson* (Baltimore, 1937), 29.

[30] *Times* (London), November 14, 1913.

[31] Bailey, *A Diplomatic History*, 552. The Gulf of Fonseca is located on the Pacific Ocean side of Nicaragua and is shared with El Salvador and Honduras.

[32] Arthur P. Whitaker, "From Dollar Diplomacy to the Good Neighbor Policy," *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 4 (Spring 1951): 15-16; Dana Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921* (Princeton, 1964). Munro was a student in Latin America in 1914. Letter to Sensabaugh from Arthur Link, January 14, 1953, quoted in Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 184-185; Bemis, *Latin American Policy*, 350. See also Lester Langley, *The United States and the Caribbean in the Twentieth Century* (Athens, 1982), 63.

[33] Whitaker, "From Dollar Diplomacy," 15-16; Sensabaugh, "Some Aspects," 185; Bailey, *A Diplomatic History*, 553; Bemis, *Latin American Policy*, 187, 534; Munro, *Intervention*, 273. Robert N. Seidel says the only difference in Wilson's brand of "dollar diplomacy" and Taft's was that Wilson substituted "platitudes of respect for sovereignty for the sometimes blatant rhetoric" of the preceding administration but still contained the same "notions of stewardship and hegemony." Robert N. Seidel, "Progressive Pan Americanism: Development and United States Policy Toward South America, 1906-1931" (Ph.D diss., Cornell University, 1973), 53, 62.

[34] Bonilla, "Wilson Doctrine," 13; Wilfrid Henry Callcott, *The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1870-1920* (New York, 1966), 322-23.

[35] Bell, *Righteous Conquest*, 47, 54.

[36] Letter to the author, February 3, 1993.

[37] William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan* (New York, 1971), 364.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Wilson, *Papers* 28: 432.

[40] Bailey, *A Diplomatic History*, 554-56; J. Fred Rippy, *British Investments in Latin America, 1822-1949* (Hamden, CT, 1966), 66, 67, 95. Rippy said the 1910 amount of British investment in Mexico was approximately $492,000,000. Bailey said the U.S. had invested roughly one billion dollars in Mexico.

[41] *Mobile Register*, November 9, 1913.

[42] Munro, *Intervention*, 272; Wilson, *Papers* 28: 488-90. Augustus Octavius Bacon (D-GA), chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, gave an interview to the *New York Herald* on November 2, 1913, where he attempted, as he told Wilson later, to get Wilson's message from the Mobile address across to the European public.

[43] Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism During World War I* (Wilmington, DE, 1991), 7-8; See also Thomas Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, 1980); and Robert F.

Freeman, *The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1932* (Chicago, 1972), 31-32.

[44] Harold Stearns, *Liberalism in America: Its Origins, Its Temporary Collapse, Its Future* (New York, 1919), 36-37, 53, quoted in Ambrosius, *Wilsonian Statecraft*, 2. As a reporter for the *New York Press*, Stearns traveled to England and France in the summer of 1914 where he witnessed the outbreak of World War I. As one of the "alienated intellectuals" or "lost generation" writers, he would write of his "hatred of war, the 'statesmen' that encourage or compromise with it, the people who profit from it, and the fools who participate in it." This hatred was directed at Wilson in a chapter of *Liberalism in America*, his first book. See Harold Stearns, *Confessions of a Harvard Man*, ed. Hugh Ford (Santa Barbara, 1984), 413-14.

[45] Grantham, "Southern Congressional Leaders and the New Freedom, 1913-1917," 441, 458-59.

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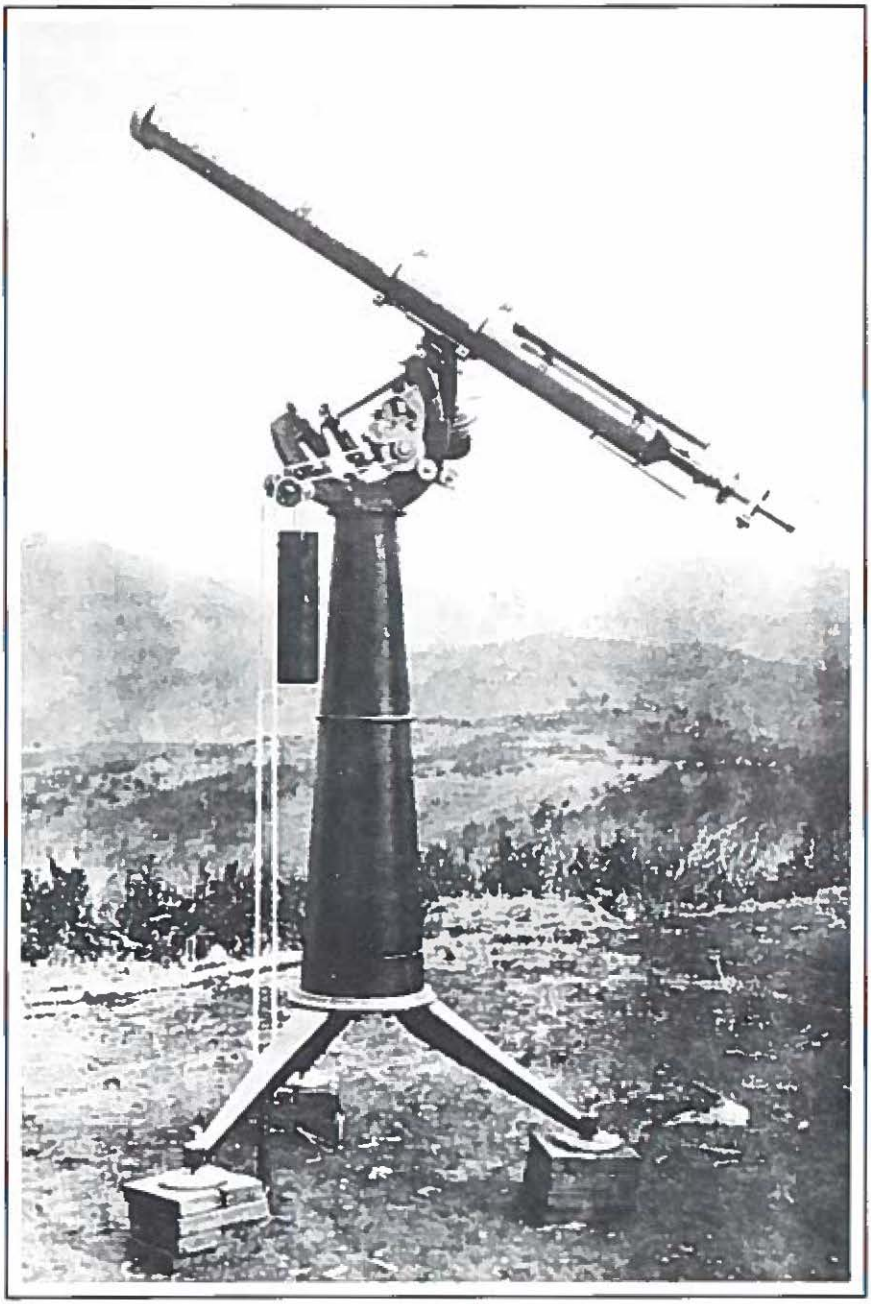
Lyric Theater. Eric Overbey photo, USA Archives.



Clark five-inch telescope. United States Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C.

Cedar Key, Florida and the Transit of Venus; The 1882 Site Observations

Vincent Ponko, Jr.

The Transit of Venus Commission was authorized by Congress in the early 1870s to determine the distance of Earth from the Sun. It was intended that this measurement should be calculated from data obtained by studying the passage of Venus across the face of the Sun in 1874 and 1882. Congress appropriated substantial funds for the commission's work, its endeavors were intense and wide-spread both demographically and geographically, and its formation and actions received attention from the news media of the period.

Today, however, its work is virtually forgotten. The data it gathered and the documents telling of its endeavors are scattered, incomplete, misplaced, or lost; a comprehensive reconstruction of its history and conclusions would demand the equivalent of a research and writing miracle. The aim of this article is more modest: to focus upon some of its 1882 activities at Cedar Key, Florida, for which some records are still extant, in the hope that it will shed light on one aspect of the commission's story and at the same time fill a gap in the history of Cedar Key.

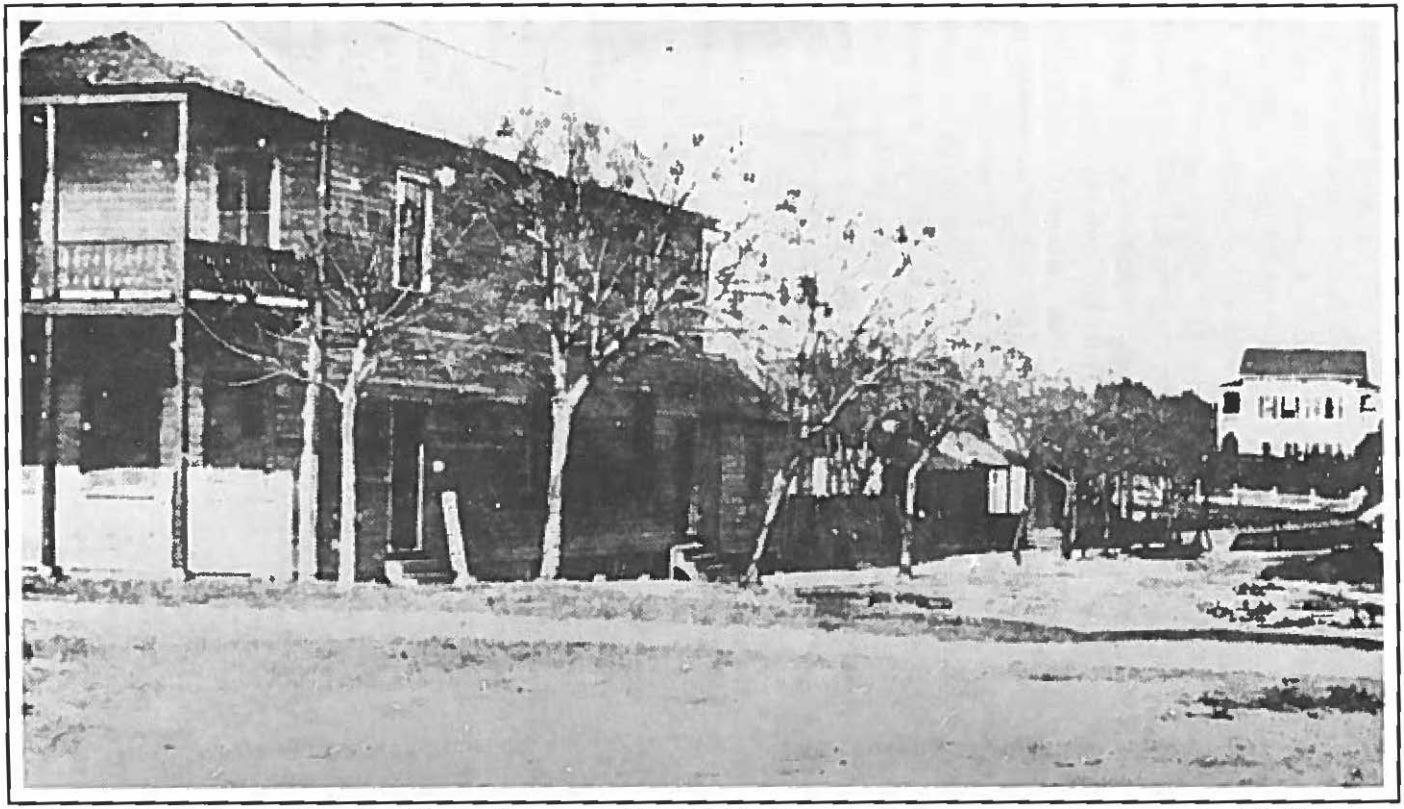
In the early 1880s, Cedar Key had the distinction of being the only port south of Pensacola with railroad access to the interior. A town on the eastern end of Way Key, one of a group of Gulf Coast isles known as Cedar Keys, the port was situated fifty-eight miles southwest of present-day Gainesville. Cedar Key owed its importance to the fact that Senator David Levy Yulee had used his considerable influence to have a railroad constructed from Fernandina (near Jacksonville) to Cedar Key, facilitating the transportation of goods produced in the area. Cedar Key and the mainland were also connected by a shell road, completed in 1882, which drained dry at half tide. Tampa, some 130 miles to the south of Cedar Key, could not compete with this offshore port in terms of access to interior markets until it became the terminus of a railroad in 1884.[1]

As the town developed into an important commercial center, Cedar Key became an object of the federal government's attention. The Coast and Geodetic Survey charted its waters and set its geographical position, as well as other surrounding land features, by triangulation, astronomical observations, and other means. In 1882 its

prestige grew when the Transit of Venus Commission selected it as one of four sites in the United States in which carefully selected groups of qualified observers would establish astronomical stations from which the transit or crossing of Venus in front of the Sun on December 6, 1882, could be observed and desired data gathered. This data, combined with that obtained from the other three sources in the United States and four others located abroad, plus evidence gained in the transit of 1874, would enable astronomers to precisely measure the distance between Earth and the Sun. The other observing sites in the United States were Cerro Roblero, New Mexico, San Antonio, Texas, and Washington, D.C. Stations outside the United States were located at Auckland, New Zealand, Santa Cruz, Patagonia (South America), Santiago de Chile, Chile, and Wellington, Cape Colony, (South Africa). Private observatories and observers were also encouraged to participate in the venture.[2]

The determination, as exactly as possible, of the distance from Earth to the Sun held great interest for astronomers even before the Christian era. One approach used, especially after the advent of the telescope, was to first calculate the solar parallax, defined as the angle at the Sun subtended by any known distance on the surface of Earth. Knowing the solar parallax, and translating the known distance on Earth into a base line equivalent to Earth's radius, one could use trigonometrical methods to arrive at the distance between Earth and the Sun.[3] Such a method, however, presupposes the availability of measurements to determine the parameters of the definition to be solved. Radial distance must be interpolated from data obtained at locations vertically as far apart as possible. Different positional viewing times of Venus crossing the face of the Sun due to the rotation of Earth on its axis has to be synchronized by careful attention to the placement of observing stations to allow a productive reduction of the evidence from these sites for computation. For optimum observational results places likely to be cloud-free on the day of the transit have to be selected. The location to be used for an astronomical station must be suitable for the erection of equipment, and access to the place for personnel and equipment must be possible.

Before 1882 it was concluded that stations in the southern part of the United States on latitudes not excessively divergent and spread also across the breadth of the country, combined with a similar arrangement in the southern hemisphere, would meet these specifications. The cost of establishing astronomical stations played a



Typical late nineteenth-century Cedar Key scene. The Florida Town Improvement Co. office is on the left. Cedar Key Historical Society.

big role in this decision; in 1874 all such stations were outside the United States and it was considered prudent not to incur the expense again that this had entailed. Cedar Key and its surrounding area had been surveyed already and it was therefore known to the federal government; it was approximately on the latitude line of the other stations; the risk of cloud cover in December seemed minimal in contrast to Pittsburgh, for example; and it offered transportation advantages with the accompanying hope that ground conditions would allow the proper operation of the needed astronomical instruments. Thus it was picked as the location for the 1882 observations.

Even before Cedar Key was selected as part of the 1882 plans of the Transit of Venus Commission, the prospect of observing the transit of Venus aroused intense interest among astronomers of at least the Western world, including those at the United States Naval Observatory. Although predictable, the phenomenon did not occur frequently and the opportunity to observe the 1882 event could not be missed. The orbit of Venus around the Sun is not on the same plane as that of Earth, but is inclined by some 3.4 degrees; a visible transit, therefore, can take place only when both Earth and Venus arrive simultaneously at the line of intersection of their planes. Moreover, Venus orbits the Sun faster than Earth, 224 days to Earth's 365 days. This factor, combined with other peculiarities of each planet, as well as the orbit of the solar system itself, limits the intersection of the orbit planes of Venus and Earth to periods separated by more than one hundred years in sets of two transits eight years apart. A transit had occurred in 1874 and the second occurrence of the set was expected in 1882. The next transits were predicted to occur in 2004 and 2012. Because of this long interval between passages of Venus across the Sun's face, observing the transit of Venus in 1874 and 1882 seemed to many astronomers of the period the last chance to experience the event not only for themselves but for their progeny.[5] Efforts to launch American observation parties began in 1869 when astronomers at the Naval Observatory urged that it was in the national interest of the United States to join the cooperative international program. Simon Newcomb, a well-known astronomer who was associated with the Naval Observatory, introduced the topic with a paper in the *American Journal of Science* and at the 1870 spring meeting of the National Academy of Sciences. His colleagues approved of Newcomb's proposal and a resolution passed the Academy calling for the appointment of a committee to investigate what preparations would be necessary for United States'

scientists to observe the transit in 1874 and 1882. The committee received instructions to report on its findings at the next meeting.[6]

The work of this committee was preempted when Congress approved the Naval Appropriation Bill of March 3, 1871. It contained two thousand dollars for the preparation of instruments which would be needed to observe the transit in 1874, with the proviso that the money would be handled by a commission to be headed by the superintendent of the Naval Observatory. The other members of the commission were designated as the president of the National Academy of Sciences, the superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and two professors of mathematics of the navy attached to the Naval Observatory. Professor Newcomb acted as secretary of the commission.

Although this commission set policy and exercised overall supervision of the venture, the astronomers attached to the Naval Observatory served as its executors and advisors. They were asked to investigate the condition of available instruments as well as the need to purchase new ones and to carry out the decisions of the commission in general. Because there were too few astronomers to staff full-time all the desired observing stations, the participation and cooperation of other suitable persons, such as selected members of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, had to be obtained. Congress responded also to the needs of the commission by appropriating additional sums of money for equipment and the transportation of observers and material to the observing sites.[7] To be successful the project had to be an integrated operation among government agencies as well as private astronomers and observatories. However, the superintendent of the Naval Observatory and his superior, the secretary of the Navy, remained in overall control.

One early decision of immense importance made by the commission involved the use of photography to insure accurate results. Photography helped to compensate for the human problem of uncertain eyesight, slow reaction in noting important positions as they occurred, and other variables including the impact of stress upon an observer due to the long periods needed to complete observation. Photographing the transit of Venus had an advantage over visual observation, as the course of the planet would not be distorted by human error. During the observations of the eighteenth century, a problem known as the "black drop" marred the visual results. This was a condition where Venus and the Sun appeared to remain connected by a ligament or thread for some time as the planet passed

the rim of the Sun on its inward passage across the face of the fiery disc and again as it crossed the other rim on its departure.

Using photography to record the transit of Venus, however, required that appropriate information about its value be available to prospective observers and that instruction in the manipulation of the photographic instruments be offered to each observer expected to handle them. The problem stemmed from the fact that the Sun was an irregular body having inconsistent energy sparks and lacking a sharply defined outline.

It was hoped that photography would reduce this problem to acceptable proportions by presenting a complete and accurately centered picture of the Sun to the astronomer, in serial sets if desired, with a sharp and clear image of the planet facilitating accurate measurement. To reach this point, however, the astronomer had to control the access of the Sun's rays to the photographic apparatus, the focal length of the instrument in question, the size and centering of the image on the photographic plate, the time and recording of exposures, and the proper development of the photograph itself. The photographic plates had to be coated at the optimum time by a suitable and consistent emulsion correctly applied to avoid distorted or blank pictures. Moreover, the astronomer had to be aware of changes in the atmosphere and make adjustments to his instruments accordingly. The use of photography would help greatly in the observation of celestial events like the transit of Venus, but only if attention was paid to the strict demands and details of its application.[9]

For the observations of 1874 the attempt was made to avoid photographic failure by seeking the assistance of prominent astronomical photographers of the day, and helpful advice was gained through such contacts. One such person, Dr. Henry Draper of New York, a pioneering expert in the field with his own observatory on his family's estate at Hastings-on-Hudson, traveled to Washington at his own expense to share his knowledge and experience with the observing parties. His advice, as well as the contributions of others, resulted in the improvement of an original celestial photographic apparatus which had been conceived by Simon Newcomb and his fellow astronomers from the Naval Observatory. The new piece of equipment allowed an observing crew to take a sequence of clear photographs without spending a long time learning how to operate it. This element of simplicity was beneficial, as it allowed observers time to train with other equipment and become familiar with the very

important observations needed to determine the longitude and latitude of each observation site, factors of major importance for the calculations which would be made from the photographic data. The matter of locating the observation instruments at a spot of known longitude and latitude was crucial according to the instructions written for the guidance of the observing parties.

To emphasize and supplement the instructions, an opportunity was given to the observing parties to acquire some experience in the handling of the astronomical instruments they would use, including the photographic apparatus. Dr. Draper supervised this "hands-on" work for a period of three to four weeks. By the end of this time every observing party knew what was expected of them when they reached their astronomical stations.[10]

Each expedition received a transit instrument, a clock, two chronometers–one for mean time and one for sidereal time–and a chronograph. In addition, each party had the use of a five-inch equatorial telescope for longitude and time observations; the instrument was used for "observing contacts and occulations of stars by the moon."[11] The all-important photographic device consisted of a tube about forty feet long into which the Sun's rays were directed at one end by an object known as a heliostat. The heliostat turned by clockwork on a fixed axis so that the rays of the Sun would pass in a nearly constant direction during the duration of the transit. Within the tube lenses focused the image of the Sun onto a photographic plate held by a plate-holder located at the opposite end. Collectively, the parts of the photographic apparatus were known as a photoheliograph.[12]

The plate-holder was attached to an axis on which it could turn, with a spirit-level on top for horizontal veracity and a fine silver plumb line to maintain the vertical axis. In front of the plate-holder, a reticle, or network of very fine horizontal and vertical lines served as reference points for the mathematical calculations that were to be made later. The photoheliograph rested on a hollow pier so that the plumb line could reach the basin of water in which it was supposed to hang. Detailed directions were written relative to the setting of the pier in the ground and it was intended that a house should be erected to enclose and protect the plate, the plate-holder, and collateral materials.[13] The time each photograph was taken was recorded both automatically and manually, and procedures were devised to adjust the instruments as needed. The equipment appeared to be entirely appropriate for the job it was to do.

The personnel of the Cedar Key expedition consisted of Professor J. R. Eastman, U.S.N., of the Naval Observatory as chief of the party, Lieutenant J. A. Norris, U.S.N., assistant astronomer, Mr. George Prince, a photographer from the Supervising Architects' Office, U. S. Treasury Department, and Mr. George F. Maxwell of Washington, D.C., as assistant photographer. As preparation, the group spent some days together in Washington, D.C. checking the constants of the instruments they were to use, receiving instructions in the proper use and placement of those instruments, and practicing the role they expected to play, individually and collectively, to make the December 6 observations successful. As in 1874, simulation was available to hone their skills. Only the environmental and climatic conditions facing them at their assigned site could not be experienced beforehand.

By October 30 the party had finished its training and the group's attention turned to the suitable packing of the items entrusted to its care for delivery to Cedar Key. That afternoon the packed boxes were deposited with the Adams Express Company in Washington, D.C. for shipment to Florida. The next day the group departed for Cedar Key. The party with its equipment and supplies reached its destination on November 4 without incident.[14]

Once they were on site with the items they needed to carry out their task, the Venus observers began almost immediately to establish their astronomical station. They were aided by the town's officials, businessmen, and others, interested in the success of the project. A reputation for lawlessness blemished the name of Cedar Key and accommodations for visitors were considered poor, but the transit party seemed not to suffer from these factors.

After a reconnaissance of the area it became clear that the sandy soil would not provide the firm foundation needed for their instruments. Some kind of a base plate had to be Sunk into the ground upon which the piers could be mounted. The 1882 instructions called for pier foundations three or four feet below the surface of the ground–or a least below frost level–with a vacant space one or two feet around each pier into which concrete could be poured to form a concrete casing. The sandy soil of the area presented a problem with regard to the maintenance of this vacant space long enough for the pouring of concrete. Sand also posed a difficulty for the observation group because it could damage their instruments. To avoid this potential catastrophe a temporary storehouse was built for the equipment and supplies. Work on the storehouse began on the

morning of November 6. Then attention turned to the selection of a site for the placement of the instruments and the construction for the buildings needed to house them.

After intricate calculations, the observers selected a small park recently planted with young orange trees. It was located between the Suwanee Hotel and the Atlantic, Gulf and West Indies Transit Company passenger depot. L. J. Lutterloh, agent of the Florida Town Improvement Company which owned the land, cooperated by allowing the transit party to use the site. Later it became a town park.

One of the advantages of the site for the astronomical station at Cedar Key was the fact that the longitude and latitude of the spot were fairly well known even without astronomical observations. In 1852 a topographical party from the Coast and Geodetic Survey had established an accurate base line from which to fix sandy locations in the area. This base line was confirmed in 1858. In 1874 Cedar Key was not involved in the Transit of Venus observation but a Coast and Geodetic expedition under the leadership of Assistant Edwin Smith had used the base line to help it fix the site by astronomical observations. Using Smith's notes, the transit of Venus party felt that it could determine the longitude and latitude of the site it had selected even without making astronomical observations for this purpose.[15]

Having obtained an acceptable site for its astronomical station, and with the question of longitude and latitude settled, the Cedar Key transit crew turned to the task of installing its instruments. Because of the sandy soil of Way Key, as well as the cumbersome nature of the work, placing the piers in proper position and anchoring them proved difficult. The group experienced a bit of luck in this respect by finding two old iron plates, forty-one inches long, twenty-four inches wide, and half an inch thick, that served as bases for two of the iron piers. Concrete was made from shell mound material found north of the main business street–a street which occupied a narrow ridge running nearly east and west not more than eight feet above high tide. After the piers were placed on the iron plates in their respective holes, careful handling of the surrounding sandy soil allowed the vacant space around the piers to be filled with concrete which, in time, hardened, holding the piers in proper alignment. Sand was placed in each pier hole to at least ground level.

A pier made of brick and cement was constructed for the transit instrument. Its placement and the depth of its base in the ground met the specifications of the 1882 instructions. For a capstone, a marble

slab, twenty-four by twenty-eight inches in size was found in Jacksonville, 155 miles away, and transported to Cedar Key.

Once the piers were firmly in place, the instruments were mounted, aligned according to instructions, the necessary buildings were completed, and some tests were conducted preparatory to the actual observations. By the evening of November 13, observations were being made with the transit instrument in order to check, or "rate" the chronometers for accuracy, and the position of the photoheliograph along the meridian was confirmed. The time tests were done by observing stars taken from the *American Ephermeris and Nautical Almanac* in right ascension, or passage, across the meridian, a task which required excellent visual as well as mathematical skills.

With the chronometers operating correctly and the photoheliograph positioned, steps were taken to make sure that the driving clock of the heliostat functioned properly, that the heliostat itself worked well, and that the photoheliograph was properly positioned. For example, it had to provide an image on the photographic plate which would be vertical, centered, sharp, and clear. This test required that the lens be correctly focused, that the plate in the holder be capable of adjustment as needed, that the reticule and hanging vertical thread be in proper positions, that the passage of the Sun's image be unaffected by reflections or shadows, and that the Sun's plates be prepared properly.

In preparing the glass plate negatives, the observers ran into problems because of the area's humidity. The Cedar Key operation was scheduled to use a version of the new dry-plate photographic process.[16] The plates were still coated by the operator, but were then dried before use. However, it was too humid to dry the plates in the standard "drying box." To solve the problem, a stove was installed in the photographic house and the temperature raised to 75° F. The plates were then arranged around the stove and the heat from the stove dried them as needed. Tests of plates picked at random on December 3 and December 4 produced excellent results. In the end 150 dry plates were packed in boxes for use on December 6, the day of the transit. Other plates were saved for wet-plate use should the plates prepared by the new procedures fail at the last minute.

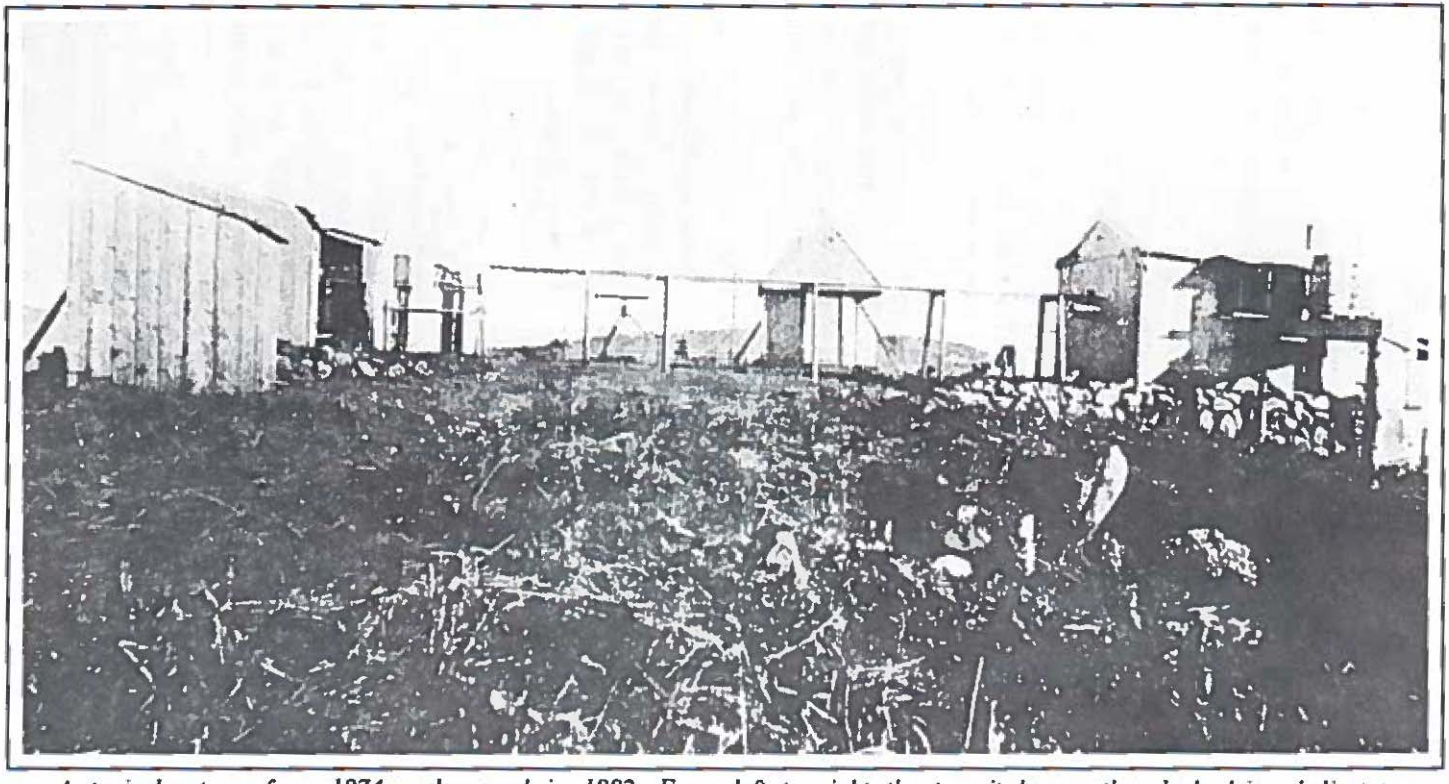
While working on the plates, the observers learned that a well could be dug eleven feet below ground to fill the container in which the plumb bob would hang. The well water was also used to develop

the photographic plates. Before this discovery they had to bring water in buckets from the Suwanee Hotel.

With all the instruments positioned correctly under proper cover, the crew awaited with confidence the actual transit of Venus on December 6. On that day it was imperative that one of the group make sure that satisfactory photographs were being made in a regular and sequential order as Venus traveled across the face of the Sun and that the time each photograph was taken be recorded. Professor Eastman, as chief of the party, assumed responsibility for monitoring the process. The chronograph, situated near the heliostat, recorded the sidereal time of each photograph. Lieutenant Norris supervised the operations of this device. Norris also watched the heliostat to see that it functioned properly and reported to Professor Eastman in the photographic house on weather conditions which might affect the photographic exposures. Mr. Prince was to develop a sample plate to make sure that the photographs were satisfactory. He also would prepare and develop any wet plates that were used. Mr. Maxwell's job was to take the prepared plates from the storage box, place them in the plate holder, call out the number of the plate, and after exposure put each plate in proper order in another box.

On the eve of the actual transit day, everything seemed to be in good order. The only question was the weather. When dawn broke on December 6, it looked like the day would be sunny, but as the morning progressed it became apparent that thin clouds and haze would obscure the Sun intermittently; the day would not remain perfectly sunny during the whole transit time. The haze, however, did not interfere materially with the photographic work. The damp and wet weather offered a greater impediment to the operation by interfering with the arrangements to record the time when each photograph was taken. This arrangement included a closed electric circuit linking the chronograph, the sidereal chronometer, and the camera apparatus in the photographic house. On the day of the actual transit the system malfunctioned just enough to cause a loss in the recording of the time for some of the photographs. Four dry plates were lost also when they failed to show an image after being developed and two were broken when being varnished for shipment. A flood of ink leaking out of the chronograph's recording pen caused the loss of a time record for some photographs.

In spite of these problems, 156 dry- and 30 wet-plates were processed, packed, and shipped to Washington, D.C. Those photographs without a chronographic time did have an exposure time



A typical set up from 1874, also used in 1882. From left to right the transit house, the clock drive, heliostat, measuring rod, photographic house and store house. In the background are a small telescope and the shelter for the five-inch equitorial telescope. U.S. Naval Observatory.

indicated by the mean time chronometer and, thus, the timing of all the plates had been recorded in some fashion. The photoheliograph part of the Cedar Key operation had a relatively happy ending. The technique used could serve as a model in astronomy.

One aspect of the Cedar Key observations which took a somewhat unusual turn involved the use of the equatorial telescope for visual recording of the contacts of Venus with the Sun. Great pains were taken to compile a photographic record to avoid human error as much as possible. This approach turned out to be somewhat ironic. Even though the day could not be classified as perfectly clear, Professor Eastman used the telescope to view the transit and reported that he experienced little or no difficulty in marking the position of Venus in front of the Sun at three of the four contact points considered crucial for a successful sighting. As Venus moved towards the Sun, clouds prevented Eastman from seeing its initial contact with the Sun's rim. He was, however, able to see Venus in front of the Sun as the planet moved away from the inner side of the Sun's rim–and he later maintained that he recorded accurately the time when Venus broke contact with the inner rim of the Sun. The same situation prevailed as Venus approached the other rim of the Sun's disc and when it broke contact as it passed this rim. Eastman recorded these points by using a key attached to an electric wire connected to the sidereal chronometer and the chronograph. He also yelled "mark" so Lieutenant Norris could record the time on the mean time chronometer. In his report, which was written in third person, Eastman resorted to the use of first person when he noted:

> I am thoroughly convinced that, with an observer with fair eyesight, and with average good seeing, a good telescope and properly arranged shade glasses, the black drop, ligament, clinging of limbs, etc, are phenomena that never should be seen in transits of Venus and Mercury.[17]

He went on to state that he thought that his timing of the contacts could not be in error by more than one second. The "black drop" phenomenon, noted earlier, had called into question the results of the eighteenth-century observations, and even compromised to some extent the work of 1874 despite the use of photography. In 1882, the "black drop" was expected to be part of any visual observations, and Eastman's assertion that it was, in essence, a myth perpetuated by inept observers was revolutionary in astronomical circles and constituted an original contribution to the field.

The Cedar Key group ended its work by shipping the odd-numbered photographic plates to Washington on December 13 and the even-numbered on December 14. Prince and Maxwell left for Washington on December 19 after packing the photographic devices and supplies. By December 21 the astronomical instruments were ready for shipment, and after selling the housing units at auction, the rest of the group also left for the capital.

When the transit observers left Cedar Key, the instrument piers remained in position protected by a picket fence with the permission of the park's custodians. The party thanked the mayor, other prominent officials, and the citizens of the town, for the courtesies which had helped to make possible what all considered to have been a worthwhile observation.

The opportunity to be a generous and gracious host to the observers of the Transit of Venus Commission came at a time when the glory of Cedar Key as the premier commercial port on the west coast of central Florida had begun to fade. When Tampa got its railroad in 1884, Cedar Key's day was done.

Ironically, about the same time, scientific and public interest in the transit of Venus also began to fade. Persons previously affiliated with the commission and keen supporters drifted to other projects. In the late 1860s and early 1870s when interest in observing the 1874 and 1882 passages of Venus was intense, the publication of a multi-volume comprehensive report as the culmination of the commission's work seemed inevitable. In 1882 the Naval Observatory even solicited amateur astronomers as observers with the hope that a national surge would develop to support a compendium.[18] This support never materialized, and as interest in the transit of Venus waned, the original publication objectives were abandoned. Today a relatively short general account exists along with some printed correspondence and instructional manuals, but a comprehensive narrative, or the narratives of every expedition, have never been published for general distribution. Except in a few instances, accounts which were supposed to have been written by the chief of each party have either been lost, misplaced, or were never prepared in the first place. Documents filed in various locations sometimes lack identification, are fragmentary, and are difficult to read because of their age and the fact that they are handwritten. Because of these problems, it is impossible to reconstruct what happended at some astronomical stations, very difficult to write about the events at other sites–such as Cedar Key–and hard to imagine that a comprehensive, overall report could now be produced.

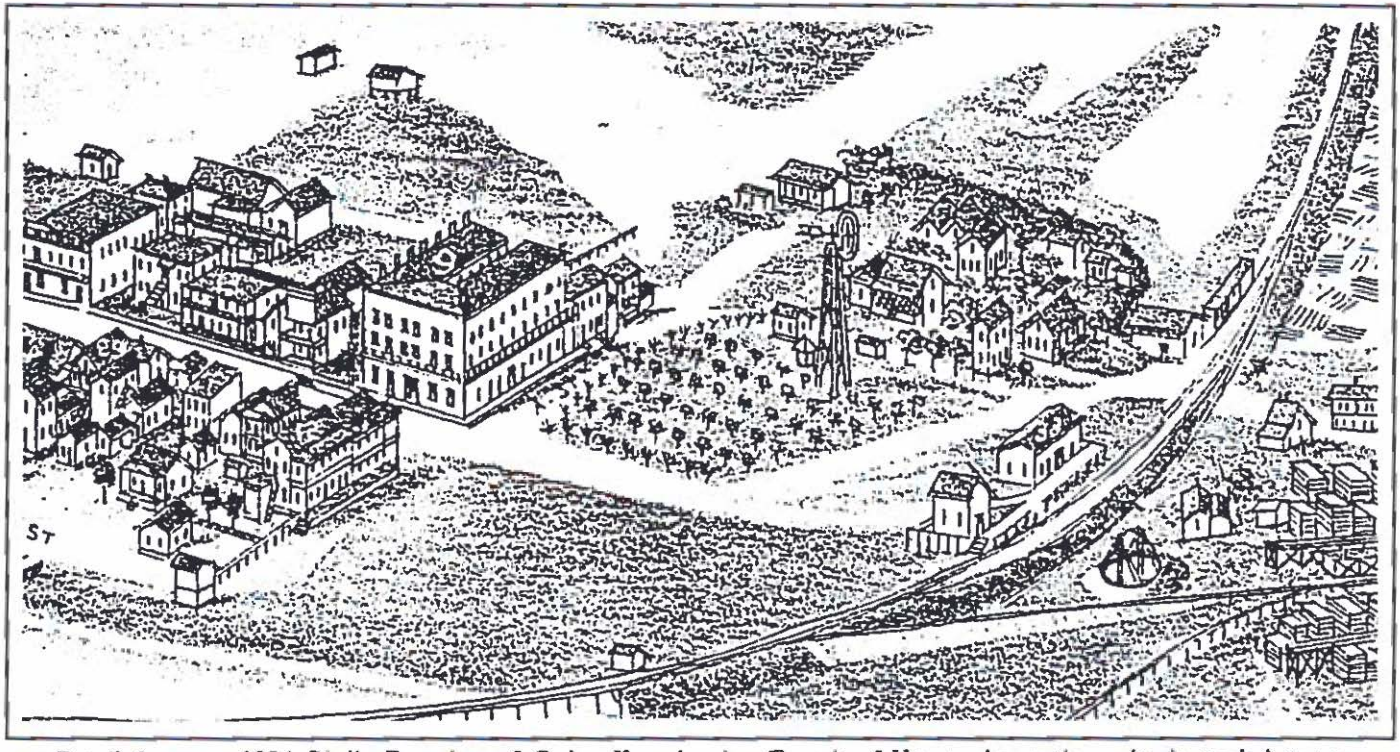
Considered only from the scientific side, a similar situation prevails. As a result of the complexies of the mathematical calculations, the enormous amount of data gathered in 1882, and the lack of money to hire persons to do the necessary computations, no formal report was ever issued. As a result of the calculations that were made, including work of his own, one astronomer at the Naval Observatory, Professor William Harkness, did inform the superintendent in 1889 that he judged the distance of Earth from the Sun at 92,455,000 miles with an error probability of some 123,400 miles.[19] Today, the poor condition of the records makes it virtually impossible to examine the data which has survived. Finally, none of the photographic plates has been found, either from 1874 or 1882. There is a plethora of figures available for examination, but the lack of precise identification of their source renders them of questionable value. The accuracy of the process which yielded even the figures Harkness gave can never be known.

The Transit of Venus Commission, with the logistical and supervisory aid of the navy succeeded in attracting the help of experts in the field of celestial photography, and it instructed, organized, and transported observers to various sites. It also energized private observatories and astronomers to gather data about the Venus transits. Nevertheless, the commission lacked the foresight to make sure that enough trained personnel were employed to handle the material received from these sources, and to prepare acceptable presentations of the data.

The most important scientific benefit that came from the Cedar Key operation was proof from Professor Eastman and his colleagues that celestial data of interest and importance could be obtained from instruments used nearly at sea level; that observatories need not be situated at the highest possible elevation to be effective as some astronomers claimed.

In addition, the transit observations at Cedar Key, along with those at the other stations, stimulated public interest and involvement in astronomy. Attempts to find expressions of popular interest in the transit and the work of the observers from the residents of Cedar Key and adjacent areas, other than the references in Eastman's report have, unfortunately, been futile.

However, on December 7, 1882, the *Florida Daily Times* printed a factual account provided by Professor Eastman as well as reactions to the transit by the citizens of Jacksonville. The newspaper suggested in a previous edition that people desiring to watch the transit should



Detail from an 1884 Bird's Eye view of Cedar Key showing Transit of Venus observations site in park between the Swannee Hotel and the Florida Railroad terminal. Bureau of Survey and Mapping, Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

do so through smoked glass, but it had forgotten to mention that the smoked side of the glass should be the outward side. The result of "the neglect was something less than a thousand noses on Bay Street in the afternoon with soot on the ends thereof" as well as a host of watery eyes. As was the case in other localities, students and adult observers viewed the event through a telescope mounted by a local astronomer. The actual transits of Venus were popular events in Jacksonville and elsewhere.[20]

In all likelihood the transits of Venus in 2004 and 2012 will not be approached by professional astronomers with the same intensity as those of bygone years, but great interest might be found among amatuer astronomers and people who enjoy watching celestial events. The fact is that advances in astronomy have provided other methods to measure the distance from Earth to the Sun. [21] This shift, however, should not be allowed to provide an excuse to ignore the lessons of the 1874 and 1882 transit of Venus observations, particularly the need to have appropriate resources at the finish line as well as the start and during the course of the race.

Notes

[1]This decription of Cedar Key during the early 1880s is contained in "Transit of Venus 1882 Report of Observations at Cedar Keys Florida by J.R. Eastman Prof. Math. U.S.M. Chief of Party," in Records of Astronomical Observations Made Chiefly in and Near Washington, January, 1845 to June, 1907. Records of the Naval Observatory, RG 78, Entry 18, Box 36, 1-2, National Archives. For another contemporary depiction, which supports the above account, see John Richards, comp., *The South Publishing Company's Florida State Gazetteer and Business Directory*, (New York, 1886), 1:101-2. Government documents of the period call the town Cedar Keys; in other material, past and recent, the designation Cedar Key is used.

[2]"Transit of Venus 1882 Report of Observations at Cedar Keys Florida," 1-2, 4-6; W.D. Horrigan, Librarian, "Memorandum for the Superintendent Concerning the Origin and Operations of the U.S. Transit of Venus Commission, May 27, 1992," 13-15, U.S. Naval Observatory Library, Washington, D.C.

[3]For an account of how this problem appeared to astronomers before 1874 and the procedures in use in 1874 to attempt a computation of the distance of Earth from the Sun, see George Forbes, *The Transit of Venus* (New York, 1874), 1-45. Another noteworthy reference work is Richard A. Proctor, *Transits of Venus. A Popular Account of Past and Coming Transits From the First Observed by Horrocks A.D. 1639 to the Transit of A.D. 2012* (New York, 1975), 1-238.

[4]For a brief explanation of the "tracking steps" to arrive at a distance figure using the orbital relationship of Venus, Earth, and the Sun, see Sir Harold Spencer Jones, *General Astronomy* (London, 1961), 150-52.

[5]Forbes, *The Transit of Venus*, 5; Rear Admiral B.F. Sands, Superintendent, to the Honorable George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, United States Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C., March 5, 1872, in *Papers Relating to The Transit of*

Venus in December 1874, prepared under the direction of the commission authorized by Congress and published by authority of the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, Part I (Washington, D.C., 1872), 8. An 1873 conference in Europe, which Newcomb attended, reflected the cooperative interest of Western astronomers in the transit. Simon Newcomb, *The Reminiscences of an Astronomer* (New York, 1903), 167. Cooperation continued in many forms after the 1883 Venus Transit.

[6]For an account of the events which led to the involvement of the United States in the transit of Venus project, see Horrigan, "Memorandum for the Superintendent"; P. M. Janiczek, "Transits of Venus and the American Expedition of 1874," *Sky and Telescope* 48 (December 1974): 366-71; P. M. Janiczek, "Remarks on the Transit of Venus Expedition of 1874," *Sky with Ocean Joined Proceedings of the Sesquicentennial Symposia U.S. Naval Observatory*, ed. Steven J. Kick and Leroy E. Doggett (Washington, D.C., 1983), 53-72; Newcomb, ed., *Observations of the Transit of Venus December 8-9, 1874*, (Washington, D.C., 1880) 1-20; Newcomb, *Reminiscences*, 161-162. Albert E. Moyer, *A Scientist's Voice in American Culture: Simon Newcomb and the Rhetoric of Scientific Method* (Berkeley, 1992), gives only cursory attention to the transit question, 74.

[7]Congress at various times voted at least a total of $279,950 for the Venus project. Horrigan, "Memorandum for the Superintendent," 4. Newcomb, *Reminiscences*, 178, claims $375,000.

[8]For an analysis of the "black drop" problem, see Forbes, *The Transit of Venus*, 47-59. On the question of absolute accuracy, see C.A. Young, *The Sun* (New York, 1898), 23-26.

[9]The merits as well as the problems in using photography as a means of tracing the movement of Venus across the face of the Sun instead of relying on visual observation through a telescope equipped with or without a special device for such an activity is discussed in Forbes, *The Transit of Venus*, 31-34; Newcomb, *Observations of the Transit of Venus*, 10-11; Young, *The Sun*, 12-15, 24-31.

[10]Draper's work is noted in Newcomb, *Observations of the Transit of Venus*, 17. For the use of "hands-on" or simulation techniques, see Newcomb, *Reminiscences*, 170-71.

[11]Newcomb, *Observations of the Transit of Venus*, 14. "A List of Articles Furnished to the United States Transit of Venus Parties in December, 1882," is on file in the Library of the U.S. Naval Observatory. This document is eighteen pages long and lists a variety of items. For the positioning and installation of the equipment, see (Simon Newcomb), *Instructions for Observing the Transit of Venus, December 6, 1882*, prepared by the commission authorized by Congress (Washington, D.C., 1882), 1-50.

[12]Newcomb, *Observations of the Transit of Venus*, 15.

[13]Instructions about anchoring the piers can be found in (Simon Newcomb) *Instructions for Observing the Transit of Venus*, 10-11.

[14]Except as otherwise noted, the following presentation of the transit of Venus observations at Cedar Key, Florida, is based on "Transit of Venus 1882 Report of Observations at Cedar Keys Florida..." Comments about the humidity and the rain can be found on pages 30-31. See also Prof. J.R. Eastman, "The Florida Expedition to Observe the Transit of Venus," *Science* 1 (February-June 1883): 300-302.

[15]Material pertaining to the 1874 work of the Coast and Geodetic Survey at Cedar Key is in Section 7, "Gulf Coast and Sound of Western Florida, Including the Ports and Rivers," in *Report of the Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey...During the Year 1874*. 43rd Congress, 2d sess., H. Ex. Doc. 100 (Washington, D.C., 1877), 30-31. See also "Assistants, 1866-1875," Administration at College Park, College Park, Maryland, RG 23, S, v. 2.

[16]This constituted an exception to the general approach of the Transit of Venus Commission which encompassed the use of the wet-plate photographic process as more reliable and likely to produce a better image. *Papers Relating to the Transit of Venus in 1874*, 15-16.

[17]"Transit of Venus 1882 Report of Observations at Cedar Keys," 23-24.

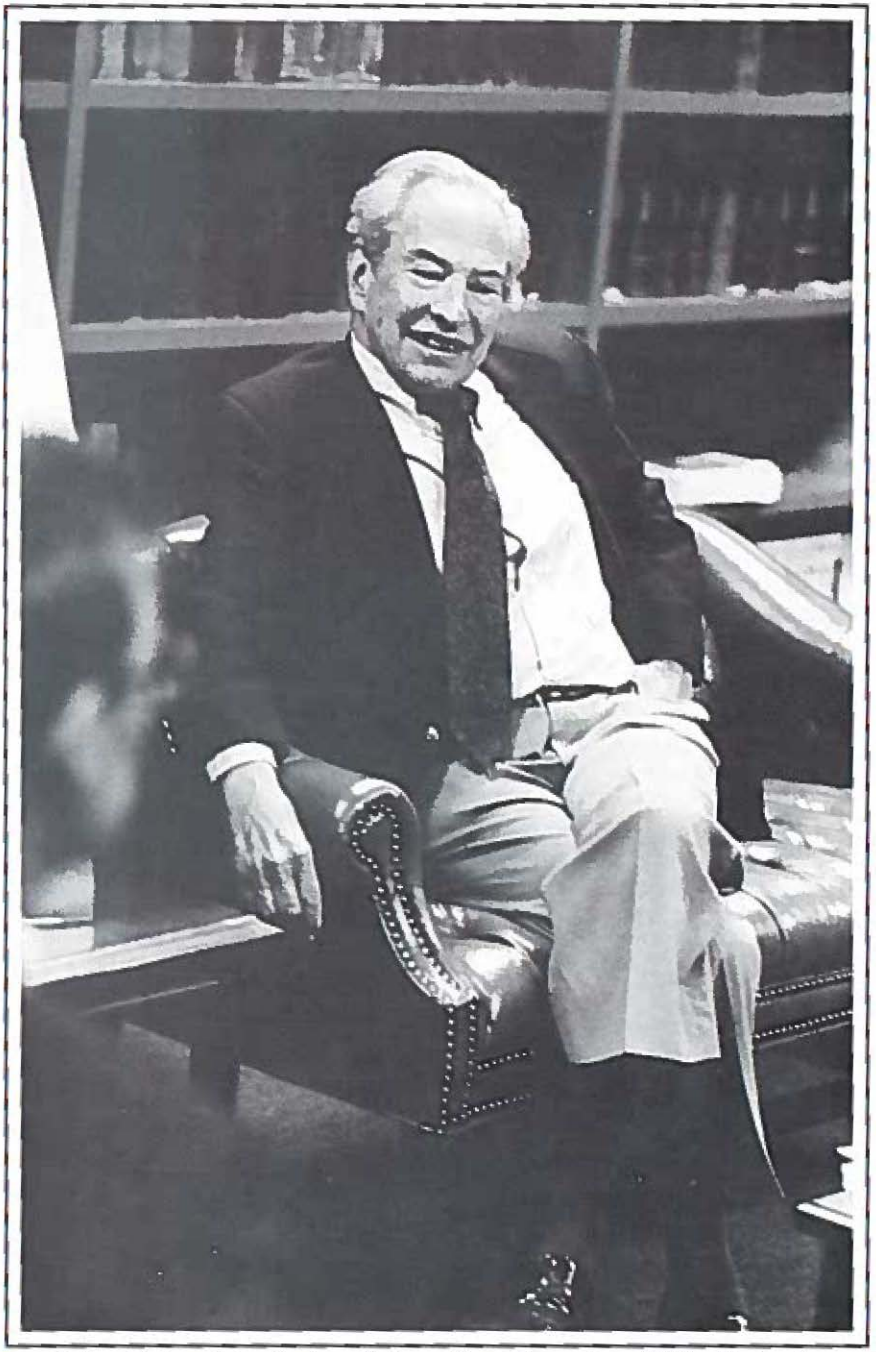
[18]Reference to a proposed multi-volume comprehensive report can be found in Newcomb, *Observations of the Transit of Venus*, 8. For the participation of amateur as well as private professional astronomers, see (Simon Newcomb), *Instruction for Observing the Transit of Venus*, 2; Horrigan, "Memorandum to the Superintendent," 17; and Records of Astronomical Observations Made Chiefly In and Near Washington, January, 1845-June, 1907, Records of the Naval Observatory, RG 78, Entry 18, Box 38, National Archives. This latter source contains manuscript plans for a multivolume publication as well as about 100 letters from amateur astronomers to the commission telling the story of their Venus observations.

[19](William Harkness), "Report of Professor William Harkness of the Transit of Venus Commission, U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, August 13, 1889," in *Report of the Secretary of the Navy to the President, November 30, 1889*, Part I. Appendix B (Washington, D.C., 1890), 424-25. See also Horrigan, "Memorandum to the Superintendent," 24-28.

[20]*The Florida Daily Times*, December 7, 1882, in the State Library of Florida, Tallahassee, FL. For an example of the work of amateur astronomers in other towns, see *The Scranton Republican*, December 7, 1882, in the Scranton Public Library, Scranton, PA. For the opposite view that the higher the elevation the better the chances were for productive observations, see Vincent Ponko, Jr., "19th Century Science in New Mexico: The 1882 Transit of Venus Observations at Cerro Roblero," *Journal of the West* 33 (October 1994): 49.

[21]Garry E. Hunt and Patrick Moore, *The Planet Venus* (London, 1982), 105.

Dr. Vincent Ponko is a retired academic administrator, teacher, and scholar who has contributed articles on the history of science and technology to this and other journals during his career.



John Sledge interviewing Robert Rea, December 1994. Photo by Michael Thomason.

Parting Shots: A Retrospective of The Career Of Robert Right Rea, Doyen of British West Florida Historians

John Sledge

The 1990s are witnessing a wave of retirements by historians of the World War II generation. Tested in the crucible of world conflict and educated under the GI Bill, these men flooded into the colleges and universities to teach succeeding generations of students. Now, after forty-year careers, loaded with memories and honors, they are stepping aside for a new and very different breed of historian.

Among these recent retirees is Robert Right Rea, professor emeritus at Auburn University. In the words of Robin Fabel, one of his immensely talented students, Rea is the "doyen of British West Florida historians." Jay Higginbotham, Mobile's municipal archivist and himself no stranger to the colonial period, calls Rea "a pioneer in the archival investigation of British West Florida." Over his forty-year career Rea told the story of this nearly forgotten chapter of British colonial history in inimitable style through articles, books, and lectures.[1]

I first became acquainted with Dr. Rea while a student at Auburn during the late 1970s. His course about medieval England was a formidable challenge to students like me who were not rigorous thinkers. Indeed, most of us had never encountered anyone like Rea in our entire college career. Intellectually tough and demanding, he forced us to think and work hard. Among our requirements was the critical analysis of a different book each week. Woe to the student who submitted a simple "book report." Rea taught us to examine the sources critically and ask insightful questions. He was as close to the character of Professor Kingsfield in *The Paper Chase* as any instructor I ever encountered. He made me a better historian than I would otherwise have been, and I love him for it.

Robin Fabel remembers Rea as an exceedingly demanding graduate advisor. "The first decent article I wrote began as a seminar paper for him," Fabel remembers, "and he went through it line by line and just tore it apart with a red pen. Then he told me, 'if you give it a good going over, and I mean a good going over, it could be considered publishable.' After the revisions, it was accepted straight away by *Eighteenth-Century Studies*." For Fabel, Rea is a special case

even in his own generation, "I don't know if scholars like him have ever been common."

Rea's many outside interests include fencing and a passion for classical music. As a member of the Auburn Fencing Team, I found Rea as formidable a fencing master as he was professor. His speciality was infighting, that is close-in combat between swordsmen. I saw more than one younger and nimbler opponent humbled by his skill. Rea also played the viola in the Auburn Symphony Orchestra. As a scholar, fencer, and musician he is superbly disciplined and focused. In demeanor he is the perfect gentleman. To quote Higginbotham again, "he combines scholar and gentleman as well as anyone I know."

Dr. Rea lecturing to a history class at Auburn. Auburn University Photographic Services.

Rea's retirement marks the end of a remarkably productive career, a career of importance for Gulf Coast historians. A list of honors and titles must include Director of Graduate Study in the History Department at AU from 1967-1990, Distinguished Graduate Lecturer, 1982-1983, Faculty Achievement Award in the Humanities for 1985, the Robert Reid Award (from graduate students and thus perhaps more meaningful than other awards) in 1986, and Hollifield Professor of Southern History, 1990-1992. His memberships include the Florida

Historical Society, the Alabama Historical Association (President, 1976-1977), the Southern Conference on British Studies (President, 1983-1985), the Southern Historical Association and the advisory board of the *Gulf Coast Historical Review* (1985-present). His publications list is equally impressive with more than ten books and forty major articles. Though his published work is by no means limited to Gulf Coast history, "I have always considered myself an English historian (and tend to flinch at being thought of as a 'local historian')," it is his work on British West Florida that is most important. Among Rea's books are *The Minutes, Journals, and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida* (with Milo Howard), published in 1979, *and The Log of H.M.S. Mentor* (with James A. Servies), published in 1990. Fabel considers *The Minutes, Journals and Acts* to be of critical importance for its elucidation of the administrative and institutional structure of British West Florida. With this work, Fabel declares that we now have "a much better understanding for how things worked for officers and administrators." Rea further explored the colony in dozens of articles in *The Alabama Review, The Florida Historical Quarterly, Louisiana History,* and *The Gulf Coast Historical Review.* These articles include glimpses into the life and administration of British West Florida; everything from a profile of John Eliot, the colony's second governor, to descriptions of military deserters and even "*belles-lettres* in British West Florida." All of his writings are distinguished by their clarity, wit, and erudition, qualities sadly lacking in most history writing today.

When I approached Dr. Rea about doing a retrospective of his career, he agreed to cooperate. During 1994 we corresponded about his work and thoughts on his field. In addition to his copious published writings, he was kind enough to send a short unpublished manuscript which contained personal reminiscence and notes of great value. A number of his friends and colleagues took time to share their experiences with me as well. What emerges is a portrait of a man of great integrity, ability, and achievement.[2]

Robert Right Rea was born on October 2, 1922, in Wichita, Kansas, far from the emerald green waters of the Gulf of Mexico. As a boy, he loved the novels of Alexandre Dumas, and not surprisingly for such a youth, developed an early interest in fencing. Like virtually every male of his generation, he saw military service during World War II, in his case as a naval aviator. His wartime letters to his family have been published under the title *Wings of Gold* by the University of Alabama Press.[3] He received his Ph.D. from Indiana

University in 1950. "When I entered graduate school I had no interest in English history," he says, "but I found in Dr. John J. Murray a professor who was available, willing to listen to my rather unformed ideas, encouraged me to discover the enormity of my innocence for myself, and then gently nudged me into a workable M.A. thesis that led to my dissertation."

That dissertation was titled "The English Press in Politics, 1760-1774," and was published by the University of Nebraska Press in 1963. Despite a long publication history since this fledgling effort, Rea reveals that "I get the greatest kick out of seeing *The English Press in Politics* cited today by English authors as the 'standard work on the subject.'"

After serving as a teaching assistant at Indiana University for three years, Rea took a post at Auburn University. "My primary teaching assignment was always English history. By 1954, when I first published in the field of British West Florida ("Outpost of Empire," *The Alabama Review*), I had compiled a modest list of articles in English history and continued to publish in that field as late as 1977." Indeed, Rea's reluctance to consider himself a "local" historian is perhaps indicative of his generation of scholarship, the explosion in the state and local history field having come about during the 1970s, well into his career. Fabel recalls Rea being asked at a conference what his field was. "He answered, 'British history in the reign of George III,'" explains Fabel, "not British West Florida or Colonial History." Yet Fabel believes this broader vision gives Rea's work its depth.

Rea's interest in British West Florida was aroused when he heard a "distinguished state historian" give credence to the legend of the medieval Welsh prince Madoc. He then saw that now infamous Madoc marker at Fort Morgan but noted the "little attention to the

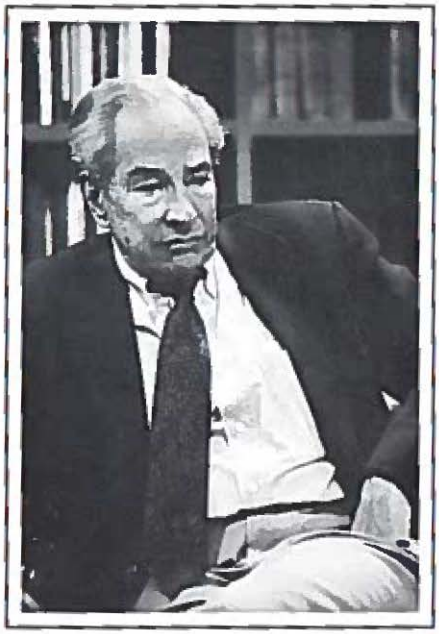
very real fact of British colonial establishment on the Gulf Coast in the eighteenth century." The investigation of that "real fact" was to become the endeavor of a lifetime.[4]

"The following summer I was at the William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan, researching British political satire. Having some odd moments, I checked the manuscripts catalog under 'Alabama, Mobile,' and 'Farmar' (Robert Farmar, purported to have been a governor of Mobile and Member of Parliament), and literally struck pay dirt. There they were, notably in the military papers of General Thomas Gage (British officer in overall command in America), a handsomely bound set of volumes that occupied most of one wall of the manuscripts reading room. Back in Auburn I began to look into the published literature." Dominating the field was Peter J. Hamilton's *Colonial Mobile*, first published in 1897, and revised by the author in 1910. "It was a landmark in Alabama historiography and a truly remarkable work for its time. It is still a noteworthy piece of historical literature, but Hamilton wrote as a Victorian Alabamian and had limited access to materials." Though Rea believes Hamilton's book is now suspect as a reference work, he stresses that "old historians should be read by young historians; I would not discard Macaulay, Gibbon, or even Tacitus simply because ethnic and women's history is currently in vogue." Also among the secondary literature was Cecil Johnson's *British West Florida* (1943), "coldly institutional," and Clinton Howard's *British Development of West Florida, 1763-1769*, "little noticed and chronologically incomplete."

And so he began. "My first venture into the subject drew upon the letters of Lieutenant Colonel David Wedderburn (his brother was well-known to me as a prominent legal figure, ultimately Lord Chancellor). Like me, David was a young man encountering the realities of British West Florida in total innocence. That made him a sympathetic character, particularly when I shortly found myself reading a paper on him at an Alabama Historical Association meeting and observing that the spotlight fell most directly on a group of ladies from Mobile who were discussing favorite old family recipes. That sort of pairing is not unknown in later days, and it has the virtue of reminding historians that they do not occupy the center of the Universe." Rea sent the article to W. Stanley Hoole, then editor of *The Alabama Review*, a man who was "a bit prickly" and had a "low opinion of British West Florida and of Robert R. Rea as an author." Nevertheless, Rea fine-tuned his manuscript and in 1954 entered the arena of British West Florida. The article, "Outpost of

Empire," was to be a classic example of Rea's direct, yet learned style. He would write, "The eighteenth-century British imperialist was usually, as he is almost always portrayed, a close-fisted man of business intent upon his profits...." The short article gave the lie to the prevailing attitude toward the history of British West Florida as "brief and dull."[5]

His early Alabama researches introduced him to Marie Bankhead Owen, who "sat enthroned as a formidable guard" over the collections at the Alabama state archives. Rea was introduced to "Miss Marie" by Milo Howard, "a very promising graduate student," who in time was to be one of the more colorful figures in the field of Alabama history. Howard and Rea collaborated in the publication of *The Memoire Justificatif of the Chevalier Montault de Montberaut* in 1965.



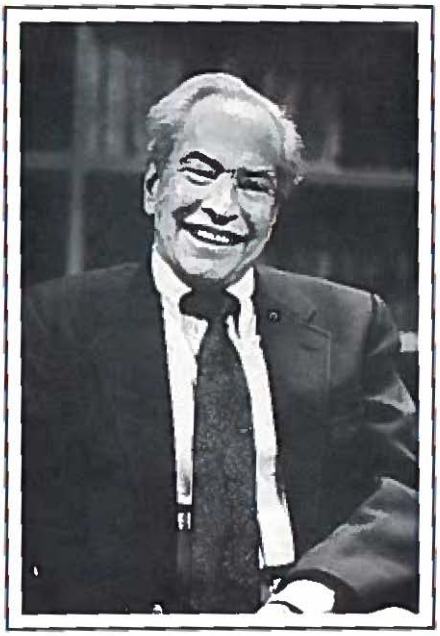
Rea's involvement with British West Florida deepened in 1969 when he was invited to participate in the first Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference. His paper was "Resources and Research Opportunities for British West Florida," which "had the effect of committing me to the subject." The small gathering of scholars was exciting; "the meeting made clear to us that there was such a thing as Gulf Coast history and that our various interests were truly complementary." It was also clear that institutional support for such study was critical, and Rea praises Sam Proctor, editor of *The Florida Historical Quarterly* and of the University of Florida Press, and James Servies at the University of West Florida for "both material and scholarly support. Bringing Gulf Coast history together across the boundaries of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana was, for me, a great delight–and I am sure the same may be said for men like Bill Coker and Jack Holmes whose work has always looked beyond state boundaries. But our careers can hardly have done more

than to suggest that Gulf Coast history is not 'state and local' history. A new generation must define it in appealing and persuasive terms that go beyond a British imperial or Spanish borderlands approach. A few years ago I encountered a young lady who proposed to prove in her dissertation that there was a Gulf Coast! But she was from Yale."

Rea explains this broader reach of Gulf Coast history well. "Knowledge of what these men were before and after they saw the Gulf beaches leads directly to a realization of the breadth and interconnections of the eighteenth-century British Empire. Farmar had seen service, before he landed at Mobile, in South America, Europe, Gibraltar, Scotland, and Cuba. Johnstone had seen action in the Caribbean and later commanded a fleet in action on the coast of South Africa. Pittman's career ended in India. Deans had sailed to the distant Falklands. Young Lieutenant John Blankett, after sailing up the Mississippi to the Iberville, sailed beyond India to China and met his end while commanding in the Red Sea.[6] All were part of a world-wide sea-borne empire that included the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. Their 'local history' was part of the world history of the eighteenth-century, as was that of British West Florida, and so I have tried to portray it."

Rea is a realist who does not gloss over eighteenth-century deficiencies. That colonial world "was not the same as the American world of the late twentieth century, and that disturbs those ardent practitioners of political correctness who would have past generations as wise and good as we are today." As a historian Rea has been criticized by the politically correct for references to Native Americans as "savages" and "red men" in his *Major Farmar of Mobile*. But as he notes, these people of the eighteenth century saw each other in "very personal ways. A few hundred sickly British redcoats may be understood to be a little nervous about some thousands of Francophile Indians camped around Mobile and freely walking into the fort with their weapons (the gate was off its hinges) and firing off the occasional shot when a good target presented itself or bibulous enthusiasm overflowed. Nor were the Frenchman who carefully disabled the cannon of Fort Charlotte before withdrawing to be blindly trusted. This was the wilderness, a military frontier immediately after a long war in which most, if not all, of these men had seen bloody action. If they were not saints and did not talk like angels, they were rather typical eighteenth-century Britons, and an historian should portray them as they were."

Rea is under no illusion about the importance of British West Florida to the layman. He notes that the two Floridas "were not part of the glorious Thirteen in 1776. They did not become British because of a desire for religious liberty (though West Florida practiced it rather better than most of the Thirteen) nor because of the noble pioneering spirit that struggled manfully westward, but because of the outcome of a European war which was very nearly worldwide." Yet Rea and his generation of scholars have "gotten a bit more reality into the general picture–and the general acceptance takes many years. That's success from a historian's point of view."



Besides his own contribution to the subject, Rea's influence will be felt for years in the work of former students. These include three of the four authors of the just-published *Alabama: History of a Deep South State* and, of course, Robin Fabel of Auburn, who has written two books, *Bombast and Broadsides: Governor George Johnstone* and *The Economy of British West Florida*, and also many articles on British West Florida. Fabel sees the need of a social history of the colony and an in-depth look at its women. There are plenty of records still to be studied. Rea notes that he could "cheerfully anticipate another forty years in the same collections–if I had my youth–most productively." These collections include the Gage Papers at the Clements Library, papers at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, England, and the National Army Museum at Chelsea, as well as the colonial papers in the Public Records Office in London.

His friends and former students all hope that Robert Right Rea will remain active in Gulf Coast history circles. His courtly manner, erudition, and eithteenth-century wit brighten any gathering of scholars. His achievement is an impressive one, and all Gulf Coast historians are in his debt.

Appendix

The following is a sampling of publications by Dr. Rea. Most relate to the history of British West Florida. Though not complete, it does list his major works and suggests something of Rea's achievement.

Books

The English Press in Politics 1760-1773. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963.

The Memoire Justificatif of the Chevalier Montault de Monberaut. University: University of Alabama Press, 1965. With Milo B. Howard.

The Minutes, Journals and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida. University: University of Alabama Press, 1979. With Milo B. Howard.

George Gauld, Surveyor and Cartographer of the Gulf Coast. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1982. With John D. Ware.

The Log of the HMS Mentor. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1982. With James A. Servies.

Major Robert Farmar of Mobile. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990.

History at Auburn. The First One Hundred Years of the Auburn University History Department. Auburn, 1991.

Articles

"Outpost of Empire," *The Alabama Review* 7 (1954).

"Henry Hamilton and West Florida," *Indiana Magazine of* History 54 (1958).

"Belles-lettres in British West Florida," *The Alabama Review* 13 (1960).

"A Naval Visitor in British West Florida," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 40 (1961).

"1763–The Forgotten Bicentennial," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 25 (1963).

"The King's Agent for British West Florida," *The Alabama Review* 16 (1963).

"Military Deserters from British West Florida," *Louisiana History* 9 (1968).

"The Trouble at Tombeckby," *The Alabama Review* 21 (1968).

"Madogwys Forever," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 30 (1968).

"A New Letter from Mobile, 1763," *The Alabama Review* 22 (1968).

"Graveyard for Britons," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (1969).

"Redcoats and Redskins on the Lower Mississippi," *Louisiana History* 11 (1970).

"Assault on the Mississippi–The Loftus Expedition, 1764," *The Alabama Review* 26 (1973).

"Lieutenant Colonel James Robertson's Mission to the Floridas, 1763," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 53 (1974).

"Planters and Plantations in British West Florida," *The Alabama Review* 29 (1976).

"Lieutenant Thomas Campbell's Sojourn Among the Creeks," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 36 (1974). With R. A. Fabel.

"Brigadier Frederick Haldimand–The Florida Years," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 54 (1976).

"John Eliot, Second Governor of British West Florida," *The Alabama Review* 30 (1977).

"The Deputed Great Seal of British West Florida," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 40 (1978).

"The Naval Career of John Eliot, Governor of West Florida," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 57 (1979).

"Florida and the Royal Navy Floridas," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 60 (1981).

"A Better Fate! The British West Florida Seal," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 43 (1981).

"The Royal Naval Base at Pensacola," *Pensacola History Illustrated* 1 (1984).

"Exploring His Britannic Majesty's Imperial Gardens of East and West Florida," *El Escribano* (1984).

"British West Florida Trade and Commerce in the Customs Records," *The Alabama Review* 37 (1984).

Urban Problems and Responses in British Pensacola," *Gulf Coast Historical Review* 3 (Fall 1987).

"John Ellis, King's Agent, and West Florida," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 67 (1988). With Julius Groner.

"British Pensacola," *Pensacola History Illustrated* 3 (1990).

"Lieutenant Hutchins to the Rescue! The Wreck and Recovery of the Mercury," *Gulf Coast Historical Review* 5 (Spring 1990).

"Master James Cook's Gulf Coast Cartography," *The Map Collector* (1990).

Notes

[1] British West Florida encompassed the central Gulf Coast from Appalachicola to the Mississippi River. Pensacola served as the capital; Mobile was an important outlet for the fur trade. The British acquired the colony by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Mobile fell to the Spanish in 1780 during the American Revolution. East Florida included the peninsula, with the capital at St. Augustine.

[2] Robert Right Rea, "Biographical and Professional Career Notes," unpublished manuscript, n.d. Telephone interviews with Robin Fabel June 13, 1994 and Jay Higginbotham January 12, 1994.

[3] Wesley Phillips Newton and Robert R. Rea, eds., *Wings of Gold: The Correspondence of Aviation Cadet/Ensign Robert* R. Rea (Tuscaloosa, The University of Alabama Press, 1987), 48.

[4] The Madoc marker was erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1953 and read:

> In the memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language. Authority is–*Encyclopedia Americana*, Copyright, 1918–*Webster's Encyclopedia*, Richard Hakluyt, 1552 to 1616, a Welsh historian and geographer–Ridpath's *History of the World*–ancient Roman coins found in Forts in Tennessee. These forts resemble the forts of Wales in the ninth and tenth centuries and of the white Indians of the Tennessee and Missouri rivers.

Damaged by Hurricane Frederic in 1979, the marker has not been re-erected. Not surprisingly, Rea has weighed in on the subject of Madoc in his article, "Madogwys Forever," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 30 (Spring 1968). For Rea the Welsh prince is as "elusive as a seawraith." (p.6).

[5] Robert R. Rea, "Outpost of Empire," *The Alabama Review* 7 (1954): 217.

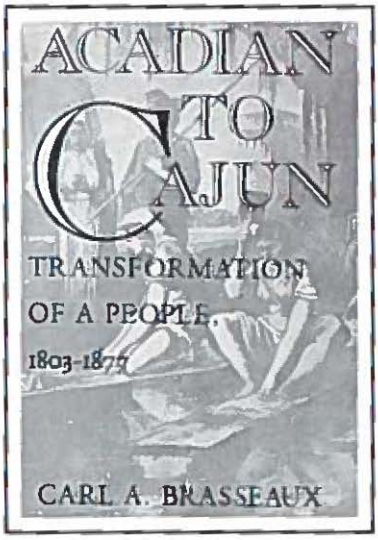
[6] Major Robert Farmar was the British commandant at Mobile, George Johnstone was the first govenor of British West Florida from 1763-1767, Lt. Philip Pittman made a map of Mobile Bay, Robert Deans was captain of the HMS *Mentor* at Pensacola and Mobile bays in 1780 and 1781, and John Blankett was a young lieutenant who sailed up the Mississippi.

John Sledge is an architectural historian with the Mobile Historic Development Commission.

Book Reviews

Carl A. Brasseaux. *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992, *xiv*, pp. 252. Cloth, $40.00. ISBN 0-87805-582-7 / Paper, $16.95. ISBN 0-87805-583-5

For over a decade Carl Brasseaux has published his research into and interpretation of a unique society. His latest work explains the cultural metamorphosis that produced the group popularly called *Cajun* (a term that might, in today's world, be politically corrected to Acadian-American). His first volume, a scholarly presentation of the epic people romanticized in Longfellow's *Evangeline,* detailed the history of the culturally diverse colonists of French Acadia through their exile and into the early years of their arrival in Louisiana. The present volume carries their society through the era of Reconstruction, by which time their transformation seems entrenched.



The Acadian families who came to Louisiana were characterized by a cohesiveness that made them distinct and easily recognizable as a people and a culture. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, this unity was deteriorating, as separate social classes became strongly delineated by material prosperity. Those who clung tenaciously to the old way of life, in comparative isolation, became the basis for the stereotypical Cajun. Others patterned themselves after Creole aristocrats and Anglo-American planters, creating an elite that retained little of its cultural heritage. Members of this upper class, especially in the river-bottom areas, dedicated their efforts to sugar and cotton and became virtually indistinguishable from their non-Acadian neighbors. To the elite, not surprisingly, the term *Cajun* became an epithet. Between these extremes, the majority of *Evangeline's* spiritual descendants came to constitute a middle class of farmers and ranchers, occupying a gray area between self-sufficiency and materialism.

Brasseaux's present study is a detailed look at Acadian society's development and way of life. One chapter treats folk life as reflected through dress, domiciles, food, entertainment, family

structure, cross-cultural contacts, and marriage. In another, political attitudes are followed from apathy to activism as a result of the rise of Jacksonian Democracy. A chapter on secession and the Civil War notes that a Cajun led the Louisiana delegation out of the Democratic convention in 1860 and that the region supplied the Confederacy with three brigadier generals. It also frankly shows the war's unpopularity–particularly after the Confederate Conscription Act of 1862. Later chapters depict the economic destruction and violence visited upon Louisiana by the Civil War and the extent to which these forces turned Acadian upward mobility into a downhill plunge.

All these factors, in the words of the author, created a society which "resembled that of modern Third World countries lining the Caribbean rim." Polarization created a tremendous gap between the lower class and the small affluent elite that soon abandoned them. Forsaken by their leaders, scorned by other ethnic groups, pressured to conform to the dominant culture, and largely stripped of hope for an improved existence, the Cajuns of the 1870s bear little resemblance to their forebears the author presented in his first volume.

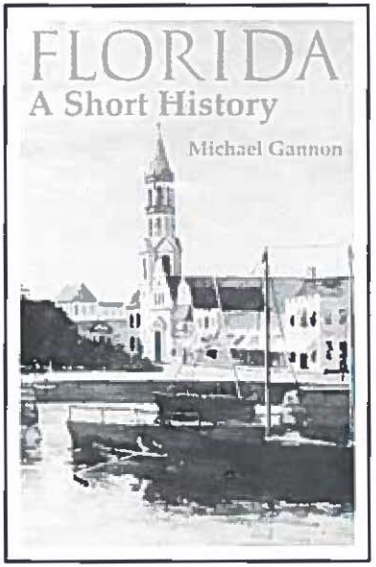
Professor Brasseaux's account also bridges two other worlds, presenting sound scholarship in a form enjoyed by lay people and academics alike–assuming that one doesn't mind paying the press's price for the volume.

Gary B. Mills University of Alabama

Michael Gannon. *Florida: A Short History.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993, pp. 170. $24.95. ISBN 0-8130-1167-1

"Relax," Michael Gannon reassures his targeted audience on the opening page of *Florida: A Short History.* The author has designed the book for Floridians intrigued by the history of their state but not inclined to tackle a massive textbook or a work written by an academic for other academics. Gannon's objective is a concise and readable introduction to Florida's long and fascinating history, with which the interested general reader can spend an enjoyable evening or two. Gannon, Distinguished Service Professor of History at the University of Florida, is not a critic of textbooks or academic writing. Indeed, he hopes that *Florida: A Short History* will inspire its readers to keep going, delving deeper into the waiting literature that Florida's historians have produced. Professor Gannon has set out to produce an engrossing "invitation" to the study of Florida history and has succeeded admirably.

Florida: A Short History supersedes Rembert W. Patrick's concise introduction to the state's history, *Florida Under Five Flags*, a book which had been out of print since 1967 but is available in every Florida library. Gannon's book carries the story of Florida to 1992, and incorporates recent research on all periods of the state's history. Professor Patrick wrote with engaging style, and the same is true of Professor Gannon.



Gannon devotes roughly two-thirds of the book's 151 pages to Florida history since the 1880s, when Henry Flagler commenced building railroads down the length of the state, ushering in a century of development, booms, and tourism for which Florida is famous. Brevity, Gannon's goal, is especially in evidence for the pre-colonial period through Reconstruction. Occasionally, he introduces topics so briefly that the general reader may be confused. For example, the author mentions the existence of the eighteenth-century free black community at Fort Mose, but does not provide needed context by discussing blacks or race relations in Spanish Florida. Another case in point: Is the reader to think Zephaniah Kingsley and his African wife Anna Jai, who alone are named as examples of important antebellum planters, were typical? Such topics deserve another sentence or two in the next edition.

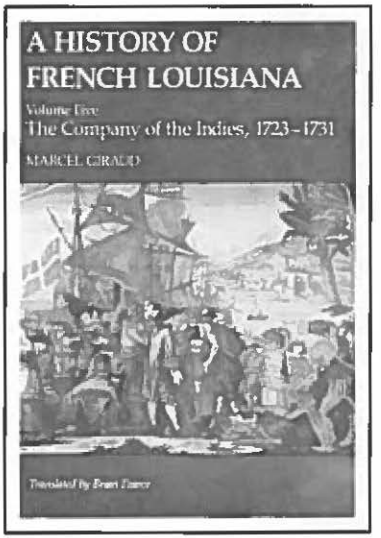
A significant feature of the book is the author's focus on people. Gannon chronicles the notable achievements of Florida's leaders, but incorporates the history of Florida's plain folk as well. The illustrations which accompany the text, mostly drawn from the Florida State Archives, help to convey the experiences of the common man and woman. These images, along with their informative captions, contribute greatly to the book's success. This is a book about governors and other movers and shakers, but also about such people as the Florida cowmen and the debt peons of the turpentine camps. Though the general reader may not know it, the effort to tell the history of average Floridians reflects current trends in academia.

The author suggests fifty books for readers who want to continue to explore Florida history. The selection of titles is judicious, but the cap on their number and the exclusion of articles seem penny-wise at the expense of the objective of inviting readers to read more.

Specialists and academics, who will surely enjoy reading *Florida: A Short History* but are mainly on the lookout for intensive studies, should know that Professor Gannon is at work editing a new Florida history text which will draw together essays from a number of leading scholars. No doubt many general readers, captivated by *Florida: A Short History*, will also be among those to welcome Gannon's next volume.

Craig Buettinger — Jacksonville University

Marcel Giraud. *A History of French Louisiana.* Vol. 5, *The Company of the Indies, 1723-1731.* Brian Pierce, trans. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991, pp. 517. $47.50. ISBN 0-8071-1571-1



This book is the fifth volume of a history of French Louisiana that M. Giraud undertook to write about forty years ago. As in the previous four volumes, the author seeks to draw a general picture of the development of this French colony for a particular period of time, in this case the eight years during which Louisiana was under the sole control of the Company of the Indies, from 1723 to 1731. The author continues with the same series of sources (mainly the Archives des Colonies) and analyzes minutely and cautiously to cover a wide array of themes about colonial life in Louisiana. It is difficult to point out a specific thesis for this book apart from that of the series. This probably explains its abrupt beginning and ending with neither formal introduction nor conclusion.

The book is divided in three parts. The first one, titled "The New Régie," as the colonial administration was named during this period, deals mainly with the difficult relationship between the king's commissioner, La Chaise, the councilors, commandant general Bienville, his successors Boisbriand and Périer and their respective supporters among the military officers and the religious orders. This eventful period confirmed Louisiana's reputation as "the land of discontent and confusion." Curiously, this first part contains one

chapter on "the struggling economy" (chap. 6) and another one on the "extensions of the colony," (chap. 7) two themes which, by their content and their scope could–and probably should–have formed a distinct section of the book. Nevertheless, these two chapters contain very interesting information on colonial development and underscore the ongoing problems of an inadequate labor force, integrating Louisiana's products into regular commercial circuits, and the taming of the Mississippi River.

The second part examines the "beginning of urban growth and society," even though, as the author acknowledges, "it is hardly possible to speak of urban growth in Louisiana in the period of the new régie." Despite the relatively limited importance of the towns in question, M. Giraud manages to study very closely the early urban environment, services, architecture, and society of the "capital" New Orleans. He also pays considerable attention–some thirty pages–to the small settlement of "Fort Condé at Mobile."

The third and last part of the book is concerned with the penetration inland, especially with the Natchez drama of 1729 and its consequences, and with the Illinois country. This region had considerably different features from other parts of the colony, and so, in many ways the reader gains the distinct impression that another colonial story has been included in the book because of the administrative link the Illinois country had with Louisiana.

Considering the exhaustive documentary material consulted by M. Giraud, his book constitutes a solid, fundamental study of Louisiana. All in all, its encyclopedic value is great. The translation from the French as been done so well that the nuances of Giraud's writing have been preserved. This book, by the depth and precision of its detailed narrative, elicits the reader's admiration. Yet, one must also know that it represents the end of a way of doing and writing history. Today, who would dare to undertake such a career-long research project which produces a five-hundred-page book about eight years of the history of an isolated and largely unsettled colony?

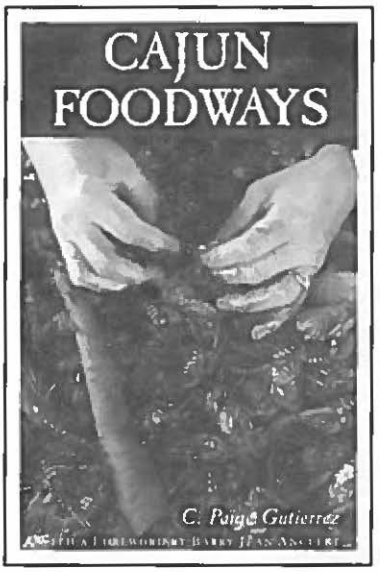
Alain Laberge Université Laval

C. Paige Gutierrez. *Cajun Foodways.* Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1992, *xv*, pp. 149. Cloth, $35.00. ISBN 0-87805-562-2 / Paper, $15.95. ISBN 0-87805-563-0

Since the 1980s, "Cajun" cuisine has become increasingly popular nationwide. However, Cajun culture and foodways were not always held in such high esteem by the rest of the nation. In this slim volume, anthropologist C. Paige Gutierrez attempts to explain who the

Cajuns were and what makes them unique, particularly their diet and foodways–all food-related activities and their meanings. The book is not a cookbook or a history, but "a description and interpretation of the symbolic aspects of Cajun ethnic foodways, based on field research in Louisiana and written from the perspective of folklore studies and cultural anthropology."

According to Gutierrez, "There is no short and simple definition of *Cajun* that readily identifies all people who call themselves Cajun." Thus, the author provides a brief introduction to the geography and history of south Louisiana, where French influence remains strong, and its inhabitants. Gutierrez explains the origins and backgrounds of the area's major ethnic groups, points out the fine distinctions between the terms "Creole" and "Cajun," examines the "ethnic revivalism" experienced by modern Cajuns, and details the leading social and economic issues confronting the region. Concluding that contemporary Cajun identity is "varied, evolving, and complex," the author itemizes the major traits which identify Cajuns: Ancestry (French Acadian), language (French), regional origin, competence in the natural environment, and sociability. While some of these traits, specifically competence in the natural environment and sociability, might properly be extended to all rural Southerners, Gutierrez attempts to explain why Cajuns are distinct from other Southerners. Most importantly, Gutierrez sees food as "a pragmatic and flexible symbol of Cajun ethnicity," and examines not only food itself, but also how it is cooked, served, and eaten, and how it is part of the larger social and cultural identity of the Cajun people.



The first chapter details the common ingredients in Cajun dishes. As the author points out, it is not the ingredients but rather the method of preparation which sets most Cajun food apart. The importance of meat and fish, seafood, rice, corn and other vegetables is discussed, as are the seasoning vegetables: Onions, red peppers, parsley, sweet peppers, garlic and celery. Filé powder and cayenne pepper and pepper products, such as hot relishes, hot sauce, and pickled peppers are included in the last category. The major Cajun dishes are described in chapter two, with emphasis on preparation

methods, particularly the use of a roux, strong flavors, and long cooking times. The dishes discussed, usually gravy-based meat and seafood dishes served with rice, include gumbo, fricassee, etouffée, sauce piquante, jambalaya, rice dressing, boudin, and other sausages. "Cooks and Kitchens" are covered in chapter three, which includes an analysis of "men's cooking," with outdoor kitchens, equipment, and the dishes and style of cooking common to Cajun men.

Three chapters are devoted to the crawfish, which is fitting since it "is the dominant food-related symbol in Acadiana" and is "frequently associated with the expression of ethnic/regional consciousness and pride." Gutierrez, noting that the crawfish has not always been popular with outsiders, explores its metamorphosis from a low-status food to an ethnic symbol by examining legends, historical sources, and even jokes and songs which mention the creature. In addition to discussing the crawfish industry, Gutierrez explains how Cajuns catch, cook, and eat these crustaceans–a source of amazement and sometimes confusion for outsiders. In chapter six, the author explores "The Meaning of Crawfish." Declaring that the "crawfish boil is an event that celebrates Cajun joie de vivre and espirit de corps," Gutierrez writes that "crawfish foodways are shared by all Cajuns." Thus, a crawfish boil pulls the family and community together. The author also attempts to show that the handling of live crawfish prior to cooking "helps validate Cajuns' belief in their environmental competence," thereby reinforcing ethnic identity.

Other social events which involve food are discussed in the book as well, including the family *boucherie* (hog killing and preparation of meat), *cochon de lait* (hog roast), rural Mardi Gras, and community food festivals. Food at everyday meals is also examined, including meals structure and its significance.

The author concludes by noting that Cajun foods have become increasingly popular outside south Louisiana and highly marketable on the national level. Even so, Gutierrez maintains that Cajun food is much more than a "marketable product." "Cajun food is a source of meaning and value in the lives of a people, a medium that helps them express what it means to be a Cajun."

The study, based on the author's fieldwork from 1978 through 1983, is very lightly documented, but does carry a brief bibliography. The book includes eight pages of photographs. The work, though interesting and frequently enlightening, is at times repetitive and superficial. For instance, a more detailed comparison of Cajun foodways to those of other rural Southerners might reveal that "environmental competence" and various community food events are not restricted to Cajuns, but are shared by rural people throughout the South and the nation. Even so, those curious about the food and

people of south Louisiana will find the book an interesting addition to the literature.

Kathryn E. Holland Braund Dadeville, Alabama

William Ivy Hair. *The Kingfish and His Realm: The Life and Times of Huey P. Long.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991, *xvi,* pp. 406. $24.95. ISBN 0-8071-1700-5

New Dealer Rexford Tugwell once characterized Huey Long as "a pudgy, overdressed loudmouth...a curiosity, nothing more." But as Tugwell and others soon discovered, a complex and disturbing personality lay beneath the clownish exterior. Scores of historians also have grappled with this Louisiana enigma. William Ivy Hair's gripping account of the man who called himself the Kingfish is destined to remain the definitive biography for many years to come.

Long loved to boast that he was *sui generis*, and Hair's lively portrayal of Long's formative years provides persuasive evidence for such swagger. The seventh of nine children, young Huey was aggressive, charming, and blessed with a photographic memory. He was also insecure, selfish, and a physical coward. Huey used his competitive spirit and acerbic wit to provoke fellow classmates into verbal jousting matches but left the inevitable fisticuffs to his younger brother Earl.

Hair's lively prose superbly captures the frenetic quality of Long's early life, from his stint as a cottonseed oil salesman to his brief but tempestuous year of law school study. He was impatient and impetuous, forever running against the clock. Obsessed with time, Long packed an enormous amount of activity into a few years. By the time he became Louisiana's youngest lawyer at the tender age of twenty-one, Long "already had lived more than half his life."

Elected to Louisiana's Railroad Commission in 1918 at the age of twenty-five, Long transformed his position on this moribund body into a launching pad for his political career. As a member of the only governmental body possessing even minimal regulatory power

over the state's oil and gas pipelines, Long fashioned himself the champion of the working folk. His populist posturing gave him political advantages. Highly publicized tirades against Standard Oil and the Bell System, in addition to propitious political alliances, made Huey Long a known entity across the state and laid the groundwork for his successful gubernatorial bid in 1928.

As governor, Long demonstrated "a scorn for the principle of the separation of powers" and would settle for nothing less than the complete domination of others. "Huey led by compulsion instead of statesmanship because he was internally driven by a force he seemed unable to control," Hair writes. The Long administration quickly congealed into an efficient patronage-wielding machine, and Huey regularly and indiscriminately appropriated state property for personal business. In response to Long's dictatorial methods, controversial refinery tax legislation, and accusations of bribery, the Louisiana House of Representatives initiated impeachment hearings in 1929. The impeachment trial was terminated after a sufficient number of senators signed a "round robin" stating they would not vote to convict Long on any of the charges.

Long's sincere concern for Louisiana's poor had been the subject of much historical debate. Hair contends that Long was genuinely concerned about the poverty that engulfed the majority of Louisianans and therefore deserves credit for supporting public works projects for badly needed roads and bridges and for his free public schoolbook legislation. But, Hair argues, Long's motives were selfish. He only helped those who could eventually pay him back with votes. Predictably, the needs of nonvoters such as blacks remained unaddressed.

Elected to the United States Senate in 1932, Long soon became the special concern of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Instrumental in Roosevelt's presidential nomination, Long initially, albeit unenthusiastically, supported the New Deal Programs, but by 1934 he had declared war on the Roosevelt administration. Roosevelt considered Long a serious threat and used federal patronage and relief programs against him. At one point, according to Hair, Roosevelt even considered placing Louisiana under federal military occupation.

In 1934 Long organized the Share Our Wealth Society, an organization dedicated to the redistribution of wealth. It quickly mushroomed, boasting 3 million members by the end of 1934, 7.5 million by the spring of 1935. The Long plan was simplistic and deeply flawed, and it was doubtful that Huey himself actually believed in the plan. Nevertheless, the popularity of the Share Our Wealth Society gave the Roosevelt administration cause for concern. Hair contends that Roosevelt's sponsorship of the 1935 Wealth Tax Act was in direct response to this threat from the Kingfish.

The Kingfish and His Realm is a balanced, sophisticated, and lucid study based on solid research and fresh perception. Past biographies have depicted Long as buffoon, a conniving dictator, or a corrupt but sincere politician. Hair's book succeeds at analyzing the Kingfish in an evenhanded manner, avoiding caricature or extreme sympathy, and thereby complementing Glen Jeansonne's *Messiah of the Masses: Huey P. Long and the Great Depression* (1993). Hair's ability to place Huey Long within Louisiana's complex racial, social, and economic milieu is simply superb. Finally, it is the author's rare gift for storytelling that makes this book so enjoyable. It is no surprise that it was awarded the Jules and Frances Landry Award for 1991.

Kari Fredrickson Rutgers University

Gwendolyn Midlo Hall. *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century.* Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1992, *xx*, pp. 434. $29.95. ISBN 0-8071-1686-6

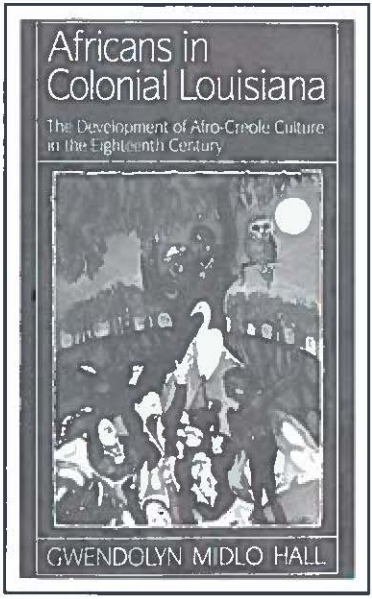
What Peter Wood did for South Carolina and Allan Kulikoff for the Chesapeake, Gwendolyn Hall has now provided for Louisiana: A thoroughly researched, original interpretation of the role played by Africans and their descendants in the colonial period. Like Wood,[1] she argues that they were essential to the success of colonization. They provided not only the labor force to clear land, build levees, dig canals, and construct buildings, but also the technical expertise to cultivate and process rice and indigo, the two principal crops of French Louisiana.

Like Kulikoff,[2] Hall focuses on the process of cultural formation, but she demonstrates that Louisiana differs from other regions of the American South in the degree to which slaves imported from Africa were able to recreate ethnic communities. Through description of African cultures in Senegambia, the region supplying most of the slaves to Louisiana, details from pilots' logs about conditions and revolts on slave-trade ships, evidence of complicity of slaves in the Natchez Indian uprisings of 1729, and analysis of two slave conspiracies in 1731, Hall documents the capacity for violent resistance of the first generation of African slaves, especially those belonging to the Bambara nation.

At the same time, a distinctive Afro-Creole slave culture emerged in Louisiana over the course of the eighteenth century. It owed much to the "founding contingent" of Africans. Taking exception with the view that Louisiana Creole is a derivative culture, Hall

argues it was created in the first two decades after arrival of African slaves. "Scrupulous" protection of slave families in the French period favored the transmission of a highly Africanized culture to children within "stable, nuclear families composed of African mothers and fathers and creole siblings." Excerpts from Creole songs at the beginning of each chapter provide a glimpse of this culture's "creativity, intelligence, biting wit, joyfulness, musicality, poetic strain, and reverence for beauty." Afro-Creole culture is described in turn as the core of a hybrid, multiracial "Creole" culture incorporating elements of the African, Amerindian, and French cultures in contact and interaction with one another in the Mississippi Delta.

Hall stresses the absence of racial exclusiveness under frontier conditions in French Louisiana. On the one hand, the system of justice was as brutal in its treatment of lower-class whites as it was towards slaves. The public executioner in New Orleans was a free African who broke whites as well as blacks on the wheel. On the other hand, race mixture was common throughout French Louisiana and especially extensive at the post of Pointe Coupee located fifty *lieues* (leagues) upriver from New Orleans. The racial openness of colonial Louisiana contrasts strikingly with the preternatural racism other historians have observed in the colonial cultures of the Chesapeake and South Carolina.



The last three chapters of Hall's monograph cover the Spanish colonial period. Observing that natural increase and imports from other colonies in the Americas cannot explain the rapid growth in the number of slaves in Louisiana in the 1770s and 1780s, she infers a resurgence in the African slave trade. The resulting "re-Africanization" of the slave population contributed to a conspiracy in Pointe Coupee in 1791. Trial records reveal that it was mounted mainly by members of the Mina nation as yet unfamiliar with Louisiana Creole, the language in which interrogations were conducted. Theirs was "a narrowly focused ethnic conspiracy involving slaves who belonged to small slave owners." By contrast, the Pointe Coupee conspiracy of 1795 was much more dangerous. Inspired by Jacobin ideology, it involved slaves "from large, heavily

Africanized estates" and was supported by the lower class of all races.

Hall's passionately written book celebrates acts of individual and collective resistance by slaves. Africans were at the heart of all the attempts at violent revolt. Even the 1795 conspiracy originated among the predominantly male and African slaves on the Poydras plantation. Their leader was the *commandeur* Antoine Sarrasin, whose grandparents were French, Indian, and African. Hall does mention other Creole slaves in Pointe Coupee who were reluctant to join the revolt, particularly those "on subsistence farms, where the old, intimate, familial tradition between masters and slaves remained."

In general, Creole slaves appear to have been less apt than Africans to resort to violence against their white masters. Although Hall does not insist on the point, her description of Afro-Creole culture suggests one of the reasons for this difference in behavior. Race mixture must have interfered to some extent with the formation of stable nuclear families of African parents and Creole children, the basis of cohesive slave communities. Cross-racial family ties generated by the tradition of racial openness in Louisiana undermined the solidarity necessary for a successful slave revolt.

Notes

[1]Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion* (New York, 1974).

[2]Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill, 1986), 315-420.

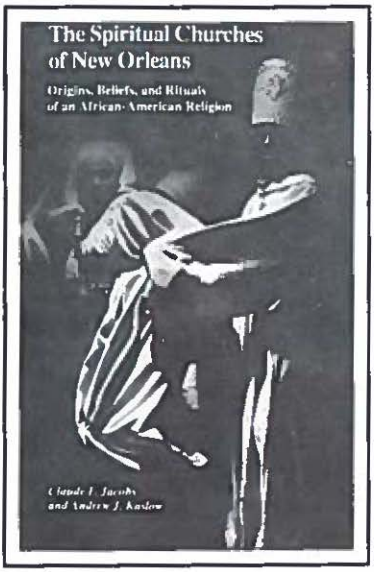
Paul Lachance University of Ottowa

Claude F. Jacobs and Andrew J. Kaslow. *The Spiritual Churches of New Orleans: Origins, Beliefs, and Ritual of an African-American Religion.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991, pp. 235. $24.95. ISBN 0-87049-702-2

The African-American church has been receiving a great deal of scholarly attention lately. Most of it has focused on the mainstream Baptist and Methodist denominations. Anthropologists Claude F. Jacobs and Andrew J. Kaslow, however, have chosen one of the more obscure groups, the Spiritual churches of New Orleans, for their investigation. The result of their work is an interesting book that adds both information and insight to what observers such as Zora

Neale Hurston and Hans Baer had previously written about the Spiritual churches.

Although scholars once argued about whether African-American churches and the theology encased in them were derived from Europe or African antecedents, research shows very clearly that the question was not really an *either/or* one. Slaves brought religious traditions with them from Africa, blended them with the European beliefs they encountered, and altered these beliefs and traditions to conform to their circumstances. The product of this cultural mixing and overhauling was a multitude of uniquely African-American religious forms with roots in many sources. The Spiritual churches are especially fascinating because they reflect an unusually large number of religious traditions. They combine elements of Roman Catholicism, Voodoo, Pentecostalism, and nineteenth-century Spiritualism. Jacobs and Kaslow have undertaken to explain how those diverse traditions were blended together and how they work today.



The beginnings of the Spiritual Church movement in New Orleans are not clear. Some of Jacobs's and Kaslow's informants claim that it originated in the Voodoo traditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most popular theory, however, is that it was introduced by Mother Leafy Anderson, who arrived in New Orleans from Chicago in the 1920s as a missionary having established churches in various southern and midwestern cities and organized them into the Eternal Life Christian Spiritualist Association. Jacobs and Kaslow conclude that neither explanation is complete and that the beginnings of the movement are as complex as its structure, beliefs, and rituals. However, they credit Mother Anderson with founding the first church. At that time, the mainstream Baptist and Methodist churches were beginning to lose some of their appeal to working-class blacks who complained that under the influence of middle-class values and ministers trained in denominational seminaries the churches did not arouse "the spirit" in them. The theology of many mainstream churches no longer emphasized the presence of supernatural forces in people's daily lives. Many women resented their exclusion from the power structure. A variety of other people

were looking for new sources of relief from discrimination, unemployment, and disease. Mother Anderson and her followers, including a number of other powerful women, gratified those needs by drawing upon diverse religious traditions that were popular among blacks in New Orleans. The churches they founded emphasized a real and ever-present spiritual power. This emphasis on spiritualism came in part form Roman Catholicism, established in Louisiana by French and Spanish Catholic missionaries in colonial times, and its belief in intercession on behalf of the living by the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints. It was also influenced by Pentecostal revivalism and its stress on the power of the Holy Spirit, manifested in shouting, spirit-possession, and speaking in tongues. Pentecostal churches appeared in New Orleans early in the twentieth century and appealed to dissatisfied Baptists and Methodists. Further validating the Spiritual theology was the Voodoo tradition of invoking spiritual power for both good and evil purposes. Nineteenth-century Spiritualism, reared in the turmoil of industrialization and the rising tide of immigration, also contributed to Mother Anderson's belief system. Spiritualists rejected the orthodox Christian concept of God and substituted the power of spirits as the controlling forces of the universe. Spiritualism had been present among the elite mulatto population of New Orleans in the 1850s and was retained by some of their descendants into the twentieth century, even by those who had fallen on hard times.

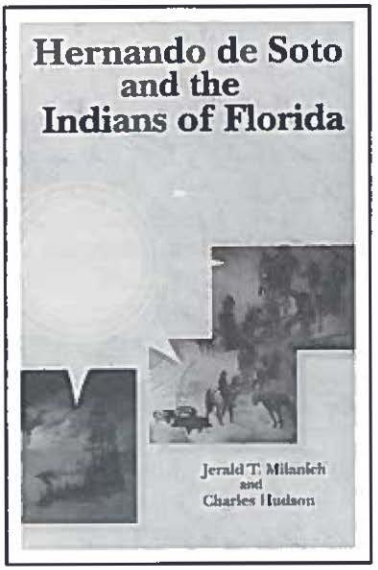
The Spiritual Churches of New Orleans is ethnographic, although Jacobs and Kaslow devote a full chapter to the history of New Orleans Spiritualism. The authors show that the four influences outlined above share a common view of the spiritual realm and do not separate that world from the human world. They classify the four traditions as "central religions" (Roman Catholic and Pentecostal) and "peripheral cults" (Voodoo and Spiritualism). They show how the Spiritual churches of New Orleans combined not only the similarities of the four religious traditions but also the dissimilarities. For instance, the Catholic focus on the altar and the Pentecostal focus on the pulpit; the "central religions'" use of public sermons and the "peripheral cults'" private readings; and the bureaucratic organization of the Roman Catholic church and the congregationalism and individualism of the other traditions are all accommodated in the Spiritual churches, although not always without tension. There is also conflict with the mainstream churches who sometimes, along with secular authorities, accuse the Spiritual churches of harboring superstition and engaging in fortune-telling.

The Spiritual Churches of New Orleans does not make any major contributions to our understanding of this segment of the African-American church, but it does add importantly to the body of

information about the Spiritual churches. Despite a few typographical errors, it is an excellent piece of scholarship.

William Montgomery Austin Community College

Jerald T. Milanich and Charles Hudson. *Hernando de Soto and the Indians of Florida.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida / Florida Museum of Natural History, 1993, *xv*, pp. 292. $34.95. ISBN 0-8130-1170-1



For some years Charles Hudson has been analyzing the routes sixteenth-century Spanish explorers took through the southeastern United States. With students and colleagues, Hudson has reconstructed travel routes, and teased from Spanish records new perspectives on native societies before and immediately after aboriginal polities collapsed as a consequence of depopulation. Florida Natural History Museum archeographer Jerald T. Milanich joined Hudson in writing this volume extending Hudson's earlier studies of Hernando de Soto's marauders to Florida.

Future analysts of sixteenth-century southeastern natives cannot ignore this study. Its strength is the presentation of physical evidence recovered from the ground. Archeographic interpretation of the physical remains of Florida's sixteenth-century native occupation has recently proliferated. Moreover, Milanich recruited students to search for remains of native settlements along putative de Soto routes, and to excavate selected sites. Consequently, Milanich and Hudson bring both documentary evidence written by Spaniards and physical evidence created by natives to bear on the route reconstruction puzzle. Earlier students of de Soto in Florida have not had available the physical evidence Milanich and Hudson use.

The collaborators briefly describe their analytical techniques and the events that led Hernando de Soto to Florida. In four chapters, they reconstruct the marauders' route, beginning with the landing place. They interpolate chapters on native peoples of (1) central and southern Florida, and (2) northern Florida. While interesting, these

interpolations interrupt the narrative flow of route reconstruction. The collaborators end with a discussion of Spanish Florida after de Soto's intrusion.

Twenty-six maps drawn for this volume enhance the text by placing reconstructed routes and native settlements firmly in geographic context. Seventeen reproductions of all or portions of historic maps dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century show areas discussed in the text. Historic map reproduction quality varies; that of land form and artifact illustrations varies even more–from good to atrocious.

This volume constitutes a quantum leap from the 1939 official national de Soto commission report, primarily because of the tremendous expansion in archeography since 1939. If publishers lose interest in studies like this after 1992, this analysis may be the last study of its magnitude for another half century. However, Milanich and Hudson are not necessarily always correct. Lack of fluency in Spanish leaves the authors at the mercy of translators. *Villafarta*, for example, is glossed as "village of plenty." The Spanish language long since acquired a terminology classifying human settlements, and a Spanish villa is not a village. Hamlets are "*caserios*." Villages are *aldeas*. Towns are *pueblos*. Cities are *ciudades*. The English language lacks a word for settlements larger than pueblos and smaller than cities–*villas*. By erroneously labeling this native settlement as a "village," Milanich and Hudson miss the major analytical point. *Villafarta* was more populous than a typical native town, although smaller than the Nahua-speaking urban places on the lakeshore in the Valley of Mexico that Spaniards recognized as true *ciudades*. The Spanish perception of this settlement's size is pertinent to reconstructing the population magnitudes of Florida's native peoples.

Milanich and Hudson follow sources in uncritical ways that Patricia Galloway warned against.[1] René Laudonniere indeed justified his troops' burning Chief Edelano's empty settlement on grounds that the inhabitants had "murdered" a Frenchman, Pierre Gambaye.[2] Jacques Le Moyne also reported that Gambié's canoe crew "murdered" him, but furnished the additional information that Gambié had "married" Chief Edelano's daughter while trading at his insular settlement.[3] Perhaps the native paddlers did murder Gambié for his "wealth," but perhaps Chief Edelano had him "executed" for absconding with that "wealth" and abandoning his native spouse. Northern Timucuan chiefs did, after all, possess the power to execute their subjects.

More seriously, in their archeographic interpretations of the Spaniards' routes, Milanich and Hudson ignore the native propensity to exchange commodities. When these authors argue that sixteenth-century Spanish artifacts recovered from native settlements indicate de

Soto's travel path, they implicitly assume that when a Spaniard lost or left each such artifact, no native later transported or traded it. That is hardly a tenable assumption in view of extensive documentary and physical evidence of native commodity exchange.

Specifically, Milanich and Hudson do not mention Spanish artifacts near Charlotte Harbor. They take de Soto from the shore of Tampa Bay across the Alafia River as the *Rio de Mocoso* without being able to explain why the Spaniards had to construct two bridges. Leaving Charlotte Harbor, they would necessarily have built two bridges to cross two nearby rivers. That Don Hernando landed at modern Tampa Bay is quite possible but not conclusively demonstrated. As Milanich and Hudson realistically state, theirs is "a tentative reconstruction."

Notes

[1]Patricia Galloway, "The Archaeology of Ethnohistorical Narrative," in *Columbian Consequences*, vol. 3, *The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*, ed. David Hursy Thomas (Washington, 1991), 453-69.

[2]René Laudonniere, *Three Voyages*, trans. Charles E. Bennett (Gainesville, FL, 1975), 131.

[3]Jacques le Moyne de Morgues, "Narrative," in *The New World*, ed. Stefan Lorant (New York, 1946), 119.

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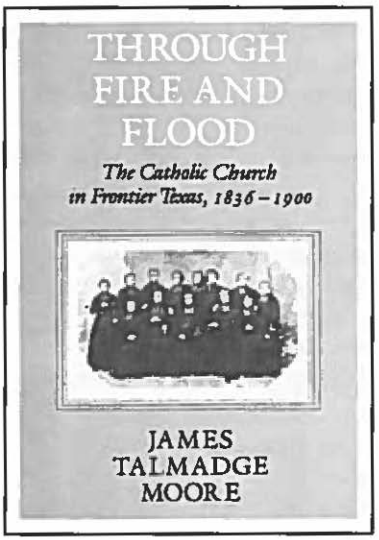
James Talmadge Moore. *Through Fire and Flood: The Catholic Church in Frontier Texas, 1836-1900.* College Station: Texas A & M University Press, *xiii*, pp. 284. $39.50. ISBN 0-89096-504-8

This book is the first of a projected two-volume history of the Catholic Church in Texas from the 1836 revolution through the later years of the twentieth century. These volumes will reexamine and update the period covered in Carlos E. Castañeda's 1958 *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1529-1936*, volume 7. The author's stated purpose is "to chronicle the reestablishment of ties [with the worldwide Catholic Church] that for a time seemed broken, efforts that became part of a mosaic of events forming around wave after wave of immigration that ultimately produced phenomenal growth and development in the life of the Texas Catholic church."



This volume begins with a short overview of the scattered Texas Catholic communities in 1836, the role of Catholic political leaders such as José Antonio Navarro, and the underlying considerations in the anticlerical provisions of the early Texas constitutions.

Moore then traces Rome's efforts to establish ecclesiastical authority in newly independent Texas. Always sensitive to political realities, Roman officials faced a thorny administrative problem in regard to Texas. Each alternative–creation of a separate diocese, continued jurisdiction from Mexico, or transfer of authority to nearby New Orleans in the United States–had its political pitfalls. Politicians such as Governor Mirabeau Lamau favored an independent Texas diocese as a valuable asset in winning European diplomatic recognition. In 1838, Rome assigned Bishop Antoine Blanc of New Orleans responsibility for reestablishing contact with Texas' widely scattered Catholic communities. Fathers John Timon and then Jean Marie Odin became the future state's early fact-finders and missionaries.

The author proceeds to concisely narrate the growth of Texas Catholicism including the appointment of its first bishop (1874), the spread of parish churches and schools, and the creation of separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions for San Antonio (1874), Brownsville (1874), and Dallas (1890). He clearly summarizes complex administrative developments such as the confusion concerning jurisdiction over the El Paso area. The narrative is readable and interesting. Catholic development is repeatedly set against the broader background of major political and economic events, for example, the delay in bringing the first women religious to Texas because of the 1842 Mexican invasion, and the impact of the federal blockade during the Civil War on Catholic communities at Galveston and San Antonio. The book is enlivened by interesting, detailed glimpses of Texas religious life, particularly during Timon and Odin's early missionary journeys. Occasional informative snapshots of local community life include the celebration of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast at San Antonio's San Fernando Church in 1841, the liturgical services celebrating the laying of the cornerstone for St. Mary's Church in Galveston in 1847, future bishop Claude Dubois's construction work on the church at Castroville

in 1849-1850, and the Polish community's celebration of the erection of the stations of the cross at Panna Maria in 1870.

Moore adopts a traditional framework for his Texas Catholic history, concentrating on episcopal and clerical biographies, diocesan establishment, as well as parish and school formation and building programs. The author's narrow approach to Catholic history precludes the possibility of a comprehensive portrait of Texas Catholic life. Jay Kolan's *The American Catholic Experience* (1985) paints a much broader portrait of Catholic life, rooted in an emphasis on social history and a renewed, broader theological understanding of Church as enunciated in Vatican Council II (1962-1965). Thus, Moore gives only superficial treatment to many important aspects of local Catholic history: lay leadership in forming local civic and religious communities; individual and communal renewal programs; varying local patterns of Catholic-Protestant-Jewish relations; the role of lay organizations; the vital financial resources provided by European societies such as *La Propagation de la Foi* in Lyon; and liturgical and devotional practices. All are mentioned, but, with the exception of brief sections on the anti-Catholic Know-Nothing and American Protective Association movements, only in passing.

The bibliography concentrates on published works but also includes several dissertations, theses, and brief monographs. The notes, however, indicate extensive use of the rich archival resources at the Catholic Archives of Texas in Austin. Citations of archival material, however, do not indicate whether the cited materials are original documents or photocopies, transcriptions, or calendars (summaries) of original materials in other archives such as the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon, France, or the University of Notre Dame Archives in South Bend, Indiana. Notes are sometimes incomplete. Footnote 35 on page 112 concerning Sam Houston's 1855 statement on Know-Nothingism and Catholicism includes no page reference. It is also not clear that the same paragraph's material on the political allegiance of the state's sixty-one newspapers is taken from the same source. The absence of maps also makes it difficult to follow the author's detailed accounts of changing political and diocesan boundaries, long missionary journeys, and local congregational development.

While the author questions Jean Marie Odin's portrait of and initial actions concerning the two resident Spanish priests in San Antonio, he offers no documentary evidence for this position other than possible cultural bias. Several minor mistakes should be noted: Bishop Dubourg, not Dubourge (253); *janvier*, not *januier* (243-44); Etienne Rousselon, not Etiene Rousellon (253). Bishop Elder of Natchez was exiled by a federal officer to Vidalia for seventeen days, not "some months."(135) The boatload of priests, religious and

seminarians who arrived in New Orleans in 1863 aboard the *Ste. Genevieve* were destined for both Louisiana and Texas, not just Texas (127-29, 136-37).

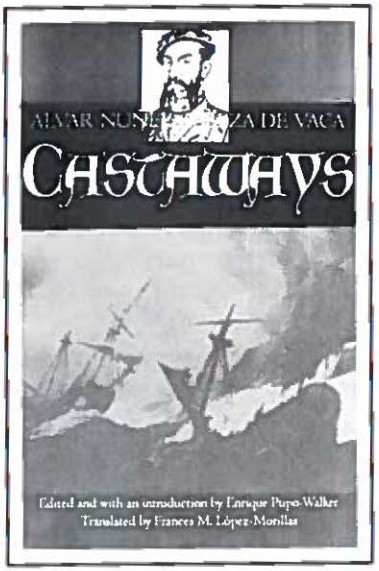
In summary, Moore has accomplished his stated purpose of narrating the administrative development of Texas Catholicism from 1836 to 1900 in a clear, concise, and often interesting way. His scope, however, is limited, and much of the story of nineteenth-century Texas Catholics, particularly lay people, remains to be told.

Charles E. Nolan Archdiocese of New Orleans

Enrique Pupo-Walker, ed., and Frances M. López, trans. *Castaways: The Narrative of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, *xxx*, pp. 158. Cloth, $30.00. ISBN 0-520-07062-3 / Paper, $12.00. ISBN 0-520-07063-1

On April 14, 1528, the expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez reached the Tampa Bay region to initiate the exploration and occupation of Florida. After four months of overland travel northwesterly to Apalachee, Narváez determined that he could not readily reach northern New Spain by land, and returned to the coast to rendezvous with his fleet and to sail for Cuba. However, due to his lengthy absence, the ships' commanders had considered the expedition lost and had returned to Santiago. Marooned, the two hundred and forty remaining Spaniards slaughtered their horses, dried the meat, and used the hides for canteens and as coverings over wooden frames to make boats to cross the Gulf of Mexico. Their departure from Florida in September began one of the greatest epics of survival and strangest episodes in the history of the Americas.

Following the Gulf Coast westward, the expedition passed the mouth of the Mississippi River, and in November some eighty survivors reached Galveston Bay in Texas. By the spring of 1529, exposure, disease, hunger, and Indian hostility reduced the Spaniards' numbers by over 75 percent, and those remaining gradually died or disappeared into the interior in attempts to reach New Spain. By late 1532 only four survivors remained in Texas: Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, treasurer and chief magistrate of the expedition; Andrés Dorantes and his Moroccan slave, Estebanico; and Alonso del Castillo. At that time, moving from Indian group to Indian group, practicing amateur medicine and often serving as slaves, the Spaniards began an erratic journey across Texas, northern Nuevo León-Coahuila, Chihuahua, and Sonora until April of 1536 when they were met by a detachment of soldiers serving Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán near San Miguel de Culicán, a few miles from the Pacific Ocean.



A narrative of these wanderings, with substantial ethnographic information relative to the Coahuiltecan, Jumano, Opata, and Piman groups, was produced by Núñez upon his return to Spain in 1537 and appeared in print in Zamora in 1542. A second edition, used for this translation, was corrected and edited by Núñez and printed in Valladolid in 1555. Since then, numerous editions of the *Naufragios y Comentarios* have appeared in Spanish, and since the mid-nineteenth century several English-language translations have appeared. This new one, made from Pupo-Walker's 1992 Spanish edition, is very readable while retaining a fine tone of sixteenth-century language. The editing is from a literary, rather than historical, viewpoint, and the volume is published as part of a series of Latin American literature in translation and literary criticism.

In his introduction the editor provides a concise history of the expedition and its aftermath, the career of Núñez Cabeza de Vaca in Río de la Plata, and his tribulations and death in Spain. *Castaways,* dedicated by Núñez to his king and benefactor, Carlos V, is fundamentally a report of the author's merits and services, presented with appropriate imaginative and exaggerated descriptions and religious allusions, in a medieval rhetorical style. Ethnological observations are frequently highly detailed, but geographically and chronologically the report is vague and often confusing. While possibly not of importance to literary studies, it is of interest to historians that such early Spanish reports on the New World were generally produced as reports of merits and services and intentionally vague as a means to avoid stringent censorship and probable prohibition of publication.

Further, historians will also note shortcomings in annotation of ethnographic descriptions, geographic locations, and the limited identification of flora and fauna. Little information on persons is provided, and some historical details, such as the idea that the "North Sea" might be the Gulf of Mexico or the Pacific, or that the Pápago were related to Apaches of the Concho basin and extended southward to the Río Yaqui, reflect the problems of crossing disciplines in editing. In an otherwise fine bibliography, the absence of citation to the route study by Carl O. Sauer is notable, but an analytical index makes the volume more readily usable as an historical document.

Nicely reproduced black and white illustrations are well chosen, though the late Ted (not "Ettore") De Grazia's work is totally lost by not showing his great mastery of pastel colors. Geographical views and other contemporary maps of the area would have been more appropriate.

Despite these criticisms, this is a fine translation of the first published narrative relative to the southeastern United States, and essential to any collection devoted to the subject.

W. Michael Mathes

Professor Emeritus
University of San Francisco

John E. Salvaggio. *New Orleans' Charity Hospital: A Story of Physicians, Politics, and Poverty.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992, *xvi*, pp. 406. $45.00. ISBN 0-8071-1613-0

Established in 1736 through the beneficence of the estate of Jean Louis, a French shipbuilder in New Orleans, Charity Hospital holds the honor of being the oldest continually operated hospital in the United States. Its long struggle to serve the indigents of New Orleans as well as those residents of the upper Mississippi River valley and the Gulf Coast who often found themselves ill and destitute in the Crescent City has made for a colorful, fascinating history. Whether under French, Spanish, or American control, the institution became steeped in Louisiana history and the machinations of her politics. Salvaggio has done a masterful job in drawing upon his knowledge as a physician as well as making use of the methodology of historical research to trace the good, bad, and transitional times of the "Big Free" down to the current gubernatorial administration of Edwin Edwards.

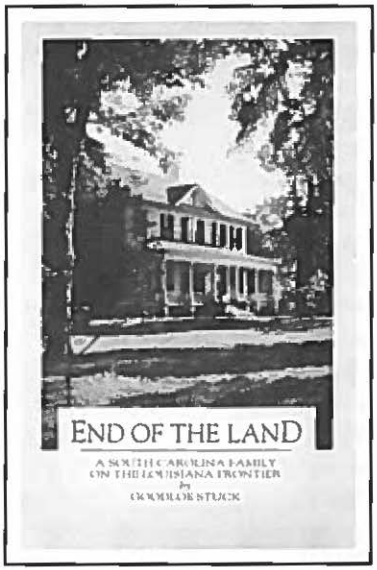
Salvaggio dutifully follows Charity Hospital from its founding through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries using the standard sources available. He describes the epidemics of smallpox, cholera, and yellow fever that periodically ravaged the citizens and visitors in New Orleans. However, it is not until he comes to Huey Long's

day, the rise of the "New" Charity, and the modern era that he reaches his stride. As a keen, personal observer, with colleagues in the Louisiana State University and the Tulane University Medical Schools which both wanted to use the facility as a primary teaching hospital, Salvaggio is able through the benefit of interviews to give invaluable inside information on the inner workings of the hospital. He describes the infighting among state and local politicians and their medical allies seeking to control the institution, and the cyclical ups and downs of the hospital dictated by various political administrations. Further, Salvaggio documents incidents such as the Family Health Foundation dispute between the head of the Department of Health and Human Resources and the governor which kept medical caregivers in turmoil during the 1970s. He traces the AIDS epidemic in New Orleans in the 1980s, which gave Charity interns and physicians an opportunity to work in a well-equipped, federally funded treatment and evaluation unit, even though other major facilities in the hospital were being eliminated. Indeed, physicians, interns, and the medical staff at Charity were apt to see and to treat many maladies and conditions that they would seldom, if ever, encounter in private institutions.

Louisianians will hardly be shocked by the graft, corruption, cronyism, and scandals associated with Charity. Readers who live outside the state will certainly gain important sociological, medical, and political insights into the history of Louisiana. Equally important, they will read of the sacrifices that organizations such as the Sisters of Charity, or individuals such as nurse-administrator Sister Stanislaus or physicians such as Rudolph Matas and E. W. Alton Oschner made to bring improved health care to indigent Louisianians. Considering the unfortunate oil bust and the financial plight of the Louisiana economy Salvaggio raises valid concerns over whether or not Charity Hospital in New Orleans or any of her satellite sisters scattered across the state will survive the final decade of the twentieth century, despite federal infusion of Medicare and Medicaid money. A hospital with a decaying physical plant, financial woes, and frustrating difficulties in obtaining adequate, well-trained staffing, provokes many critics of Charity to question whether ot not indigent patients should be housed in private facilities with the state and federal health care systems paying the bills. But, if Charity closes, Louisiana will lose an institution with a long and colorful history which sets it apart from the hospitals in other southern states.

Marshall Scott Legan Northeast Louisiana University

Goodloe Stuck. *End of the Land: A South Carolina Family on the Louisiana Frontier.* Ruston, Louisiana: Louisiana Tech University, 1992, pp. 209. $24.95. ISBN 0-940231-07-7



The southern planter class is often seen as the subject of drama–the play of triumph and tragedy on a vast stage. Yet no part of the planters' lives so clearly combined challenge with opportunities for either fortune or disaster as westward migration. To be sure, some novelists have tried their hand at this subject. William Faulkner had given us the unforgettable picture of Thomas Sutpen, the self-made man who carved riches out of frontier Mississippi. However, the westward saga was more far reaching than Faulkner's depiction and involved many men who were far better heeled than the crude Sutpen. Indeed, the move to the west by well-to-do young men intent on retaining and increasing their wealth had been a theme that historians have only recently begun to explore. *End of the Land* tells this story of westward migration and its wrenching impact on one southern family–that of Henry and Maria Marshall and their children of Caddo Parish, Louisiana.

Their story begins with a courtship and marriage in South Carolina in 1832 as young Henry Marshall successfully wooed Maria Taylor, the well-educated, sheltered daughter of a Columbia family. This marriage took place in a world of political and economic unrest–South Carolina was attempting to nullify the tariff and to defy the federal government. At the same time a tide of migration was surging from the old seaboard states of Virginia and the Carolinas to the Southwest–Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana in particular. Henry Marshall, trained as a lawyer but owner of a plantation in Society Hill, took part in both these major movements. He supported nullification, but became far more interested in moving to the West.

A plantation in the West could not be built in a day, even by a man as entranced with the Southwest as Henry Marshall. He made his first visit to inspect western lands in the fall of 1833, surveying in part where his relatives and his in-laws later settled in Alabama and Mississippi. Not until the summer of 1835 did he shut down his law practice and sell his South Carolina lands. By then he had

decided on lands in northwestern Louisiana near the fledgling settlement of Shreveport on the Red River. He moved his slaves there late in 1835.

Henry's fascination with the untamed Red River lands and Maria's attempts to reconcile herself to the frontier establish major themes for almost three-fourths of the book. Stuck seldom quotes Maria Taylor Marshall on migration but makes clear her silent distrust of leaving "civilization." However, unlike the unfeeling husbands depicted by historian Joan Cashin in her recent book on migration, Henry Marshall tried to humor as well as to counter his wife's distaste for the new plantation they called "Land's End." During the six years after Maria's arrival in Louisiana in February 1837, he and she apparently agreed that she and the children could spend almost four in South Carolina visiting her parents. Maria's parents stayed at least an additional six months with her in Louisiana. By 1843 she had returned to Land's End to stay, and the remainder of the couple's ten children would be born there. The Marshalls' solution to her dislike of Louisiana also has implications for Joan Cashin's observations about how migration deprived planter women of an essential network of family relations. While Maria Marshall appears to have been emotionally dependent on her kin, she was never thoroughly separated from them. The Marshalls continued to visit Carolina and enrolled their children in schools there. More significantly her favorite cousin and her parents moved nearby in Louisiana. Yet, this was not enough to preserve Maria's sanity. Her mother–justifiably enough, it seems–worried that the loneliness of plantation life tended to exacerbate her daughter's withdrawn, depressive nature. While Maria Marshall's letters illustrate the life of a conscientious mother and plantation mistress, she became increasingly depressed after her mother's death in 1846. In 1851 she entered an asylum in Philadelphia where she died four years later.

While most of this book deals with the beginnings of Land's End plantation, the final few chapters detail a maturing family, their triumphs and finally their tragedies. In some ways these chapters open as a typical story of the high-flying 1850s when cotton prices soared. Henry Marshall built a new, far more imposing mansion house at Land's End: its furnishings were chosen by his daughters in New York after a European vacation. Yet, the accidental drowning of eighteen-year-old Thomas Marshall sounded a mournful note amidst the prosperity. When Henry Marshall participated as a delegate supporting secession in the convention that took Louisiana out of the Union and into the Confederacy, he little imagined that the Civil War would open such a period of darkness for his family. Disease carried off two daughters, and two remaining sons died of war-related illnesses before Henry's demise at age fifty-nine in 1864. Stuck

terminates his story there, leaving the reader to wonder what became of the remaining daughters and Land's End during the Reconstruction era.

The Marshalls' experiences have much to say about migration and women's part in it. Yet, because the author makes little effort to link his findings to recent historical works about planter women, their social life, and migration, he misses an opportunity to place his subjects in a wider context. This is unfortunate because it would also have given readers a sense of the extent to which the Marshalls resembled others of their class. Nonetheless, readers interested in western migration, the Marshall family, or the settlement of Caddo Parish will enjoy this well-constructed narrative.

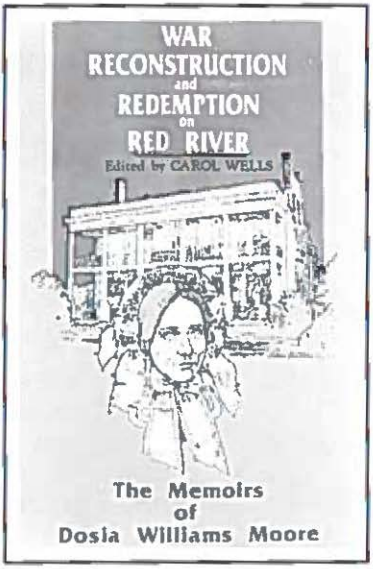
Jane Turner Censer George Mason University

Carol Wells, ed. *War, Reconstruction and Redemption of Red River: The Memoirs of Dosia Williams Moore.* Ruston, Louisiana: McGinty Publications, 1990, *x*, pp. 135. $19.95. ISBN 0-940231-06-9

Dosia Williams Moore's memoirs provide a brief glimpse of the social upheaval in Louisiana caused by both the Civil War and Reconstruction. They depict a region ravaged by war and reduced to poverty, while torn apart by racial strife. Correspondingly, Moore's perception of this turbulent age was distinctively influenced by her race and gender, suggesting a powerful relationship between the two, although the editor neglects this dimension.

Born in South Carolina, Moore was three years old when her family and its few slaves moved to Louisiana, settling in northern Natchitoches Parish. Near the outbreak of the Civil War her father moved the family to the rich Red River country in Rapides Parish. War, she said, made life become "changeful, uncertain, and exciting." Her father's enlistment in the Confederate cavalry and the presence of "Yankee" invaders following the Union Army's 1863 spring invasion supplied all the unwelcome changes and excitement she needed. Still a young child, Moore quickly became accustomed to "Blue soldiers" in the Red River region, even suggesting that one northern officer who had established his headquarters at her residence was a "human being after all." Moore admitted that her later hatred for the invaders ripened after listening to her elders recite tales of "Yankee" brutality and depravation. Despite her shallow characterizations of African Americans, Moore's discerning remarks about slave behavior should be of particular interest to southern social historians documenting the disintegration of the master-slave relationship. Moore recollected slaves refusing to work, portraying them as

"insolent" and in "open revolt." Consequently, fearing slave reprisals, her mother and other plantation women summoned the sole white man in the area (an elderly tutor) for "masculine advice," and after acknowledging his own impotence, he then left them and their children to their fate. However, far from revolting, the slaves discovered that the Federals were not prepared to free them. Instead, federal troops demanded that slaves remain sub-servient plantation laborers until the war's close.



Predictably, Moore saved her bitterest invective for Reconstruction, labeling it the "unseen monster." Her Dunningesque interpretation scorned carpetbaggers and the "ignorant" freedmen, claiming that African Americans were "made a tool in the hands of unscrupulous wretches, to torture, crush, and humiliate the class of whites who had been in the ascendance before the War." Moore claimed she had lived in mortal fear of blacks, adding that their "threats against the womanhood of the white people were unspeakable," and apparently unrecordable.

Yet, Moore's memoirs clearly capture the widespread racial violence of the Reconstruction era in her descriptions of the Colfax Riot of 1873 and the murder of Lloyd Shorter, a black United States marshall. According to Moore, the Colfax Riot proved the defining moment in the struggle between the state's "carpetbag government" and the white citizenry, ultimately saving the state from "utter destruction" by the Radical Republicans. Though Moore failed to consider the sheer savagery of the riots (which modern scholars believe resulted in the deaths of at least fifty blacks and only two whites), she did discuss in considerable detail her community's elaborate efforts to shield the white rioters from federal troops by establishing a hidden refuge deep within the Bayou Boeuf swamp. This ruse, coupled with local white antipathy toward the government, thwarted officials' efforts to deal with the crime. Thus, when Lloyd Shorter threatened to make arrests, a band of the "more conservative white men" murdered him, afterwards disemboweling his body and throwing it into the swamp. This atrocity symbolically eliminated a final vestige of local black "impertinence" in challenging white supremacy.

Unfortunately, after her account of Reconstruction, Moore's memoirs consist of only a few well-worn stories and vignettes. Hence "Redemption" as part of the title seems inappropriate given Moore's disregard for chronicling this era in any detailed fashion. On the other hand, Carol Wells deserves credit for weaving scattered and conflicting accounts into a coherent narrative up through the post-Reconstruction material. The editor's regrettable decision to allow Moore's descriptions to stand independently without editorial analysis or alternative interpretation could leave readers with a distorted view of events. Wells compounds this problem by corroborating Moore's memoirs with contemporary sources supporting the author's biased perceptions. This one-sidedness could have been corrected if the editor had either supplied a brief bibliography or placed the book within its proper historical context at the outset.

For scholars of this age Moore's memoirs tantalize but ultimately disappoint. They allude to a relationship between race and gender but only explain it in the most superficial manner. However, general readers interested in Louisiana history and local color will find the work of some interest. In the final analysis, whatever slight merits the work may possess, it is of limited value for any serious study of Louisiana during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Bruce E. Matthews Auburn University

Briefly Noted:

Janice Feagin Britton. *Tales of an Uncommon Man: Uncle Ort's Keepsakes.* Fairhope: The Slow Loris Press, 1994, pp. 275. Paper, $14.95. ISBN 0-9643940-0-6

Ort Ertzinger (1889-1959) grew up in Huntington, Indiana and moved to Bay Minette in 1909 where he became prominent in the life of that town and Baldwin County over the next half a century. This account of the energetic Ertzinger's fascinating life is set against the history of his adopted home county. The author, his niece, spent seven years assembling material which ably describes his life and the development of one of the Gulf Coast's fastest growing and largest counties.

Copies may be ordered from the author at 500 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL 36527.

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From the Archives . . .
Newcomb Archives, Tulane University

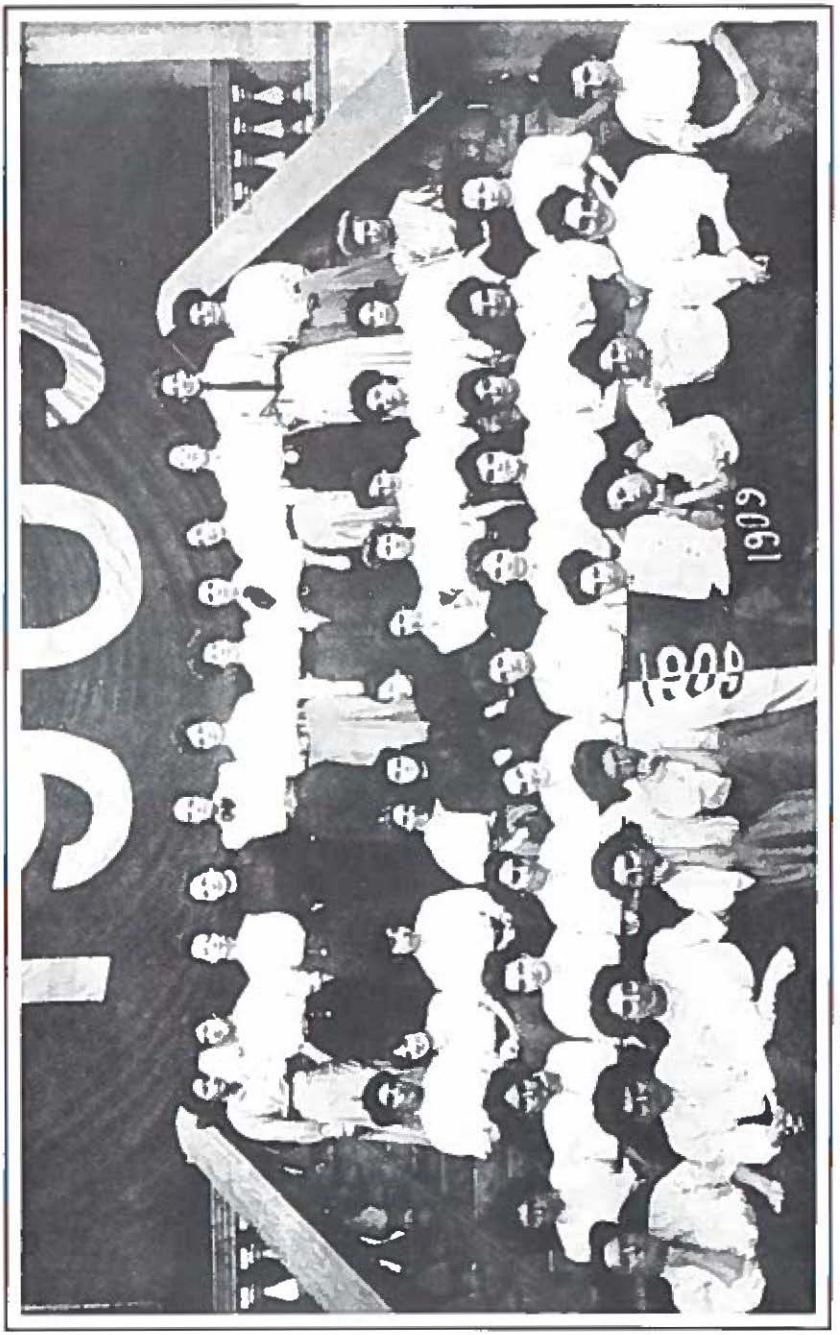
Susan Tucker

An education for women should look to "the practical side of life as well as to literary excellence...." wrote Josephine Louise Newcomb in an 1866 letter to the administrators of the Tulane University Educational Fund. Desiring to establish a college in her daughter's name, Mrs. Newcomb's bequest enabled the creation of the first coordinate college for women in the United States, the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College of Tulane University.

Today, young women and men at Tulane University attend classes together but the structure of the coordinate college exists to provide separate counseling and programming for women students. Also, within the structure of the women's college is the Newcomb Archives, a repository rich in the history of southern women's education, and certainly a testament to both the practical and literary side of the college's history.

The archives was established in 1989 with the help of a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Housed within the Newcomb College Center for Research on Women, the archives contains over one thousand cubic feet of records of the college, manuscript collections of alumnae and other southern women, and art and artifacts created under the auspices of the Newcomb Pottery and various home economics classes in the early years of the college. Additionally, the archives contains a small number of collections relating to the women's movement of the 1970s.

Newcomb College is an unusual school in many ways and its early records reflect a varied faculty, staff, and student body. The faculty minutes and papers of the administration show how the curriculum sought to provide women with the same education as men and at the same time, sought to find them some sort of means to make a living in economically depressed New Orleans. The urban character of the school meant the creation of records which deal with large numbers of day students and among these, Catholic and Jewish students, groups usually not so important in the women's colleges of the South or Northeast. Other records deal with the shipment of pottery to large exhibitions in places throughout Europe and the U.S.,



Newcomb Class of 1909

Sadie Irvine, a prominent artist and 1906 Newscomb graduate.

the literary efforts of students torn between progressive politics and debutante balls, and fifty years of surveys detailing the lives of educated women.

The college also maintained an early affiliation with a nursery school, the first of its kind in the Deep South, an institution whose records are also housed within the archives. A photographic collection of some two thousand images illustrates the various moves of the campus from near downtown to the Garden District and finally to the Broadway campus adjacent to Tulane's uptown campus. The physical education classes are heavily documented in these photos, showing teacher Clara Baer's role as author of the rules for girl's basketball and Newcomb ball. Baer, a leader in the physical education movement, also is credited as one of the first to use the one handed basketball shot. Her gymnasium containing machines not unlike one finds today are also well documented in the photographs, along with countless other images of student life.

Newer collections include the records of the Women in the Mainstream Pavilion of the 1984 World's Fair; the Jacqueline Michot Ceballos papers which deal with the early years of the National Organization for Women in New York City as seen through the work and eyes of a Louisiana woman; the papers of historian Mary Gehman; the papers of the local Planned Parenthood Association; and the papers of Emily Card. Card, a 1963 graduate of Newcomb, was the author of the 1974 Equal Credit Opportunity Act; her papers date from the early 1970s through 1988, and show the evolving nature of women's access to financial institutions.

Since 1989, the archives has published a guide to records of the college, a guide to scrapbooks in the archives, a guide to records and manuscripts on women in New Orleans, and other bibliographies and finding aids as a part of its ongoing *Archival and Bibliographic Series.* The archives also offers small stipends each year to scholars concerned with women's education. During the '94-'95 academic year preference in the awarding of these stipends was given to researchers interested in Newcomb pottery, the lives of artists educated at Newcomb, particularly Sadie Irvine, Harriet Joor, and Juanita Mauras, or the life courses of educated women during the first half of this century. For information about these stipends for 1995-96 contact Susan Tucker at the Newcomb College Center for Research on Women, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 70118, (504) 865-5238.

Index

The Gulf Coast Historical Review has compiled an index to its last four years' issues. It is in two separate parts: the Author/Editor Index and the Title Index. The first lists items alphabetically according to the author's last name. Book reviews are listed under both the author of the book being reviewed and the writer of the review itself. Articles or books with more than one author or editor are listed under each writer's name. This portion of the index is useful in determining if a writer had a review or article published in the GCHR and perhaps in noting the total contributions of a given writer to the journal over the period.

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