

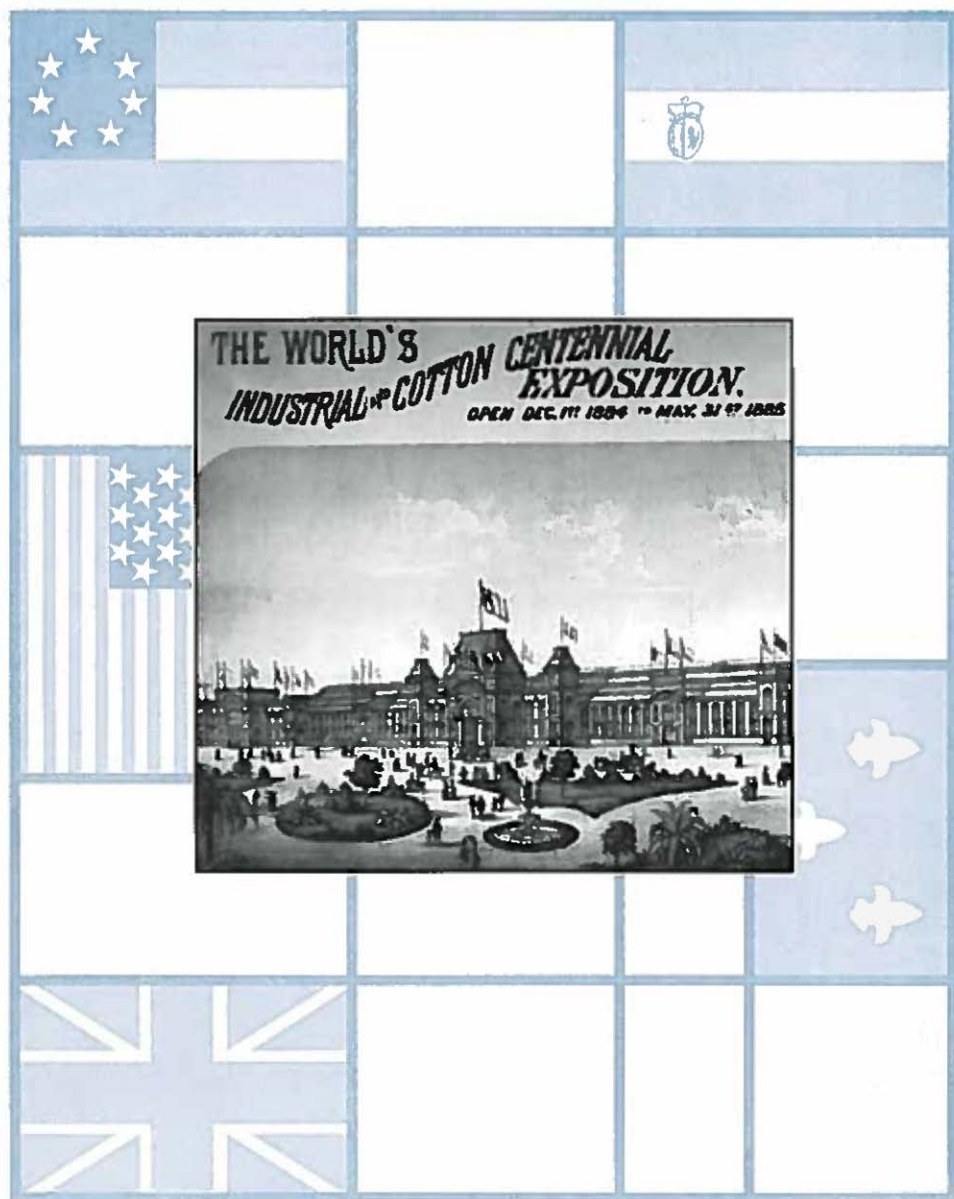
G|S
H|R

Gulf South Historical Review

Vol. 19

No. 1

The Journal of the Gulf South Historical Association





Gulf South Historical Review

Vol. 19

Fall 2003

No. 1

Editorial Advisory Board

Dr. Bradley G. Bond
University of Southern Mississippi

Dr. Carl Brasseaux
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Dr. Jane Dysart
University of West Florida

Dr. John D. W. Guice
University of Southern Mississippi

Dr. Roman Heleniak
Southeastern Louisiana University

Mr. Jay Higginbotham
Mobile Municipal Archives

Dr. Harvey H. Jackson
Jacksonville State University

Dr. Tennant McWilliams
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Dr. Robert Snyder
University of South Florida

Dr. Kenneth R. Stevens
Texas Christian University

Dr. Lewis N. Wynne
Florida Historical Society

From the Editor. . .

There is an unusually wide array of articles in this issue, starting with this year's William Coker Award winner, Carol Ellis, writing about Fr. Albert Foley and the confrontation between him and Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963 Birmingham. Then we can explore Don Bernado de Gálvez' impact on the colonial fortunes of the tiny trading town of Mobile nearly two hundred years earlier with Dr. Robin Fabel. We also examine tax laws and architectural design in antebellum Mobile, Natchez, and Vicksburg in an article by an accounting professor and his preservationist partner. Dr. Ari Kelman looks at a late nineteenth-century fight over jetties in the Mississippi, showing us that there is a lot to be learned from studying the river. Finally, we are printing an account of the recently reopened Museum of Mobile, which Dr. Clarence Mohr praises as a national-class museum, well worth a visit, and probably more than one.

There are a lot of different kinds of history here, unusual approaches, as well as more traditional studies which are certainly done well! From colonial days to the present, there are articles to mark your way.

The book reviews are always fascinating, and indeed some people say they read them first. This is no time to change your ways. In this issue there are many interesting reviews of books on subjects from military history to Civil Rights and race relations. Finally, check out the announcement of a new website on Galveston, provided by the Rosenberg Library. Have a look at the wave of the future.

On October 16-18 the Gulf South Historical Association is having its twenty-second annual meeting in Pensacola Beach at the Hampton Inn. There will be special theme sessions on the Louisiana Purchase on the occasion of its two hundredth anniversary. For more information contact Dr. Samuel Hyde, Center for Southeastern Louisiana Studies, Southeastern Louisiana University, SLU 10730, Hammond, LA 70402. The phone number is 985-549-2151; email <selahistory@selu.edu>.

Another good issue of your journal to start a busy fall!

Editorial Staff

Clarence L. Mohr, Executive Editor
Michael V. Thomason, Managing Editor
Elisa Baldwin, Associate Editor
Carol Ellis, Margaret Istre, Editorial Assistants
Debbie Thomaston, Administrative Assistant

Book Review Editor
James McSwain, Tuskegee University

The *Gulf South Historical Review* is the journal of the Gulf South History and Humanities Conference. It is published biannually in the fall and spring by the History Department of the University of South Alabama. The subscription price is \$20.00 per year with payment to accompany order. Inquiries about subscriptions should be sent to the History Department of the University of South Alabama, HUMB 344, Mobile AL 36688-0002. Manuscripts may be submitted to Dr. Thomason. E-mail communications may be sent to Dr. Thomason at thomason@jaguar1.usouthal.edu. Further information about the *GSHR* can be found on the web at www.southalabama.edu/archives/html/publications/archorder.htm. Click on publications. Authors should write for the *GSHR* style sheet before submitting a manuscript. All submissions are subject to the blind peer review process. Any claims for lost or missing issues must be made within six months of that issue's publication. The *Gulf South Historical Review* is not responsible for statements or opinions of fact made by its contributors. The *GSHR* is indexed and abstracted in *America: History and Life*. Readers will also find a subject index at www.southalabama.edu/archives/html/manuscript/gshrindex.htm. This journal is printed on acid-free paper.

© Copyright 2003
Gulf South Historical Review
ISSN 0892-9025

Table of Contents

Vol. 19

Fall 2003

No. 1

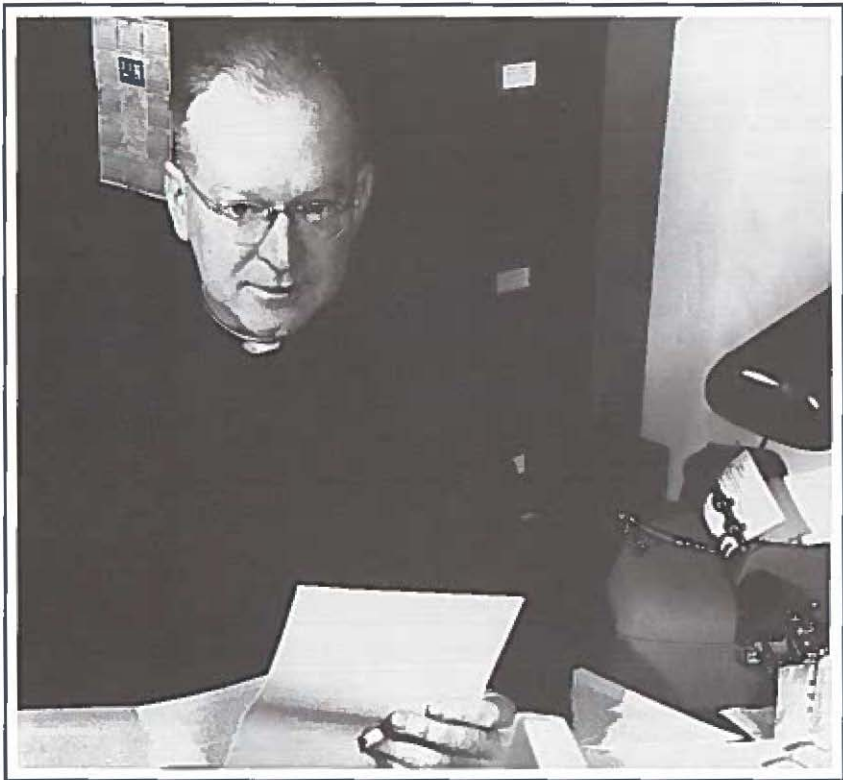
Articles:	Page
"The Tragedy of the White Moderate": Father Albert Foley and Martin Luther King, Birmingham, 1963 Carol Ellis	6
Reflection on Mobile's Loyalism in the American Revolution Robin F. A. Fabel	31
A Referendum on the River: The Mississippi Jetties Controversy Ari Kelman	46
Seeking a More Democratic Voice: New Approaches to the History of the Urban South at the Museum of Mobile Clarence L. Mohr	72
Investigating the Impact of Property Taxation on the Architecture of Antebellum Homes in Natchez, Vicksburg, and Mobile Andrew D. Sharp and Greta J. Sharp	79
Book Reviews:	
Rod Andrew Jr. <i>Long Gray Lines, The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915</i> Chris Ferguson	95
Thomas R. R. Cobb. <i>An Inquiry into the Law of Negro Slavery in the United States of America. To Which is Prefixed an Historical Sketch of Slavery</i> Dwayne Cox	97

Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott. <i>Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies</i>	Demetrius L. Eudell	98
Ariela J. Gross. <i>Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom</i>	Dwayne Cox	101
Aileen Kilgore Henderson. <i>Stateside Soldier: Life in the Women's Army Corp, 1944-1945</i>	Gregory Irwin	103
Loretta M. Long. <i>The Life of Selina Campbell: A Fellow Soldier in the Cause of Restoration</i>	Mark Wilson	105
Timothy J. Minchin. <i>The Color of Work: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Southern Paper Industry</i>	Roger Biles	108
Gerald J. Prokopowicz. <i>All For the Regiment: The Army of the Ohio, 1861-1862</i>	Stacy D. Allen	109
Herbert Randall and Bobs M. Tusa. <i>Faces of Freedom Summer: The Photographs of Herbert Randall</i>	Catherine M. Jannik	112
Ted Tunnell. <i>The Ordeal of Carpetbagger Marshall H. Twitchell in the Civil War and Reconstruction</i>	Terrence J. Winschel	114
Michael Wayne. <i>Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South</i>	Elaine Frantz Parsons	117

From the Archives:

Rosenberg Library Announcement	119
--------------------------------	-----

Cover Photo: *World's Industrial and Cotton Exposition, Main Building, 1884-85.* Historic New Orleans Collection.



Father Albert Sidney Foley Jr. at his Spring Hill College office around the time of his confrontation with Martin Luther King Jr. Museum of Mobile.

“The Tragedy of the White Moderate”: Father Albert Foley and Martin Luther King, Birmingham, 1963

Carol Ellis

Ms. Ellis was the 2002 winner of the William Coker award for the best graduate paper given at the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference held in Galveston, Texas.

On April 4, 1963, the *Mobile Register* announced a “new era” in politics in the city of Birmingham.¹ Despite the newspaper’s positive attitude, demonstrations convulsed the city in April and May. Even before the events of that spring, Birmingham had the reputation as “the worst city this side of Johannesburg, South Africa,” in race relations.² That reputation played out, both for good and for bad, in the streets that spring. It brought together many of the biggest names in the movement and some lesser known ones, all of whom worked for change in the city. It also brought disorder in the streets, the sight of police dogs lunging at innocent bystanders, and images of children in their Sunday best driven in all directions by water hoses, all of which shocked the nation.

Countless people took part in what happened in Birmingham in 1963. Some names are familiar to us. Other names we have forgotten. Fr. Albert S. “Steve” Foley Jr. is one of the forgotten participants.³ Foley, a Jesuit priest, intervened with King as the streets of Birmingham filled with its black citizens. In doing so he paid a price. The role of the southern Catholic in the Civil Rights Movement is an area of limited historiography. In fact, historical work on all facets of Catholics in American history “still lies on the margins.”⁴ This article reveals how the movement’s transformation from a city-by-city assault on the Jim Crow system “into a campaign for the national mobilization of black economic and political strength” affected the southern Catholic liberal.⁵ By examining Foley and his role in Birmingham, we can learn about the contributions and limitations of white liberals, particularly Catholic liberals, to the overall Civil Rights Movement. Such a study highlights racial moderation’s last gasp and allows us to see the new direction blacks took in the civil rights struggle.

From the early years of Foley’s priesthood he recognized that the South’s racial system was a malady that produced grave inequities for blacks. He did not, however, join with those who marched in the streets for immediate change of the system. Instead, he worked to educate

others about the issue in articles he wrote and workshops he conducted. He held membership in a number of Catholic and secular organizations dedicated to educating others about the evils of the Jim Crow system. He worked with local civil rights leaders and government officials in his adopted city of Mobile, Alabama, to dismantle back-of-the-bus seating, to contain the Ku Klux Klan, and to integrate lunch counters. Foley earned a national reputation for his workshops, many of which he held on the subject of race. But he preferred operating with small groups. His early experiences with these small group, face-to-face workshops that taught participants to discuss, mediate, and negotiate to solve common problems shaped Foley's approach to the 1963 Birmingham demonstrations.

Morton Sosna called southern liberals members of the "Silent South." The "Silent South" was made up of those elements of the white southern population who were "less apparent" than segregationists but who were a "nevertheless significant element of Southern society."⁶ Steve Foley was one of the "less apparent" southern liberals on the race issue. He possessed credentials both as a son of the South and a son of the church. He was born in New Orleans on November 6, 1912.⁷ Both Foley and his father were named after the Confederate general, Albert Sidney Johnston. Foley's grandfather served as Johnston's flag bearer during the Civil War. The younger Foley grew up in a segregated world, but he did not question the Jim Crow system during his youth. As a child he saw the film, *Birth of a Nation*. Like Virginia Durr, Foley "idealized" the Klan depicted in the film as his "boyhood heroes." The two "thought of the Klan as something noble and grand and patriotic."⁸

Foley spent nearly sixty years of his life in the service of the Jesuit order, an order viewed by many in the Catholic Church as the "Church's 'premier' liberal group, not hampered by the...piety which afflicts ordinary Catholics." However, so ingrained were the South's racial patterns within Foley that in his early years in the novitiate at Grand Coteau, Louisiana, he viewed himself as "quite unprejudiced" because of his work among the area's poor, black Catholics. Despite his racially optimistic opinion of himself, when a local lynching horrified his fellow northern-born novices, he thought the act was justified to protect southern women. By 1942, however, Foley began to be aware of "a shadow over [his] ministry" that "flawed it deeply from many angles."⁹

Real change in Foley's racial attitudes did not come until World War II when he was called on to teach a course in "Migration, Immigration, and Race" at Spring Hill College. The texts he read in preparation for that part of the course, including Gunnar Myrdal's *An*

American Dilemma, revealed segregation's injustice and fallibility. He discovered that the pervasiveness of segregation was "much more serious" than he had at "first realized." Its prevalence "intimidated him." Despite the daunting task facing him, he became committed to changing the South's racial pattern.¹⁰

From that time forward, no matter to what province Foley's superiors assigned him, he founded and joined organizations dedicated to educating others about and working toward racial tolerance. The rise in racial rhetoric and violence after the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 particularly disturbed Foley. In 1955 he became a founding member of the Alabama Council on Human Relations (ACHR), Alabama's "only truly integrated organization." Then, in 1961, the civil rights division of the Justice Department appointed him to the Alabama Advisory Committee (AAC) to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission (USCRC), one of fifty state advisory panels. The AAC acted as the eyes and ears of the Civil Rights Commission on issues related to civil rights in Alabama.¹¹ Affiliation with these two groups placed Foley in Birmingham in 1963.

Birmingham's long road to the spring of 1963 began after the Freedom Rides presented the city with a disastrous public relations fiasco. The national spectacle resulting from racists beating integrated interstate bus passengers to the point of hospitalization disgusted some members of Birmingham's business community. They decided it was time to do something. Realizing that no real progress was possible while Connor and the other two city commissioners remained in office, David Vann and Abraham Berkowitz, two Birmingham attorneys, created Citizens for Progress (CFP). The two men began to plan the political removal of Bull Connor. They led a petition drive to change the city's form of government. The two men's efforts succeeded in getting a referendum on the mayor/council form of government placed on the November 1962 ballot.

Meanwhile, beginning in January 1962, Fred Shuttlesworth's Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR) along with students from Miles College initiated a boycott of Birmingham's segregated stores. Through negotiations Shuttlesworth extracted a promise that the business community would remove segregation signs from their establishments. The businessmen feared Connor's reaction to such a deal, though, and reneged on their promise. Shuttlesworth then approached King and the Southern Leadership Christian Council (SCLC) at a board meeting in Nashville and asked them to join forces with his organization "in a massive campaign against segregation in

of the building. However, as Abernathy addressed the crowd and called for volunteers to participate in the next day's demonstrations, his eyes spotted Foley standing in the back. Abernathy interrupted his speech to ask if the audience recalled the resolution of the previous week "condemning what Fr. Foley had said in criticism of their movement." He then prompted the gathering by asking, "We didn't condemn Father Foley, did we?" "No, of course [not]," the group dutifully replied. Next, King's right-hand man informed his audience that he "was happy to announce" that the priest was present. He invited Foley to "come up to the platform" where King, Abernathy, and the Black Muslim Jeremiah X stood, and then to join the crowd.²⁸

Foley moved to the front of the church and continued up to the platform where, as he passed, witnesses heard him mutter, "How did I get myself in this mess?" On the platform he shook hands with Abernathy and King "in token of mutual forgiveness such as [they] had exchanged over the phone...the day before." King turned to the audience and asked rhetorically, "We still love Father Foley, don't we?" Then King clasped Foley in one arm and Jeremiah X in the other and said in the oft-repeated phrase, "We don't love what Brother X advocates, black supremacy, and we don't love white supremacy, but we love our white brother and we love integration."²⁹

After embracing, King took the microphone. Foley "watched him very closely," trying to learn "the secret" to King's "power" over people. What the priest discovered was King's "great emotional and symbolic appeal." Then, Foley turned to appraise the civil rights leader's audience. Those attending, Foley estimated, were "lower class Negroes, easily identifiable as domestics and day laborers." "Few and far between," the priest wrote, "were men of [the] upper classes."³⁰

Foley had traveled to Birmingham on April 9 with "the hope of getting some associations going." He returned to Mobile late on April 10 with the feeling that his aspiration had been "a relatively illusory hope." Still, hope died hard in this priest: "If Birmingham [can] just weather two or three more days without a major outbreak, the issue [could] be settled" when the new government came in.³¹

Real horror and tragedy, however, greeted Birmingham, the state, and the nation Friday, May 3. During the daily march, Connor ordered his deputies to turn high-power water hoses on the marchers, many of whom were school children. Shortly after, Foley issued two press releases. In the first, the chairman of the AAC tried to put to rest the continuing fire storm caused by the *Frontiers International* newspaper article. Foley told the press that he wanted it "clearly understood" that he had "no quarrel" with King. His and King's "differences" were

"solely on matters of timing and tactics." He called King the "symbol and spearhead" of the movement, and decried the use of "police dogs, fire hoses and other forms of violence" in Birmingham. Still, the merchants and the business community of Birmingham were, according to the cleric, "dismayed" that King would launch the demonstrations without allowing Boutwell's government to "prove itself" concerning civil rights.³²

Meeting later with the city's black leaders, the press release went on to relate, Foley "advised" Birmingham's African Americans to "follow the example of the Negro political leadership in Mobile." He then related details about how Mobile's moderate leadership had negotiated to achieve token steps at integration. Foley continually tried to push for the same result in Birmingham. He again used the opportunity to call on King to stop the demonstrations, publicly stating that further marches could not "bring about a climate of racial understanding...under the conditions now existing."³³

The priest ended the press release by stressing the "sincere and progressive action" that the AAC and USCRC had "demonstrated." Foley advised the city's blacks not to put themselves in the same "position that they [had] so strongly criticized"—that of an "arrogant attitude" by white people. Then he spoke directly to King "in the name of properly, peacefully achieved civil rights for all citizens" and asked him to "create an end to disorder in the streets." Only by stopping the extralegal demonstrations, Foley wrote, could King show that "the Negro race deserves the responsibility that it has demanded."³⁴

Shortly after these events, Foley issued another statement to the press in which he said King "at first agreed" to negotiate but "then changed his mind without notice." The assertion incensed Wyatt Walker, the ambitiously brash acting director of the SCLC. He called Foley "a blatant liar." City newspapers also printed a repeat of Foley's earlier declarations regarding King's presence in the city. In response, Walker sent letters to both the *Birmingham Post-Herald* and Foley threatening legal action if they did not "immediate[ly]" recant. Shuttlesworth also telegraphed the priest to demand a retraction, telling Foley that his allegations were "an attack on every member of the [SCLC] board." The leader of the ACMHR said in the telegram that he did "not wish as Christian brothers to resort to the courts" but he "demand[ed]" that Foley "either name" his "informant" or publicly retract his statement.³⁵

Foley did send a letter of repentance and retraction to the SCLC. In it he expressed his "profoundest apologies" for the misunderstanding, but he reiterated that his words had been "misconstrued, taken out of

context, and distorted" by the press. Foley then demanded that Walker retract the "blatant liar" charge. The newspaper also printed a retraction, stating that it had "no information" to confirm that Foley's allegations were true.³⁶

After these series of newspaper statements by Foley, members of the SCLC and others wrote President Kennedy requesting the removal of Foley as chairman of the AAC. Fellow members of the AAC counteracted those requests with their own letters in support of the priest. Judge Edward McLaughlin of Anniston, Alabama, wrote to tell Foley how "ironic" it would be if King's campaign "should deprive the committee of one of its strongest members." The judge thought Foley's removal would be ironic because Foley was such "an ardent advocate of the Negro cause." Charles Prestwood also thought it was "imperative" that Foley remain as chair, and considered anyone who would question Foley's "sincerity and devotion...to the dispossessed of Alabama...either a damn fool or just looking for publicity." The cleric also received telegrams of support "strongly" urging him to "continue [his] commission leadership."³⁷

The day after the Birmingham police turned water hoses on the marching school children, Vincent Townsend, of the *Birmingham News*, appealed to the priest to contact King again and ask the civil rights leader to "halt the demonstrations." Foley agreed to try again, especially in light of what he called the "near-disaster riot" in the city the day before. By now, however, after the Frontiers International disagreement and Foley's press statements condemning King's actions, the civil rights leader was "reluctant" to talk to Foley. The priest insisted, and the two went on to have a bitter conversation.³⁸

To begin, Foley brought up King's earlier broken promise to negotiate with the white merchants. King repeated that "he had never been aware of any agreement to negotiate"—only that he had told Foley he would take it up with the black negotiating committee. He agreed that negotiations were "a good idea," but he reminded Foley that he had said that "he did not want to be on the negotiating committee." Foley told King that it no longer mattered who negotiated. "We [are] faced with a major catastrophe," he reported. The priest warned King: "Now that the K.K.K. realize[s] that the police [have] their hands full...[the police will] not be able to give the protection which has been given in the past month." At that King again accused Foley of not understanding the movement. Blacks needed, King said, "a full show revolution of tremendous impact," and the presence of the KKK would only add to that. "If the Klan [comes] into Birmingham," King told

Foley, "the Klan must be condemned," just as the racist actions of Bull Connor and other white Birminghamians were condemning segregation.³⁹

Foley implored King. He told the preacher that it was within his power to prevent further violence. The only means black people had to achieve their goals, King answered, was to "stand up in a non-violent, orderly, democratic way." Foley replied that actions in the city over the previous days "had in them the explosive possibilities of making things so much worse for the Negroes in Birmingham." If King persisted, the priest implied, the civil rights leader's claim of nonviolent protest was little more than "an empty boast."⁴⁰ At that, King lost all patience with the priest:

King stated again that he was sorry I did not understand what was taking place, that I did not understand the movement. He felt that I did not understand the deep agony, the deep frustrations of the Negro. He also said that he was sorry that a man like that [like Foley] was at the head of the Advisory Committee of the Civil Rights Commission in Alabama.⁴¹

Then King said again that some people had labeled all of the struggles in which he had been involved "ill-timed." "This...[is] the tragedy of the white moderate," he told the priest. His "most serious obstacles were not the Klans' and the white Citizens' Councils," King cried, "but the white moderates who are more devoted to order than justice." Fed up with white timetables for black freedom, King said he would "rather deal with Bull Connor."⁴²

Connor's use of water hoses ended Foley's need to contact King again. The day that this conversation occurred, Kennedy sent Burke Marshall, chief of the Justice Department's civil rights division, to Birmingham to oversee negotiations. On May 10 the two parties reached an agreement. A new biracial committee held its first meeting July 16, three months after the historic spring of 1963 began.

While other Alabama Catholics, either overtly or covertly, supported the Jim Crow system, Albert Foley worked to change the status quo. His route from a benign acceptance of second-class citizenship for African Americans to a public indictment of segregation took him twenty-six years and hundreds of miles from his roots. World War II changed how many people thought about race. The Tuskegee Airmen and other black military personnel serving in the war invalidated the notion of the shiftless, lazy black man. Many African Americans came home from the war changed, ready to confront the Jim Crow system. Whites who served with African Americans during the war

came home changed, too. Joseph Langan, a Mobile native and later mayor of the city, was "angered" when he arrived back home after the war and found "the injustices of racial discrimination" everywhere apparent. Langan felt that he had taken the "wrong ship" home and had "arrived in Hitler's Germany instead."⁴³ Although he did not serve in the war, Foley's attitude toward race began to change with it as well. We can trace his interracial concern to the mid-World War II course on migration and race that he taught at Spring Hill College.

Initially, Foley also supported the black community's efforts at "learning to stand up for their civil and constitutional rights." Thus, when the Montgomery Bus Boycott occurred, he applauded the efforts of that city's black community. He commended them for not being "panicked into easy submission to injustice,...not yielding to intimidation."⁴⁴ This praise of King's early work in the movement faded by 1963, however. The bus boycott was relatively peaceful, quietly supported primarily by women. Foley praised it because it was largely violence-free. In 1956 blacks celebrated the small gain made in Montgomery that allowed them to sit anywhere on a bus they chose. In reality, however, African Americans were the city's primary bus riders. One could argue that the bus company gave up little. Blacks were still largely invisible to whites.⁴⁵ By 1963, African Americans were not as willing to accept such slow progress. In the intervening years between the bus boycott and Birmingham, Foley and the rest of the nation experienced the Autherine Lucy riots, the sit-ins, the violent Freedom Rides, and the rise of the Black Power movement. Opposed to militancy and violence, Foley no longer believed that blacks' refusal to yield to intimidation, a tactic that African Americans in Birmingham again employed against the violence there, could secure a peaceful conclusion to blacks' efforts. The only alternative he envisioned that would achieve the goal of social justice while maintaining calm was the human relations workshops he championed. To Foley, civil rights could not be divorced from human relations. Problems of violence against blacks, police mistreatment of minorities, unfair labor practices, and segregated schools were, in his view, essentially problems of irrational fear and a lack of education. He chose to fight against society's maladies using a small group forum as reflected in his workshops. He believed that only by people coming together in a supportive setting to learn from and about each other, coupled with educational instruction, could the barrier against such ignorance be broken.

His reputation as a promoter of an educational approach to human issues of equal justice and equal treatment led, in 1955, to his

association with the Alabama Council on Human Relations and, in 1961, his appointment to the Alabama Advisory Committee. Foley was an active member of both groups and worked toward better race relations in Birmingham. King and Foley had spoken over the years at the state ACHR meetings. No doubt, the renowned civil rights leader was aware where Foley stood in the civil rights struggle and knew of the Jesuit's work with Vann and others toward a new political era in Birmingham. Obviously, Vann, Townsend, and others thought Foley had some influence with King, judging by their requests to him to talk to King. More importantly, Foley and King were interested in the same goal: the end of segregation. Why then did Foley allow his actions in Birmingham to spiral into a heated confrontation with King and King's colleagues? While he was hardly the only person, black or white, who disagreed with King's methods in Birmingham, he spoke out publicly and questioned King's basic reasons and integrity. Why would he naively claim that he didn't think his words would be reported in the newspaper? Up to that point he had worked more than twenty years in a highly bureaucratized institution. One does not do that without acquiring or having at least some political savvy. When the head of an organization with ties to the federal government speaks out on a situation capturing the imagination of the entire nation, the media takes interest. How could an educated man, shrewd enough to be the chair of the AAC, have gotten himself into such a situation with King?⁴⁶

Clearly Foley was a liberal thinker on the issue of race. He was also paternalistic. His "persistent paternalism" is evident in his press release statement that King could only prove blacks' deserving of responsibility by stopping the demonstrations and settling for whatever steps toward desegregation the city or its businessmen were willing to give. The remark highlights his "deep aversion to any sign of militancy among black leaders" and his belief that they must overcome their cultural and economic disparity with whites before they would deserve equal treatment.⁴⁷ Another example of his paternalistic feelings toward blacks is his statement to A. G. Gaston, prominent black Birmingham businessman and owner of the Gaston Motel, that King and Abernathy were too politically naive to formulate a plan to take to the Boutwell government. Foley was also envious of King, mystified by his charismatic power over others, and resentful that the civil rights leader would not take his advice. We can sense his envy of and bewilderment over King's appeal when we imagine him standing in the back of the Sixteenth Street Church trying to gauge what made King so popular. Foley expressed his resentment of King when he twice described the civil rights leader as "completely incoherent and confused" during his

reports on the two men's conversations. Actually, King had only vigorously pursued his end of the conversation, not allowing Foley to break into his train of thought.⁴⁸ King talked of the immediate end of segregation. Foley spoke of a slow process.

One scholar labeled the southern liberal's support for a gradual approach to civil rights as the "progressive mystique." One can think of the "progressive mystique" as the image or appearance of toleration and open-mindedness shrouded in an insistence on consensus which, in effect, perpetuated the Jim Crow system. These liberals "believe[d] that conflict" was worse than segregation. For them, a consensus offered "the only way to preserve a genteel and civilized way of life." Foley, likewise, felt that racial progress could only come about in an atmosphere of consensus. Racial action to change the South's way of life for Foley meant discussion. As scholars of southern liberals theorize, "civility" was the "cornerstone of the progressive mystique."⁴⁹

Foley's firm stance on the rock of gradualism was ingrained within him. His language was strikingly different from that of King. He framed the issue of civil rights not in terms of a black woman's ability to try on a hat in a department store or the right of African Americans to sit and eat at any lunch counter they chose, but in terms of human relations. Deprivation of blacks' right to vote and to just wages was, Foley wrote, a loss of African Americans' "*human rights*." He "firmly believed that moral persuasion and an emphasis on *human relations*," rather than direct confrontation, "would bring about the desired integration." He further wrote that what "distressed" him "the most" about what happened in Birmingham was that King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference "promptly pulled out" of the city after the agreement, leaving it a human relations "shambles."⁵⁰

King, on the other hand, spoke in terms of African Americans' civil rights. The Trappist monk Thomas Merton wrote that "Ghandian nonviolence," as practiced by Martin Luther King, was "a kind of language." King's lexicon, however, as Thomas Merton suggested, was "beyond words." Merton believed that King's expressions of nonviolence verbalized "a purification of language, a restoration of true communication on a human level."⁵¹

Foley believed in and taught human communication skills. His "moral vision," however, "would not expand to include...confrontation for confrontation's sake."⁵² His workshop experiences also solidified his vision of how to end segregation. In them Foley taught others to come together to reach consensus on problems calmly and quietly. He imagined Birmingham could solve its problems in the same way. His background was with small groups, not huge masses. Like Virginia Durr

and Will Alexander, Foley was not "inclined toward...direct action." He wanted King to agree with him on "practical measures...in areas in which specific progress could be made." Ironically, he did not afford King the same opportunity for face-to-face discussion, choosing instead to make his differences with the civil rights leader public, a fact King pointed out in their talks. Foley simply could not see that King was no longer interested in a city-by-city assault on segregation. As Foley wrote, but somehow could not grasp, "The Negro leaders were...insistent on complete desegregation."⁵³

Foley, unlike King, did not recognize that Connor represented the deep-seated hatred Birmingham's white masses felt for its black citizens. As in Mobile, Foley expected Birmingham's moderate white businessmen and pillars of the black community to control the degree and process of racial progress. He believed that Birmingham's citizens, as true sons and daughters of the South, could correct their racial problems without outside interference. Encouraged by the Boutwell victory, Foley simply could not understand why King and Birmingham's blacks did not feel the same way and would not wait for Boutwell's government to take office.

King, however, saw Boutwell as "meaningless" to his ultimate goal: the intervention of the federal government and a strong federal program against public segregation. As some historians argue, King's genius was in realizing blacks would have to create stress on the region's system of segregation "sufficient" enough "to compel intervention from outside the South." Only by such means could Jim Crow be broken. Desegregation was not going to come from within the societal structure of the South. It was too ingrained. Abernathy echoes this assessment. Ultimately he and King were determined to come out of Project C with federal legislation. They were aware that if they were to "compromise" in Birmingham they would end their chance to effect change. Foley apparently never comprehended that reality. He assumed that King sought in Birmingham what blacks had achieved in Mobile: a desegregated park and a few black policemen.⁵⁴

On April 8, at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church nightly mass meeting, Foley seemed about to grasp King's ultimate goal. He wrote that he could see King was "committed to an all-or-nothing program and would consider negotiations and any compromise solutions to a gradual program of progress to be a surrender of the moral principles he had espoused." However, while intellectually he could support the ends, he could not support the means. He had lost "touch with shifts in the attitudes of average blacks" and with "the dynamics of black leadership" in the movement. Foley judged King as "a captive of his

own propaganda and completely bewitched by his own spell binding" powers. Foley was extremely cautious and unsettled by the idea of direct action. Colleagues also knew him as "intolerant of opposition," a man with tunnel vision who, once set upon a course, could not adapt to change.⁵⁵ By choosing to take the segregation battle into the streets, Foley felt King was undoing everything for which he had worked. King concluded, on the other hand, that Foley had "taken the wrong road," that he had "deserted" the black cause. He could not understand why Foley could no longer comprehend their "mood," and he placed him "in the category of the white moderate."⁵⁶

Foley was deeply effected when the bomb exploded at the Sixteenth Street Church on September 15, 1963. He wrote that the "callous cruelty" of that act made him "so ashamed." His shame was such that he went around "apologizing" to his "Negro friends for being white." "Fortunately," he consoled himself, "one of them...told me that he knew I was not 'that kind of white man.'"⁵⁷

Alabama's hard line racists of the civil rights era did not view Foley as their kind of white man. He was accustomed to seeing "nigger lover" splayed across his office door. Although he was born in the South, he "came to symbolize" for many white Alabamians, the "evil outsider agitator." To them, he "betrayed the white cause" and "the Christianity" white Catholics embraced. Others disagreed, considering him the "symbol [of] the progress made by the Church at large in race relations following the end of World War II." In hindsight, Foley told a local newspaper years later that he agreed with King's ultimate goal: "If the media had not covered...the activities...to attract attention in Washington, not as much progress would have been made." In Birmingham Foley was caught between daunting institutional obstacles, a racist white laity, a disinterested Kennedy administration, black and white moderates in Birmingham, a history of gradualism in Mobile, and his own inability to adapt. However, as Norman Jimerson told Wyatt Walker at the height of the Birmingham demonstrations, "Being a white liberal in the South [is] such a trial that one's motives [can] not be anything other than a commitment to human dignity."⁵⁸

Foley had spent years working for racial justice and an end to violence, many of them in the wilderness of interracial work, enduring feelings of ostracism and loneliness. He passed the "ultimate test of the white Southern liberal" that Sosna enunciated: that of "a willingness...to criticize" the "racial mores" of the South. He believed that "the place for the Southern liberal [was] in the South." Foley "condemned those who took shelter in the North collecting royalty



Father Foley walks with mourners for Martin Luther King Jr. in Mobile, April 7, 1968, three days after the assassination of the civil rights leader. Foley is shown slightly left of center with his head bowed. Palmer Collection, University of South Alabama Archives.

checks as the South convulsed in blood and hatred." He was a critic of those who saw the South's "desire to maintain white supremacy" as the "'central theme' of Southern history."⁵⁹ Yet, along with other liberals, secular and religious, he "erred in assuming that" he "represented the key to racial change." The tragedy of the white moderate, as King told Foley in their last conversation, was in his self-deception. As long as African Americans, as a whole, did not directly challenge segregation, "southern liberals were able to make a contribution toward improved race relations." As their critics noted, however, "in adopting methods and arguments" that counseled patience and gradualism, they "played into the hands of fire-eating segregationists." When the climactic moment came, Foley found that events had overtaken him. Younger black leaders like Martin Luther King were no longer willing to tolerate liberals like Foley. Their movement progressed. It became not only an "assault on segregation" but also "a rejection of the racial diplomats" like Foley. Unable to see the new direction blacks were headed, when the winds of change blew in Birmingham, Foley looked backward toward the only racial direction with which he was comfortable—human relations.⁶⁰

Notes

¹"Connor Regime Nearing End: Boutwell Win Opens New Era," *Mobile Register*, April 4, 1963. Albert Boutwell, the fifty-eight-year-old winner of the election, began his political career in an upset victory for student government president at the University of Alabama in the mid-1920s. "A proven bigot," Boutwell was the hand-picked choice of Birmingham political reformers, yet the Big Mules, the name given to white executives and attorneys who oversaw the city's iron and steel industries, also looked on him favorably. See Diane McWhorter, *Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama, the Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution* (New York, 2001), 312-13. Connor was an arch segregationist who had been in office in Birmingham for more than twenty years.

²Ralph David Abernathy, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down* (New York, 1989), 230.

³Taylor Branch, in *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963* (New York, 1988), says nothing about the priest. Abernathy, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*, is silent on Foley as well. The same is true of Martin Luther King, *Why We Can't Wait* (New York, 1964) and Coretta Scott King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York, 1969, revised 1993). McWhorter, author of *Carry Me Home*, 324-25, 335, contributes a total of seventeen lines to the cleric, while Glenn Eskew's *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill, 1997), 222-23, 380 n36, gives him even less, eleven. One reason for the lack of attention given Foley lies with his papers. The bulk of his

papers have been at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, since his death in 1990. They remained uncatalogued and unorganized until the author began work on them in June 2001. Therefore, scholars have had a difficult job accessing his papers or they have had to rely on other sources for information about Foley.

⁴David W. Southern, *John LaFarge and the Limits of Catholic Interracialism, 1911-1963* (Baton Rouge, 1996), xvii.

⁵Anthony Lake Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor: The South's Middle-of-the-Road Liberals and Civil Rights, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, 1982), 13. An example of recent historical research on the subject of Catholics in the movement is S. Jonathan Bass's *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders, and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail"* (Baton Rouge, 2002) which examines, among others, Joseph Durick, co-bishop of Alabama. For works on the topic of southern liberals and southern moderates, see Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor," Morton Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South: Southern Liberals and the Race Issue* (New York, 1977), John Egerton, *Speak Now against the Day: The Generation before the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 1994), Anthony P. Dunbar, *Against the Grain: Southern Radicals and Prophets, 1929-1959* (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1981), Linda Reed, *Simple Decency and Common Sense: The Southern Conference Movement, 1938-1963* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1991). For works about specific southern moderates and liberals see, among others, Harry S. Ashmore, *Civil Rights and Wrongs: A Memoir of Race and Politics, 1944-1994* (New York, 1994) and Virginia Foster Durr, *Outside the Magic Circle: The Autobiography of Virginia Foster Durr*, ed. Hollinger F. Barnard (Tuscaloosa, 1990).

⁶Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*, x; S. Jonathan Bass E-mail to author, re: *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, May 29, 2002.

⁷Foley's nephew Steve Foley played corner back for the Denver Broncos for eleven seasons.

⁸Albert S. Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia: Reminiscences of A Tangle with Terrorists," 25, 26, undated and unpublished manuscript, Foley Papers, Manuscripts, Spring Hill College Library Archives, Mobile, Alabama [hereafter cited as SHC]; Durr, *Outside the Magic Circle*, 44. There are two versions of Foley's manuscript: this one, which was in the possession of Foley's administrative assistant, Joan Sage, until her death, and is now in the Joan Sage Papers at the Josephite Archives in Baltimore, Maryland, and one entitled simply "Shadow of the White Camellia" located at SHC. I was fortunate enough to obtain Sage's copy through the generosity of Fr. Hogan at the Josephite Archives. All references in this article are to the Sage edition, a copy of which is in the author's possession.

⁹James Hitchcock, "The Pope and the Jesuits," *Catholicism in Crisis* (July 1984): 11; Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 24, 28.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 24, 37, 38, 32-33. Although Foley does not fully explain in what way the texts he read opened his eyes, he does imply that, intellectually, they exposed segregation and prejudice as illogical and scientifically untenable.

¹¹Joan Sage, "The Grilling Story of St. Joan the Bar-be-qued and How She Got That Way, or Joan McCormick Sage," 132, unpublished manuscript, found in Sage Papers, Josephite Archives, Baltimore, Maryland, a copy of which is in the possession of the author [hereafter cited as Sage Memoirs]. The other organizations to which Foley belonged included the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Catholic Committee of the South, and the Midwest Clergy Conference on Negro Welfare. For more on the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, see William E. Cole, "The Role of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation in War and Peace," *Social Forces* 21:4 (May 1943): 256-63. Although it is another example of an insider look at the history of a Catholic organization, see Capistran J. Haas, O. F. M., *History of the Midwest Clergy Conference on Negro Welfare*, for more on that group. For more on the Alabama Council on Human Relations, see Jan Gregory Thompson, "A History of the Alabama Council on Human Relations, From Roots to Redirection, 1920-1968" (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 1983).

¹²King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 201.

¹³Burt Schorr, "Birmingham Backfire: Moderates Fear Negro Demonstrations May Wreck Quiet Integration Program," *Wall Street Journal*, May 14, 1963; King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 202. See the letter from Edwin J. Lukas to Steve [Foley], October 2, 1962, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC, where Lukas tells Foley that, after meeting with King in New York, he had persuaded King to delay the demonstrations. Lukas was a board member of the American Jewish Congress. According to Foley, it was at Foley's instigation that Lukas met with King. See Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 184. According to McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 290 and 624, Norman Jimerson, the executive director of the Alabama Council on Human Relations, also appealed to the American Jewish Congress to talk to King.

¹⁴Sage Memoirs, 241 [quote], 239.

¹⁵"Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC; McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 324; *Birmingham Post Herald*, May 17, 1963; C. Herbert Oliver diary, April 3, 1963, found in McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 325.

¹⁶Albert S. Foley to Roscoe C. Sheehy, March 22, 1963, and Albert to Dear Folks, April 8, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, Birmingham, Correspondence; "Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC; "King Accused of Breaking Up Race Progress," *Birmingham News*, April 5, 1963.

¹⁷Ibid. See also, Lillian Foscue, "Civil Rights Adviser Deplores Sit-Ins Here," *Birmingham Post Herald*, April 5, 1963; Robert E. Baker, "Many Hold Birmingham Sit-Ins Ill-Timed to Achieve Goals," *Washington Post*, April 6, 1963; and "Georgia Negro Mix Leaders Lash Foley," undated newspaper clipping, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC.

¹⁸"Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963," 6, and "Report on Birmingham, April 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC; Paul D. Hastings to Mr. Foley, May 10, 1963, and Charles F. Wittenstein to Father Foley,

¹⁹"Taped Recording of Abernathy's Speech in Birmingham, April 4(6), 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, Birmingham, SHC. The crowd must have been somewhat reluctant to go along with Abernathy since he had to repeatedly urge them: "Come on. Sit up and give it to me. Stand up and make it." This appears to be a verbatim copy of a transcript of Abernathy's speech that night. Either Foley was there to record it himself or he was given a copy by whoever did tape the speech. Since Foley had written to the man who had invited him to give the Frontiers International Speech that he would be leaving Birmingham to return to Mobile "by late plane" directly after the speech, it seems unlikely that he attended the mass meeting and recorded the speech. See Albert S. Foley to Roscoe G. Sheehy, March 22, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, Birmingham, Correspondence, SHC.

²⁰"Telephone Conversation between Fr. Foley and Martin Luther King, Monday, April 7, 1963," 1, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

²¹*Ibid.*, 2-3.

²²*Ibid.*, 3; "Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963," 6, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

²³"Telephone Conversation between Fr. Foley and Martin Luther King, Monday, April 7, 1963," 3, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 3-4.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 4-5.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 5-6, 7, 9, 10-11; "Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Monday, April 8, 1963," 2, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC. The same evening this conversation occurred, King also addressed the Frontiers International group. According to McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 333, King made no mention of Foley's earlier speech to the black businessmen.

²⁷"Report on Birmingham," and "Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 335; "Report on Birmingham," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC. Foley, in his numerous papers, does not mention having ever made the "How did I get myself in this mess?" remark. McWhorter does not provide credit for the statement. Glenn Eskew, in *But for Birmingham*, 380 n36, tells of the same remark. He attributes the statement to a police record in the Eugene "Bull" Connor Papers at the Birmingham Public Library.

³⁰"Report on Birmingham," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²"Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC. See also, NCWC (National Catholic Welfare Council), "Priest in Civil Rights Post Clarifies Position Regarding 'Differences' with Rev. King," May 6, 1963, in Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

³³"Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC. Mobile's city leadership had agreed to hire a few black policemen to patrol the African-American neighborhoods and had desegregated the city's golf courses. See Eric D. Duke, "A Life in the Struggle: John L. LeFlore and the Civil Rights Movements in Mobile, Alabama (1925-1975)" (M.A. thesis, Florida State University, 1998) and Patsy Busby Dow, "Joseph N. Langan: Mobile's Racial Diplomat" (M.A. thesis, University of South Alabama, 1993) for more on the civil rights era in Mobile.

³⁴"Press Statement Sent to Townsend, Birmingham News, May 3, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

³⁵A. E. Hefferman, "Priest Claims King to Blame in Birmingham," undated newspaper clipping, found in Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC; Father Albert S. Foley to Wyatt Tee Walker, Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, Fred Shuttlesworth, and the SCLC Board, "about May 8, 1963," Wyatt Tee Walker to James E. Mills, May 6, 1963, and Wyatt Tee Walker to Father Albert Foley, May 7, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC; Western Union telegram from Fred Shuttlesworth to Father Foley, May 6, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC. See also, "King Fires at Foley," undated newspaper clipping, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC; A. E. Hefferman, "Foley Hits Racial Strife," *Mobile Register*, May 4, 1963, and "Fr. Foley Sets Record Straight on King," *The Springhillian*, May 14, 1963.

³⁶Father Albert Foley to Wyatt Tee Walker, Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, Fred Shuttlesworth, and the SCLC Board, "about May 8, 1963," Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC; "Correction," *Birmingham Post Herald*, undated newspaper clipping found in Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC.

³⁷In Albert S. Foley to Alabama Advisory Committee Members, May 8, 1963, Foley Papers, AAC-USCRC, Correspondence, SHC, the priest mentions local press reports of the SCLC calling for his removal from the Alabama Advisory Committee. Edward D. McLaughlin to Father Foley, May 10, 1963, and Charles M. Prestwood Jr. to Father Foley, May 10, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC; Western Union telegram from Vera C. Foster to Father A. S. Foley, May 13, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Newsclippings, SHC; Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 214. While these letters and this telegram came from members of the AAC, they do indicate the level of support Foley received from his colleagues.

³⁸Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963," 1, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, SHC.

³⁹Ibid., 1, 2.

⁴⁰Ibid., 3-4.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., 4.

⁴³Dow, "Joseph N. Langan," 9.

⁴⁴Albert S. Foley, S. J., "Desegregation and the South's Minorities," 8, Foley Papers, Articles, SHC.

⁴⁵Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980*, in *A History of the South*, ed. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter (Baton Rouge, 1995), 11:299, 300.

⁴⁶As one correspondent put it to Foley in a letter written after the newspaper article appeared: "Why, in the name of high heaven, were you not as vocal in our [African Americans] defense against the brutalities of your own people as you are now in saying our movement is ill-timed, and financially inspired?" A. H. Harris to Father Foley, May 8, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC.

⁴⁷Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor," 498.

⁴⁸"Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963." Whether because he felt the need to protect himself against further misconstrued statements on his part or because he wanted to be sure an accurate record of the talk was kept, Foley taped this conversation. The tape is in the Foley Papers, SHC.

⁴⁹William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York, 1980), 7, 8.

⁵⁰Sage Memoirs, 241; Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 216. The emphasis in this quote is mine.

⁵¹James J. Ferrell, *The Spirit of the Sixties: The Making of Postwar Radicalism* (New York, 1997), 44.

⁵²Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 31.

⁵³Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor," 20; Andrew Scott Moore, "Catholics in the Modern South: The Transformation of a Religion and a Region, 1945-1975" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 2000), 167; "Report on Birmingham."

⁵⁴"Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963," 9; J. Mills Thornton III, "Challenge and Response in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956," *The Alabama Review* 33 (July 1980): 234 ["compel intervention" quote]. Thornton believes that what set King apart from other civil rights leaders was his singular ability to grow from one who believed that the South's problems could be solved internally to one who knew that only federal intervention could end segregation.

⁵⁵"Report on Birmingham;" Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor," 498; Edward D. McLaughlin to Father Foley, May 10, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, MLK & Foley, Correspondence, SHC; Author interview with Chris Viscardi, June 25, 2002, Mobile, Alabama.

⁵⁶"Report on Talk with Martin Luther King, Saturday, May 4, 1963," 12.

⁵⁷Foley to Dear Folks, September 23, 1963, Foley Papers, Civil Rights, Birmingham, Correspondence, SHC.

⁵⁸Sage Memoirs, 135; Moore, "Catholics in the Modern South," 81, 126; Southern, *John LaFarge*, xix; Vivian Cannon, "Reception Honors SHC Priest," *Mobile Register*, April 11, 1988; Vivian Cannon, "Jesuit Priest Still Thinks Ahead of His Time," *Mobile Press Register*, November 7, 1987; McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*, 290. Curiously, in the November 1987 article, Foley denied his involvement "in the racial issue" of the 1960s. See also, "Rev. Albert Foley Named Public Citizen of the Year," *Mobile Register*, March 10, 1978, and the M. O. Beale Award given Foley in *Mobile Register*, April 22, 1988.

⁵⁹Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*, viii; Foley, "Shadow of the White Camellia," 2; Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*, viii.

⁶⁰Farrell, *The Spirit of the Sixties*, 43; Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South*, 206, 204; Newberry, "Without Urgency or Ardor," 3; Bartley, "The New South," 303.

Carol Ellis is a recent master's of arts graduate in history from the University of South Alabama and has been the editorial assistant for the *Gulf South Historical Review* since fall 2000.

Reflections on Mobile's Loyalism in the American Revolution

Robin F. A. Fabel

If they mention the British Floridas at all, textbooks on the American Revolution dismiss them, usually very briefly, as Loyalist bastions. J. Barton Starr, the premier historian of West Florida in the Revolution, wrote that: "by and large the actions of the residents of the colony indicate a strong degree of loyalty."¹ Starr does not give particular attention to Mobile. In a fifteen-page chapter on the province's loyalism, he gives it one short mention.

This paper will argue that Mobile does not fit well into Starr's generalization. My starting point for thinking so were two oaths of March 1780, when almost two hundred males then in Mobile swore loyalty to King Carlos III of Spain. Most Mobilians of French heritage had no longstanding attachment to Britain,² but in 1780 most males in Mobile were not French. Sixty-nine of them with French names took an oath of loyalty to the Spanish king on March 22, 1780, but nearly twice as many, 120 men with Anglo names, had sworn a similar, only slightly less wholehearted oath, five days previously.³ This disparity gave an initial and, as it turned out, misleading impression of enthusiasm for Spanish rule, but the impression that it also conveyed, of profound Anglo disillusion with the way they were treated during the latter years of the British period had some justification.

Swearing allegiance to a monarch was no trivial act. From the Middle Ages and throughout nearly all the colonial period, that obedience was owed to one's natural monarch, just as children had to obey their parents, was a fundamental ethical premise. Biblical authority backed both forms of subordination. Colonial statutes specified severe corporal punishment for defying parents, just as opposing one's sovereign, being treasonous, could be punished with death. In the same year that Mobilians renounced loyalty to Britain by swearing allegiance to Carlos III, it was reported from Georgia on October 5 that "thirteen men have been lately hanged [at Augusta] for having joined [Elijah] Clarke in his attack upon [the Loyalist] Colonel [Thomas] Brown, after taking the oath of allegiance to the British government."⁴

But in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the rights of the king of England and of his representatives in North American colonies had been repeatedly questioned, it would be surprising had West Florida remained insulated from the spirit of the age.

That spirit took different forms. Thomas Paine advocated rejection of all monarchy. West Floridians, Mobilians in particular, never went so far. They did move toward accepting that the governed had a natural right to act against those who governed them if they violated their responsibilities.

From 1770 West Florida had, in Peter Chester, a governor of the very type that made colonists elsewhere in North America reject gubernatorial authority. An army officer by profession, Chester's style was autocratic. He ruled without a legislature when he could, tampered with its representation when he could not, played favorites, seemingly thought 'compromise' a foreign word, and neglected the defense needs of West Florida's citizens. He gave Mobilians particular cause to complain.

During the period of British rule, the French population of Mobile remained stable while newcomers from elsewhere swarmed into the port.⁵ Father Ferdinand, a Catholic priest in Mobile, estimated that forty French families lived there in the early 1760s.⁶ The Reverend William Gordon, Anglican minister to Mobile and chaplain to its garrison from 1772, recorded growth and change in Mobile's population. It is difficult to say what percentage of Mobilians in the 1770s were French, because Gordon did not distinguish between French and Anglo inhabitants, but he wrote (probably) in 1774 that there lived 330 white people of all ages and both sexes in Mobile and its surrounding district. They lived in ninety houses.⁷

Few single women lived in Mobile. Unmarried men, not all of whom owned or rented houses, abounded. Gordon wrote of what he called "strangers without any settled abode," who would not thus have qualified as inhabitants. Many of them would have been among the six or seven dozen traders he mentioned as of Mobile's population. Just like the soldiers in Mobile's Fort Charlotte, these traders were Anglos, not French, and among them Scottish names predominated.

In exchange for deerskins, West Florida's main export, these traders supplied European manufactures and rum to hunters and to Native Americans. After 1763 they continued the trade with the Choctaws originally established by the French, and trafficked in the Creek and Chickasaw lands.⁸

The grievances of the French Mobilians in part accorded with, in part differed from, those of Anglo Mobilians. One difference concerned the Roman Catholicism that most French Mobilians professed. The legal status of Catholics in all the territories that Britain had acquired in



United States Postal Service stamp.

North America as a result of its victory in the French and Indian War, of which Canada was the most important, had been precisely and generously defined in Britain on June 10, 1765:

Roman Catholic subjects residing in the countries ceded to His Majesty in America [of which West Florida was one] are *not* subject in these colonies to the capacities, disabilities and penalties to which Roman Catholics in this kingdom [Great Britain] are subject by the laws thereof.⁹

Defying this ruling, the establishment of West Florida all but entirely excluded Catholic Mobilians from the executive and legislative branches of government. In the province the equivalent of an executive cabinet was the governor's council that also served as the upper house of the legislature. Only one Frenchman, François Caminada, ever served on that council. Not a Mobilian in origin, Caminada had immigrated from New Orleans. Sworn in on January 7, 1765, he served for fewer than eight weeks.¹⁰

Thus essentially excluded from the executive, the French were almost as badly represented in the legislature. During its existence as a colony, ten sessions of West Florida's elected assembly were planned. Only one Frenchman sat in any of them. He was François Pousset and, unlike nearly all French Mobilians, he was a Protestant.

The Capucin Fr. Ferdinand, an exiled Acadian, administered to the spiritual needs of Mobile's Catholic community from the early days of British rule, but he left the port in 1771 because his parishioners could no longer afford to support him. In 1772 twenty-seven of them petitioned for the British government to pay a stipend to a missionary priest who could administer the sacraments to them according to the rites of the Catholic church. They asked in vain.

Although some French Mobilians surely chafed at their exclusion from the legislature and the council, from 1766 they *did* vote for legislators and they *did* object when Governor Chester rerigged the existing franchise system to deprive the town of Mobile of all specific representation in the assembly, a rearrangement that also angered the Anglo inhabitants of Mobile. One of the latter, Edmund Rush Wegg, had led the demand for constitutional rights in 1766. Wegg, assemblyman for Mobile in five sessions of the legislature, propagated the "doctrine that no government is binding unless consented to by subjects or through representatives,"¹¹ and it was as a result of a petition from Mobile that West Florida's first assembly met later the same year.¹² In that assembly six of its fourteen members came from the Mobile

district. They were to resent very much later Chester's attempts to reduce that degree of representation, particularly as the town's population grew.

It was Mobilian voters who insisted, for better control of their representatives (and contrary to English practice) on limiting their terms to a single year.¹³ Governor Chester thoroughly disapproved of these Mobilian pretensions. In 1772 he denied the legality of limited terms. The intended assemblymen from Mobile protested formally and declared that they would not attend the proposed sixth assembly unless the governor renounced his decision.¹⁴ In the knowledge that several members from Pensacola would, from sympathy with the Mobilians, boycott the same assembly, Chester never took the final step of calling it together. He governed without an assembly for the next six years.

If peace in North America had lasted, so too might Chester's manifest preference for governing with no assembly. The outbreak of the revolutionary war, followed by British defeats, made West Florida vulnerable to invasion. An assembly could rally loyal sentiment and vote to raise the recruits and supplies needed for the colony's effective defense. In October 1777, therefore, the authorities in London ordered Chester to call an assembly. Still the governor delayed.

Then, in February 1778, a one-time Mississippi planter, James Willing, equipped with a commission from the Continental Congress, burst down the great river. He completely surprised his former neighbors of the Natchez District. Initially neither they nor anyone else could cope with his small force. Nobody knew what backing he had or what support he might find in West Florida, but his ability to inflict more damage in the province seemed potentially large.

The reaction from Mobile was significant. That port's leading merchant was John McGillivray. By provincial standards a grandee, McGillivray owned property in Mobile, in Pensacola, and more than two dozen slaves. The provincial government esteemed him for his "firm attachment to His Majesty's interest." As early as 1776, McGillivray had offered "to raise two companies of volunteers of 100 men, each to be ready to throw themselves into the fort of Mobile when occasion requires."¹⁵ Although the patriotic port magnate's offer was spurned at that time, the provincial establishment reacted differently to his zeal after Willing's 1778 raid. The governor in council made McGillivray a lieutenant colonel with authority to appoint 5 captains, 5 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, 10 sergeants, and to recruit 250 privates, all to be properly paid, uniformed and armed out of public funds.¹⁶ Something may be inferred about the loyalism of

West Florida's general population from the paltry sixty-eight that the record shows to have been the number of rank and file that McGillivray was able to recruit, and something too from the fact that among those sixty-eight are only four French names.¹⁷

Another way that Governor Chester reacted to the Willing raid was at last to summon another assembly. Before and beyond all else he wanted it to pass a militia act. He foresaw that he would not get one from the stubborn members representing the port of Mobile unless he made constitutional concessions to them that were most repugnant to him. In an attempt to nullify this threat to his principles and pride, he resorted to gerrymandering. He would increase Pensacola's representation to ten members, reduce the number representing the district of Mobile from six to five, and allow the town of Mobile no representatives at all.¹⁸

The members from the Mobile district did not boycott the new assembly, even though there was no term limitation in their indentures, the practice so dear to Mobile voters. They would raise it in debate in addition to framing legislation embodying their detestation of Chester's highhandedness in disfranchising the town of Mobile.

This assembly turned out to be the last to meet in West Florida in the British period. The session was a tussle. In return for passing the militia act beloved by Governor Chester, the assemblymen opposed to him demanded his assent to "An Act for Establishing the Number of Representatives for the Different Towns and Districts or Shires in this Colony, for Ascertaining the Rights of the Electors, and the Duration of the Assemblies." Its fundamental principle was stated in the bill's first line: "a free and equal representation is one of the most essential principles of our excellent constitution."¹⁹

In essence the act would have reenfranchised Mobile, limited the life of the existing assembly to one year, and have restricted Chester's prerogative. According to the act the governor could still adjourn, prorogue or dissolve an assembly. What he could not do was to gerrymander or to reduce the number of representatives for each of West Florida's constituencies.

If the opposition members hoped for compromise from Chester they were disappointed. The governor would not bend. By refusing to accept the representation act, he did not get the militia bill he craved and which, as later events would show, West Florida truly needed.

The leaders of the assembly opposition group included two representing the Mobile District: Daniel Ward and Adam Chrystie, Speaker of the assembly's lower house. Some members from Pensacola and one from Manchac joined them in resisting Chester.

The intensity of anti-government feeling on the representation issue is attested by a letter of thanks for their efforts sent to Chrystie and his collaborators on November 17, 1778. It was signed by thirty-four "principal inhabitants of Mobile," of whom thirteen had French names.²⁰

French names were absent from a longer petition of grievances that followed the gridlock session of 1778. Clearly meant to secure Chester's removal, it went to the king in England: 130 signers charged that the monarch's surrogate in his province of West Florida was, to summarize, corrupt, oppressive, and incompetent. Although Chester described the petitioners in his rebuttal to his sovereign as "the very dregs of the colony," they included some of West Florida's best-respected citizens. One was Adam Chrystie, the province's military hero, the man who had swept Willing's men off the banks of the Mississippi, before representing the Mobile District in the recent assembly. Another was Lieutenant Colonel John McGillivray, whose proven loyalism should have been a usable asset for Chester. Yet another was Mobile's parish minister and military chaplain, William Gordon.²¹

The king, to whom the petitioners naturally swore devotion, did not respond to their request. Peter Chester stayed in power, apparently as strong as ever. An outside observer might have concluded that West Florida too was strong, paradoxically strengthened by the raid of James Willing. The raiders had dispersed without adding an acre of land to the revolutionary confederation, and Willing had become a captive of the British. In addition the British high command had sent a significant military reinforcement to West Florida to deter incursions like Willing's.²²

Since plunder was so obviously his prime motivation, Willing was a disreputable representative of the revolution. Chester potentially could have capitalized on the anger Willing had aroused in many colonists to bind them to the king. Basking in a misplaced complacency, he made no evident effort to do so.

In 1779 the talented Governor of Spanish Louisiana showed Chester how fragile his security really was. In a matter of weeks Bernardo de Gálvez conquered West Florida's Mississippi settlements in their entirety. The combined resources of the inhabitants, regular, German and provincial troops under Brigadier General John Campbell could not stop Gálvez, whose acquisition of the Natchez District was a particularly juicy prize. Because of its rich riverlands and their agricultural potential, that district had become by far the most

desirable destination for recent immigrants. Rather than abandon their recently-acquired plantations a good many settlers in the Natchez District took an oath of allegiance to their new Spanish rulers. A number of them were outraged that a British officer, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Dickson, had unnecessarily surrendered the whole district to Gálvez. Dickson had not even made the Spaniards besiege Fort Panmure, the one serious stronghold in the district. Rather than stay under the Spanish flag, and at the urging of a magistrate, Charles Walker, some Natchez residents headed to places like Pensacola and the Mobile District.²³

Once more the town of Mobile was under threat and its inhabitants must surely have been aware that the government in Pensacola had fortified that port while neglecting their own. Chester's reluctance to protect them was a complaint of long standing among Mobilians. Back in 1771 French and Anglo Mobilians had jointly demanded that he defend them adequately: Choctaws had burned a plantation sixteen miles from Mobile, after which three hundred of them had stormed into the town, contemptuously pushing aside the single sentry confronting them, and then, allegedly, indulging in a rampage of robbery.²⁴ Little was done to strengthen Mobile in the eight years that followed. In March 1779 General John Campbell, the new commander of British land forces in West Florida, described Mobile's fort and barracks as "a scene of ruin and desolation."²⁵

Seven months later, from the Tombigbee river settlement, electorally part of the Mobile District, came an offer and a petition signed by fifty-eight settlers. Under the leadership of Charles Walker and Hubert Rees they would form a military unit and fight anywhere in the province, provided they could be assured of protection for their farms and families. To this end they wanted a fort.²⁶ The tenor of their petition made clear that the main concern of these Tombigbee loyalists was the security of their own settlement, but a number of the signers did later travel to the defense of Mobile, even though they did not get the fort they wanted.

Despite such flickers of a loyalist determination to resist him, Gálvez enjoyed major advantages in his campaign to take Mobile. One was that, despite frantic last minute attempts to strengthen it, a decrepit fort faced him there in 1780. A second advantage was that French Mobilians supplied him with military intelligence even before he began to besiege their town in March 1780. "They love us," he wrote.²⁷

His third, and best, advantage was that his besiegers outnumbered Fort Charlotte's 304 defenders by approximately six to one.²⁸ Its

garrison included a mixed bag of two hundred regular infantry, sailors, provincial troops, artificers and a handful of artillerymen and royal engineers. All these became prisoners of war once the garrison surrendered, after a siege of thirteen days. Gálvez soon shipped them out of the province. Another fifty-two of commandant Elias Durnford's garrison were slaves. Their dubious status as alternatively prisoners or prizes of war became a source of dispute, ensuring that their fate was not so quickly settled.

The remaining surrendered defenders were not local townsmen who had rallied to save Mobile. For the most part they were refugees, hastily embodied into recently raised volunteer units from elsewhere in the province.

From the Tombigbee River twenty-four volunteers under Hubert Rees had canoed thirty miles to join Fort Charlotte's garrison. A rather more formally organized unit was the West Florida Royal Foresters. On February 5, 1780, in the month before the siege of Mobile began and ended, General Campbell belatedly authorized the raising of two companies of light dragoons (mounted infantry). Adam Chrystie would assume overall command of these Foresters. Charles Walker and Patrick Strachan would head their individual companies.

Twenty-eight men of Walker's company of the Foresters took part in the defense of Fort Charlotte. In the initial surrender agreement Gálvez specified that citizens who had taken up arms against the Spanish should be prisoners of war. The Foresters and Tombigbee volunteers lacked uniforms, but they qualified for imprisonment. In the end, perhaps from magnanimity, perhaps for convenience, Gálvez freed them. It seems likely that he made their agreement to swear fealty to the Spanish a condition of their release. Certainly a large number of their names appeared on the loyalty oath.

A hitherto neglected aspect of the defense of Mobile has been the effect on its defenders of their knowledge of how, five months previously, General Gálvez had treated the residents of the Natchez district when it surrendered to him. They would have known that the people of Natchez were in some ways unlike themselves, but that their experience in defeat might well offer hints of how Gálvez would treat Mobilians.

At Natchez the plantation-owning leadership was more actively loyal to the king than the smallholder majority. In the opinion of William Dunbar, the most celebrated of the Natchez plantocracy, "one half of the people were in the American interest."²⁹ The loyalist justice of the peace, Isaac Johnston, agreed that, respecting Americans, the Natchez district residents were "were never more divided," but united,

he insisted, in their abhorrence of the prospect of Spanish rule. He witnessed Spanish occupation troops landing at Natchez in the company of settlers who had "tears in their eyes, sorrow and distraction on every feature of their faces." That Dickson had handed the Spanish the entire Natchez district without giving its citizens a chance to fight shocked him: "Planters fight for their families and properties, the love of liberty and those precious laws we have hitherto enjoyed."³⁰

Johnston's message is mixed—many residents of the Natchez saw nothing precious in Britain's trade laws for instance—but the primacy he gave to protection of family and property was probably fitting. That concern had undoubtedly been the chief reason that fifty-nine of them had signed the Natchez neutrality accord with Willing upon his arrival in their district in 1778. It was the settlers, not Willing, who had taken the initiative in broaching the subject of neutrality. They had offered it in return for his promise to leave unharmed their persons, slaves and other property.³¹

In retrospect their fear of Spanish rule that Johnston noted in 1779 may seem exaggerated, but at the time they had some reason to expect sudden and unwelcome demands from Gálvez. In April 1777, as new Governor of Louisiana, he had ordered the confiscation of all British vessels on the Mississippi between Belize and Manchac. In April 1778, having summoned all British traders in New Orleans to Government House, he told them they had thirty minutes in which to decide whether or not to take a stringent oath of loyalty to the King of Spain. Those who refused would have to leave Spanish territory within twenty-four hours.³²

In the event Gálvez treated Natchez leniently. Residents who swore an allegiance oath could remain in undisturbed possession of their property. He allowed those who would not swear eight months to dispose of property. The Spanish authorities would then supply a vessel to take them to an English port. Although Isaac Johnston complained with justice that there would be no buyers for property of those who chose to leave the province, Gálvez could have made their lot much more severe.

The Natchez experience should have heartened Mobilians, except there was a crucial difference between what had happened at Fort Panmure and events at Fort Charlotte. Gálvez was not made to fight for the fort at Natchez, but the fort at Mobile surrendered only after a siege of nearly two weeks at the expense of Spanish casualties. According to what Christopher Duffy calls "the principle of exchange" in what eighteenth-century jurists called "the usage of civilized warfare," the price Mobilians would have to pay their conqueror for defeat

was, potentially, greater than that paid by the residents of the Natchez district.³³

The outcome of the siege of Fort Charlotte probably relieved Mobilians. The terms of its surrender closely resembled what Gálvez had exacted at Natchez. Although unmentioned in the published surrender terms it seems very likely that Gálvez made it clear that he expected the surrendered to take an oath of loyalty to the Spanish king in exchange for his leniency. A list of the members of Captain Walker's troop of West Florida Royal Foresters does not seem to exist, but we have such a list for the members of Captain Patrick Strachan's troop. Strachan had filled it with one lieutenant, two sergeants, two corporals, a bugler and twenty-nine privates. After Mobile fell, Strachan's troop were encamped on the Tensa, where a Spanish patrol surprised them, burned their tents, and made sixteen of them prisoners of war. Sixteen members of the troop took the oath promising fidelity to the Spanish.³⁴ Gálvez's expectation that the surrendered should take an oath of allegiance was later formalized by a decree of May 8, 1780 that ordered residents to take such an oath within six months of Fort Charlotte's surrender. Edmund Rush Wegg, one of the Mobile district's most eminent citizens, did not. When he sought to resume property and residence rights there at the very end the grace period, the Spanish governor of Mobile denied him both.³⁵

Not all Mobilians swore fealty to the Spanish king. Leading Mobile merchants John McGillivray, Peter Swanson, and Thomas Strother did not. Some could not, however willing they might have been to do so. William McGillivray, William Struthers, and John McIntosh, all major Mobile merchants could not, because, after capture at sea while trying to flee to Jamaica, they were doing time in Havana's notorious El Morro citadel.³⁶

What may surprise is how many Anglos *did* take the oath, including three McGillivrays, a McIntosh, George Troup, and even Daniel Ward, a very senior merchant member of the West Florida legislative assembly. No doubt action to avoid confiscation of their property in Mobile played some part in their motivation, but another dimension may have been disgust at the contempt for their rights of the corrupt bully that George III had entrusted with their government. From the evidence presented here the rights that Mobilians asserted were:

- the right to have a representative assembly;
- the right to vote for who should represent them in that assembly;
- the right to control those representatives through short term limits;
- the right not to have their representation diminished by the governor;

- the right to practice their religion with dignity;
- the right to be protected from criminals and enemies.

Denying loyalty to one's governor is one thing; renouncing one's sovereign is much farther along that road. Why so many Mobilians did so raises questions that beg for answers.

That Mobilians of French descent were ready to swear loyalty to the Spanish king is not mysterious. Carlos III of Spain was much less alien to them than George III of England. They or their parents were accustomed to rule from the king of France, an autocrat, fettered by no constitution and, above all, a Catholic. Carlos was similar in all these respects and even, like Louis of France, a member of the Bourbon family.

What puzzles are the Anglo Mobilians who took the oath, almost all of whom depended directly or indirectly on trade for their livelihood. They EITHER took the oath cynically and frivolously in the expectation that British forces would soon reconquer Mobile and they would be only briefly under Spanish rule OR, disgusted with British rule, they took the fidelity oath totally seriously, expecting to live long and prosper under the flag of Spain.

Either possibility is unreasonable. Militarily the British position was dismal. The Spanish under Gálvez had shown initiative, ingenuity and skill. Not only had the British military displayed none of these qualities, but they were in addition heavily outnumbered. Rationally they could not retake Mobile.

The other possibility also defies reason, because their businesses seemed certain to wither under Spanish rule. The established market for their peltry was Britain, not Spain. The goods they gave to Native Americans in exchange were of British, not Spanish, manufacture. The Spanish could not make them. Under Spanish regulations that existed in 1780 foreign-made Indian trade goods could be imported into Florida only through Spanish intermediaries and pelts from Florida could be exported only to Spanish ports. Such processes could only add to costs, delays and difficulties. Gilberto Maxent, father-in-law to Gálvez, thought there was no hope for the Florida fur trade under such rules.³⁷ The Spanish official Martin Navarro wrote at the time that "in comparison to other nations we [Spanish] scarcely know what trade is."³⁸

One must leave for discussion and conjecture—for there really is very little documentary evidence on which to base other kinds of judgment—the enigma of the motivations of the Anglo merchants of West Florida in taking an oath of obedience to a foreign king. On

the question of the loyalism of Mobile, the citizens of Mobile had more cause than other West Floridians to resent the rule of the king's representative and they took the lead in mounting opposition to him. Although they sought consistently to be given what they conceived to be either their natural rights or their rights as British subjects, rather than rights as republican revolutionaries, Mobile was, in that tepidly loyal province of West Florida probably the least loyalist community.

Notes

¹J. Barton Starr, *Dons, Tories, and Rebels: The American Revolution in British West Florida* (Gainesville, 1976), 228.

²The British did not occupy Mobile until 1763. In 1764, 110 of its inhabitants, almost all of whom had French names, swore to obey the king of England. Dunbar Rowland, *History of Mississippi, the Heart of the South* (Chicago, 1925), 1:254-55.

³F. de Borja Medina Roja, *Jose de Ezpeleta, Gobernador de Mobila, 1780-1781* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1980), 38, 40.

⁴Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, November 15, 1780.

⁵Albert Tate Jr., "The French in Mobile, British West Florida, 1763-1780," *New Orleans Genesis* 22 (1983): 265. Tate insists there was more French movement into and out of Mobile than has been generally recognized, but he nevertheless notes that 36 of the 67 [I counted 69] signers of the fidelity oath to Carlos III, had surnames recognizably the same as those on the Mobilians' 1764 oath of fidelity to George III.

⁶Bernard Street Parker, in "Parker Family History," 3, Local History Division, Mobile Public Library.

⁷He wrote too that 416 African Americans lived in his parish. Presumably most of them dwelt in slave cabins (or worse) that he would not consider separate houses. Gordon to the earl of Dartmouth, 1774(?), Ellis Papers, Courtesy Dr. Roy Rauschenbourg. As late as 1812 there were still only 90 houses in Mobile, Peter J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile* (1910; reprint, University, AL, 1976), 404.

⁸Kathryn E. Holland Braund, *Deerskins and Duffels: The Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815* (Lincoln, NB, 1993), 56-8.

⁹Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty, *Documents relating to the Constitutional History of Canada, 1759-1791* (Ottawa: Canadian Archives, 1907), 1:236. I am grateful to Dr. Eric Jarvis for this reference.

¹⁰Council Minutes for January 7 and February 28, 1765. CO5/632. Public Record Office (PRO), Kew.

¹¹George Johnstone to John Pownall, February 26, 1766, PRO CO5/514:218.

¹²Robert R. Rea and Milo B. Howard, Jr., *The Minutes, Journals and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida* (University, AL, 1979), 3-4.

¹³Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 305.

¹⁴To represent them, the freeholders of Mobile nominated William Struthers (merchant), John McGillivray (merchant), Alexander McIntosh (merchant), Robert Farmar (army officer and landowner), Henry Lizars (miller), Daniel Ward (merchant), Edmund Rush Wegg (lawyer), and Benjamin Ward (merchant), but they would not complete election formalities without a term restriction. Rea & Howard, *Minutes*, 272.

¹⁵Council Minutes, September 7, 1776, PRO CO5/634:389.

¹⁶Council Minutes, March 18, 1778, PRO CO5/635:127.

¹⁷Pay List for a Regiment of Provincials. Treasury 1/540:75. Great Britain. PRO, Kew.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 275.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 395. An admirable standard of perfection that was certainly not a principle visibly practiced in the British constitution at the time.

²⁰Letter of thanks of November 17, 1778, to Adam Chrystie and seven assembly members from "The Principal Inhabitants of Mobile, signed by John Austin, Thomas Baskett, Thomas Benoist, James Colbert, L. Carriere, James Dallas, George Dow, William Cocke Ellis, Jean Favre, François Fleury, William Gordon, Barthelemy Greloz, Pierre Guillivray, Gilbert Hay, Walter Hood, Lavall, Jean-Baptiste Lusser, Louis Lusser, Cornelius McCurtin, James McGillivray, John McIntosh, John McIntosh Jr., David McLeish, Jean Louis Mirabeau, L. Mirabeau, Daniel Mortimer, Bertrand Nicolas, Buckner Pittman, Charles Roberts, Francis Roberts, Thomas Strother, William Struthers, Peter Swanson, George Troup. Mississippi Provincial Archives Spanish Dominion, Jackson, Mississippi, 8:257.

²¹"Petition and Memorial to the King of the Gentlemen Freeholders and Principal Inhabitants of the Province." PRO CO5/595:785-805.

²²The reinforcements comprised three regiments: the (German) Waldeckers, the Maryland Provincials, and the New Jersey Provincials, roughly one thousand men.

²³Borja, *Ezpeleta*, 80.

²⁴Mobile Inhabitants to Chester, May 8, 1771, and M[ichael] Grant to Philip May, May 8, 1771, Add.MSS 21672:18-19, British Library, London.

²⁵Campbell to Lord George Germain, March 2, 1779, PRO CO5/597:87.

²⁶Council Minutes for October 21, 1779, PRO CO5/635:264.

²⁷Gálvez to Don Diego Josef Navarro, October 16, 1779. Mississippi Provincial Archives Spanish Dominion, Jackson, Mississippi, 1:317.

²⁸All figures relating to the siege and surrender are from "Return of the Killed, Wounded, and Prisoners of the Garrison of Fort Charlotte," PRO CO5/597:499.

²⁹Eron Dunbar Rowland, ed., "Peter Chester, Third Governor of the Province of West Florida under British Domination, 1770-1781," *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society* (Centenary Series, 1925), 1:62.

³⁰Extract of a letter from Isaac Johnston to Anthony Hutchins, October 5, 1779, PRO CO5/635:268.

³¹John W. Caughey, "Willing's Expedition down the Mississippi, 1778," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 15 (1932): 10.

³²Robin F. A. Fabel, *The Economy of British West Florida, 1763-1783* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1988), 96, 100.

³³Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason* (New York, 1988), 293.

³⁴Borja, *Ezpeleta*, 140. The oathtakers were Captain Strachan, Sergeant Philip George, Troopers Thomas Atkinson, Peter Bixon, James Brown, John Clark, Richard Cork, John (possibly James) English, Nimrod Gilchrist, David Gillis, John McCullagh, Edmund McLachlan, John Price, Ephraim Sawyer, Daniel Tollow, and Charles Tucker.

³⁵Borja, *Ezpeleta*, 171.

³⁶They were captured while sailing to Savannah-le-Mar. *New York Journal*, November 22, 1779.

³⁷William S. Coker and Thomas D. Watson, *Indian Traders of the Spanish Borderlands: Pantón, Leslie & Company and John Forbes & Company, 1783-1847* (Pensacola, 1986), 10.

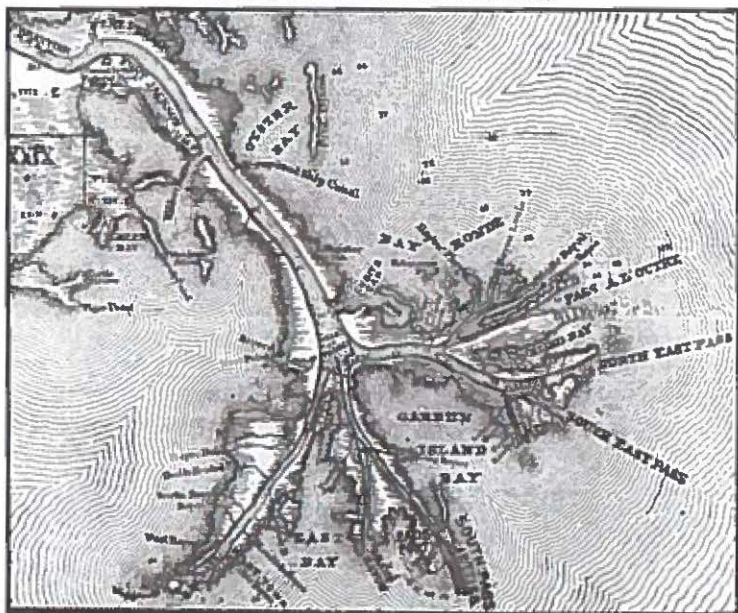
³⁸Navarro, "Political and Economic Reflections on the Present State of the Province of Louisiana," Mississippi Provincial Archives Spanish Dominion, 1:407.

Robin Fabel is a professor emeritus of history at Auburn University.

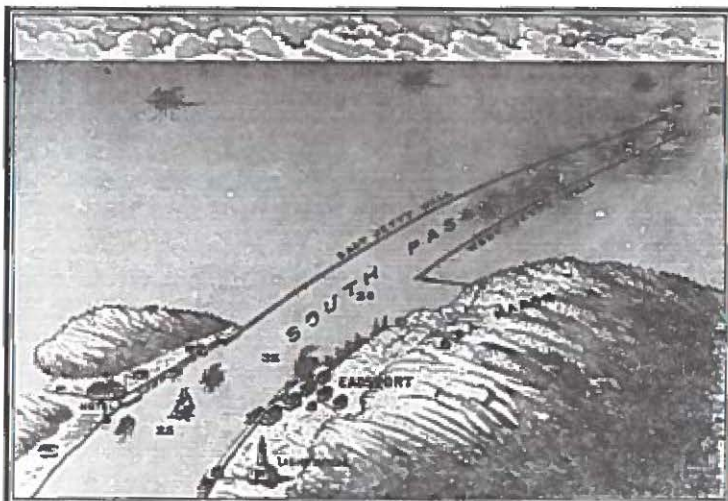
SKETCH OF EADS' JETTIES

PREPARED FOR THE MEDICAL AND SURGICAL MEMOIRS
OF JOSEPH JONES, M.D.

By T. S. HARDEE, CIVIL ENGINEER.



BIRDS EYE VIEW.



View of the Jetties from Light House looking seaward.

Thomas S. Hardee, "Sketch of Eads Jetties," 1879. Historic New Orleans Collection.

A Referendum on the River: The Mississippi Jetties Controversy

Ari Kelman

The River Blockade

On February 18, 1869, New Orleanians awoke to grim tidings. As they scanned their papers, eager for news of the city's markets, they learned that the Mississippi was blockaded again. This time Union gunboats were not responsible for closing the river, as they had in 1862. Instead, a sandbar had formed where the Mississippi emptied into the Gulf of Mexico, effectively shutting the river. Unaware of the danger, a steamship had run aground the previous day. The river's current had then shifted the ship where it clung to the bar, leaving it resting perpendicular to the channel, with no room for other vessels "trying to creep around her stern."¹ Trade ships soon crowded on both sides of the trapped steamer, creating the impression that somebody needed to pop a cork to unleash a flood of commerce. In the following days, unseasonably warm weather and heavy rains caused panic in New Orleans, as laborers scammed to salvage produce stored along the Mississippi's waterfront. New Orleans's economic elites became so worried that the crisis would cause traders to divert produce away from the city's already beleaguered markets that as the blockade dragged on for nearly a month, local papers likened the anxious commercial community to a "hedged in animal."²

The river blockade could not have come at a worse time for New Orleans. Since the start of the Civil War, the city's waterfront, which had creaked beneath the collected goods of the Mississippi valley in the 1850s, had stood nearly empty.³ Even after the war ended, optimists in the city were let down when valley traders, who had shipped goods to market at New Orleans on the north-to-south river route before the war, continued their wartime practice of using more direct west-to-east rail lines. As a post-war study of the nation's commerce noted: "Thanks to the embargo of war, the railroads had gained in four years an advance on the Mississippi which under ordinary favorable circumstances it would have taken them twenty years to have secured."⁴ Assessing the damage, one local estimate suggested that 75 to 90 percent of the region's trade was finding its way to markets other than New Orleans by 1865.⁵ And while many New Orleanians still clung to the myth that trade would always flow down the "great river, which," they claimed, had "been carved out by Nature's God as the natural outlet for the products of the West," realists like the satirist

George Washington Cable scoffed at such nonsense.⁶ Surveying the city's woebegone post-war commercial climate, he huffed that "the moment East and West recognized the practicability of taking straighter courses...[to market] the direct became the natural route, and the circuitous the unnatural."⁷

In the postbellum years, members of the city's commercial community realized that Cable was right: the "natural advantages"—the Mississippi system's streams—that they had counted on to sweep trade to their city paled in significance next to railroads, which they had derided as the "artificial channels of the commerce of the West" before the war.⁸ Reading the shifting landscape of trade, New Orleans lured railroads to town. By 1869 trains ran along the Mississippi's banks, carrying not only trade but a renewed sense of optimism and vitality, missing since before the war.⁹ The bellow of steam whistles, the clank of construction, and the chugging of trains banished the depressing silence that had shrouded the riverfront for years. New Orleans was now connected to its hinterland by river and rails, prompting boosters, meeting at a commercial convention in the city in 1869, to boast: "Recognizing the fact that 'Westward the Star of Empire has taken its way,' we declare in favor of the Crescent City as the seat of a commercial empire, whose sceptre shall rule the world."¹⁰ But the prospect of future blockades at the river mouth clouded such grand visions of the city's future.

As New Orleanians searched for solutions to the problem at the Mississippi's mouth, they asked themselves questions whose answers had far-reaching consequences in the city and nationwide: How best could the river be used? Could people control the Mississippi? If so, how? And who should be trusted to tame the mercurial stream? New Orleanians answered the first question, drawing on more than a century of tradition, to claim that the Mississippi, above all, should serve human uses as a commercial highway. The second question, then, had to be answered affirmatively; the river had to be brought to heel somehow. That left two other queries lingering in the delta's humid air, and those questions spurred years of controversy. On one side of the battle stood New Orleanians who were captivated by the promise of technology. These people called for a canal at the river mouth, to be built and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Mississippi's traditional steward. On the other side of the fight, championing civilian engineers and the river itself—or so he claimed—James Eads insisted he could pry open the Mississippi's mouth with a system of jetties (artificial riverbanks).

Because it occurred at a crossroads in the nation's economic and environmental history—as railroads imposed the logic of capital on the vagaries of geography—the controversy following the river blockade served as a referendum on technology, the river, and by extension nature, in New Orleans and nationwide.¹¹ The conflict also achieved notoriety because its location, at the Mississippi's mouth, provided a grand stage for such a drama. As competing interests fought to control the river mouth, they used that scene as a didactic landscape, trying to demonstrate that it was possible to extract civilization from a desolate and watery wilderness. The players, too, elevated the events. By the time he became involved in the conflict, Eads had secured his reputation as one of the nation's leading mechanical innovators and experts on the Mississippi, and his principal opponent, Andrew Atkinson Humphreys, the Chief of the Corps of Engineers, also had won fame for engineering genius and knowledge of the river.

The jetties dispute took place on at least three levels: the local, in New Orleans, a city struggling with environmental constraints; the personal and professional, with Eads and Humphreys battling for credibility; and the national, as the country grappled with the role that technology was to play in its future. Locally, the controversy's resolution left New Orleans more dependent on technology and vast engineering projects than ever before, as the city continued fighting to impose order on its unpredictable surroundings. New Orleanians emerged from the conflict with renewed certainty that the river could be tamed, indeed that any environmental problem would ultimately yield to human ingenuity backed by capital. At the same time, in part because of publicity the conflict generated, and in part because of what eventually was a transformed landscape at the river mouth, the professional status of engineers throughout the United States, and Eads's personal fame, continued to climb. Perhaps even more important, nationally, the outcome of the jetties dispute apparently taught even the most skeptical observers around the country that seemingly intractable environmental problems, no matter how complex, would eventually yield to what interested observers labeled the "hand of man."¹²

The Officer, The Entrepreneur, and Big Muddy

The problem facing New Orleans in February 1869 was not a new one. Each year the Mississippi carries more than 275 million cubic yards of solid matter to the gulf.¹³ About ninety miles below New

Orleans, at the so called Head of the Passes, the river divides into several distinct and smaller outlets, including South and Southwest Pass. Because a stream's ability to carry material is proportional to its current—the faster the current the more material can be held in suspension—when the Mississippi divides, the individual passes take only a portion of the main stream's flow, lessening the current in each. Then, where the passes meet the gulf, the current diminishes still further, as the confined river empties into open water. The Mississippi can thus no longer support the bulk of the sediment that it has carried from throughout its valley, and it deposits a portion of its load there, sometimes creating sandbars, as in February 1869. Geologists label this process an example of "dynamic sedimentation."¹⁴

Because of this sedimentation pattern, New Orleanians sometimes wrestled with the river mouth in the city's early years, but more often they adapted to the hand geology dealt them.¹⁵ In the 1820s and 1830s, however, as steamboats carried hundreds of millions of dollars of interstate commerce on the Mississippi system each year, the federal government increasingly involved itself in river improvements, deploying the Army Corps of Engineers to keep the passes clear. Still, even the Corps usually found itself stymied by the dynamic river. After trying a variety of solutions—including a feeble attempt at having jetties built on the eve of the Civil War—the Corps kept returning to dredging, which worked intermittently at best.¹⁶ Finally, in 1869, with the city's economic future at stake, New Orleanians demanded a permanent solution at the river mouth; they called for a canal. Andrew Humphreys and James Eads answered the city's plea, arriving in New Orleans with vastly different training, disparate goals, and incompatible ideas about how to control the Mississippi.

After graduating from West Point in 1833, Humphreys settled into a distinguished career as an engineer. Then, in the wake of the great Mississippi flood of 1849, Congress demanded a survey of the lower river, and Humphreys received the job.¹⁷ As Humphreys began work, Charles Ellet, who had received his training in Europe, struggled with the same task on the Mississippi—a showdown between military and civilian engineers. For generations West Point had enjoyed a monopoly on American engineering. After 1835, though, graduates of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute began undercutting the status of army engineers. By 1850, when the Mississippi survey began, five other schools also offered engineering programs.¹⁸ With army engineers facing competition from civilians for the first time in the nation's history, Humphreys, always a man of great pride, found himself defending not only his

own, but also his comrades' honor, in a battle for professional credibility and future control of the Mississippi River.

Ellet quickly finished his survey, and his findings, though impressionistic, were nonetheless breathtaking, particularly his recognition that people had exacerbated floods on the river by confining it behind artificial levees and cutting down thousands of acres of forests throughout its valley. In highlighting people's ability to alter the environment on so grand a scale, Ellet presaged the work of George Perkins Marsh, who was to publish *Man and Nature* fourteen years later. Marsh is hailed as one of the fathers of modern environmentalism because he recognized the human impact on processes previously labeled "natural."¹⁹ Ellet, however, arrived at such findings first, writing that "the difficulty in protecting the delta from overflow is produced by the artificial embankments along the borders of the Mississippi, and the cultivation of the prairies."²⁰ In short, technology and deforestation could, together, create disasters that were not "natural" exactly, but in part at least, human-constructed.²¹

With Ellet's reputation threatening army engineers, Humphreys systematically rebutted his rival's conclusions in his survey—known as *Physics and Hydraulics*—which he finished as the country ripped apart at its seams in 1861. If Ellet's work was a model of intuitive argument, based on brilliant insight and limited observation, at nearly five hundred pages, *Physics and Hydraulics* was a towering monument to empiricism. And in conclusions as well methods, Humphreys disagreed with Ellet. Where Ellet warned that the river's "natural" regimen would be ignored at the valley's peril, Humphreys leaned on an unshakable faith in the power of data to reveal the best methods of controlling the Mississippi. He assured readers that within his survey "every river phenomenon has been experimentally investigated and elucidated. Thus every important fact connected with the...physical condition of the river and the laws uniting them [has been] ascertained."²² With that accomplished, Humphreys promised that the problems of river flooding and the bars at the mouth of the Mississippi could be alleviated once and for all.

Humphreys's survey exemplified what Donald Worster labels an "imperial" view of nature. In Worster's telling, the ascendancy of Darwinism caused many scientists to reevaluate the natural world, calling for a liberal application of the ostensibly civilizing influence that humans had on their surroundings.²³ For engineers in the United States, this imperial view typified their intellectual culture while serving their professional interests. As Americans increasingly looked

to engineers to mediate their experiences of the environment—to control nature—the profession's prestige grew.²⁴ Consequently, Humphreys gained authority not only because he promised that military engineers could solve problems on the Mississippi with technology, but also because of the empirical foundation on which his claims rested. It helped, too, that the international scientific community regarded *Physics and Hydraulics* as a masterpiece, further elevating Humphreys's reputation. In 1866 he received the ultimate recognition of his professional standing when he was tapped to head the Army Corps of Engineers. From that lofty perch, Humphreys devoted the rest of his career to patrolling the nation's scientific and engineering landscape in order to safeguard his own reputation and the status of all army engineers. He eventually brought his crusade to the river mouth in 1869.

James Eads took a very different path to the mouth of the Mississippi. Eads first met the river aboard the steamboat that brought his family to St. Louis, in 1833, when the vessel sank, carrying his possessions to the bottom.²⁵ Once in St. Louis, though he had no time for formal schooling, Eads proved himself a dedicated autodidact, borrowing books from his employer while working as a talented salesman, a skill that was to help him throughout his life. Eads's greatest gifts, however, lay in his capacity to transfer the fruits of his powerful intellect to his hands, in other words, in an uncanny ability to plan and execute complicated mechanical projects. For example, he designed and built a riverboat model that awed observers with its multiple decks and working boilers, before finding a job on the steamboat *Knickerbocker* in 1839.²⁶ At that time, Eads began an intimate relationship with the Mississippi, studying its waters and seemingly endless moods, but only for a season, before the *Knickerbocker*, too, sank. Before his twentieth birthday, Eads had witnessed two steamboat disasters first-hand. Where some people might have acknowledged the Mississippi's unpredictability, Eads only saw opportunity. He invented a salvage boat and diving bell to pull valuable cargo from the river bottom and partnered with a St. Louis ship-building firm, which agreed to construct the craft he had designed.²⁷ In the salvage business Eads continued his education about the Mississippi. For years he traveled up and down the river system with his salvage operation, spending full days walking on the stream bed, looking for wrecks. Eads later described the Mississippi's bottom "as a record written by God Himself in the language of natural law."²⁸ This was a language that only he

knew, a record that only he had been privileged to read, thus he believed that the time he spent under the river gave him an unparalleled understanding of the Mississippi. His experiences taught him that the laws of nature were knowable and that the river could be manipulated.

Throughout his life, Eads returned to the Mississippi, where he enjoyed triumphs, deepening his conviction that the river was malleable in the hands of an engineer skilled and confident enough to dream big. After becoming one of St. Louis's wealthiest citizens, he designed Union gunboats during the Civil War.²⁹ Following the war, he took on a greater challenge, when he began constructing a bridge over the river at St. Louis. The notion of spanning the Mississippi had intrigued visionaries for decades, but only in theory. Following the war, though, Eads saw that St. Louis needed a bridge over the river to compete with its rival Chicago in an age of steel rails that threatened the Mississippi's stranglehold on the valley's trade. Geography compounded the problem. Located on the Mississippi's west bank, St. Louis required a bridge to maintain its link with eastern railroads and the markets they served. But such an obstacle seemed minor to Eads, who was certain that he was the man to build the bridge.

In the postbellum years, as Eads contemplated his span, the nation began a period of incredible technological advance, in which engineers reshaped the landscape with the help of inexpensive labor. Railroads crossed the continent, mechanical reapers did the work of full teams of men, and a process, pirated from England, allowed mills to produce relatively cheap steel. These innovations served as symbols of a new era of artifice, but no image proved more enduring than the huge bridges daring builders erected around the country. In this context, in August 1867, Eads began constructing the bridge that still bears his name. A shrine to the modern, the bridge sported three arches, each embracing more than five hundred feet. The arches' size was unprecedented, and, onlookers whispered, dangerous. Relying on steel, the miracle material of the day, Eads replied to his many critics that his design was sound.³⁰ Time proved him right.

The construction of the bridge garnered Eads more publicity than he had ever received, cementing his reputation as one of the era's great engineers. And though tragedy marred the project—thirteen men died of Caissons Disease (the bends) during construction—the nation and world watched with awe as Eads's workers extended huge steel arches across the Mississippi. In 1873, however, just as laborers prepared to link the banks of the Mississippi in dramatic fashion, Eads turned his

attention to yet another challenge, the silted passes at the river mouth and a battle with Andrew Humphreys, by then the Chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.³¹

No Cure, No Pay

In the spring of 1873 participants at a convention of river interests in St. Louis discussed plans for improving the Mississippi. One of the key issues facing the gathering was the condition of the river mouth. Since the blockade of 1869, New Orleanians had begged for a canal to circumvent the unpredictable passes.³² Leaders at the Corps of Engineers, though, had insisted that even if practicable, a canal would prove too costly, so they had deployed a dredge boat to deepen the channel. The Corps named the vessel *Essayons* (French for “let us try”); the *Essayons* failed. Finally, in March of 1873, as another blockade threatened trade, Charles Howell, the Corps officer charged with keeping the river open, lost patience with dredging, deciding, after much prompting from New Orleans’s Chamber of Commerce, that a canal was the only way to guarantee navigation on the river.³³ The bottleneck at the river mouth, and the Corps’s decision to support a canal, provided the backdrop for the river convention.

The majority of the river interests gathered in St. Louis supported the idea of a canal, which seemingly promised a permanent solution to the problem at the river mouth. Then, on the second day of the meeting, James Eads rose and addressed the assembled throng. Eads had the cure for canal fever, he claimed. Over a buzz of protests he suggested that a system of jetties could open the river forever. Eads considered a canal a desecration of the Mississippi, which, he said, could scour itself out if directed to do so by well-engineered jetties. At the convention and later that summer, Eads promised that the river needed only the guiding hand of man to help it behave. Human ingenuity, he was certain, could complete nature’s already good work by shaping the plastic landscape to serve commerce and development. An apostle of technology and progress, Eads assured all who would listen that because of his experience on the river, he should be trusted to save the Mississippi from the disgrace of a canal.³⁴ What he did not realize was that he was treading on terrain occupied by the Corps and in doing so offending Andrew Humphreys, another of the nation’s most powerful engineers.

Eads’s mistake became obvious that fall when steamboat interests, certain his bridge served railroads alone, convinced Secretary of War

William Belknap to instruct Humphreys to investigate whether the arches might impede river commerce. It did not matter that years earlier designers had implemented hinged smokestacks that could be lowered as steamboats passed beneath such obstructions. Humphreys took advantage of the chance to attack Eads, whose civilian status and call for jetties at the river mouth undermined the Corps. Humphreys found that the bridge *was* a threat to river traffic and twisted the knife by insisting that the only way to rectify the problem was to build an eight-hundred-foot canal around the span. Eads refused to dig a ditch around his bridge, and he set out for Washington, where he looked up an old friend, President U. S. Grant, who told Secretary Belknap to drop the matter. After outmaneuvering Humphreys, Eads returned to St. Louis to celebrate his bridge's opening on May 24, 1874.³⁵

Having kept one canal off the river, Eads was determined to defeat another. But New Orleanians, backed by Humphreys, stood in his way.³⁶ Humphreys not only hoped to maintain the Corps's hold on the river, but also to place his stamp on one of the enduring engineering problems of the day. Accordingly, when the Corps convened a committee in 1874 to investigate silting at the river mouth, its response was decisive: an artificial canal provided the only hope for free navigation on the Mississippi.³⁷ Eads responded by traveling to Washington again, this time to bring his influence to bear on congressional hearings about the canal. When he arrived at the Capitol, Eads proposed a "no cure, no pay" deal, in which he would receive compensation for his labor only if the jetties he advocated worked. Congressmen, many of whom had been incredulous about jetties, suddenly took notice of the self-promoting civilian engineer.³⁸

Predictably, Eads also drew some fire because of his initiative, with Humphreys and New Orleans's commercial elites among the first to train their guns on the civilian engineer. Humphreys squeezed off the first shot, suggesting that Eads was a crackpot who lacked the training needed to understand the Mississippi.³⁹ New Orleanians then attacked, fretting that Eads served St. Louis in its quest for commercial dominance by offering the jetties as a Trojan horse at the river mouth—useless technology that would inevitably be overwhelmed by the Mississippi. Twenty-seven of the city's leading businessmen accused Eads of being an "outsider" on the river, asking him to abandon his pursuit of jetties.⁴⁰ Other New Orleanians begged Congress not to "tolerate the half insane proposition of strangers," imploring the legislators not to "permit us to be destroyed" by ill-fated schemes. Whereas Eads promised order on the Mississippi, they insisted he would

deliver chaos instead, explaining that the river had taught them humility, and that hubris was misplaced on the great stream.⁴¹

The tenor of Eads's rebuttals was telling, revealing an unshakable confidence in his ability to control the river and an understanding of the opportunity before him to demonstrate his prowess on a national stage. He took on Humphreys first, trading barbs as well as data, even questioning the validity of sections of *Physics and Hydraulics*.⁴² He then answered the businessmen of New Orleans, playing on the era's cult of the self-made man by explaining that "practical knowledge... enables me to speak with much more certainty of the ability of the bar to sustain my proposed works than could be given by any theories founded on assumed conditions which do not exist." As for his ego, he acknowledged that he brimmed with confidence, because, after all, the solution to silting at the passes was "a question of money and brains alone." Finally, donning the mantle of science and reason, he warned his detractors that "what I know of the Mississippi are facts, and facts are the uncut jewels which grind false theories to powder."⁴³ In sum, rather than hide from charges of hubris, Eads embraced them.

Despite Eads's confidence and no-cure, no-pay offer, Congress sent a commission of three civilian and three military engineers, with a member of the Coast Survey to cast a tie-breaking vote, to Europe to study the jetties question before finally granting Eads the contract on March 3, 1875. The deal, though, was not as attractive as Eads had hoped, especially because he would have to build his works at the smaller and shallower South Pass, rather than at Southwest Pass. For Eads, who, like many other engineers of his time, had posterity in mind, working at South Pass seemed short-sighted because he suspected that deep-drafted, ocean-going vessels would soon outgrow the smaller outlet. At the same time, Congress guaranteed only incremental payments, based on the depth of the pass. In other words, Eads would only receive his full fee if South Pass's channel reached twenty-eight feet. Yet Eads recognized that Congress was offering him an opportunity to make good on the river's promise, to create a landscape in which human ingenuity prevailed over the vagaries of the untamed environment. So when presented with the chance to carve his signature in the valley's landscape, Eads eventually accepted.⁴⁴

Three weeks later, Eads stood before a huge crowd gathered in St. Louis's Southern Hotel, celebrating his triumph and demonstrating again his faith in his ability to discern the river's mysteries. The Mississippi presented a challenge, he admitted, but "every atom that moves onward in the river, from the moment it leaves its home amid the crystal springs or mountain snows, throughout the fifteen hundred

leagues of its devious pathway, until it is finally lost in the vast waters of the gulf, is controlled by laws as fixed and certain as those which direct the majestic march of the heavenly spheres." "Every phenomenon and apparent eccentricity of the river," he continued, "is controlled by laws as immutable as the Creator, and the engineer needs only to be assured that he does not ignore the existence of any of these laws, to feel positively certain of the result he aims at." He concluded, to thunderous applause, that "I therefore undertake this work with a faith based upon the ever-constant ordinances of God himself."⁴⁵ In sum, the laws of God and nature worked in harmony, and Eads understood both. A month later he left St. Louis, bound for his new home at the Mississippi's mouth.

Port Eads

In 1875 the river's mouths were a watery wilderness, unsettling to onlookers. One traveler gasped that he had "never beheld a scene so utterly desolate as this entrance to the Mississippi. Had Dante seen it, he might have drawn images of another Bolgia from its horrors."⁴⁶ In his memoir of the jetties' construction, even Eads's assistant, E. L. Corthell, a pragmatic engineer, admitted that his mind had reeled when first confronted with the desolate sight of South Pass. "The whole country," he wrote, was nothing but "a low, flat marsh of mud, reeds, and grasses, which, in long narrow strips, is thrust out into the gulf." As Corthell scanned the horizon for any topographical feature, he found "not even a background of high land to relieve the monotony of the scene."⁴⁷ On that canvas, Eads worked from a palette of technologies to paint an image of progress and civilization, hoping to reassure New Orleanians and people around the nation that the river, even at its wildest, could be shaped by powerful artifice and human expertise.

Even before Eads arrived at South Pass in 1875, it became obvious that winning the jetties' contract would be the easy part of his project. Because of the no cure, no pay deal, he needed investors to keep his venture afloat until South Pass grew deep enough that the government would settle up. Eads thus turned to his entrepreneurial roots, forming a private corporation. He promised shareholders double their investment plus 10 percent when the jetties worked.⁴⁸ Despite these terms and Eads's national reputation, bolstering stockholder confidence proved difficult, especially as Humphreys and his subordinates struggled to scuttle the project. Consequently, throughout his time at South Pass, Eads relied on two strategies to generate favorable publicity and new investors: the creation of symbolic landscapes that would prove his control of the Mississippi, and

the use of dramatic spectacles to illustrate the viability of the jetties. The result of these efforts was that the construction at South Pass remained in the public eye for years to come, maintaining a hold on the nation's imagination.

Aware that Humphreys was penning poison letters about him, published in New Orleans's papers, one of the first things that Eads attempted, in modern terms, was to control the spin by having workers lay telegraph line to South Pass.⁴⁹ He then gave the press something to write about, capitalizing on popular fascination with the jetties by transforming the riparian landscape at the river mouth into a tableau of progress. Laborers built neat buildings at South Pass, which, when juxtaposed with their watery context, were intended to provide observers with evidence of Eads's mastery of the Mississippi—where there had been only an untamed wilderness, hostile to the civilizing influence of commerce, a small village dubbed Port Eads stood.

With Port Eads sentinel at South Pass, the engineer seemingly had tamed a wild land. He then turned to the jetties themselves, staging a series of elaborate events for curious onlookers. Workers first sank parallel lines of piles, the jetties' spine, into the river approximately one thousand feet apart and then connected them with willow mattresses, the works' muscle, sinew, and flesh.⁵⁰ Silt from the muddy Mississippi would fill any gaps in the mattresses, making them watertight. After just a year's work, long, low walls stretched into the gulf, amplifying the scour in the channel. So on March 4, 1876, the anniversary of the day the jetty bill had passed congress, Eads decided to show off, arranging for a large schooner to exit the river through South Pass. Although the vessel arrived at the jetties as the tide fell, and stuck on the bar overnight, it passed through the next morning, apparently demonstrating the works' viability and prompting banner headlines in New Orleans proclaiming Eads the city's savior.⁵¹

Eads's exalted status, though, proved relatively short-lived. Emboldened by his early success, he invited a large group of investors aboard a steamboat junket to South Pass on April 26. That day, revelers swayed to the strains of a full orchestra and feasted on sumptuous meals on the *Grand Republic*.⁵² Eads, meanwhile, noticed another smaller vessel "rushing seaward till almost lost to sight on the bar near the ends of the jetties; now galloping across the channel like a race horse; now zigzagging here and there in its desultory course like a swallow skimming over the water."⁵³ The mysterious craft turned out to be the Corps's steam launch, dispatched to make its own soundings of South Pass. When the *Grand Republic* eventually arrived at Port Eads, a Corps representative boarded the steamboat and began circulating

rumors that a new bar had formed beyond the jetties in the gulf. The party stopped as people struggled to hear the Army engineer's bad news, and when the *Grand Republic* arrived back in New Orleans, the word spread quickly: the jetties were useless, Eads had failed, stockholders beware.⁵⁴

Sensing his venture sinking beneath the weight of investor anxiety exacerbated by a new round of Corps-authored criticism in New Orleans's papers, Eads orchestrated another event to prove the jetties effective.⁵⁵ This time he asked E. V. Gager, the captain of the steamship *Hudson*, to navigate his craft through South Pass. The *Hudson* was a steel-hulled vessel, and thus its crossing presented a test for the jetties. Gager arrived aboard his ship at the head of South Pass on May 12, with the dispute about the jetties still dominating the news in New Orleans. The *Hudson*, which had a draft of more than fourteen feet, came to the jetties as the tide was falling. Gager still gave the order: "Head her for the jetties." Eads and his crew watched, knowing that only the *Hudson's* successful passage could convince skeptics that the Corps's accusations were false. And when the ship made it through the two and a quarter miles of artificial riverbanks they celebrated, certain the event had "restored confidence in the jetties."⁵⁶

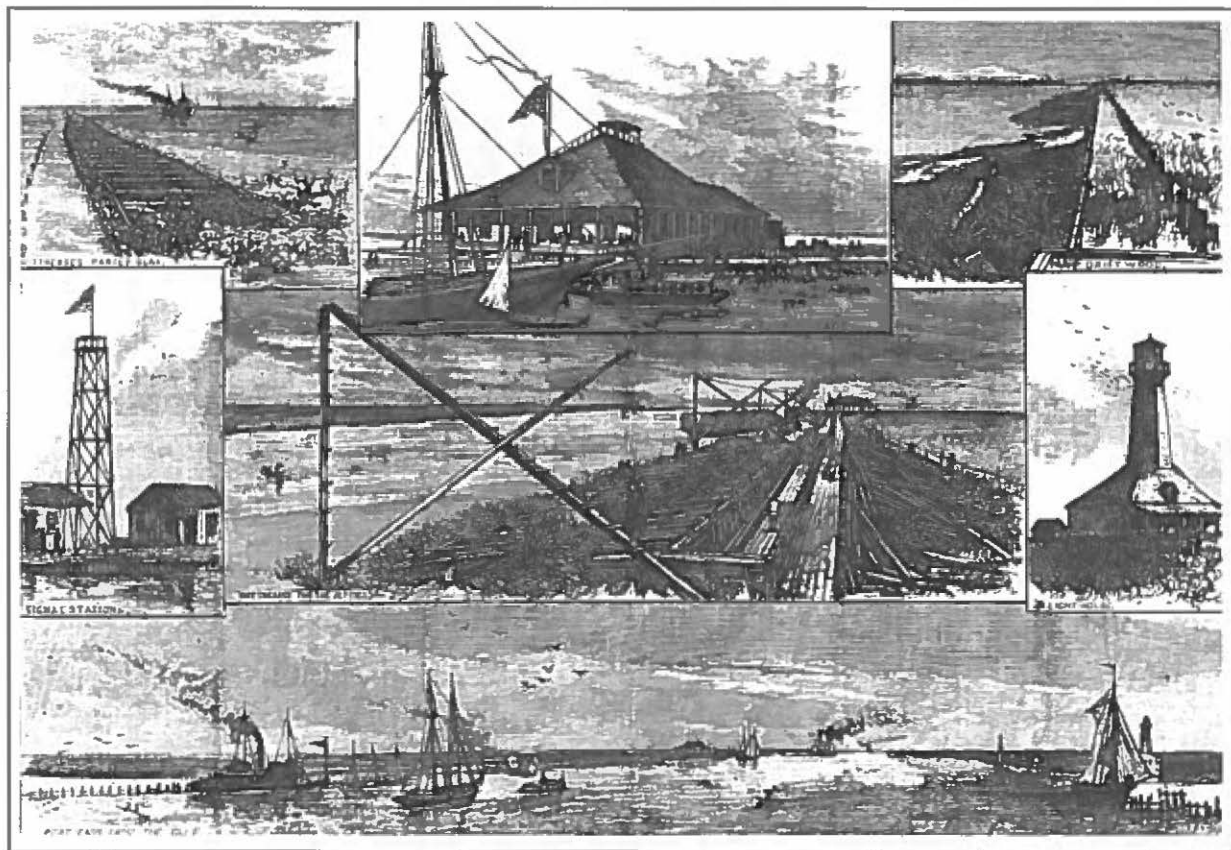
Following the *Hudson's* well-publicized journey, many ocean-going vessels began bypassing Southwest Pass, where the Corps still operated its ineffectual dredge boat, opting instead for South Pass. From July 1877 to July 1878, more than fifteen hundred vessels traveled through the jetties, proving that they worked better than anybody, except perhaps Eads, had expected.⁵⁷ In the latter year, Eads's workers placed massive concrete capstones—some weighing more than two hundred tons—atop the jetties, crowning their achievement and protecting it from the gulf's ravages. Finally, after numerous setbacks, including an outbreak of yellow fever that killed eleven people at South Pass, and much additional meddling by Humphreys and his subordinates, Eads and his crew of sun-baked, sweat-soaked laborers completed the jetties in mid-summer 1879.⁵⁸ With the project finished, E. L. Corthell, Eads's trusted lieutenant, gazed at South Pass from the high ground afforded by Port Eads, remarking on the transformation that he and his crew had wrought in the landscape around them. "Wharves, buildings, jetties, and sea-going vessels have taken the place of the desolation characteristic of the Mississippi River at one of its unused passes," he reflected with considerable pride.⁵⁹

In time, New Orleanians claimed the jetties as part of their extended municipal landscape and evidence of the city's post-war

recovery. Daily trips carried tourists to South Pass to show off the technology that had improved the river.⁶⁰ Eads's own words reveal the scene greeting visitors when they arrived at South Pass: "They [the jetties] constitute a remarkable illustration of how completely the immense forces of nature may sometimes be controlled," he suggested. And though he tried to remain modest, the task was too much for him. After all, the jetties proved without a doubt the power of the hand of man: "by the gentlest influences, the mighty current is swayed and directed completely obedient to his will. There is no instance, indeed, in the world where such a vast volume of water is placed under such absolute and permanent control by the engineer."⁶¹ After centuries of unpredictability, South Pass remained consistently deep enough for steel-hulled vessels to enter and exit the river. And by transforming the landscape at the river mouth, Eads offered onlookers a symbol of the seemingly limitless power of human ingenuity and technology. The effect was not lost on observers: Port Eads and the jetties made empire seem plausible again in the city.

A Grand Exposition

By the time Eads completed the jetties, railroads crossed the country, Alexander Graham Bell had developed a working telephone, fantastic inventions had begun pouring from Thomas Edison's lab, and the Roeblings had almost finished the Brooklyn Bridge. The nation rode a wave of unprecedented scientific and technological advance, and to many observers the jetties signified the power of engineers to overcome environmental obstacles. In that moment it seemed that "nature" was knowable and pliant, a tool in the hands of innovators armed with inspiration, data, and technology to reshape the continent. Writers at the *New York Tribune*, for instance, marveled at the transformed landscape at South Pass: "genius, persistence and practical skill have seldom won so great a triumph over the forces of nature."⁶² The jetties gave pause even to Mark Twain, a noted skeptic, who gushed that "Captain Eads, with his jetties, has done a work at the mouth of the Mississippi which seemed clearly impossible; so we do not feel full confidence now to prophesy against like impossibilities."⁶³ In Twain's words lay the jetties' meaning for many onlookers—the impossible had become possible, as engineers had demonstrated their apparent dominion over even the most intractable environmental problems. As for New Orleanians, Eads had not just redeemed South Pass, he had helped usher in a new era of massive engineering projects in the city.



Frank Hamilton Taylor, "Mississippi Jetties," from Harper's Weekly, March 2, 1878. Top Left to Right: Mattresses Partly Sunk, Hotel Port Eads, Driftwood; Middle Left to Right: Signal Station, Mattresses for the Jetties, Light House; Bottom: Port Eads As Seen from the Gulf. Historic New Orleans Collection.

Before New Orleanians considered the jetties' symbolism or lasting significance, though, they counted profits the reengineered river delivered to them. With valley traders shipping goods through the city again, markets revived, invigorated by regional produce and grain especially. In 1878, with the jetties open, the city received roughly four million bushels of grain, more than a ten-fold increase from 1876.⁶⁴ From 1879 to 1880, grain receipts in the city then increased by more than 110 percent, and the press reopened discussions of empire. The *Daily Picayune* guessed that "the entire grain product of the Northwest, beyond the Missouri, and much of that grown between the Mississippi and the Missouri, now controlled by Chicago, must find its way down the Mississippi to our city."⁶⁵ Such optimistic predictions appeared prescient, when an average of more than eleven million bushels of grain arrived each year between 1880 and 1883, prompting one tourist to remark that New Orleans "seemed like a city rising from the dead."⁶⁶ The jetties had performed another miracle: they had breathed life into an urban corpse.

With the valley's grain arriving at the city's port, thousands of trade vessels plotting courses for South Pass, and railroads traversing the Mississippi's banks, New Orleans's revitalized commercial community contemplated the best way to share the good news with the rest of the nation and world: because of the hard work of engineers working with new technologies their city was finally open for business again, back on track toward empire, having already left the bloody war in the distant past. In the winter of 1884-85, New Orleanians decided to host a world's fair, the so-called Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, on a huge parcel of land today known as Audubon Park. The fairgrounds stood in the midst of the city's up-and-coming Uptown district, fronted on one side by the river, with St. Charles Avenue's long rows of stately mansions and live oaks, bedecked with Spanish moss, on the other.

In December 1884 the fair opened, comprised of landscapes designed to show that New Orleans was part of a "New South"—a land of racial harmony, industrial development, technological advance, removed from the discord of war.⁶⁷ To accomplish this complex goal, the fair, like others of the time, relied on a dizzying array of goods and services, art and architecture, agricultural produce and industrial output, high culture and pop kitsch. It boasted neo-classical buildings, ethnographic displays, colossal steam engines, temples made of soap, cathedrals crafted from cracker boxes, costumed pigs, anatomy exhibits drawn from Civil War battlefields, and towers of sugar cane.⁶⁸ But what may have been even more revealing was what was almost entirely

absent at the Cotton Exposition: cotton. Although the State of Louisiana offered a folksy exhibit of the staple, "an old man and woman and their dog, composed of ginned cotton," one visitor was stunned to see "the supremacy of King Cotton audaciously challenged here in the chief city of his dominions by the new State of Nebraska, which proclaims on an enormous screen in letters of golden ears, that 'Corn is King,' and shows a huge portrait of the rival sovereign formed of red and yellow kernels."⁶⁹

Throughout the fair, grain seemed ascendant, perhaps because event planners were reluctant to focus on cotton, the crop of the discredited past, favoring instead grain, the harvest of Eads's South Pass jetties. For New Orleanians, the fair offered a chance to showcase the city's suddenly bright future, and they blanched at the thought of appearing backward. Whereas cotton reeked of the antebellum era, of slavery and secession, grain smacked of progress, of the rising West and "nature" controlled by powerful artifice, such as the railroads and the jetties serving the city. Awash in profits for the first time in many years, New Orleans used the fair to celebrate its rejuvenated economy and the innovations upon which it rested. As Louisiana Governor S. D. McEnery explained, all credit for the exposition belonged to "the genius of Eads presiding over the Mississippi."⁷⁰ The presence of so much grain at the fair thus narrated New Orleans's rise from the ashes of war, the railroads' timely arrival at the waterfront, and the jetties' imposition of order and civilization on the river. In an era of boom and bust, the city's future seemed secure in 1884, as visitors sidled up to exhibits at the fair.

Although New Orleans's economic triumphs quickly proved ephemeral—even during the fair, railroads adjusted shipping costs to recapture grain from the river—the jetties' impact in the city was still to be felt for years to come.⁷¹ In the 1890s and 1900s, New Orleans, like many cities around the nation, embraced what historians have labeled the Progressive Era: a time of reform and calls for efficiency in government, commerce, and everyday life.⁷² In New Orleans these years were marked most of all by respect for and reliance on expertise, engineering know-how particularly, and constant clamor for technological innovation to render the local environs more predictable, just as the jetties had the Mississippi. With South Pass teaching observers that "there is no limit to American genius, enterprise and energy," New Orleanians demanded new engineering projects, as the city attempted to recast itself as a progressive New South urban center, liberated from constraints imposed by geology, climate, and topography—in short a metropolis able and committed to controlling "nature."⁷³ The most

pressing concern in New Orleans in these years, with the problem at the river mouth solved, was flooding, which ostensibly had hamstrung the city's development for years.

By the early twentieth century, flood control engineering in New Orleans had revealed one of the legacies of Eads's triumph while beginning to make the jetties project seem comparatively minor. The artificial levees lining the river, huge pens designed to contain the Mississippi's fury, quickly grew so tall and massive that the city resembled a walled medieval village, barricaded against invasion. Those levees were, in some ways, direct descendants of Eads's jetties. Because of his success at South Pass, in 1879 the federal government asked Eads, a devotee of levees, to become a founding member of the Mississippi River Commission (MRC), the agency most responsible for the rise of the artificial embankments along the lower river. (Infuriated by the civilian's success, Humphreys, also an advocate of levees, retired from the Corps just two days after Eads joined the MRC.⁷⁴ In 1880 and 1881, the MRC's annual reports reflected Eads's influence, suggesting that levees, like jetties, could deepen the river's channel, thus lowering flood heights.⁷⁵ The following year, the MRC stated unequivocally: "It is obvious that for secure protection of the valley from overflow there is necessary a system of levees high and strong enough to withstand the greatest flood. *No other means of protection is practicable or even possible.*"⁷⁶

In the 1890s and early 1900s, with a progressive passion for science, technology, and landscape rationalization providing the cultural context, the jetties at the river mouth serving as evidence that engineers could accomplish most anything they set their minds to, and the Eads-influenced MRC acting as a technical clearinghouse and underwriting two-thirds of construction costs, local interests revamped New Orleans's waterfront, relying on a "levees-only" approach to flood control. At the time, an officer in the Corps of Engineers explained the impulse girding the work: "What nature has failed to do, and what remains for man to accomplish in order to fit the Mississippi river to his wants and uses, is summed up in one word, control."⁷⁷ By 1920, enthralled by such sentiments, New Orleans had added more than 10 million cubic yards of earth to its levees.⁷⁸ Once elevated only three feet above the adjacent terrain, the levees towered over the city they ostensibly protected. In 1928, one long-time resident of New Orleans noted, "I would have to get on top of the roof of the very home where I lived as a boy to see over the levees," which, he suggested, had become "miniature mountains."⁷⁹

With the city attempting to engineer some of the lingering dynamism out of its deltaic environs, and, in the process, reinvent itself yet again, in time many New Orleanians built on the confidence that Eads's jetties had inspired in them. It was possible to control the non-human world, they believed, to impose capitalist desire on the landscape as never before in the nation's history. Although Eads had once tried to differentiate himself from Humphreys by claiming to be the river's savior, both men were advocates of a river controlled by powerful technology—whether jetties or a canal. The success of Eads's jetties, thus bred overconfidence among observers, around the nation and especially in New Orleans. Consequently, as flood-control engineers apparently overcame, or, more accurately, ignored environmental limits, many of the city's residents lost sight of the power of the non-human world, buying into a false and dangerous opposition of nature and culture. And why not? With the levees growing taller each year, many New Orleanians could not even find the Mississippi in their city any more. The river was hidden behind a massive barrier of earth and concrete, only available for viewing if observers scaled the huge artificial levee. In retrospect, the results, for environmental historians at least, were unsurprising.

The levees could never be "impregnable," despite the claims of overconfident and overzealous flood-control engineers.⁸⁰ In fact, the embankments were partly responsible for raising flood heights on the Mississippi with each passing year at the beginning of the twentieth century. So much so that, in 1927, New Orleanians became reacquainted with the river in a year of flooding so catastrophic that the city's residents began seriously questioning their faith in engineering and technology—if only for a time—eventually demanding that the levee just downstream from the city be dynamited to release the engorged stream. By then, though, it was too late to turn back. New Orleans's Faustian bargain, forged during Eads's time on the river, had been sealed. The city would not, indeed could not, exist without the help of massive engineering projects designed to render the environment predictable and hospitable to development. The levees were only to grow taller in the years following the 1927 flood, while new jetties were to open up another of the outlets at the river mouth. And these are just a few of the many stories of the significance and power of engineering in New Orleans, a city completely reliant on technology to insure its survival. The same could be said of much of the nation, a state of affairs that likely would please James Eads and Andrew Humphreys.

Notes

¹*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, February 18, 1869.

²*Ibid.*, March 17, 1869.

³House Ex. Doc. 6, Part 2, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 213-15, 224.

⁴*Ibid.*, 227.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Proceedings of the Commercial Convention Held in New Orleans, May 24th, 27th, 28th and 29th, 1869* (New Orleans, 1869), 9.

⁷George E. Waring and George Washington Cable, "History and Present Condition of New Orleans, Louisiana," in *Tenth Census, Report on the Social Condition of Cities* 19, Part 2 (Washington, 1887), 252.

⁸"New Orleans, Its Present Situation and Future Prospects," *The Commercial Review of the South and West* 2 (July 1846): 58.

⁹Act No. 67 of 1869, in *Jewell's Digest of the City Ordinances, Together with the Constitutional Provisions and Acts of the General Assembly, Relative to the Government of the City of New Orleans* (New Orleans, 1882), 495; Ordinance No. 799, N.S.—Article 70, in *Jewell's Digest of the City Ordinances, Together with the Constitutional Provisions and Acts of the General Assembly, Relative to the Government of the City of New Orleans* (New Orleans, 1887), 188; *New Orleans City Ordinances Relating to the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad Co.; New Orleans, St. Louis, and Chicago Railroad Co.; Chicago, St. Louis, and New Orleans Railroad Co., and to the New Orleans Belt Co. from May 17th, 1852 to August 15th, 1881* (New Orleans, 1881), 8.

¹⁰*Proceedings of the Commercial Convention...*, 43.

¹¹Edward Ayers, *The Promise of the New South* (Oxford, 1992), 3-25; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York, 1991), 64-84; David Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA, 1994), 62-96; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey* (1977; reprint, Berkeley, 1986), 35-43, 55, 91-96.

¹²*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, March 16, 1869.

¹³E.L. Corthell, *A History of the Jetties at the Mouth of the Mississippi River* (New York, 1881), 15.

¹⁴Charles R. Kolb and Jack R. Van Lopik, "Depositional Environments of the Mississippi River Deltaic Plain," in *Deltas in their Geologic Framework*, ed. Martha Lou Shirley (Houston, 1969), 17.

¹⁵"Instructions to de la Tour, November 8, 1719," in Pierre Margry, *Decouvertes et Etablissements des Français dans L'Ouest et dans le Sud de L'Amerique Septentrionale* (Paris, 1879-88), 5:612.

¹⁶Senate Doc. 451, 29th Cong., 1st Sess., 8; House Ex. Doc. 16, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 10; House Ex. Doc. 139, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 14, 71; House Ex. Doc. 5, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 87; House Ex. Doc. 97, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 2; House Ex. Doc. 6, Part 2, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 212; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, February 6, 1859.

¹⁷Henry H. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys, A Biography* (Philadelphia, 1924), 28-56.

¹⁸Edwin Layton, "Mirror Image Twins: The Communities of Science and Technology in Nineteenth Century America," *Technology and Culture* 12 (October 1971): 576-679; Raymond H. Merritt, *Engineering in American Society, 1850-1875* (Lexington, KY, 1969), 6-58; Martin Reuss, "Andrew A. Humphreys and the Development of Hydraulic Engineering: Politics and Technology in the Corps of Engineers, 1850-1950," *Technology and Culture* 26 (January 1985): 2, 6, 15, 17, 24; Todd Shallat, *Structures in the Stream: Water, Science, and the Rise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (Austin, 1994), 45, 99-112.

¹⁹Robert Dorman, *A Word for Nature: Four Pioneering Environmental Advocates, 1845-1913* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 5-42; David Lowenthal, *George Perkins Marsh, Prophet of Conservation* (Seattle, 2000), 17.

²⁰Charles Ellet, *The Mississippi and Ohio Rivers* (Philadelphia, 1853), 132.

²¹Senate Ex. Doc. 20, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 27-36.

²²A. A. Humphreys and H. L. Abbot, *Report Upon the Physics and Hydraulics of the Mississippi River* (Washington, 1867), 30.

²³Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (1977; reprint, Cambridge, 1994), 114-77.

²⁴Edwin T. Layton, Jr., *The Revolt of the Engineers* (Baltimore, 1986), 55-60.

²⁵*Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, ed. Estill McHenry (St. Louis, 1884), vii.

²⁶Florence Dorsey, *Road to the Sea* (New York, 1947), 8, 12; E. W. Gould, *Fifty Years on the Mississippi, or, Gould's History of River Navigation* (Saint Louis, 1889), 214.

²⁷Dorsey, *Road to the Sea*, 15.

²⁸Ibid., 19.

²⁹John Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America* (New York, 1996), 22-30; Dorsey, *Road to the Sea*, 29-36; John A. Kouwenhoven, "James Buchanan Eads: The Engineer as Entrepreneur," in *Technology in America*, ed. Carroll Pursell (Cambridge, MA, 1990), 81.

³⁰Calvin M. Woodward, *A History of the St. Louis Bridge* (St. Louis, 1881), 7-31.

³¹Ibid., 36-92.

³²*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, March 22, 1871.

³³Ibid., March 22, 1873.

³⁴Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 24; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, May 6, 10, 1873.

³⁵*St. Louis Missouri Republican*, May 25, June 5, 1874; William Taussig, "Personal Recollections of General Grant," *Missouri Historical Society Publication* 2 (1903): 11; Woodward, *History of the St. Louis Bridge*, 270; House Ex. Doc. 194, 43rd Cong., 1st Sess., 2.

³⁶*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 2, 4, 1874.

³⁷Extracts from Reports upon Fort St. Philip Canal and Construction of Jetties for Improvement of the Mouths of the Mississippi; Being Appendix R (In Part) of the Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers for 1874, in Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 243, 247.

³⁸James Eads to Senator Carl Schurz, January 24, 1874, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 130; James Eads to William Windom, Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation Routes to the Seaboard, March 15, 1874, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 131.

³⁹House Ex. Doc. 220, 43rd Cong., 1st Sess., 3.

⁴⁰Business Men of New Orleans to James Eads, March 18, 1874, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 146.

⁴¹Transcription in Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 40.

⁴²Review of the Report of General Humphreys, Chief of Engineers, USA, May 29, 1874, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 156; Chief of Engineers' Arguments Refuted by His Own Testimony, in Ibid., 183.

⁴³Correspondence with Business Men of New Orleans, April 6, 1874, in *Ibid.*, 153-54.

⁴⁴Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 47-49; House Ex. Doc. 25, 43rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1; House Ex. Doc. 114, 43rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 2; Transcript of the Report of the Board of Engineers Relating to Improvement of the Mouth of the Mississippi River by Jetties; Being Appendix S (in part) of the Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers for 1875, in Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 251.

⁴⁵Response to Welcome Address of the Mayor of St. Louis at the Banquet Given at the Southern Hotel, March 23, 1875, in Honor of the Passage by Congress of the Jetty Act to Improve the Mouth of the Mississippi, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 48.

⁴⁶Francis Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London, 1832), 2.

⁴⁷Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 69.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁹*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, May 12, 1875.

⁵⁰Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 75.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 96; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, March 6, 1876.

⁵²*Ibid.*, April 28, 1876.

⁵³Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 97.

⁵⁴*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 28, 1876.

⁵⁵*New Orleans Democrat*, May 6, 1874.

⁵⁶Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 108-9.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 375.

⁵⁸James Eads to Alphonso Taft, Secretary of War, May 23, 1876, in *Addresses and Papers of James B. Eads*, 207; James Eads to W.S. Holman, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, January 29, 1877, in *Ibid.*, 242; James Eads to G.W. McCrary, Secretary of War, May 7, 1878, in *Ibid.*, 252; Review by Jas. B. Eads of the Letter of Gen. A.A. Humphreys, Chief of U.S. Engineers, May 1, 1878 to Hon. E.W. Robertson, Chairman House Committee on Levees and Improvement of the

Mississippi, June 1, 1878, in *Ibid.*, 256; Review by James B. Eads, of the Report of the Board of the U.S. Engineers Appointed under the Act of Congress Approved June 19, A.D. 1878, in *Ibid.*, 280; Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 142, 156, 186, 212, 297.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 210.

⁶⁰*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, May 2, 27, 1877.

⁶¹Corthell, *History of the Jetties*, 184-85.

⁶²*New York Tribune*, July 15, 1879.

⁶³Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* (1883; reprint, New York, 1991), 182.

⁶⁴House Ex. Doc. 6, Part 2, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 163.

⁶⁵*New Orleans Daily Picayune*, May 20, 1881.

⁶⁶House Ex. Doc. 6, Part 2, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 163; Laurence Oliphant, *Episodes in a Life of Adventure, or Moss from a Rolling Stone* (Edinburgh, 1887), 112.

⁶⁷Ayers, *Promise of the New South*, ix; Harry Grady, *The New South* (New York, 1890), 146; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, December 17, 1884; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge, 1951), ix.

⁶⁸Henry McElderry, *Description of Selected Specimens from the Medical and Surgical Sections of the Army Medical Museum* (New Orleans, 1884-85), 11-15, 17; C. J. Barrow, *Report of the U.S. Commissioner, and a List of the Collective Exhibit of the State of Louisiana, at the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition* (New Orleans, 1885), 11; Edward C. Bruce, "The New Orleans Exposition," *Lippincott's Magazine of Popular Literature and Science* 35 (April 1885), 417; Donald Clive Hardy, "The World's Industrial and Cotton Exposition," (MA Thesis, Tulane University, 1964), 37; Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair* (Chicago, 1984), 73-98; Eugene Smalley, "In and Out of the New Orleans Exposition," *Century Magazine* 30 (June 1885), 185-87.

⁶⁹First quote from, A. de G. de Fonblanque, "Report by Consul Fonblanque on the World's Cotton Centennial Exhibition at New Orleans," in *Reports by Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad on Subjects of Commercial and General Interest* (London, 1885), 2:36-37; second quote from, Eugene V. Smalley, "The New Orleans Exposition" *Century Magazine* 30 (May 1885), 14.

⁷⁰Herbert S. Fairhall, *The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition* (Iowa City, 1885), 20.

⁷¹House Ex. Doc. 6, Part 2, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 163.

⁷²John Buenker, John Burnham, and Robert Crunden, *Progressivism* (Rochester, VT, 1977), 3-29, 71-103; William M. Deacon, *Martin Behrman Administration Biography* (New Orleans, 1917), 47-55; Daniel Rodgers, "In Search of Progressivism," *Reviews in American History* 10 (December 1982), 113-32.

⁷³Fairhall, *Cotton Centennial Exposition*, 20.

⁷⁴Barry, *Rising Tide*, 89.

⁷⁵James B. Eads, *Minority Report of the Mississippi River Commission* (Washington, 1882), 1, 5, 7; Senate Ex. Doc. 58, 46th Cong., 2nd Sess, 14; Senate Ex. Doc. 10, 47th Cong., 1st Sess., 11.

⁷⁶House Ex. Doc. 37, 48th Cong., 1st Sess., 19. Italics added for emphasis.

⁷⁷Smith S. Leach, "The Mississippi River—What It Needs and Why It Needs It," in *Riparian Lands of the Mississippi River, Past—Present—Prospective*, ed. Frank H. Tompkins (New Orleans, 1901), 94.

⁷⁸*Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1890, to April 20, 1892* (Baton Rouge, 1892), 8; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1892, to April 20, 1894* (Baton Rouge, 1894), 21; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1896, to April 20, 1898* (Baton Rouge, 1898), 66, 119; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1908, to April 20, 1910* (New Orleans, 1910), 127; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1910, to April 20, 1912* (New Orleans, 1912), 107-12; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1912, to April 20, 1914* (New Orleans, 1914), 131-33; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1914, to April 20, 1916* (New Orleans, 1916), 48; *Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1916, to April 20, 1918* (New Orleans, 1918), 103.

⁷⁹*Hearings Before the Committee on Flood Control, House of Representatives, 70th Congress, First Session on the Control of Destructive Flood Waters of the United States, November 7, 1927 to November 22, 1927, Part 1* (Washington, 1927), 255.

⁸⁰*Report of the Board of State Engineers from April 20, 1896, to April 20, 1898*, 119.

Ari Kelman is assistant professor of history at the University of Denver.



The Museum of Mobile, now located in the former Southern Market/City Hall, Museum of Mobile.

Seeking a More Democratic Voice: New Approaches to the History of the Urban South at the Museum of Mobile

Clarence L. Mohr

Museum of Mobile, 111 South Royal Street, Mobile, Alabama, 36602.
Permanent exhibition opened September 27, 2001. Monday-Saturday, 9:00
A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Sunday, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M.; Adults \$5, Senior Citizens \$4,
Students \$3. 20,000 sq. ft. Internet: <http://www.museumofmobile.com>

Founded in 1702 as the capitol of French Louisiana, Mobile, Alabama, has rarely attracted the historical attention accorded other American towns with a colonial past. Over the last two decades, however, a number of intellectual and political developments have raised the historical profile of the Gulf Coast's second largest port city. In academic circles the community studies movement of the 1960s and 1970s converged with the post-Cold War internationalization of scholarly discourse to place the study of Mobile and other Gulf of Mexico ports within an "Atlantic world" paradigm. Outside the academy historical awareness was heightened, and often distorted, by a new politics of cultural symbolism in which ethnic, religious, regional, and generational identities were mobilized through appeals to group memory. Faced with bitter disputes over the legacy of Christopher Columbus, the morality of the atomic bomb, and the treatment of Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, curators at the nation's leading museums might have profited from the experience of southern colleagues who regularly rose to the challenge of mounting exhibits in a polarized environment. At times, to be sure, southern museums have behaved supinely, confusing history with therapy and shrinking from honest engagement with the ugly realities of slavery and segregation. But times change. During the 1990s, despite racially charged debates over rebel flags and neo-Confederate symbolism, there were signs of a new political calculus at work when black and white civic leaders struggled to rejuvenate the economies of historic southern cities. History typically became a building block in the work of urban development and, in the process, historical museums acquired a strong incentive to depict a past that was authentic and relevant to visitors across a broad social spectrum. In cities across the South museums faced, and continue to face, a common challenge: to bring history to a diverse clientele without walling off minorities, fragmenting shared experience, or succumbing to a sanitized blandness that would promote

a southern version of the "culture of forgetting" embraced by Germany after 1945.

In Mobile, where controversy had long simmered over the presence of the Confederate battle flag on the city's official seal, museum activities became identified with a vision of the past that allowed people to disagree about history's meaning and still recognize themselves as historical actors. Stated somewhat differently, local leaders came to realize that an inclusive and unromanticized depiction of the past was the key to success in the museum field. Against a backdrop of racial power sharing in city government and promotional efforts linked to the idea of cultural tourism, the stage was set for an expanded commitment to the newly reorganized Museum of Mobile.

Originally located in a converted home a few blocks from its present site, the Museum of Mobile operated for two decades after its creation in the 1970s with neither the budget nor the physical space to display its collections in an optimal manner. During the mid-1990s George Ewert, a trained historian, became the museum's director and made plans to relocate the facility from the 11,000-square-foot residence to a 67,000-square-foot historic site at 111 South Royal Street. In September 2001, after a five-year restoration project costing \$11.5 million, the museum occupied its new quarters in a magnificently restored antebellum structure that had previously served as both the city hall and a public market. The move represented a change in outlook as well as a shift in geographic locale. In its earlier location the museum had adopted a highly traditional approach that centered around the display of what might be loosely termed elite culture. In the absence of a guiding set of educational aims exhibits such as horse-drawn carriages, weapons, uniforms, and Mardi Gras regalia provided what was, at best, an episodic and intellectually incomplete picture of Mobile's history. Many valuable objects and collections were acquired during the early decades but a new conceptual framework was required to transform artifacts and text panels into an active learning experience.

The present-day museum employs innovative exhibit design and imaginative interpretive strategies to encourage personal engagement with the human complexity of the city's intricate and fascinating three-hundred-year past. To a degree that is rare in public institutions of the Deep South, the Museum of Mobile speaks in a democratic voice. Its exhibits are shaped by a spirit of unflinching realism and social inclusion. The curators are specialists who have thought deeply about their respective subject areas, and they approach history with an eye for both diversity and commonality.

Visitors enter the museum through a lobby adorned with New Deal-era murals depicting major epochs in the city's development from colonial times through the late nineteenth century. In their depiction of Indians, slaves, antebellum cotton commerce, and the social ambiguities of Mardi Gras, the murals speak volumes about the ongoing dialog over collective identity that shapes any museum's effort to provide an authentic encounter with the past. The contested nature of historical consciousness is apparent throughout the chronological sequence of permanent exhibits on the first floor. Arranged in four contiguous units spanning the years from prehistory through the present, the chronological exhibits yield much more than a simple time line of Mobile history. Collectively they evoke the dialectical quality of historical change in a city born of imperial rivalry and ethnic conquest and nurtured by a post-colonial American commitment to individual liberty and racial inequality. Just as important, the exhibits highlight the protean character of the city's relationship to its natural environment. From the beginning Mobile's destiny has been closely tied to its river and harbor and a thought-provoking maritime motif has been skillfully incorporated into the first-floor galleries.

Upon entering the first chronological exhibit (prehistory to the beginning of American rule in 1813) one encounters a striking twenty-foot-long native American dug out canoe dating from the mid-fourteenth century. Indian and European artifacts (grinding stones arrow heads, Spanish branding irons and French trade beads) are commingled throughout the display. The exhibit also contains a well-executed replica of the 1799 Ellicott Stone, a bilingual sandstone marker demarcating the imaginary line dividing the United States from Spanish West Florida. As the museum's exhibits subsequently make clear the thirty-first parallel would endure after 1813 as a cultural boundary separating the Gulf Coast from the southern interior. A wall panel noting the arrival of the first slave vessel in 1721 prepares visitors for the next chronological section which is entered through a chillingly realistic recreation of the hold of a slave ship. Only the feet of chained captives are visible on rough wooden planks. But an audible background murmur of black voices speaking a half dozen or more West African tongues evokes the terrible meaning of the middle passage in a way that requires no translation. The effect is both unnerving and sensitizing, thrusting the humanity of enslaved Africans to the forefront of one's consciousness. Upon leaving the slave ship's hold, visitors enter the world of antebellum Mobile by way of an auction block where they may stand against proportioned silhouettes and experience some semblance

of what it meant to be priced and sold as human property. Subsequent displays feature the city's waterfront, its commercial and recreational life, talking characters taking the viewpoint of a slave, a cotton factor, a planter, etc. Visitors receive brief introductions to secession, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the gradual recovery from the financial collapse of 1879.

The period from 1887, when Mobile regained its municipal charter, through the outbreak of World War II comprises the third chronological exhibit followed by a fourth section devoted to events after 1945. Section three begins with a look at changes in technology and transportation that would gradually draw Mobile into the orbit of a larger industrial system. Visitors pass a replica of Mobile's World War I Victory Arch to consider the economic expansion and cultural conflict of the 1920s, followed by examples of the impact of New Deal projects in the 1930s including a visually arresting wall-size photograph of the construction of the Bankhead Tunnel beneath the Mobile River. World War II comes alive in section three through a vintage 1943 documentary film focusing on the city and its domestic mobilization. Passing under a "Colored Entrance" sign, even the most casual visitor will quickly realize the war's dual significance as an end and a beginning, an event that triggered economic recovery, unprecedented



Rainbow Division parade through downtown Mobile, 1919. S. Marion Coffin Collection, University of South Alabama Archives.

in-migration and urban growth, a destabilizing of old power relations as returning veterans demanded political change, and the beginning of the end for Jim Crow practices in education, voting, and public accommodations. Each of these themes receives skillful treatment in section four, the highlight of which is a documentary film on the work of black civil rights leader John LeFlore and the Non-Partisan Voters League.

The museum's spacious second floor contains thematic exhibits with separate galleries focusing on Mobile personalities (men and women from all ethnicities and walks of life), the Civil War, recreation, diversity (including the influence of Mobile's colored Creole population), natural disasters such as hurricanes and epidemic disease, and ship and boat building (including the scores of naval vessels constructed in local shipyards in the wake of Pearl Harbor). By their very nature the thematic exhibits pose questions that take account of race and class differences while ultimately looking beyond such categories to consider how Mobile was experienced by individuals and groups from widely divergent historical backgrounds. Whether they came as French colonists, antebellum planters, African slaves, German, Greek, or Irish immigrants (a majority of the city's male wage earners were foreign-born in 1860), Vietnamese or Cambodian refugees, nearly all Mobile's people were at some point newcomers—voluntary or involuntary immigrants whose reasons for coming may be explored, whose interactions with each other and the larger community may be examined, and whose struggles with war and natural disaster that all may answer, asking visitors to reflect upon their own history and to ponder what it has meant, and what it might mean, to be a resident of Mobile.

A brief review can only suggest the variety and richness of the museum's offerings. In addition to permanent displays, the second level contains a large changing exhibit gallery that currently houses a splendid collection of artifacts from the Civil War commerce raider the CSS *Alabama*, whose captain Raphael Semmes spent the postwar decades in Mobile steadfastly refusing to swear allegiance to the national government. Future exhibits will include selections from a recently acquired collection of American bicentennial memorabilia, the largest body of such material outside the walls of the Smithsonian. Within recent months the museum has also opened a special "Discovery Room" where children may enjoy hands-on interaction with history through making their own murals, mapping and construction exercises, and an introduction to municipal politics that includes registering to vote

and the casting of a mock ballot on a juvenile curfew law. Here as elsewhere exhibits are designed to correspond with the subject area modules of the state social science curriculum.

With over 55,000 objects and documents currently in its possession, the museum is already a leading conservator of Gulf Coast material culture. In its selective and non-intrusive use of technology to promote artifact-based historical engagement, the museum is breaking new ground. Historians will find much to commend in the museum's inclusive vision and its unswerving commitment to the honest depiction of Mobile's evolution from a primitive colonial outpost to an aspiring New South metropolis. But visitors will also detect an underlying awareness of issues that transcend the Gulf South. At a time when America's newly declared war against terrorism has magnified long-standing tensions between diversity and homogeneity in our national culture, the Museum of Mobile, with its emphasis on international rivalry, migration, and painful domestic battles over racial equality and pluralism, reminds us of how the history of the "former Confederacy" may illuminate global terrain.

Copyright 2002 by the Organization of American Historians. An earlier version of this essay appeared in the *Journal of American History*, 89 (December 2002): 994-99.

Clarence L. Mohr is chair of the history department at the University of South Alabama and executive editor of the *Gulf South Historical Review*.

Investigating the Impact of Property Taxation on the Architecture of Antebellum Homes in Natchez, Vicksburg, and Mobile

Andrew D. Sharp and Greta J. Sharp

Did the antebellum architects and builders take advantage of existing tax loopholes—a legal tax planning technique—while designing homes and buildings during the early nineteenth century? Historians have the challenge of studying the past as it was, and avoiding inferences which interfere with that task. Accounting records, which survive the passage of time, enable accounting historians to study one artifact of earlier generations. Accounting ledgers contain much more than just numbers and words. They can also assist future generations in learning what it was like to have lived in an earlier time. Therefore, analytical implications may flow from the interpretations of accounting when viewed as an important aspect of our socio-economic evolution.¹

One type of accounting history research investigates the impact, if any, of an accounting change (for example, property taxation) on the environment of the time. Would the lives or lifestyle of men and women be changed by a new tax accounting standard? Would they change the way they worked, lived and played to avoid additional taxation? This study seeks to determine if this was the case with the architecture of antebellum homes in Natchez and Vicksburg, Mississippi, and Mobile, Alabama. In sum, did property taxes influence antebellum construction, and if so, in what fashion?

William Wallace presented a description of the attempts at taxation before the American Civil War (1861-1865).² Since the establishment of the thirteen colonies (1607-1733), the heated issue of taxation has been the subject of great debate. For centuries citizens have invariably expressed displeasure at being taxed, for example the Boston Tea Party (1773). Taxpayers perceived taxation as a means of being forced to part with some of their precious wealth whether the tax was on land, personal items' such as silver, or farm animals. Following the American Revolution, people resented the "government" for "taking" a portion of their hard-earned income, much as they do today. However, local governments proceeded to develop taxes along with systems of assessment and collection. These taxes targeted goods or property (for example, land and slaves) as an important source of revenue on the local level. While the federal government did not levy



Interior view of Anchuca Jib window. Anchuca Historic Mansion and Inn, Vicksburg, Mississippi. Photograph by Greta J. Sharp.

property taxes, such tax represented one of the oldest taxes in the United States.

Certain provisions of the property tax laws can be explained by the economic climate of the time. The tax treatment of certain items encourages or deters particular courses of action, for instance, the use of a certain product, such as alcohol. This paper will explore the issue of architecture as a result of an external pressure called property taxation. The primary focus centers on the taxation of "doors" in selected southern cities during the antebellum period.

A Tale of Two Cities

Vicksburg, located in central Mississippi's Warren County, sits atop the high bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River and the diverted Yazoo River Canal. The city's elevation made it impervious to the overflow of unpredictable floodwaters. An area, which was not on the river, located ten miles north of present day Vicksburg was first settled in 1698 by the French as an outpost. In 1812, Rev. Newet Vick moved to the location on the river which would later be known as Vicksburg. Since its founding in 1819, the rich history and economic development of this river port have been heavily influenced by the Mississippi. The planting, harvesting, and shipping of cotton enabled the "Gibraltar of the Confederacy" to rapidly flourish in the 1800s as a center of commerce, agriculture and river traffic. This "River City" is in the Delta area of Mississippi, forty miles west from the state capital, Jackson, and seventy miles upriver from Natchez. Despite its surrender to Union forces in July 1863 following a grueling forty-seven-day siege, Vicksburg has stubbornly maintained its proud history. It truly reflects its past, which is well-preserved in its charming antebellum mansions (for example, Anchuca and Balfour) replete with period antiques.³

Natchez (pronounced Natch-es by the locals) enjoys the distinction as the western-most city in Mississippi. Perched two hundred feet above the Mississippi River, this strategic river port proudly occupies the highest promontory north of the Gulf of Mexico. Furthermore, edging out New Orleans by two years, Natchez represents the earliest European settlement (1716 by the French and 1798 by the Americans) on the Mississippi River. A great deal of its colorful past is preserved in its buildings with more than five hundred houses, churches and other structures antedating the Civil War. During this antebellum period, entrepreneurs, some reputable and others shady, acquired and lost

massive fortunes from the area's natural resources—mainly land and the river. Natchez blossomed as one of the wealthiest cities in the nation through its bustling commerce and agriculture. Thus, the city with a commanding and sweeping view of the mile-wide river and the Louisiana flatlands became a symbol of the wealth of America's "Cotton Kingdom." This wealth triggered a remarkable proliferation of grand mansions and the importation of the finest furnishings available. Today, many of these historic mansions (for example, The Burn and Linden) furnished with rare antiques are architectural gems. One plausible reason for the number of antebellum mansions still elegantly standing in Natchez is its surrender without incident of the city to Union troops in May 1862.⁴

The cities of Vicksburg and Natchez are extremely proud of their surviving antebellum mansions and many are on display to the public. Throughout the years, tour guides at these homes graciously extended southern hospitality to their guests. Information about the tour homes has been passed from one generation of tour guides to the next. Yet, are these "facts" accurate? These tour guides confidently point out the architectural features of the buildings and the role property taxes had on them. They show the tourists the jib windows, then explain that jib windows were built in place of doors since the number of doors in a house raised the property tax assessment for the owner. During the tours, the guides also explain that the homes contained very few closets as each door caused the property tax bill to increase. The guides rationalize the exterior stairs of the mansions as a further means to reduce property taxes since exterior stairs were taxed at lower rates than interior stairs. Finally, the guides capture the attention of the guests with ghost stories. They point to the pale blue paint on the ceilings of the galleries (synonymous with verandas and covered porches) and explain how the color "haint blue" discouraged ghosts from visiting and scared away bad spirits.⁵

Antebellum Natchez Homes

A jib window consists of a double-hung sash window unit over a pair of hinged panels, at times referred to as jib doors. Functional or operational jib windows create a floor-length opening when in the open position. To open the jib window, the bottom sash of the double-hung window unit is raised even with the top sash and the two panel doors are swung open into the dwelling against the interior wall. Thus, a doorway is created.⁶

Jib windows represented an architectural device that complemented the galleries to ameliorate the hot and humid climate characteristic of southern cities. The earliest documented jib windows in Natchez were those incorporated in the construction of D'Evereux, which was probably built in 1836. Frequently, jib windows were added to homes in Natchez, as at Elms Court, the Briars and Fair Oaks. They provided increased air circulation for the houses and more direct communication between the people on the interior of the houses and those enjoying the galleries.⁷

Construction commenced around 1836 at Elms Court (sometimes spelled Elmscourt).⁸ The Briars was built around 1818.⁹ Although documents suggest that a dwelling stood on the premises in 1822, the broadness of the moldings reveals that the Fair Oaks millwork dates as late as the early to mid-1830s. The jib windows at Fair Oaks were used to improve much needed ventilation and provide passage with ease between the rooms of the home and its gallery.¹⁰ Myrtle Bank, another Natchez home, proudly displays its full-width gallery recessed under the front pitch of the roof. Jib windows, or windows positioned over moveable panels, provide access between the gallery and each front room on the interior of Myrtle Bank. Construction of this home probably began shortly after 1836.¹¹

Elgin Plantation represents another of the Natchez homes from an earlier period. The earliest part of Elgin was built prior to 1780 during the Spanish period (1750-1800).¹² Dr. John Carmichael Jenkins, a famous horticulturist, added the front on Elgin enclosing the older part of the house in 1840. This plantation house features double galleries, ninety feet in width, spanning the front façade. The jib doors of Elgin under all of the windows opening on the upper and lower galleries are hinged and open from the center, providing maximum ventilation for the interior of the house. Additionally, these jib windows provide unlimited access from the interior rooms to both levels of the double-tiered gallery enhancing the front of the home.¹³

The pride of Natchez is also reflected in a lovely house known as Linden, located amidst moss-draped oak trees on the outskirts of town. Through the years Linden has had a lasting effect on southern architecture. It represents a flawless example of Federal period (1775-1820) architecture. While the builder and designer of the original section of Linden are not known, construction of such dates around 1785. In 1818 Mississippi's first United States Senator Thomas B. Reed purchased Linden and widened the structure with wings on each end making it ninety-eight feet across the front on the first level. After 1829

he added a graceful lower level gallery spanning the entire front with a two-storied gallery occupying the center portion. Therefore, galleried wings balance each side of Linden. Jib windows, still operable today, allow access from the wing rooms on the first floor of the house to the expansive front gallery.¹⁴

The Burn, circa 1834, represents the earliest documented Greek Revival (1820-1861) residence in Natchez. While this spectacular home contains no jib windows, it stands as a National Historic Register bed and breakfast inn today. The grounds of the cypress-clad, columned mansion are elegantly landscaped with azalea and camellia bushes. The Burn features a unique free-standing, semi-spiral staircase gracing the entrance hall, as well as a set of servants' stairs exterior to the rear of the home that duplicates the access of the spiral stairs.¹⁵

Antebellum Vicksburg Homes

Anchuca stands in great tribute to Vicksburg's rich history as one of the most architecturally significant antebellum mansions of the town. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this impressive Greek Revival landmark represents the inaugural columned mansion in Vicksburg. Surrounded by stately live oak trees and black iron fences, Anchuca prominently sits atop a steep embankment in the heart of Vicksburg's Historic District.¹⁶

Local politician J. W. Mauldin built the original house circa 1830. In 1847 Victor and Jane Wilson added the giant Doric columned front and two-story brick dependency (a separate, yet connected building) containing the mansion's original kitchen and servants' quarters. Victor Wilson was one of Vicksburg's most influential citizens of his day; among other businesses he founded an ice and coal company in the town. Anchuca's bold and impressive exterior displays the unusual local architectural feature of an undercut gallery across the front façade like Vicksburg's Cedar Grove Mansion (circa 1840). The entrance doorway at Anchuca occupies the center of the gallery while two flanking jib windows provide additional access. The windows consist of six-over-six, double-hung sashes with exterior shutter blinds. Today the hinged panels under the windows are sealed and inoperable. Used as a hospital during the latter part of the Civil War, Anchuca has long reminded the citizens of Vicksburg of the immense prosperity the town enjoyed before the War.¹⁷

Also located in Vicksburg, Balfour is one of the finest Greek Revival structures in Mississippi and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, Balfour's 1982 restoration earned the Mississippi State Historical Society's Award of Merit. This mansion was built in 1835 by William Bobb and its back yard contained additional buildings—stable, carriage house, kitchen, storeroom, servants' quarters, hen house and a trellis covered with vines serving as a barrier between the main house and the outbuildings. On the interior, Balfour contains a rare, three-story elliptical-shaped spiral staircase. This house was home to renowned Civil War diarist Emma Harrison Balfour as she and her husband, Dr. William T. Balfour, purchased and took possession of the mansion in 1848, but did not acquire title until 1850. Following the July 1863 surrender of Vicksburg, this landmark house served as Union Headquarters for General James B. McPherson and his occupation troops until the War's end.¹⁸

Navigating the corkscrew-like stairs represented an arduous challenge for Emma. In a letter, she specifically addressed this issue. "I am getting a little accustomed to coming up and down the stairs but at first it fatigued me exceedingly and when one thinks of it—running up twenty-five steps as often as I do in a day—it is no trifle." In this same letter, Emma describes the installation of a floor covering and how difficult it was "fitting it around the stair case...you know as it is a winding stair case."¹⁹

The Balfours made major changes to the inside and outside of the house in 1855, including the addition of a big porch and set of exterior stairs on the back. Emma mentioned the inside and outside stairs in letters to her sister-in-law:

I've made the addition to get a good nursery & a dressing room—and now the arrangements there are complete. My own room, dressing room, necessity & bath room are connecting—and as there is a back stair case and entrance to the nursery and through that to my room &, there is no necessity that any one should pass through my room, and down the inner stair case except the white family—consequently a great saving of cleaning.²⁰

Emma needed and badly wanted a private staircase as part of the improvements to the house. This exterior staircase satisfied her desires. An outside set of stairs kept Emma's movements in the house from



*Looking down from atop the Balfour Spiral Staircase. Old Court House
Museum Collection, Vicksburg, Mississippi.*

being so public when company was there. She could quietly sneak up and down the exterior private stairs into the back yard.²¹

A Noted Mississippi Historian

For over twenty-five years, Gordon A. Cotton has extraordinarily served as director and curator of the Old Court House Museum in Vicksburg. A seventh-generation Mississippian, Cotton has authored many local history publications, including more than a dozen books. This former history teacher and newspaper reporter still finds time to write a weekly column on local history for the Vicksburg Post. In addition, he frequently speaks at functions held in the community. His dedication to preserving Vicksburg's past is indeed an inspiration to all. Gordon Cotton is a consummate example of "laid-back local stuff."²²

Regarding the antebellum homes in Vicksburg and Natchez, Cotton claims that the incorporation of jib windows and exterior stairs, as well as a lack of closets, were not property tax related. Jib windows were merely included in the construction of such homes as a means of ventilation and access to the galleries. Homes at the time were severely lacking in closets since the people then did not have many clothes. They kept the few clothes they had in wardrobes and armoires. Exterior stairs existed for a number of reasons. In some cases, another set of stairs would not fit inside the small houses of Cajuns. Some owners did not want their servants coming through the house; therefore, a set of exterior stairs accommodated the servants. The interior spiral stairs in some homes (for example, Balfour and Burn) were difficult to climb since one had to stay on the wide end of the treads. Thus, the jib windows, exterior stairs and lack of closets were not the result of avoiding property taxes in these two Mississippi cities. The guided tour stories are merely folklore.²³

Cotton provided observations about additional myths that have survived the years: in Natchez, people did not place the button or cap on top of the newel post at the bottom of the interior stairs until the house was paid for and the mortgage was gone; houses in the Carolinas contain hollow newel posts, the mortgages or deeds were kept in the newel posts; in Vicksburg and Natchez, the ceilings in the galleries were painted pale green/blue to scare away the bad spirits. These three stories represent more myths. Gallery ceilings were painted pale blue to keep the dirt dobbers and wasps from building their nests in the ceilings. These insects mistake blue ceilings for the sky.²⁴

Today, the choice of a paint color for a porch ceiling is still rooted in practicality. Architect Joanna Lombard observes, "A porch can be a fun place to experiment with color. We chose blue for the ceiling because it's traditional and it's said to be outside the spectrum of wasp vision—thereby deterring wasps from making nests in the rafters."²⁵

Biologists provide a scientific explanation of why dirt dobbers and wasps avoid blue objects. The color blue has a short wavelength, which gives off high energy. These insects stay away from high energy. In addition, they do not have good vision until they are close to an object. Insects merely see shades of colors. Given their ultraviolet vision, these flying creatures are sensitive to ultraviolet light. Thus, dirt dobbers and wasps detect energy far better than colors.²⁶

Warren County Tax Records

Two broad classes of property exist—real property, also known as real estate, and personal property. Land and things attached to it or growing on it constitute real property. Thus, real property includes the land and improvements in the form of buildings, roads, fences, trees and other landscaping. Personal property includes all other things that are not real property. Objects such as goods (tangible) as well as accounts receivable (intangible) satisfy the classification of personal property. An item of personal property attached or annexed to real estate is generally treated as real property. Through the years, systems for taxing real property have differed from those for taxing personal property. Property taxes assessed on real estate have been significant in most states; however, personal property taxes have often been less severe.²⁷

Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum, a national landmark, contains a few of the surviving personal property tax records from the antebellum period. Personal property assessments levied in Warren County are available for 1851, 1853 and 1857. These ledgers reflect the names of the property owners, items of personal property subject to tax, quantity of each item owned, the tax rate for each item, the value of each item and the amount of the resulting tax. Some items of personal property taxed included amount of money loaned at interest, amount of stock in incorporated banks, number of watches, number of bowie knives, number of slaves, number of cattle, bales of cotton, value of gold and silver plate and number of dueling or pocket pistols. Additionally, a school tax and additional assessment by

the sheriff were noted. Exterior and interior doors, as well as inside and outside stairs were not among the items taxed in these three ledgers. But, these could be real property, like land.²⁸

Another reference to personal property taxes in Vicksburg involves Mrs. Napoleon B. Batchelor during the 1863-1864 period. She lived in a comfortable two-story frame home with a gin house, blacksmith shop, barns, sheds and slave quarters on the property. She paid luxury taxes on a piano, a clock, and a carriage. Mrs. Batchelor owned a herd of cattle on which she paid taxes also.²⁹

There is a surviving ledger containing real estate assessments for 1857 on all lands in Warren County and lots in several surveys of the City of Vicksburg at the Old Court House Museum in Vicksburg. One section of this historic record reflects assessments on real property in "Vicksburg Proper." The columns on the pages provide data regarding the owners' names, division of lot, lot, square, street, value and state tax. The names Victor F. Wilson, owner of Anchuca, and William T. Balfour, owner of Balfour, appear in this real property assessment ledger. The lots were assessed a state tax; however, as before, no documentation of the taxation of exterior and interior doors, as well as inside and outside stairs, exists in these records.³⁰

Even today, Mobile Architect Nicholas Holmes Jr. notes the lack of any contemporary references to property tax avoidance in architecture. The quantity and placement of doors and staircases do not affect the property tax assessment on homes and buildings in the South. Thus, these architectural features were not influenced by taxation issues.³¹

Antebellum Mobile Homes

The port city of Mobile, Alabama, located on the western shore of Mobile Bay, is southeast of Natchez and Vicksburg by some 230 miles. Mobile also has some antebellum structures containing jib windows. As early as the 1830s, such windows were found in Mobile. Four of the windows in the Hogan-McLoskey Building (1832) included jib doors below the double-hung sashes. Although residences from the period featured jib windows, this represented the first reference to jib windows in a commercial building in the city.³² The Rowan Cottage (1838) and Robert Purvis House (1840), both of Spring Hill, John Elliott House (1837), and Edward O'Connor Cottage (1839) are examples of country dwellings during the period. Small jib doors under the front windows were common in homes such as these.³³

Oakleigh is a fine Greek Revival house built by merchant James W. Roper in 1833. The city's official antebellum mansion is in the American Buildings Survey and the National Register of Historic Places. As its architect Roper incorporated practical features into the design of his home. The long front, six-over-six windows featured in both wings and the center section of the second story contain jib doors leading to the galleries. The units are still fully operational today. Former staff member Heather Norred proclaims that the jib windows were a source of ventilation and access, not a property tax avoidance device. She attributes the jib window tax connection and petticoat table stories to mere doctent lore. It is easy to see why these stories get into circulation, as they seem to present logical explanations. A petticoat table consisted of a console table with a floor level mirror underneath to theoretically reflect the hems of antebellum dresses, ensuring they covered the woman's ankles. Actually, these mirrors were not to check petticoats but were rather popular since they repeated carpet patterns in the mirror and reflected additional light into the room. The Victorians appreciated little visual games of this nature. Standing next to a petticoat table, a woman would be unable to see her feet without bending over.³⁴

In the decade of the 1840s, some buildings in the city were constructed so that the ground floor was devoted to the business with a storefront entrance and the living quarters occupied the second floor. Double-hung windows, commonly called "slide-by" windows, with jib doors beneath afforded easy passage between the interior rooms and the balconies for the occupants. Thus, the balcony on the second story provided a front porch for the residents.³⁵

The 1850s provided more examples of jib windows in Mobile. In 1850 Roger and Isabella Stewart built their country home, Stewartfield, in Spring Hill. Their home was constructed in the Greek Revival style with Doric columns and jib windows enhancing the front gallery.³⁶ In the city proper, the Vickery dwelling of 1855 reflects the brick townhouse style. Jib windows were also incorporated into Vickery.³⁷

Surrounded by lush plantings of camellias and live oaks, Mobile's Bragg-Mitchell Home was built in 1855 by Judge John Bragg. He excelled as a lawyer, circuit judge and United States congressman. Local builder/architect Thomas S. James designed the mansion, providing a rich heritage of classic beauty for Mobile. James employed the Greek Revival style replete with white pillars and spacious rooms in a city dominated by the French influence (similar to New Orleans).

Mobile's most handsome Greek Revival mansion features Doric columns strategically placed around the three-sided veranda, accessible from the dining room through a slide-by window with jib doors. Bragg-Mitchell is very representative of the antebellum South with its architectural features allowing for maximum ventilation in an oppressive climate.³⁸

Described as a "born storyteller," John S. Sledge serves as Architectural Historian for the Mobile Historic Development Commission and edits the *Mobile Register's* books page. He is the author of *Cities of Silence: A Guide to Mobile's Historic Cemeteries*. Sledge submits that property taxation had no impact on the architecture of antebellum homes in Mobile. Architecture was driven by more practical considerations and ease of use. Therefore, the incorporation of jib windows, exterior stairs, limited closets and pocket doors (sliding doors without hinges that disappear into wall cavities when opened) lacks any connection to avoiding property taxes. These tax avoidance stories simply represent folklore, an early example of urban legends.³⁹

Conclusions and Further Research

The impetus for this research study centered on four items: Vicksburg, Natchez, jib windows, and property taxes. These two cities, like thrones on cliffs high above the river, were chosen based on their successful fall and spring pilgrimages showcasing the numerous antebellum homes and buildings there. Additionally, Natchez and Vicksburg are within a few hours driving distance from Mobile. Jib windows, with the slide-by sashes and jib doors, are simply an intriguing architectural feature from the period. Taxation has been, and still is, the wild card in many decisions. Thus, this quartet seemed like an interesting story to pursue.

As the project evolved, more players entered the game—exterior stairs, closets, pocket doors, petticoat tables, gallery ceilings and Mobile. Eventually, this study found no linkage in Natchez, Vicksburg, or Mobile between these architectural features and property tax avoidance during the antebellum period. Therefore, property taxation had no impact on the architecture of antebellum homes in these waterfront southern cities. Any purported connection represents another "Old South" myth. The findings of this research study remind us that no history is without myth, and myth can become part of history. Over the years, tour guides have embellished these antebellum home myths, making them history for their audiences.

Further research opportunities exist for an extensive study of antebellum myths. Another issue worth investigating involves certain houses in Charleston, South Carolina. The fronts of such houses do not face the street; instead they face the side yard. Thus, the front door opens into the side garden. Could this be the result of property taxes years ago? The historic homes from the antebellum period in New Orleans provide another venue for studying the property tax impact on architecture.

This study was funded by a research grant from the Teagle Foundation.

Notes

¹Michael Chatfield, *A History of Accounting Thought* (New York, 1977), 3.

²William D. Wallace, "The Income Tax in the United States Prior to the Sixteenth Amendment," *Accounting Historians Notebook* (Fall 1980): 3.

³City of Vicksburg, Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Website <<http://www.vicksburg.org/pages/history.htm>> (June 2, 2002); Gordon A. Cotton, *Vicksburg: Images of America* (Charleston, 1999), 6-8; Interview with Gordon A. Cotton, Director and Curator, Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum, October 13, 2002; Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, Vicksburg Visitors Guide (Vicksburg, 2002), 4-6.

⁴City of Natchez, Natchez Convention and Visitors Bureau Website <<http://www.natchez.ms.us/geninfo.htm>> (June 2, 2002); Jerry DeLaughter, "Bed and Breakfast in Old Natchez," *Early American Life* (April 1985): 46-49.

⁵The authors have toured many of the antebellum homes in Vicksburg and Natchez over the years, and are members of the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society.

⁶Mary Warren Miller and Ronald W. Miller, *The Great Houses of Natchez* (Jackson, 1986), xi; Mobile Historic Development Commission, *Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts* (Mobile, 2002), 9-10.

⁷Miller and Miller, *The Great Houses of Natchez*, xi and 20.

⁸*Ibid.*, 37.

⁹*Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 40.

¹¹Ibid., 83.

¹²For dates of the architectural periods in the South, see J. Frazer Smith, *White Pillars: Early Life and Architecture of the Lower Mississippi Valley Country* (New York, 1941), 212.

¹³J. Wesley Cooper, *Ante-Bellum Houses of Natchez* (Natchez, 1970), 76; Miller and Miller, *The Great Houses of Natchez*, 33.

¹⁴Cooper, *Ante-Bellum Houses of Natchez*, 146; DeLaughter, "Bed and Breakfast in Old Natchez," 48; Miller and Miller, *The Great Houses of Natchez*, 62.

¹⁵Interview with Loveta Byrne, Former Owner and Proprietor, Anchuca Historic Mansion and Inn of Vicksburg and The Burn of Natchez, September 30, 2002; Letter from Derek Nienaber to authors, Inn Staff, The Burn of Natchez, October 12, 2002.

¹⁶Interview with Tom Pharr, Co-Owner and Proprietor, Anchuca Historic Mansion and Inn of Vicksburg, May 22, 2002; National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, Anchuca of Vicksburg, Prepared by Mary Warren Miller, Research Consultant, Historic Natchez Foundation, February 25, 1981.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Interview with Katy Watt, Tour Guide and Caterer, Balfour House of Vicksburg, May 21, 2002; Sylvia Higginbotham, *Marvelous Old Mansions and Other Southern Treasures* (Winston-Salem, 2000), 107.

¹⁹Letter from Emma Harrison Balfour to Mrs. Thomas A. Harrison, April 3, 1848, Faunsdale Plantation Papers, Birmingham Public Library, Translated by Katy Watt and Nita Brown.

²⁰Letter from Emma Harrison Balfour to Mrs. Thomas A. Harrison, January 17, 1856, Faunsdale Plantation Papers, Birmingham Public Library, Translated by Katy Watt and Nita Brown.

²¹Letter from Gordon A. Cotton to authors, Director and Curator, Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum, July 9, 2002.

²²Interview with Gordon A. Cotton, Director and Curator, Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum, May 20-21, 2002.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Alicia K. Clavell, "Living Outside: Building a sunny porch was a true labor of love," *Southern Living* (September 2002): 14AL.

²⁶Interview with Allen Tubbs, Assistant Professor of Biology, Spring Hill College, Mobile, November 18, 2002.

²⁷Peter J. Shedd and Robert N. Corley, *Business Law* (Englewood Cliffs, 1993), 934-37.

²⁸Tax Assessment Roll, Warren County, Mississippi, 1851; Tax Assessment Roll, Warren County, Mississippi, 1853; Personal Assessment, Probate Clerk's Office, Warren County, Mississippi, 1857.

²⁹Gordon A. Cotton, ed., *From the Pen of a She-Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Emilie Riley McKinley* (Columbia, 2001), 4.

³⁰Real Estate Assessments, Probate Clerk's Office, Warren County, Mississippi, 1857.

³¹Interview with Nicholas H. Holmes, Jr., Architect, Holmes & Holmes Architects, Mobile, November 20, 2002.

³²Elizabeth Barrett Gould, *From Fort to Port: An Architectural History of Mobile, Alabama, 1711-1918* (Tuscaloosa, 1988), 76-77.

³³*Ibid.*, 94-95.

³⁴Interview with Heather Norred, Former Museums Director and Docent, Mobile's Oakleigh Historic Complex, June 25, 2002.

³⁵Gould, *From Fort to Port*, 109.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 154.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 155.

³⁸Ralph C. Hammond, *Ante-Bellum Mansions of Alabama* (New York, 1951), 167-68.

³⁹Interview with John S. Sledge, Architectural Historian, Mobile Historic Development Commission, June 24, 2002.

Andrew D. Sharp is professor of accounting at Spring Hill College. Greta J. Sharp is proprietor of A Sharp Look in Mobile, Alabama.

Book Reviews

Rod Andrew Jr. *Long Gray Lines, The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, 169 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 0-8078-2610-3.

Military schools described the real man and citizen as a brave soldier, not a swaggering, whiskey-drinking hellion eager to prove his prowess in gambling and fighting. Thus, while their interpretation of manliness was firmly embedded in the idea that fighting was honorable, their definition of moral character and manliness was not far from that of the evangelical clergy, says Rod Andrew in his excellent book about southern military school traditions. Southern military schools such as Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and the Citadel are well known to most students of the War Between the States, but postwar schools such as Texas A&M, Arkansas, North Georgia College, Auburn, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State, Clemson, and North Carolina State are not tied to southern military traditions, though all of these schools, beginning in 1871, were founded on the basis of developing young southern boys into model citizens and upstanding soldiers. Andrew's book traces the founding and military traditions at each of these schools, with the opening of A&M, Arkansas, and North Georgia, in 1871, until about the mid-1920s, when the military-style education became less and less the norm.

Military tradition was a prominent feature of higher education across the nineteenth-century South. Established before the War Between the States, VMI and the Citadel followed the West Point mode. After the war, former Confederate states took advantage of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 to establish colleges that offered students an inexpensive and practical education as well as a background in military science. Schools such as A&M, Auburn, and Clemson organized themselves on a military basis requiring male students to wear uniforms, join a cadet corps, and subject themselves to constant military discipline. Several southern black colleges also adapted a military approach. In his book, Andrew covers such topics as educating the citizen soldier, the death and rebirth of the military school traditions of the South, discipline and defiance of the student body, and the military education of black youth. Andrew's work flows smoothly from chapter to chapter, is footnoted exceptionally well, and from the bibliography, it appears that exhaustive research went into the book. Andrew argues in the initial chapter of his book that sectional

tension between North and South before the Civil War was one of the least important factors igniting the military school craze in the South. The political situation in the 1850s, however, led Southerners to believe that military training made a young man valuable, useful, and honorable, and this was the principle reason for his existence. Most southern academies died with Lee's surrender at Appomattox in the spring of 1865 as most of the schools had been destroyed or were occupied by federal forces. Two schools, the Georgia Military Institute and the Arsenal in Columbia, South Carolina, were in ashes and ceased to exist. The reputations of well-known Confederates and the myth of the Lost Cause were crucial factors in the establishment and reopening of southern military schools after the war. It was during these years, 1871 to 1925, that these newfound military schools instilled in the young men of the South the habits, feelings, and qualities expected of soldiers. Students dressed in gray uniforms with rifles in their hands for drill, imitating the virtues of their Confederate forebears and the Lost Cause.

Andrew devotes two chapters to discipline, defiance, and military law as a means of defining how each of these newfound schools would be run. In a number of instances, student rebellions occurred as a result of southern notions of honor, loyalty, and soldierly duty—the same qualities found in the Confederate soldier. The author asserts, using a wide range of primary sources, that the trustees, administrators, and faculties felt an obligation to assert authority and restore order during times of student unrest. Andrews concludes that while southern militarism allowed room for rebellion, it also valued social order, obedience to law, and deference to authority.

Andrew concludes with a full chapter on the evolution of black military schools and how white Southerners perceived them. Using the same investigative technique and employment of primary sources, he carefully examines the role of black student soldiers in the South and their treatment as second-class citizens.

Andrew's book is a stimulating study of the southern military school tradition and a welcomed addition to any library, especially for those students interested in the development of New South schools and the traditions of the Lost Cause.

Chris Ferguson

Alexandria, Virginia

Thomas R. R. Cobb. *An Inquiry into the Law of Negro Slavery in the United States of America. To Which Is Prefixed an Historical Sketch of Slavery*. Introduction by Paul Finkelman. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999, originally published, 1858, 228 pp. + 358 pp. \$65.00. ISBN 0-8203-2127-3.

In 1858 Thomas R. R. Cobb published his *Inquiry into the Law of Negro Slavery*, which began with a 228-page *Historical Sketch of Slavery* from antiquity to the mid-nineteenth century and continued with a separately numbered, 358-page study of the law of slavery, with a particular emphasis upon how that concerned Southerners and other Americans of the author's day. Cobb also published these works as two distinct volumes. In 1999 the University of Georgia Press issued a reprint edition of the combined version, with a helpful introduction by Paul Finkelman, who refers readers to William B. McCash, *Thomas R.R. Cobb (1823-1862): The Making of a Southern Nationalist* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), for further information on the subject. The 1999 reprint comes as part of a University of Georgia Press series on the Legal History of the South, under the editorship of Finkelman and Kermit L. Hall.

Cobb was a Georgia native, brother of the prominent politician Howell Cobb, and son-in-law of Joseph Henry Lumpkin, who from his seat on the state's highest court issued scores of decisions regarding slaves. Thomas Cobb practiced law in Georgia prior to the Civil War, founded the law school at what became the University of Georgia, and died at the battle of Fredericksburg. His crowning achievement, however, was the *Inquiry into the Law of Negro Slavery*, which he claimed to have undertaken with "no political, no sectional purpose," but readily admitted to being biased by his "birth and education in a slaveholding state." Cobb spent approximately eight years researching and writing this study, traveled to Washington, Philadelphia, and New York to consult materials not available to him in Athens, Georgia, and sought to publish a treatise "to define the Law of Slavery" as it existed in the United States.

Cobb wrote well and produced a study valuable to jurists and practicing attorneys of his day. He showed an interest in comparative slavery, with portions of his book's first section devoted to the institution among the ancient Hebrews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. The same was true in his treatment of slave law, where he employed evidence from European countries to bolster his arguments. His discussions of American case law regarding slaves as perpetrators of crimes, suits for freedom, and testamentary manumission all

contained useful information regarding appellate court decisions. Cobb criticized some aspects of slavery, such as the non-binding nature of slave marriages; planned a second volume on slaves as property, the first having dealt more with them as persons; and, undoubtedly, would have received much wider attention if slavery had existed in the United States for more than a few years following the book's publication.

The author's clear and moderate prose, footnotes well stocked with case law and other references, and periodic criticism of slavery veiled his sectional and racial bias. Ultimately, Cobb viewed slavery a positive good that had its origins in natural law. He considered Africans particularly well-suited to servitude because of their mental and moral deficiencies; preoccupation with the sectional crisis led him to devote an inordinate amount of space to a defense of interstate comity in the transportation of slave property; and his study of the comparative history of slavery served to support his assumptions regarding the virtue of the institution. In other words, Cobb was one of the many antebellum southern writers who defended slavery. As McCash indicates, the Georgia attorney had once been "an exponent of national unity." By 1858, however, his transition "to an uncompromising secessionist and southern nationalist had clearly begun," though Cobb still hoped for sectional reconciliation along lines that favored a southern agenda. Two years later, with the election of Abraham Lincoln, his transition to southern nationalist was complete.

Dwayne Cox

Auburn University

Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott. *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Post-emancipation Societies*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000, 198 pp. \$15.95. ISBN 0-8078-4854-9.

The question of the end of slavery (especially in the Americas) is one that historians have begun to examine increasingly from a comparative perspective. These studies have enriched our understanding not only of the effects of the institution of slavery on those enslaved but also they have illuminated related issues such as cultural hierarchy, the rise of capitalism, the relation of *métropole* to colony, the contradictions of revolutions, and how to effect a transformation from one social order to another. In this collaborative work spanning from Jamaica in the 1830s to French West Africa in the 1940s, three distinguished historians in the field describe, with nuance and

complexity, the cultural landscape of postemancipation societies in Africa and the Americas.

Noting that while studies of slavery (on both sides of the Atlantic) have been able to discuss the totality of the institution (hence the term slave society), such has not been the case with the aftermath of slavery. As a consequence, free labor has often been represented "as an undifferentiated, unexamined conceptual foil to bondage" that became "simply the ending of coercion," and not "a structure of labor control that needed to be analyzed in its own way." Thus, the Western understanding of freedom (as with slavery) belongs to a culture specific field of meaning: "It is a social construct, a collectively shared set of values reinforced by ritual, philosophical, literary, and everyday discourse. Freedom has a history that contains distinct notions whose conflation in a particular historical tradition is itself as important as the tension among them."

An important theme that emerges in these essays addresses an issue broached in Frank Tannenbaum's now classic *Slave and Citizen*. Although often sidelined by discussions of other issues in the book, the question raised by Tannenbaum of citizenship was one that remained central to formation of postemancipation societies. In this context, the role of the former slaves becomes important, as they contested and redefined the dominant understanding of citizenship (that is, of being human) in order to secure their social and political interests. Thus, rather than dismissing citizenship as a purely Western idea imposed by imperialism, and therefore irrelevant to the social world of the former slaves, the actions of freedpeople demonstrate that they expanded the meanings of European social ideas beyond official articulations.

In his essay, "The Essence of Contract: The Articulation of Race, Gender, and Political Economy in British Emancipation Policy, 1838-1886," Thomas Holt argues that a shift transpired in the "social contract" founding of the society, whereby the initial policy of political and social equality expressed by bureaucrats such as Colonial Secretary Lord Glenelg at the moment of abolition, was quickly abandoned. As he has shown in his seminal work, *The Problem of Freedom*, and as he argues in this essay, this change did not result from "idealism, pragmatism, or a fit of absentmindedness," but rather as a consequence of an intellectual mutation occurring at the time—the transformation of a classical liberalism and the emergence of the discourse of political economy. The increasing democratizing that occurred in British society *pari passu* the implementation of emancipation (such as with the 1832

Reform Bill), raised the issue of the application of liberal ideology to former slaves.

The discourses of race and citizenship unfolded according to Rebecca Scott in "Fault Lines, Color Lines, and Party Lines," in a somewhat different manner in the postabolition situation of Cuba. Scott compares the mobilization of workers in two sugar-producing regions, the central province of Santa Clara in Cuba during the 1890s and the Terrebonne Parish in Louisiana in 1887. Just as in the United States, where a Civil War brought about the abolition of slavery, a war as well, but one against colonialism, forced the issue of abolition on the political scene in Cuba. And, as occurred in the United States and in other instances with abolition, the end of slavery accompanied a reconfiguration of national identity.

In "Conditions Analogous to Slavery," Frederick Cooper demonstrates that Africans living under British and French colonialism were forced to reinterpret the dominant understandings of citizenship in order to secure their well being. The discourse of colonialism represented the African (and the Arab) as being both enslaver and victim. In either case, the behaviors of Africans needed to be reformed, not only with political and economic domination but also with moral and intellectual imperialism. This new civilizing mission, Cooper notes, was international "in a much fuller sense than the British-dominated drive against the slave trade after 1807." But, in coming to terms with the dynamics of slavery in Africa, the colonial regimes would also be forced to address "the limits of their own tools for understanding and intervening in African society."

Cooper illustrates with labor struggles in coastal Kenya and Zanzibar that colonial officials, as had occurred in the British Caribbean, abolished slavery (with compensation), while at the same time, a landowning class was maintained in a system organized on the basis of export agriculture and wage labor. Although the colonial system changed the relations of power, ending large-scale slave trading and the legal status of slavery, the complexity of the local situation made clear that the nature of the change could not be completely directed within the terms of the colonial powers. Frustrated by the inability to apply "the universal principals of social and economic progress" to the former slave, the colonial power, rather than seeing the inability of their models to explain to the postslavery social situation, "came to accept as African, as immutable, and as traditional certain notions of social relations that were the products of struggles and of a history that they did not want to know."

This collection enhances our understanding of the dynamics of the emancipation process in both Africa and the Americas. It also provokes further questions. Holt states that most discussions of emancipation policies presume the "worker" is male, when in fact "women constituted the core of the field labor force," as the "plantations were dependent not simply on proletarian labor but on a female proletariat." Such a contention could be amplified to pose questions about the nature of perception and consciousness with respect to the formulation of emancipation policies.

Scott's conclusion that with the forces of ideology and state power marshaled against them "Louisiana sugar workers lost, after decades of struggle, the space for action that Cuban sugar workers managed to keep open well into the twentieth century" may be drawing too rigid a distinction, especially given a century after their respective emancipations, the political mobilization and public discourse on race in North America versus that of Cuba.

Finally, the extent to which, as each essay effectively demonstrates, postemancipation societies attempted to define the former slaves through their labor (a strategy contested and reinterpreted by the ex-slaves), raises questions, not just of labor control but also of cultural formation, illustrating that labor is but one aspect of the way in which Western and westernized societies institute, stabilize, and reproduce their social orders.

Demetrius L. Eudell

Wesleyan University

Ariela J. Gross. *Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, 272 pp. \$30.50. ISBN 0-691-05957-8.

The antebellum Georgia attorney Thomas R. Cobb divided case law on slavery into the categories of slaves as persons and slaves as property. Many modern historians have followed Cobb's precedent, which generally corresponds with the difference between civil and criminal actions. For example, property disputes concern such things as slave sale warranties, while criminal decisions involve the assignment of moral agency to slaves, most notably for the commission of violent crimes. Gross accepts the distinction between slaves as persons and slaves as property, but takes the evidence for her study only from disputes over the sale and hiring of slaves, which clearly assigned bondsmen to property status. Drawing upon printed appellate decisions

and unpublished circuit court records from five Deep South states, she examines "the paradoxes that arose from slaves' double identity as human subjects and the objects of property relations *at one and the same time*."

Disputes that originated in the slave market frequently spilled over into the courtrooms of South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, the states under study. Contrary to the genteel stereotype of the Old South, the region produced an ready group of litigants who did not hesitate to initiate legal actions regarding the commerce of slavery. Naturally, the legal profession profited from this tendency. Gross argues that because antebellum white southerners placed a premium upon honor and reputation, a warranty suit not only carried monetary consequences, but also challenged the character of both parties. As a result, suits regarding slave sale warranties and slave hiring contracts threatened the self-image of the master class.

White southerners also valued the character traits of honesty and industry in the slave property they bought, sold, and hired. This, in itself, threatened the law's treatment of slaves as chattel. At the same time, southern racial ideology held that slaves lacked the capacity for unlimited moral improvement. Nevertheless, a proper environment could shape the character of a slave in a positive fashion. This cast some responsibility for a slave's behavior upon the master and posed a potential threat to his honor and reputation. For example, the purchaser or hirer of a slave who ran away might institute a legal action arguing that he had acquired a congenital runaway who the seller had known as a flight risk prior to the business transaction. On the other hand, the seller could respond that the slave fled only because the new master had been too harsh, too lenient, or lacked some other skill necessary to the proper handling of slave labor. In either case, the actions of a slave had undermined the honor of a white man.

Those who hired and purchased slaves also studied their bodies for evidence of misrepresentations regarding age, health, and frequency of corporal punishment, the latter being an indicator of the slave's character. Slave merchants, meanwhile, described their wares in terms designed to encourage purchase or hire. Again, legal actions grew out of these circumstances. Consequently, physicians became the authoritative readers of slaves' bodies and often testified as expert witnesses in warranty suits. Nineteenth-century southern physicians even believed that blacks suffered from disabilities peculiar to their race. If a medical expert offered evidence that a slave developed a physical ailment or mental flaw as a result of the new master's mismanagement, this

benefitted the seller financially and dishonored the new owner. If another expert testified that the same slave suffered from a chronic physical or mental illness that predated the sale, this benefitted the purchaser financially and vindicated his honor. Significantly, the courts allowed physicians to report slaves' declarations pertaining to their own medical problems. As a result, the word of a slave could undermine white authority through a physician's expert testimony.

As the author indicates, much of the previous literature on slave law followed the traditional division between cases that concerned slaves as property and those that concerned slaves as persons. This distinction retains its validity for students of the subject, but Gross has used the old categories in a new way to demonstrate that slaves exercised moral agency even when the law assigned them to property status. Furthermore, she has employed a variety of interdisciplinary tools to examine the impact that this exerted upon the honor of slaveholders. In doing so, she also has provided valuable insights into the relationship between the slave market and the courtroom, the physicians' status as an expert medical witness in civil disputes regarding slaves, and the conflict between racial ideology and everyday life in the Old South.

Dwayne Cox

Auburn University

Aileen Kilgore Henderson. *Stateside Soldier: Life in the Women's Army Corp, 1944-1945*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2001, 224 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 1-57003-396-X.

Two things can make a personal history valuable: the author's character and voice—the quality of her authorial company—on one hand, and the experiences she recounts on the other. If the author's company provides satisfaction, then though her experiences may be otherwise quite inconsequential, her work may be estimable; or her character may seem transparent, dull, or noxious, and yet the import of her story make her work riveting. *Stateside Soldier*, an account in letters and diary entries of a young southern woman's life in the Women's Army Corp (WAC) during World War II, is valuable both for the world that she saw and recorded and for the marvelous company that she provides for her readers.

She was born Aileen Kilgore in a coal-mining settlement in west central Alabama, the daughter of loving and supportive parents. Her first school classroom had a dirt floor. At age twenty-two she

determined to do "a daring thing": she resigned her job in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and volunteered for military service.

She didn't look like much of a soldier. On January 26, 1944, eight days before she was to leave home, she wrote in her diary: "I'm so underweight the Army almost didn't take me. The recruiter said I made the highest I.Q. test score that's been made in Birmingham. They really wanted me, but had to wire somewhere for permission to enlist me." Bright and slight, with only the vaguest sense of what military life would entail, she set off by train for Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

She managed basic training with aplomb. "We're afflicted by stiff legs, limps, staggers, and every crippling condition. By [evening] drill time I wasn't able to lift a foot, but I marched on and sang while I did it." Some other WACs were a trial at first: "Northern girls are by far the ruder, more vulgar [compared to southern girls]. They laugh and cuss and holler bad things long after lights out." Later though, when training had begun, she attested the egalitarianism that the military instills in recruits: "Here in Basic I've not noticed any of that Northern-Southern friction."

Upon what subjects can a WAC trainee report? Living quarters, inspections, scouring and polishing, uniforms, demanding physical training, KP, war-time indoctrination, camaraderie, loneliness; days that started and ended outdoors in the dark; Aileen reports on that life with vigor. She went to church, and she shopped in the post exchanges, where goods unavailable in civilian life were to be found. She spent time with friends, and she wrote letters. The only recreation she regularly enjoyed (once post privileges had been awarded) was movie attendance: the book provides dozens of one-sentence film reviews.

When basic training was completed, Aileen was shipped off to Ellington Air Force Base, outside Houston, Texas, where she began work as an airplane mechanic. The proximity to airplanes delighted her. "I'm in love with (don't get scared—it's only an airplane) a B-25 – the most beautiful ship that flies." Her fascination with the great long flight line, airships facing it on either side, is a recurring theme. I counted sixty entries in the index under *aircraft*, subcategorized by airplane type.

"Dear Mama and Daddy: If you could see your daughter now, stringy haired, beet red from sun and wind, and looking like Charley Chaplin in Size 48 coveralls." She was holding down what would at that time have been a 'man's job,' and she was proud and determined. "Today I worked on MY baby, the AT-21. What a beauty! Few of the men like her but a small number of us will defend her to the last."

She was befriended by a well-to-do family in Houston (all female), ate meals and spent relaxing weekends among them, and made frequent trips with them to the surrounding countryside and to the Galveston beaches. Her closest friend among them, known to us only as DD, was a reader in a large Christian Science congregation. From DD we hear the praise that many others must have felt: "Aileen, did I ever tell you what a wonderful person I think you are? Of all the WACs I've known you are the cream of the crop." Aileen's response (as she recounts it in a letter to her parents) was characteristic: "I was floored. But I knew the right answer. I said, 'DD, I have exceptional parents.'"

As VE day approached, Aileen wrote, "A great change has come over Ellington since the combat returnees have come here." The post commander gathered all Ellington together on May 8 to officially announce victory in Europe. Aileen saw "how out of touch he is with the Ellington troops." He told them that the "real war" was over, and that the Japanese were not brave enough to fight on. "A roar of derisive laughter drowned out the rest of his words. The troops fell apart, turning their backs on him, laughing and talking. They have a disregard for military discipline that we Stateside GIs wouldn't dare show. And there are so many of them! I was afraid. The Col. soon gave up and asked the Chaplain to pray."

Aileen was discharged and home for Christmas 1945. After the service she earned a B.A. and an M.A. from the University of Alabama. She has been a teacher, and has written three award-winning books for children.

This volume is handsomely printed, with twenty-three half-tone photographic reproductions.

Gregory Irwin

Duluth, Georgia

Loretta M. Long. *The Life of Selina Campbell: A Fellow Soldier in the Cause of Restoration*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001, vii + 235 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8173-1059-2.

Ever since Barbara Welter initiated in 1966 the discussion of separate gender spheres in nineteenth-century America, scholars have sought to understand the nature of the relationship between men and women in the period of the Early Republic. Were women, as Welter suggested, bound by their male counterparts in a world of submission and domesticity, or, as recent scholars of women's history suggest, were women more active than passive, agents of change rather than

prizes on pedestals? Loretta Long, Assistant Professor of History at Abilene Christian University, enters this discussion with a biographical study that combines both women's history and American religious history, offering an intimate portrait of a woman whose story has never been told.

Alexander Campbell, co-founder of the Disciples of Christ, a nineteenth-century American movement to restore Christianity to its first-century roots, and Selina Bakewell married in 1828. Long, focusing mainly on Selina's life after marriage, argues in this biography that Selina Campbell was not "imprisoned" in a "world of domesticity," but used the power of her separate sphere to become, as the subtitle of the book suggests, "a fellow soldier in the cause of restoration." Canvassing more than fifty articles by Selina published in denominational newspapers and scores of letters to family and friends, Long paints a vivid portrait of Selina Campbell as mother, hostess, and missionary advocate.

When Selina married Alexander Campbell in 1828, she automatically became a mother of five. Alexander's first wife, Margaret Brown, died from tuberculosis, but shortly before her death she requested that Alexander marry her friend Selina, whom she knew would provide excellent care for her children. So from the very start, Selina took on an overwhelming amount of responsibility in the marriage, particularly since her well-known husband was frequently preaching or teaching across the country, far away from home. Selina and Alexander eventually had six children of their own. Long narrates well the role of religion in child rearing, stating that the life of Selina Campbell "further demonstrates that motherhood played a vital role in Disciples ideology and constituted the major contribution that women were expected to make to church culture."

While Alexander Campbell soldiered his way across the country as commander of the Restoration of Christianity, Selina held the position of formal hostess of the Campbell Mansion, "the Mecca of Campbellism," which Disciples viewed as the center of the Reformation. "The idea with me was," Selina said, "while my dear husband was feasting them intellectually and spiritually, it was my province to attend to the wants of the body." Selina served such notable guests as Henry Clay and James Garfield and numbers of students who attended Bethany College, a school founded by Campbell in 1840. Selina, known to students as "Mother Campbell," became a campus minister to the students who needed a home away from home. Outside of her domestic circle, Selina represented the Campbell family at social functions,

another role that Long argues "formed another key aspect of the partnership achieved by the Campbells."

In 1866 Alexander Campbell died. Selina spent every moment by his bedside caring for him during his last few months. Long places this care in the "somber side of the separate spheres." It was part of the "challenge that many women faced in ministering to their families while striving to care for themselves as well." Selina began life on a "new frontier" after Alexander's death, "her activities regulated more by her own interests than by her duty to her family." Selina spent her years writing, reading, and visiting grandchildren. Her writing, mainly essays concerning the issues of family life and moral behavior, "won the esteem of her peers at least somewhat apart from her husband's influence." As a widow, it seems, Selina found her own voice.

After the Civil War and Alexander's death, Selina, states Long, found her greatest success "as an advocate of women's issues in advancing the cause of foreign missions." Selina's fund-raising efforts for missions were large and shaped the Disciples of Christ's Christian Women's Board of Missions, founded in 1875. Selina's promotion of women's leadership in foreign missions, however, did not conflict with her conservative view of women in church life. For example, she had always been against female preachers and argued that "women could influence an entire community of relationships and therefore did not need a more public expression of faith." Long concludes therefore that, "[Selina] labored arduously throughout her life to promote the cause of women's activism without ever undermining the ideal of true womanhood."

Long's concise biography of Selina Campbell is a welcome edition to the historiography of American religion. The relationship between Alexander and Selina, as Long argues, was partnership in the cause of restoration, rather than an example of an oppressive superior/inferior relationship. However, Long admits that Selina experienced deeply the "somber side of the separate sphere," mentioning briefly the fact that Selina's continual outpouring of love and time for her family limited time to care for herself. A more thorough investigation and interpretation of the life of Selina Campbell might include careful attention to this unfortunate aspect of separate spheres in the Early Republic. Nevertheless, Long has presented an impressive biography of an important nineteenth-century female religious leader who joined her husband in a distinctly American religious reform movement.

Timothy J. Minchin. *The Color of Work: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Southern Paper Industry, 1945-1980*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001, xiv + 277 pp. Cloth, \$55.00. ISBN 0-8078-2618-9. Paper, \$24.95. ISBN 0-8078-4933-2.

Paper mills require huge tracts of land and considerable quantities of water. Processing wood pulp produces awful odors unwanted in large urban areas. As a result, most paper mills are in small towns and remote rural areas near rivers or lakes. In the South, which became the nation's largest paper-producing region by the mid-1960s, most mills are located in an arc extending from the Carolinas to Louisiana with clusters situated near the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. At its peak, the paper industry employed 150,000 workers in the South. The noisy, smelly mills frequently lacked adequate safety features, and constant exposure to dangerous machinery resulted in a high incidence of work-related accidents and fatalities. However, southern men eagerly sought mill work because of high wages and the scarcity of jobs in isolated rural areas. African-American men helped construct many of the mills in the 1930s and 1940s and then worked in them when they were operating. They faced systematic segregation, consigned to low-skilled, low-paying jobs with scant hope of promotion or advancement. In *The Color of Work: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Southern Paper Industry, 1945-1980*, the historian Timothy J. Minchin tells the story of African Americans' struggle for equality in this key southern industry.

Relying heavily upon oral history interviews and courtroom depositions given by witnesses in class action suits against paper companies, the author provides a grass-roots look at the working conditions endured by African Americans in the paper mills. In a series of detailed chapters, he describes the pervasiveness of Jim Crow in the workplace as well as the collusion between the paper companies and white unions to exclude African Americans from skilled jobs and higher wages. As in other industries, the author notes, segregated unions proved to be both a blessing and a curse to African-American laborers. For example, African-American workers registered their complaints under the name of segregated locals and earned invaluable experience as leaders of their unions. African-American locals frequently became strong community institutions that played leading roles in the Civil Rights movement. Yet, at the same time, separate unions based upon race codified and legitimized segregation in the workplace and, while giving African Americans a voice, ensured that

the voice would always be muted. White locals typically remained antagonistic to African-American aspirations, and the national leadership of the paper workers' unions acquiesced in segregation in the South.

Improvements in employment for African Americans came only with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a landmark piece of legislation that affected southern workplaces in a variety of ways. In their legal testimony and reminiscences, African-American workers made it clear that the civil rights bill provided the essential mechanism for meaningful change in the paper industry. Further, passage of the law forced mill owners and white unions to address for the first time the employment inequities based upon race. Under the watchful eye of the federal government, companies opened up jobs to African Americans and unions relinquished the system of segregated locals that had predominated for decades. Discrimination persisted in the southern paper mills after 1964, however, as companies and unions delayed and dissembled. Just as compliance to the *Brown* decision came grudgingly in the South, white workers in the paper industry staged boycotts and tried to intimidate African-American workers who sought promotions. Resistance from business executives and white workers assured that the struggle to integrate the paper industry in the South would be arduous and prolonged. Even today, the author concludes, patterns of segregation remain in the southern paper mills.

Long ignored by historians, the paper industry has played a vitally important role in the southern economy. Timothy Minchin's monograph is a welcomed look at an important topic in the region's history. *The Color of Work: The Struggle for Civil Rights in the Southern Paper Industry, 1945-1980* provides a nice counterpoint to studies of the tobacco, steel, textiles, and longshore industries in the South. The book deftly combines labor and civil rights history, showing the reader the close connections between the two. Deeply researched and clearly written, Minchin's study gives us a clearer appreciation for the color of work in the modern South.

Roger Biles

East Carolina University

Gerald J. Prokopowicz. *All For The Regiment: The Army of the Ohio, 1861-1862*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 280 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8078-2626-X.

Although the Army of the Ohio played an important role in the early years of the Civil War in the West, it has remained one of the

least studied of all United States army commands. With *All for the Regiment*, Gerald J. Prokopowicz successfully fills this important niche in the history of the war. Far from being a traditional campaign narrative, Prokopowicz's incisive examination of complex military culture illustrates how recruitment, unit formation, and training provide the critical link to understanding the battlefield performance of this fascinating Civil War army.

Organized from May to November 1861, the Army of Ohio drew upon citizen volunteers recruited from Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio, as well as the demographic Unionist regions of Kentucky and Tennessee. For one year, until it was officially reorganized and redesignated the Army of the Cumberland under Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans, this important national army had a series of commanders including generals Robert Anderson, William Tecumseh Sherman, and Don Carlos Buell. Prokopowicz insightfully argues that the amateur soldiers who served under these leaders in the Army of the Ohio bridged a diversity of cultural backgrounds and ethnic affiliations to organize themselves into individual regiments that were remarkably cohesive, resilient, and strong. The great irony however, is that not one of the three apparently capable and talented army commanders managed to mold and integrate these good regiments into an effective military organization. On campaign and in combat, the regiments fought well independently of each other, but the army consistently remained decentralized and elastic. It was a military force easily disrupted and difficult to coordinate and command.

In development of this thesis, Prokopowicz examines the combat performance of the Army of the Ohio in its smaller engagements at Rowlett's Station and Mill Springs and compares this to its behavior in the larger, more complex major battles at Shiloh and Perryville. Within this combat record, Prokopowicz discovered that a fundamental, regiment-oriented military culture prevented the Army of the Ohio from achieving decisive tactical results on any battlefield. As long as the soldiers of the army "identified themselves primarily with their regiments, the army remained a decentralized aggregation of military communities" that could not perform effectively on the offensive. More than any other unit, the Civil War regiment was a "self aware community, held together by bonds based on common geographic, social, cultural, or economic identities, strengthened by months of training and campaigning as a unit." These factors produced extra-ordinarily strong levels of organizational loyalty and cohesion, but at the lowest common denominator. A soldier's loyalty centered on his smallest military association—the company and especially the

regiment. However, these bonds of organizational identification and loyalty rarely extended throughout the larger military units: brigades, divisions, corps, and armies. About this strong insular attitude one army staff officer observed that veteran soldiers could often camp for a month "without knowing or caring what regiment was encamped next to them."

Prokopowicz argues that regimental solidarity, which developed into the army's greatest strength, ironically created an insularity, which was a dangerous vulnerability for the army in battle. Since other Union and Confederate field armies recruited, organized, and trained soldiers in relatively the same manner as the Army of the Ohio, these military organizations experienced a "characteristic disjointedness" in operation. The complexity of large organizations made battlefield management difficult for the relative few professionally educated officers and virtually impossible for the volunteer officers, both of whom combatants relied upon for leadership. Unlike their component regiments, higher echelon organizations—brigades, divisions, and corps—were routinely disrupted in battle and virtually incapable of conducting complex offensive movements. The inability of many division and brigade leaders to maintain control of their commands in combat was both a product of questionable or indifferent leadership qualifications and a virtual neglect of soldier training beyond small-unit (company, battalion, regiment) close order drill. Throughout the conflict this decentralized military formation fought battle after battle in which it absorbed enormous casualties and endured levels of punishment that amazingly never shattered the armies to the point of complete organizational destruction. A troublesome pattern developed as inconclusive battles ended with the defeated army permitted to withdraw, to mend its wounds and to reorganize, while the victorious army was too badly damaged to mount an effective pursuit that might produce a decisive result. Assembled from an assortment of independent and fiercely clannish companies and regiments, the Army of the Ohio proved to be a strong but awkwardly ponderous military force whose component parts lacked the necessary agility to execute maneuvers to destroy a Confederate army.

In his history of the Army of the Ohio, Prokopowicz offers a scholarly reflection on the unique combination of resilience and awkwardness that characterized the army. He demonstrates that throughout their combat history, Army of the Ohio regiments displayed great bravery under fire. In less complex, smaller engagements these regiments demonstrated a considerable level of tactical finesse.

However, in major battles, higher echelon commanders proved unable to perform their leadership functions, and the entire command and control system proved unusually unimaginative. The army survived destruction in battle only because individual regiments maintained organizational integrity and unit solidarity. The factor that best determined how well or how poorly the Army of the Ohio performed in battle proved neither to be technology nor generalship but the regiment-based culture of the army. A military culture developed in the processes of recruitment, training, and organization. The author believes the same influences may apply to other Civil War armies. It is an innovative argument that invites further scholarship. For now, *All for the Regiment* provides every student of the Civil War with an engaging examination into the nature of applied violence and human behavior.

Stacy D. Allen

Shiloh National Military Park

Herbert Randall and Bobs M. Tusa. *Faces of Freedom Summer: The Photographs of Herbert Randall*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001, 132 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 0-8173-1056-8.

Faces of Freedom Summer: The Photographs of Herbert Randall tells the story of a few hot summer months and a number of people working toward an ideal in a succinct, enlightening, twenty-eight-page introduction by Bobs M. Tusa followed by 102 dramatic and engaging photographs by Herbert Randall. This beautifully printed work offers more than forecast by its coffee-table appearance.

Organized by Mississippi's Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) and staffed by Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) members, 1964's Mississippi Freedom Summer in Hattiesburg included seven Freedom Schools, Community Centers, voter registration work, and projects designed to document conditions in the state and provide medical and legal aid to workers and Mississippians. The Hattiesburg Freedom Schools taught an estimated 650-675 of the 3,500 Mississippi students reached that summer. Seventeen thousand blacks, many in Hattiesburg, attempted to register to vote in the state by the close of the project.

Tusa begins by introducing the photographer and tells how Randall's photographs, many seen by no one other than Randall since 1964, came to reside in the collections of the University of Southern Mississippi. She explains the strong activist community in existence

in Hattiesburg prior to the arrival of the "outside agitators" and delves into some of the organizations and history involved in Freedom Summer and the workings of the project. Along with volunteers' and locals' names and their later accomplishments, Tusa includes reports culled from SNCC files recounting a surprisingly small number of violent incidents directed at those involved in Freedom Summer in Hattiesburg. White Hattiesburg's tacit support or at least acceptance of the Freedom Summer volunteers and their activities has resulted in little attention being focused on that city's role in Freedom Summer in the historical literature. Tusa explains that the relatively uneventful but highly successful tenure of the volunteers has received sporadic coverage dating only to Clayborne Carson's 1981 book *In Struggle*. Tusa refutes the myopic view of some participants that Freedom Summer did not accomplish the goals hoped for by COFO with a description of its influence on the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, the federal Head Start program, and the city of Hattiesburg. The epilogue describes the June 1999 symposium on the leaders of Freedom Summer hosted by the University of Southern Mississippi where many of the characters in Tusa's history reunited and witnessed the opening of the Faces of Freedom Summer exhibit.

However, the story Tusa relates only comes alive when coupled with Herbert Randall's artful photographs. Granted a John Hay Whitney "Opportunity" Fellowship for Creative Photography in 1964, New Yorker Randall used the fellowship to produce a photographic essay on black life. SNCC field secretary Sandy Leigh, to whom the book is dedicated, persuaded Randall to document Freedom Summer. Randall made his way south to Hattiesburg. For two brief months that summer, after a week-long stop at Freedom Summer orientation in Ohio, Randall shot pictures with the blessing of COFO but with no formal affiliation with the project. The resulting 1,759 negatives pared down to 102 black and white photographs for the exhibit and book of the same name, show blacks and whites, blood and sweat, determination and defiance, and most strikingly, the daily lives of the Freedom workers, local activists, and citizens working together to open Mississippi for all its citizens. Tusa emphasizes the partnership between the summer volunteers and the Hattiesburgites. Randall's photographs capture this camaraderie poignantly. The many stirring shots capture such images as Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld of the Hattiesburg Ministers Project bloody from a beating with a tire iron, bullet holes in volunteers' automobiles, sessions at the Freedom Schools, voter registration canvassing, and life in black areas of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, largely destroyed since 1964 by Molotov cocktails, decay, and flooding.

Randall's photographs stand well alone, unaccompanied by text, and provide powerful documentation of the trials and achievements of Freedom Summer in Hattiesburg. However, the researcher might have reaped a greater benefit had Tusa extended her introduction into text alongside the photographs. The captions identify major players and local residents where appropriate, but the names are unfamiliar and their importance lost between the introduction and the photographs that follow. The process of joining the text with the photographs is hindered further by the photo pages being unnumbered and the names in the captions not appearing in the index. Tusa mentions the dearth of published information on Freedom Summer in Hattiesburg. However, the reader is confronted by a work on the subject that provides masterful and moving photographs of the project supported by a valuable but all too brief narrative. It leaves the reader wanting more.

Catherine M. Jannik

Georgia Institute of Technology

Ted Tunnell. *The Ordeal of Carpetbagger Marshall H. Twitchell in the Civil War and Reconstruction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001, 326 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8971-259-4.

The stranger than fiction experiences of a Vermont carpetbagger in Louisiana during the dark and violent period of Reconstruction are the focus of Ted Tunnell's *Edge of the Sword*. Destined to be a classic in the growing field of literature on Reconstruction, Tunnell provides readers with a superbly crafted narrative that is scholarship at its finest.

The sensational story of Marshall Twitchell is as riveting as it is remarkable. As a volunteer soldier, Twitchell served with the Fourth Vermont Infantry and saw action on the Peninsula during the Seven Days' Battles, at South Mountain, and Antietam. In these actions he proved himself a brave and capable soldier and rose to the rank of first sergeant. Wearing his hard-earned stripes, he went on to fight with the Green Mountain Boys at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg, in which actions he polished his reputation and gained the respect and admiration of his men.

In the spring of 1864, following his return from veteran's furlough, Twitchell applied for and received a commission as captain in the 109th Regiment United States Colored Troops (USCT). However, prior to receiving his new duty assignment, he was wounded at The Wilderness as a bullet "ripped the outer corner of his left eye, cut a groove along

the left side of his skull, and exited behind the ear." Declared as "good as dead" by doctors at the field hospital, the badly wounded Twitchell mustered an inner strength and determination that eventually pulled him through to full recovery. That same strength and determination would later serve him well and again save his life when ambushed by an assassin in Louisiana in the turbulent days of Reconstruction.

Following a long convalescence, Twitchell returned to duty and finally assumed command of a company of black soldiers. He served with them in the trenches around Richmond and Petersburg and, at war's end, left with the 109th USCT for Texas as part of the American force that compelled the French to leave Mexico. His service in Texas was short-lived. In August 1865, he took a leave of absence to seek medical treatment in New Orleans and never returned to his regiment. Twitchell's service with black troops, however, had a profound impact on his life and greatly influenced the next and most challenging chapter of his life.

Although fascinating, Twitchell's military service is not the focus of this book and is covered in only four of the opening chapters. *Edge of the Sword* is not intended to be a battle study or a history of the Vermont Brigade, yet students of the Civil War will find the author's treatment of military operations vivid and captivating. Rather, Tunnell concentrates his many skills as a researcher and a gifted writer to detail a sensational story of the soldier-turned-carpetbagger in Reconstruction Louisiana. His writing is crisp, fast-paced, and at times suspenseful, and the story he relates is worthy of a Tom Clancey novel or a Hollywood epic.

Twitchell's experiences in Louisiana began as a Freedmen's Bureau agent, a position for which his service as an officer of USCTs made him ideally qualified. Tunnell concedes that Twitchell probably only had "some" notion of helping the freedmen, but he set about his new duties with a firmness of purpose. He devoted his time to arbitrating disputes—mostly dealing with land and wages, education of blacks, and maintaining peace in a troubled land. "If freedmen were anticipating a messiah in blue, they doubtless found Twitchell a big disappointment," writes Tunnell. "On the other hand, whites hoping for a pliant ally were to be discomforted, too." As with other agents of the Freedmen's Bureau, the Vermonter found himself in a no-win situation. His daily life was hard and physically demanding, and yet Twitchell adapted to his new surroundings. He even married a local girl and bought a small plantation with the intention of settling into a life of a gentleman farmer in Red River Parish.

The advent of Radical Reconstruction in 1867, however, changed his life. He entered local and state politics as a Republican. Twitchell held many elected offices, including state senator, and wielded tremendous power that he used for his own advancement and for the benefit of family, friends, and political allies. He became a target of the White League that sought to oust carpetbag rule in Louisiana and return blacks to a less than equal status. Bloodshed was inevitable, and, in the violence that erupted, Twitchell had a brother and three brothers-in-law murdered in the famous Coushatta Affair that riveted national attention on Louisiana and the graft and corruption that have come to characterize Reconstruction. Later, an assassin ambushed Twitchell, who lost both arms from gunshots and suffered permanent injury to one leg.

Scared and disfigured, Twitchell was also financially ruined with the failure of Reconstruction. His life all but shattered, the Vermont carpetbagger returned to New England. His indomitable spirit never failed. He remarried, raised a family, and from 1878 until his death in 1905 served as American Counsel in Kingston, Ontario. He also penned his autobiography as a lasting legacy of his life of service and portrayed himself as one "who zealously worked for nearly ten years to substitute the civilization of freedom for that of slavery." Tunnell, however, concedes that "Marshall Twitchell was no saint" and refers to him as the "carpetbag Machiavelli." Regardless of his actions or motives, saint or sinner, Twitchell remains one of the more colorful and controversial figures of his day.

In *Edge of the Sword* the author writes with a level of intimacy of his subject that readers will truly appreciate. He presents Twitchell in the broad context of his time with objectivity and forceful clarity. It is a powerful biography that will stand the scrutiny of time. An associate professor of history at Virginia Commonwealth University, Tunnell's previous works include the highly acclaimed *Crucible of Reconstruction: War, Radicalism, and Race in Louisiana, 1862-1877*. He is also the editor of *Carpetbagger from Vermont: The Autobiography of Marshall Harvey Twitchell*. This fascinating read will enthrall students of the Civil War and Reconstruction as well as those with a general interest in history.

Terrence J. Winschel

Vicksburg National Military Park

Michael Wayne. *Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 257 pp. \$16.95. ISBN 0-19-514004-4.

Death of an Overseer emerged largely out of three experiences: the author's studies with J. H. Hexter, classroom teaching, and an interesting antebellum murder case. This book is a contemplation of historians' relationships to the texts they study and an attempt to teach undergraduates how to follow a particular historical methodology.

While researching his dissertation, Wayne came upon a letter giving an account of the death of overseer Duncan Skinner, of the official prosecution of three slaves for this murder, and of the unofficial prosecution of white carpenter John McCallin for complicity in it. He used the case in his classroom teaching. Over time he became increasingly interested in the questions raised by it, and returned to the archives for more evidence. His archival work was surprisingly fruitful, reframing the case and, particularly, McCallin's role in it.

The book is about the relationship among events, evidence, and interpretation. Both contemporaries working to "solve" the case and Wayne, at earlier stages of his project, made a number of what turned out to be false interpretations of the evidence. Wayne explores how the limited and sometimes compromised nature of the sources, combined with the interpreters' own cultural assumptions and prejudices, led to these misinterpretations. He suggests techniques researchers should use to limit such mistakes. He discusses how historians ought to approach primary sources with informed skepticism and gives detailed descriptions of the excruciatingly close readings to which he subjected his sources. The book's appendix includes, in full, the most crucial documents, and Wayne encourages his readers to consult them. He also demonstrates how historians read texts through their broader understanding of the social, cultural, intellectual, and political contexts of the time.

Wayne's book is exemplary in its use of a particular teaching method. It begins by telling a compelling story and then introduces historical information and theories by way of explaining or contextualizing it. In chapters four through seven, Wayne smuggles in the theses of key interpreters of the nineteenth-century South including Eugene Genovese, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Winthrop Jordan, Deborah Gray White, Bertram Wyatt-Brown, and many others.

This book reveals Wayne's passion both for the historical process and for the historical subject. He strives, as much as possible, to get

"inside the heads" of the figures he studies, to understand how they experienced the events he describes. While this desire for immediacy makes for a vibrant and engaging book, it is also the book's greatest weakness. There are several moments in which Wayne's eagerness to "fill in the gaps" left by the scattered evidence gets the best of him. As Wayne puts it, historians, to give a accurate and compelling view of their subjects, must be "extraordinarily resourceful and creative."

The book's hilarious cover art, depicting a young man hallooing over the newly-discovered dead body of Skinner while a rather startled horse looks on, is a figure for the chief weakness of the text. Despite or perhaps because of the almost photographic "realism" of the image, it looks quite artificial. As much as historians might hope to have as rich an understanding of past events as we do of our own experiences, it is finally impossible. When we try to do so we inevitably produce an image that never quite feels right. While Wayne cannot be held fully responsible for his cover, he too often resorts to this sort of speculation, which at times verges on the ahistorical. When he failed to find any contemporary images of McCallin, for instance, he commissioned an artist to draw a "conception of John McCallin based on a photograph of his grandson." Similarly, the book ends with a letter like that which Wayne imagines McCallin would have written to his son explaining the incident and his life. Wayne adopts this speculative style of interpretation, in smaller ways, throughout the book.

While Wayne is scrupulously careful to inform the reader of the fictive nature of the image, the letter, and other speculations, it is my curmudgeonly view that Wayne has overstepped his bounds. The work of creatively "filling in the gaps" is, after all, one of the pleasures of reading secondary works just as it is of reading archival sources. It is one of the many reasons that reading histories is better intellectual exercise than watching the History Channel. As much as Wayne invites his readers to consult the primary sources and to come to their own conclusions, he is unable to resist this sort of creative imperialism.

This is an excellent book, not only for general readers drawn by the "mystery" plot, or for undergraduates and other historians-in-training looking for guidance, but also for any historian who wants to think again about the theoretical basis of his or her work or who has forgotten, over the years, how fun doing history should be.

Elaine Frantz Parsons

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

From the Archives . . .

Rosenberg Library Announces New Galveston History Web Site

The Rosenberg Library, 2310 Sealy, Galveston, Texas 77550, announces its web site <www.gthc.org> featuring the database, "Galveston: A City Transformed, 1890-1915." This pivotal period witnessed the city's emergence from the 1900 hurricane, the nation's deadliest natural disaster.

Located on an island off the upper Texas Gulf coast, Galveston in 1900 was one of the wealthiest cities in the United States on a per-capita basis. In 1899-1900 its deep-water port, serving states west of the Mississippi River, ranked second to New Orleans in the export of cotton. The hurricane of September 8, 1900, left Galveston in ruins, with approximately eight thousand victims on Galveston Island. All of the city's sectors—its port, beachfront, houses, businesses, places of worship—were wrecked or damaged.

Yet Galveston survived and rebuilt by transforming its character and appearance. In 1901, to expedite its recovery, it pioneered the establishment of the commission form of government, which replaced its mayor and aldermanic board. The completion of a seawall along the beach between Sixth and Thirty-ninth streets followed in 1904. An extension to protect Fort Crockett was completed in 1905. For further protection Galveston's elevation was increased to a maximum height of sixteen feet behind the seawall. This process, called the "grade raising," took place between 1904 and 1910. Finally, a causeway connecting Galveston Island with the mainland was dedicated in 1912. Galveston experienced two more hurricanes in 1909 and 1915. The 1915 storm, an even more severe one than that which had occurred in 1900 one, gave the seawall its first real test. This time Galveston escaped catastrophic damage.

"Galveston: A City Transformed, 1890-1915" features several thousand photographs, manuscripts, and oral history interview transcripts, as well as other material preserved at the Rosenberg Library. This project was funded through a \$20,000 grant provided by the Texas State Library & Archives Commission's TexTreasures program. Galveston County provided additional project funding. Historians, school students, authors, tourists, media employees, and anyone with a fascination for Galveston's rich history will find much of value on the web site.

