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Lost Cause campuses: Confederate memory and Lost Cause rituals at the University of Mississippi and University of Virginia

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Lost Cause Campuses: Confederate Memory and Lost Cause Rituals at the University of
Mississippi and University of Virginia

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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This work is dedicated to my family, Mom, Dad, and Justin, who have supported me unconditionally in throughout my life.

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Abstract

From the 1890s to the 1940s, students at southern college campuses, like most white southerners, participated in the Lost Cause movement. But these young men and women custom fitted the imagery, rhetoric, symbols, and ideals associated with the movement to better fit their campuses. These students, then, were actively participating in their own, indigenous, personalized Lost Cause rituals.

Confederate memory, and Old South mythologies permeated student publications. The pictures and stories that littered the pages of yearbooks, newspapers, and magazines took elements from the Lost Cause and customized them to reflect their own indigenous campus culture. At the University of Virginia, students composed stories that reflected the Old South Cavalier spirit that so defined the Commonwealth and its flagship institution of higher learning. At the University of Mississippi, though, the Lost Cause rituals focused on the Confederacy and the fight for the Southland.

It was in this environment, steeped in Lost Cause rituals, that these two schools adopted mascots and nicknames for their athletics' teams, and specifically football, that were themselves rooted in these campus-specific Lost Causes. The new game appealed to southern men's sense of honor and a new, postwar, masculine ideal. The same Cavalier themes that showed up on the pages of the UVA student publications became the symbol of the school's football team. At the U of M, the Confederate spirit that saturated the pages *Ole Miss* yearbook manifested itself in the school's nickname, the Rebels, and Colonel Reb, the school's mascot. Thus, football games became part of the Lost Cause movement and its invented traditions.

These students, then, constitute a new, and until now, ignored aspect of the Lost Cause. This demonstrates the degree to which southern college campuses were important mechanisms in the Lost Cause movement and in the perpetuation of the southern mind. The students who populated these campuses would go on to lead southern states, counties, cities and courts. Therefore, their being educated at these decidedly Lost Cause campuses makes the influence of these schools all the more important in the creation and perpetuation of southern thought and culture.

Introduction

Southerners were witness to the cracking and crumbling of their social and cultural edifice in the wake of the convulsions brought on by the Civil War. The postbellum white southern population had endured privation then defeat in the name of a cause that was lost. After the war, they witnessed the dissolution of their economic system and a move to replace the Old South with a one predicated on industrialization. Postbellum southerners were confronted with a once subjugated population now liberated and given political rights. To ameliorate the effects of such upheavals, white southerners looked for an element of their lives that seemed durable, and could withstand the trimmers tearing down their social structure—their history.¹ C. Vann Woodward's *The Burden of Southern History* probes the lingering ethos of the South in the mid twentieth century, but his theories are applicable or at least informative when applied to the turn of the century South as well. Southerners in both eras were faced with social and economic changes, but the differences were a matter of degree and not of kind. Amidst these changes, southerners constructed or amplified myths and invented traditions in an attempt to tie their changing society to the idealized Old South and the Confederacy.²

These myths and traditions acted as stanchions meant to bolster their deteriorating cultural façade. The most ardent mythmakers and tradition creators were those involved in the Lost Cause movement, the collective name for the various actions taken by the

¹ C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 12.

² As this piece is concerned with the Lost Cause on southern college campuses populated entirely by white students, the terms that should include African Americans, such as southern mind, southern ethos, or southern zeitgeist refer to the region's white population. To be sure, African Americans of the turn of the century South and into the mid twentieth century experienced the Lost Cause in very different ways from their white counterparts, and should be treated as its own historiographical subject. The term "white" will be used on occasion so as to remind the reader of the population this piece is investigating.

numerous organizations of Confederate memory makers and Old South myth propagators in the postbellum South. These authors, educators, historians, and memorial organizations and the memories they conjured focused on the crucible of war, often ignoring the impetus behind southern secession. These same men, and many women, extended their mythmaking back beyond the great conflagration, and perpetuated and expanded the Old South myth. Their efforts were meant to act as an salve to quell postwar emotional scarring and to maintain and strengthen the web of social cohesion in a changing society.

The Lost Cause's mythmaking and invention of tradition was an important part of college life in southern institutions of higher learning like the University of Mississippi and the University of Virginia following the war. The pages of student publications including yearbooks, magazines and newspapers are littered with paeans to the Confederacy and to the Old South, which southern soldiers had sacrificed to protect. Poetry, fiction, nonfiction, biographies and art reminded students of the region's history, however manufactured, and the mythical past of their ancestors.

Saturday football games offered students no respite from the constant reminders of the Confederacy or Old South. Once thoroughly infused with notions of southern honor and masculinity, college football became the primary spectator sport for southern college students. The game, both for spectators and players, was an outlet for masculine energies and offered an arena in which southern collegians could display their manliness. The game soon became a cultural touchstone for southerners, and as a result, fans cloaked the game in Lost Cause and Old South trappings in the 1920s and 1930s. Student-published newspapers, yearbooks and magazines, and fan-chosen mascots and team

names demonstrate the agency southern college students exercised in perpetuating the Lost Cause.

These elements of the Lost Cause and Old South myth were an ever-present part of the southern college student's education. Sociologists, social psychologists and historians have analyzed the importance of college campuses in socialization and have discovered a multifaceted educational processes found at institutions of higher learning. Campuses such as UVA and Ole Miss, just like every other college campus, educate their students both purposefully and incidentally. These formal and informal educations are so potent, they are capable of confronting and changing a students values.³ This ability to change a student's life was captured by a writer in the *University of Mississippi Magazine*, when he explained "Colleges are truly forces of the greatest influence."⁴ The "formal education is merely a rational procedure for further carrying on and completing, in the schoolroom the task that began with the child in the home." This domestic education, which formal education would continue on college campuses reflects a society's goals, mores and standards—it is aspirational.⁵

Incidental education, though, includes virtually everything existing outside the classroom and is an important element of the socialization process of students. Beyond the lecture halls, college campuses have their own, "indigenous cultures" that are understood to be comprised of a complex of interdependent entities such as cliques,

³ Anat Bardi and Robin Goodwin, "The Dual Route to Value Change: Individual Processes and Cultural Moderators, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 42, no. 2 (Feb. 21, 2011): 279; Horace Mann Bond, "Education as a Social Process: A Case Study of a Higher Institution as an Incident in the Process of Acculturation, *American Journal of Sociology* 48, no. 6 (May, 1943): Ann Kieffer Bragg, "The Socialization Process in Higher Education," *American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/Higher Education Research Report* 7 (1976): 7; Edward Y. Hartshorne, "Undergraduate Society and the College Culture," *American Sociological Review* 8, no. 3 (Jun. 1943): 321.

⁴ "College Journalism and its Effect on Sectional Strife," *Mississippi University Magazine*, November 1899, 15.

⁵ Bond, "Education as a Social Process," 702.

residence halls, fraternal organizations, and other extracurricular groups.⁶ Yearbooks, newspapers, and magazines were apparatuses that transmitted the campus cultures of Ole Miss and UVA and acted as agents in the informal education, socialization and acculturation at these schools.⁷ The student publishers, then were cultural agents. This could also be said of football games. With its newly established bonds with the southern past, the game of football became a part of the informal education at southern college campuses alongside the student publications. Alumni from UVA and Ole Miss would go on to be mayors, judges, governors, senators, supreme court justices, and cabinet members. These students would write the news, literature, poetry and history of the South. These students would go on to extend primary education to southerners, lecture at universities, and take charge of college campuses as administrators. These future molders of southern society and culture were socialized on campuses steeped in Lost Cause imagery and rhetoric. The Confederate and Old South memories were perpetuated by the students themselves, thus making students a critical part of the Lost Cause movement and its influence on southern society.

Of course, like any movement, the Lost Cause was far from a monolithic, static entity, rather its leadership, constituency, emphasis and purpose transmuted over time. These same elements are part of the historiographical debate concerning the Lost Cause. In 1973, Rollin G. Osterweis portrayed the Lost Cause as a social myth and positioned it in the tradition of southern romanticism, which he, in an earlier volume, claimed was the central contributing factor to southern secession. For Osterweis, the Lost Cause was a constituent element in “a nexus of related myths” which focused on the region’s

⁶ Bond, “Education as a Social Process,” 702; Hartshorne, “Undergraduate Society,” 322.

⁷ Bernadette Lear, “Book History in ‘Scarlet Letters’: The Beginning and Growth of a College Yearbook During the Gilded Age,” *Book History* (2006): 181.

romanticized past with its “chivalric planter; the magnolia-scented Southern belle; the good, gray Confederate veteran, once a knight of the field and saddle; and obliging old Uncle Remus.” Found in the folds of the Lost Cause movement were southern politicians, scribblers, artists, religious leaders as well as the common white man. In the span of one generation, these Lost Cause practitioners metamorphosed the movement from a primarily literary phenomenon to “a new version of Romanticism in the South.” The Lost Cause shadowed the southland in a new romantic mantle, stalled progress, and instituted “a white supremacy institution nearly as severe as legal slavery.” Osterweis focuses his analysis on the years 1865 to 1900, but in his epilogue, he offers an explanation of the Lost Cause’s persistence into the twentieth century. One explanation, he claims, was the continuation of the Confederacy’s dogged determination to resist ““the commercial, industrial civilization of the former erstwhile enemy, amoral and heartless”” and maintain a society whose values were cultivated in the region’s fertile soil, extolled family, honor, courage, respect for women, and perhaps most importantly, white supremacy.⁸

Seven years after the publication of Osterweis’s *The Myth of the Lost Cause*, Charles Reagan Wilson released *Baptized in Blood*, which takes the Lost Cause beyond Osterweis’s social myth and elevates it to the rank of civil religion—“not a formal religion, but a functioning one.” Like Osterweis, Wilson found the Lost Cause’s antecedents in the antebellum South. For Wilson, though, the Lost Cause was not solely resultant of the region’s proclivity to romanticize. Rather the religion of the Lost Cause sprouted from “The antebellum and wartime religious culture,” which, through wartime experiences, “evolved into a Southern civil religion, based on Christianity and regional

⁸ Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause: 1865-1900* (Hamden, CT: Archon Book, 1973), ix, x, 143, 152.

history.” Wilson further diverges from Osterweis in that he sees the Lost Cause’s mythology as focusing on the Civil War. The myths of the Old South and Reconstruction were merely “adjuncts” to the myth of the Confederacy, which was the focus of the religion of the Lost Cause. The religion of the Lost Cause allowed southerners to make sense of their defeat and to stave off existential crisis by offering them a means to affirm their identity which was still largely shaped in opposition to the northern acquisitiveness, thus southerners were continuing the Confederate fight against the North.⁹

On the heels of Charles Reagan Wilson, Thomas L. Connelly and Barbara L. Bellows worked together to compose *God and General Longstreet*, and conclude that there was both an external and internal Lost Cause movement. The external movement was propelled by a desire to find a place for the South in American society, and was seen in the literature of “local colorists,” such as Thomas Nelson Page. This external movement, or National Lost Cause, was “bidimensional,” in that its purpose was to provide understanding of southern defeat for southerners and northerners. In the inner Lost Cause, which was meant to ease fears about how Confederates would be viewed by future generations, Connelly and Bellows found similar religious elements to those Charles Reagan Wilson discussed in *Baptized in Blood*. Rather than constituting its own religion, the inner Lost Cause for Connelly and Bellows was bolstered by a religious-moral foundation that insisted the conquered Confederate was the “better man.” General Robert E. Lee served as a “Christ-symbol for a defeated Confederacy.” True, the South had lost, and this should have crippled their piety, rather, southerners framed the loss in Christian notions that loss was not a punishment from God, rather it was part of his

⁹ Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood* (Athens, GA: The University of Virginia Press, 1983): 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16, 22, 37, 57.

divine plan. For these authors, the themes of the Lost Cause changed both with time and audience. The Confederate cause and soldier's chivalry was part of the early movement, but an emphasis on the Old South permeated the Lost Cause movement beginning in the 1880s, especially when authors were writing for a national audience with the aim of solidifying an appropriate place in the American tradition.¹⁰

In just four years, another important piece of Lost Cause historical analysis was published when Gaines M. Foster wrote *Ghosts of the Confederacy*. Unlike Osterweis, Wilson, and Connelly and Bellows, Foster leaves postbellum fiction out of his analysis. In this piece, Foster focuses his attention on the organizations that took on the task of perpetuating Confederate memory and the monuments, memorials, and historical analysis they created. For Foster, the Lost Cause was primarily focused on the Confederacy, and Old South myth claims little room in his investigation of the movement. The Lost Cause was instead a means for southerners to understand defeat and allay fears and insecurities arising from the changing world around them in the postbellum South through memorials, monuments and public displays of remembrance. Foster takes issue with Wilson's assertion that the Lost Cause was itself a religious movement. True, the religious interpretation of the Lost Cause illuminates the movement's cultural significance, but the interpretation of religious imagery and metaphor, is, for Foster's tastes, too literal.

The antecedents, causes and organizations of the Lost Cause are not the focus of this investigation. Rather, this paper illuminates the role southern college students played in perpetuating and shaping the Lost Cause movement. The Lost Cause here means the

¹⁰ Thomas L. Connelly and Barbara L. Bellows, *God and General Longstreet: The Lost Cause and the Southern Mind* (Baton Rouge: The Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 5, 6, 7, 11, 22, 27, 28, 60, 63.

literary, and artistic products associated with the Lost Cause, but the importance of public spectacles associated with the Lost Cause and college football, too, is central to this paper. In a sense, this is an admixture of the authors mentioned above. Furthermore, the term will encompass both Old South and Confederate myth and memory. This is in line with Rollin G. Osterweis's presentation of the movement as a web of interrelated myths.

But this paper will diverge from the above critical investigations of the Lost Cause. All of these histories of the Lost Cause ignore the active role southern students played in the perpetuation of the movement and its ideals. When youths are discussed at any length, they are portrayed as receptacles for Old South and Confederate mythology rather than active participants in the movement. The literature and journalism they wrote, and the mascots and nicknames they adopted for their athletic teams show they themselves worked to hold on to Confederate memory and Old South history. Thus, this paper presents a new interpretation of the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause was not the purview of the professional authors and poets, nor was it the exclusive territory of former Confederate generals or the exclusive province of postwar memorial organizations. Rather, students at southern colleges and universities contributed their own materials to the Lost Cause movement and helped shape the southern mind.

These campus's Lost Cause movement was part of the informal education that socialized southern students. Their informal Lost Cause socialization allowed them to establish an "identity within the group," which was comprised of both the campus population and the southern people beyond the confines of Ole Miss and UVA. The socialization process results in "the internalization of group values into the individual's

self-image.”¹¹ The values these students internalized were intimately associated with the Lost Cause and the mythology it presented. These students and their active perpetuation of the Lost Cause fundamentally shaped the socialization process through their student publications and invented traditions meant to tether the new game of football to the Old South and the Confederacy. Thus, in their own Lost Cause movement, localized on their campuses, students themselves wove “the unbreakable ties that bind the University to the best ideals of the ‘days befoh de wah’” which they would carry with them after they graduated and entered southern society.¹² At these schools, the college man’s “is free and impressionable.” Since “it is well that all these colleges are the vital nerve centers the social system, the informal education derived from Old South and Confederate memory on southern college campuses played a critical role in perpetuating not only the Lost Cause, but the ideals and values of the South.”¹³

¹¹ Bragg, “The Socialization Process,” 14, 18.

¹² The University of Mississippi, “Ole Miss in the Sixties,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1925), 24. Archive info.

¹³ “College Journalism,” November 1899.

Chapter One

Memory in Media: The Lost Cause in Student Publications

“To the ‘University Greys,’ who, under the leadership of that gallant student-soldier, William Benjamin Lowry, resigned their college labors to battle for the cause of their fathers, this volume is affectionately dedicated,” reads the opening page of the first issue of the *Ole Miss*, the University of Mississippi’s yearbook. The University Greys was the name given to the faction of students at the U of M who banded together to fight for the Confederate cause. Yet the “Raison d’Être” of the yearbook, written by the editors, claims their purpose for composing the volume was to “present life at the University in its various phases, to give the stranger to our institution some idea of our daily life, to keep the alumnus in touch with his Alma Mater, and lastly to give the student a partial diary of his life at the University during the present session.”¹ If the purpose of the annual was to provide the students a diary of their time at the school, or to present life of the University to strangers, why dedicate the very first issue to men who left the university years ago, none of which actually graduated from the institution? The truth is that Confederate memory was part of the daily life at Ole Miss. Confederate memory was such an important part of the institution that a stranger should be acquainted with its role on campus.

The same could be said of the University of Virginia. At the turn of the century, both schools were populated by students who had grown up after the Civil War, yet were surrounded in their youth by either veterans, or at the very least, the memory of their fight against the Yankees. These students were exposed to the New South’s economic

¹ The University of Mississippi, “Dedication: To the University Greys,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS.: 1896).

progress. While, according to Paul M. Gaston and other New South historians, this progress was largely a myth, the region did undergo momentous changes, even if the industrial revolution New South prophets predicted eluded southerners until the mid twentieth century.² Nonetheless, the region was “being altered almost beyond recognition by a cyclone of social change.” Amidst these changes, southerners constructed or amplified myths about the Old South. These myths acted as stanchions meant to bolster their deteriorating cultural façade. These myths were part of the Lost Cause movement, which soon found a hospitable home on southern college campuses.

Students at these southern schools filled their publications including yearbooks, magazines and newspapers with allusions to the Confederacy and to the Old South which Confederate soldiers had sacrificed to protect. Poetry, fiction, nonfiction, biographies and art reminded students of their heritage and the mythical past of their ancestors. Though both schools’ publications featured memorials to the Lost Cause, Ole Miss’s yearbooks and newspapers always contained more than those at UVA. From the very beginning, the *Ole Miss* yearbook featured Lost Cause imagery, while such elements did not emerge at UVA until later issues, usually surrounding important anniversaries or events. The publications at Ole Miss would hold more Lost Cause pieces on important years, but even in years that share no important anniversary with the Confederacy or its leaders, U of M publications still contained Lost Cause imagery. Part of this could be due to the ever-present University Greys, the student-composed company that left Oxford to fight for the Confederacy. Their memory, which is stamped everywhere on campus, could have

² Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), viii, ix; W. J. Cash, *The Mid of the South* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1941), 1. Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1970), 190, 201, 202; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 140.

influenced the writings of these students. But the school may also have been attempting to overshadow the state's less than illustrious military history in the Confederacy and its lack of true aristocratic, Old South leaders. Virginia was home to the Cavaliers, however few, but Mississippi was still largely a frontier state at the breakout of war. Furthermore, the state played host to fewer battles and victories than did the Old Dominion. Therefore, these Lost Cause elements at Ole Miss may be an attempt to draw on an Old South myth that was more realistic in Virginia than it was in Mississippi.

Twenty-five years after Union and Confederate soldiers left the battle fields to return to their homes, R. C. Blackford, esq., the editor for the University of Virginia yearbook, the *Corks and Curls* asked alumni to write remembrances of their time at the school. Ed. S. Hutter, a student at UVA in 1860-'61 took up the charge and wrote a retrospective account of the goings on at the school prior to the breakout of war. Hutter explained how he "snatched intervals from pressing engagements to respond to" the editor's request, "mainly for the purpose of referring to the names and characters of the manly, glorious and chivalrous men who made up the roll call of students at the University for the session of '60- '61." After Lincoln's election, many UVA students "immediately" "assembled and formed a company of Volunteers . . . made up of the very best material that this great Virginia School contained at that time." Some 120 young men began to teach themselves the soldierly arts.³

The company, by "reason of the intelligence of its members was soon almost perfect in the manual of arms, as well as in evolutions of company and battalion drill." The students, dubbed "The Southern Guards," continued to practice on the University

³ Ed. S. Hutter, University of Virginia, "Sketch of the University at Commencement of the War," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1890), 22.

Lawn under the leadership of “the gallant and chivalrous man and soldier, Jas. M. Tosh, of Petersburg.” In the period between Lincoln’s election and the secession of eleven southern states, students at the University of Virginia scarcely talked of anything but the “approaching clash of arms.” Little else could hold their attention, save the annual celebration of the school’s founder’s birthday. “According to custom, Jefferson’s birthday was celebrated at the School founded by that great man.” On April 13, the student volunteers marched with military companies of the town of Charlottesville. Four hundred men, “handsomely uniformed and well equipped,” drilled before “an immense concourse of people assembled on the Lawn” with Ed. S. Hutter in command.⁴

As the battalion lined up for “dress parade,” and the band commenced “making its rounds,” Hutter was given a “despatch” [sic], explaining “Fort Sumpter [sic] has surrendered, and the Palmetto flag now floats over its walls.” Hutter relayed the message to the “multitude assembled,” whereupon “a mighty sound went up.” Within short order, the “battalion was . . . separated into companies, and each and every one began to prepare for war.” Just four days after the parade, “the four companies from Charlottesville and the University were ordered to Harper’s Ferry, and left the same night.” Hutter proceeds to describe the jubilant scene surrounding the journey from Charlottesville to Harper’s Ferry: “It seemed that the entire population had left their homes and gathered at the different stations.” At each station, Hutter saw “every one bringing provisions, clothing, etc., for their relations, who were going to the front.” But once there, to their dismay, Confederate General Robert E. Lee ordered the young men to return to their campus to help training the “volunteers, who were coming in by the thousands, to defend their

⁴ Hutter, “A Sketch of the University,” 24.

native State.”⁵ Hutter’s men obeyed the revered general, and made their way back to the University grounds.

“Impetuosity and impatience” prevented these young men from staying away from the fight, and the unit “disbanded at once, and each one for himself” joined “some organization that would be kept in the field.” Each man in the Southern Guard found his way onto the roster for some company, “and during the entire war, never failed in the courageous performance of duty.” Ed. S. Hutter goes on to list his “comrades” who “gave up their lives on the field of battle”—All noble men.” He concludes his correspondence by lamenting the lack of due regard for these martyrs: “I hope the day will soon come when the survivors of the ‘Southern Guard’ and ‘The Sons of Liberty’ will meet together at the University.” Beyond this reunion, Hutter called for the University to “take proper steps to have a monument erected to commemorate the memory of those of our comrades who yielded up their lives for the cause we all loved so well.”⁶

Hutter either purposefully, or by fault of the passing years, confused important dates. When he and his fellow Southern Guardsmen arrived at the front, Robert E. Lee would not have resigned from the U.S. army. With this story, Hutter was attempting to align the “cause we all loved so well,” the southern fight for independence, with the father of American independence and UVA founder, Thomas Jefferson. By showing the commencement of the Civil War fell on the one hundred and eighteenth birthday of Jefferson, Hutter was attempting to legitimize the southern cause by invoking Jefferson. It was common practice for Confederate leaders to co-opt the American Revolution and its leaders for their own purposes, namely to place the southern secession in the context

⁵ Hutter, “A Sketch of the University,” 25.

⁶ Hutter, “A Sketch of the University,” 25.

of American independence. The Confederates, then, were inheritors of the true spirit of the American Revolution.⁷ With Hutter's story, Jefferson, the definitive revolutionary, was present at the moment the South called forth its sons in the name of independence. By reminding the readers that the day the South first beat the North in battle fell on Jefferson's birthday, Hutter makes it seem as though Jefferson gave his consent for the southern rebellion.

In the same issue of *Corks and Curls*, we find another alumnus's account of the Confederate days at UVA. This story, in particular, recounts how the Confederate flag was hoisted atop the idolized rotunda—the centerpiece of Jefferson's campus plan. This piece has a lighter tone than Hutter's story of the pre-secession days at the University. R. C. M. Page, M. D., who was at the time of publication living in New York, differs from Hutter's claim that with the election of Lincoln, UVA students immediately formed companies. Rather, Page claims the temperament on campus was rather subdued. Page believed the secessionist disposition on campus was low, as “secession at the University of Virginia, for a time at least, had received a decided set-back.” In fact, Constitutional Union Party candidates Bell and Everett, had garnered the support from the “overwhelming majority” of the school's men. Despite the Unionist sympathies that, according to Page, prevailed at UVA before secession, once war was declared, students supported the southern cause with vigor. Even before being issued the requisite implements of battle from Richmond, students began “drilling away as if the fate of the whole nation depended on it.” Pro-Confederate sentiment soon prevented students who may have harbored Union allegiance from making such admissions. “Soon,” Page

⁷ Drew Gilpin Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 14.

explains, “any member of the Southern Guard or Sons of Liberty who could not whip five Yankees kept his thoughts about it to himself.”⁸

In the time between the formation of the two companies and their departure for battle, Page and a compatriot, Randolph H. McKim, took it upon themselves to raise the Confederate flag—“if not the first, it was certainly among the first ever raised in Virginia.” The task was of such import that Page and McKim devised a plan that included sawing out a portion of the back door to the rotunda. It was, in Page’s words, “Regular Burglary!” Page and McKim enlisted some cohorts and solicited, or rather “directed,” Isaac Simpson, a black carpenter, to help in their escapade. Once to the top of the rotunda, the group realized they had one more obstacle in their path—the door leading to the dome’s outside. They resorted to using brute force, and proceeded to crash the door in: “forming in line we stood back and took a running start at the door.” After a few tries, they successful broke the barrier, and made their way onto the cupola. Once atop the rotunda, the group, in the light of the rising sun, latched the flag to the lightning rod. Their feat captured the attention of their fellow students, and “but little college work could be done that day.” In time, the faculty decided to take the flag from its place of honor, putting in its stead the Virginia state flag. Page concludes his story by honoring two of his fellow mischievous friends, Bedinger and Latane, who “were both killed,” with Latane being “buried by some young ladies, there being no men within reach.”⁹

Page’s story is in and of itself a veritable lesson in the Lost Cause, especially as an example of reconciliation, an important facet of the Lost Cause. His story begins by showing not everyone at UVA, much less in the South, were virulent secessionist—

⁸ R. C. M. Page, University of Virginia, “The Raising of the Confederate Flag in Virginia,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1890): 39.

⁹ Page, “The Raising of the Confederate Flag,” 40, 41, 42.

indeed the students were Unionists until the prospect of war compelled them to join the fight against the North. By showing that the students opposed secession before the North forced them into the fray, Page shows that enlisting in the army came from fealty to Virginia and the South and not necessarily from a secessionist fervor on campus. By the 1890s, historians, both professional and amateur, for numerous reasons focused their attention on reluctant Confederate figures like Robert E. Lee. Lee, Gaines M. Foster explains, “was not considered a champion of slavery or secession, and supported reunion after the war.” Thus Page and his comrades resembled Lee, “the supreme hero of the Virginians,” and one of the most revered figures of the Lost Cause.¹⁰ Like Lee, Page fought for the Southern cause not out of devotion to slavery or a deep-seated animosity for the North or a desire to see the South secede, rather he fought to defend the honor of the Southland. Much like Lee, once Page enlisted, he devoted his efforts to the Confederacy. Page’s fealty to the South was so strong, he and his friends were willing to deface Jefferson’s rotunda to fly the Confederate flag before risking their lives in war.

Page’s story, too, pays brief homage to the women of the South who suffered through the crucible of war. With no men around, “some young ladies” were forced to bury Page’s fallen comrade, Latane. The line about this action is simple and matter of fact, yet its power is undeniable. Women, especially southern women, should not be expected to dig a grave for a soldier. In the Confederate celebrations of the 1890s, women began to take a more central role, for “she endured great hardship, ministered to the needs of the soldiers, and remained loyal to the cause.” These women who buried the dead soldiers certainly “endured great hardship.” When turn of the century readers would

¹⁰ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 185, 59.

come across this story, they would immediately call to mind William D. Washington's 1864,¹¹ "The Burial of Latane," one of the most notable paintings associated with the Lost Cause. The painting depicts women of all ages, some dressed in somber habiliments, surrounding a freshly dug grave. With them, is a group of slaves, who apparently had themselves upturned the soil for Latane's burial. The women and slaves are all visibly upset. The painting is meant to illustrate the Old South myth of the loyal slave, and to portray the fealty southern women had to the southern cause. This story would then evoke both a mental and visual memory for the reader.

Similar nonfiction prewar stories can be found in the U of M's yearbook, the *Ole Miss*. Though it was not written by an alumnus who witnessed battle, a piece in the 1925 yearbook, entitled "Ole Miss in the Sixties" recounts the bravery of the young men who went to war to protect the Southland. The story opens with the line, "The University of Mississippi is rich in its heritage from the soldiers of the 'Lost Cause.'" Specifically, the school's Lost Cause heritage is tied to the University Greys, whose bones still lie on the field of Gettysburg. The story tells how they "served with a heroism that challenges the admiration of every loyal soul in Dixie." Out of the one hundred and thirty-five that went to war, only twenty-four remained "When the drums beat the last tattoo." The story goes on to explain how "four-fifths of all the young men who enrolled in the university from its foundation up to 1861 served under the 'Conquered Banner.'" This, the author explains, helps to tie the school to the "memorable struggle." "Across the years there seems to extend a hand of brotherhood between those first alumni and the students of today," the author writes. "The ideals on which their lives were builded are still taught in

¹¹ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 124.

Ole Miss,” he explains, “ and the students of 1925 glory in the valor of the boys who followed Lee and Jackson.”¹²

Those who sacrificed everything for the southern cause take center stage in an 1899 *Ole Miss* student-composed dark, gothic tale. The story opens by glorifying the unrivaled beauty of the Ole Miss campus. Visitors to the campus could “never find a more splendid situation for their gorgeous displays in all our picturesque Southland than within that sacred grove of the goddess of wisdom.” Soon, though, the story descends into the macabre. The campus’s beautiful buildings and ancient trees, the author reveals, “wear a gruesome aspect under the shade of night that banishes all memory of their beauty by day.” The narrator is ill at ease in his home, the venerable, yet “Stygian” Hermaean society’s building, Madison Hall. “One stormy evening,” the author found himself alone, save for the company of Bob Fitz, “a large brindled cat” that had made himself at home in Madison Hall. The cat fell into a restless sleep, “and awoke at intervals with uneasy growls and whines.” The author threw the cat out of the room, hoping to rid himself of the distraction. But Bob Fitz’s fits were a portent to more sinister things to come. An hour after evicting Bob Fitz, the narrator noticed the odor of sulfur. Soon, a soldier, “dressed in a ragged gray military suit, a battered black hat upon his head, and a tall old army musket,” opened the door and greeted the student.¹³

The visitor made himself comfortable in the author’s room, tending to the fire to warm his bones. The old soldier prevented the frightened young man from leaving the room, and proceeded to ask the student questions about how life had changed. “Who was chancellor; who mayor of Oxford, what were we doing with the negroes; were they all

¹² University of Mississippi, “Ole Miss in the Sixties,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1925): 23.

¹³ Durell Miller, University of Mississippi, “The Devil Knows,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1899): 139, 140.

killed out,” the ghost asked. Eventually the specter was summoned by “faint tapping of a drum down in the grove.” As he was leaving the room, the ghost reassured the student he had nothing to fear. Before he exited, the apparition told the narrator how he had lived there once, when he was sick. “Some night when ye have time, ye might look for that box of mine,” said the ghost. “Would ye like to?” he asked the student. Nervously, the student “bowed” in a silent answer in the affirmative. The spirit gave the student precise directions to the box’s hiding place—“walk ninety steps toward the railroad bridge, till ye come to a hickory tree; then go twenty-six steps beyond the tree, still toward the bridge, and stop . . . there ye’ll find an iron bolt driven into the ground.” There he would find the soldier’s secret box. The drum summoned the soldier again, and he took leave. The student flew out of the house and literally ran into his friend, Tomson, to whom he recounted the night’s frightening events. After some pleading, Tomson agreed to help the narrator find the soldier’s treasure. The two students faithfully followed the soldier’s orders. But the two found themselves at the Library. Tomson realized the building had been constructed after the war, meaning the soldier’s box was lost underneath it. Once the two discovered this, they heard the ghost say, “Aye, it is lost; it is lost!” in a “deep, husky voice.”¹⁴

This story does not fit the typical Lost Cause formula. The Confederate soldier is not venerated or honored in any way. In fact, the author quotes the dead soldier as saying he is used to the heat of the fire, likely an allusion to his being condemned to hell. What could he have done to be hellbound? Furthermore, the title of the story is “The Devil Knows!” Still, the narrator is not deterred by the ghost’s hellish associations and decides

¹⁴ Miller, “The Devil Knows,” 141, 142, 143.

to uncover the soldier's hidden box. His endeavor is foiled by the newly built library. Could this story be a lamentation on the fact that Confederate knowledge, or history was a casualty of the New South's progress? Nonetheless, the story illustrates the presence of Confederate memory on the Ole Miss campus—either good or bad. In this story, Confederate soldiers still walk through the grove, almost as if keeping sentinel over the campus.

The next edition of the University of Mississippi yearbook contains a narrative that combined the Old South myth with Lost Cause imagery. Stuart Clayton's "Louise," opens on an idyllic "old mansion" on the Gulf of Mexico, shaded by magnolia and live oaks, where a "green mass clings to its stained brick," and "Around the broad veranda, creeps the jessamine." Here lives, "the fairest and sweetest of all beings—a winsome Southern lassie," whose eyes "suggest—well a touch of mischief and fun." As she lounges on the veranda, she spies a "troop of cavalry," wearing "the loved gray." In this troop, she sees a wounded officer, Captain Conrad Winston, "who reels from side to side with the motion of his horse." Captain Winston is in luck—Louise's father, Mr. Kingsley, is a doctor.¹⁵

After convalescing for a week, Captain Winston regains his strength, and soon, he humbly begins to court young Louise when he plays the guitar while Louise sings "Far Away." Their romance is interrupted when Captain Winston returns to battle, "but in spite of long roads and numerous foes, he makes frequent visits to Kingsley Manor." But Captain Winston, we learn, is not the only visitor. Federal Captain Carr, garrisoned in the nearby town, makes regular visits to the old mansion. "But Louise dislikes him," not only

¹⁵ Stuart Clayton, University of Mississippi, "Louise," *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1900): 217.

“because of his cruel face,” but also “because he wears the despised blue.” “On the morning of the Fourth of July,” Captain Winston learns of the Confederate’s surrender of Vicksburg, and a rumor “that Lee was cut to pieces at Gettysburg.” Despite this news, Winston’s indomitable spirit leads him to continue on with the Confederate Cause. “No matter,” he tells his men, “lost or won, we’re going to make our raid to-day.” But one stop had to be made before they reached their target. The troop comes to a halt at Kingsley manner where they are greeted by Mrs. Kingsley, “her eyes red with weeping.” She reveals to Winston and his men that a “body of Federals had looted the place about daybreak . . . all in masks.” Among the things they absconded with was fair Louise.¹⁶

Winston’s “iron nerve never deserted him,” and he and his men waste no time, hastily mounting their horses to give chase to the Federals. Along the way, Winston comes to a crossroad, and decides to split his troops to cover both directions. Winston and his men follow carriage tracks, which he suspects will lead to Louise. After some distance, they happen upon a vacant, “lonely dwelling-house.” Winston dismounts and investigates the home. This entire scheme, it turns out, was a trap set by the dread Union Captain Carr. Before Winston could climb back on his mount, he and his men are surrounded by “a body of Federal horsemen.” Winston and his men take refuge in the abandoned home. Carr advises Winston, known to the Federals as the Fox, to surrender as he and his Confederate compatriots are outnumbered, fifty to five. “Such excellent advice,” Winston retorts. But his steely spirit and brave heart will not allow him to give in. “But I must disregard it,” he tells Carr. After a verbal exchange, Captain Winston tells his Federal foe, if I were you I’d have prayers before I attacked, for some of you will

¹⁶ Clayton, “Louise,” 218, 219.

never have another opportunity again, sir.” But Winston makes it clear his target is Carr. “I’ll settle with you, you infernal Northern hound,” he tells Carr.¹⁷

A gunfight ensues. Winston’s “besieged Confederates had repulsed the first attack” successfully, despite the imbalance in numbers of men and guns. But he and his men could not last much longer. Even their “deadly precision” could not stave off the Federal advance. “with desperate bravery,” Carr and his Union men make their way into Winston’s hastily made fortification. The two groups face each other, and “the combat is hand to hand.” Then, “down the road rings the wild rebel yell.” Just in time, another portion of Winston’s troops that split off at the crossroads arrive to help their outnumbered cohorts. They learned of Carr’s scheme by threatening “a negro trooper,” with a noose, “who, under the influence of such strong inducements . . . speedily disclosed the details of Carr’s plot.” In light of the new numbers of Confederates, the Union men “begin a retreat,” but the Rebels turn it “into a wild flight.” Winston spies Carr’s attempt to flee, so he and some of his men, overtake him and his horse a ways down the road. Carr and some of his fellow refugees “charge the pursuers, but the impetuous onslaught of the Southerners carries all before it.” This leads to the showdown the entire story has been building toward. “Carr makes a fierce cut with his saber,” and “Winston parries it, his blade lunges forward, and Louise, who has stepped from the carriage, shudders, as Carr’s body reels and plunges to the ground with a sickening thud.” The story ends, somewhat abruptly with a concluding sentence that informs us that Louise and Conrad were married, and have made a home in her family’s old manse.¹⁸

¹⁷ Clayton, “Louise,” 220, 221, 222.

¹⁸ Clayton, “Louise,” 221, 222.

This story occupies a liminal space in time, when the Old South was under siege and on the verge of defeat. We are presented with a familiar scene from the Old South myth, where “lovely ladies, in farthingales . . . which had been the dream of all men and the possession of none.” They lived in a “manorial” world, with “an aristocracy coextensive with the planter group” who “dwelt in large and stately mansions.” As Cash explains, the Old South was destroyed by the Civil War, and was, supposedly, “to give place to a society which has been rapidly and increasingly industrialized and modernized both in body and in mind.”¹⁹ But this Old South was never forgotten, rather it was entrenched in the southern mind through a persistent myth, acting as an opiate for the body of people who felt their cherished, traditional life was swept away after Appomattox.. Louise lived in this mythical Old South. She reposes on the veranda of her mansion. The builder of the old home constructed it, as he “sought in this New World, to retain those fond mem’ries of the Old, by building a home like the one he left afar in other lands.” While the author, Stuart Clayton, does not explicitly say the home’s first owner was the revered Cavalier of Old South myth, it is clear he comes from a refined heritage. Thus with this tale, we are presented with a scene out of the mythical Old South—a refined, gentle southern woman lives in a manse, constructed by an Old World Cavalier, overgrown with jessamine, and wreathed by magnolias and live oaks.

But this Old South was obliterated by the Civil War and the hostile northerners. The defeat on the battlefields left deep scars on the southern psyche, and wounded southern ideals of honor and masculinity. “If neither guilt nor shame accurately characterizes their attitude, southerners did clearly display disquiet and defensiveness.

¹⁹ W. J. Cash, *The Mid of the South* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1941), xlix, l.

Perhaps their feelings can best be described simply as a damaged self-image. Defeat in battle and the exigencies of the war's aftermath wounded southerners' confidence in their righteousness, honor and manliness." As Gaines Foster explains, "Most important for southerners, however, the joint reunions offered tacit testimony and occasional explicit salutes to their honorable conduct in the war." The Lost Cause movement acted as a salve to help heal these deep abrasions. Captain Winston most certainly displayed honor and manliness, both in his treatment of Louise and in his fighting against Carr. It was the northern army that acted duplicitously, kidnapping the young Louise in order to set a trap for Captain Winston and his Confederate cohort. This was far from honorable. Winston was justified in his treatment of Carr. He called Carr out personally for his actions, and made it clear he intended to save his best for the dishonorable Yankee. It was Carr that fled the fight, but Winston did not relent, and proved his mettle and manliness by taking on Carr in a sword fight. His talent with the saber allowed him to win in this duel. But the author does more than highlight Winston's martial acuity, he also shows how the Confederate soldiers were able to defeat the Union attack, no matter how outmanned they may have been. By the 1890s, Lost Cause proponents focused their celebrations on more than the Virginia heroes of Lee and Jackson and began to laud the actions of the private soldier, like the ones in Clayton's "Louise."²⁰

Clayton, Page, Hutton and Miller's fictional accounts are far from the only representation of Old South memory and Lost Cause imagery found in southern yearbooks at the turn of the century. In 1894, Armistead C. Gordon contributed to the UVA *Corks and Curls* a lengthy poem dedicated to "The Confederate Dead." Gordon

²⁰ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 35, 68, 116.

uses a line from Castelar's "Savonarola," which reads: "The grief that circled his brow with a crown of thorns was also that which wreathed them with the splendor of immortality." Gordon, here, is comparing the Confederate soldiers to the Renaissance Italian martyr, Savonarola. The poem goes on to describe the jubilation surrounding the Confederates' march to war:

Garlands wreathed their shining swords;
They were girt about with cheers,
Children's lisplings, women's words,
Sunshine and the songs of birds;
They are gone so many years.

It is these soldiers, the author claims, that would bring "brighter days" and ring forth "Freedom's august dawn." But the author concedes their defeat:

All is gone for them. They gave
All for naught. It was their way
Where they loved. They died to save
What was lost. The fight was brave.
That is all; and here they are.

Yet,

Nobler never went than they,
To a bloodier, madder fray,
In the lapse of all the years.

Garlands still shall wreath the swords
That they drew amid our cheers;
Children's lisplings, women's words,
Sunshine and songs of the birds
Greet them here through all the years.

In death, they were still to be treated as heroes, and their memory should still be commemorated by garlands and cheer. In the end, the Virginia heroes of Lee, Jackson

and Stuart still lead the brave Confederate soldiers who are, “Fame’s through all the years.”²¹

The poet has obviously connected the Confederates, both the common soldier and the heroic generals, to martyrs of the Christian faith. Their crown of thorns is defeat, yet their immortality is assured by their sacrifice. Such poems are part of the Lost Cause effort to ease the “pain of defeat.”²² Despite their loss, their suffering and their fighting for something that was ultimately lost, the Confederates were the bravest men to ever take to battle.²³ Similar poems were read at memorial day celebrations across the South in the 1890s. This was a stark change from the more mournful, and less laudatory poems of the early Lost Cause movement. Poems of the late 1880s and 1890s focused more on the fight and bravery of the Confederate side than did earlier poems.²⁴

Nonfiction pieces concerning leading Confederate figures such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis appear in various student publications at these southern schools. On the sixtieth anniversary of General Robert E. Lee’s death, the University of Mississippi student newspaper, the *Mississippian*, published call for students to donate to a Daughters of the American Revolution memorial fund to preserve his childhood home. Their goal was to make it “a national shrine, an educational memorial, and a center of historical research.” It is difficult for memorial organizations to raise money from the pockets of college students when they desire to commemorate the Confederacy through memorials, for, as the author explains, “there are memorials and memorials” already across the South. This changes when the memorial leagues mention the former General-in-Chief of

²¹ Armistead C. Gordon, “The Confederate Dead,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1894), 182.

²² Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 127.

²³ Gordon, “The Confederate Dead,” 182.

²⁴ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 127, 128.

the Confederate forces. “The name of Robert E. Lee causes a change of expression on the collegian’s face,” the author concedes. The building, the author contends, is “the building that is best fitted to symbolize the principles of courage and manhood for which Lee lived.” By doing “their small part in the drive,” Ole Miss students could help preserve Lee’s legacy, so that future generations of young men could learn from his manhood and principled ways.²⁵

Ten years after the death of Confederate president Jefferson Davis, Ole Miss published a “Life Calendar,” and biographical sketch of the “soldier, orator, statesman, and student.” The piece lauds his service, his intelligence, and his devotion to his family. He was, in the author’s estimation, “a cavalier *sans peur et sans reproche*, (without fear and without reproach).” Davis was “an epitome of the patrician South” and the Confederacy’s “natural leader in the struggle for Constitutional freedom.” Though he was only able to serve part of his six-year term, he stayed devoted to the cause with “unflagging devotion and fiery zeal,” even until the very end, for he “would not believe that a cause so sacred could suffer defeat.” Despite the treachery and machinations of his enemies, Davis stood strong, and on his death, “all those who had worn the gray, irrespective of former political creed, mourned the death of a beloved chieftain.” Davis had lived an honorable life, beyond reproach, according to this piece, and he would be forever remembered as a worthy politician, tactician, and family man.²⁶

Both of these vignettes are illustrative of central aspects of the Lost Cause, and show how the movement changed over the course of the years. In death, both of these men were prominent figures in the Lost Cause celebrations. Their birthdays, especially,

²⁵ “Robert E. Lee,” *Mississippian*, Oct. 12, 1929.

²⁶ The University of Mississippi, “Jefferson Davis,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1899): 5, 6.

brought much attention to their lives, before, during and after the War. While most memorials for Davis saw him less as a role model and more as a “representative” of the Confederacy, the Ole Miss dedication treated him more like a valorous hero. This can be attributed to the fact that he had lived in Mississippi and had represented the state as senator and representative before the Civil War. Throughout it all, though, Lee was the primary figure for the Lost Cause, he was the South’s hero. After the construction of his monument in Richmond in 1890, southerners celebrated his birthday every January 19. But at Ole Miss, they were remembering him on the anniversary of his death.²⁷

During World War I, stories of the Confederacy resurged in the University of Mississippi yearbook. In 1917, “The Sacrifice” appeared, recounting the story of a brave young Confederate spy who was willing to make a tremendous sacrifice for the Southern cause. The young soldier was injured and captured by Northern troops as he tried to cross the line. Draped by a cape, he was taken to headquarters and ordered to reveal his purpose for crossing enemy lines. He remained silent, and as such, was ordered to be searched. The Yankees found, sewn into his collar, a coded letter. After being pressured, and threatened with death, the boy agreed to decipher it for the Union soldiers. But once it was given to him, the boy “tore the folded note into hundreds of pieces.” Death would be his punishment. But his youth tore at the heartstrings of the commanding Yankee officer, Halton, who asked the young Rebel if he had a last wish. The boy asked to see his mother, as tomorrow, Christmas Day, marked his birth. The Yankee sent for his mother. Halton left the two alone in privacy for an hour before the mother left. The next morning, after the prisoner was shot, Halton was called to the firing squad. Once there, he saw his

²⁷ Foster, *Ghosts*, 120, 121.

soldiers in a poor state, “One had thrown aside his rifle and was kneeling by the body, tears running down his face.” As Halton neared, he realized the body that lay dead before him was not that of the young boy, but of his mother. The two had exchanged clothes, and, just as “Nineteen years before on Christmas day she had given him life . . . she had given it again.”²⁸

The title, “The Sacrifice,” is ambiguous, and could apply to both the mother’s sacrificing her life for her son, or to the son sacrificing his mother for the Confederacy. Nonetheless, both made a significant sacrifice. The ending, too, leaves room for interpretation. Obviously, the reference to the giving of life nineteen years ago refers to the boy’s birth. But the story does not end by saying she had given him life again, simply that she had given life again. Could the author be saying she had not only given life to her son, but also to the Confederate cause? Could her sacrifice have been enough to help the Confederacy hold on for as long as it did?

The Confederate imagery continued on before the end of WWI. the 1917-1918 *Ole Miss* was dedicated to the current students who left behind family and friends “in order to uphold worthy traditions and national honor.” Their story was to stand “side by side with the glorious record of the University Greys!” This dedication demonstrates how the school saw the current student-soldiers as inheritors of the bravery, honor and valor of the University Greys. These students were then directly linked to the Confederacy.²⁹ The same year at UVA, the *Corks and Curls* featured an editorial of sorts describing the valor of the soldiers from Virginia who were fighting, “Not with war-lust or hysteria, but with a steadfast determination that human kindness and justice shall not

²⁸ The University of Mississippi, “The Sacrifice,” *Ole Miss*, (Oxford, MS: 1917): 146, 147.

²⁹ The University of Mississippi, “Dedication,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1918): 197.

perish from the face of the earth.” These young men were the first since “our grandfathers left the shaded lawn to gallantly wear the gray under Johnston and Lee” to sacrifice themselves in such a grand way, the piece claims. For their duty, “Perhaps ere the flight of many months, there will be somber tablets of bronze fixed to the Rotunda, beside that other glorious company,” reminding future students “to serve as befits ‘worthy sons of a proud mother.’”³⁰ The bronze tablet the piece refers to is dedicated to the bravery and honor of the Confederate soldiers, like Hutter and Page, who set their books aside, and left UVA for the Confederate front. Just like those valiant and honorable men in gray, these young men would be forever memorialized in the sacred rotunda.

Such poems and stories became less prevalent as time continued. At UVA, over time, such Lost Cause elements simply faded away. At Ole Miss, they remained, but were wedded with images of progress and signs of the state’s bright future. The dividing pages of the 1936 yearbook show the changing times of the state. One page depicts black sharecroppers harvesting cotton while watched by a white man astride a horse. Below the image, in large lettering, reads: “Mississippi in Agriculture.” Another divider shows a shiny silver airplane with passengers disembarking from its cabin. Its caption reads: “Mississippi in Transportation.” The fraternities section is set off by a divider with a picture of a horse drawn carriage driven by a black chauffer who is stopped to allow a woman dressed in Old South regalia to board. Below it, the page reads: “Mississippi in History.” Finally, the student organizations’ section begins with the picture of a large factory with two sky-high towers belching smoke into the air. The picture is titled: “Mississippi in Industry.” These dividers illustrate the divided mind that grips the state by

³⁰ The University of Virginia, “Untitled,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1917): 419.

this point. In 1936, the New Deal was changing the state's economic landscape. While before the New Deal, 70 percent of the state's farmers were tenants, "By the end of the Depression decade . . . land ownership patterns looked unmistakably different." Electricity had been extended throughout the region, and industry had proliferated.³¹ The South was changing, and as the 1936 *Ole Miss* indicates, the region was struggling to maintain a grasp on its past while moving into the future. The region was an agricultural based economy, and its culture and society grew up around this fact. How would a twentieth century where cotton crops would be harvested not by Negroes, but by machines look like? What would a Mississippi with smokestacks bring? Who would come from Chicago on those silver airliners? It is clear the region was adopting the progress, that in many ways it could not resist, yet it was hesitant to let its heritage of horse drawn carriages, bonneted ladies and servile black population go.

The 1937 issue of the *Ole Miss*, which was titled the "Rebel Issue" due to it being the first yearbook published after the inauguration of the Rebel as the athletics' new nickname, opens with a prologue wherein the author hopes to do the school's southern heritage justice in the annual's pages. "May we, in presenting this book, show that the same spirit of courage, honor, and friendliness which filled the hearts of our grandfathers manifests itself on the Ole Miss campus to-day."³² The yearbook acts as a representative of the school, the prologue suggests, and it is necessary that such a representative do the school's southern grace and charm justice. Southerners were eager to reap some benefits of the New Deal's efforts at modernization. Infrastructure developments like new roads were lauded through the southland, especially in Mississippi. The extension of electricity

³¹ Roger Biles, *The South and the New Deal* (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 36, 53, 54, 55, 56.

³² The University of Mississippi, "Prologue," *Ole Miss*, (Oxford, MS: 1937).

across the South was another benefit of the New Deal southerners enjoyed. But it is clear from such representations that many southerners were conflicted by the changing world around them. Their agricultural society was being fundamentally altered.

Wreathing the prologue is a series of sketches that will be repeated throughout the yearbook. Each division within the book is set apart from a page featuring photos that represent what each section holds. But below these pictures are drawings of the Old South. One image depicts a top-hatted man holding open a gate for a bonneted belle decked out in farthingales. The athletics page features, below pictures of football players, track runners and cheerleaders, a drawing of two Antebellum men standing back to back, ready to face off in a duel. And the organization page shows a slave toting cotton bales off of a trailer and onto a train bed. Each of these images depict idealized Old South imagery, and they are coupled with similar shadowed depictions on each individual page. Slaves are featured in three different drawings, one shows several filling bags with cotton, another shows a house servant bringing a drink on a tray to his master and the third shows a slave on his time off, fishing by a pond. Others include well-dressed Antebellum men and women wearing top hats or broad dresses, or sitting atop a giant horse. All of these images recall the mythical Old South where men and women enjoyed leisure while the slaves worked, happily, in the fields or tending to the house. These drawings border each and every page, reminding those reading the book of what once was (or was supposed to have been).

The Lost Cause was used to help ameliorate the effects of these changes. In times of economic strife, and industrial proliferation, southerners looked to the past to help them move into the future. The pages of these student publications show how

Confederate memory resonated in the student population for the better part of a half-century. From the 1890s to the end of the New Deal era, these schools' newspapers, magazines and yearbooks included images, stories, poems and biographies that drew on the Confederacy. These elements recalled the valor of the soldiers who fought, and even tied current students to those who defended the South against the North. Though the numbers of these elements would dissipate through the years, they never fully disappeared. In fact, during the changes brought on by the New Deal, the U of M yearbook, the *Ole Miss* featured even more backward looking components, just as the school had adopted the Rebel as their mascot. Thus, these school publications reflected the need southerners felt to look to the past to ease them into the future and to commemorate their ancestors who they saw as fighting for the right cause.

Chapter 2
The Cavalier and Rebel on the Sidelines: Masculinity, Honor, and the Lost Cause in
Southern College Football

Teddie knew his team would fall to the wearers of orange and blue that day in Vicksburg. The men from Louisiana State University had traveled across the river, and were ahead of Teddie's beloved men in blue and red by what seemed to be an insurmountable six points. When the referee blew his whistle to mark halftime, the LSU faithful "broke forth in such a pandemonium of joy only a football crowd could make." Teddie's attention was captured by the "patronizing" grin of a Louisiana man to his side. Teddie's honor was visibly wounded, and his female escort sensed it as Teddie bit his lip. "Never mind, Teddie," his female escort reassured him, "just wait until our half-back tries some of his bucks in the next half."¹

But as the two teams reconvened on the field for the second half, it was LSU's halfback that marched toward the Ole Miss's goal, "turning over three ambitious youngsters" on his way to a touchdown, extending the lead to twelve-zero. The whole scene "grew hateful" to Teddie "with its fluttering orange and blue flags, and all its shouting Louisiana men." Teddie wanted nothing more than to "go over to where those tin horns were and knock somebody down with something heavy." But the consolation of his female companion prevented the University of Mississippi student from resorting to physical violence. "That's alright Teddie, our guys will win this game for us yet," she said, with the aim of heartening her distraught Teddie.²

¹ The University of Mississippi, "In Football Times," *The Ole Miss*, (Oxford, MS: 1898), 155.

² "In Football Times," 155, 156.

Soon, Teddie's anxiety turned to excitement when Ole Miss's men held the line of scrimmage as "Vainly the opposing line hurled itself" against the men in red and blue. The men of Mississippi had possession after LSU turned the ball over on downs. "The big fellow" and his Ole Miss compatriots were virtually apoplectic as "from the supporters of the red and blue there came a mighty and increasing howl of joy," despite the distance that stood between the Ole Miss players and the LSU goal. But the predictions of the "dainty Mississippi enthusiast" proved true, at least partially, when the Ole Miss halfback "goes followed by his out-distanced pursuers" toward the LSU goal. Filled with excitement, the Ole Miss faithful, "breaking through the ropes, scarcely give him time to make his touch-down before they surround him," and "strained their voices to the highest pitch of endurance."³

On the next possession, the men of Mississippi again stood firm, halting the LSU attack. They were rewarded with possession of the ball. Teddie and his companion watch as Ole Miss moved the ball down the field, "inch by inch," toward the LSU goal. But Teddie's earlier inklings proved true. Time was running short, as the smug LSU rooter next to Teddie pointed out to his own female companion. As a loss became imminent, "the dear little form" of Teddie's female companion "bent closer and closer to him." The defeat cut Teddie deep, "He needed sympathy, and it comforted him to have her near—so very near." Teddie's story illustrates how college football found turn of the century southern college campuses a hospitable environment to take root.⁴ Teddie's passion for the game and his violent tendencies demonstrate the sport's importance to a southern

³ "In Football Times," 156, 157.

⁴ Andrew Doyle, "Turning the Tide: College Football and Southern Progressivism," *Southern Cultures* 3, no. 3 (Fall, 1997): 29.

man's sense of honor—the shiny suit of armor that displayed to all around him his importance and invulnerability.

But his defeat in the Civil War and facing an astoundingly altered home corroded the Southern man's honor. The evangelical and reform movements, with many women at the helm, put a chink in his suit of honor as they aimed to refine the rougher sex. In particular, they took into their sights the southern “hell of a fellow,” who was prone to “stand on his head in a bar, to toss down a pint of raw whiskey at a gulp . . . to bite off the nose or gouge out the eye of a favorite enemy.”⁵ Such grandstanding and other masculine displays were severely curtailed by these reformers, further weakening his honor. But southern men would embrace college football, both as fans and as players. It would help add polish to his armor as the sport offered men an opportunity to display their masculinity in a grand fashion. Soon personal, regional, state and college honor were invested in the sport.

Once the sport had assumed such significance, fans and players at southern colleges incorporated the game into the Lost Cause. The University of Mississippi and the University of Virginia began to drape the sport in the trappings of Old South myth and Confederate memory, especially in the face of changes brought on by the economic hardship of the Great Depression and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Second Reconstruction.⁶ In this time of destitution and deprivation in the southland, young men

⁵W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 50.

⁶ This term, the Second Reconstruction, was first used by eminent southern historian, C. Vann Woodward in, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. Writing just one year after *Brown v Board*, Woodward employed this phrase to describe the Civil Rights Movement in the South, as “Not since the First Reconstruction has this area been invaded from so many quarters, with such impatience of established practice and such insistent demand for immediate reform,” (9). The New Deal, though could be aptly described as the Second Reconstruction. In the span of a few short years, southerners witnessed the invasion of Federal programs that promised to remake the region. F. D. R. used his New Deal to help modernize the region, inexorably altering the agrarian society. Just like the original Reconstruction, the

at the University of Virginia looked back to a time when the Anglo-Saxon Cavalier fought for his own lost cause in England, when he forged a path into the frontier, and brought with him his refined sensibilities and noble pedigree. In Oxford Mississippi, students at Ole Miss looked back to the genteel planter and the slaveocracy he constructed, which assured white supremacy. He was a Rebel who fought honorably for the southern cause. Though they lost their wars, both the Cavalier and Colonel Reb were the very embodiment of honor and chivalry, and became part of the football culture at these schools. By evoking the memory of the Old South and the Confederacy, twentieth century southern students were able to escape to a more ideal time. The memories of these pasts were sunny ones, especially when refracted through the Romanticism that so defined the southern imagination. But they also represented the possibilities the future would present.

Like the Cavalier and the Rebel, twentieth century students could fight with honor on the football field, and as fans, from the stands. By the 1930s, students at the University of Virginia and the University of Mississippi took part in Lost Cause celebrations when they went to cheer on their football squads. The fans and players were both participants and witnesses to these displays of Confederate memory and Old South mythology. With the adoption of the Rebel at Ole Miss and the Cavalier at UVA, college football became one more element in the incidental education that helped to perpetuate the mind of the South on southern college campuses.

The antebellum South was a safe time for the white man. This was a time when social status and self-identity rested upon a foundation comprised of the interrelated ideas

second iteration wrought unforeseen consequences that hurt the very populations the efforts were meant to aid—the white and black sharecropper. With all deference and respect to Professor Woodward, Second Reconstruction will be used to denote the New Deal.

of race, gender and class. This was a society wherein “a rigid caste society,” developed, becoming more calcified and stratified, “rising tier on tier from the ‘mud-sill’ of the happy slave to the planter, charged with all power at the top.”⁷

In this construct, women played the part of a helpless diminutive sort, beholden on the southern man for protection and material satisfaction. His ability to do so contributed to his sense of honor. But masculinity was also perceived in communal terms and was framed by the defining notion of honor, which “existed not as a myth, but as a vital code” that “established signposts of appropriate conduct.” It, in effect, would “point the way out of chaos.”⁸ Honor, Wyatt-Brown explains, consists of three elements: an inner conviction of self-worth; the public display of this self-worth; and the “assessment of the claim by the public.” It is both internal and external, it is in short, “reputation.”⁹

But the Civil War honeycombed this foundation of social organization, shaking the faith in the southern man’s honor and upheaving gender roles that, in the Antebellum South, were seen as inviolate. Southern women, impoverished, widowed or newly conscious of their dependent status looked beyond the hearth and home for work or to assert their growing sense of independence. A “mistrust of men fueled” their refusal to be reassigned to their antebellum status as helpless.¹⁰ Women were no longer “altars of sacrifice,” but were now “Steel Magnolias.”¹¹ But in a world of emancipated slaves and deprivation, women struck a Faustian deal, and largely returned to their subordinate role

⁷ Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; Cash, *The Mind of the South*, 87.

⁸ Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethic and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 114.

⁹ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 14.

¹⁰ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 31; Faust, *Mothers*, 251, 254.

¹¹ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 251, 253, 257.

in the southern patriarchal system in exchange for protection and support.¹² Thus southerners cobbled together a foundation comprised of the same elements of used to support the old social construct: race, gender and class. They would largely find success. Gender dynamics seemingly returned to their natural balance. The postbellum South saw a veritable “matrimonial boom in the first five to ten years after the war.” In fact, statistics indicate southern postwar marriage rates outpaced those seen in the Antebellum South and the Postbellum North.¹³

Nonetheless, with more women laboring outside the home and more women asserting their rights in the political arena through suffrage protests and working to improve their property rights, southern men were cognizant of the threats to their dominance in society. Their stature was further imperiled by the “new gigantism” of the race issue.¹⁴ Black men were extended the right to vote and hold elected office, and this, along with their general mobility jeopardized the safety of the southern white man’s perch atop southern society.¹⁵ Still, the most corruptive attack on the southern man’s honor was their defeat by the Union.¹⁶

This was the plexus of menaces to white manhood in the Postbellum South—an altered, however moderately, gender dynamics, the freedman, and an honor crippled by defeat on the battlefield. In the wake of the tsunami of change surged forward by the Civil War, two new estimations of masculinity emerged: one centered on Christian gentlemanliness, and another centered on the martial ideal. Both were defined by

¹² Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 253.

¹³ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 30.

¹⁴ Cash, *The Mind of the South*, 108.

¹⁵ Craig Thompson Friend, “From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2009), vii.

¹⁶ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 29, 24, 25, 26.

communal ideals of manhood wherein their self-worth was entrenched in honor. In short, southern manhood was not the “urban, industrial, liberal, corrupt, effeminate” manhood southerners saw in their northern conquerors.¹⁷

The opposite of this dandified Yankee was the “warriorlike and heroic manliness” of the Confederate soldier. In this construct, the Confederate soldier symbolized the notion that while “the Confederacy had fallen, southern civilization had not.” But the “warriorlike and heroic manliness” was meant to do more than be a display of a man’s personal honor; rather the masculine energies were expected to provide a more communal service, “specifically to demonstrate honor in and protection of one’s self, family and region.”¹⁸

Favorite pastimes, “Fighting, horse racing, gambling, swearing, drinking, and wenching,” provided Antebellum southern men with the chance to prove their mettle and affirm their honor.¹⁹ But traditional manly exploits of hunting, cockfighting, and public drinking at the turn of the century were targeted by the southern women who, after the Civil War, looked to extend “personal and social uplift” to the less refined populations of the South.²⁰ These recreations were soon endangered not only by the impassioned evangelical reform movement, but also by an emerging conservation effort that looked to preserve nature’s abundance.

Hunting was by far the most common recreation for southern men, both in the Antebellum South and in the postbellum era. In the forest, southern men could experience “reckless freedom”, and display their “animal-like qualities”, pride and honor in a way

¹⁷ Friend, “From Southern Manhood,” x.

¹⁸ Friend, “From Southern Manhood,” x, xi, xii. xviii, xix.

¹⁹ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 164.

²⁰ Faust, *Mothers*, 253.

they were unable to among the more evangelical women and their children in the home.²¹ But the southern man's territory was threatened and hemmed in by the New South's influx in large commercial plantations and timber harvesting companies and an nascent conservation movement.²² While the sport maintained its status as the southern male recreation of choice, hunting became a shadow of its former self by the turn of the century with the introduction of the game warden, bag limits, the outlawing of night hunting, restrictions on what could be hunted and what weapons could be used to hunt.²³

This was a perilous time for the violent sport of cockfighting, an Antebellum favorite amongst both the southern elite and more common populations. The homes of southern elites were often the settings of these bloody matches. Maintaining the honor of the sport was paramount in the eyes of the wealthiest cockfighting enthusiasts, and holding events on their own property allowed them to scrutinize the field of play, thus preventing the sport from degenerating at the hands of the rabble. Men took tremendous pride in the physicality of their birds, whose pedigree was a reflection of their masters' own. In the postbellum South, the sport's significance and masculine qualities is exemplified by the fact many men linked their birds' ferocity in the ring to the bravery and military might of the Confederate soldiers.²⁴

In 1881, former Kentucky Governor, Beriah Magoffin, recounted a bet U.S. Vice President, John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky made with Secretary of War John B. Floyd of Virginia in the lead up to the Civil War. Both men were debating the superiority of

²¹ Ted Ownby *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 28, 29, 35, 32, 34.

²² Ted Ownby, "Manhood, Memory and White Men's Sports in the Recent American South," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 15, no. 2 (March 7, 2007): 108, 109.

²³ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 178, 180.

²⁴ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 77, 79, 80, 86.

their states, and included in the lists of their states' finer qualities were the women and the fighting birds. Breckinridge, the author remembered, "good-humordly maintained that Kentuckians were an improvement on the Old Virginia stock." More importantly, he claimed "Our women are the handsomest in the world," and Kentucky had "finer horses and even better chickens than the Old Dominion could produce." Floyd took umbrage with these claims and "proposed then and there to arrange a main to be fought on the Virginia border." Both men, confident in their state's birds, wagered \$1,000—not a small sum in Antebellum America. But the impending war interfered with their plans, and the fight was cancelled.²⁵

These men were far from the common farmer. Each character held important and respectable political positions, both regionally and nationally. One would assume their prestigious offices would assure their honor and sense of pride, yet these men were so offended at the notion their states may produces inferior gamecocks. They were willing to stake impressive sums of money on their birds. It is clear they were not worried their displays would detract from their public image. In fact, they tied their own honor, image and status to the birds they planned to fight, showing how important cockfighting was to masculine culture and notions of honor.

As the twentieth century approached, southern men would be forced to find another outlet for their pride and honor as cockfighting became a target of evangelical and progressive reformers between the 1870s and 1890s. The violence surrounding cockfighting offended the evangelical notions of "self-controlled official morality." Evangelicals fervently worked to "refine the overall roughness of male culture," and

²⁵ "Sons of 'Kaintuck.' A Story Told by Ex-Governor Beriah Magoffin of Kentucky," Vicksburg, *Daily Commercial*, Nov. 3, 1881.

wanted to extend their “desire for increased self-control” to southern men. One step in achieving this goal was the outlawing of blood sports like cockfighting.²⁶

The same desire that propelled the movement to prohibit cockfighting dealt a fatal blow to public drinking. Like hunting and cockfighting, public drinking, “above all, was recreation.” In the Antebellum and postbellum South, court days attracted men who had business before the bench, but also men who were in search of good time. Small towns’ thoroughfares flooded with men who came from the periphery during court days, Saturdays and the holiday season. Here, they would gather at the general store to regale one another with stories, assuredly recounting their hunting feats. Their behavior in the county seat’s streets helped solidify southern men’s reputation as “hellraiser.”²⁷

These hellraisers would have to find other avenues through which they could express their manliness as moral reformers worked to restrict access to alcohol and eventually succeeded in prohibiting its sale. As transportation made it easy for women and children to make their way to the city, reformers increasingly felt the need to manage men’s actions on main street. One primary concern was interaction with and the influence of African Americans. After the emancipation of slaves, southern whites increasingly sought ways to distinguish their behavior from that of blacks. Drinking was soon associated with the freedmen, and thus became a central cause of the reform movement.²⁸

With these sports declining in popularity and accessibility due to the fervency of southern evangelical reformers and a nascent conservation movement, there developed a vacuum in southern masculine recreation. Football made its way below the Mason and

²⁶ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 175.

²⁷ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 171, 39, 41.

²⁸ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 169.

Dixon line at roughly the same time these sports saw their predominance deteriorate, and the new spectator sport soon filled the void these diminished sports left behind. Increasingly, manliness was productively expressed through competition.²⁹ Football became the competition of choice for southern men to display their masculinity and manliness in very public ways. The grandstands that southern college football players performed in front of provided a venue in which those who were unable play the game could display their own honor and pride in their team. Fans filled the bleachers, voicing their support of their school's and their state's team. They were not peripheral to the displays of honor, rather they funneled their own notions of masculinity and honor into their cheering and grandstand spectacles. Thus men, both on the field and in the bleachers, were able to display their dominance over other men, a central conceit of southern honor, through their support of the new game of football.³⁰

As early as 1893, students and even professors at the University of Mississippi extolled the importance football reflected in the honor of the school. Professor Bondurant preached to those assembled at a meeting of the Athletic Association to "show yourselves gentlemen." The players were to "acquit yourselves like men," so as to "uphold the dignity of your institution."³¹ To Bondurant, the young college athletes were the representatives of the University of Mississippi. These players' comportment reflected on the honor of the university. Ole Miss had placed its pride in the players, and they would have to do it service.

²⁹ Friend, "From Southern Manhood," xviii.

³⁰ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 340.

³¹ The University of Mississippi, "Editorial: Editorial Notes," *Mississippi University Magazine*, November 1893, 15.

In a later issue of the same publication, Dr. Bondurant returned to ask the students, after a less than stellar season, if “we are to leave the football field with laurels on our brows, or shall we bravely come to the front and let all the world know that hearts of Southern pluck and determination still throb within the manly breasts of the gallant boys of Mississippi?” Awards and trophies were less important to Bondurant than was the school and state’s honor, and the author, speaking on behalf of the student population, agreed, responding rhetorically, “we have resolved upon the latter course.” These players were men, and specifically, men of Mississippi. By saying their “hearts” were filled with “Southern pluck,” Bondurant demonstrates that the game had already become imbued with regional significance.³² Their violence was exerted for the pride and honor of their region, which was a hallmark of the martial ideal of manliness in the turn of the century South.

Not everyone could play football, though. There were only a certain number of slots on the roster, meaning the majority of young men would miss the opportunity to wear the “M,” upon the field of play. These young men could vicariously experience the thrill of the game and display their masculinity by being faithful followers of the sport. A U of M team manager relayed this message to students, when “he entreated the fellows to be present at every football meeting.” He paid special notice to those “who cannot enlist as candidates for places on the team,” imploring them to “be present, thereby expressing their sympathy, and best wishes for those that can.” It was up to these young men, these

³² The University of Mississippi, “Athletics,” *Mississippi University Magazine*, October 1894, 39.

fans, “to do all in their power to cheer for their comrades.” The manager explained to those present just how important their presence was at games to the team’s success.³³

But some students had already taken it upon themselves to make their presence known and support the team at every opportunity. Before the first early morning workout and scrimmage, several Ole Miss students organized a pep rally, “marching around the campus” creating “flesh-grating discords of old coal scuttles, tin pans, toy whistles, rattles, hand-clapping, and college yelling.”³⁴ With this act, the students displayed both their enthusiasm for the game and the players, these “gallant boys of Mississippi. But these fans also became active participants in the sport, effectively making themselves part of the team. By 1911, athletics was considered to be a principal facet of the college man’s life, it was a way to build him into a successful man once he departed from campus. As the *Ole Miss* explains, this included not only those who sacrificed their bodies for their school’s pride, but also those who rooted from the stands, for “neither could be successful without the other.”³⁵ Being a fan was a means to participate in athletics that was as critical to the school’s—and student’s—success. By 1913 football “[held] the interest of the student body more strongly than all other forms of athletics combined.” Even in defeat, the teams were paragons of valor.³⁶ By the sport’s Golden Age of the 1920s, football players ascended to being “Our Heroes” at Ole Miss.³⁷

³³ “Athletics,” *Mississippi University Magazine*, October 1894, 39.

³⁴ “Athletics,” *Mississippi University Magazine*, October 1894, 39.

³⁵ The University of Mississippi, “The Place of Athletics in a College Man’s Life,” *Ole Miss*, (Oxford, MS: 1911): 156.

³⁶ The University of Virginia, “Review of the Year’s Athletics,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1913): 202.

³⁷ The University of Mississippi, “Glorifying the American Male,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1926): 231.

Just as the football squad practiced, the fans practiced. The 1893 University of Virginia yearbook, the *Corks and Curls*, presented to the student body a guide to the cheers and yells so they could practice for the games. Several chants and cheers sit below a sketch depicting rowdy, disheveled young men waving flags in victory. Among these cheers is the generic “rah, rah, rah.” But at the bottom center of the page, the author instruct the fans to chant “We’re the team of ’93 that fears no harm / We’re the team of ’93 that fears no harm / Give us a show and we’ll win / We’re the team of ’93 that fears no harm.”³⁸ Like the Ole Miss students, the UVA men were learning to be active participants in the game of football. This is demonstrated by their language. The fans obviously felt connection to the team and their school. But the cheers don’t say, “We’re the school that fears no harm,” rather the fans are “the team of ’93 that fears no harm.” Furthermore, this cheer illustrates the importance of masculinity in their adoration of the game and its players. It is not the skill of the players, necessarily, that will win the match, rather its their fearlessness that so appeals to the fans. The cheer announces to the other team, that like their team, these fans fear no team, no matter how outmatched they may be.

Toward the end of this cheering tutorial comes “Air: Don’ You Hear Those Bells.” The fans are to rhetorically ask, “Don’t you see those boys, / They’re playing for the glory of Virginia . . . They’re playing for the glory of Virginia.”³⁹ Much like at Ole Miss, the football team had already come to embody the school and the state’s glory and honor in the six short years of its existence, they were playing for more than their own honor, they were defending the glory and honor of Virginia. Such cheers do not exist for

³⁸ The University of Virginia, “Arcade Echoes,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1893): 198.

³⁹ The University of Virginia, “Air: Don’t You Hear Those Bells,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1893): 200.

baseball, basketball, track and field or any other sport. In fact, the school's yearbook and newspapers cite the introduction of football to their campus as the reason students support any other sport, as the game allowed "athletics to have quite a boom."⁴⁰ These cheers are custom made for the football team as several of them explicitly name current football players or relate to specific positions, such as halfback, or employ specifically football terminology like snapping the ball, or rushing the line or getting the ball over the line.⁴¹

Athletics in general was important on college campuses at this time, both for those playing and the spectators. When a piece on college spirit in Ole Miss's student magazine describes the necessities for a true esprit de corps, students must contribute to "oratory, fraternalism, scholarship, magazine work, and every phase and condition of college life." But listed before these instrumental aspects of college spirit is athletics, and the only sport it lists is football. Students can display their pride and spirit not just by playing, but also by "giving the 'yell,' talking athletics," or "celebrating football victories."⁴² Though it is not the only component of college spirit, it is a critical one. Cheering for the athletes, and particularly football, is part and parcel of being a good college student according to those at the University of Mississippi. Football was the sport in which these fans had invested their honor and manliness. A piece in the *Mississippi University Magazine* from 189_ demonstrates the monopoly football held over the students' sports enthusiasm at the school. Though the article is titled "Athletics," the vast majority of the article is dedicated to football, and the concluding paragraph asks,

⁴⁰ "Air: Don't You Hear Those Bells," 200.

⁴¹ "Arcade Echoes," 198.

⁴² The University of Mississippi, "College Spirit," *Mississippi University Magazine*, November 1894, 24.

“Has baseball been forgotten in the University?” The answer is no, but the author does acknowledge “it has only been neglected for a season or two.”⁴³ In a later piece in the *Mississippi University Magazine*, an appeal to support other sports is made to the student population. It opens by talking loftily about the new favorite sport, as “the world is resounding with the yells of the football maniacs, and the exploits of the victorious team are lauded to the sky upon the downy wings of patriotic eloquence while the air is full of the praises of enthusiastic sympathizers.”⁴⁴ The author’s bitter jealousy over the attention the new sport has garnered is palpable. But his envy demonstrates the attention football has earned. No other sport in the yearbook, newspapers, or magazine receive near the attention football is given. The team’s section in the yearbook is longer, the games are described in more detail, and is almost always given the premier spot in the athletics subsection. These sources are stocked with both actual and fictional accounts of rowdy football games. These pieces describe in detail the emotion the fans invest in the sport. This is not true for the other athletic endeavors on southern college campuses.

The football players demonstrated their masculinity, honor and valor on the field in ways other athletes could not. The violent nature of the game appealed to the new, turn of the century martial masculine ideal. In fact, the University of Virginia yearbook includes a sketch of a football match in progress. Four men are splayed on the ground in obvious pain while the rest of their teammates are doing their best to either progress or stop the ball in a giant dog pile at midfield. The football field, according to the artists,

⁴³ The University of Mississippi, “Athletics,” *Mississippi University Magazine*, November 1894, 40.

⁴⁴ The University of Mississippi, “Tennis in the University,” *Mississippi University Magazine*, November 1894, 23.

was the school's "Campus Martius," or field of battle.⁴⁵ The football field is UVA's men go to war, it is where they prove their mettle and display their manhood by doing their best, clawing and fighting, to win for the honor of their school and state. On this collegiate campus martius, the players sacrificed their bodies just as the Confederate soldiers, the prototype of the new martial ideal masculinity, had in their struggle with the Union in the Civil War.

A story in the University of Virginia's 1905 yearbook, the *Corks and Curls*, describes the crowd who ventured to Richmond to watch UVA take on their Thanksgiving day rivals, the University of North Carolina. The author breaks the spectators down into types: "the blushing debutante," "the confident belle of a half dozen seasons," "the renowned hostess of a hundred pink teas," "young men and old men, handsome men and ugly men; but none save enthusiastic men." But the crowd is split according to social rank. "Near the center of the grand stand, in the highest priced seats, were none but the leaders of the inner circle." This resembles the gentrified cockfight. Without proper aristocratic oversight, cockfighting would be degraded by the "recklessness of the lower classes." The same stands true for football. The president of a trust company and a well-heeled colonel, "descended from the Earl of Crispinlast, of Weltmore Castle, Vampshire, Egnland" and member of the Sons of the Revolution watches the game from their seats of privilege surrounded by other businessmen who were at the center of society.⁴⁶ Mr. D'Arcy, the trust company president, attended the

⁴⁵ The University of Virginia, "Our Campus Martius," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1895): 17.

⁴⁶ The University of Virginia, "Twopas," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1905): 204, 206; These are fictional cities and fictional ancestors used sarcastically to demonstrate the pretentious air of southern men of power.

game “for the obligation I owe society” for he had forbidden his own son from playing the sport, telling him to “leave the brutal game of football to more common men.”⁴⁷

While watching the game, the New South aristocrat was awed by the physical skill demonstrated by the right tackle, Del-Car, who was “presumably of Spanish origin,” and “whom nobody in society had ever heard.”⁴⁸ Yet, Mr. D’Arcy notes the young man’s “aristocratic air,” even under his uniform, pads and nose guard.⁴⁹ Del-Car carries the rest of his team on his back, virtually winning the game single-handedly. This Herculean feat astonished the crowd, but he alone could not prevent North Carolina from scoring a field goal and a safety. He watched as UNC took a 5-0 lead. With time quickly running out, Mr. D’Arcy begins to regret his forbidding young Vladimir to participate in the game. Mr. D’Arcy groans before lamenting “I wish I had let Vladimir play. *HE* could make a touch-down now.” Mr. D’Arcy had become so invested in UVA’s football success he was willing to endure the possibility of his son’s deformation at the hands of an opponent, and even taint his aristocratic standing.

What Mr. D’Arcy did not know, is his son, Vladimir, had shunned his father’s orders and taken to the field under the sobriquet Del-Car to help support his school, even with the specter of disinheritance hanging over his head. It looks as though both his play and his disguise were successful, until Vladimir’s arch-rival, the more lowly and less-socially connected Telemachus Smythe, discovered Del-Car’s true identity. While Smythe’s family was steeped in heritage, his father was “employed as a bookkeeper in a wholesale grocery store.” To prevent the young aristocrat from capturing glory on his

⁴⁷ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 87; “Twopas,” 206.

⁴⁸ “Twopas,” 206.

⁴⁹ “Twopas,” 208.

way to a touchdown thus assuring victory for UVA, the petty Smyth deliberately tripped Del-Car. The spectators and his teammates saw this underhanded act and called him a “traitor! Villain!” Despite Smyth’s antics, Del-Car’s prevails as he evades two Carolina tackles—a feat “impossible of belief”—before he crosses the goal line securing a win for old UVA. The crowd erupts into “an inferno of joy!”⁵⁰

Once the game has drawn to a close, Mr. D’Arcy marches toward the sideline, and demands of the young “hero” to reveal his identity. Smyth does so before Vladimir could confess that he had indeed taken on the persona of Del-Car in order to play the game he loved for the school he held so dear. “He speaks the truth,” young D’Arcy admits. “I can not tell a lie. I care not, for I have saved the honor of Virginia.” The honor of his school and even his state was more important to this chivalrous young man than his enviable inheritance. After a moment’s pause, Mr. D’Arcy comes to tears over the pride he feels toward his noble son. “Ah, my boy, I am proud of you,” he admits before lamenting the fact that his “aristocratic great, great, great, great-grandfather” was not there to witness his football playing and honorable actions.

This fictional account, which reads almost like a moral story, appeared a year after UVA won a close game over their archrival, North Carolina in Richmond. Beyond this fact, the rest of the story seems utterly fabricated. The scores are not the same, and the story claims the team almost beat Princeton, though UVA had not played them in years. Perhaps the author was trying to be didactic, and show that true valor and honor would be greatly rewarded despite the odds. Not only can Vladimir not tell a lie, he was acting out of school and regional pride. D’Arcy was playing not for himself, as his

⁵⁰ “Twopas,” *Corks and Curls*, 1905, 209.

identity was concealed throughout the match. Rather, he was sacrificing his body and his inheritance for Virginia. He is an example of the martial ideal of masculinity nonpareil. D'Arcy channeled his violent tendencies into a more productive medium, football, in a public way, and did so for regional honor. As such, he is able to keep his inheritance, protect Virginia's honor, and was rewarded with the love of a fair lady.

His father, on the other hand, exemplifies the dandified Yankee masculinity against which southern men compared their own manliness. He himself refrains from physical recreation, other than occasional perambulations with other wealthy men. But by the end of the story, Mr. D'Arcy is on his knees begging his son for forgiveness, and thanking him for his valorous and honorable actions. While Vladimir's nemesis, Smyth does exert his violent energies in the productive game of football, he is playing for his own honor. Smyth purposefully trips D'Arcy, thinking only of his desire to win the hand of the woman who goes to D'Arcy at the end of the game. Smyth is not concerned with the honor of UVA or Virginia. Therefore he fails to live up to the martial masculine ideal which requires violence be used to defend regional honor and pride. As a result, not only is he seen as a traitor and villain by his teammates, classmates, and fans of UVA, he is forced to see the woman he wants walk away with Vladimir.

The game's popularity allowed young men to productively exert their violent tendencies, physical prowess and dominance in a grand way that hunting, cockfighting, and drinking could not. The men who took the field wearing their school's colors came to personify the university and state's spirit. Those who did not participate, either as a player or faithful spectator, could not be considered masculine by the martial ideal. Furthermore, the actions of the spectators embodied their school's, and their state's

honor. Playing football was now part of the “signposts of appropriate conduct” in the South.⁵¹ It was a sport young men from established families could play without fear of ostracism from society. College football was now actually a point of pride for even the most aristocratic southerner, both New and Old.

While the UNC v UVA game in Richmond was of great import, games played outside the South took on tremendous prestige. Despite their perpetual domination by northern football powerhouses, “southerners were nonetheless eager to test themselves against northern schools.”⁵² These games took on significant meaning for the schools. At UVA, fans composed a poem about their success against Yale in the previous season. But this poem more than lauds a simple victory, it demonstrates the persisting regional rivalry. The epic-like poem opens with the team departing Charlottesville, leaving at the station a crowd of faithful supporters. These fans, the story explains, gathered, “A thousand strong,” together as “Gus Mason reads the telegrams and plots each vital play.” Despite the odds, the fans stay spirited. Their faith in their team is rewarded with a win, and “A thousand throats ring out the notes, a thousand brains are crazed, A thousand feet with rapture beat, a thousand hats are raised.” This was clearly no ordinary game. The poem goes on to say, “The Rebel Yell that cleaves the sky would make the Bull-Dog quail; A Southern Team at last, good friends, has scored on proud old Yale.” The game would warm the hearts of alumni and fans until the sacred “old Rotunda falls.” This was more than a victory for UVA, it was a victory for the entire South.⁵³ On the page following the poem recounting the epic defeat of Yale, there appeared a series of

⁵¹ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 114.

⁵² Doyle, *Turning the Tide*, 29.

⁵³ The University of Virginia, “And Now We’ll Lick Old Yale,” *Corks and Curls*, (Charlottesville: 1916): 278, 281, 283, 284.

drawings, entitled “The Cause; & Effect,” depicting the repercussions the win would bring on. One drawing shows a mustachioed, aging man who says, “That wipes out Appomattox.”⁵⁴ The victory over the northern team was enough to erase the memory of the Confederate defeat. Though this is obviously an exaggeration, the artist was connecting the victory to the Civil War and demonstrated the importance of the win for the pride of southerners.

These intersectional games maintained their significance even fifteen years after the southern David felled the northern Goliath. This is demonstrated by the fervor and excitement surrounding Ole Miss’s football team’s less than successful 1929 venture into Indiana to take on the Big Ten’s Purdue. The yearbook’s account of the game is brief, and concedes Ole Miss was far outmatched, as the team “had no chance whatever of winning.” Yet, the players “displayed such a fine brand of football” that the Boilermakers were unsure of their eventual margin of victory. In the end, Ole Miss left Indiana defeated, but they took solace in the fact they were the only school that season able to score on the Boilermakers. This, the author assures us, “was a moral victory for the Southerners.”⁵⁵

By the 1920s, southerners needed all the moral victories they could muster. This was a time of economic destitution in the South. In the decade between WWI and the New Deal, the South was still railing against economic change. Southerners still had, what W. J. Cash called, “the patriotic will to hold rigidly to the ancient pattern.”⁵⁶ While this rigid resistance could not prevent modernization and southern urbanization, the

⁵⁴ The University of Virginia, “The Cause; & Effect,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1916): 285.

⁵⁵ The University of Mississippi, “1929 Football Season,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1930): 194.

⁵⁶ Roger Biles, *The South and the New Deal* (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 1; W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South*, 319.

region was still a predominately agricultural economy. This was problematic for the late teens and early twenties saw tremendous fluctuations in the prices of agricultural commodities such as rice and tobacco, but more importantly, the crop most associated with the region, cotton, experienced wild ups and downs. The price of cotton fell precipitously in 1920, before rebounding in 1922-24. The crop's value was further endangered when it faced with the pestilence of the boll weevil, which, according to a University of North Carolina Sociologist, was "the world's largest consumer of raw cotton." By 1931, cotton's price plummeted to just \$0.05. This fall brought "a disaster which struck through the whole economic structure of the region."

Facing these scourges, the South, according to historian Roger Biles, fell into the Great Depression before the rest of the country. By 1932, Cash writes, "Everybody was either ruined beyond his wildest previous fears or stood on the peril of such ruin."⁵⁷ By 1934, President Franklin Roosevelt would call the region the nation's number one economic problem. To remedy this issue, he decided to devote decided attention to the region in his New Deal programs. The region saw increased mechanization and changes to agriculture, including cotton crop reductions, through programs such as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. These changes "radically altered the face of the Southern countryside and the lives of the people engaged in agriculture."⁵⁸ The New Deal and the changes its programs brought to the South removed the region even further from the idealized and mythologized Old South and its genteel cotton aristocracy. "Since the cultural landscape of his native region is being altered almost beyond recognition by a cyclone of social change," C. Vann Woodward argues "the Southerner may come to feel

⁵⁷ Cash, *Mind of the South*, 360, 362.

⁵⁸ Biles, *The South and the New Deal*, 2, 53.

as uprooted as the immigrant.” His identity was endangered, and at risk of being forgotten. “Is there not something that has not changed?” Woodward asks. His answer: “There is only one thing that I can think of, and that is its history.” Thus, in a time of economic blight and the invasion of mechanization, southerners looked to the past for comfort.⁵⁹

Confederate memory and Old South imagery offered these desperate southerners the comfort they desired. Lost Cause images would soon permeated college football traditions and rituals. Schools like the University of Mississippi and the University of Virginia reached into its past to adopt nicknames and mascots that, on the surface, are the essence of defeat. In the 1920s, athletic teams at UVA came to be known as the Cavaliers, which was derived from supporters of Kings Charles I and Charles II in the English Civil War. Ole Miss, too, turned to figures from the past, and specifically, the figure of a veteran Confederate Colonel.

Both schools adopted figures that were the embodiment of defeat. The Cavaliers fled to the American colonies after their defeat in the English Civil War, and the Confederacy was felled by their northern adversaries in the Civil War. Despite their losses in battle, each figure represented economic prosperity, masculinity, honor and resilience in the face of adversity. They harkened back to a time when men could provide for their women, to keep them from want, when their masculinity and honor, which was largely tied to their ability to provide was intact. They tethered the game to men who would persevere after defeat. These nicknames tied the game to martial figures who

⁵⁹ C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (1960; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 15.

sacrificed themselves for a cause, for their honor, the very essence of the martial masculine ideal.

With these two nicknames and mascots, Ole Miss and UVA were able to call on a cherished mythological past that held special meaning for both schools. As W. J. Cash wrote, western men, “have everywhere and eternally sentimentalized the causes of their wars, and particularly the causes that were lost. All of them,” he writes, “have bled for God and Womanhood and Holy Right,” but “not one has ever died for anything so crass and unbeautiful as the preservation of slavery.”⁶⁰ Both schools associated their athletics and specifically football with military figures who fought and bled for noble causes, for their region, for God and their women.

Of course the Cavaliers have a specific resonance with Virginians. W. J. Cash notes Virginia was home to “a genuine, if small, aristocracy” comprised of these Cavaliers. This southern gentry, no matter how insignificant in numbers, would inform the southern myth for generations.⁶¹ While there were some gentlemen scattered throughout the Old Dominion, the likelihood of those gentlemen existing in great numbers, much less surviving and thriving in the dense forests of the Colonies, was rather low. Nonetheless, the myth existed, and was potent, and passed down through generations.⁶² Thus, Virginians identified with these aristocrats, and their “assumption of charm, that very real desire to please, a high-heartedness with hope, a recklessness against odd” that defined the Cavalier culture. Later historians would evoke the lineage of the still great names of Virginia families whose ancestors brought with them the

⁶⁰ W. J. Cash, *Mind of the South*, 127.

⁶¹ W. J. Cash, *Mind of the South*, 5.

⁶² John Peale Bishop, “The South and Tradition,” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Spring, 1933): 3, 4.

aristocratic heritage and traditions with them from England. This was especially resonant in a time of Anglophilia in America. By tracing their ancestry back to the noble British Cavaliers, Virginians were able to establish their Anglo-Saxon bona fides.

But for Virginians, the Cavalier took on a broader symbolism in the postwar era when it became representative of the Lost Cause, giving “reassurance of continuity amidst the violent disruptions of Reconstruction.” Virginians saw themselves reflected in the Cavalier who maintained “gallantry in defeat from an earlier civil war.” Just like these Cavaliers who had faced defeat yet survived, so too would the downtrodden Virginians after sustaining defeat in their own Civil War. Thomas Nelson Page claimed the Confederacy and its principles was the very embodiment of the Cavalier and the Anglo Saxon “spirit.” Just as the Cavaliers in England fought for their heritage against usurpers, the Confederate fight was “the defence of the inner circle against whatever assailed it from the outside” and this defense was “nowhere . . . more absolutely established than in Virginia.” The Confederacy and the Virginians who battled the North were, in a sense, freedom fighters, just as the Cavaliers were.⁶³

This desire to maintain a grasp on the past while reaching for the future extended to the naming of southern schools’ teams. Like many colleges, the University of Virginia’s athletics teams had no single moniker. Journalists would interchange “Wearers of the V,” or Virginians, or Orange and Blue and sometimes Old Dominion when referring to UVA in all sports. During the football season in 1923, this changed when Cavaliers was used to denote the UVA football team on the front page of *College Topics*, the school’s student newspaper. The headline, “Cavaliers Romp on Trinity For Victory,”

⁶³ Michael D. Clark, “More English than the English: Cavalier and Democrat in Virginia Historical Writing,” *Journal of American Studies* 27, no. 2 (Aug. 1993), 189, 187, 199, 202, 192.

is the first known usage of Cavaliers in reference to a UVA athletics team.⁶⁴ The word emerged again in subsequent issues of the *College Topics*. What is of note, though, the new name was only applied to the school's football program, and not to any of the minor sports. The UVA track team is called Virginia or Virginians only. The new name began to gain prominence, however slowly. Cavaliers appeared in later issues, usually only once in each story, and again, only in stories concerning the football squad, and more specifically, the varsity football squad, as at this time, colleges still forbade freshmen from participating on the varsity team.

The football team embodied this Old South myth, they embodied what it meant to be a Virginian, what it meant to be a Cavalier. The Cavalier was battle-ready, with his sword always at his side, and despite facing defeat on the field, he too would survive and thrive. In a poem in the *Corks and Curls*, the author painted a picture of the brave Cavaliers as heroically facing an unknown fate and seemingly insurmountable odds after landing on the American shores. Their dogged determination, hard work and bravery was destined to create something great. "For us they toiled, and warred and prayed," wrote the poet. The Cavalier's spirit, he insists, "Lives within their sons / Virginia Cavaliers."⁶⁵ As this was issued after the Cavalier became the athletics' moniker, the author could have been relating the school's football team with the valiant Cavalier of old. By being applied to only the football team, and the varsity eleven at that, it is clear the student journalists at UVA associated their football team in a significant way with the Old South Cavalier. With time, all sports at UVA adopted the Cavalier as their nickname. The organic appearance of the Cavalier is significant. It seems natural, and not forced. The Cavalier

⁶⁴ "Cavaliers Romp on Trinity For Victory," *College Topics*, October 20, 1923, 1.

⁶⁵ The University of Virginia, "Virginia Cavaliers," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1928): 140.

was adopted quickly and without much fanfare. Such a shift connotes a sense of appropriateness. No one protested, and no one hailed it as a masterful change. It is as if it had always been.

The same could not be said for the University of Mississippi. Their name change was a concerted effort on both the university and statewide levels. For years Ole Miss had played sports under many nicknames—The Wearers of the “M,” the Blue and Red, the Men of Mississippi—none of which were official or even widely liked. But in 1929, a letter to the editor of the *Daily Mississippian*, the University’s student newspaper, made an appeal to the school’s population, asking them to exercise their imagination and come up with a nickname for the school. “The Ole Miss athletics have labored under the handicap of not having a name,” he noted, while other schools had distinctive monikers. He proposed students create a name for athletics that would be as equally distinctive as the school’s nickname, Ole Miss.

Countless names flooded into the newspaper’s office after a contest was announced. Though the announcement mentions the name will be applied to all of the school’s athletics, the article specifically mentions the importance of finding a name for any sport other than football demonstrating its place at the pinnacle of the U of M’s athletic hierarchy.⁶⁶ After much consternation, a *Mississippian* headline on November 23, 1929 proclaimed in capital letters, “The MISSISSIPPI FLOOD is the name by which the athletics at Ole Miss will be designated in the future.”⁶⁷ The student who submitted the winning entry, Dick McCool explained, “he wants to drown out the Tigers, Yellowjackets, and Alligators and all the rest of the menagerie in the Southern

⁶⁶ “Everybody’s Say So,” *Daily Mississippian*, October 1929.

⁶⁷ “The Mississippi Flood Picked as Name for Athletes,” *Mississippian*, November 23, 1929.

Conference,” the same way the Mississippi River unconsciously drowned the state in 1927. As Mr. McCool told the *Mississippian*, a “Mississippi flood is something that can’t be stopped or controlled by those who come in its way.” For his contribution, Mr. McCool was awarded “loving cup” to serve as a “perpetual reminder of the fact that he was the one who had the honor to name the team of Ole Miss for all time to come.”⁶⁸

Or for seven years. In 1936, the University of Mississippi once again decided to abandon their current name. At the fore of the movement was once again the *Mississippian* who announced a contest to choose a new name for the school’s athletics. The old-new name, the Mississippi Flood, failed to enamor itself to the school’s fans. As University of Mississippi historian, David G. Sansing notes, many fans continued to call the team the Red and Blue, after the school’s colors which were adopted in 1893 under the leadership of the school’s first football coach and Latin professor, Alexander Bondurant.⁶⁹ Few yearbook or newspaper articles ever used the newly adopted appellation. As the *Mississippian* explained, the name’s “connotation was bad.”⁷⁰

While the call for a new nickname originated with the student body, the student response was underwhelming. Football coach Ed Walker revived the contest, and extended it beyond the campus. More national attention was being paid to the Ole Miss football program, and “University of Mississippi teams need a name for publicity more than anything,” Purser Hewitt of the *Clarion Ledger* explained in a 1936 piece.⁷¹ In response to the call, over 500 proposals were submitted, which was winnowed down

⁶⁸ *Mississippian*, “The Mississippi Flood.”

⁶⁹ David G. Sansing, *The University of Mississippi: A Sesquicentennial History* (Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 255.

⁷⁰ “Ole Miss Rebels—It’s Permanent,” *Daily Mississippian*, September 19, 1936, 7.

⁷¹ Purser Hewitt, “Hewitt to the Line, Let the Chips Fall Where they May,” *Daily Clarion Ledger* May 14, 1936, 10.

through a multi-step process.⁷² From the new list, sports writers were to choose the name that best suited the University of Mississippi. And this time, the winning entry was sent in from recent law graduate Ben Guider who felt the name “Rebels” suited the school.

Rebels was “suggestive of a spirit native to the Old South,” and, the *Mississippian* reported, “particularly Ole Miss.” Rebels, the editorial argued, “should prove a valuable whip in gaining national recognition.”⁷³ A *Mississippian* headline read “Ole Miss Rebel’s – It’s Permanent.” The article explained how the name lent itself to many variations—“The Johnny Rebs—The Red and Blue Rebels, the name fits in any way used.” The name recalls how many students wanted to use the more general term for the university, Ole Miss. While the name “was placed over and around the grid team,” it was used to describe any and every other organization on campus. The name for the football team, the article insinuates, was to be something special as the piece mentions only the “grid team,” and no other sport.

The name was vigorously supported. The cheerleaders, that very year dubbed themselves the “Rebel Yells.” The article announcing the name notes how “ancient warriors fought their battles alone and practically unaided.” This would not be the case at Ole Miss. The Rebel Yells, “neatly clad cheerleaders, working behind tremendous spirit and enthusiasm, aided by a smartly clad, smartly marching band” was “far over and above any ancient mark.”⁷⁴ The Ole Miss alumni newsletter excitedly recounted how the school came to adopt a name that “fits with the University of Mississippi.”⁷⁵ The next

⁷² “Ole Miss Rebels—It’s Permanent”, 5.

⁷³ “Ole Miss Rebels,” *Daily Mississippian*, September 26, 1936, 1.

⁷⁴ The University of Mississippi, “The Rebel Yells,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1937): 191.

⁷⁵ “‘Rebels’ is New Name for Athletic Team,” *Ole Miss Alumni News*, October, 1936, 6.

issue of the yearbook, the *Ole Miss*, placed on its cover the rendition of Colonel Reb that would quickly endear itself to Ole Miss students and alumni.

The figure of the mascot was a mustachioed, seemingly middle-aged man wearing a broad cowboy hat, and a long tailed coat over a vest and tie. The fact the school adopted a Colonel is informative in that officers in the Confederate army were likely to be of higher social standing. In this way, Ole Miss students were harkening back to the idealized cotton planter, likely overseeing a number of slaves on his plantation. In this time of stark economic problems in the South and in specific, Mississippi, recalling an era when the region supposedly enjoyed riches beyond the present day was comforting. It gave Ole Miss supporters a belief that if they had been there once, maybe they could return to those same halcyon days. Furthermore, the Colonel represented a fighting spirit. He was a Rebel, a veteran of the Civil War. Later images of the Colonel would have him leaning on a cane, perhaps symbolizing the sacrifice he made for his region's honor. Even later, Colonel Reb appeared on the sideline of football games dressed in full Confederate grays, waving a Confederate battle flag. In both manifestations, Colonel Reb was the martial ideal of masculinity personified.

Beyond this, the new athletics name married well with the school's well-known and much loved nickname, Ole Miss. The name was thought up Mrs. J. F. Cappleman, who, in 1897, "suggested the name for the first annual" at the U of M. The name was derived from the name slaves commonly called the wife of their owner. The name, she claimed, was meant to "typify the mellow and reverential respect that the slaves held for 'Ole Master's' wife." The name was more than fitting for a school "in the heart of Dixie, surrounded by the many traditions of the Old South, hallowed by the blood of the

Confederacy, and pregnant with the memories of all that is dear to Southern history,” a story in the yearbook explained.⁷⁶ Thus, both names conjured up images of the Old South and a mythologized past steeped in romantic ideals of gentility and aristocracy. With the adoption of Colonel Reb, the University of Mississippi became the big house from which he and the Ole Miss would send forth their learned children to be the leaders of the Magnolia state.

These invented traditions, regardless of how transparent or organic they may seem, show the importance of athletics and specifically football, to the southern schools. The adoption of Old South or Confederate imagery allows the schools and their beloved sport to bridge the past to the present, to “establish continuity with a suitable historic past.” These schools’ “suitable historic pasts” drew on southern history, albeit different eras. The University of Virginia’s Cavalier was rooted in the Old South myth while Ole Miss’s grew from Lost Cause imagery that beatified the Confederate soldier. Both symbols pointed to an aristocratic heritage. Ole Miss identified with the brave, yet genteel colonel, and UVA with the brave and aristocratic Cavalier. The invention of traditions often accompany change. As this was a time of considerable change in the South, it stands to reason these schools would look to their past for a sense of continuity. An almost professional Lost Cause movement, headed by institutions like the United Daughters of the Confederacy, kept the Confederate memory alive, and their movements molded southerners’ views of the Civil War. “More southerners formed an understanding of their past through the ceremonial activities or rituals conducted by these groups than

⁷⁶ The University of Mississippi, “Things You Would Not Know If I Did Not Tell You,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1935): 182.

through anything else.”⁷⁷ But southern imagination was colored by memory of the Old South. A less formal Confederate memory could be found in the Southland. Southern men grew up playing war with everyone wanting to be the boy in grey. “Every boy growing up in this land now had continually before his eyes the vision, and heard always in his ears the clamorous hoofbeats, of a glorious swashbuckler, compounded of Jeb Stuart, the golden-locked Pickett, and the sudden and terrible Forrest . . . forever charging the cannon’s mouth with the Southern battle flag.”⁷⁸ With their ancestors’ mythical world succumbing to a more modernized society, resembling ever more and more the North, a need to connect to their past prompted supporters of these schools to adopt invented traditions that helped quell “increasing fears generated by the social changes” that had been crossing the South since the late nineteenth century.⁷⁹

These traditions were far from benign, insists Hobsbawm, rather they are meant to establish “certain values and norms of behavior.”⁸⁰ The implicit norms of behavior and values associated with a Confederate Colonel and Virginia Cavalier are white supremacy, masculinity and honor. The Cavaliers were, in the words of the UVA poet, “Anglo-Saxon men” who came to America’s shores where they subjugated the savages and “reared in strength . . . The shrines of Liberty.”⁸¹ The Ole Miss Colonel represented a planter who fought valiantly for the southern cause. With each football game, and soon at every other sport, students and fans alike were reminded of the South’s history, however mythical and imagined, through the images of a Confederate Colonel and Virginia Cavalier.

⁷⁷ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat*, 4.

⁷⁸ Cash, *Mind of the South*, 121.

⁷⁹ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 5.

⁸⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2, 1.

⁸¹ The University of Virginia, “Virginia Cavaliers,” *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1928): 140.

College football quickly positioned itself as the spectator sport of choice in the American South. The sport migrated south at a fortuitous time when traditional masculine exploits in the region were endangered by technology and religious fundamentalism. Football evaded the reformers and evangelicals in a way cockfighting, public drinking and court day carousing could not. But it captured southerners' attention for more reasons. College football's masculine appeal allowed it to insinuate itself onto the public psyche, and soon came to represent southern schools' honor and valor—central components of southern culture and society—for both players and spectators. Soon the sport was imbued with fundamental elements of southern culture and honor, that it came to represent the South, as the interregional games demonstrate. As such, southern folks took these emotions of regional pride and distinction and publicly displayed them by adopting names that harkened back to the Old South, rooting the sport in the region's tradition, tying it to the mythic remembrances of life before the Civil War. With its prominence on the college campus, it constantly reminded students and fans alike of the Old South. It became yet another aspect of southern institutions of higher learning's perpetuation of southern identity.

Conclusion

“We at Ole Miss have as an heritage the grand and glorious traditions of the Old South, with its slumberous atmosphere and its jovial life.” This was the first line of the forward in the 1925 *Ole Miss*. The author continues by describing the “peace and prosperity in our southland” before “out of the shadows, there came the rumblings of war.” The war, seemingly arrived out of nowhere, only to bring “from the fields and hamlets of our sunny Dixie our heroes.” The heroes from Ole Miss, “the University Greys” fought for “our cause.” While the school was forced into dormancy for four years, “Yet no sooner than the hate and wrath of battle had ended” the illustrious sons” took to the “work of reconstruction.” It was “these noble followers of the Stars and Bars” who “builded a greater life” “upon a foundation of ruin.” “The Alma Mater of you and me and of those illustrious sons who offered all in the bloody days of ‘61” was “an uncrowned memento to their undying devotion and zeal.” In its closing, the foreword asks the readers to “consider the story that is written here as the result of their tireless labor.” It was thanks to the devotion, sacrifice and subsequent hard work that Ole Miss survived.¹

The words of this passage show the students at Ole Miss kept alive Confederate memory. But what’s more, the foreword exemplifies the way in which the students at Ole Miss took appurtenances of the Lost Cause and interwove them with the school’s history. The story is not generic, it is applicable only to the University of Mississippi with their University Greys who transmitted the “heritage the grand and glorious tradition of the Old South” to the twentieth century. This is one example of the distinct Lost Cause

¹ The University of Mississippi, “Foreword,” *Ole Miss* (Oxford, MS: 1925).

movement and memory on southern college campuses. Students at Ole Miss were able to directly connect their school to the valiant Confederacy. The Confederacy inhered at the University of Mississippi thanks to the students' newspapers, yearbooks, magazines and football traditions. In virtually every edition of the *Ole Miss*, homage of some kind to the Confederacy and the palmy days of the Old South the Rebels fought to defend. During the New Deal, the U of M adopted the Rebel as the moniker for their athletics teams, and took on as their mascot a genteel, grayed Confederate Colonel. During this second Reconstruction, the students at each football game were able to recall a time when the South was not the nation's number one economic problem, a time when the white race exerted mastery over African Americans. Colonel Reb was of this time; he was of the "sunny Dixie" of old. With each football game, the students were participating in their own, particular Lost Cause performance.

Eastward from Mississippi, in Virginia, students at UVA summoned the spirits of the Confederacy in the same ways. The Lost Cause, here, took on themes peculiar to the Old Dominion. At UVA, the Cavalier was the personification of the Old South. The Old South spirit lived on at UVA, where:

In the cool twilight
Of the Lawn. . .

Cavaliers come and go,
Chilly ghosts, in the glow
Of the cool dim lights.

And they say not a word.
In their long Spanish boots,
And the blue and crimson cloaks,
Orange lace, feathered hat,
Slender sword; while they drink,
And the empty bottles clink
As they go.

Their mascot personified the Cavalier, from his cloak's "Orange lace," and his "feathered hat."² The Cavalier was a fighter, a man, a man ready to protect his honor, as he did against the Roundheads in support of King Charles I in the English Civil War. So, with temerity they "bore the ark" to Virginia's "pebbled beach," where they "toiled, and warred, and prayed."³ The men at UVA were scions to these intrepid men, thus they bestowed upon their football team this sacred cognomen.

The Lost Cause participation at Ole Miss and UVA into the twentieth century demonstrates the persistence of Old South and Confederate memory and mythology. Charles Reagan Wilson and Gaines M. Foster explained the Lost Cause began to wane in importance deeper into the twentieth century. Both historians point to the election of Woodrow Wilson and World War I as critical pivot points in the Lost Cause's development. The Great War and the Wilson administration, in Reagan Wilson's view, helped to compel southerners to adopt more American civil religion themes. Southerners were able to maintain their southern pride by tying themes from the Lost Cause to Wilson and the successes in WWI. This enabled southerners to change "its tragic meaning . . . into a more typical American success story."⁴ The southern civil religion of the Lost Cause had been overtaken by a more American civil religion.

For Foster, the memory of the Civil War, the central theme of the Lost Cause, continued to be evoked in the South into the 1920s and 1930s. But the movement began

² The University of Virginia, "Cavaliers of the Night," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1924): 134.

³ The University of Virginia, "Virginia Cavalier," *Corks and Curls* (Charlottesville: 1928): 139, 140.

⁴ Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1983): 176, 26, 178.

to lose its cohesive nature in 1913, and only continued to atrophy as the new century progressed. By 1913 “the Confederate tradition became commercialized,” and continuously became more atomistic, eventually losing “much if not all” of its cultural currency. The Lost Cause was denuded of much of its meaning, as it was applied to help progress various conservative and even liberal causes.⁵

The continued Lost Cause movements at Ole Miss and UVA seem to confirm the assertions of Rollin G. Osterweis and Thomas L. Connelly and Barbara L. Bellows, who believed the Lost Cause, though different from its original iteration, continued well into the twentieth century. For Osterweis, the Lost Cause was no longer a “social expression.”⁶ But the traditions of Confederate and Old South memory at UVA and Ole Miss demonstrate that the Lost Cause continued to be an important “social expression.” Connelly and Barbara see the Lost Cause influencing the twentieth century much more than the previous historians acknowledged. For them, the term refers more to a southern state of mind and less as memory of the Confederacy.

While these authors debate the continued importance of the Lost Cause into the twentieth century, they look at the movement as a southern-wide phenomenon. This study looks at the Lost Cause locally, on college campuses, but also regionally. In Mississippi, representative of the Lower South, the Lost Cause maintained the elemental theme of the Confederacy. Colonel Reb was not just representative of the Old South, he was representative of the men who wore a gray uniform and fought for the Southland. Their yearbooks and newspapers continued to focus on the Civil War, the University Greys,

⁵ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 197, 198.

⁶ Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause: 1865-1900* (Hamden, CT: Archon Book, 1973), 152, 143.

while still remembering the Old South. At UVA, though, the school adopted the Cavalier as their mascot and nickname. By the time the school did so, the Cavalier was being used to tie Virginia to the national myth by southern historians and authors. In doing so, they demonstrated assertions by Foster and Reagan Wilson that the South was tempering in its regionalism and adopting more national allegiance by the 1910s and certainly in the post-WWI era. Thus, these two schools represent the multifaceted nature of the Lost Cause. The movement could take on decidedly local characteristics, and could change depending on who was making the memories and where they were transmitted. Thus the students at Ole Miss and UVA were actively molding the Lost Cause to fit their own campus mythology. Both schools sent men off to war, students from both schools were lost, and their sacrifice was duly remembered at both schools. But at the University of Virginia, the students reached back to their rich Old South heritage and chose to focus on the brave and honorable Cavalier as their mascot. The pages dedicated to Confederate memory began to decrease in numbers as the twentieth century progressed. At the University of Mississippi, Confederate memory was kept alive and was incorporated into the public displays of their football games with the Colonel Reb. Their newspapers, yearbooks and magazines continued to draw on Old South and Confederate mythology in ways UVA's did not.

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