

AUM Historical Review

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Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the eleventh issue of the *AUM Historical Review*! As always, our student contributions cast a wide net, from the complex loyalties of Alabamians during the American Civil War to the developing historical narrative regarding the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. The *AUM Historical Review* remains committed to better studying the Civil Rights Movement and its impact in the Deep South, so we bring you a book review of Robert J. Norrell's *Reaping the Whirlwind* and an article discussing the International Civil Rights Center and Museum in Greensboro, North Carolina. Also, in recognition of three recently retired professors, we are pleased to bring you interviews with Michael Simmons, Timothy Henderson, and Jan Bulman.

The hard work and dedication of our student authors and editors must be recognized. Many thanks to our new authors, Daphne Calhoun, Graeme DePace, and Jennifer Go. It has been our pleasure to work with our associate editors, Skylar Bass, Meghan Bush, Sonja Hadder, Carla Meadows, and David Rains. Their help in proofreading, fundraising, and virtually all elements of this publication could not be more appreciated. Our graphic designers, Amanda Meade and Alexondra MacGuire, have produced a wonderful internal layout and cover for this issue. And last, but certainly never least, the indispensable guidance of Dr. Steven Gish and Professor Breuna Baine is much appreciated. A strong bond of students and faculty has always been the backbone of this publication and shows the care that AUM's faculty has for its student body.

We, the editors, would like to give a shout out to the wonderful History Department faculty and staff members, past and present. They made the process of obtaining our bachelor's degrees both a learning experience and a pleasure. We both came to AUM through non-traditional routes, earning associate's degrees in the Alabama community college system before becoming part of the Warhawk family. Our time at AUM has been marked by extremely interesting classes taught by amazing instructors, Warhawk events, involvement with peer mentoring, and peer tutoring. The support of the History Department – both instructors and administrators – was instrumental to our success and happiness, as all our instructors could be relied upon to give advice, help us find internships or other learning opportunities, and supported us throughout our journey. Their kindness and guidance will continue to influence us as we move to the next phases of our journeys. It is with the utmost sincerity that we offer our deepest gratitude and respect to the entire History Department for their unwavering dedication to student success.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue of the *AUM Historical Review*. Without your interest and support, this publication would not be possible. Whether a casual reader or patron of this work through our annual fund-raising, your interest in this journal makes it such a joy for all those involved in its publication.

Lee Rives and Kimberlee Fernandez,
Co-Editors

Conversations with AUM Historians

Last year, the *AUM Historical Review* had the opportunity to speak with three recently retired history professors from the university. Distinguished Research Professor Michael Bland Simmons, who taught at AUM from 1990 until 2021 and specializes in early Christianity, spoke with Carla Meadows. Distinguished Research Professor Timothy Henderson, who taught at AUM from 1996 until 2020 and specializes in Mexican history, spoke with Judith Cantey. Emerita Associate Professor Jan K. Bulman, who taught at AUM from 2003 until 2019 and specializes in medieval French history, spoke with Skylar Bass.

Dr. Michael Simmons

by Carla Meadows



Michael Simmons, c. 2010. The clerical garments shown consist of a Roman (Anglo-Catholic) House Cassock with vest, pectoral crucifix, red purple (magenta) sash, and magenta zucchetto (skullcap) which represent the formal attire worn on special occasions by Anglican Archbishops.

Q: Tell us about your childhood, where you grew up, and some of your fondest memories.

A: I was born in Raleigh, North Carolina. I was the youngest of three sons. My parents were loving, kind, and encouraging. Because of my father's business ventures, we moved to Key West, Florida, and then to Mobile County, Alabama. Growing up on the Gulf of Mexico was truly idyllic and full of adventures. We often visited the islands of the coast, my favorite one being Petit Bois (other islands: Coffee, Horn, Ship, Cat, and of course, Dauphin). We had picnics, went swimming, and explored the end of the island which had a small area of woods (hence the name, "Small Wood," which was later destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.) We had a three-story treehouse in our backyard where we played, sang, and camped out. It was there that I taught myself how to play an acoustic guitar. My middle brother, Jerry, bought it for a dollar and it only had one string. The first song I learned to pick was "Mary Had a Little Lamb." At nine-years old, I made my first appearance on stage at a talent show. I played lead, there was a rhythm guitarist, and a singer. We played Ray Charles' "What I'd Say." I eventually acquired a Fender Stratocaster, a Sun amplifier (4 12" speakers), and played lead guitar in various rock bands.

Another memory I have was listening to my neighbors from Louisiana, Marie and Clodis Marceaux. They would speak their first language to each other (Cajun French). This planted a great love of philology in me and influenced me throughout my academic studies and career. Mrs. Marie also taught me how to cook Cajun cuisine with great, patient emphasis upon how to prepare the roux

(essential for various dishes like gumbo and shrimp étouffée.)

Q: Where did you attend college, and what or who helped lead you to the paths that you chose?

A: I earned my B.A. with a double major (Latin American History and Spanish), one course short of a minor in German, at the University of South Alabama in Mobile. I studied for the M.Div. at Duke, with a concentration in Comparative Semitics (e.g., Classical Hebrew, Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, Syriac, Ugaritic, and Ethiopic), Hellenistic Greek, and Classical Latin. I received my Master of Sacred Theology in New Testament and Patristics at Yale. I obtained my Ph.D. in Early Church History at New College, the University of Edinburgh. I received my calling into the Christian ministry just before starting my undergraduate studies. It was Providence which had a hand in guiding me to the paths that I chose.

Q: Do you have a wife and children? Any grandchildren?

A: I have a beautiful Latin American wife, Maria Antonieta. We will celebrate our fiftieth anniversary in 2023. We have two daughters, Tania and Alexandra, four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren, including a set of twins born last July. We expect our sixth great-grandchild in a few months! He will be named Marshall Ezra.

Q: What different places have you lived? What was your favorite place to live and why?

A: I lived in North Carolina, Florida, various places throughout Alabama, New Haven, Connecticut, and Edinburgh, Scotland. I enjoyed living in all of these places, especially Key West and the U.K.,

but as Dorothy said on *The Wizard of Oz*, “There is no place like home,” and there is no place like “Sweet Home Alabama.”

Q: Tell us about your career in Montgomery, specifically at Auburn University at Montgomery.

A: I began teaching two World History courses, each quarter in 1990, including summer terms. I continued these courses and began others after becoming a tenured faculty member in 1998. I have been teaching for over thirty years. I have never missed a day due to sickness; and as a minister, I have never missed a day of work due to having to conduct a funeral!

Q: What awards and recognitions have you received?

A: I graduated with Honors in Spanish at the University of South Alabama and received several recognitions for scholarly papers that I wrote at Duke. At Yale University, the Rev. Rowan A. Greer, III, Professor of Anglican Studies and a prestigious Patristics scholar, was my primary thesis supervisor. He described my S.T.M. thesis as the best he had read in the fifteen years that he had been at Yale. Sir Henry Chadwick, Professor Emeritus of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the Dean of Patristics of the 20th century, was the external examiner of my Edinburgh dissertation. He recommended that it be published in the Oxford University Press’s Early Christian Studies series. I have been honored with scholarly works published through Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Notre Dame, Beauchase (Paris), Peeters (Belgium), Brill (Holland), T&T Clark (Edinburgh), and other prestigious academic venues. It was a great honor for me to receive the title of Distinguished Research Professor as a member of the

Department of History at AUM.

With respect to my ministry, all the members of my House of Bishops unanimously elected me on the first ballot to be consecrated bishop in 2000 and installed as Archbishop in 2007. I am blessed to have a document that exceeds one-hundred pages, all of which contain all my lines of Apostolic Succession (including those of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and many Eastern Orthodox traditions) unbroken, giving the dates of each episcopal consecration, and going all the way

Q: What is your proudest achievement?

A: Next December I shall celebrate my fiftieth anniversary in the ordained ministry. My proudest achievement was when I dedicated my life to serving the Lord Jesus Christ. I have truly led a wonderful and blessed life.

Q: What courses do you teach, or have you taught?

A: World History to 1648, the World of the Bible, Greek Civilization, the Roman World, Religions in the Roman Empire, Early Christianity, Medieval to Modern Christianity, and ancient languages, i.e., Classical Latin, Classical Hebrew, and Hellenistic Greek.

Q: What are your three favorite books?

A: First and foremost, Holy Scripture, in original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek); almost anything written by Eusebius of Caesarea, the Father of Church History; and the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, by Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Q: What education-related advice do you have for college students?

A: Enjoy your experience at the university. Your social life is important, so be sure to attend parties, go out to dinner

with your friends, or watch a good movie together. But prioritize your studies. Your main goal should be to obtain your degree and good employment upon graduation.

Q: What are you working on now? What future work do you have planned?

A: I am currently waiting for the editor of *Studia Patristica* to send the final proofs of a paper I read in Spanish at the Oxford International Patristics Conference (2019), which philologically compared two Greek fragments of Eusebius' Theophany with a later Syriac translation. I have finished seven major entries for the upcoming Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity. I will soon have an essay published by T& T Clark, Edinburgh, on Pauline Reception in Arnobius and Lactantius, two Early Church Fathers who lived in Roman North Africa. However, my major research project right now is Eusebius of Caesarea: Salvation History in Late Antiquity, in three volumes: I. Divine Plan, II. Divine Purpose, and III. Divine Providence. I am also in discussions with an editor at Cambridge

University Press concerning a monograph on Early Church History.

Q: Tell us your hobbies and interests apart from work-related tasks.

A: I really enjoy cooking. My wife loves the idea that I cook about 85% of the meals at our home. Some of my favorite types of food are Southern Cuisine, Cajun, Mexican, and French. Most people rave over my egg rolls, so I like to cook Chinese, too. My favorite dish I like to cook is Boeuf en Crute ("Beef Wellington"), which is quite expensive to prepare. The recipe calls for Brandy and Madeira wine and fillet mignon. I like to play my Fender Stratocaster, with a candy apple red body and a white maple neck, and a small Marshall (vintage) amp from the late 1960s, which still plays like a dream! The music I play these days is slow blues. Cm. Hendrix and Alvin Lee are my favorite blues guitarists. I also like to work at our ranch just outside of town and cut down saplings with my machete, amongst other chores.

Carla Meadows returned to the classroom after many years of staying home with her children, and she is currently majoring in history as she has gained an appreciation and a fascination for all historical events. Carla received a Bachelor of Science in management information systems from Auburn University in 1991 and a Master of Business Administration, with an information systems option, from AUM in 1996. Carla plans to continue her studies at AUM and pursue a Master of Liberal Arts in history.

Dr. Timothy Henderson

by Judith Cantey



Tim Henderson in the municipal archive of the city of San Martín Texmelucan, Mexico in 1992, where he was doing research for his dissertation, which became his first book, *The Worm in the Wheat*.

Q: Where were you born and in what year? And where did you grow up?

A: I was born in 1957 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. We didn't stay long in Pennsylvania. After living in upstate New York and Charlotte, North Carolina, my family eventually settled in Harrisonburg, Virginia. When I was 17, I joined the U.S. Navy.

Q: Where did you attend college? Where and what course of study did you pursue in graduate school?

A: After I left the Navy, I began my academic career at Blue Ridge Community College in beautiful Weyers Cave, Virginia. I transferred to New York University for my sophomore year and majored in film. I quickly realized I would be unable to break into the film industry. I transferred to the University of Texas at Austin, where I majored in American Studies and took an interest in

Latin America. I received my B.A. from UT and later, my Ph.D., at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Q: What first sparked your interest in Mexican history?

A: I vividly recollect going for a brief trip to Mexico in 1964 with my family. At the time, I had no idea that Mexico would figure so prominently in my life. I mostly remember pyramids, bullfights, and the whole family getting violently ill. After earning my B.A., I could not find work, so I took jobs in construction and restaurants. After a couple of years, I decided to go to graduate school, though I was unsure of what subject to pursue. I took a course in Mexican history, mostly because it happened to fit my schedule. I was flabbergasted to learn that the country just south of our border had such an intense and dramatic history—a history that, till that time, I'd known absolutely nothing about. There's nothing quite like suddenly coming face to face with the vastness of your own ignorance.

Q: What courses did you teach at AUM? Was there a course that you especially enjoyed teaching?

A: I taught both halves of World History. My main upper-level classes were Colonial Latin America, Modern Latin America, Mexico Since 1810, and U.S.-Latin American Relations. I also taught the history of Central America and the Caribbean, Latin American History in Film, and Modern Middle East. The last, of course, was well outside of my comfort zone, but given how that region has figured so prominently in the news for most of our lifetimes, I owed it to the students to give it a go. Frankly, it was challenging work, but I had a blast

teaching that class. It was refreshing to depart from the familiar and do something completely new. But, if I have to choose one, I will have to go with the history of Mexico.

Q: How have you pursued your interest in Mexican history and culture in your research and writing?

A: My first book, *The Worm in the Wheat*, dealt with Mexico's postrevolutionary era, the 1920s. After that, I collaborated with Gil Joseph on a resource book of readings on Mexico, which is soon to appear in a second edition. My other books include discussions of the U.S.-Mexican War of the 1840s, the Mexican independence movement of the 1810s, the history of Mexican migration to the United States, and my recent work, which I've just finished co-editing, is a book of documents on the Mexican Revolution. I think it helps that I am genuinely enchanted with Latin American culture in general, and Mexican culture in particular. It's often said that Latin America may be materially poor, and its politics have long been troubled, but it does indeed have a rich and profound culture.

Q: You use films in your classes to bring the subject matter to life. What films, or film directors, especially related to Latin America would you recommend?

A: When I was young, I aspired to be a filmmaker, and even though I haven't yet realized that dream, I am still a major fan of the medium. Some of my favorite films to use in class were *The Last Supper*, a Cuban film made in 1987 by Cuba's greatest director, the late Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, and his *Strawberry and Chocolate*; *Herod's Law*, a black comedy about political corruption in 1940s

Mexico; *Four Days in September*, a 1997 Brazilian film about the kidnapping of the American ambassador in 1969; *The Official Story*, a powerful Argentine drama which takes an unsparing look at the legacy of the so-called “dirty war”; and *Men With Guns*, the only film on this list not by a Latin American director. *Men With Guns* was made by American filmmaker John Sayles.

Q: What do you consider your most significant achievement in your academic career?

A: I’m very proud of my first book, which was based on my dissertation. It deals with the experiences of an American widow who owned land in Mexico during the revolutionary and postrevolutionary years, a time when peasant land hunger inspired considerable chaos and violence. I sought to use this woman’s experience to examine big questions about agrarian reform – which sounds like a dry topic, but it is incredibly fundamental. Agrarian reform is a matter of pursuing social justice in the simplest, most direct way possible. Recently, I’ve done research on U.S.-Mexican relations during the 1960s, resulting in conference papers and articles. Most of my other books were written with the classroom and general readers in mind. I figured they were topics that folks should know about.

Q: Are you fluent in Spanish? When did you begin to learn Spanish?

A: “Fluent” is a very high bar. I would say I’m functional in Spanish. That is, I can do what I need to do, and I’ve done some translations that I’m very proud of. I took Spanish classes in high school and college, but frankly didn’t learn much. It’s unlikely anyone will learn a

language unless they find themselves fully immersed in a culture. For me, that began in the mid-1980s when I took Spanish classes and lived with a local family in Antigua, Guatemala.

Q: Do you have hobbies? What is your favorite past-time?

A: Working full-time does not leave much time for hobbies. However, retirement allows me to devote more time to some hobbies like bicycle riding, painting, and playing music. I’m pleased that a couple of my paintings were featured in the 55th Annual Montgomery Art Guild Exhibition this year.

Q: You are an accomplished musician, as is your wife. Tell us something about your life as a musician.

A: I can say, with no false modesty whatsoever, that “accomplished” is way too generous a description of my musical abilities. But that’s the wonderful thing about music: you don’t have to be all that good at it to get immense pleasure from playing it. I can play, in a serviceable way, the guitar, mandolin, fiddle, and ukulele. My wife and I have a little band and we play shows occasionally at Old Alabama Town. My wife worked as a songwriter in Nashville for several years, and, together with a couple of co-writers, she wrote songs for the Alabama Shakespeare Festival’s production of *Fair and Tender Ladies*. She’s the accomplished one in that area.

Q: What authors and books are your all-time personal favorites?

A: I have to confess that, for the most part, reading stuff by my fellow academics is hard work. Academic historians tend not to be the best writers. I don’t think it has to be that way,

and I do wish academics would eschew jargon and try to write more stimulating prose. Some of the best works on the recent history of Latin America are by journalists like Tina Rosenberg, Alma Guillermoprieto, Sam Quinones, Julian Preston, and Ioan Grillo. Latin America has, of course, produced some of the world's greatest writers. I think Gabriel García Márquez wrote two of the finest novels ever (*One Hundred Year of Solitude* and *Love in the Time of Cholera*). I'm a big fan of the Mexican novelist and poet Rosario Castellanos. I even named my dog in her honor, which I meant as a sincere homage. I must confess that most of my reading since retirement has been either the news or fiction. I like Richard

Russo, Carl Hiaasen, Michael Connelly, James Ellroy, Dennis Lehane—that sort of thing.

Q: Tell us about your animals.

A: Oh my, do we ever have animals. Two dogs—Trevor and Rosario. The first is a young dog with an old soul, very calm. The second is a young dog with the soul of a mischievous puppy, very rambunctious. And then there are the cats. When my wife retired, she decided to devote her energies to cat rescue. We now have a ridiculous number of cats. I think last time I counted it was 18, give or take. I wouldn't object to having fewer cats.

Judith Cantey is a retired physical therapist who found the History Department at AUM the perfect place to pursue her lifelong interest in history as a non-degree student. Her post-secondary education at Duke University and Columbia University, where she received her B.S. in Physical Therapy in 1962, and at the University of North Carolina School of Public Health, where she earned a Master's in Public Health in 1968, was based primarily on science courses and professional studies. After returning to her hometown of Montgomery in the 1990s, she began taking history classes at AUM, which deepened her understanding of the contemporary world and proved to be one of the most rewarding experiences of her life. As one example, the courses in Latin American history taught by Dr. Tim Henderson broadened her understanding of immigration issues the United States faces today and the current crisis at the US southern border.

Dr. Jan Bulman

by Skylar Bass



Jan Bulman on the summit of Mont Ventoux in Provence (southern France). This peak was made famous by Francesco Petrarca, who wrote about climbing the mountain with his brother in 1336 in *Ascent of Mont Ventoux*, one of Bulman's favorite works from the Middle Ages. It is also one of the most challenging climbs for cyclists in the Tour de France.

Q: When and where were you born?

A: I was born in Syracuse, New York in 1953. But I grew up in Brookfield, WI, then moved to Michigan when I was in high school. So, I think of my roots as being in the Great Lakes.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: I went to Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan for my undergraduate degree in history. I went to Michigan State University for graduate school.

Q: What kind of extracurricular school clubs did you join?

A: I was a founding officer of the Phi Alpha Theta chapter at Oakland University. When I came to AUM, I was really pleased to learn that we had a Phi Alpha Theta chapter here as well. When I was an undergraduate, I was a “non-traditional” student, which was a euphemism for a student who was an older, working adult. I worked full-time and took my classes primarily at night. At the time, this was somewhat unusual,

so there weren't a lot of opportunities for me to engage in on-campus clubs and activities. Fortunately, this has changed. But the experience of working full-time and taking classes at night worked well for me. For most of my time at AUM, I tried to teach my upper-level courses at night to accommodate working students.

Q: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A: Hmm. I always loved horses and rode quite a lot when I was a kid. I would have liked to be an Olympic equestrian. I never came anywhere close to that!

Q: Where is your favorite place to travel?

A: France is my favorite foreign destination. My research has centered on France. I love the French people and their culture. I also spend the summers at a cottage on Lake Michigan where I walk to beaches and enjoy the beautiful summer weather.

Q: Do you like to cook or sew?

A: With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, I tapped into my sewing skills. I was never an expert seamstress – straight lines of stitches were my forte. When the CDC told us to start wearing masks, they were very hard to find. I began to make masks for family, friends, and in the end, for complete strangers. Once I got rolling, I actually must have made hundreds of them! I was very conscientious about protecting myself from the COVID-19 virus, so going to the store to buy fabric and elastic was not an option. I had to use whatever materials I could find around the house. At first, I was using shoelaces for ties for the masks! After awhile, things like elastic became available for purchase on the internet, which made it easier to acquire the

necessary materials needed for making masks.

I have always enjoyed cooking. For me, cooking is an outlet that is equal parts creative, social, and inventive. I take pride in being a “pantry cook” – that is, I like to use whatever I have on hand to create a delicious dish – or at least, the hope is that it turns out delicious! As a cook becomes more experienced with flavors and the ways that various ingredients interact and affect the outcome of a dish, it is possible to be quite inventive.

Q: Do you have any animals? If so, what kind and what are his/her/their names?

A: I have always had at least one dog, usually a breed that's on the large side. So, a collie, an Irish setter, a lab, a golden retriever, and now a labradoodle. My labradoodle's name is Pepin, which was the name of the father of Charlemagne, but Pepin is also the name of a key figure in my current research project. Pepin is a very “peppy” dog, so the name fits him perfectly! He travels everywhere with me. He happily runs every day along the shore of Lake Michigan where I spend my summers. Compared to other dogs I've had in the past, Pepin is very well behaved. In the past, one of my dogs must have set the world's record for bad behavior. She jumped through the picture windowpane glass to chase the mailman (she did this twice!) and set the house on fire by turning on the electric range. I'll let you decide which breed did this.

Q: What did you do before you became a professor? I have been told that it may have something to do with jewelry?

A: You heard right! I worked for Saks Fifth Avenue for more than twenty years before going on to graduate school.

Although I held various positions there (I started as a salesperson in the Gloves and Hosiery Department! Can you believe there even was such a thing?), my final full time job was what they called a “Merchandise Administrator” in fine jewelry. This meant that I got to work with a lot of very high-end jewelry, which was pretty interesting. I even helped Aretha Franklin with the purchase of a beautiful cabochon (unfaceted) emerald ring.

Q: What drew you to history, and medieval history specifically?

A: I wanted to understand medieval philosophy, especially twelfth century philosophy. However, once I started to dive deeper into it, I realized that philosophy was not for me. But what did interest me was how medieval people thought and how they viewed the world. When I started studying the Middle Ages, I thought medieval people must have been very different from us. Their ideas, literature, and actions all seemed so foreign, even exotic, to me. Over time, I have come to think that people of the past, even the long ago past, were really not so different from us moderns. The job of the historian is to understand why people in the past did the things that they did, held the beliefs they held, and to make sense out of what made sense to them at the time.

Q: When and why did you decide to become a professor?

A: I hoped to influence and inspire students in the same way that I was influenced and inspired as a student. I also love conducting research, which is also an important part of a professor’s career. To work with and handle a manuscript that was written, by hand

of course, say, nine hundred years ago, is absolutely thrilling. Sounds corny, but true! To be a medieval historian is like walking in a dark cave with a flashlight. Your research, like the light that you carry in the cave, illuminates parts of the darkness, but only a small section at a time. To get a fuller understanding of the contours of the cave wall, there must be many lights, some pointing in different directions, so that we can understand the structure and environment that is shrouded in darkness. For the historian, this means continually asking new questions of the primary sources.

Q: In an earlier conversation you mentioned that you associated with the Annales School. How did this impact your research and influence the way that you examine history?

A: As you know, the Annales School is not an actual “school” but rather a way thinking about the past. The Annales approach tries to understand the mental universe of people of the past – what they thought and why, as well as why did they live the way they did. For the Middle Ages, it is not so much studying wars, kings, and popes, but the significances and influences that shaped and molded the lives of ordinary people. My current research project examines a sorcery trial from the fourteenth century in France. A man was accused of creating a wax figure that was said to resemble the bishop in order to cause harm or death to the bishop by destroying this wax image. I hope to shed light on why an accusation of this sort made sense to the people involved, why the accused made the wax figure, and why people of the mid-fourteenth century were becoming increasingly alarmed by fears of diabolical magic. In other words, why

their behaviors and beliefs made sense to them, in 1347.

Skylar Bass earned his B.A. in history from AUM in December 2021. His goal is to obtain a master's degree in history with a minor in philosophical studies. He is interested in many areas of history with a special interest in modern Latin America and modern Asia. He enjoys traveling, spending time with his wife and two dogs, and learning more about historical figures.

The International Civil Rights Center and Museum

by Daphne Calhoun



The International Civil Rights Center and Museum, housed in the F.W. Woolworth building in Greensboro, North Carolina. (National Trust for Historic Landmarks)

Established in 2010, the International Civil Rights Center and Museum is in the heart of downtown Greensboro, North Carolina, and is housed in the original and historic F.W. Woolworth Building. This museum pays homage to the first sit in protest that occurred on February 1, 1960. On this day, four college students walked into the racially segregated lunch counter area

demanding that they be treated like their white counterparts.

Upon entrance to the first floor, visitors are greeted by a 15-20-minute video about the museum and the various exhibits on display. One exhibit focuses on the four little girls in Birmingham, who were killed on a Sunday morning in 1963; another focuses on the death of

Emmett Till in Mississippi in 1955, which helped spark the Civil Rights Movement.

The story of the center begins historically at the March on Washington in August 1963. This historical event is the primary focus of the museum's discussion of civil rights from a local, national, and universal perspective. Photographs and short detailed descriptions depict the nationally recognized events that took place during that tumultuous time, such as images of the reflection pool aligned with hopeful African Americans.

The second floor of the museum covers a vast and comprehensive history of Greensboro, North Carolina, and includes other areas of the country's history of racial injustice, such as the segregation between African Americans and white Americans in public spaces. The most notable yet important part of the second-floor exhibit is the complete lunch counter where a historic protest occurred in 1960. Intact and preserved from the Woolworths Department Store, the lunch counter is complete with original artifacts from the time, giving visitors an idea of what February 1, 1960, was like. The last section of the counter is dedicated to the "Greensboro Four" and features a plaque giving recognition to the brave African American students that successfully integrated the segregated lunch counter. As visitors exit, they enter another exhibit where they are greeted by a large "Colored Entrance" sign, preserved from the local Greensboro train station. Passing through such symbolic representation is humbling.

The most memorable sections of the museum include a discriminatory

Coke machine with inflated prices for African Americans as compared to white Americans and a large display of the infamous Green Book. The center leaves no stone unturned in its exposure of historical injustices and ensures that visitors receive a full view of the issues facing the Civil Rights Movement.

The museum makes sure to highlight the contributions of not only the "Greensboro Four," but other notable historical figures that have either come from Greensboro or made their name in surrounding areas as well. Many of the notable figures that the museum focuses on are political figures and medical professionals. The bulk of the figures featured are those that have dedicated their lives in pursuit of lasting social change.

In addition, by highlighting notable figures from North Carolina, the center also notes the contributions of other African American greats that have shaped the social landscape of their time. The Tuskegee Airmen from Tuskegee are noted in the museum. Their bravery and skill are recognized through a local Greensboro resident, Harvey R. Alexander, who was also an airman in World War II. Historical artifacts such as a robe once worn by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. is displayed proudly in the museum under a section titled "Church." The center is divided into separate areas to highlight the many contributions of African Americans and civil rights events. There are labeled and theme-oriented areas to immerse the visitor into the values that were most prominent to African Americans during that time.



The Greensboro Four solidified the notion that African Americans deserved equal treatment in all aspects of society, but in this instance the racially divided lunch counter. (VisitNC.com)

The last portion of the center serves as a memorial to those that have lost their lives to racial violence. Nationally recognizable names encompass the area dedicated to the many who have died at the hands of injustice. Names such as Viola Gregg Liuzzo, who lost her life to Ku Klux Klan members in Selma, are memorialized on the wall of remembrance. Tuskegee Institute student Samuel Younge, who lost his life in racially motivated violence in Tuskegee, is included in remembrance as well. There are others that are memorialized on the wall, representing different ages and races, each of whom fought for equal justice.

The final portion of the museum highlights the work and words of former President Barack Obama. Projecting the words of hope and encouragement to visitors through the words of

President Obama provides the visitor with aspirations that they can better themselves and their community by standing up to injustices everywhere. In addition, various parts of the museum pay homage to the contributions of African nations. From national chiefs to other political figures, the continent of Africa has produced many notable people of importance that have had an impact on the African American community. The center makes sure to incorporate the contributions of many African Americans from all areas of society. Influential members like Marcus Garvey helped mold ideals of racial pride and sustainability. Similar ideas pushed the greater goals of civil rights nationally.

The events of February 1, 1960, set the stage for the Civil Rights Movement; it was because of this protest that similar protests followed

shortly thereafter. The actions that took place on this day solidified the ideals of nonviolent resistance. Being that this was the basis of many nonviolent protests that took place throughout the South, it served to be monumental in various ways. One of the factors which made this protest different was that the protesters highlighted a strong sense of identity and self-pride by their style of clothing. The calm, confident tone which their demeanor brought to a stressful and violent situation spoke highly of the actions of the young African Americans who participated.

The Greensboro Four solidified the notion that African Americans deserved equal treatment under the law, not just at the racially divided lunch counter, but in all aspects of society. These men sitting at a segregated counter signified that African Americans deserved better treatment from their societal neighbors. The civil rights movement would not have been much without the participation of young people. It was the school-aged and college-aged students that acted against the injustices that were on display. Young people nationally took a stand against racial inequality, and they also were the driving force behind encouraging adults to take their place in the movement as well. Children and young adults served as the face of the movement throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and the likes of Emmett Till served as reminders that young people were not immune to the violence

of angry white Americans. Nationally recognizable events such as the 16th Street bombing and the murder of the four little girls highlight the realization of violence against young African Americans.

Overall, the International Civil Rights Center and Museum serves as a great reminder of how far African Americans have come in the fight for equal justice. Although the journey to civil rights has been long and hard-fought, there have been successes and hopeful notes along the way. Historically, African Americans have needed to fight for their rights more than other minority groups, and this museum does not make light of the journey. Other museums throughout the nation pay homage to certain areas of the Civil Rights Movement, but this one holistically tries to immerse the visitor into the whole experience of racism in America. From the actual lunch counter with appliances and coffee cups to the wall of remembrance, this center highlights the contributions of well-known and lesser-known notable historical figures. If possible, please visit this museum to educate yourself on the many contributions of African Americans from a local and national standpoint. Tours are available in person and virtually on a weekly basis. For further information, visit the website at <https://www.sitinmovement.org/the-museum>.

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From Frontiersmen to “Reluctant Rebels” and Beyond: A History of Tallapoosa County

by Lee Rives

Alabama earned its well-known nickname of “the Heart of Dixie” mostly due to geography, but also because its state capital doubled as the national capital of the fledgling government of the Confederate States of America. However, Alabama’s citizens were far from unanimous in their enthusiasm for secession. While most of the rich agricultural landowners of south Alabama’s Black Belt region eagerly threw in their lot with both the idea and the implementation of secession, many hardscrabble farmers in north Alabama were more wary. These sentiments, of course, are a generalized remembrance of a more nuanced actuality, but provide a basic sketch of how varied responses were to secession and the Civil War in Alabama. A microcosm of how these competing ideas met within communities across the state can be seen in the mixed views held by citizens of Tallapoosa County. An area of central Alabama that merely twenty years before war broke out was a wild frontier had, by the time of the war, been transformed into a place with rich farmland and brisk trade. Roads from Georgia and Tennessee converged and veered westward to new frontiers, through Mississippi to Texas and beyond, opening new horizons for both those

settling and those passing through.

In Tallapoosa County, the maintenance of the status quo was favored by most, though many sons of Tallapoosa signed their names to Confederate muster rolls in the days following the call for soldiers to defend their state and, by extension, its peculiar institution. However, many doubted the men of Tallapoosa, as anti-war sentiment lingered throughout the war and rumors flourished of an underground Peace Society. Through an examination of the history of the area, particularly through the retelling the stories of individuals from the era and examining some surviving wartime newspapers, this article will show how Tallapoosa County and its citizens – termed “reluctant rebels” by local historian Gerald H. Reynolds in *Tallapoosa County: A History* – reacted to a war many of them seemed not to want. In many ways, Tallapoosa County provides a unique case study in a significant yet overlooked society of reluctant rebels and how civic duty prevailed over the common assumption by many in the region that secession was not a wise course of action.

Tallapoosa County, located in the

borderland between the northern and central portions of the state, represents an intersection of political diversity within Alabama. Perhaps the earliest mentions of the region are from before it was officially carved from Muscogee Creek territory, with the famous Battle of Horseshoe Bend taking place near what would later become its county seat, Dadeville. Much of the land was forcibly ceded by the Muscogee in the years before they were relocated to Oklahoma, despite the area's abundance of major Native American settlements such as Oakfuskee, Tukabatchee, and Talisi. The county's early years of American settlement – roughly from the late 1830s to the 1840s – were also documented through satirical stories by the writer Johnson J. Hooper. Hooper wrote a collection of short stories which some in the literary world argue laid down the archetype for the fast-talking, humorous frontier con man in American literature and even influenced writers like Mark Twain. Hooper, who experienced frontier life in Tallapoosa County as part of his duties as census taker and roaming lawyer, would later go on to serve as secretary to the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America and die in Richmond in 1862 of tuberculosis. The period from 1850 to the turn of the century is murky save for family stories, scattered letters and personal receipts, and some county legal documents.¹

Tallapoosa is rarely mentioned in Confederate and Union documents for a variety of reasons. The few mentions there are mainly come in the form of accounts detailing the actions of individuals in battle, Confederate government correspondence on the Tallassee Carbine Factory, and reports

on a Union raid which passed through the county. However, the backbone of historiographical information comes from the 1950s and 1970s, when locals banded together to print histories of the county with varying degrees of source material. These include *Tallapoosa County: A History*, a volume put together by the Tallapoosa County Bicentennial Commission, *A History of Tallapoosa County* by William Presley Ingram, and *Heritage of Tallapoosa County, Alabama* by the Tallapoosa County Heritage Book Committee. The interest of these individuals was mainly genealogical in nature, thus placing an emphasis on the individuals who helped to build the frontier town, aided in its development, and would rise to prominence over the years. Still, in this period a wealth of primary sources influenced the work, both in the form of historical documents and the first-hand accounts of individuals passed down over the generations. This period also coincided with the founding of the Tallapoossee Historical Society, which took its name from an alternative spelling of Tallapoosa which was used early in the county's history. Still in operation today, the Tallapoossee Historical Society runs a local museum which showcases information about the county's history and curates a collection of personal letters and other period documents and artifacts.²

Today, few locals and fewer historians care to investigate the history of the area. The creation of the Thomas Wesley Martin Dam and subsequent flooding of vast tracks of farmland in the 1920s inundated most of the remains of Muscogee sites, caused old homesteads to be torn down, and graveyards moved. The dam, a major source of hydroelectric

power, gave rise to several major mills in the area which have provided jobs to many. Therefore, the dam and its history have served as a common focus of amateur and professional historians. However, there are still a small number of amateur historians who occasionally investigate the county's involvement in the Creek War and the Civil War, but the focus of recent historical work tends to be on more recent events.³

Tallapoosa County's early history is a tale that seems more out of the wild west than the deep south. Rampant land speculation, conflict with Native Americans, and a brief gold rush all dominate the early days of Tallapoosa County. Its original county seat, Oakfuskee, had been briefly the site of a British fort and an enduring site of trade and settlement for both white Americans and the Muscogee tribes of the region. In 1836, however, the county seat was moved to the emerging settlement of Dadeville – named for Major Francis Langhorne Dade who was killed along with 110 men under his command in the Seminole Wars in the year of the city's founding – which was located near a confluence of several major roads. A few of these included roads from Tennessee and Georgia, as well as a westward road which traced its way through Mississippi and on to Texas. The earliest European settlers of Tallapoosa County were traders of mostly Scottish descent who often intermarried and lived peacefully with the remaining Muscogee population. One outlying but vital figure was Abraham Mordecai, a Jewish tradesman who set up the first major trading post at modern Dudleyville and married a Muscogee woman. These unions between European and Muscogee populations resulted in the births of

important figures such as Alexander McGillivray, a British lieutenant colonel in the Revolutionary War, an influential chief of his mother's Muscogee tribe, and later a successful planter and slaveholder. A lesser-known example is the later Red Stick Creek leader Menawa, the commander of Muscogee forces at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, which he narrowly survived. A more well-known individual is William "Red Eagle" Weatherford, who would surrender personally to General Andrew Jackson and secure a measure of mercy for his people by personally impressing Jackson. However, by the 1840s, the Muscogee were long gone from the region with the exception of a genetic remnant from intermarriage with white settlers. Former soldiers and militiamen, farmers and families now made up the backbone of the local population. A stagecoach route soon meandered through the county from the southeast, bringing people seeking new beginnings as well as transients with plans of traveling further west.⁴

These were people eager to lose themselves in the semi-wilderness of this new, rich country. Farmland, timber, minerals, and natural resources abounded and soon an inn (which doubled as a tavern), shops, and a log courthouse were established to bring a semblance of law and order to the wild territory. Johnson J. Hooper immortalized these rowdy days in his humorous tales of the fictional Captain Simon Suggs, who was reputed to be based on local lawman and gambler Byrd Young with some of Hooper's own experiences as local census taker and lawyer woven into the narrative. Suggs, presented as a silver-tongued conman, lawyer, and census taker with a penchant for gambling and using his wits to his

benefit, highlights the frontier spirit of Tallapoosa County in the 1840s and '50s. Hooper's stories show him interacting with a broad array of people, from the comparatively wealthy lawyers and officials of the local court system to the humbler families of settlers who merely wanted to be left alone, especially when it came time for the census to be taken and Suggs came around to "count the cloth and the chickens." Even when acknowledging the satirical nature of Hooper's writings, one can easily see a pale comparison of what life was likely like in the county in this period. Before long, Dadeville was a flourishing place of trade and a common stop for those migrating westward from the Carolinas and Georgia.⁵

However, as tensions rose between the North and South, the hostility of the era found its way to even this remote county. As early as the days of Hooper's fictional Captain Suggs, locals like innkeeper Sumeral Dennis – based on a real man by the same name, who had served in the War of 1812, the Creek War of 1836, and the Mexican War – declared dislike for "nullifiers" and those touting rebellion. Indeed, this seems to have been the common sentiment of most men of prominence in the county. On the eve of the Civil War, another man of local prominence, Representative Michael J. Bulger, expressed doubts about the ability of the South to defend itself in a military conflict with the more industrial North. However, both men would ultimately bow to the pressure of perceived civic duty, with Bulger finding some remembrance in history due to his leadership at Little Round Top with the 47th Alabama Infantry and Dennis watching his eldest son and 16-year-old grandson ride off

with the Confederate 6th Alabama cavalry in 1863. Popular support is difficult to establish on an individual basis in the broader population, but enlistment records, surviving newspaper coverage, and family stories suggest a higher level of Confederate patriotism among the lower-middle class of yeomen farmers in the county.

Therefore, Tallapoosa County serves as a unique case-study. Many men of prominence strongly opposed secession at the war's outset but came around later on, some even joining the Confederate military. Indeed, both state legislative representatives for Tallapoosa County -- Michael J. Bulger and Allen Kimball – voted against secession at the Alabama Secession Convention. On the other hand, there were men who strongly favored the war, as newspaper coverage and enlistment records show. Many made the long trek to Montgomery and made up much of the 1st Alabama Infantry's Company A – raised in 1861 – which was nicknamed the Tallapoosa Rifles for just that reason.⁶

Perhaps the most famous son of Tallapoosa County in this period is Michael J. Bulger. Born in 1806 to the son of Revolutionary War veteran Pierce Bulger and his wife Sarah, Bulger moved to Alabama at seventeen with his brother. He relocated to Tallapoosa County in 1837, shortly after marrying his second wife, who had family in the area. Principally, Bulger was a planter by trade at this point in his life, owning twenty-one slaves in 1861. Though a profitable farmer, he felt the call to politics and in 1851, he was first elected as a state representative. During the contentious 1860 presidential election,



Michael J. Bulger, some time before the Civil War. (Greg Wilson)

Bulger was a strong supporter of Stephen Douglas. Douglas, a famous supporter of popular sovereignty who often tried to resolve the controversial issues of his day by compromise, only carried a small portion of the vote in Alabama in this election despite campaigning personally in the region. Indeed, Bulger seems to have shared Douglas's opinion of both union and compromise, as he would "by his influence and his vote... oppose secession [as well as being] one of [two dozen] who would not sign the ordinance of secession after it was passed." Despite his anti-secession sentiment, Bulger was remembered as "a plain man of much practical knowledge and lofty integrity" by his peers. Even when "a mob of four or five hundred men gathered outside" the Alabama Secession Convention after hearing of Bulger's refusal, along with two dozen others, to sign it, Bulger's cool reply was to "sen[d] them word that in his opinion a man who refused to vote according to the wishes of his constituents deserved to be hanged and they should come on and do the work." This bravado seems typical of Bulger and shows his strength of will, as well as the level of personal charisma he could call upon when needed. Undoubtedly, this charisma proved useful when Bulger bowed to his sense of civic duty and, in March of 1862 began recruiting in Tallapoosa County for the 47th Alabama Infantry at Loachapoka, a railroad hub near his home.⁷

Bulger's 47th Alabama had a large concentration of men from all walks of life from Tallapoosa County. Local physicians and yeoman farmers, the sons of planters and day laborers all joined the unit. Though Bulger did not secure their immediate trust due to his

previous anti-secession sentiment, he soon proved himself in battle at Cedar Run, where the 47th lost "nearly a third of its force present." Cedar Run, Bulger's first military engagement as a Captain, saw him "seriously wounded in the arm and the leg, and [he] was compelled to return home." Bulger rejoined his men in command at Fredericksburg and fought with distinction. The 47th went on to fight in Hood's division of Longstreet's corps, leading them down the bloody path to Gettysburg. Bulger's regiment briefly broke through Union lines, only for him to be seriously wounded once again and thought dead. The 47th, without officers to keep their momentum, fell back from the attack. Bulger, seriously wounded but alive, was taken prisoner, to eventually be exchanged and again rejoin his men. There are conflicting reports naming Colonel Rice of the 44th New York or Colonel Chamberlain of the 20th Maine as the man he surrendered to, though the latter seems more credible due to the position of the units over the course of the battle. Bulger was granted a medical leave of absence shortly before General Lee's surrender at Appomattox, meaning he was not present at the surrender with his men. After the war, Bulger was elected to the state senate and would later run for governor and lose despite "reciev[ing] a very complimentary vote," and was later re-elected to the senate in 1866.⁸

Another prominent citizen of Tallapoosa County in this period is Sumeral Dennis. Born in South Carolina, Dennis is recorded as one of the earliest settlers in Dadeville and is listed as second only to the surveyor himself in buying property there. Like Bulger, Dennis was the son of a



The United States Hotel, run by the Dennis family, circa 1935, looking much as it would have during the antebellum period. (W. N. Manning, Historic American Buildings Survey / Wikimedia Commons)

Revolutionary War soldier and family lore states his father was an apparent childhood friend of Andrew Jackson. Over the course of his life, Dennis shows just how versatile frontiersmen could be with their professions; he is listed variously as being a farmer, an on-and-off soldier or militiaman, amateur tailor and blacksmith, jailor, and innkeeper. Apparently a man of great patriotism in his youth, Dennis served in the South Carolina militia of one Captain Beatty (alternatively spelled Beatts) during the War of 1812 and is later found listed as

one of the Tallassee Guards, a militia group under Captain John Broadnax during the Creek War of 1836, as well as serving as a Captain of the 1st Alabama Infantry during the Mexican War. Dennis was a property-holder in the growing town of Dadeville and was even appointed to a jury which was to decide the path of a road from Dadeville to Tallassee. He also used his blacksmithing skills to secure prisoners for the county jail, according to surviving documents from the era reprinted within *Tallapoosa County: A History*, published for the

county's bicentennial. A satirized version of Dennis appears alongside Johnson J. Hooper's Captain Suggs, as the local innkeeper – a verifiable position, as he did build and operate the United States Hotel (alternatively the Union Hotel) in this period. However, knowing the real man's extensive military background, his fictional counterpart's description as "a true-hearted Union man, and opposed... at all points to the damnable heresy of nullification" - a nod to the Nullification Crisis of the 1830s – is not hyperbole. However, it seems as though Dennis's zealous patriotism for the United States waned during the Civil War, like even the most stalwart Unionists in the area.⁹

According to 1863 muster rolls, his son, Sumeral Dennis Jr., can be found as the second lieutenant of the 6th Alabama Cavalry and his grandson, John Sumeral Dennis, is also listed as a private. Indeed, his son would be captured in 1864 and held well into 1865, transferred first to Ship Island, then to Vicksburg, and finally to New Orleans. According to his obituary, the elder Sumeral Dennis Sr. himself "did a man's work constructing breastworks at Mobile," presumably on the eve of the famous battle there. However, seeing as he was roughly seventy-seven when the war broke out, it is more likely he contributed materials or even sent someone else to work in his place. However, even with this debunked, the shift in his position is still noticeably stark. From the days when Johnson J. Hooper frequented his tavern, Dennis had been against nullification and rebellion to the point of promising violence to any man who would dare associate him with such notions. By the time of the war, and certainly by 1863, Dennis's views had apparently changed radically, likely due

to a mixture of social pressure, a Union raid which threatened Tallapoosa County, and the idea of civic duty. The Dennis patriarch appears to have lived a quiet life after the war, with further mentions of him coming from pension applications filed on his, and later his second wife's, behalf. Despite what appears to be extensive military service, Dennis's habit of simply leaving once the fighting was over as opposed to waiting to be released led to major headaches in his pension endeavors and even assumptions that he had died in 1815 as a result of his service during the War of 1812.¹⁰

Bulger and Dennis were two reluctant rebels, but this was not necessarily the case for all men of Tallapoosa County. Even though many were wary of military conflict with the North, others were decidedly less so. Indeed, the *Tallapoosa Times*, a prominent newspaper in the county, showed great contempt for Northern political leaders and a strong defense of secession. In a July 12, 1860, edition, it proclaimed pithily, "Hamlet said there was something rotten in Denmark, but our government is now a sort of Denmark in which there is nothing that isn't rotten." Corruption was a common theme of the *Times* in the latter half of 1860, focusing mainly on national politics, from the presidential race of 1860 and its candidates to the discord within the Democratic Party. This explains why so many men of the county chose to serve in the Confederate military, with many signing up early in the war and fighting through the course of the war in various military units.¹¹

The 1st Alabama Infantry was formed primarily of men from Talladega,

Tallapoosa, Pike, Lowndes, Wilcox, Barbour, and Mobile counties. Company A of the 1st was formed primarily of Tallapoosa County men and hence nicknamed the Tallapoosa Rifles. Formed early in the year of 1861, most of its men signed on for a year of service and were sent to defend Pensacola. Many of its companies – especially the companies made of men from central Alabama – renewed their service after the one-year mark and went on to fight in battles at Corinth, Jackson, and Port Hudson in Mississippi in 1863, then in the conflicts at Alatoona, Kennesaw, and the Atlanta Campaign in Georgia the following year. Many officers and men were lost or captured at Port Hudson, including Tallapoosa County natives Private William Hammond and Captain James D. Meadows. The 1st Alabama Infantry surrendered at Goldsboro with roughly one hundred men after Johnston’s surrender in Greensboro, North Carolina. Though the regiment – and, indeed, the Tallapoosa Rifles --received heavy losses throughout their engagements, they fought for the course of the war rather than return home as others did.¹²

Another regiment marked by men of Tallapoosa County is one that has already been mentioned – the 47th Alabama Infantry. The 47th performed admirably in the face of heavy losses throughout the unit’s involvement in the war and lost men heavily, such as on September 17, 1862, at Sharpsburg, the climax of Lee’s first invasion of the North. Here they “lost every commissioned officer present on the field, mustering 17 men the next morning under a sergeant.” As outlined in the section on Michael Bulger, the regiment served with the Army of Northern

Virginia predominately, fighting at some of the most well-known battles of the war, at first under the indomitable Stonewall Jackson. They suffered high casualties in their first battle, Cedar Run, but continued on, fighting at Second Manassas, Chantilly, and Sharpsburg, before wintering on the Rappahannock near Fredericksburg. After serving on security detail in North Carolina, the 47th followed General Lee to Gettysburg. Here, Bulger led them to renown at Little Round Top against its Union defenders in place of his superior, James Jackson, who was suffering from heat exhaustion. Their adversaries consisted of the 20th Maine, the 44th New York, and the 83rd Pennsylvania. Despite heavy losses suffered at Gettysburg, the 47th was transferred to northern Georgia and took part at another bloody battle at Chickamauga and fought at Knoxville before settling down in east Tennessee for the winter. Spring of 1864 saw the 47th return to Virginia, fighting with at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, then on to Richmond and Petersburg. The bedraggled regiment surrendered at Appomattox with General Lee with about ninety men on April 9, 1865.¹³

Though the total number of men from Tallapoosa County who served in the Civil War has not been concretely tabulated, a rough estimate is around 2,100. It is known that at least 110 from the county seat, Dadeville, died in Confederate service in various military units. Service in an infantry regiment was the most common form of service for the men of Tallapoosa County. Company F of the 13th Alabama Infantry, Companies G and Company H of 14th Alabama Infantry, Companies D, E, and F of the 34th Alabama Infantry, and Company

B of the 37th Alabama Infantry were all made up primarily of men from Tallapoosa County. In a more limited capacity, Tallapoosa countians served in the 1st and 6th Cavalry Regiments. The 1st Alabama Cavalry, raised in Montgomery in November 1861, fought in battles from Shiloh to Stones River and Chickamauga to the Atlanta Campaign. Likewise, the 6th Alabama Cavalry also primarily saw action in the western theater after it was raised in 1863, with its main campaign being the Atlanta-Dalton campaign it before retreated southwest to Mississippi to fighting General Rousseau at Ten Islands, where they had heavy casualties before once again retreating and eventually surrendering at Gainesville, Florida.¹⁴

Meanwhile, on the home front, the wives, sisters, and sweethearts of Tallapoosa County's soldiers were drafted into the war effort in their own way. "Let the ladies in every neighborhood organize themselves into sewing and knitting societies and thus furnish the boys that have gone" off to war, the *Dadeville Banner* suggested in its October 4, 1861, issue. In this edition, it further stated that "[w]e learn that every member of Captain Meadow's unit has been presented with a pair of socks" by women of a local Ladies Aid Society. In the same edition of the paper, local recruiters for the Horseshoe Rangers, a militia group, extolled the young men of the county to do their civic duty for the Confederacy, saying "[l]et all young men come forward and hang not around their mothers until the war is at their threshold. Don't wait for the old men and women to do battle for your rights." In a February 21, 1861, issue, the *Tallapoosa Times* published an article aimed at reassuring local farmers

of the Confederate government's support for agricultural ventures, saying the Confederate government was sure to "plac[e] it upon an equality with the other great and leading interests of the country." The *Times* also proclaimed that "the formation of a Government for a people almost entirely agricultural in their pursuits... [a change from] the almost total indifference extended to this great interest by the Government" of the United States before secession. Further, the *Times* declared the Southern system of farming "an independent agricultural industry, involving the nicest principles of science – in mechanical [sic], chemical and natural philosophy... properly an object of governmental care and attention: much more so, we insist, than commerce and manufactures, the prosperity of which are almost entirely dependent upon the success of [the] agricultural industry." This type of rhetoric is common in the surviving issues of the *Times*, which was a fiercely patriotic publication and heavily supported the Confederate government, especially into the later war years.¹⁵

Indeed, this topic of patriotism was addressed in a front-page article of the *Times* from March 14, 1863, entitled "Over Zealous" which discussed a move by some in the area to convene a meeting and pledge not to buy goods from Free Soil states. The *Times* urged locals to reconsider this, saying "our weeding hoes, trace chains, shoes and boots, and the clothing we wear and a thousand other articles of merchandise must continue to be purchased from Yankeedom, as much as we may regret it, or the farmer's pocket will feel the smart to an extent not generally thought of." To this end, the *Times* urged locals to

buy secondhand when they could, but otherwise not curtail their purchases should it prove too harsh to their bottom line. However, this was immediately followed by an attack on the publishers of the rival *Dadeville Banner*, accusing them of giving the county a bad name by “the oft repeated charge of Abolitionism made or insinuated against the people of Tallapoosa... [charges] calculated to misrepresent and do misrepresent the sentiments of the people of Tallapoosa county.” So, while perhaps there was a small group of Tallapoosa citizens who favored both Unionism and Abolition, this seems not to have been the common sentiment of the area. And even if it was, those who believed it thought it best to keep quiet about it. Outwardly, the people of the county seem to have wholeheartedly embraced the Confederacy and committed to the fight, especially when one considers that the *Banner* shortly fell out of publication, while the *Times* continued to publish throughout the war, suggesting it was the more popular paper.

On February 4, 1864, the editors of the *Times* asked their readers “[h]ave you given all you can spare? Who is it that keeps the invaders from your homes? One breath from the despot Lincoln would sweep you from your possessions were it not for the soldier,” showing the tremulous situation the area was in at this period, having weathered a raid by Union General Rousseau a few months earlier. In the same article, the editors called once more on the ladies of Dadeville, saying “[w]e recommend that [the ladies of Dadeville] meet at the Baptist Church and organize themselves into a Ladies Aid society and do all they can to relieve the suffering of our brave soldiers.” Similarly, the same issue of the *Banner*

called for “the planters of every State in the Confederacy [to] meet in a general convention... and set a corresponding price upon each and every article of home consumption” and agree not to negotiate other prices for their own benefit. This alludes to the severe consequences of the inflation of Confederate currency in this period and how it hurt many families in the area, as was seen throughout the South. Nevertheless, the article also shows how farmers and planters were expected to bow to civic duty, waving away arguments “that the planter would suffer from such a measure [by questioning], is not every planter willing to suffer a while for the beneficial results of such a measure?”¹⁶

One reason for the somewhat shrill cries for men to sign up for the war or for women of the area to produce knitted goods for their defenders or even for planters to stabilize the means of commerce was the sudden pressure of Union activity in Mississippi and Tennessee and a powerful Union cavalry raid which passed through the area. General Lovell H. Rousseau passed through Tallapoosa County with an aim to damage vital Confederate railroads supplying Georgia to support General Sherman’s campaign there. Starting in the Tennessee River Valley, Rousseau and his men dashed south to Tuskegee and crossed through Tallapoosa County in the process. The rain-swollen Tallapoosa River posed a challenge to Rousseau’s 2,500 men and large baggage train when they reached it late in the evening. However, a ford was found with the reluctant aid of a local African American man despite his fears of reprisal from the local population and Rousseau’s mounted troops crossed there while the baggage

train with its wagons were ferried across.

Overall, the most apparent sign of the raid in the county was some damage to a popular ferry across the Tallapoosa River owned by the local Stowe family, along with the claim of some burned private property, though the amount of damage was limited due to time constraints. Rousseau and his men rode through the night to reach Notasulga in neighboring Macon County, where they damaged a vital rail line before continuing. Traveling on to Loachapoka, Rousseau's men burned a depot acting as an armory, uprooted a long section of track and damaged the rails, cut telegram lines before moving on to Opelika before rejoining Sherman's forces in Columbus, Georgia. The purpose of the raid was, as outlined by the *New York Times*, "to cut certain of the rebel communications and destroy certain of his depots," and perhaps to sow discontent in the Confederate heartland. However, this doesn't seem to have been its ultimate effect, even after a skirmish between the Union cavalry and southern home guard near Tuskegee shattered the safety of rural Alabama, as the *South West Baptist* of Tuskegee stated: "we are gratified at the spirit manifested by our people... Let this raid into the very heart of Alabama arouse our people to organize at once." Despite the calm and resolved rhetoric of the *South West Baptist*, Rousseau's raid did much damage to local railroads and telegraph lines across the heart of Alabama, not to mention shaking Confederate morale despite claims otherwise.

Indeed, this call for fresh troops was echoed by regional defender Brigadier General James Clanton, who explained

in the *Democratic Watchtower* that he had tried to raise a timely and effective defense against Rousseau "but [was unable because his] troops had been taken from him... to be sent to other commands [and he] had but a small force left" to defend against Union incursions. The general sentiment of the raid is best summed up when the *Montgomery Daily Mail* reminded its readers after the raid that "the duty of all in this section was to drop all business, close doors, and hasten to meet the invader. This was not done and we have no right to charge the authorities with neglect or mismanagement. The success of the raiders is due to a lack of the right spirit among the people at home."¹⁷

However, it was not just men that Tallapoosa County provided to the war effort. Even before the war, sulfur, timber, tin, asbestos, and more raw materials were regularly harvested in Tallapoosa County or passed through it enroute to their destination. Also, its well-connected but rural location proved of interest to the Confederate government. Nestled on the edge of Tallapoosa County, in what is today Macon County, the town of Tallassee held what, had it had proper access to materials, could have been a major asset to the Confederacy. In 1864, due to recognition of the vulnerability of Confederate manufacturing in areas such as Selma and Richmond, the Confederate government decided that its new carbine factory would be constructed in Tallapoosa County, which many presumed to be far from any Union sabotage.¹⁸

It was an enterprise fraught with trouble from the beginning; Tallassee was a small town, its city center "consist[ing]

of two widely spaced churches, a store, a tavern and four houses.” Its population was dominated by agricultural and cotton mill laborers, local farming families, and large-scale planters. Indeed, the cotton mills at Tallassee “became a part of the supply system of the Confederacy... manufacturing cloth for uniforms from 1861 until 1863” when the carbine factory was expanded and pushed out the looms. Despite the readily available space and power for the carbine factory, there was not enough housing readily available for the workers. Several houses were built for Confederate officers and their families, while some individuals rented out rooms or spaces for worker housing. Furthermore, it was extremely difficult for the Confederate government to get the necessary supplies to the factory and, as time wore on, to even adequately provision the workers. The run of five hundred carbines produced was limited by these factors and most never even reached the hands of southern soldiers. Considering this, the relocation of the factory to Tallassee was perhaps not worth the effort, even if it did prove to be the only Confederate armory never to fall into Union hands.¹⁹

As with most rural areas of the South reliant on so-called King Cotton, Tallapoosa County suffered economic decline in the years after the Civil War. Also worth mentioning is the human toll of the war, as a comparison of census data from 1860 and 1870 shows a drop in the county’s total population of roughly six thousand people. However, despite lingering resentments, Reconstruction also saw a bevy of northern educators come into the county, replacing private tutors and extending education to a wider number of children both at the

county seat and in the rural areas of the county, as well as to freed slaves who wished to take part. However, economic woes dominated the county during Reconstruction. It, along with Randolph, Chambers, Lee, and Pickens counties, was one of the so-called “strangulated” counties which had incurred heavy debts as a result of failed railroad rebuilding and improvement in 1868 and sought relief from the state government as a result. Though the people of the county had been against secession, a mindset inexorably linked to abolitionism to the modern mind, and rumors of abolitionists had flourished during the Civil War, Tallapoosa County seems to have been a center for the early Ku Klux Klan. Indeed, according to some sources, the county had a chapter “said to have 200 to 300 members... [with] a large element in it of the poorer whites” who saw freed slaves as competition in landownership and paid jobs. Thus, it comes as no surprise that this prompted “a general exodus of negroes who had lived on the richer lands of the larger farms and plantations.” As noted in the *New York Times*, the people of central Alabama could be called “loyal, if loyal means a perfect willingness to submit to the decree of the sword, a manifest disposition to obey all laws... for a speedy restoration of Alabama... to the position she once occupied.”²⁰

However, in the years during and after Reconstruction, an uneasy peace settled over Tallapoosa County. It eventually overcame its economic woes and, as always, its place at the confluence of many roads brought commerce back to the area. But disquiet settled across the county in the years following the freeing of slaves, with voter suppression

and vagrancy laws being used to keep freedmen from voting and perpetuate forced labor in agricultural fields, the local timber industry, and other spheres of labor. Sadly, as with most of the South, this miasma did not lift until the Civil Rights era. One particularly well documented case of this practice of forced labor, or peonage, was the system presided over by local businessman and farmer, John Pace. Pace had arrived in Tallapoosa County in 1879 from Georgia, where he had been raised as part of that state's slaveholder class. This perhaps explains why Pace so readily entered into the peonage system and, according to most sources, was instrumental in its establishment. Elected county sheriff shortly after he arrived, Pace entered a partnership with the local probate judge, developing a system whereby primarily black freedmen were arrested – usually under arbitrary conditions, such as vagrancy – and fined. As most did not have the cash to pay these fines, they were forced to pay the fine through labor, though the added cost of court fees, and the cost of food and board during this period of labor, made it extremely hard for them to pay off their overall debts. This labor could be for county projects, but as time went on, “Pace reached an agreement with the county judge to lease every prisoner sentenced to hard labor, as well as any unable to pay fines or court costs... [which] amounted to nearly every black man arrested” in Tallapoosa County. Pace profited handsomely from the system, expanding his land holdings, opening a sawmill, and hiring white locals to oversee his African American laborers. This would go on into the early 1900s, when the United States Marshals investigated the situation, culminating with Pace being served with

eight indictments on April 4, 1903 in Montgomery for his role in the peonage system, specifically “as the buyer of black men seized by local constables... [with evidence presented that] “one Negro woman had been killed on his farm, that men and women had been force to work nude for lack of clothing, and that the laborers were mercilessly beaten.” Pace declared his innocence to reporters gathered outside the courthouse, stating he merely hired out workers from Coosa and Tallapoosa County officials to work on his farm, insisting they were well treated, and their status was a legal product of local law enforcement.²¹

Pace would later change his story as he gathered three further indictments and much press attention throughout the nation. Indeed, in attempt to subvert this attention, he approached the US attorney for the case and attempted to plead guilty and thus make a trial unnecessary. This was accepted, though his lawyer filed objections to each charge on the status “that the federal peonage statue didn't apply to the acts alleged in the indictments.” The judge overruled the objections and Pace was sentenced to five years in federal custody per charge but “taking into account Pace's infirmity [and age], the judge ruled that the sentences would be served concurrently. For “health reasons,” Pace was allowed to post bond and return to his home until his legal challenges were ruled on. The local government of Tallapoosa County, eager to avoid press attention and a bad reputation, made sure that Pace was seen to be the leader of the peonage system, with a hastily convened grand jury stating: “It is our opinion, that John W. Pace and his convict farm are more responsible, by far, than all others in our



One of five hundred Tallassee Carbines produced at the Tallassee Armory, held as part of the Smithsonian's collection today. (Smithsonian Institution / Wikimedia Commons)

county for the abuse of ignorant and helpless people... [an] evil is practiced by very few in our county, to the detriment of all, and should be discontinued in our county forever.” Despite this tough talk, Pace would remain free virtually for the rest of his life due to the fact the forced labor system of Tallapoosa County did not fit the exact legal definition of peonage. However, the existing system was thoroughly dismantled due to public pressure. This system, from what evidence does survive, does not seem to have been the general mood of the county, but rather the product of Pace and a group of likeminded individuals seeking profit from cheap labor. For example, Mary Shepard, a freed slave who lived in Tallapoosa County all her life and was interviewed by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s did not mention the peonage system, nor did it appear to directly affect her family throughout her life. So, the overall extent of the peonage system and the reach of Pace and his conspirators is not fully understood today.²²

This was perhaps aided by the fact that by the 1910s, Tallapoosa

County was shifting away from large scale agriculture. With its abundant and fast-running rivers and creeks, the county was an early center of hydroelectric power experimentation and by 1916, a young company which would evolve into Alabama Power took an interest in an area of the Tallapoosa River near Dadeville called Cherokee Bluffs. Over the next decade, the lowland areas surrounding Cherokee Bluffs and beyond were bought, at first at top dollar and later for far less than market price, by Alabama Power in preparation for construction of the Thomas W. Martin Dam and the flooding of the area. Some residents held on, hoping the waters would not rise to cover their entire property and stubbornly holding onto land that had been in their family for, on average, two to three generations, with some even filing lawsuits to stop the flooding. However, Alabama Power held firm and the court ruled in their favor. Homesteads were razed, entire graveyards moved, and acre upon acre of timber felled to make way for the rising waters which covered much rich farmland and several old settlements in

the area. For a time, Lake Martin – as the body of water created by the Martin Dam is called – was the largest man-made lake in the world when it finally filled to capacity in 1926. By 1909, reliance on cotton crops and the establishment of numerous small-scale dams, such as one that “supplied... electricity for light and power from a plant on Sandy Creek” just outside what is now downtown Dadeville, led to a boom in hydroelectric power for cotton mills in Dadeville, Alexander City, and Tallassee. However, the tremendous power of dammed water would soon break King Cotton’s hold on Tallapoosa County.²³ Abundant, cheap energy quickly attracted industry. The established textile industry of Tallapoosa County thrived, with Russell Corporation in nearby Alexander City becoming an integral part of the local economy. The relationship between Alabama Power Company and Russell Corporation had started out rather rocky because Russell Corporation had been planning to construct its own dam near Cherokee Bluffs at a site called Buzzard Roost Shoals, and subsequently lost the property to Alabama Power Company in a court battle. However, due to an understanding reached between Alabama Power’s Thomas W. Martin and Russell Corporation founder Benjamin Russell, the relationship improved, and Russell Corporation became one of the first organizations to promote the lake as a recreational spot. As the textile industry declined as a majority employer of the residents of Tallapoosa County, the automotive industry stepped in, drawn by low energy prices and incentives offered by cities around the county. This is not to say that Lake Martin brought about only positive effects on the county, though.²⁴

In the early years of flooding, as

some locals had feared, a seasonal battle with malaria and other mosquito-borne illnesses played out from roughly 1928 until well into 1940. It was around this point when a combination of stocking the lake with fish to eat mosquito larvae, chemical measures, education and aid measures for the local population, and the availability of quinine tablets eased the seasonable troubles. Along with this problem of the lake was the loss of “what old timers say were once pretty bottomlands... [and] the site of Great Oakfuskee Town,” a prominent Muscogee village and trade location, as well as the original county seat. Another settlement lost was Old Susanna, a town to rival Dadeville in size and “known to support a school, gristmill, flourmill, sawmill, blacksmith shop, gold mine, post office and church in the mid-1800s,” all of which were torn down before the land was flooded. The numerous roads that had made the area such a bustling transportation hub were also severely impacted, with many now dead ending into the waters of the lake. To solve this problem, a network of bridges for regular transport and railroad traffic had to be constructed and the course of some roads changed. For all of this, the county’s economy picked itself up and slowly began to shift in focus. Some might argue this shift is still ongoing, even more than ninety years after the vast reservoir filled for the first time.²⁵

Over the years, farming has all but disappeared from Tallapoosa County despite it being the predominate profession of the county in its early days. Today, the waters of Lake Martin draw people to the county, and many make their homes there due to its hospitable climate and friendly community. One

of few things that has not changed over time is that the county is a hub of transportation. In 1973, Highway 280 -- which passes through the center of Dadeville -- was widened to four lanes to allow for more traffic to pass safely. The Highway 280 corridor is a vital link between cities such as Birmingham and Auburn, as well as a link to Highway 49, which leads south to Montgomery.²⁶

In conclusion, Tallapoosa County's long history shows how even reluctant rebels can become devoted soldiers when they feel their lives and families are threatened, as well as reminding one that Unionist sympathies do not equal a pro-abolition mindset, nor one which favors racial equality. During the Civil War, the men of Tallapoosa County responded not just under immediate pressure, but also enlisted for long stretches when they could have returned home as others did. At home, men and women alike found

ways to serve their new country, from knitting socks to manufacturing carbines, keeping their nerve even after a major Union raid passed through the sleepy community. These soldiers showed the mettle of the sons of Tallapoosa County at battlefields across the country, from Port Hudson to Atlanta and Pensacola to Gettysburg. This led into a darker chapter of the county's history, marked by the Ku Klux Klan and the perpetuation of forced labor by African Americans. However, this would abate in Tallapoosa County in the 1920s, when agriculture and its legacy of racial inequality ceased to be the most profitable business in the county. In the end, Tallapoosa County serves as a good case study of how the tensions and difficulties of patriotism, love of family, racial inequality, and more played out across the larger region, from its frontier origins to today.

Lee Rives transferred to AUM from Central Alabama Community College upon completing her Associate's degree and graduated from AUM with her Bachelor's degree and a certificate in museum studies in fall of 2021. During her time at AUM, she joined several honor societies, served as an editor of the *AUM Historical Review* under the guidance of Dr. Gish beginning in 2019, worked as a Peer Mentor in 2020, and won the Richard E. Morse Memorial History Prize twice. Over the summer of 2021, she completed an internship at Pioneer Park in Loachapoka, Alabama which was secured with the help of Dr. Lee Farrow of the History Department. A lifelong history buff, she hopes to work in the museum industry or education, showing old and young alike that history is not a study of dusty tomes and bygone dates, but rather the same cycles of human life which still mark our lives today.

Notes

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- ² Tallapoosa County Bicentennial Commission, *Tallapoosa County: A History*, 16.; Tallapoosa County Heritage Book Committee, *Heritage of Tallapoosa County, Alabama* (Clanton, AL: Heritage Publishing Consultants, 2000) .
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- ⁴ Virginia Noble Golden, *A History of Tallassee for Tallasseeans* (Tallassee, AL: Tallassee Mills of Mount Vernon-Woodberry Mills, 1949), 6-10.; Peter A. Brannon, "Fort Okfuski : a British post on the Tallapoosa River, together with some subsequent history of the site," Tallapoosa County Bicentennial Commission, *Tallapoosa County: A History*; Claire A. Wilson, "Abram Mordecai," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, September 7, 2011; John H. Goff, "The Path to Oakfuskee: Upper Trading Route in Alabama to the Creek Indians," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1955): 152-71.
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- ⁶ Brant and Fuller, eds., *Memorial record of Alabama. A concise account of the state's political, military, professional and industrial progress, together with the personal memoirs of many of its people* (Madison, WI.:Brant & Fuller, 1893) vol 2, 996-1018; Willis Brewer, *Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men from 1540 to 1872* (Montgomery, AL: Barrett & Brown Steam Printers and Book Binders, 1872), 659-60.
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- ¹¹ *Tallapoosa Times*, July 12, 1860.
- ¹² Edward Young McMorries, *History of the First Regiment, Alabama Volunteer Infantry, CSA* (Montgomery, AL: Brown Printing Co., 1904; Brewer, *Alabama: Her History*, 589-591.
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- ¹⁵ *Dadeville Banner*, October 4, 1861 and *Tallapoosa Times*, February 21, 1861.
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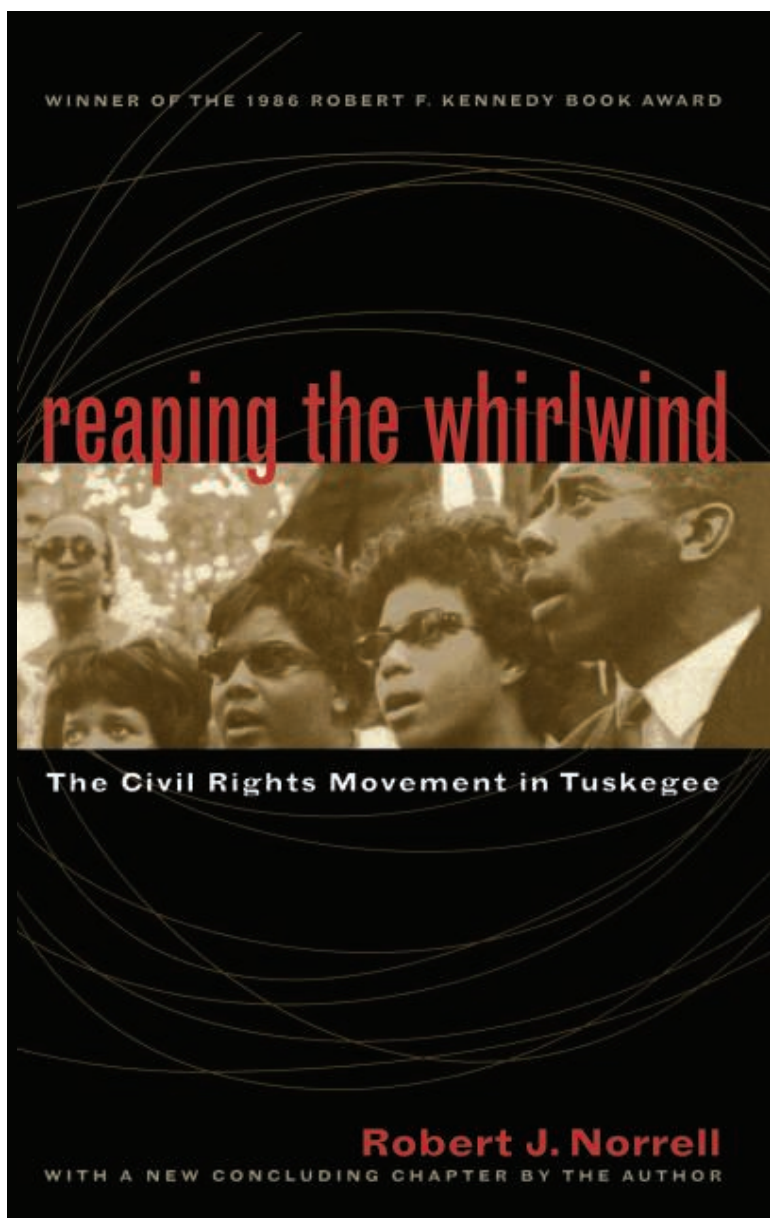
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Review of Robert J. Norrell's Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee

by Kimberlee K. Fernandez



The mid-twentieth century was a monumental historical period for African Americans in the United States. This period marked the dawn of a new era – the Civil Rights Movement. Prior to the mid-twentieth century, the United States, during the post-Reconstruction years until the 1950s and 1960s, was racially segregated and non-whites were third-class citizens. Blacks were treated unequally, unjustly, and had no true protections under the law. The Civil Rights Movement granted non-whites equal rights under the law, granting all US citizens the right to vote, regardless of race. The Civil Rights Movement, and later Civil Rights Acts, were imperative to ending racial discrimination and segregation, as well as enforcing African American enfranchisement. Racial discrimination, segregation, and suppression of African American voters were prominent and publicly practiced throughout the southern states. To study circumstances and events surrounding some of the Alabama Civil Rights Movements, the influential historian and writer Robert J. Norrell presents readers with *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee*. Norrell provides readers with a unique glimpse into the town of Tuskegee, Alabama, during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Norrell's work encompasses the many unique and complex difficulties faced by African Americans in Tuskegee and throughout Macon County, Alabama, with special emphasis on civil rights leaders, such as Booker T. Washington and Charles G. Gomillion. Washington and Gomillion were well-respected, educated, and distinguished leaders in the fight to end African American disenfranchisement and racial discrimination. Norrell chose

to highlight and analyze the struggles of African Americans in Tuskegee because of its unique situation. Tuskegee is home to the historically black college, the Tuskegee Institute (now University), and was the location of the only Veterans Administration hospital for African Americans in Alabama, post-World War I. The white citizens of Tuskegee called the Tuskegee Institute and its small housing complexes a “model community” of blacks during the early twentieth century. For the white populace, there was a “perfect peace,” as they held all the economic and political control throughout Macon County. African Americans were at the mercy of the white political machinery throughout Tuskegee and Macon County. For Norrell, Tuskegee, with its many unique layers, granted him the ability to examine how Booker T. Washington's accommodationist theory, combined with the slow and steady progression of African American education and an increase in societal influence, was exactly what the United States needed to pass the Civil Rights Acts during the 1960s and to overcome white fear and anxiety surrounding African Americans.¹

Norrell's *Reaping the Whirlwind* is not just a historical account of how Macon County purposefully continued to disenfranchise African Americans during the late nineteenth through twentieth centuries. *Reaping the Whirlwind* is a powerful literary work that brings the prominent historical figures to life, capturing the period's most influential African American civil rights leaders and their antagonists, like Judge Varner, in the immortality of written works. The format and layout of Norrell's work provides readers with short, succinct

chapters, placed in chronological order. Each chapter has a main topic of discussion. Norrell presents readers with an in-depth review of each topic, which helps readers develop a broader and deeper understanding of the chapter's historical subject and topic. For example, chapter three discusses Charles G. Gomillion. Norrell provides Gomillion's biographical and educational background, offering readers a brief glimpse into Gomillion's life and the circumstances of his youth. This enables readers to understand how Gomillion filled the power-vacuum in the Tuskegee Institute's black community when Institute President Moton's successor, Frederick Patterson, was unable to fill the void when Moton retired. Norrell's ability to separate historical figures from the events they are associated with provides readers with a better understanding of the individual behind the history. This is a skill few historians master. Norrell not only masters this skill, but he seamlessly blends information from the earlier chapters into future chapters. This leads readers to develop and understand the complex historical contexts surrounding events and allows readers to watch how each event builds upon an earlier one.

Norrell does not limit himself to discussions of prominent African American figures during this period. He also discusses the leading white political figures, providing their background information, which enables readers to contextualize the differences between the white and African American political leaders during this period. This deeper understanding and conceptualization aids and supports Norrell's theories – one of which was that white fear and anxiety were two of the biggest factors

supporting white political domination over African Americans. For example, Norrell draws comparisons between the white progressive Senator Henry Neill Segrest and progressive Governor “Big Jim” Folsom, with the staunch conservatism of Senator Samuel Martin Engelhardt, Jr., throughout chapters four, five, and six. As previously noted, Norrell skillfully combines and builds upon details from previous chapters, allowing readers to fully grasp and contextualize the deep, convoluted web in which the politicians of this period kept African Americans entangled and disenfranchised. As another example, Norrell draws a distinct comparison between Booker T. Washington's accommodationist approach that reassured southern whites, providing them a sense of peace, versus white fear, anxiety, and consternation of sociopolitical and economic change brought on by the “boycott” promoted by Gomillion and the Tuskegee Civic Authority in the late 1950s.²

Norrell's *Reaping the Whirlwind* offers readers a complex and unique narrative describing events leading up to, surrounding, and detailing the aftereffects of the Civil Rights Movement during the mid-twentieth century. This compelling narrative sheds new light on the deep entanglements between the differing factions operating in Tuskegee, Alabama, during this period. Norrell uses excellent primary sources such as federal and state court records, government publications, newspaper articles, as well as documents from the Alabama Department of Archives and History. His secondary sources consist of historical books and articles in combination with personal interviews he conducted. The

combination of sources supports Norrell's claims and provides readers with not only an unforgettable literary work, but one that is also historically accurate. It is rare for historical writers to capture and keep readers' attention throughout the entirety of a historical narrative. Norrell does not have this problem. Although some readers may be aware of the historical events he describes, Norrell's work has readers turning pages, rooting for "Big Jim" Folsom and

Gomillion as they try to overcome racism in the politics of their time. Robert J. Norrell provides readers with an excellent account of events leading to the end of racial discrimination, segregation, and disenfranchisement of Macon County African Americans during the mid-twentieth century. This book is highly recommended for anyone who enjoys historical literature, young or old, and is a valuable addition to any personal library.

Kimberlee Fernandez is a graduate student in the Master of Liberal Arts Program at AUM. She earned her Associate's degree from Enterprise State Community College in 2018 and graduated from AUM with double Bachelor's degrees in English and history in fall of 2021. Her goal is to obtain her Master's degree and share her passion for history and English through teaching composition and survey level courses in the Alabama community college system. She believes that a student cannot understand history without reading the literature of that era, nor can a student understand literature without being familiar with the history of its era. This is the second year Kimberlee has been a part of the *AUM Historical Review* editorial team. Currently, she is a Master Tutor at the Learning Center for AUM's Warhawk Academic Success Center, President of AUM's English Honor Society (Sigma Tau Delta), and President of AUM's English Club.

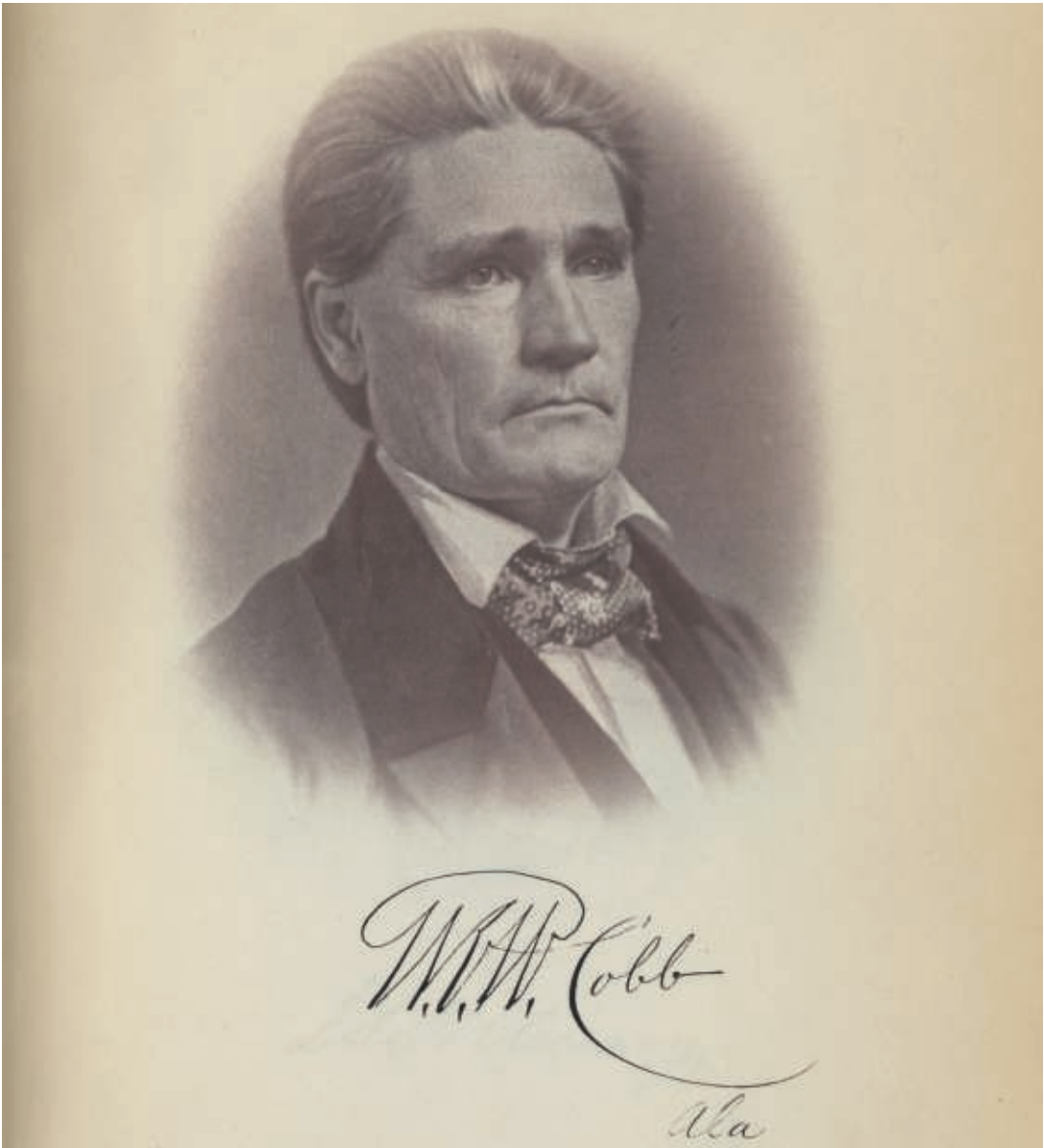
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Williamson Cobb: Unionist Confederate Congressman

by Graeme DePace



Williamson R. W. Cobb was popular with the common folk of North Alabama and was known to be well spoken but down to earth, however he could comfortably take the look of a politician as well. (Julian Vannerson / Wikimedia Commons)

Between the years of 1861-1865, Alabama saw its fair share of tumult, sending thousands of men to fight in the bloody conflict between the Union and the Confederacy. In the later years of the conflict, Alabama saw ever increasing engagements inside the borders of the state with each year bringing more Union incursions despite Alabama's location in the Deep South. However, physical conflict and social strife was not the only thing Alabama experienced on the home front. There was also a large degree of political turmoil and fracturing. One of the lesser known but especially relevant conflicts that appeared in Civil War Alabama was the dispute over loyalties. Many of the more southern counties in Alabama were majority Secessionist, and their allegiance lay with the Confederacy. However, throughout Alabama, especially in some northern counties, there was a considerable number of citizens whose loyalties remained with the Union. This led to important political developments throughout the war, including attempts by some of these Unionists to restore Alabama to its rightful place in the national fold.

Williamson R. W. Cobb provides a case study which helps to illuminate these anti-Confederate political developments throughout the Civil War years. The incumbent Alabama Congressman for Alabama's third district was beaten by a Secessionist in the running for the First Confederate Congress of 1861. However, in 1863 Cobb would run again, beating two opponents and becoming, arguably, one of the strongest Unionists elected to Alabama's congressional delegation. This raises questions that should be answered: How did such an overt Unionist manage to get elected to one

of Alabama's seats in the Confederate Congress, and did he achieve any political change? It can be argued in response to these questions that Cobb was elected to due to lingering support from his former constituency, an expanding peace minded base in the hill counties of his district, and division among the opposing war party's platform. However, despite popular support and serious potential, Cobb would fail to achieve much with his political platform. Refusing to attend Congress and subsequently being expelled from it, Cobb would die before he could make a more meaningful impact.

The historiography on Cobb is limited, and surprisingly lacking in some cases. No works have been specifically committed to the study of Cobb and his activity during the Civil War, though works which touch on topics such as Alabama politics and Unionism sometimes mention him. However, even in these works there is not much focus given to Cobb and his place within Alabama history. One of the definitive works on Alabama Unionism and Unionists, Margaret Storey's *Loyalty and Loss*, neglects to mention Cobb even once in the index of the work. The earliest historical works simply outline the basic facts of Cobb's life and political activity, such as Willis Brewer's *Alabama, Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men, From 1540 to 1872*.¹

Two discrepancies in historical works arise following this period, one questioning Cobb's loyalty to the Union and the other raising questions about his death. An early twentieth century history written by Walter Fleming titled *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* describes Cobb as an opportunist who

was “for the Confederacy as long as he thought it would win; when luck changed, he proceeded to make himself safe.”² Contemporary works such as Christopher McIlwain’s *Civil War Alabama* and Ben Severance’s *A War State All Over* do not bother to address the question of Cobb’s loyalty to the Union, since their evidence and arguments prove that he was sincere in his expressed beliefs. *Civil War Alabama* consistently refers to Cobb as a Unionist,³ and in *A War State All Over*, Severance clearly illustrates Cobb’s loyalty to the Union, describing his view of the Confederacy as “a government that he [Cobb] despised.”⁴ The second discrepancy is based on a varied description of Cobb’s death. Brewer and Fleming, in agreement with local newspapers from the time, attribute Cobb’s death to a discharge of his own pistol, thus making it an accident.⁵ However, in *Civil War Alabama*, McIlwain argues that Cobb was in fact assassinated, likely by Confederate guerillas.⁶ Of the two differences, the question of Cobb’s loyalty is more significant and simultaneously easier to resolve and will be answered in this article.

Williamson R. W. Cobb was born in Jackson, Tennessee in 1807 and his family moved to Madison County in Alabama in 1809. Coming from particularly humble beginnings, Cobb would work as a clock peddler and then in retail, while also being involved in agriculture. He got his start in politics when elected to the Alabama State House of Representatives in 1844. In 1847 he was elected to congress and would continue to hold his seat until 1861 when he was beaten by John P. Ralls. In 1863, however, he prevailed in the congressional elections but refused to take his seat when

the Confederate Congress convened. Cobb spent some time in political agitation, seeking to raise support for the cause of peace and reintegration into the Union until his death on November 1, 1864. Cobb was a tall and well-built man who was proficient at speaking, but down to earth enough to win the favor of “the common man.” As Brewer describes it, Cobb was especially popular with the “humble and unlearned,” and given his Jacksonian political views this is no surprise.⁷

To say that Cobb held to a Jacksonian view of politics refers to the political ideology that emerged during Andrew Jackson’s time in the presidency of the United States. Named after the president, this political view was democratic, and sought to expand the rights and protections of poor or working-class white men. This protection specifically combatted the influence and control of the governing and economic elite. Historian William S. Belko explains Jacksonian Democracy’s fundamental principles as “equal protection of the laws; an aversion to a moneyed aristocracy, exclusive privileges, and monopolies, and a predilection for the common man; majority rule; and the welfare of the community over the individual.”⁸ Many of these principles are what Cobb held to and promoted, and the people of Northern Alabama, easily described as common men, confidently placed their trust in him to serve in congress on their behalf.

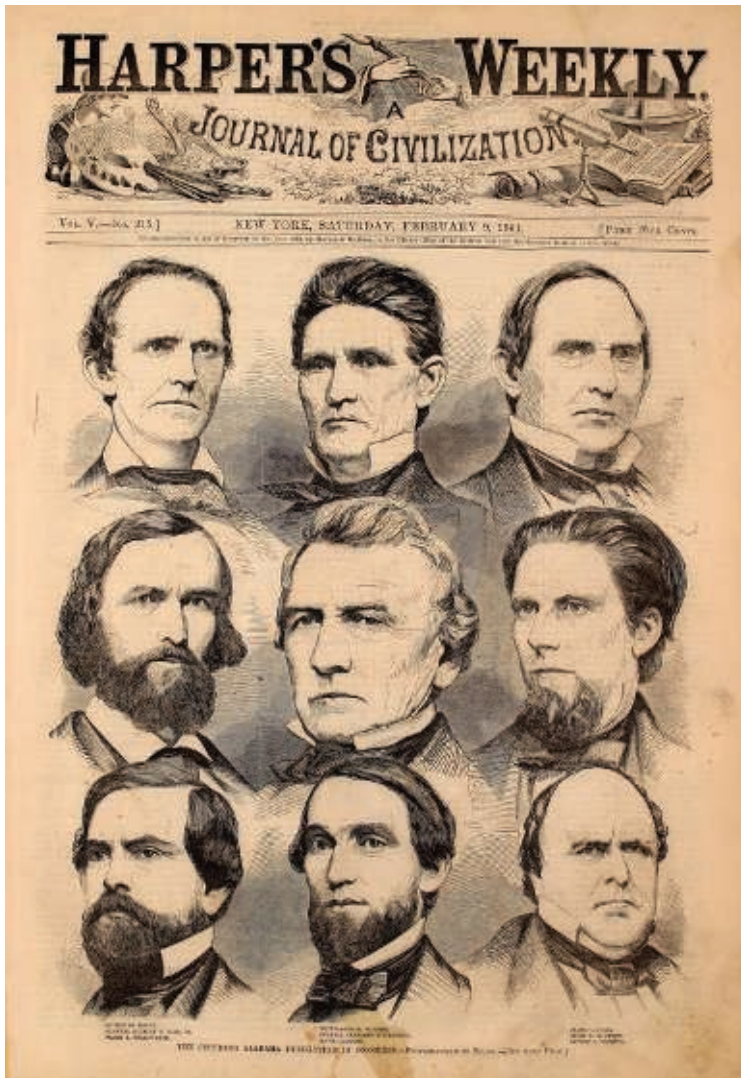
The question of Cobb’s loyalty to the Union can be settled by observing the position he took at the start of the secession crisis and his well-known status towards the end of his life in 1864.

When Alabama seceded from the Union, every one of Cobb's fellow congressmen from Alabama left the United States Congress quickly, resigning their seats to join the cause of the new Confederacy. Cobb, however, did not follow his fellow congressmen but delayed his departure until the last possible moment and only after he received a copy of Alabama's Ordinance of Secession. In Cobb's address to congress at his departure, his language makes clear his desire to maintain the Union but be loyal to his state. He frankly explained that he "had hoped from the beginning that something would have been done to preserve the integrity of the Union."⁹ His reluctance to see the country divided in two is even more apparent towards the end of his address when he urged Congress to take action to resolve the conflict between the North and South before the formation of the Confederacy would be formalized in early February. He stated emphatically at the conclusion of his address, "I trust that you will do something; that peace and harmony may be restored; that your families and our families, that have mingled so long in social harmony, may not be called upon to shed each other's blood; and that peace may reign from the rising to the setting sun, and from the [Great] Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico."¹⁰ It is apparent that, at the start of the secession crisis, Cobb could not be described as fully committed to the Confederacy. Indeed, as Malcom McMillan described it through his editorial comment in the *Alabama Confederate Reader*, Cobb was "opposed to secession."¹¹

Perhaps a more accurate description of Cobb would state that he was loyal to the Union but committed

to his state. He expressed this in the final words of his speech as he ties himself to the fate of Alabama. His final sentences, as he expresses his good will to the other members of Congress, conclude with the statement that he must "return, as I have said, to my dear Alabama, where the bones of my father and my mother rest; to defend their ashes, and to share the fate of those to whom I am closely bound, be it for weal or for woe."¹² However, as events throughout the war progressed it would become more apparent that Cobb's loyalty was solidly with the Union, and his real desire was to restore Alabama to its former place in said Union. The fact of Cobb's anti-Confederate views was so well known by 1864 that the Confederate Congress that he had been elected to adopted a resolution on May 3 opening an investigation into reports of his disloyalty.¹³ The result of this investigation would lead to the expulsion of Cobb from the Confederate Congress in a unanimous vote on November 17, 1864.¹⁴ Cobb was a Unionist throughout the war, and was no doubt well known as one by the time of the 1863 elections, and yet, he succeeded in defeating his pro-Confederate opponents during said elections. This resurfaces the question of why a Unionist such as Cobb was elected.

The loyalty that voters had to Cobb in the isolated hill counties of Alabama is important when explaining his success in the 1863 Confederate Congressional elections. These loyalties developed through the years 1847-1861 as Cobb consistently defended the common man's rights and expanded their opportunities. While these loyalties were no doubt strained in the 1861 elections when Cobb lost to John Ralls, they



While Cobb was firmly against the secession of Alabama from the Union, his loyalty to the state won out, and he is pictured here (top row, center) as part of the seceding Alabama Delegation in Congress of 1861. (after Mathew Brady / Wikimedia Commons)

persisted and led to rekindled support for Cobb in the 1864 election. To understand why Cobb commanded such respect and loyalty from his voters, one only needs to look at his voting record and activity in Congress in the years from 1847-1861. For an example of his Jacksonian political view, consider a speech he gave in 1851 concerning the construction of a railroad and the improvement of

land value in north Alabama. Cobb's description of the issue makes clear that he was fighting for the common man, explaining that "for the members of the old States to be opposed to liberal measures for their younger sisters [public land grants and a railroad] ... is not at all surprising, when they have so little idea of the toil and labor it has cost the hardy sons of the Southwest... opening

up highways, building churches, mills, in their country.”¹⁵ This demonstrated Cobb’s commitment to the white non-slaveholding yeomen, or hardy sons of the Southwest, whom he represented. In turn they had confidence that Cobb, as a self-made man himself, would defend them as working men and protect their interests. However, the pinnacle of Cobb’s political record was his proposal to Congress of the Graduation Act of 1854, an act which required the price of land to decrease the longer it took to sell. This act lowered the price of vast tracts of land in northern Alabama, allowing many of the yeomen farmers who supported Cobb to expand their landholdings and increase their prosperity, which only increased Cobb’s unpopular image among the slaveholding class. This legislation would solidify Cobb’s support from his district as evidenced by his undefeated election record for the next seven years.

Leah Atkins’s work *Williamson R. W. Cobb and the Graduation Act of 1854* is important to reference at this point, as it provides clearer insights into Cobb’s favor with his voters. Atkins describes early on what is often referred to as demagoguery on the part of Cobb.¹⁶ He would win the votes of the people by many means, from chewing on onions to composing and singing songs – “Cobb’s plain folk were delighted by his antics.”¹⁷ One of Cobb’s key political songs was “The Homestead Bill,” in which he sang about the common man’s desire to own property, which the government could provide given it still owned much of the land in northern Alabama. This shows his focus and understanding on the needs of the poor, mountain dwelling population he represented, which is why he would eventually introduce the Graduation Act.

While Atkins’s article focusses heavily on the impact Cobb’s bill had for new territories springing up in the west, she does note that Cobb’s intention behind his bill was not to lower the price of land in these western states and territories. Instead, Cobb’s primary purpose was to represent “the interests of his mountain constituents by advocating cheap public lands.”¹⁸ There should be no doubt, given his success in achieving lowered prices, that his constituents were indeed thankful.

However, Cobb’s campaigning and work done for the common men of northern Alabama was not received quite so well by the rich planter class that also had a significant presence in the northern counties. The main reason for this, of course, was because “Cobb was able to defeat the best men the Huntsville aristocracy could send against him.” Cobb’s ability to stand against the elites was impressive, and many men of the same aristocracy hated him for it. C. C. Clay Jr., a prominent politician out of Huntsville who was defeated by Cobb, wrote that he had “been beaten by an ass for the H. of Rep.” Furthermore, Clay echoes the notion that Cobb’s popularity was simply because of his ignorant voting base, claiming that those who cannot or are not able to read would always vote for such a man as Cobb, instead of voting for a seemingly more qualified politician.¹⁹

Voters did not simply favor Cobb in the 1863 election because he had represented them well in the past. To explain Cobb’s success, it is also necessary to understand the domestic, economic, and military situations in Alabama in the months leading up to the 1863 election. Throughout the war, the

South had struggled to maintain pace with an ever increasingly militarized and industrialized North. This only became more apparent as the war dragged on into 1863 and the Confederacy struggled more and more to maintain its military and domestic unity. As the Confederate army ran low on manpower reserves, the Confederacy introduced conscription acts which were resented by many, as something which unfairly affected those of the lower classes. As Douglas Purcell succinctly states, “the conscription laws were very unpopular.”²⁰

A main reason attributed to this unpopularity was how the conscription laws worked. One was able to avoid conscription either by paying a large sum of money, hiring a substitute, or by taking advantage of the “Twenty Negro Law,” a law which allowed men to escape conscription if they were responsible for twenty or more slaves. Of course, many of the more well-off slaveholders and elites were able to avoid military service through one of these means, while the average yeoman was left either having to dodge conscription all together or submit and enlist for military service. Added to this, in many places, conscription was seen as an attack on state’s rights. Given that secession was about constitutional rights, such acts which demanded military service were an outrage to many.²¹ In other places the laws were simply frustrating to the local population and meant that men who did not wish to serve the Confederacy had to.²² This resistance to conscription was focused in opposition to the efforts of Gideon Pillow who organized and oversaw the Conscription Bureau in Alabama. One of Pillow’s largest obstacles to overcome was “at least ten thousand Tory conscripts

and deserters hiding out in the hills” of northern Alabama.²³

There were other laws that the Confederate government passed which were not well received by the people of Alabama. In fact, laws passed by the Confederate government were not only opposed by the people but were in some cases even opposed by the states as well. This only worked to strengthen any disaffection the people had toward the Confederate government and its laws. Firstly, there were the impressment laws, which meant that farmers had to sell whatever supplies the government needed and accept whatever price the government would offer for them. For a multitude of reasons, these prices were almost always below market value. Added to this was the tax-in-kind law which required that one-tenth of whatever a farmer produced be provided to the Confederate government. These two alone combined to weaken loyalty to and create outright opposition to the Confederacy among the yeomanry. A final action taken by the Confederate government which was seen as cause for disloyalty was the suspension of *habeas corpus* by Confederate President Jefferson Davis. As historian Georgia Tatum states, “it was not difficult to convince many people, when Davis asked for the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, that he was aiming at absolute power.”²⁴

Combined with this were the many simple struggles that had arisen for the Southern people because of the war. Fleming explains that “when the men went away to the army, poor families began to suffer for the necessaries of life... the suffering was greater in the white counties, where slaves were

relatively few.”²⁵ Unlike the North, the South struggled to produce enough resources to provide both for its army and for its people, and as a result, in many places there were shortages of food and extreme price gouging. What’s more, even when there were resources available and in plenty in some parts of the state, bad infrastructure, lack of transportation and railways, meant they would not get to the destitute part of the state that needed them.²⁶ Alabama suffered its fair share of these hardships and shortages throughout the war, as evidenced by such events as the Mobile bread riots, which saw women marching the streets “carrying banners reading ‘Bread or Blood’ and ‘Bread and Peace.’”²⁷ Of course, this suffering and shortage was especially prevalent in the northern counties where Cobb found his support. One large reason for shortages was Union raids which exhausted supplies in many places. An example of northern Alabama suffering from these raids is Huntsville, which was raided an astounding twenty-one times before 1863 had even come to an end.²⁸ Such suffering played no small part in the growing discontent and disloyalty to the Confederacy among the families of yeomen.

These events and the progression of the war also affected morale and the commitment to the cause in Alabama. 1863 had seen some of the fiercest and most concerning conflicts of the war, in some sense, to Alabamians. The Battle of Gettysburg took place in the first days of July 1863, resulting in a Confederate loss. On July 4, Vicksburg would be surrendered by Confederate General John Pemberton, opening the way for Union penetration into Southern territories via access to the Mississippi.²⁹ As incursions

continued to take place deeper and deeper into Confederate territory, many began to doubt the Confederacy’s ability to defend their land. These sorts of concerns and controversy did little to instill Alabama voters with confidence in the Confederacy. It was as these Confederate losses took place in 1863 that the group of dissidents grew to be much larger than it had been before, dissidents who were looking for someone to plead their case, someone like Cobb.³⁰

These concerns were intensified for the residents of north Alabama due to their particular experiences. As early as 1862, Federal troops made incursions into north Alabama, and would continue to wreak havoc on north Alabama throughout the rest of the year. Georgia Lee Tatum describes the situation in her book *Disloyalty in the Confederacy*, explaining that “the Federals marched to and fro across north Alabama, robbing, destroying, and murdering. The suffering of the people was almost beyond imagination.” Even the Union Commander in the area, General O. M. Mitchel, affirmed that the Alabamians suffered “robberies, rape, arson, and plundering” at the hands of the lawless men associated with the Union.³¹ The military prospects were dark enough by 1863 to cause many in north Alabama to wonder if the Confederacy could last, and prompted many more to question their loyalty to it.

Cobb’s constituency was uniquely situated in Alabama, being all but cut off from the lower portion of the state. The northern section of the state lacked railway connections to the south and as such was distanced from it by a journey of several days. Additionally, it was

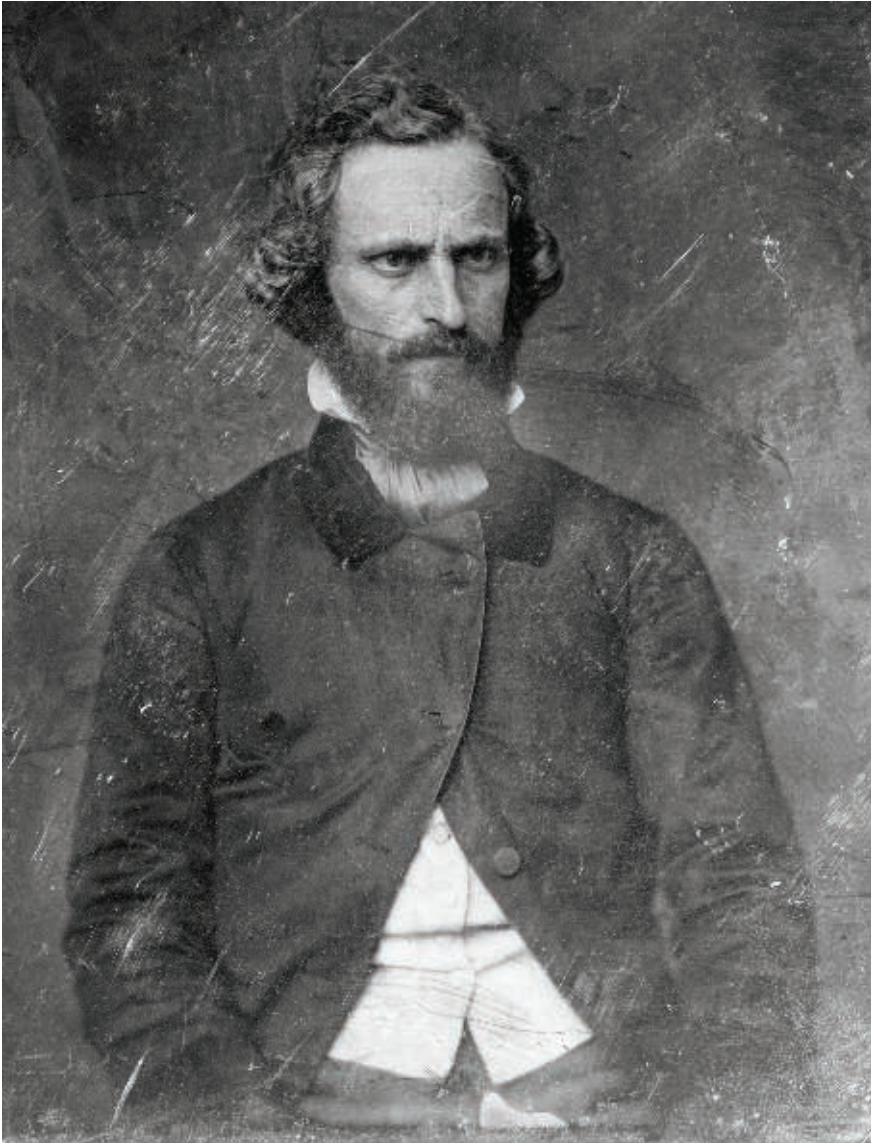
often politically opposed to the positions coming out of the capital in Montgomery. In many ways, this area of north Alabama more resembled Tennessee in its culture, and geographically it was rightly a part of Tennessee, not Alabama.³² This suggests that north Alabama, while being poorer in some areas, and suffering economically and domestically like the rest of the state, almost instinctively sought independence from Alabama and the Confederacy in favor of better conditions and government.

Not only was there nascent concern and unrest growing in the Confederacy in the months leading up to the August election, but there was in fact what some called outright disloyalty to the Confederacy and its cause in the war. The formation of many disparate movements which desired peace with the Union came to be known as the Peace Society, and it was a significant factor in the 1863 elections. As dissatisfaction with the war effort grew and a general spirit of war exhaustion increased, many Alabamians in the northern counties began to consider peace with the North as desirable. As Fleming describes these different movements for peace, he explains that “often these organizations were formed for purposes bordering on treason; often not so, but only for constitutional opposition to the administration.”³³

The existence of the Peace Society was well known to the leaders of the Confederacy, and an investigation by H. W. Walker for General Bragg into the Peace Society convinced him not only its widespread existence, but the disparate paths to its overall goal of peace for the South. He explained

that “its real teachings are as varied as the communities or even the men to which they are imparted.”³⁴ Some groups, as Fleming’s statement suggests, simply were tired of the strain and war and desired to be rejoined to the Union, an idea clearly treasonous to the Confederacy. However, it is undeniable that one of the main objectives of the Peace Society was to encourage desertion and disrupt the Confederate Army and its operations. In this purpose the society was immensely successful, and north Alabama played no small part in supporting that purpose. In fact, by 1864, there were vast numbers of deserters and draft dodgers seeking refuge in Alabama, amounting to an estimated six thousand men. These deserters were especially concentrated in the mountainous regions of north Alabama, where it was much easier to avoid detection by the Confederates.³⁵

Significant in a discussion of the Peace Society is the fact that its origins have been, most probably, traced to the north Alabama and east Tennessee area which is under consideration here.³⁶ It is helpful to remember that a large portion of the population that made up these northern counties had always been Unionists, even since the beginning of the war; they simply were not always heard, and their ideas were not necessarily expressed. Alternatively, many simply doubted the possibility of the Confederacy’s success in its effort to secede. As the war progressed and lack of support for the war increased, its opponents and dissidents simply grew louder. An unofficial peace party had developed in the Confederacy, which was born in the early years of the war and would influence politics in many of the



Clement Claiborne Clay, or C. C. Clay Jr., an established politician out of Huntsville, despised Cobb and believed his popularity with the “ignorant” masses won him elections in the state, rather than his quality as a politician. (Mathew Brady / Wikimedia Commons)

northern counties of the state.³⁷

It is relevant to note the political power of the Peace Society, which worked to affect disloyalty and disrupt the Confederacy at every turn. As Georgia Tatum describes it, “the order was a dangerous instrument in the hands of disloyal and designing politicians, and

did much harm.”³⁸ No doubt the Peace Society worked to disrupt any efforts of a man loyal to the Confederacy attempting to regain his seat in congress, representing the hill counties of Alabama. The Peace Society worked hard at political disruption. The 1863 elections saw many anti-war candidates elected to positions in Alabama government,

many of them concentrated in the northern counties. Among those elected was Williamson Cobb, who no doubt had support from the Peace Society in his campaign efforts.³⁹ However, the influence of the Peace Society and such movements in north Alabama can be overstated and should not be. Severance argues in *A War State All Over* that the impact of these peace movements were severely limited, pointing to the fact that pro-Confederate leaders retained many of the governmental seats, the state's new congressional delegation maintained earlier war policies, and at the popular level "several thousand more Alabamians donned the rebel uniform."⁴⁰

Fleming's statement points to another type of dissident, namely those who were not necessarily committed to the Union but were rather unimpressed with the Confederate government's prosecution of the war and chances of succeeding in the conflict. While many of these lost all support for the Confederacy and began to look elsewhere to find hope that the suffering and hardship of war might end, some still desired to maintain independence or continue the Confederacy in some form. One such example of a call for peace in hopes of some sort of preservation of the South's dignity and honor is found in the words of William F. Samford, a planter from Macon County, who wrote to Henry A. Wise, who was a Confederate general from Virginia, "on some practical terms, in some proper way, and the sooner the better let us have peace!"⁴¹ Such dissidents did not assuredly support well known Unionists such as Cobb. In fact, Samford himself was deeply loyal to the Confederacy and did not pen these words until 1864, well after the election of 1863

which Cobb won. This demonstrates that not all the disgruntled residents of Alabama, and even north Alabama, turned their attention towards Cobb. Many simply hoped and sought some other way to save the Union than by continuing the conflict.

While Cobb clearly ran in 1863 in hopes of beating his competition, it is not clear what sort of action he took to secure his election. Cobb's opposition in the pro-war party, due to fear of Cobb and his electability, unwittingly secured his election for him. Cobb's primary opponent in the early stages of the election was John Ralls, the opponent who defeated him in 1861. Ralls was a new politician when he was elected in 1861 to the Confederate Congress. Coming out of Cherokee county, Ralls was a well-respected country doctor and slaveholder. He was committed to the Confederacy and served quietly during his term as Congressman. One of Ralls's great failings however, as Severance describes it, was his lack of dynamism, "a personality shortcoming that would adversely affect his prospects for reelection."⁴² In 1863 the war party doubted Ralls's chances at reelection, as popular support for him suffered partly due to his personality, and his appearance of favoring hard war policies over the people.

To compensate for this Colonel James L. Sheffield stepped into the running. A military man who had a more moderate position on the issues of secession and the war, but who was also a patriot and war hero, he stood a good chance of bringing home a victory. He, like Ralls, was a small-time planter and owned slaves. He was also involved in

commerce and law, and brought some political experience to the election, having served in Alabama's state legislature. Sheffield was most widely celebrated due to his actions taken in support of the Confederacy, namely raising the Forty-Eighth Alabama Infantry Regiment with his own money and leading the regiment throughout much of the war. Such a record won him much favor with soldiers, whose vote was important. However, such soldiers often did not have the ability to vote, since the state constitution contained no provision for absentee balloting.⁴³

If only one of the two pro-war candidates had run there would have been the possibility one of them could have edged out Cobb in the election. If either Sheffield or Ralls had campaigned unopposed by their own parties' candidate, then their support may have been greater. Given that both candidates ran, fundamentally opposed to each other and to Cobb, they split the pro-war vote and thereby secured Cobb's victory. The final election results demonstrate this with Cobb bringing in 2,111 votes, Ralls 966, and Sheffield 582.⁴⁴ However, this does not mean that if only one had ran then they would surely have beaten Cobb. Even if the votes Ralls and Sheffield received are combined, Cobb still comfortably leads, which suggests that a pro-war candidate would have had a much harder time defeating the populist demagogue which Cobb was known as. Even with the possibility of including the soldiers' votes, the margin would have been much closer, but Cobb could still have won.

Cobb's election in 1863 was extremely significant. Cobb was one

of two true Unionists from Alabama elected to the Confederate Congress in that year, the other being Marcus Cruikshank from Talladega, another upstate county. The question of Cobb's impact on the course of political events is the logical progression of thought. However, if a general statement can be made which captures what Cobb's impact was at this point in the conflict and in Alabama politics, it should be described as minimal. For one, Cobb refused to take his seat in Congress. When the first session was called, Cobb was noticeably absent and never joined the session at any later date. If he had, given his record as a skilled politician, there are reasons to believe he could have achieved some success in raising support for, or at least raising awareness of, a desire for peace. However, as has already been noted, Cobb's life would come to an untimely end on November 1, 1864. Had Cobb continued to live and remained politically active, he may have had an impact that may have been more significant than anything he had achieved up to this point.

In actuality, there are many indications that, while Cobb refused to attend the session of the Confederate Congress, he did remain politically active. What is more, there is evidence which suggests that Lincoln planned to appoint him military governor of Alabama in the event of Union occupation of the state. These two facts are unsurprising. Firstly, Cobb continued to agitate and raise support for the peace movement in his home county of Jackson, in the months between the election in August 1863 and his death in November 1864. His activity was so pronounced that at one point he led Jackson in a vote to rejoin the

Union.⁴⁵ The fact of his activity was well known to many, and the *Mobile Daily Advertiser* picked up on “reports... that he [Cobb] has gone to the Yankees.”⁴⁶ Of course, this newspaper was mocking Cobb for his disloyalty to the Confederacy, but the scope of his activity was well known to many.

Cobb’s political activity was enough to draw the attention and, according to McIlwain, “it is certainly reasonable to assume that Confederates saw Cobb as a serious threat that needed to be neutralized.”⁴⁷ McIlwain even goes so far as to attribute Cobb’s death to an assassination by rogue Confederate guerillas, no doubt prompted by his public political activity. More provoking in some sense was the news that was spreading concerning Cobb’s potential appointment by Lincoln to some position of authority, or even the military governorship of Alabama. The *Richmond Daily Dispatch* notes that at the time of Cobb’s death he was about to assume military governorship of Huntsville.⁴⁸ Such suspicions were echoed by other newspapers, relaying the fact that Cobb was believed to have been a potential military governor in Alabama, in the event of a Union takeover. A Philadelphia newspaper echoed the idea that Cobb was in line to participate more actively with the Union cause. The newspaper claimed that “his [Cobb’s] influence, which may soon be exerted, in view of Sherman’s operations, may tell with fearful effect upon the Rebel cause in Alabama and Georgia.”⁴⁹ This was unsurprising and is in line with other beliefs about Cobb’s consistent contact with Union forces, and even the Union government.

A plaguing question when considering Cobb’s election to the Confederate Congress is what had he hoped to achieve by running? It seems from a historical perspective that he had no intention of taking his seat and serving as a part of the Congress, yet he ran for the position in his district and won the election. Perhaps the real intention was as Severance suggests in *A War State All Over*, the achievement of “an important victory for the antiwar movement,” and his ability to claim that he had “denied the hardliner John Ralls his bid for reelection.”⁵⁰ Perhaps Cobb simply desired to regain the position of congressman that he had held for so long in his district in the years leading up to the war. It is understandable to think that, after holding the same seat in Congress for so long, Cobb had in many ways come to believe that the seat was his, thus prompting him to seek to regain it. Even more so, it could be that Cobb simply wanted to make a show and flaunt his opposition to the Confederacy clearly and powerfully.

All hypotheticals aside, what is clear is that Cobb had straightforward intentions as to what he hoped to achieve in north Alabama, a hope which revolved squarely around cooperation with the Union. Given that Cobb was an experienced politician it is no doubt possible to claim that at the very least he hoped to disrupt the Confederate Congress and its proceedings, if only for a short time, by stealing the election from Confederates such as Ralls and Sheffield. The position most easily arrived at would be to assume that all of these had some effect on Cobb and his desire to run for a seat in the Confederate Congress in 1863.

The causes for Cobb's success in the Confederate Congressional election of 1863 are readily apparent. For one, Cobb had been a staunch defender of the everyday working-class men that populated the districts he had represented for fourteen years, and when the time came for them to look again for someone to defend their rights against elites, he was their man. Secondly, the common Southern citizens had a growing list of reasons for which to be concerned about the prosecution of the war, as their economic and domestic situations degraded, and as the North made deeper incursions into Confederate territory. Combined with this was an active movement all throughout north Alabama, a network which was committed to promoting the cause of peace and ending the war that so many began to see as unnecessary or unwinnable. The final and most important cause of Cobb's success was

splitting of the loyal Confederate votes between the two candidates Ralls and Sheffield, a split which guaranteed Cobb's election. Even combined, Ralls and Sheffield's votes did not surpass Cobb's, but one opponent could have campaigned more effectively and raised more sustained support.

While the purpose Cobb hoped to achieve through his election is unclear, Cobb continued to be politically active throughout the final year of his life, working to stir support for the Union, and working with the Union to form a stable government in Union-occupied territory. What Cobb's life and political career demonstrate is an often overlooked anti-war and anti-Confederate movement which was present from the start of secession in Alabama, and throughout the South, a movement which did its fair share in working for the cause of peace and for the restoration of the Union.

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Notes

- ¹ Willis Brewer, *Alabama, Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men: from 1540 to 1872* (Montgomery, AL: Barrett & Brown, 1872); Margaret Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2004).
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- ³ Christopher L. McIlwain, *Civil War Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2016), 151, 167, 220.
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The Ghost of Nanjing: A Massacre's Legacy

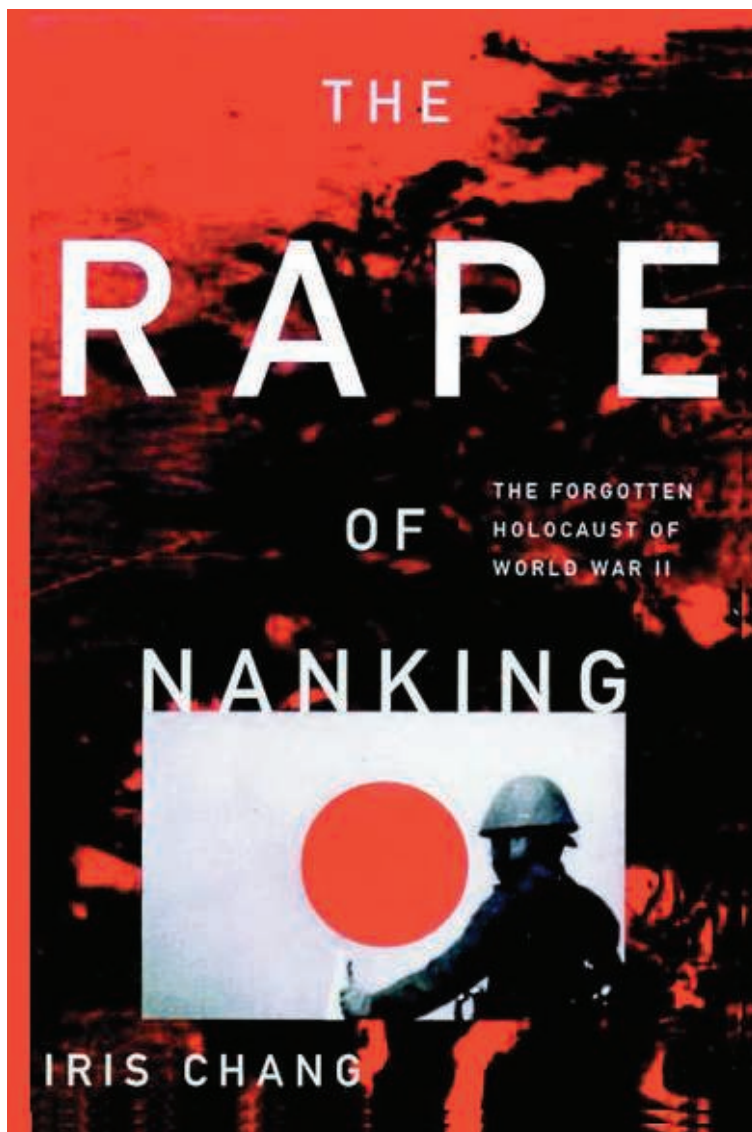
by Jennifer Go

The Nanjing Massacre was an invasion of Nanjing, China by the Imperial Japanese Army during the Sino-Japanese War. The massacre began in December of 1937, two years prior to the beginning of World War II. Thousands of Chinese soldiers were hunted down and killed, countless women were raped, and neither children nor elders were spared as entire families were murdered indiscriminately. By the end of the war, nearly half of the city had been looted and razed to the ground. The actual number of deaths in the Nanjing Massacre is unknown, though the Chinese casualties are often estimated to be around 250,000 to 300,000 people.¹ The study of Nanjing varies drastically by country, as different authors and historians attempt to unveil the truth. The lack of official records regarding the Nanjing Massacre is often attributed to the Japanese government's attempts to revise its past and alter the way the massacre was remembered.

Discussion surrounding the Nanjing Massacre first reemerged in the late 1990s as many Chinese American activists began drawing attention to the war crimes committed by Japan during World War II. In 1996, journalist Iris Chang published a book about the Nanjing Massacre on the 60th anniversary

of the tragedy. In the book, which was titled *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, Chang detailed the brutal slaughter and abuse that hundreds of thousands of Chinese people experienced at the hands of the Japanese army. Though the book was widely praised and quickly became a best-seller, Chang was met with an onslaught of criticism. Many historians accused her of misinformation and inaccuracies, questioning her credibility to conduct an accurate historical study as a journalist, while others believed the book was nothing more than conjecture and anti-Japanese propaganda. In the years following the initial release of *The Rape of Nanking*, multiple books refuting Chang's claims were published. Among these authors were Masahiro Yamamoto, who wrote *Nanking: Anatomy of Atrocity* in 2000, and Takashi Yoshida, the author of *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking": History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States* in 2006. Both books were written in response to the revived interest in Nanjing, with Yamamoto seemingly justifying the invasion and Yoshida focusing more on the origins of the different interpretations of Nanjing's history.

Iris Chang was a Chinese American journalist and political activist



The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II by Iris Chang, copyright © 1997. Reprinted by permission of Basic Books, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc.

who specialized in writing about the experiences of Asian immigrants and their families in America. Her interest in Nanjing began at a young age; as a child, she grew up hearing stories about the Sino-Japanese War from her parents, who had grown up in China during World War II. Though neither of Chang's parents had witnessed the Nanjing Massacre themselves, they shared the

accounts of their own parents with their daughter, emphasizing the tragedy's importance.² This childhood connection with the Nanjing Massacre would later inspire Chang to work with other Asian American activists trying to publicize Japanese war crimes during World War II and eventually begin researching for her book.³ The book was published in 1996 by Basic Books and was followed by

Chang's campaign for a formal apology and reparations paid to the families of victims by the Japanese government. In *The Rape of Nanking*, Chang maintained that although the "Rape of Nanking" was a tragedy comparable to the Holocaust, the Japanese government failed to apologize for the actions of its imperial army and attempted to conceal the evidence of its crimes. Her goal was to write what she perceived to be the first comprehensive account of the Nanjing Massacre, not only revealing the truth behind the incident but also holding Japan accountable.

Chang's approach to *The Rape of Nanking* is rather unusual. The book is divided into three parts: the history of the massacre, which Chang describes as being structured similarly to the film *Rashomon*, based on a short story about a rape-and-murder case;⁴ followed by the perspectives of Japan, China, and the West to show how they varied; and then Japan's attempts to keep the massacre out of the public consciousness for over half a century. She is unapologetically critical of Japan, frequently delivering scathing remarks about the government's brutality and also its refusal to confront its history with this event. It becomes abundantly clear that Chang feels very strongly about the Nanjing Massacre; her writing is impassioned, sharing the hurt and anger of an entire generation with her audience as she gives a detailed narrative of the massacre. She describes the crimes that the Imperial Japanese army committed against the Chinese in horrific detail, and Chang adamantly asserts that the casualties ranged from 250,000 to 300,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians.⁵ She is also bold in her accusations that the Japanese

government had distorted and revised the history of the Nanjing Massacre in Japanese schools, lessening the severity of the army's actions and even justifying them. She even goes as far as to claim that accredited, well-respected Japanese scholars compromised their integrity to preserve the nation's image out of patriotism.⁶

To support many of her claims, Chang relies on several photographs and sources from Chinese victims. She also made a trip to Nanjing, where she traveled around China to interview survivors of the massacre as well as a few Japanese veterans. The combination of oral history and written testimonies substantiate many of the atrocities that Chang describes in the book, validating them with the personal accounts of people who had survived such trying times. Additionally, Chang offers a more Western perspective with several newspapers and the diaries of John Rabe, a Nazi Party member, and Minnie Vautrin, an American missionary. Both Rabe and Vautrin worked in the Nanjing Safety Zone to help protect the lives of as many Chinese civilians as they could, recording their perspectives as foreigners in diaries that Chang references frequently. Though the sources Chang uses are rather diverse, she did not travel to Japan at any point to conduct research. A great deal of her research was done in the United States, and she conducted several interviews in China, but she avoided Japan and its resources in her research.

Chang's main strength is how accessible her writing is. Her background as a journalist served her well; she was able to write a compelling narrative that

is easy for anyone without any prior knowledge of the Nanjing incident or Asian studies to understand. Even with the unusual decision to stylize Part I of *The Rape of Nanking* after a film, the overall structure of the book is well-organized. Her connection to and passion for sharing the truth behind the forgotten “Rape of Nanjing” are extremely evident in how thorough she is. Chang references a multitude of sources, ranging from newspapers to oral histories and written records from America and China, and the time and effort she put into her research are evident.

However, it is that same passion and enthusiasm that she has for the Nanjing Massacre that contradicts her own work. It is impossible to read *The Rape of Nanking* without acknowledging Chang’s bias. Because she feels so strongly about the topic, Chang is unable to separate her own bias from her writing. It is extremely reflective of her activism and the culture of many Chinese Americans of the time. The book is full of vast generalizations about Japan and its culture, and she occasionally becomes combative as she describes the actions of the soldiers as well as the government. Chang is liberal with her descriptions of the Japanese soldiers, describing their acts as “an orgy of cruelty” and describing the Nanjing Massacre and the following Japanese occupation of China as “history’s most destructive war.”⁷ Chang is clearly writing to a popular audience. Though she is a very skilled, articulate writer, she does not adhere to any of the traditional conventions of historical writing. *The Rape of Nanking* is written in a style better suited for journalism. Chang’s text is interspersed with personal opinions and heavy,

accusatory rhetoric that give the book a distinctly anti-Japanese feel.

Chang’s work was incredibly polarizing and served as the catalyst for several other studies of the Nanjing Massacre. One of the most notable effects of *The Rape of Nanking* was the emergence of the Japanese revisionist scholars. Several Japanese academics responded to Chang’s work with scathing rebuttals where they not only scrutinized Chang for errors, but they also criticized her character. However, there were also scholars such as Masahiro Yamamoto who were more subtle in their criticism of Chang. Yamamoto is a visiting professor at Macon-Randolph College, and his study of Nanjing was done as part of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Alabama. Yamamoto’s book, *Nanking: Anatomy of Atrocity* was published in 2000 by Praeger Publishers. Unlike Chang, while Yamamoto concedes that the Nanjing Massacre is an atrocity by definition, he stresses that western studies have vastly misrepresented the tragedy to push anti-Japanese sentiment. It is undeniable that Japan bears responsibility for the massacre, but because there are no official records of the total casualties, demands for apologies and reparations cannot be made.

Like Chang, Yamamoto divides *Nanking* into three distinct sections. The first part of the book is dedicated to explaining what a war atrocity is and the different atrocities throughout history, followed by an account of the Nanking Massacre and then the aftermath and following controversy. However, Yamamoto’s account of the Nanjing Massacre itself is divided into



An exhibit at the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall, located in Jianguomen, close to a mass grave where thousands of victims were buried. (Gary Todd / Wikimedia Commons)

two chapters: the analysis of “Military Actions and Number of Victims” and the analysis of “Individually Committed Crimes and Nature of Atrocities.”⁸ In it, he makes several bold claims that undermine Chang’s research in *The Rape of Nanking*. He argues that before the invasion of the Imperial Japanese army, the Chinese military occasionally brutalized and killed its own soldiers.⁹ Though he stresses this fact, he does eventually concede that it is unlikely that these alleged deaths could significantly affect the total number of casualties attributed to the Japanese soldiers. Yamamoto also frequently criticizes the western media for both overlooking and misusing references. In particular, he mentions “two American journalists who basically told almost every essential

detail of the atrocities in Nanking.”¹⁰ He uses both of these accounts in conjunction with Chinese records to dispute the commonly accepted number of casualties of approximately 250,000 to 300,000 victims. Instead, he tries to invalidate the records of what he believes to be the most accurate source—the Chinese army.

Yamamoto argues that it is extremely difficult to determine the true number of casualties, primarily because Chinese records of the deaths might have been misrepresented to “cover up the disastrous military defeat in the capital city.”¹¹ He unabashedly makes several contrary statements in his study and though he does provide figures to support them, it is unclear how

he determines what sources he deems to be valid as he repeatedly reiterates that he is utilizing resources “overlooked” by other researchers. Similarly, how he discusses the events at Nanjing raises several questions. Whereas Chang had often been angry and even combative at times when discussing the Japanese army, Yamamoto is rather flippant in his analysis of their actions. He claims that the Japanese army committed war crimes but often attributes their actions to a “lack of discipline” and “misconduct,” going as far as to create a pointed distinction between murders committed by individuals and murders committed on the army’s orders.¹² His choice of tone and rhetoric seem dismissive and serve as almost a justification for the imperial army’s actions.

Though Yamamoto is not outwardly biased, he repeatedly tries to undermine commonly accepted beliefs about the massacre. He completely rejects Chang’s assertion that Japan attempted to conceal the events and immediate impact of the Nanjing Massacre, claiming that anti-Japanese sentiment and misinformation by other countries colored the incident’s history. This is particularly evident in his breakdown of the main schools of thought regarding the Nanjing Massacre. He identifies three different types of scholars: the traditionalists such as Iris Chang, who believed that the casualties were around 250,000 to 300,000 people; the centrists, whose estimate falls closer to 35,000 to 40,000; and the revisionists, who maintain that the deaths totaled around 10,000.¹³ Yamamoto supplements his dissection of the different groups with more contrary commentary. He once again suggests the possibility of

intellectual dishonesty from the Chinese, as well as disparages the quality of American research. He personally aligns with both the centrist and revisionist positions, which Yamamoto claims is “more beneficial for objective historical analysis.”¹⁴ While these criticisms have the potential for a substantive discussion, Yamamoto frequently gives the impression that Japan has been treated unfairly.

The underlying victimization of Japan is present throughout the book, though he attempts to disguise it with the occasional admission of wrongdoing and war crimes. Yamamoto’s *Nanking* attempts to disguise itself as an objective study but leans very heavily in Japan’s favor. It is not particularly surprising that Yamamoto repeatedly questions the validity of Chinese and American sources; while researching, he traveled only to Tokyo and depended heavily on predominantly Japanese references as well as uncertain “overlooked” evidence that supplemented his argument. However, Yamamoto’s assertion that his choices of reference were often overlooked and underutilized poses serious questions. Though he is not as immediately combative and impassioned as Chang, *Nanking* is not free from bias. Yamamoto repeatedly attempts to discredit and distort information that does not support his position, though he does so under the guise of objectivity and piecemeal figures he pulls from multiple sources. Because his use of sources is rather questionable, it weakens the strength of his arguments, though he does support and explain them rather thoroughly. Similarly, he lends even less credibility to his work because of his constant criticism of western research and the trivializing and frankly

off-putting way he discusses the actions of the Japanese Imperial Army.

Because the Nanjing Massacre was such a polarizing topic in the late 1990s, many of the subsequent works often mirrored the biases of both Chang and Yamamoto. The revived interest in the massacre occurred as the result of Asian American activism, which resulted in many impassioned and heavily skewed studies of Nanjing. However, in 2006, Takashi Yoshida published his own work, *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking: History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States*, which he wrote in response to the drastically contrasting accounts of the Nanjing Massacre. Yoshida is a history professor and the director of the Michitoshi Soga Japan Center at Western Michigan University, where he specializes in modern Japanese and World War II history. *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking"* first began as a project during Yoshida's doctoral studies at Columbia University in 1995, but it was eventually published by Oxford University Press. Unlike both Chang and Yamamoto, Yoshida makes it clear that his goal is not to determine the truth, but rather to contextualize and understand why so many different interpretations exist. He acknowledges that the event has "undergone continuous redefinition and reinterpretation in China, Japan, and the United States" as well as the fact that "national consciousness and character are never monolithic."¹⁵ It is an important distinction to make, especially given the sweeping generalizations made by both Chang and Yamamoto in their studies.

Yoshida is very thorough in his explanation of the history of Nanjing and the explanations of the controversies

surrounding the massacre. He explains how factors such as patriotism and ethnic pride have influenced various historical studies of the incident as well as how international politics have impacted the way the Nanjing Massacre has been represented on a broader, global scale. Because previous studies had been so biased, Yoshida is very cautious in how he represents differing perspectives, claiming that it is a "modest protest against those whose views of the world are imprisoned by concepts of nation and ethnicity."¹⁶ His thoughtful introduction immediately sets the tone for the rest of the book. Yoshida is very conscious of the rhetoric he uses and the way he presents information and tries to maintain his relatively neutral tone. The book's structure is reflective of his careful planning. It is divided into four parts, each exploring the evolution of the international perspective of the Nanjing Massacre over time. The first part examines contemporary works, which Yoshida pays careful attention to. He identifies several sources that were censored from 1937 to 1945, as well as the reaction of both domestic and foreign bystanders. The second and third sections focus on the representation of Nanjing internationally. The Nanjing Massacre had largely been overshadowed in the early years of the Cold War, primarily due to rising concerns over nuclear politics and the fear of chemical warfare.¹⁷ However, it resurfaced in the 1970s as a result of rising anti-Japanese sentiment as many antiwar and anti-imperialist movements rose to prominence. The final section of the book is dedicated to tracing modern interpretations of the massacre, discussing attempts by Japanese revisionists to either downplay or outright deny the atrocities committed



A mass grave site of the victims of the Nanjing Massacre. (Gary Todd / Wikimedia Commons)

in Nanjing.¹⁸ Yoshida also discusses the revived interest in Nanjing after Chang published *The Rape of Nanking* in 1991, bringing the tragedy back into the public consciousness.

In his analysis of the Nanjing Massacre's impact, Yoshida is especially attentive to the historical and psychological evolution of the event. He refutes Yamamoto's claim that the Japanese government had not attempted to censor the massacre, asserting that the government had attempted to block most publications from the general public as well as created a special task force to prevent alleged "misinformation" and slander about the government from spreading.¹⁹ Yoshida also provides context for the worsening tensions between America and Japan

that set the tone for Chang's book. When Chang brought the Nanjing Massacre to the attention of the American public, Americans began to broadly attribute "cruelty and barbarism" to not just the military but the country as a whole.²⁰ Anti-Japanese sentiment was once again on the rise, which had already pervaded the forefront of America's mind because of the actions of the Japanese in prior conflicts and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Chang's book was the first of many impassioned writings about Nanjing, as people either defended or condemned the many injustices that had been committed against Nanjing in hopes of swaying international public opinion. The controversy surrounding *The Rape of Nanking* sparked a catalyst, completely changing the way people both spoke and wrote about Nanjing. Chang herself faced

extremely harsh criticism, with quite a few Japanese revisionists scrutinizing her book and claiming to find around 170 inaccuracies.²¹

The strength of *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking"* is Yoshida's extremely thorough and detailed analysis of the evolution of the memory of Nanjing. He gives a careful explanation of each perspective clearly and concisely, providing information that helps contextualize the hostility and the controversy surrounding the massacre. His sources are varied not just by type but also origin. Unlike Chang and Yamamoto, who both specifically sought out information that supported their arguments, Yoshida provides a well-balanced variety of sources from China, Japan, and America. His writing is largely unbiased; it does not contain the emotionally charged rhetoric of Chang or the underlying implications of Yamamoto. Instead, he utilizes his expertise in Asian studies to his advantage. Yoshida is both accessible and straightforward in his writing style, and his book follows a logical structure that other academics and students can appreciate. The only main weakness of *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking"* is Yoshida's assumption that the reader has prior knowledge of Asian history. Those who are less versed in the history of China and Japan may have a difficult time grasping the full scope of both countries' reactions. Even so, Yoshida provides a detailed analysis of the origin and evolution of the Nanjing Massacre's legacy.

Though the true number of casualties at Nanjing is unknown, it is widely accepted that the estimated

deaths numbered around 250,000 to 300,000 people. Iris Chang set the precedent for many studies of Nanjing; like Chang, several of the subsequent studies were often subjective, impassioned works written by people with personal connections to either the city itself or the Japanese army. However, authors like Chang and Yamamoto colored the perception of Nanjing in the public consciousness, which eventually led to Yoshida's dissection of why so many different interpretations of the event exist. Many of the sources that Chang, Yamamoto, and Yoshida reference are the same, but they still managed to come to significantly different interpretations. This is largely because both *The Rape of Nanking* and *Nanking* are highly opinionated pieces. Yamamoto, in particular, tends to seek out sources that suit only his argument, even if they are not commonly referenced or used in studies that predate his own. Rather than critiquing their validity or credibility, he simply attributes their lack of use to Western bias and information. While researching, he traveled to Japan and researched at multiple institutions, reaching out to many Japanese scholars. He overlooks Chinese evidence, often deeming it invalid due to the "unreliability" of Chinese records. Chang utilized a similar method; though she weighs the perspective of China, the United States, and Japan, Japan is vastly underrepresented in her study. She relied on predominantly American and China references, traveling to China to interview survivors and veterans, but neglects to use Japanese evidence that contradicts her research.

Yoshida's work is the most well-rounded of the three. Unlike Chang and

Yamamoto, he does not appear to have a secondary agenda outside of his study of how Nanjing's memory has evolved. He acknowledges the possibility of bias, though he clearly states that he tried to remain as neutral as possible despite his own opinions on different schools of thought. The tone of *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking"* differs so drastically because of its purpose. When Chang wrote *The Rape of Nanking*, it was not solely to educate her audience of what had happened. It was specifically written as a condemnation of the Japanese government and its imperial army, shaped by a period of Asian American activism. As a result, it is saturated with the rhetoric of the time. Likewise, Yamamoto wrote in response to the work of Chang and the other scholars of the time. Though he initially gives the impression of neutrality, Yamamoto makes his stance on Nanjing abundantly clear with his staunch defense of the Japanese army and invalidation of opposing sources. The purpose of Yoshida's work, however, was solely to examine the multiple perspectives perpetuated by different authors and historians over time. He chronicles the evolution of changing public opinion and historical memory, commenting on how these varying studies shifted based on factors beyond just personal histories and opinions. He provides commentary on how the Nanjing Massacre's legacy was shaped by foreign relations and patriotism, as well as how the authors themselves contributed to its characterization. Because of how well-organized and

straightforward Yoshida is, his book is undoubtedly the best to reference for both popular and educational reading on the topic of Nanjing.

However, though *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking"* provides an excellent explanation of why so many studies of the Nanjing Massacre have drastically different conclusions, he does not contribute very much to the "truth" behind the massacre itself. If a historian were to conduct another study on Nanjing, they would greatly benefit from Yoshida's method, as he lays the groundwork for a well-balanced work that pays equal attention to sources from all three countries involved in the Nanjing Massacre. The Nanjing Massacre has been greatly shaped by the biases and persuasions of authors with political intent and much is still not known about the Chinese casualties. Future studies of the Nanjing Massacre would benefit from not only a re-examination of the fatalities, but also a further analysis of primary sources from both Chinese victims and Japanese soldiers. Many of the voices from the Nanjing Massacre were either silenced or misrepresented in prior works because of how polarized the incident has become. The various interpretations of what truly happened in Nanjing are so drastically different that it warrants a thorough evaluation of all the sources available, especially since it has been nearly thirty years since Iris Chang first revived the Nanjing Massacre in the public consciousness with *The Rape of Nanking*.

Jennifer Go graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in history in May 2021 and is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts degree at AUM. In the future, she hopes to work in a setting that aids her in her goal to make history more accessible and foster a deeper appreciation of the subject in people of all ages.

Notes

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- ⁴ Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, chap. 1.
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Additional Contributors

Meghan Bush is a junior and this is her second year on the editorial board of the *AUM Historical Review*. Originally a history major, she changed her major to secondary education with a focus in social sciences, because she felt that she could help future students better understand history while helping foster a love of history, much like her own.

Sonja Hadder is a junior history major with a minor in philosophy. They are passionate about the preservation of local history and are currently working with a handful of other students to produce historical signs in the Shady Street area of downtown Montgomery.

Alexondra MacGuire is a senior with a double major in chemistry and graphic design. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends, traveling to new places, and taking pictures with her camera. She would like to work as a UX/UI designer after she graduates.

Amanda Meade is a senior at AUM working towards her B.A. in fine arts with a concentration in graphic design. She wants to continue in the graphic design field and work for Aflac or some other corporate entity in her field. She has two kids and started her own decal and t-shirt business before realizing she wanted a degree in order to do more business-related design.

David Rains is a fifth-year history major. He has a passion for music and loves to learn about music from other cultures. Since he was a child, he has been interested in learning about Asian culture within countries like China, Vietnam, and Japan. His goal is to be a writer of contemporary history, especially regarding US international relations in east Asia after the Cold War.

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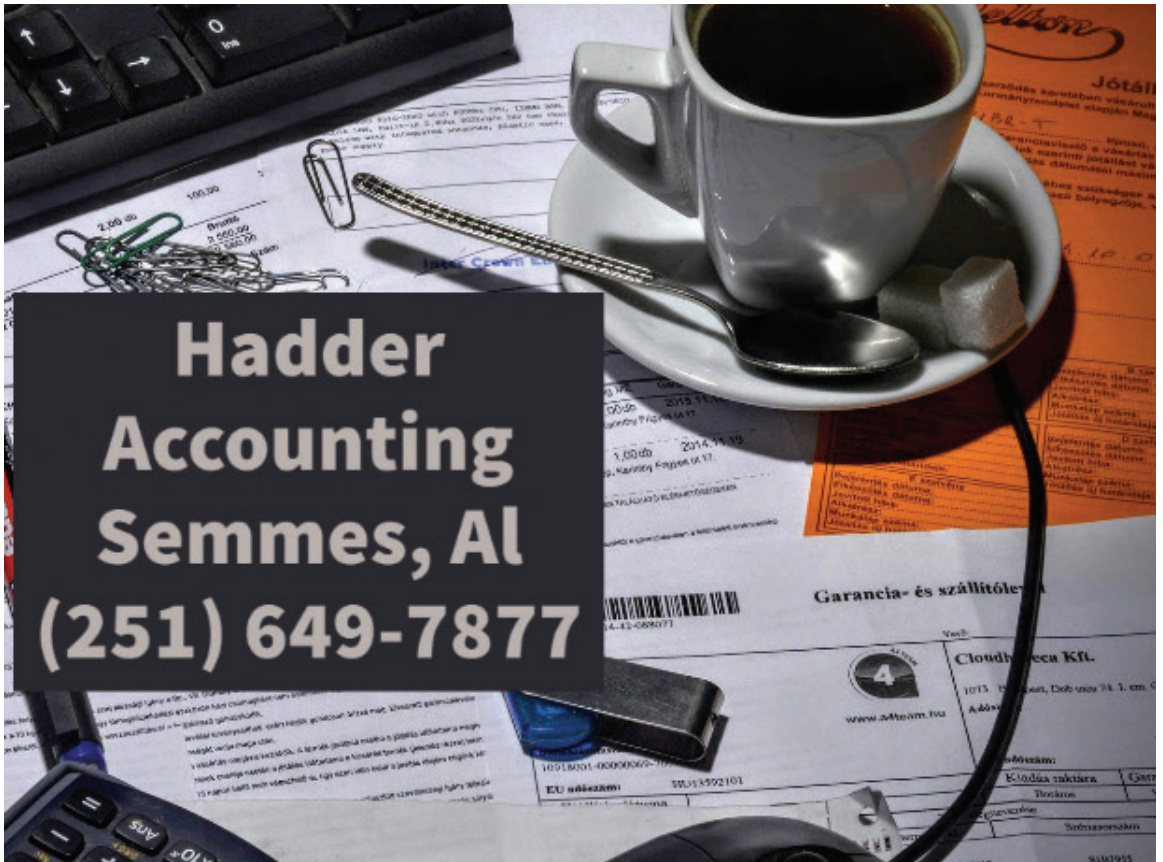
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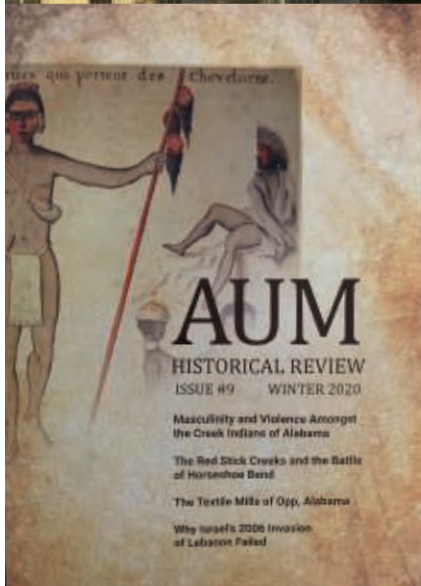
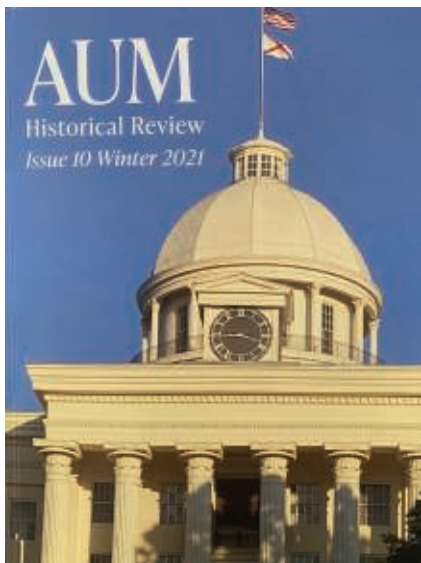
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