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PARTISAN



**Cultivating
The Art
Of Memory**
by M.E. Bradford

*M.E. Bradford 1934-1993
Special Memorial Tribute*

CONTENTS

Cover

Cultivating the Art of Memory: A Tribute to M.E. Bradford

- 6 M.E. Bradford: In Memoriam by Tom Landess.
8 M.E. Bradford: An Appreciation A special Obiter Dicta assessment of Mel Bradford the scholar and the man by his friends and colleagues—exclusive to *Southern Partisan*.
14 Not in Memoriam, But in Affirmation Excerpts from the Bradford afterword to *Why the South Will Survive*, a plea for the preservation of the landmarks of memory.

Features

- 18 “Forget, Hell!”
Honey Naylor explains without equivocation why the South was right from the beginning and will win in the end.
- 24 “I Want to See Richmond.”
Margie McAllister finds that Lincoln’s claim of “malice toward none” might have been a slight overstatement.
- 28 Black Fighters for the South
Best-selling author Sheldon Vanauken introduces us to the Confederate Negroes, loyal sons of Dixie the Yankees would have us forget.
- 32 Men of Letters as Renewers of Society
Russell Kirk, the “Sage of Mecosta,” suggests that in bad political times we will find solace in the writings of certain novelists and poets who “took their stand.”

Criticus

CRITICUS BOOKS

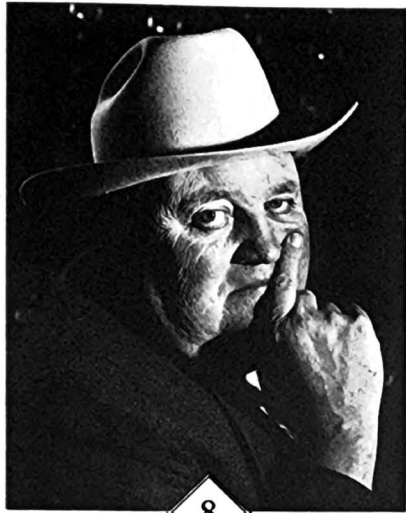
- 38 *The Portable Calhoun* by Anthony Harrigan
Reviewed: Clyde Wilson’s *The Essential Calhoun*

CRITICUS MOVING PICTURES

- 40 *Southern Flicks* by Norman Stewart
Reviewed: *Fried Green Tomatoes and Sommersby*

Columns and Departments

- 2 Partisan Letters
5 From Behind Enemy Lines *Gordon Jackson*
8 Obiter Dicta
42 Booknotes
46 Southern Sampler *William Freehoff*
46 Anguished English *Richard Lederer*
47 The Smoke Never Clears *Rod Gragg*
48 Dividing Line *Samuel Francis*
49 Classified



8



28



40

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★ **SHERMAN AND NORMAN**

Gentlemen:

I have thought long and hard about General Schwartzkopf's admiration for William Tecumseh Sherman and, I don't care how you cut it, sir, it is a direct slap in the face to any self-respecting Southerner! What was Sherman's strength? It sure was not his tactical genius. He took a much larger army with almost limitless supplies and whopped our flesh and blood. But he didn't stop there. "You got to take this war to the people," he sez, "and let them know how terrible it will be 'til they scream for surrender. Burn and plunder and rape!" What else is there if this is what Schwartzkopf likes? Unless somebody comes up with a much better explanation than this—well then, I think he ought to be the next winner of the Scalawag Award!

Henry T. Harrison, Jr.
Midlothian, Virginia

★ **SPEAKING OF SHERMAN...**

Gentlemen:

There are some groups today who are undermining America's early history. They are judging it through today's eyes. Let's look at General Sherman and his devastation of the South. From the book *Abraham Lincoln* by Carl Sandburg comes this account:

An army for 32 days to the outside world "lost sight of," as Sherman phrased it, now had behind it 800 miles of naked smokestacks, burned culverts, shattered trestleworks, wailing humanity. Of the railroads every rail was twisted beyond use, every tie, bridge, tank, woodshed and depot building burned. Thirty miles ran the dev-

astation on either side of the line from Atlanta, estimated Sherman. Kilpatrick's 5,000 horsemen had ravaged beyond the reach of foot troops for the economy of powder they had sobered hogs, knocked horses between the ears with axes, killing more than a hundred horses on one plantation with a fine mansion, and shooting every bloodhound, mastiff, or other dog that looked as though it could track runaway negroes in swamps and forests. Over many square miles of the area was left not a chicken, not a pig, nor horse, nor cow, nor sheep, nor a smokehouse ham nor side of bacon, not a standing corn crib with a forgotten bushel, not a mule to plow land with, not a piece of railroad track, nor cars, nor locomotives, nor a bunker of coal. The destruction could hardly have been worse if Atlanta had been a volcano in eruption and the molten lava had flowed in a stream sixty miles wide and five times as long.

This is one account of the destruction that went on, there are many others.

I think General Sherman should stand trial as a war criminal for the murder of unknown numbers of innocent Southern people and the total destruction of their property.

If one of the Southern generals had committed these acts he would have been hunted down and hung after the war.

Ellis Starkey
Midwest City, Oklahoma

Gentlemen:

Even after reading the article "Desert Storm: Robert E. Lee or W. T. Sherman?" Schwarzkopf is no hero to me.

Sherman... who burned and looted towns and cities... a hero?

Our school children are being

taught the Union view and they believe.

General Robert E. Lee will always be the best officer who ever lived.

Rose J. Moore
Aurora, Missouri

★ BURROUGHS ON BRADFORD CONTRA BAKER

Gentlemen:

In his review of M. E. Bradford's *Against the Barbarians* (*Southern Partisan*, Third Quarter 1992), John S. Baker completely misses the argument of the book. Baker accuses Bradford of "argument from circumstance." The only problem with this attack is that it is precisely the opposite of Bradford's position.

In the twenty-five essays contained in *Against the Barbarians* (eight of were originally published in the *Southern Partisan*), Bradford explores "the extent to which our liberties are rooted in our history, place, and time, and secured at a price, paid for in the blood and suffering of the Revolution and in the colonial struggle to establish a civilized community on these shores." Bradford ascribes to the wisdom of Will Herberg's observation that history is "the funded wisdom of the past."

Bradford recalls our nation's roots by sketching the lives of leading figures in state conventions that ratified the Constitution, men who struggled to give the proposed Constitution the wisdom of experience and the weight of law. Many of these "exemplary men" were Southerners who recognized that human beings are always vulnerable to loss of liberty, and who insisted that Americans had not fought for independence from an arbitrary and remote power only to be shackled to a new, powerful federal government.

The most moving essay is "A Long Farewell to Union," in which Bradford discusses the farewell speeches delivered in January,

1861 by Southern senators who had been called home by withdrawal of their states from the Union. The farewells were absent of rancor and filled with a sad reluctance that the Union had changed from that envisioned by the Farmers of 1787. Said one senator: "From the Union governed by the Constitution as our Fathers made it, there breathes not a secessionist."

The linkage between the North's departure from "the Union as it was, the Constitution as it is" and today's Leviathan government in Washington is direct and unmistakable. The War preserved the Union, but with revolutionary changes. In demonstration, Bradford uses two liberal icons, Abraham Lincoln and Lyndon Johnson, to reveal the desperate grasping political experimentation."

Contrary to Baker's review, Bradford attacks the barbarians in modern American politics and culture who disdain the Western experience and substitute radical ideology for traditional culture. *Against the Barbarians* should be hidden in the heart of every defender of Southern tradition.

Bryant Burroughs,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

★ ANOTHER SOLUTION

Gentlemen:

T. Keister Greer's call for radical change in American jurisprudence is out of place in a magazine that reveres tradition. [Greer's] constitutional amendment solution is comparable to burning down the barn in an effort to rid it of rats. Our tradition of appellate jurisdiction is a vital component of both our state and federal governments. While I agree with Greer's assertion that federal courts have laid waste to state autonomy, the appropriate solution is a return to the ways of old rather than trashing part of our Constitution.

Edmund Burke, in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*,

wrote of the evils of drastic change: "When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer."

I suggest that the appropriate remedy is a return to traditional states' rights jurisprudence. State action should be presumed constitutional unless it violates the Constitution's plain text.

Shelby Scott Gaille
University of Chicago Law School
Chicago, Illinois

Mr. Greer replies:

I must confess to some surprise at Mr. Gaille's criticism of a "constitutional amendment solution" and "trashing part of our Constitution." I proposed no such remedy. The recourse to Article III, Section II is wholly legislative. That is to say, it requires nothing more than a simple statute. Congressional removal of a subject from the Court's jurisdiction was sanctioned as far back as 1869, when the Congress removed habeas corpus from the Court's appellate jurisdiction. See Ex Parte McCordle, 7 Wall 506 (1869), cited in my article.

Like most Southerners, I yield to no one in my regard for tradition. but the Supreme Court's arrogation of legislative power is hardly worthy of reverence as a tradition.

Edmund Burke is a thinker whom Virginians rightly admire. If he had known of the moderns' strictures against Southerners, I cannot but think that he might have said, as he famously did on another occasion, "I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people."

★ SO ARREST US

Gentlemen:

Our Resisting Defamation Caucus is concerned about a certain usage you validated in *Southern Partisan* (Second Quarter 1992). It

is troubling you promoted "WASP" as a name for Protestant European Americans. We recognize your right to designate yourself, but we are opposed to "WASP" as an ethnic name for the following reasons.

The slur term "WASP" smothers the diversity of Protestant Americans of European origin. It is an unfair slap at a segment of European Americans in an attempt to strip them of distinguishing characteristics, and to substitute an insect-like label.

"WASP" is well-understood to be degrading and demeaning. Take a look at "WASP": the "P" stands for a religious orientation. "WASP" is often a calculated attempt to engage in anti-Christianism, just as "JAP" is often a calculated attempt to engage in anti-Semitism. Both "WASP" and "JAP" are unfortunate acronyms in our society, and each should be relegated to the unused section of the dictionary.

In the future, please consider using the term "Protestant European American" or a similarly dignified term to identify persons you might previously have slapped with a weird, unwanted label like "WASP."

Stanley Womack
Resisting Defamation Caucus
San Jose, California

★ JUST SAY STOP

Gentlemen:

The Union as it was [originally] conceived died in 1861. The enemy cry to fight to "save the union" was no more than a guise to gain power. Under the Lincoln regime a nation conceived (the Confederacy) to preserve the true Constitution and American principles was suppressed, conquered, and put under military occupation, just as Poland was annexed in 1938. The battered patient that was the Union was stitched up, resuscitated, and a campaign launched that it had been "saved." Any historian knows that [the nation] has simply been

on life support ever since. The government of any country cannot deny the different cultures it proposes to represent as the U. S. Government has and is doing.

The suppression of Southern Heritage comes at a time when other nations are experiencing a reawakening of the unique people within their borders, often in violence for the past oppression, and overthrowing the insensitive controlling forces that for years have tried to force them to deny their heritage. Why should we be any different?

If this country does not stop the pressure and lies that try to pit one segment of the population against the other, we will be living in a Fascist regime akin to Nazi Germany. The Jews [singled out] as a threat to the rest of the population by a loud-mouthed ambitious nobody. So Zell Miller emulates the Furrher in his campaign to condemn our heritage as racist. Who is the real racist here? We had better look to 1938 and say "stop!" before we end up in concentration camps for flying the Confederate Flag, loving our heritage, and honoring our forefathers.

Mauriel Joslyn
Sparta, Georgia

★ DYING BREED

Gentlemen:

Having been a Jeffersonian Southern Democrat all of my adult life, even when my party went a-whoring after false idols, I am still convinced that the South's future is not with the Republican Party. By some process of reasoning, many Southerners are convinced that the Republicans are conservative. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The administrations which have ruled us in the last twelve years have been the most profligate in our nation's history.

Indeed, the difference between the two great national parties is not that one is liberal and one is conservative. There are liberal and

conservative wings in each party as well as moderate. The difference is this: Democrats are populists and Republicans are elitists. It was Harry Truman, not Bill Clinton, who said that Republicans believe that prosperity begins at the top and eventually trickles down to the people, and he was dead right.

Every time Americans have been so foolish as to put them in power, the Republicans have taken it as an invitation to loot the country, from Grant down to the present time. The Savings and Loan scandal is typical of their economic husbandry. It is doubtful if the American banking system can ever recover from this terrible act of piracy. Then, if they are conservative, how does one explain that under their auspices we have gone from the largest creditor nation in the world to the largest debtor nation? The Japanese love Reagan better than any President because he sold them the United States.

The conservative Southern Democrats are an endangered species but, as for me, I will stick with the party of my forefathers. It is in my genes. The Republicans are not our friends and never were. They have despised the South from the time of the Black Republicans to the present day. Maybe those of us who live in the South and worship our ancestors (who were all Democrats) have no friends.

Ben Smith
Waycross, Georgia



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FROM BEHIND ENEMY LINES *Washington Report*

The Spirit of Mel Bradford by Gordon Jackson

"We're all in this together." This choral refrain of the Clinton administration, used to justify creeping collectivism, found its precise refutation in the life, thought and writings of Mel Bradford, a man whose luminous intellect has been taken away at the time when it is most needed.

The premise of Billary Clinton's government, and of New Age liberalism, if I understand it correctly, is that none of us can truly prosper when others among us are needy and neglected. We are co-dependent with everyone else, our fortunes intertwined. Let one person smoke, and the ultimate result is that he drives up the health care costs of everyone. Permit another to be intolerant of, say, homosexuals or rap musicians, and his intolerance will send out waves of unfairness and diminished opportunity that spread out across the planet and return to wash him away. Allow the wealthy man to hoard his wealth, and eventually it is lost to him, and to all. Fail to instruct the youth in proper use of the condom or the personal computer, and there will be hell to pay for each and every one of us.

It is a curious mixture of Christian idealism and new Age notions about the "field," of which (according to exotic interpretations of quantum mechanics) we are all a part. It coexists somewhat uneasily with the traditional Democratic constituencies for pork, class warfare, and accredited victim status, all of which, though divisive in their ends, employ similar utopian rhetoric to secure their places at the public trough.

These various visions of Utopia were subjected by Mel Bradford to two lines of analysis. The first—an

explication of orthodox Christianity—concluded that we just aren't going to feel truly comfortable and prosperous in this world, whatever the heck happens to our neighbor. Our natures are such that we can have no hope of finding perfection and total contentment in this life. Our neighbors are similarly afflicted; no exceptions.

The second line of analysis says that, to the extent we can prosper, it sure isn't going to be through the agencies of some megalomaniac who gets his hands on a centralized power apparatus. In noting that power corrupts, that individuals with access to government power inevitably will act in a self-interested fashion, Mel Bradford echoed the wisdom of this nation's founding fathers as faithfully as he echoed the wisdom of the Christian fathers. Like Madison and Jefferson, and all thoughtful persons with some experience of government, he saw virtuous behavior arising away from the temptations of power and self-aggrandizement.

He saw human beings at their best in a localized, particularized setting, the beneficiaries of tradition and custom. So long as he was permitted to retain his own particularities, he didn't begrudge you yours. It was a form of tolerance at least the equal of the Clintonites' government-imposed version, and one that has a much greater chance of keeping diversity from degenerating into conflict.

Now, I'm not saying that Mel's was the last word on these subjects. But it is a viewpoint that must be given great weight if an intelligent conservatism is to be reformulated from the ashes of the Reagan Revolution, and it is difficult to see who will carry it forward

with the authority and erudition of Mel Bradford. Of the surviving exponents of Mel's brand of conservatism, only Pat Buchanan has a legitimate national forum and he is continually at risk of being successfully marginalized by his opponents.

You never know, though, where honest thought is going to break out. A few years ago the great debate within conservatism was between Mel and George Will, who at the time was enamored of government's ability to craft more exemplary souls through legislation. Nowadays, Mr. Will, once the darling of the Washington political establishment, seldom lets a week go by without calling for the erstwhile perpetrators of soulcraft to be relieved, via term limitation, of their opportunity to perform such mighty works.

There has been a refreshing turn toward anti-statism in the Will column, and it's interesting to speculate about the reasons. Maybe it's because he sees himself playing a devil's advocate role toward whatever administration is in power. Or perhaps it's because his new wife, a former Reagan staffer, has provided him with a more profound and rewarding meaning for the term "house conservative." But just maybe it's because Will, who, as well as anyone, can recognize a compelling argument, finally understood that Mel had a better grasp of what government could and couldn't do.

We are not, Mr. Clinton, all in this together, and never will be. Try as you will to legislate uniformity, the spirit and mind of strong individuals will emerge to stymie your ends. The spirit and mind of Mel Bradford will inform the debate about the proper ends of government in a free and virtuous republic for many a year. Would that he were still here as well. ☆

M.E. Bradford: In Memoriam

Dr. M.E. Bradford, Senior Editor of *Southern Partisan* died on March 3, 1993 at the age of 58. We dedicate this issue to Mel Bradford, one of the South's greatest champions. On these two pages, we replace the regular columns, *Partisan View* and *Trivium*, with this special tribute written on behalf of all our editors, by Associate Editor Tom Landess, who taught with Mel at the University of Dallas for over a decade and who was among his oldest and best friends.

—the editors

I'm always amazed at how wisely good people face death, how perfectly they focus their attention at the end. I got a call from Mel Bradford the night before he was to undergo open-heart surgery; and we talked for a few minutes about the huge number of these operations a typical thoracic surgeon performs in an average week, and how routine they are. We were both trying to put the best face on a grim reality; He weighed 300 pounds; he suffered from rampant diabetes; tests had revealed substantial blockage in two major arteries and three minor ones.

After we had reassured each other, he said in a quieter voice: "If I go out tomorrow, I'll be ready. In these past few months I've lost all rancor. As a matter of fact, I now look on just about everybody with genuine affection."

On that last evening, he was not thinking about the huge body of literary and social commentary he had produced over a 30-year period, nor the political and philosophical battles that had troubled and enriched his life, nor even of the biography of Donald Davidson he had intended to finish in the months immediately ahead. He was thinking instead about his capacity to love other people and to forgive them—particularly those who had despitefully used him.

There are a good many of these. In the academy—where professors who vote the straight Democratic ticket like to picture themselves as marching to a different drummer—Mel Bradford's conservatism made him something of an intellectual outcast. Had he been

a Marxist, the volume and quality of his writings would have earned him a full professorship at Harvard or Princeton or Yale, with all the attendant financial rewards and literary honors. Because he chose to follow Burke, the anti-Federalists, and the Agrarians, he spent his career teaching in small institutions, always eyeing his bank balance with special interest toward the end of the month.

In the Republic of Letters—that mythical land where

all ideas are permitted and all opinions tolerated—he was often treated like a second-class citizen, one who violated the immutable and unwritten laws of the intellectual establishment. His commentaries on American history and literature were scandals to a generation of publishers and reviewers who only understood or admitted the comfortable abstractions of the Left. As a consequence, he saw his opinions all too frequently misrepresented or ignored. His books—which were exhaustively researched and brilliantly argued—were published by small conservative houses or regional academic presses.

In the world of practical politics, he was routinely betrayed, not so much by his legitimate opponents, who recognized his

integrity and respected it, but by those who called themselves conservatives. An active supporter of Ronald Reagan since 1976, he was denied the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Humanities in favor of William Bennett, a man who had voted in the Democratic primary in 1980 and remained a Democrat well into the Reagan Administration. (The



Jim Fiscus

M.E. Bradford, 1934–1993

by Tom Landess

full story of how Bradford's candidacy was derailed by distortions and outright lies has yet to be told.)

Yet he understood and accepted the limitations of his own commitment to his people and their past. He wouldn't have taught at Yale or Harvard or Princeton had he been given the opportunity. He knew the University of Dallas had one of the best undergraduate programs in the country, and he was happy with the quality and disposition of his graduate students. Like Davidson and Lytle, two of his former intellectual mentors, he preferred to live and work in the South.

As for his adversaries in the Republic of Letters, he understood and enjoyed their intellectual animosity. He knew that strong opinions vigorously defended always provoked reciprocal hostility. "To them," he said with a smile, "I'm the beast of the Apocalypse." Yet some of his strong friendships were with those who disagreed with him. Harry Jaffa, his opponent in several public debates on the character of Abraham Lincoln, remained a friend over the years, as did Eugene Genovese, the brilliant and genial Marxist historian. In fact, both men supported Mel's candidacy for chairman of the NEH.

As for that bitter and divisive struggle, Mel alone seemed willing to forgive the slights and forget the indignities. He did not personally provoke the ensuing warfare between traditional conservatives and neo-conservatives and, insofar as the fighting centered on the NEH controversy, he was never a combatant. If the rest of us harbored grudges, he did not. In this respect he was stubbornly, maddeningly charitable. He confined his own quarrels to legitimate impersonal philosophical debate, though he was never shy in challenging the heresies of Big Government Republicans.

For those who didn't know him, he was a figure of epic splendor, a warrior who never doubted himself or the cause he served. Yet his close personal friends found in him a surprising humility—a compulsion to subject himself and his work to the harshest intellectual standards. If anything, he underestimated his own talents and achievements, particularly in comparison with those of his friends. "I'm nothing more than a fairly competent explicator of texts," he once remarked. On another occasion, when he was telling about an honor he was scheduled to receive, he said, "I guess I'll go and play the Great Man. I have the sinking feeling that I'm becoming unbearably distinguished." And years after he had played a significant role in the 1972 Wallace campaign, he came across a snapshot of himself, standing on a political platform, eyes bulging, arms waving the air. He looked at the photograph for a moment, shook his head, then cried out: "Give us Barrabas!"

Yet despite such self-effacement, both his friends and adversaries recognized in him the unmistakable signs of greatness. He had one of the best minds of his time. It contained all the essential ingredients: a com-

puter-like capacity to store facts by the trillions of megabytes and to call them up at an instant; the power of analysis, which enabled him to isolate the elements of discourse into discrete ideas and to understand them apart from their rhetorical context; the gift of synthesis, which allowed him to gather fragments of meaning from a wide range of sources and to fit them together into a coherent order that reflected recognizable reality; the ability to criticize, to make qualitative judgments about the world and its literary analogues; and, finally, the rigorous discipline necessary to make sense out of everything he knew and to translate it into language that others could understand—some others.

In this regard, I should note that the hundreds of articles and books he published over a lifetime didn't come easily. He was not Thomas Wolfe, who wrote 100,000 words at a sitting and tossed the pages over his shoulder, impatient to type the next sentence. Mel wrote everything in longhand with considerable effort. While other literary scholars could produce several glib pages a day, Mel usually wrote no more than a few paragraphs—carefully, thoughtfully constructing compound-complex sentences that contained so many layers of meaning that those with insufficient intelligence (or courage) failed to understand them. Herbert Read once wrote that "style is the ultimate morality of mind." The morality of Mel Bradford's mind, like his prose, was complicated, hierarchical, and wide-ranging—not the mind of a simpleton, a Jacobin, or an ideologue.

That he produced an enormous body of work is not so much a tribute to his mind but evidence of his strong character and generosity. He worked every day for years; and after his reputation was secure, he seldom refused the request of an old friend or young admirer to review a book, make a speech, or contribute an article. Only after his health had begun to fail did he reduce the volume of his output and try to concentrate on his Davidson biography.

A number of people have said that his death is a great loss to the intellectual community—and so it is. But for those of us who knew him over the years, it is not his work we miss in the days that remain, but Mel himself, his enormous spirit, too large even for his ample body, and his swift and singular wit. He was a great story teller and a great listener; an undemanding friend, yet always quick to offer help; a repentant sinner who forgave all those who trespassed against him, even those of us who didn't ask for forgiveness.

And that brings me back to the man, who, lying in a hospital bed in Midland, Texas understood fully what was ultimately important and what was finally irrelevant. The books and articles will be read, probably a hundred years from now. As for the forgiveness and generosity and love, we have it on the best authority that God, in His careful mercy, gathers that part of us into his arms and keeps it alive forever, even as He wipes away all our tears. ☆

Obiter Dicta

M.E. Bradford: An Appreciation

This space is normally filled with *Obiter Dicta*, a collection of brief opinions on a variety of subjects, with the South being the single unifying theme. So it is with this special tribute to Mel Bradford. The South was indeed a unifying theme in his life.

The writers below—friends, colleagues and admirers of Mel Bradford—give us a brief assessment of him as a man, as a scholar and as champion of a cause that will never be lost for as long as his works endure. And they will endure. The thousands of students Mel taught, as well as others who read and admired him, have taken to heart the advice he gave us in the essay the appears on page 14 of this issue: we have pledged to keep the art of memory alive.

—the editors

A GIANT OF A MAN, 6 feet 4 inches, more than 300 pounds, always in a gray Stetson when he left his beloved Texas, Dr. M.E. Bradford was a controversialist. He defended the South and the Constitution, and spent a good part of his career—more than 300 essays and articles—battling what he thought was the great myth of Abe Lincoln. But writers who came to joust with Mel Bradford went away remarking on his civility and courtesy.

Weeks ago, Mel came to my home, full of enthusiasm, for a round-table discussion of how, together, we could better defend the traditions and values to which he had devoted a lifetime. He brought an inscribed copy of his latest book, *Against the Barbarians*.

"The core of his thought," Sam Francis wrote, "may be summarized as the theme of rootedness...the necessity of roots for a nation's public and cultural identity." Mel Bradford "takes his stand on the firmer earth of concrete human experience—writers in the context of societies that bred them, political figures who embodied the norms of their culture, and ideas as reflections of personalities and conflicts in which they flourished."

When I decided to take my stand a year ago, Mel was an early volunteer. He called friends all over the South, told the young to sign up, and the wealthy to contribute.

Not until the Texas primary did I meet the legend. After a rally at the Alamo, we flew to Dallas. The gentle giant was on stage at U.D. for one of the most enthusiastic rallies of our campaign. "Now Pat's a good

churchman," he told his students who invited me, "so we'll get Father Jim to pray over him." Already well into middle age, Dr. Bradford still referred to his own father as "my daddy."

Mel had signed on as an adviser to our new foundation, The American Cause, and agreed to moderate a panel on the cultural war, when God suddenly called him home in Midland, Texas. "I'm a schoolteacher," Mel told a reporter who asked if he ever thought of running for public office. "That's high enough calling for me."

Pat Buchanan

Syndicated Columnist—McLean, Virginia

I FIRST CAME TO KNOW M.E. BRADFORD THOUGH HIS WRITINGS in the quarterly journal *Modern Age*, and almost exactly twenty years ago met him in person at a meeting of the North Carolina Conservative Society. I walked into a room where the sponsors were showing the silent film classic "Birth of a Nation," a pro-Southern rendering of events surrounding the War Between the States. There in the darkened hall, with scores of college students at his feet, sat Mel Bradford—reading aloud each caption as it flashed upon the screen, and with no small gusto.

It is an unforgettable tableau, but then so much about Mel is unforgettable. His is a unique voice. He was not just a scholar, but an authority—not due to the depth of his scholarship, though that was abundantly pre-

sent, but rather a special authority born of the breadth of his learning. Mel understood that a proposition is more true or less true to the extent that it coheres with other truths. Thus Mel always connected men and events, not only to their contemporaries, but to their intellectual antecedents—if appropriate all the way back to the ancients.

This sense of connectedness, or more precisely, of rootedness, led Mel to become one of the great synoptic minds of our own age. Only Russell Kirk matches M.E. Bradford for the sheer expansiveness of his erudition. It is no accident that these two men were first respectful colleagues and then affectionate friends. Kirk, the great Tory interpreter of the Old Whigs. And Bradford, an Old Whig himself, the genuine article.

Mel enjoyed a good controversy, but his enemies were not persons. Rather, as with Burke and the Old Whigs, Mel's enemy was the ideological abstraction, or the argument from definition, as he often called it. Against the enveloping darkness of such armed doctrines, he held aloft the lamp of experience—and when Mel was at his best, what a light was there.

Mel might be called the philosopher of memory. He counseled us to know ourselves, not through introspection, but through recollection. He bade us honor the winnowed teachings of our fathers, and our father's fathers. The word patrimony flowed readily from his pen. Above all, Mel exhorted us to remember and nurture the densities of meaning revealed and preserved in the great currents and quiet eddies of our cultural past. Let us take up the task, and let us begin with the life and work of M.E. Bradford.

Mel leaves behind many colleagues, disciples, and a body of writing that stands alone in modern letters. And there is more to come. At least two new editions of earlier books are in the works, and just last week he and I were discussing bringing out a book of his remaining uncollected essays, under the title *As I Was Saying*. The manuscripts are already in hand.

In my distress at the news, I said to his wife Marie that Mel's passing left a hole that the rest of us cannot fill. Marie responded, "No, he has left a mountain." And of course, she is right. So many of the lives he helped to shape will go on to shape other lives, and his writings will instruct and delight generations yet unborn.

Mel took ill in harness—at a meeting of the Texas equivalent of the Philadelphia Society, The Landrum Society, which he helped found and guide. From his hospital room before the operation, he took telephone calls and made them. To one caller he confided that, despite the many battles he had fought, there was no rancor in his heart. He had long talks with Marie and in general held court. In short, he was himself.

Against the millenarian tides of his century, Mel taught us to live in piety toward the world as God created it. At the end, he taught us how to leave that world for a better place. We grieve for Marie, their son Douglas, and the family's inconsolable loss. We grieve for our own loss of an irreplaceable friend and mentor. But there is no call to grieve over the life and death of M.E. Bradford. You see, he has left behind a mountain, and we have yet to scale its full dimension.

T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr.

*President, Intercollegiate Studies Institute
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania
(from the funeral eulogy)*



David Funderburk

Ambassador Funderburk of North Carolina poses with Mel Bradford of Texas and Air Force Colonel John Kirk of Mississippi in Romania in 1981.

MEL BRADFORD AND I served on the *Southern Partisan* board. Our paths occasionally crossed, such as the time he visited the residence in Romania, where I was serving as the U.S. Ambassador. He understood very well the tragedy and human suffering

caused by Communist tyranny in that country and elsewhere. He was a gentle giant who put people at ease.

He was best known as a prolific writer and as a scholar of the classics and literature. As one who defended the traditions and values passed down by Western civilization and who extolled the virtues of his beloved South, he was not politically correct in today's world of liberal academia.

Thus I admired his courage as a conservative fighter who paid a price during his candidacy for Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. While his unsuccessful candidacy caused pain and anguish, it flushed out the enemies of the ideals and objectives of traditional conservatism. The lines were drawn between neo-conservatives who hijacked the Reagan Revolution and traditional conservatives.

If Mel Bradford was a dinosaur or part of the "nostalgic Confederate remnant in the conservative movement"—as critics of his nomination charged, then I thank God there was one such great dinosaur left. As Southern Patriots, we have lost a great voice and we are in the debt of Mel Bradford.

David B. Funderburk

former U.S. Ambassador to Romania

WE HAVE LOST A GREAT AND GOOD MAN.

And, at the risk of presumption, "we" includes those outside the circle of his southern-conservative brethren, for we too were privileged to know him as a priceless friend. We could always count on his largeness of spirit, generosity, sympathy, and wise counsel. Firmly but gently he contested that which he regarded as our errors: firmly, because he held fast his principles; gently, because, a true Christian, he embodied the great admonition of his church to hate the sin, not the sinner.

Faced with the contemptible neglect of the political and academic Establishment and deprived of the professional and public honors and positions he had earned through inestimable contributions to American Letters, he remained a model of personal and political maturity and dignity. Coming generations will honor him for the courageous defense of the Southern tradition he mounted through learned studies of literature, rhetoric, and constitutional history; for his penetrating critique of the cultural and political decadence that disgrace our times; his vision of the good society that decent people in diverse political camps aspire to. He wrote, spoke, and lived conscious both of human frailty and of that element of divinity in everyman which demands respect for the human personality. His "tolerance" flowed from his respect for others—from his willingness to hear other voices and offer reasoned replies.

Mel Bradford was the quintessential Southern Gentle-

man, whose life, unmarred by holier-than-thou arrogance, challenged—and implicitly rebuked—those of us who, try as we might, could never match his nobility of soul.

Eugene D. Genovese

Elizabeth Fox Genovese

Emory University—Atlanta, Georgia

A GRACIOUS AND KINDLY AS WELL AS BOOKISH FIGURE,

Mel Bradford's voluminous publications on history, literature, and Southern men of letters showed forth his own paradigm of tranquility. It was not that Mel believed that human nature had ever been preponderantly good, at least since the Fall. He was too much of an Old Testament Protestant to think in that Pollyanna way. But he did believe in the merits of an agrarian, organic society based on custom and deference, and he looked for evidence of this ideal as a sociological reality, as well as a region of the soul, by studying the American, and particularly Southern, past.

What upset his critics was Mel's unwillingness to express liberal pieties. Though kind perhaps to a fault, Mel was never "sensitive," and he acted as if the media and therapeutic gestapo which had seized America never came to power. Undaunted and unreconstructed Americans, Mel and his wife Marie went their own way not in open defiance but in quiet contempt of the establishment. Mel never hesitated to pose the questions that liberals and neoconservatives had decided to keep closed. He was right to wonder about the limits of equality as understood by America's Founders, and he properly grasped that the flow of American history had long been away from those ideals embraced by Federalists and antifederalists alike.

A disciple of the Southern Agrarians, Mel had a deeper sense of historical contexts than almost any other American I have known. His resistance to "abstract universals" and his almost mulish insistence on looking at things within particular sets of political and social arrangements were the defining characteristics of his work. These characteristics inflamed those who saw America as the self-improving exemplification of "democracy." Mel considered contemporary America to be a revolutionized society that had lost its cultural and constitutional bearings. He found no reason to believe that America was conceived with a mandate to equalize its own citizens, let alone the rest of the world. His question was not why the founders had not tried to make everyone in their country into an equal citizen, but why this project had come to prevail, at the expense of a more restrictive view of citizenship, in the course of later American history. Because he held no brief for the "new dispensation," which he associated with the loss of an active and responsible republicanism, Mel never escaped the charge of being an

extremist. That charge was of course justified, from the eccentric perspective of modern democratic progressives. But in reality it was Mel, not his critics, who asked the intelligent questions. And he paid for that right by putting up with public insult.

In death he left many bereaved beyond his own family, for like Socrates and Jesus, he made disciples by the way he bore adversity. Those, like myself, who had complained about his forbearance in the face of his enemies came to admire him profoundly. His close friend Sam Francis, who was never a sentimentalist, observed after his death that Mel had been "a father to us all; what I believe I learned from him." Mel was indeed the spiritual father not only of his son Douglas but of all who now recall his words and example, in loving appreciation.

Paul Gottfried

Editor, This World—Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

MEL BRADFORD HAS LEFT US, all too prematurely, and there remains a personal void that nothing can fill; but his strong and distinctive voice remains very much with us. It has been a great conversation and remains a great legacy. It continues in a remarkable series of books and articles.

The term "voice" here is important. Mel was a student of rhetoric in the full classical meaning of the word, the technique of endowing words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs not only with paraphraseable sense but with experienced sense—with sinew and with feeling as well as thought. His prose has all the power that Strunk and White knew nothing about.

Mel was—Mel is—"Roman." Think about the great difference between the Greek hero Odysseus and the Trojan/Roman Aeneas. The restless Greek is in no hurry to return home to Ithaca and Penelope. (Greek philosophy was thus restless and brilliant.) But Aeneas cannot rest until he re-founds Troy in Latium and literally returns his gods to his hearth. Unlike Odysseus, the Roman Aeneas is a homebody.

Mel's voice is thus rooted at home. It knows its lares and penates. It is at once American and distinctive, universal because local. Aeneas (and Vergil) would have understood. I've had a lot to say about Mel ("M.E. Bradford") in many places, all of it admiring, including my introduction to his masterly *A Better Guide Than Reason*.

Mel's guide was habitus, an experienced and on the whole good way of life. His most recent work, also well titled, *Against the Barbarians* (Missouri, 1992) is another work of permanence.

Jeffrey Hart

Dartmouth College—Hanover, New Hampshire

THE BOLDEST LITERARY CHAMPION OF THE SOUTH IN RECENT DECADES, M.E. Bradford

lived with courage and patience, with a high old Roman virtue, despite the increasingly heavy burden of his physical afflictions. He being made for eternity, his massive form and cheerful chuckle are not forever lost to us.

His books will endure here below. I am bringing out in The Library of Conservative Thought a new edition of his *Better Guide than Reason*, with a foreword by me; and the University Press of Kansas will be publishing an enlarged edition of his book *A Worthy Company*, under the title *Founding Fathers*, also with a Kirk foreword. I trust that his Donald Davidson biography, on which he was laboring up to his sudden death, will be completed by someone and handsomely published.

It is better to write books of enduring value than to serve in public office. Dr. Bradford took an active part in Texas and national politics, intelligently helping conservative candidates, most recently Mr.

Patrick Buchanan. He and I last met, indeed, at Mr. Buchanan's residence near Washington. What with his high achievements in the disciplines of history and humane letters, he should have been appointed to high office during the Reagan administration; but the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. M. E.



Charles Goolbsy

Mel Bradford on the stump in Texas in 1968.

Bradford was a genuine conservative, a scholar and a gentleman, guided by tradition, prescription, our cultural patrimony and pietas. We may not look upon his like again.

Russell Kirk

Author and Social Critic—Mecosta, Michigan

A BELOVED FRIEND, DINNER-TABLE COMPANION AND SOULMATE of two decades' standing is gone. This is not even the whole of the matter. My trousers rustle in the bitter winds from which his vast presence – 6-foot plus and 350 pounds – shielded comrades struggling to save the soul of the West. He was our intellectual Hector, ready with a gesture, a quotation, a closely reasoned allusion from history to give the infidels a swift kick in the pants.

Melvin E. Bradford, doctor of philosophy, professor of English at the University of Dallas, loved the simple culture of an earlier America. This had nothing to do with nostalgia: it had everything to do with philosophy.

In a dozen scholarly books (with titles like *Against the Barbarians*), in hundreds of articles, in speeches galore, in table talk as rich and nourishing as I hope to hear this side of heaven, Mel Bradford stuck up for the old virtues as against the new debaucheries. He believed in duty, piety, respect, moral courage, self-denial and the now-unfashionable like. His ideal social order was one whose members lived as free men and women in relationships based on mutual obligation.

He saw glimmerings of this ideal in the culture of the old republic, and especially that of his native South, whose history and literature he knew inside out. Leviathan government he viewed as a disruptive and poisonous force. People needed to be respected for what they did and said: politicians were a hindrance – always inventing abstract “rights” for purposes of electoral bribery.

Though Mel lived in a Dallas suburb, his voice carried the length and breadth of the nation, and occasionally across the Atlantic, to Europe. The scope of his interests was astounding. He had read everything; better still, he remembered 99 percent of it.

Mel was that unique and sometimes contradictory creature, the activist professor. Ah, but not on the side inhabited by today's leftist professorate: the side of government interference and endless hand-wringing over the alleged offenses of our forebears, aka the Dead White Males. Any side but that one for Mel! The Dead White Males, from the Greeks and Romans up through the founding fathers and beyond, were his folk. Not because of sex, race or inability to interrupt his rhetorical flights, but rather on account of their wisdom and prudence.

Few such folk were to be glimpsed in modern political thickets. From duty and inclination alike, Mel took a hand: as stump speaker, organizer, motivator, theoretician. He promoted, sequentially, the causes of Barry Goldwater, George C. Wallace, Ronald Reagan and Patrick Buchanan. And paid the price.

For a time, Mel's own University of Dallas didn't know what to make of him. He was too much the man of action for more self-effacing academic types. In 1981, his hero Reagan would have named him director of the National Endowment for the Humanities but for vicious attacks launched by Mel's enemies. The professor had made bold, in widely read articles, to fault Abe Lincoln for grafting onto the American political tradition a specious equality (“dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal”) which most of the founders would have repudiated.

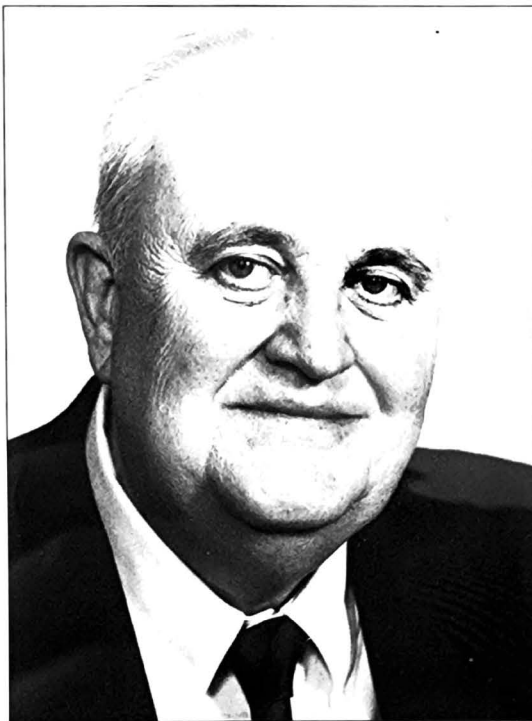
Well, one just didn't say such things in the civil rights era—even if they were true. Mel's

detractors tried to deck him out in king-size Klan robes. More open-minded observers saw that the Dallas prof had courageously raised a delicate point bearing on a central problem of the day: whether equality must be earned or whether it can and should be spoon-fed. In any case, Mel's elan never recovered entirely from the abuse heaped on him.

Bill Murchison

Syndicated Columnist—Dallas, Texas

OTHERS WILL REMEMBER MEL FOR HIS FORMIDABLE SCHOLARSHIP or his dashing polemical works, and I will, too. But what I'll miss most is the presence of the man himself: his conversa-



University of Dallas

M.E. Bradford, 1934–1993

tion, his humor and his courtliness, his gift for friendly argumentation, his startling mix of erudition and folksiness. In *Why the South Will Survive*, Mel wrote about a gathering in someone's hotel room after a scholarly conference in Columbia:

Most of the participants in the evening's celebration were Southern scholars, some of them well acquainted and some new to many of the group. They were of both sexes and three generations. The common denominator of our discourse was the business of the day. Yet we spoke of much else besides: of friends and mentors and the rumors of both—their fortunes and misfortunes, their origins and our own; of illustrative stories, many of them drawn from outside the narrow confines of the academy; of adversaries, ancient and modern; of our delight in the progress of one another's work, and reports of our personal lives; and most particularly in the rehearsal of common bonds antecedent to our professional identities, visible as much in the manner of our speaking as in its content—in idiom, in humor, in certain hyperbolic gestures, verging on swagger, panache, and familiarity. The round robin of the talk was intense and friendly, serious and droll, carried on as if all present feared that it would be some time before they were all together again and were determined to hear and say it all.

All in all, a non-Southern visitor told Mel, it was "more like a family reunion than the usual polite and professional alcoholic post-mortem to a long day's session." Mel believed that Southerners, even Southern academics, are like that. Certainly he was, and he brought it out in others.

As it happens, I was in that Columbia hotel room: it was the first time I'd met Mel. But he and I were on some of the same lecture and conference circuits, so that was just the first of many such evenings we spent together. In Nashville and Dallas and Atlanta, in Chapel Hill and (only last fall) back in Columbia, often with Marie and my wife Dale, each time the good talk simply picked up where it left off, as if we'd been apart only a few hours, not months or years. I want to believe that right now Mel and his old friends are passing the Jack Daniels around gossiping about the rest of us, mixing high ideas and low humor, telling stories and lies. I hope to join them someday.

John Shelton Reed

*Director, Center for the Study
of the American South—Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

HE WAS A LARGE MAN IN ALL WAYS. Those of us who knew him knew a largesse of spirit and an abundance of charity that spilled over and blessed all who had the good fortune to find our lives crossed with his.

There was a public Mel Bradford and a private one, and that private one spent hours, days, weeks and even

months advising, correcting, embellishing, and bettering doctoral dissertation after dissertation, thus seeing his students through to their terminal degrees. And he never forgot them. His nervous energy quickened their search for academic and even political positions. His good will and words located students and professors within academia and he furthered the careers of his colleagues whom he helped gain grants and fellowships. He did this even for men who disagreed with his philosophy of life. Mel Bradford was all charity. In twenty-seven years of knowing him and knowing him well, I never heard him say an unkind word about anyone. He had leagues of enemies but he was the enemy to no man. In Bradford there was summed up St. Augustine's admonition that we should hate the sin but love this sinner. Few do this. Mel always did.

United with this indefatigable desire to help everyone was his incomparable scholarship. When all he has written is put together—and it will be—his writings will fill more than a small library. Both a rhetorician and an historian as well as a literary critic, Mel spoke as he wrote. There was no schism between the man you met and the man who was. A universal man in the Renaissance sense of the term—although the Renaissance was not his moment in history—his reading was immense, his judgments charged with prudence, his opinions weighed with wisdom. Despite the gentleness of his nature, he always fought for the good things and his pen was a public shield and a sword in defense of decency. If he had any enemies, they were—on the one hand—a sophistic and facile cosmopolitanism—and—on the other hand—intellectual and moral barbarism. He fought the good fight.

Frederick D. Wilhelmsen

The University of Dallas—Irving, Texas

A WHISPERED GOODBYE

*Do they miss me at home, Do they miss me,
At morning at noon and at night?
And lingers one gloomy shade round them,
That only my presence can light?
...And is there a chord in the music,
That's missed when my voice is away?
A chord in each heart that awaketh,
Regret at my wearysome stay?
...And when the "goodnights" are repeated,
And all lay them down to their sleep,
Do they think of the absent and waft me,
A whispered goodnight while they weep? ☆*

—Taken from "Do They Miss Me At Home?"

An old Confederate song written by Catherine Mason and S. M. Gannis and included in Homespun Songs of the CSA, Volume V released this month by Bobby Horton.

Not in Memoriam, But in Affirmation

In 1980, the University of Georgia Press published *Why the South Will Survive: Fifteen Southerners Look at their Region a Half Century After I'll Take My Stand*. It was a heady project; to evaluate the work of the Agrarians and to interpret their seminal ideas for a new generation.

M.E. Bradford, in accepting the task of writing the conclusion, understood the importance of the project. His essay, entitled "Not in Memoriam, But in Affirmation" gives us a sample of Bradford's full power. *Southern Partisan* reproduces here two extended excerpts as a memorial to one of our region's greatest champions.

For almost two centuries, and perhaps for even longer, Southerners have found a predictable source of diversion in watching the curious outsiders or visitors who are busily watching them. As we all know, there is sometimes a bit of irritation which gives a special edge to the sport. In such cases, the tenor of the exercise is forensic and, at least partially, unpleasant. But there are other occasions when we behold with wonder the uncalculating surprise taken from our conduct by "foreign" observers who have no axe to grind. I have a friend from Michigan, a fellow academic, with advanced degrees in French history and a wide experience not only of the American scene but also of Europe and the Middle East. We see one another most frequently at scholarly conferences, though our acquaintance is of some years' standing and embodies a broad scope of mutual interests and attitudes, including consulting exchanges and common projects. Moreover, we share many of the same associates and have established a pattern of ease and candor in our conversation.

Therefore I accepted as genuine and instructive my friend's reaction to an impromptu party following an exhaustive program of weighty papers on political philosophy. Most of the participants in the evening's celebration were Southern scholars, some of them well acquainted and some new to many of the group. They were of both sexes and of three generations. The common denominator of our discourse was the business of the day. Yet we spoke of much else besides: of friends and mentors and the rumors of both—their fortunes and misfortunes, their origins and our own; of illustrative stories many of them drawn from outside the narrow confines of the academy; of adversaries, ancient and modern; of our delight in the progress of one an-

other's work, and reports of our personal lives; and most particularly in the rehearsal of common bonds antecedent to our professional identities, visible as much in the manner our speaking as in its content in idiom, in humor, in certain hyperbolic gestures, verging on swagger, panache, and familiarity. The round robin of the talk was intense and friendly, serious and droll, carried on as if all present feared that it would be some time before they would be together again and were determined to hear and say it all.

For the young historian from Michigan, the dynamic of the gathering was a cause from unmixed astonishment. In the early hours of the morning, as he was leaving, he confided in both pleasure and exhaustion, "I can't believe that this is a group of intellectuals. Professors that I know do not behave in this way, even when among close friends." And he added to this observation an acknowledgment that the festivities had been more like a family reunion than the usual polite and professional alcoholic post-mortem to a long day's session. What had struck my friend was...that the social identity of Southerners is antecedent to and the basis of the other components of their selfhood as economic and political, academic and religious men and women.

In accounting for the traditional Southerner's attitudes toward state and society, it is useful to draw some of our terms from English intellectual history. Often I tell my students that their forebears were both Whig and Tory—or rather, a synthesis of the two, being Whig when they sought to chain the Leviathan and Tory when they followed the authority which declares that some will have five talents, some three, and some only one. There is of course a paradox involved in speaking of a corporate bond linking together a people

by M.E. Bradford

who are, as we read elsewhere in these pages, so proverbially individualistic, so jealous of their personal dignity, and so unwilling to endure affront. But it is a paradox at the heart of the Southern personality, and of the experience of the region's inhabitants of life within the kind of regime identified by Michael Oakeshott as a *societas*: a nomocratic order in which members "are not partners or colleagues in an enterprise with a common purpose to pursue or a common interest to promote or protect," but are instead "related...in terms of a practice"—a common *way*.

As we all know, Southerners, or at least white Southerners, prefer that their lives be very little regulated by the power of a national government. With us, in the formula of Jefferson's First Inaugural, the milder the restraint imposed by that remote authority, the greater our devotion to its preservation. We regard other opinions of the utility of the energetic, positive state as "theoretic and visionary," discounting them *because* of the prior and permanent allegiance which we have given to an entire mesh and network of usually non-judicial social connections. True, at the level of local and state administration, the *mores majorum* impinge very closely upon the official structures of power. Nothing revolutionary is ordinarily proposed in such a context, and government tends to conserve the regime. Prescriptive law and custom reflect the aforementioned "way" or "practice." And the *Gemeinschaft*, the corporate spirit of the *societas*, swallows the state—not, as in the standard modern practice, the other way around.

To rephrase the matter, the social identity of Southerners does not rest upon a theory concerning the future of their homeland, its goal or meaning as a composite entity. The bond between us is of another, ancient variety. It is in contrast to that kind of connection which Oakeshott marks as the predicate of the conventional modern state, an "enterprise association," whose nature is *not* nomocratic, that is, characterized by a civil practice; but *teleocratic*, that is, defined by

an end. In a politicized world, where patriotism attaches to the state rather than to the society, the teleocratic combination results in a civil theology, a polity sustained by big ideas. In its most ambitious form it is a *universitas*, which tends to be all-absorbing of those well-marshaled citizens whose lives it contains. Only with grave difficulty does it coexist with the separable and distinctive components of the *societas* which (in most cases) it replaced; for members of the *societas* are persons, not instruments. But the teleocratic apology for these outrages has always had a certain plausi-

bility, with (in the words of Robert Nisbet) tyranny "concealed under the humane purposes which have brought it into existence."

Because for Southerners everything is social—personal without being too personal—it is no accident that they are distrustful of most types of professionalism, especially the "professional politician." They do not care for transactions conducted in a "strictly business" fashion and prefer at least a civil pretense that there are legitimate personal reasons, based on acquaintance, attitude, and amity, for any commercial exchange. The species of identity that proceeds from a shared enthusiasm for an abstraction or a "target" they recognize as tenuous—as in the operations of a mob. Therefore Southern politics, and also Southern political economy, presuppose the importance of who you are, not what you know, and seek instinctively to minimize the impact on private business of teleocratic positive law. Both are extensions of the social operation, a dynamic of voluntary associations which, according to Nisbet and Oakeshott, the state as *societas* exists to protect. These intermediate institutions which are repositories of value as negotiated or "discovered" over a long course of history (not metaphysically derived in argument from definition) are: church, union, guild or professional association, neighborhood or place, ethnic identity, political party, club, and (most basic of all) family. Their status in a traditional society is (or is almost) providential, and the essence of their law is private or unwritten. In all of the relationships which they sustain, *being* is prior to *meaning*. They make possible the *communitas communitatum* which the Southern Fathers of the Republic hoped to secure through the American Revolution and the subsequent agreement among the states which we call the Constitution. Southerners here and now, insofar as they recall their upbringing, will agree with Nisbet that, for

"It is well that we should remember, when asked about the South, that even in war, during its brief experience of political independence, the Southern Confederacy behaved more like a society than a state."

the sake of our posterity, "what is required...is the establishment of a scene in which there is a profound incentive to form, and live in and by, associations or groups which are distinct from political government." The great advantage for the South is that not all of this labor need be done "from scratch."

It is well that we should remember, when asked about the South, that even in war, during its brief experience of political independence, the Southern Confederacy behaved more like a society than like a state. In the field the Confederate Army was an extension of

the region's social character, not the embodiment of a separate and antiseptic military "profession" or martial juggernaut. Under generals who were more patriarchs than imitations of Napoleon or Frederick the Great, it resembled in spirit a collection of Scottish Highland clans. When I think of the regional *Gemeinschaft*, I think always of the brigades of Leonidas Polk, Nathan Bedford Forrest, and Sterling "Pap" Price. And of Lee in the Wilderness that day when his men refused to let him assume a position in the line of fire and tugged at the bridle of Traveler until they had turned him aside....

Recently I reviewed the transcript of the conversations [of the Agrarians during a "reunion" held in Dallas in the spring of 1968] and found there a unanimous encouragement that the work be carried on and the teaching reapplied. John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and Andrew Lytle were present, as well as the widow of Frank Owsley, Mrs.

"To maintain that the South still embodies an obdurate particularity worthy of defense and preservation does not seem to us to be separatism. The New South battle cry, that 'sectionalism is unpatriotic,' fades into insignificance for those who recognize that only below the old surveyor's line does a great deal of the original American character survive."

Harriet Owsley. Also attending was Professor T. D. Young, bearing a message from Donald Davidson, for whose sake the conference had been arranged. Yet, surprisingly, Davidson's absence (he died the following week) did little to soften the conversation into the predictable mixture of nostalgia and rumination. The old dynamic of the group reappeared before the eyes of their hosts, and the declension of our times was identified as a confirmation of their prophecies as younger men. Once again, though now eighty, Ransom spoke for his friends, and the rumor of his withdrawal from the cause of the South was utterly belied. As the discussion focused on what might now be done for their country, for the patria, Ransom queried, "Well now, what about this? Would it be possible...to have a new proclamation: there would be a lot of people who would be sympathetic, and they would realize that the time is more crucial now than it was when *I'll Take My Stand* came out...We couldn't scare them in 1930, but I believe now that it's possible....[The young people should not be left] without a doctrine." We could not have a more emphatic laying on of hands.

What, then, shall be our testimony? It is obvious that fifty years of policy and practice contrary to the Agrarian injunction has proven the impossibility of culture

"poured in from the top." And though modern American education is as helpless in the role of guardian for civilized values as John Gould Fletcher and his friends foresaw, recent scholarship has provided a rhetoric, a historic and dialectical basis for the analysis that in the original manifesto often rested on custom, instinct, and acute conjecture. The American civil theology is now revealed as the absurdity which once only the South knew it to be. The politics of ends as opposed to means has led to riot and ruin. Megalopolitan industrial centers are clearly on their way to being moribund; nor is it impossible for us to imagine our entire commercial system as the sort of elaborate concrete desert envisaged in Walker Percy's *Love in the Ruins*. Neither can we believe that any new display of what our fathers called "energetic government," performed in the name of some abstract theory of individual human rights, is ever likely to give to the spirit of man the kind of guarantee secured by the old corporate identity

of the South as extended family: as I said earlier, the kind of identity summarized for me by the Confederate Army in the field. I have borrowed from Michael Oakeshott the distinction between the nomocratic regime and the teleocratic. Ours is of the former kind; at whatever cost, we must be determined to keep it

so. For the alternative is barbarism, though called by some other high-sounding euphemistic names.

To maintain that the South still embodies an obdurate particularity worthy of defense and preservation does not seem to us to be separatism. The New South battle cry, that "sectionalism is unpatriotic," fades into insignificance for those who recognize that only below the old surveyor's line does a great deal of the original American character survive. Those who understand aught the connection between the American Revolution and the War Between the States, Mr. Lincoln's re-founding of the Republic, the Gilded Age, Manifest Destiny, and the nation's imperial role in the twentieth century will insist that nothing can be more patriotic than for the South to be itself. This proposition has grown in plausibility since the race problem has ceased to be peculiar responsibility of our region. And because so many of our countrymen from other sections are deciding every day to come and live among us: making that decision not in the hope of reforming us, but in the expectation that they will reform themselves, even though they are not quite sure how that may be done.

This latest migration out of Zion might well offer an opportunity to give the Yankees what-for for having

ruined the country. Such exercises are delightful. But, out of politeness, we have usually confined that teaching to implication and aside. Since they now are somewhat better prepared to listen to us than was heretofore the case, it is enough that we have not imitated the errors of recent collections of this kind with truckling and embarrassment at this or that local weakness from which we wish to be dissociated even before we begin. Our posture has been to take the offensive, and to leave to others the rituals of remorse in which they are more skilled. The measure of any regime, of any economic, social, or political system is its human product. This is an axiom, call it Agrarian or whatever you will. That industrial civilization as we have known it and energetic government *cannot* produce the complete man taken as norm by the Nashville circle is no longer a proposition subject to intelligent dispute. What we were told would be progress has left a vacuum in which solipsism and deracination, Marxism and related nostrums have moved at will. The Gross National Product at its best cannot negate this truth, nor may religion be expected to flourish under such circumstances. What has survived of the South that traced its lineage to the England of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is still visible and functioning because agriculture has been the "model," the prototype for all other vocations in which the Southerner joined the public and private things. Stewardship is still an intelligible conception for the host of Southerners who live in clusters surrounding our great cities and who do a work very different from that preformed by their ancestors. Real property is yet preferred over other kinds, and liberty is understood by them as being dependent upon their participation in the corporate life, the intermediate institutions described above. As for equality, Southerners have always known that it was the enemy of moral liberty, unless restricted in its meaning to signify nothing more than a guarantee against favoritism by those in power toward the members of their faction. We Southerners are still a people of the law. But law cannot make men equal, either in opportunity or in condition; though within the limited sphere of its authority, it may be the same for whoever comes before it. To offer either more or less is to invite the reign of envy. As Richard Weaver insisted, a high degree of immunity to that besetting modern virus is a major part of the explanation of the survival of the regime. Class struggle we neither have nor want.

What then should be our counsel to our fellow Southerners, insisting upon all that we have said, yet admitting at the same time that the South which we defend is a region greatly changed from what it was in 1930—changed in appearance and in situation, if not in spirit? First, it is important that we consciously recognize what our practice specifies that we believe: that a culture is made up of a set of habits or modes of conduct, "of chairs and tables, songs and tales," and also

of familiar sights and sounds and smells, and finally of manners. It is a way of life, and not a goal for life, which requires a deference prior to all analysis. It exists in South Carolina and Tennessee and Texas—not in covenant and eschatology. And also in speech and in serious literature where the familiar word is given lasting form. All of these attitudes rest, of course, upon a sound ontology, a reluctance to do violence against the given things; upon the creed of memory, and upon the old Revelation for which, as Professor Landess has recalled to us, our fathers sought no updated replacement. Community is grown, not made. To repeat, community is something anterior, first submitted to and only then examined by those whose sense of personal worth and joy in life depend upon its survival. To be sure, all members of a community should feel that they have a stake in its continuation if their loyalty is to be presumed, but such members must also realize that the whole of that corporate entity cannot be expected to risk dissolution in order to gratify the private expectations of any of its component parts.

Of specific recommendations for the future of the South and of prognostics, there is a sufficiency in the preceding essays. My own suggestion, which has informed much of my adult life, is that we cultivate the arts of memory, and thus hope to preserve to our posterity the bond which has heretofore (and I borrow from Burke) linked together among us "the dead, the living, and the yet unborn." For the sake of memory let us preserve the iconic things—buildings, monuments, gardens, rites, celebrations, and stories—which have defined us for over three hundred years as a people apart, and which carry in themselves the seeds of restoration as a context for the tradition. Objections to these reminders of an earlier South or to an attention to its history must be resisted, at every turn and with every resource. Those who would destroy the icons and erase that memory are not Southerners as we define the species here, but instead serve chiefly to recall to us why we never agreed to be "absorbed" by the deracinated abstractions of the Union at large. The Romans taught their sons to look backward in order to prepare for the morrow. Roman literature kept alive the rumor of the Republic and the authority of its example for centuries after the elevation of Augustus. If our friends tell us that these days are dark, then we should recite something like the hopeful formula of Mr. Davidson in his later years, one that he repeated to me many times over: that in order to get better, it must first get a good deal worse. With these priorities observed, our descendants may know that "we have not loosely, through silence, permitted things to pass away as in a dream." ☆

Why the South Will Survive is available from University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia 30602, telephone (706) 369-6130.

Forget, HELL!

When a large national magazine asked Honey Naylor to do a little article on her native region to amuse its Yankee readership, they received "Forget, Hell." Needless to say, it wasn't exactly what the editors had in mind. After it was rejected, the author had a good idea where to submit it. We're proud to bring it to you in its politically-incorrect form, as originally submitted to the big boys.

Understand one thing up front. This essay is the work of an unreconstructed Southerner who stands when "Dixie" is played; salutes the Stars and Bars; gets misty-eyed at the mere mention of the name Bobby Lee; and looks forward eagerly to each issue of a die-hard, fire-eating, "Forget, hell!" periodical out of Columbia, South Carolina, called the *Southern Partisan*. (To show you where they stand, the magazine refers to Richmond as "our nation's capital.")

Not that I'm not broad-minded. Some of my best friends are damn-yankees. Matter of fact, I lived for a number of years among them. Right smack dab in the belly of the bluebelly, so to speak. We all make mistakes.

I am broad-minded. But not impartial. And not a "submissionist"—a derogatory term my gray-jack-

eted ancestors had for Southerners who wanted to cave in to the bluecoats.

Yankees love to accuse us of "still fighting the Civil War." "How come you guys are still fighting the Civil War," they say, by way of opening a conversation. (Yankees say "you guys" for "you all," but we know what they mean. They also say, "Civil War.") Have you ever noticed that? How it's always the Yankee that brings the subject up. We know who lost the war—why're we going to broach the topic? To gloat over their glorious victory?

Anyway, it isn't the war that we're still miffed about. It's Reconstruction that keeps us riled.

Now, then. Since the early 1950s, a number of revisionists—some of them, alas, Southerners—have been busily at work revising the line on The

by Honey Naylor

War Between The States. There has been so much re-searching, rewriting, rethinking, and revising that it's difficult to piece together the truth.

Difficult. But not impossible. There are some truths we hold to be self-evident.

To give you an idea of where the revisionists stand, all of them, Southerners included, refer to the great American conflict of the 19th century as the "Civil War." When everybody down here knows it was a War Between the States. (Or, to the more militant—or candid—among us, the War of Northern Aggression. We know what you're talking about if you just say The War.)

It was a war between the states because it was fought between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America. The C.S. of A. was a nation created in 1861 by eleven Southern states that believed, by God, they had a right to secede—a stance taken in the present day by Ukraine, Tatarstan, and other republics of the late unlamented Soviet Union. Having joined the Union peacefully and voluntarily, and having read the United States Constitution, which they believed granted them the right as free and independent states to withdraw, the Southern states voted to secede from the Union.

South Carolina led the revolt. When Abraham Lincoln, the first candidate of the new Republican Party, was elected president of the United States a delegation of South Carolinians—convened to vote on the secesh question and mad as all get-out—voted 169 to zip to boogie on out of the Union. Thus, South Carolina's union with the "other states of North America" was dissolved. (Note that they seceded not just from the Northern states but from the whole shooting match. Mad as all get-out.)

That was December 20, 1860. During January 1861, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi,

and Georgia waltzed out after South Carolina, and by late spring of that year the other six states had joined the Confederacy: Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Texas, North Carolina, and Virginia.

(Incidentally, South Carolina was merely the first state to follow through on a threat to secede. In 1803, Vermont threatened to secede in protest against the Louisiana Purchase. In the 18th century, the feisty, fiercely independent little state of Rhode Island had refused to send delegates to the Constitutional Convention, and ratified the U. S. Constitution only after the Feds threatened to cut off all commerce with the state. The New Englanders were every bit as hard-headed about States' Rights as the Southerners.)

As to why the Southern states seceded, and what caused The War, the politically correct revisionists tell us it was simply because all those evil Simon Legree-type Southerners were dead-set on preserving slavery, whereas the squeaky-clean Northerners, apparently anointed by God Almighty, were dedicated to abolishing it.

An interesting premise, in view of the fact that in 1860, there were 240,000 slaves in the Unionist states. Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri, none of which was seemingly deemed unfit to belong to the Union, were all slave-holding states. As late as 1840 there were slaveholders in Illinois, and earlier in

the century Washington, D.C. was the most notorious slavetrading center in the country. Slavery could not have existed in the South—or the North—had it not been for Yankee slave-traders. And by all accounts, conditions aboard the slaveships made life on the average plantation seem like a blooming Garden of Eden.

Now, before someone starts dancing around and hollering for my head on a silver platter, let me hasten to state that this is not a defense of



Jefferson Davis was a West Pointer who had served as Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce. Under his leadership, the Confederacy "ran up a flag and opened for business."



Library of Congress

Rep. Preston Brooks of South Carolina defends the honor of his family and the integrity of his region before a hushed U.S. Senate gallery.

slavery. Slavery is indefensible. Period. In the tumultuous century in question, some Southerners made the egregious mistake of trying to defend and even justify the "peculiar institution." True, they were reacting to Yankee finger-pointing, accusations, and hypocritical, sanctimonious, self-righteous, holier-than-thou meddling. But they were wrong.

Slavery was one of the bones of contention, of course—especially as regards the newly acquired territories. But the Free-Soilers seemed as much motivated by greed and politics as anything else. The whole continent was alive with speculators of one kind or another.

By the time the War broke out, the North and South had been squabbling over various things for almost a century. They bickered about tariffs, and about legislation that the South thought was favorable to Northern industrialists and the North thought was favorable to Southern planters. The nation's leading export at the time was cotton, and cotton was produced in the South—some four to five million bales of it in 1860. But the North had a monopoly on banking, shipping, and international trade. The South produced, and the North marketed. And each thought it was being taken to the cleaners by the other.

A notorious legend of the mid-1850s—illustrative of the violent emotions of the times—is the caning of Charles Sumner by Preston S. Brooks. Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts, had made remarks on the

senate floor that were slanderous to a relative of Brooks, a representative from South Carolina. Brooks felt it was his duty to defend his kinsman, so he marched onto the senate floor, announced to Sumner what he aimed to do and why, and proceeded to beat the stuffing out of the senator in full view of a hushed gallery.

The truth is that, largely as a result of geography, as well as changes wrought by the industrial revolution, the North and the South had gone separate ways, philosophically as well as economically. The 1830s was a watershed decade, a period in which the South began to see real differences between its way of life and that of the North. The North had cast its lot with "progress" and pursuit of the Almighty Dollars. Southerners, suspicious of the new-fangled machines, science, and industrialization, preferred to stay down on the farm. Or the plantation, as the case may have been. The south remained an agrarian society.

Ironically, a Yankee invention played a role in events that led up to The War. Cotton was not crowned king until after 1793, when Eli Whitney's cotton gin made cotton production fast and profitable.

The sainted John C. Calhoun of South Carolina encouraged Southern sentiments toward sectionalism, and it was in the 1830s that the South's famed "sense of place" developed. Also, people all over the South were swooning over the novels of Sir Walter Scott

("Gone With The Wind" hadn't come out yet), and a fanciful myth evolved among Southerners. They believed that, while Yankees were descendants of the Puritans, the Southerners were descended from the swashbuckling Cavaliers—the dashing chivalrous, aristocratic 17th century Royalist exiles from Cromwell's England. Southerners began searching out their ancestors ages before "Roots" caught on and sent everybody off to the library.

The newly formed Confederacy elected a president—the sainted Jefferson Davis, a West Pointer who had served as Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce; drafted a Constitution, modeled for the most part on the U. S. Constitution; ran up a flag; and opened for business.

Mr. Lincoln and the rest of the Yankees refused to recognize the new nation. To them, it was an insurrection. In the North, the War Between the States was universally referred to as "the Rebellion." Southerners were called "Rebels", when they weren't called out and out traitors. Or worse, (as for Southern epithets, damn-yankee didn't actually become one word until Reconstruction).

The first order of business of the newly formed nation was to blast the Yankees off Fort Sumter, which happened to be on our turf. With important exceptions such as Gettysburg and Sharpsburg (Antietam) the whole war was fought on our turf.

And the truth of the matter is, we outfought the Yankee invaders and everybody knows it. Our generals were head and shoulders above their blue-jacketed counterparts, and everybody certainly knows that. (Let us bow our heads as we pay tribute to the sainted Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson). All those Southern farmboys, and they're the ones that did most of the fighting, were accustomed to the great outdoors, to hunting and shooting and riding hell-for-leather.

Think what we might have accomplished if we'd had a couple of cannon factories!

But there just weren't as many of us. Record-keep-

ing in those days was not an exact science, so precise numbers are hard to come by. But there were anywhere from two million to 2.8 million Yankee invaders down here mixing it up with 600,000 to 800,000 of us Rebs. Even with those odds, it took them four years to whip us and another twelve to suppress and thoroughly crush us. Temporarily, of course.

Now, about Abraham Lincoln. If you've ever wondered why Democrats used always to be able to count on the Solid South, it's because up until about thirty years ago everybody down here was voting against Abraham Lincoln. For Southerners, he's the very symbol of Yankee meddling. Still, Lincoln favored leniency for the postbellum South, and it's interesting to speculate about how things would have turned out for us if that lunatic John Wilkes Booth hadn't gone hog-wild and shot him.

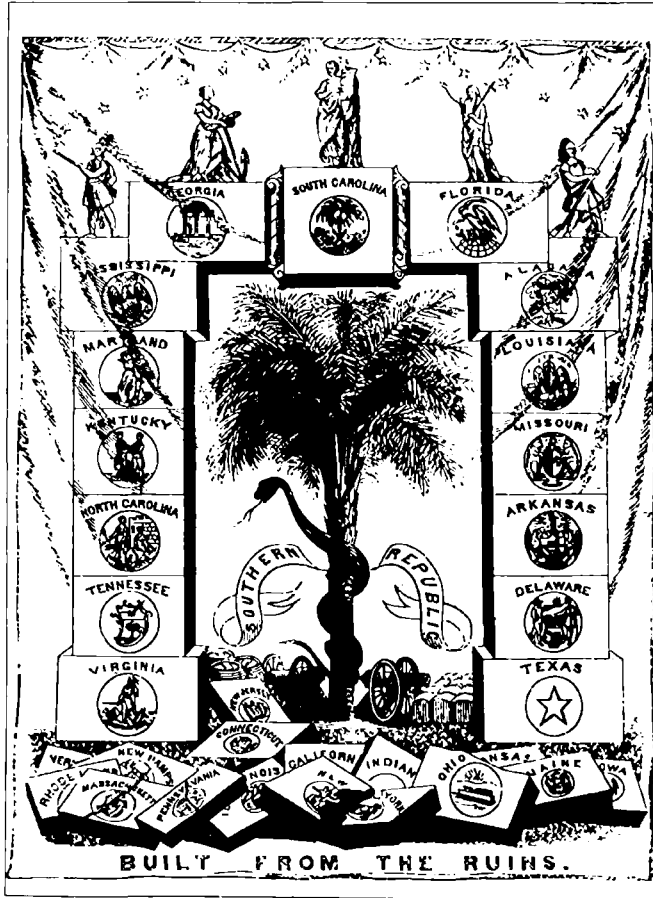
Honest Abe is known as far away as Jupiter and Mars as the Great Emancipator. But his famous proclamation—issued in its final form on January 1, 1863, and referred to by Lincoln as a "war measure"—was a monument to ambivalence. It did proclaim that slaves would be set free—but only in the states that were "in rebellion." Exempt from its provisions were Tennessee (Lincoln's vice president Andrew Johnson, was from that state), as well as all the Union slaveholding states, and those sections of Louisiana and Virginia that were occupied by Federal troops.

It therefore prohibited slavery in areas where the North had no jurisdiction—i.e., the

C.S.A.—and permitted it in states that were loyal to the Union. A strange document, indeed.

Lincoln was personally opposed to slavery, but he believed that slavery was a local, domestic issue, best settled by the states. His goal was to preserve the Union with slavery or without it, half slave, half free, howsomever. Then he turned around and said the nation couldn't endure half slave and half free.

Here we have the consummate politician. Which means he talked out of both sides of his mouth, and



The Confederacy offered a new start with a return to the Constitution of 1787, but in the new dispensation Southerners would control their own destiny.

you can get into a whole lot of trouble when you start quoting him.

Lincoln may have been ambivalent, but the country was in absolute chaos. Things were not exactly clear-cut as regards who stood where and for what. Which is to say, not everybody in the South favored secession, and not everyone in the North favored abolition. The South was aslosh with Unionists, the North a hotbed of Copperheads (Southern sympathizers). Spies

American people would simply not have been able to tolerate watching the massacres. Certainly not while they were having their dinner. The carnage was incredible. Almost as many Americans—some 50,000—died in three days of fighting at Gettysburg as were lost in all the Vietnam years.

It's hard for us to imagine this 19th century war now, especially after having witnessed on television the high-tech zip-zap fighting in the Persian Gulf. And it's hard to picture how the country looked in 1860, what with the nation now criss-crossed with super-highways, studded with sprawling, gaudy malls. But at the time of The War, the country was predominantly rural. Before the South seceded, the United States was comprised of 30 states (15 above the Mason-Dixon line, and 15 below the line), and had a population of 31 million. Of that number, only about five million lived in cities of more than 8,000 people, and more than a million of those lived in New York City. Most folks lived on farms or in tiny communities. Certainly that was true in the South. Fewer than a quarter of the Southerners lived on great plantations; the great majority were "yeoman farmers" who owned farms of fewer than 500 acres and had no slaves.

The War was fought in and around these people's houses, their chicken coops, their barns, their gardens, their cornfields and cottonfields. To name but a couple of instances, the Battle of Gettysburg was fought around the Tostle Farm and the Rogers House, as well as the Peach Orchard and the Wheat Field, while at Chancellorsville, Hawkins Farm and Dowdall's Tavern were strategic sites. The most famous "farmhouse" story is about a guy named Wilmer McLean. When war erupted, McLean lived near Manassas Junction, and both First and Second Bull Run had been fought around his farm. Thinking to move his family to safety he took them to an out-of-the-way spot in

Virginia called Appomattox Court House. Little did he know. The War ended when Lee surrendered to Grant there, in McLean's living room.

When The War was finally over, the North counted approximately 640,000 dead; the South, 450,000 to 500,000. But those figures apply only to the military. It is impossible to estimate the number of civilians who



SHUTTING UP SHOP.

UNCLE SAMUEL. "What! shutting up shop, eh!"
 MANAGING MAN OF THE COPPERHEAD HOUSE. "Yes! 'tain't no use. Sence the news from Ohio and Pennsylvania, we haint seen a customer, and the boss says to shut up quickly before New York ruins us outright."
 HEN 1863

Library of Congress

Unionist newspaper cartoons such as the one above called Northern pro-South Peace Democrats "Copperheads" because they wore copper pennies to identify themselves to one another.

and saboteurs were spying and sabotaging like crazy on both sides of the Smith and Wesson line. And the old cliché is true: this was a brother-against-brother war.

Columnist George Will has said that had there been television during The War, as there was during Vietnam, this country would now be two nations. The

perished, or to count the wandering hordes of men, women, and children—black and white—who were homeless after the war.

In addition to human loss, the vast Southland battlefield was, to put it pithily, a mess. A bankrupt wasteland of ravaged cities and burnt-out plantations homes, farms and public buildings, destroyed bridges, fences, and wrecked roadbeds; and cottonfields overgrown with weeds. Livestock was virtually nonexistent. Food was scarce. There was neither money nor credit available. The Confederacy had totally collapsed.

The financial cost of four years of war, plus 12 years of Reconstruction, was estimated at \$20 billion. Sherman's own estimate of the damage done by his "bummers" as they burned ravaged, and pillaged their way from Atlanta to the sea was \$100 million.

It's fun to wonder how things might have been if the United States had treated the C.S.A. as it did Germany and Japan after World War II, instead of merrily grinding the defeated South beneath its heel. Who knows? The Confederacy might have become one of the richest, most powerful nations in the world.

All purely speculative, of course. With the South destroyed, the North proceeded to "reconstruct" us.

After a fair amount of infighting between the Republican Party and its Radical wing, the U. S. Congress created the Joint Committee on Reconstruction. Under the

leadership of fire-eating Radicals like Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Charles Sumner of Massachusetts—he who'd been caned—the entire South was dismantled and carved up into five military districts. Each was governed by a blueback major-general.

Over a period of time, state governments were reformed and ruled by a coalition of freed slaves, Carpetbaggers and Scalawags. Carpetbaggers were Yankees who packed their duds in bags made of rug fabric and came South to make a killing; Scalawags—far and away the most hated by Southerners—were Southerners who sucked up to the enemy for profit. Yankee occupation forces remained until 1877, when the last Federal troops were withdrawn from Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina, and the process of Southern redemption began. That is, we got our states back.

Having now been thoroughly redeemed, some of us dyed-in-the-wool types speculate, more or less jokingly, about how differently things would turn out if we should ever get riled up enough to sashay out of the union again.

Massa may be in the cold, cold ground, but NASA's in Houston.

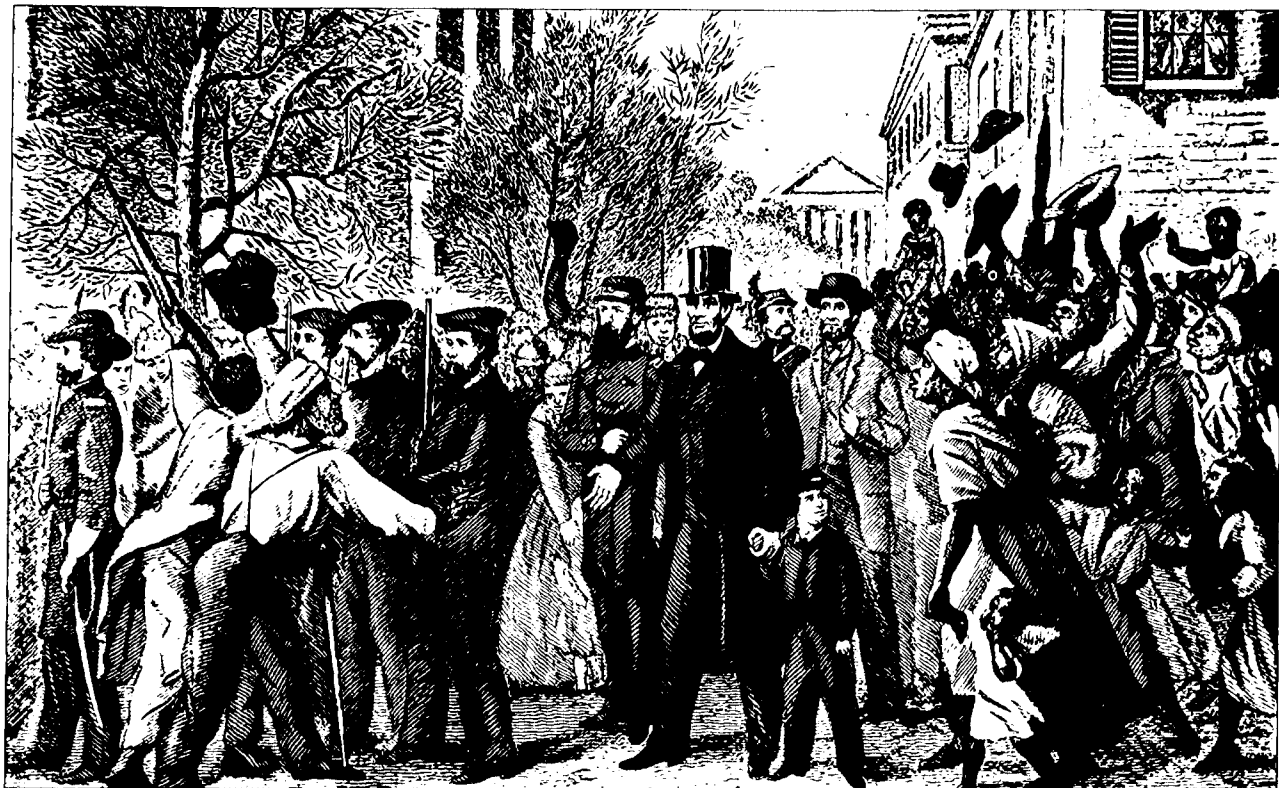
Think about it. ☆

Honey Naylor is a freelance writer from New Orleans, Louisiana.



U.S. Army Military History Institute

The financial cost of four years of war, plus 12 years of Reconstruction, was estimated at \$20 billion. Sherman's own estimate of the damage done by his "bummers" as they burned ravaged, and pillaged their way from Atlanta to the sea was \$100 million.



I Want to See Richmond

Imagine the following scene. The Atlanta Braves win the 1992 World Series instead of the Toronto Blue Jays. Braves manager Bobby Cox marches across home plate to the Blue Jay dugout, then walks through the loser's dugout to the Jays office. He plops down behind manager Cito Gaston's desk. Gaston is in the locker room with his despondent players. Seated in Gaston's chair, with hands behind his head and feet outstretched, Cox declares, "I feel almost at home here. God Bless America."

Bobby Cox, of course, did not march across the Skydome. If he had as the winner, he would have

sparked a bitter reaction from baseball fans in Canada. But consider a similar scene in 1865, the day that Abraham Lincoln visited Richmond, Virginia, the fallen Confederate capital. Imagine how much stronger the feelings would be where citizens had lost a four-year war fought on their own soil, instead of losing just a sporting event.

In the PBS television series *The Civil War*, historian Shelby Foote commented on a Southerner's sense of defeat, an aspect of the war that lingers today. Could the tone have been set for Southern feelings of defeat by a victory visit from President Abraham Lin-

by Margie McAllister

coln? "I want to see Richmond," the president declared from his retreat on the James River, the steamship *River Queen*, when he learned that Union troops had finally entered the Confederate capital after four long years of civil war.

On Tuesday afternoon, April 4, 1865, Richmond was still smoldering from fires lit to keep Confederate supplies and documents out of Union hands. Two days earlier, Confederate President Jefferson Davis had stashed the remnants of his government on railroad cars and abandoned Richmond for a new capital, Danville. Union troops first rode down Richmond's Main Street at 8:15 Monday morning. The following afternoon, President Lincoln left the *River Queen* and proceeded by barge toward Richmond. Accompanied by his son Tad, who had turned twelve-years-old that day, and guarded by only a handful of soldiers, a victorious Abraham Lincoln strode two miles up a hill into what had been the heart of the Confederacy.

Newspapers brought Lincoln's visit and other events to their Southern readers. An important example is the Saturday, April 8, *Richmond Evening Whig*. The *Whig* described the pivotal scene, "President Lincoln at the Jeff Davis mansion, in Jeff's easy chair, leaning back with palms behind his head, and pedal extremities extended—Visitor—'Mr. Lincoln, how do you feel?' Mr. Lincoln—'Well I don't know; I think I feel just as well as if I was home in my own house.'" The *Whig* was proud of its coverage, "... (after) diligent enquiries among the best informed, we congratulate ourselves on being fortunate to secure the scene ahead of the *New York Herald*."

As Lincoln toured the city, he was greeted by crowds of cheering newly-freed slaves. Other citizens peered out at the visitor from behind curtains in their homes. Further south, in Raleigh, North Carolina, the *Daily Standard* gave Southern readers more details about the president's trip to their fallen Confederate capital, "upon the arrival of the President (Union) General Weitzel held extemporized drawing room receptions in the late Executive mansion of the Confederacy..." Imagine the feelings of Southern readers, as they read in their local newspapers about Abraham Lincoln's tour of their smoldering capital city and of receptions held in the office of their president, Jefferson Davis.

Southern sentiment was well captured by a Northern reporter. From the *New York Herald*, George Alfred Townsend was one of the first reporters to reach Richmond, arriving less than a week after Union troops first entered the city. Townsend provided a

poignant description of Richmond, while depicting a Southerner's point of view.

On Saturday the city was calm and trusting; Lee its idol, held Grant at Petersburg, fast; the daily journals came out as usual, filled with soothing accounts; that night came vague rumors of reverses; in the morning vaguer rumors of evacuation; by Sunday night the public records were burned in the streets...the spring wind carried the flame from the burning boats on the canal to the great Galligo Mills, to files of massive warehouses groaning with tobacco, into the heart of the town, where stores, and vaults, and banks, and factories lined wide, undulating streets...And behind all, plunderer, incendiary, and straggler, came the one vague, overlapping, dreadful fear of—the enemy...Richmond had cost them half a million of lives, a mountain of blood and wealth, four years of deadly struggle; would they not complete its ruin?

Into this atmosphere of fear, arrived President Lin-

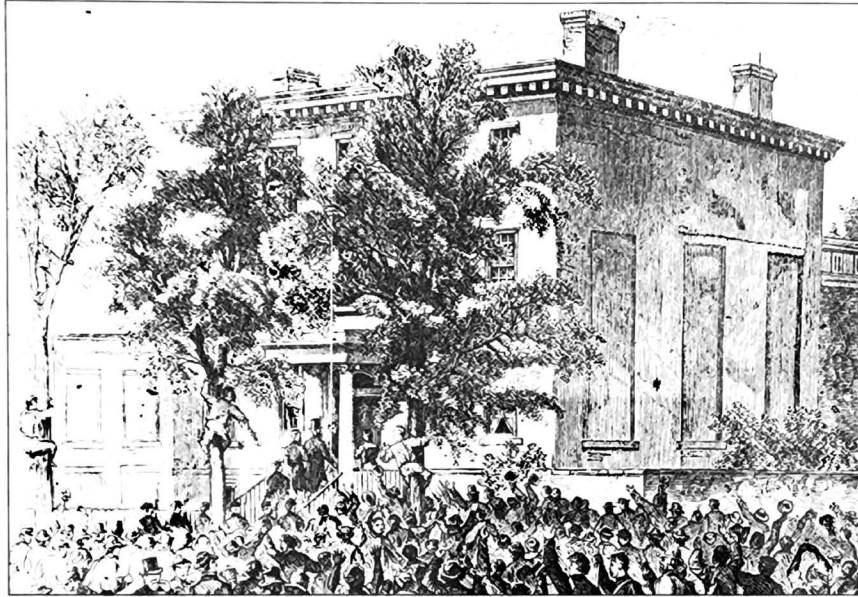


Upon entering Richmond, Lincoln proceeded directly to the White House of the Confederacy. Sitting in Jefferson Davis' chair with his palms behind his head, Lincoln leaned back and replied "I feel just as well as if I was [sic] in my own house."

coln on a victory tour of Richmond. But Lincoln was not the only visitor from the North. The new scalawag Southern press brought their readers news of additional visitors. On April 4th, Mary Todd Lincoln wrote a couple of letters about an upcoming trip. While this description did not appear in the press of the day, it illustrates the mood of the prospective visitors. Mary Todd Lincoln wrote to a friend, "...how happy I am feeling over our glorious victories...We will have a most charming party...I am expecting quite a number of friends." The same day she wrote to her husband, "Please say to (*River Queen*) Captain Bradford that a party of seven persons, leave here tomorrow & will reach City Point (Grant's Virginia headquarters) Thursday morning for breakfast."

Richmond families had lost their children, spouses, parents and friends in a war fought on their soil. Their reactions when reading about the visitors were predictable. The Friday April 7 *Whig* noted, "Distinguished Visitors at Richmond—Mrs. Pres. Lincoln and Mrs. Gen. Grant arrived in the city on yesterday after-

businesses sprung-up, and newspapers began to publish again. Many Southern papers were now bringing Southern readers a perspective in sharp contrast to coverage before the fall of their capital city. A new daily newspaper started up nearby in Petersburg, the scene of a nine-month face-off between Grant and Lee. Petersburg finally fell to Union troops just before Richmond. The first issue of *Grant's Petersburg Press* was April 3, "...showing that no time was lost in using rebel type to print the good news of the fall of Petersburg and Richmond." Rebel families in Petersburg, read in their new local paper, "We attach no special importance to the story of a grand march by the Rebel army through North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi..." The *Press* reprinted an earlier story from the *Baltimore American* about rebels on the Chesapeake Bay, "...sixty guerrillas who are lurking about St. Mary's and Prince George counties to murder and rob the Union men of those sections." According to the scalawag press, rebel soldiers overnight went from heroes to murderers.



According to the Unionist Frank Leslie newspaper, President Lincoln rode through Richmond "amid the enthusiastic cheers of the inhabitants."

George Alfred Townsend was one of the first Northern reporters to reach Richmond. He covered the Lincoln arrival for the *New York Times*.

noon. The party, accompanied by several prominent government officials, rode through the city in carriages, with an escort of cavalry..." The following day, the *Whig* told its readers, "A tremendous 'On to Richmond' is now being indulged in by the civilians of the Northern states, (including) hundreds of citizens from Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, in their pursuit of business, pleasure, and to gratify curiosity. The Spotswood Hotel is overflowing." In the same issue the newspaper announced a new policy. Beginning the next Monday, the *Whig* would begin publishing daily, a list of hotel arrivals "...for the convenience of the army and public and those especially who are expecting friends from the North."

While tourists from the north poured into Richmond, day-to-day life struggled back from ruin. Small



have ignored considerations of public duty during this visit to Richmond. Other world leaders have not followed Lincoln's example. After World War II, Allied

As the new Southern press was bringing a Union voice to their readers, the Union press had their own perspective on Lincoln's motivation for his trip to Richmond. Lincoln appeared to some to have toured the city to celebrate, without regard to his personal safety. The *New York Times* noted that it could

...readily understand his personal eagerness to witness events of such transcendent importance as the defeat of the rebel army and the capture of the rebel capital; we deem it his duty to have subordinated all such personal predilections to the higher considerations of public duty which the case involves. Mr. Lincoln's life may be of no special value to himself...but he has no right to put it at the mercy of any lingering desperado in Richmond.

Lincoln appeared to

leaders did not visit Japan and Germany. In fact, Germany and Japan received aid, and were treated with dignity and respect in order to rebuild. Yet, Lincoln began the period of Southern Reconstruction, not with a message of dignity for conquered rebels, but with a victorious and perhaps irreverent visit to the office of their fallen Confederate president.

As Reconstruction began and Richmond struggled, Lincoln had returned to Washington. A tired President was called to an open window in the White House by a jubilant crowd. Among the newspapers that brought the story to citizens outside of Washington were the *New Orleans Daily Picayune* (page one) and the *Daily*

torney General, and he gave his opinion that it is our lawful prize. (Laughter and cheers.) I ask the band to give us a good tune upon it.

The band accordingly played "Dixie" with extraordinary vigor, when three cheers and a tiger were given, followed by tune of "Yankee Doodle." The President then proposed three rousing cheers for Grant, and for all under his command; and next, three for the navy and all its forces. They were most enthusiastically given. The President retired amidst huzzas, the tune of "Hail Columbia," and the firing of cannon.

As portrayed by *The Civil War* television series, President Lincoln, with a reverent tone, had called for "Dixie" to be played as one of his most cherished and favorite tunes. The essence described in the press of the day is quite different. As reported in the press that day, Lincoln did not offer three cheers for Robert E. Lee, for those who served under his command, or for those who sang "Dixie" with pride.

The sense of defeat for Southerners was, of course, inevitable. With or without a visit by the victors, with or without the loss of their own voice in the press, with or without the usurpation of their anthem "Dixie," the South lost its four-year struggle. Yet, could the tone have been different? Would subsequent generations hearing stories of carpetbaggers have passed on



Richmond, Virginia—April, 1865.

Richmond as Lincoln saw it.

Missouri Democrat of St. Louis. Here is the story in full, which ran in at least two newspapers of the day.

Washington, D.C., April 10—During the rejoicings here today, the President, who returned from Richmond last evening, was called out and said: I am greatly rejoiced that an occasion has occurred so pleasurable that the people cannot restrain themselves. (Cheers) I suppose that arrangements are being made for some sort of a formal demonstration, perhaps this evening or to-morrow night. (Voices—"We can't wait.") If there should () a demonstration, I of course will have to respond to it (A voice—"Bully for you.") I will have nothing to say if you dribble it out of me. (Laughter and cries of "We want to hear you now.") I propose now to close up by requesting you to play a certain piece of music or tune. I thought "Dixie" one of the best tunes I ever heard. (Laughter. The band began to play "Dixie" but soon ceased. The President continued.) I had heard that our adversaries over the way had attempted to appropriate it. I insisted yesterday we had fairly captured it. (Cheers and laughter.) I presented the question to the At-



the same sense of defeat had Reconstruction started out differently? Baseball writer Roger Angell offers advice to the fans of a losing team, "Sometimes it's wiser to remember the byplay of big games—the songs and the rest of it—instead of their outcome, because losing hurts so much." ☆

Margie McAllister is a graduate student at the University of Texas at Austin and press secretary to a Texas state senator.

One Confederate military unit which benefited from the service of black Southerners was Harvey's Scouts, led by Addison Harvey. Harvey and ten of his men who died in battle are honored with this monument in Canton, Mississippi.

Black Fighters For The South



Canton Chamber of Commerce

The fierce loyalty and dedication of white Southerners—most of whom had never owned a slave—in repelling the Northern invaders in the War of Southern Independence cannot be questioned. When asked by a Northern soldier why he fought, the captured Southerner succinctly replied: “Because you’re *here!*”

The whole story for many a Confederate soldier: *invaders*. “Northern flags in South winds flutter,” say the war-time words of “Dixie”: To arms! To arms! And conquer peace for Dixie.” It was the Athenians at Marathon against the Persian host. Or Churchill’s England against the Nazis. “To live or die for Dixie!” And tens of thousands of Southerners fought and died for Virginia or Carolina or Georgia—for Dixie.

But, while the loyalty and dedication of the Confederates under arms—white men, since blacks could not be enrolled—cannot be doubted, what did black Southerners feel? It is widely accepted—because the victors write the history books—that Southern blacks, groaning under slavery, were hoping

by Sheldon Vanauken

and praying for Northern victory and their own liberation. But there were no pollsters in those days; this image of the blacks is no more than an assumption—a guess. We know, of course, that there were some blacks who ran away to the North via the “Underground Railway”: but we also know that the murderous John Brown, capturing the arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in order to hand out muskets to the slaves who would rise, found that the slaves were uninterested in rising against their masters. Thus there is reason to doubt the popular assumption of black hostility to the Confederate cause. It is fair to assume that the attitudes of Virginian blacks would not be greatly different from that of blacks in South Carolina or in Louisiana? And a further assumption appears reasonable; that the attitudes of certain black Southerners would not be decidedly different from those of their families and friends.

The failed invasion of South Carolina to relieve Fort Sumter was, as intended by Mr. Lincoln, the beginning of the War, but real combat began with the invasion of Virginia in 1861. Shortly thereafter the Lynchburg, Virginia, newspaper reported that seventy black freemen had formed a company pledged to defend Virginia—and the paper adds: “Three cheers for the patriotic Negroes of Lynchburg.” At about the same time another company of sixty black freemen marched into Richmond under a big Confederate flag, asking to be al-

“LOYAL, FAITHFUL, TRUE EACH AND ALL OF THEM.”

—South side of Howcott Monument
Canton, Mississippi

William Hill Howcott of Canton, Mississippi, a Confederate veteran wounded in the chin during a raid on Union positions, didn't like slackers. His grandson Peter Monrose remembers him being “very critical of people who did not fight in the war.” But Howcott was a fair man who believed in honoring those who gave their lives for the Confederacy, no matter what their color, and a 20-foot monument stands today in Canton, Mississippi as testimony to his desire to honor his black friends. Had he not chosen a tribute of such permanence, the story of these loyal blacks might have been lost forever.

The Howcott monument, built sometime between 1894 and 1900, honors both a black individual and a group of loyal blacks. The individual tribute is recorded on the North side, which reads: “A tribute to my faithful servant and friend Willis Howcott, a colored boy of rare loyalty and faithfulness whose memory I cherish with deep gratitude.” Another grandson of the white Howcott, Harley Howcott, Sr. of New Orleans, remembers that the black slave Willis Howcott accompanied Howcott in his exploits as a member of Harvey's Scouts, a group of local men who operated behind enemy lines scouting and attempting to delay the advance of Sherman across Georgia in 1864. According to local legend, black servant Willie Howcott was killed in battle.

The east panel of the monument reads: “Erected by W.H. Howcott to the memory of the good and loyal servants who followed the fortunes of the Harvey Scouts during the Civil War.” According to Monrose, Howcott's desire was to honor house servants who literally kept his mother alive while he was away at war. “She would have starved without them,” Monrose said.

The monument to Confederate black Willis Howcott was re-dedicated by black and white ministers in 1984.



Canton Chamber of Commerce

lowed to fight the invaders. There were nearly 200,000 free blacks in the South, many of whom wanted to fight for the Confederacy. And in Petersburg blacks volunteered to help in raising fortifications and held a mass rally. The Mayor presented them with a Confederate flag, amidst cheers. The black leader accepted it proudly, saying “We are willing to help Virginia's case to the utmost.” Somewhat later when Union forces were besieging Yorktown, the bluecoats were plagued by a deadly accurate sharpshooter.

When he was finally located and killed, he turned out to be a black Virginian. Do the descendants of those men, one wonders, still cherish the Stars and Bars? Do they even remember? And what of the descendants of the three and a half thousand blacks who themselves owned black slaves? As early as 1830 there were some 13,000 slaves with black masters. Who remembers this? Or have the memories been blanked out by the waves of propaganda against the Confederacy?

Although, by law, blacks were not allowed a com-

bat role, many of the military bands were black. And many officers had black body-servants with them. In late 1862 one of these servants was captured and told he was now free. Hired by a Union officer as a servant, he was sent to a spring for water. He trudged off towards the spring, and then simply kept going, along with two Yankee horses, back to his own Confederate regiment. "A masterly retreat," said the general.

In 1863 Captain Arthur Freemantle of the English Coldstream Guards, who was with Lee, told of an even more masterly retreat. A black servant who had been captured returned to his Confederate lines wearing a blue uniform and bringing a Yankee prisoner dressed in his old rags. Captain Freemantle in his book also speaks of "the detestation and contempt" with which the Southern blacks with the Army spoke of the Yankees. Not much "groaning under slavery" here. Another Englishman with the Confederate army told of a black who deserted to the Union, revealing the location of the Confederate batteries. Later that black man was recaptured. Was he then whipped by his white officer? On the contrary, a delegation of black servants asked to be allowed to punish the deserter, and this was granted. Thereupon the Englishman reported, the black deserter turned over to the loyal blacks "met a death at their hands more violent than any white person's anger could have suggested." How would those Confederate blacks have regarded today's blacks who want to tear down the Southern flag? And do the great-grandchildren of those loyal Confederate blacks still pass on this story?

At Brandy Station in 1863 an officer's black servant lured a detachment of bluecoats into a Southern ambush. And, during the great cavalry battle two black servants grabbed Yankee muskets and—no doubt—with Rebel yells—joined the 12th Virginia charge and captured a Union soldier.

Another black servant, a cook, was himself captured, and he refused the oath that would have freed him. "I'm a Jeff Davis man," he said; and he steadfastly remained a prisoner despite all offers of freedom for the rest of the war. Was this story of loyal fortitude remembered in his family?

These are, to be sure, isolated



REBEL NEGRO STEALS AN ENEMY HELMET IN A FIELD.

Library of Congress

Harper's Weekly provided readers in the North proof of black service for the Confederacy.

incidents, yet there were no doubt many similar stories that were never written down. At all events, they do strongly suggest a massive black loyalty—the very opposite of the “groaning under slavery” myth. No doubt there were those who groaned under slavery, but the idea that all blacks felt oppressed under cruel masters and regarded the Southern Cross Battle Flag with loathing simply cannot be true. They simply did not see the Confederacy as wicked; that is left to those who never knew it. All over the South, the only plantations were being run by the women and old men; the slaves could have risen against Ol’ Massa or Ol’ Miss—the young white men were off with the Army—but they did not rise. And the loyalty of the black servants with the armies was surely not diametrically opposite to the feelings of their families and friends at home.

There were many calls for the blacks to be enlisted in the fighting units, calls, as we have seen, from blacks as well as whites. General Lee himself urged it strongly. Until November 1864 President Davis resisted this idea, but finally he yielded, and in the following year, 1865, the C. S. Congress authorized it. Virginia alone was to enroll 300,000 black men. A massive black army from the whole of the Confederacy. And the blacks enrolled in the army were to be emancipated. Obviously, it would mean the end of slavery. But it was too late, although a few units were formed; the Confederacy was collapsing. Whether it would have made a difference in the outcome if the black regiments had been formed can never be known.

Regardless of the outcome, it is a pity that the enrollment of the blacks did not occur. The emancipated blacks would then owe their freedom to the Confederacy, so that today it would not be a propaganda enemy. Moreover, if blacks and whites had fought together against the Yankees, that comradeship would have been a bond in later years. Even today, according to *The Enduring South*, the Southern whites and Southern blacks are closer in their values than Southern whites and Northern whites.

But there’s one thing more to be said of the decision by President Davis and the Congress of the Confederate States: the decision itself proves beyond question that the representatives of the white South cared more for independence than for slavery. The decision is proof of that. If one or the other had to be sacrificed — independence or slavery — slavery must go. Therefore it cannot be said that the South fought primarily for slavery. But the South’s fight for independence was almost over, and with its fall the old idea of the voluntary Union perished. ☆

Sheldon Vanauken, a regular contributor to *Southern Partisan*, is the author of *The Glittering Illusion: English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy and the national best-seller A Severe Mercy*. Mr. Vanauken wishes to acknowledge as a valuable source Wayne Austerman’s “Virginia’s Black Confederates,” published in *Virginia Country’s Civil War Quarterly*, Volume VIII.



Bobbie Chandler

SILAS CHANDLER — BLACK CONFEDERATE HERO

To Confederate Southerners, Silas Chandler is honored as a veteran of the War Between the States. Joining his master, he donned the gray and fought in the 44th Mississippi Volunteer Infantry. (Master and slave are pictured above as they appeared in a 1909 *West Point Times-Leader* article with a sword across their knees.)

But to his master, Silas Chandler is much more than a brave soldier. He also saved his master’s leg. According to the great-grandson of the slave, Mr. Bobbie Chandler, a printer living in Washington, D.C., Andrew Chandler was wounded in battle near Memphis, Tennessee. Fearing infection, beleaguered Confederate surgeons ordered the leg amputated as a life-saving measure. But Silas wouldn’t allow it, saving Andrew Chandler’s life and his leg by carrying him on his back for miles and then placing him on a boxcar for the return trip to better-equipped doctors in Mississippi.

After the war, the Chandlers, black and white, stayed in Mississippi for decades only to be scattered at the turn of the century. But upon publication of the above photograph in *The Washington Times* last year, Bobbie Chandler was contacted by the great-grandson of the master in the photograph. They plan to meet for the first time later this year. The whereabouts of the master’s personal effects are unknown, but the uniform and sword of Black Confederate hero Silas Chandler are the prized possessions of the great-grand nephew who inherited them.

—Oran P. Smith



Donald Davidson



Andrew Lytle



Allen Tate

Men of Letters as Renewers of Society

The Vanderbilt Agrarians, the twelve Southerners who wrote I'll Take My Stand, were not alone in their struggle against big government and big business, but enjoyed support from a British counterpart, the Distributist followers of Chesterton and Belloc. Like the Agrarians, the Distributists were not politicians, but literary men—moralists, poets and historians. Russell Kirk suggests that we heed the voice of the bard as a way out of our destructive leveling culture.

Ever since the ephemeral triumph of the Jacobins in France and elsewhere, malicious sets of writers have amused themselves and ruined others by devoting pen, typewriter and word-processor to the cause of pulling down the established order of society and repudiating the Logos. Marx exhorted the "intellectuals" to gnaw at the foundations of society—ratlike, one may add. Britain and the United States long held out against

by Russell Kirk

such subversion by the *literati*; but after 1914, George Bernard Shaw, the other Fabians, and persons of more intemperate mind began to dismember the old pattern of beliefs and institutions in Great Britain; while in America we behold right now malignant crews of nihilists and levelers dominating famous universities and endeavoring to lay waste both the climate of opinion and the social structure that had nurtured them.

Yet there contends against these enemies of tradition, custom, convention, and our literary patrimony a very different body of men and women of letters—who endeavor to serve as guardians of a rich culture and of a tolerable social order of justice and freedom. At this Conference we are discussing two such groups of writers who aspired to renew our society and our patrimony of letters: the Distributists and the Southern Agrarians, who flourished when your servant was a boy.

Neither Distributists nor Agrarians have been forgotten, and their ideas continue to work among us, in an arcane fashion—to borrow a picturesque phrase from Coleridge, “like bats at twilight.” Yet politically and materially Agrarians and Distributists seem to have been clean beaten down, horse, foot and dragoons.

In Britain, the decline of rural life, the decay of old towns, and the proletarianizing of the population have proceeded apace since the 1920s—parallel with, and in part caused by, the desertion of the churches, whether Anglican, Roman Catholic, or Dissenting. Landed estates that have been the centers of rustic Britain for perhaps seven hundred years are being broken up with increasing speed; while agriculture and the fisheries fall upon very hard times indeed, in consequence of the Common Market and the demands of European Community. England even is ceasing to be a nation of shopkeepers, as huge new shopping centers, owned by commercial conglomerates composed of distant shareholders, everywhere push small firms to the wall. Centralization of several sorts effaces the traditional pattern of life that Chesterton and Belloc loved.

But the large topic cannot be covered adequately in this lecture of mine. As for the United States, the big cities are rotting out, but political and economic centralization still increase. I will touch upon America’s rejection of Agrarianism later in this lecture. For the moment, I suggest merely that the ruined and perilous city of Detroit, the city I know best, is sufficient evidence of the illusions of our “democratic capitalism” *a la* Bentham. In the ’forties, Detroit was styled “the arsenal of democracy.” So much for worship of the Great God Efficiency.



Cleanth Brooks

The worldwide decadence near the end of the twentieth century is bound up with the swift decline of literary culture. Cannot men of letters undertake some measure of renewal, rather than rejoicing in the descent to Avernus? In such an endeavor, Distributists and Southern Agrarians of yesteryear may be our exemplars and mentors. That wise poet T.S. Eliot wrote kind words about both Agrarians and Distributists and so I mean to quote him repeatedly concerning the adherents to an old and humane cause.

With every year that passes, the number of titles of new books published much exceeds the number published in the preceding year. We live in a time when popular interest in humane letters, nevertheless, has declined. Of the books

published in the year of our Lord 1993, few will be read in the year 2000—and perhaps none at all by the year 2093.

Recovery of Culture

As I put it in my book *Eliot and His Age*, “Though here and there some stalwart Gerontion still writes, or some hopeful new talent starts up, for the most part we encounter literary ephemera, or else the prickly pears and Dead Sea fruit of literary decadence.” Yet it does not follow as the night the day that there may not occur a renewal of high literary talents, illuminated by the moral imagination. Permit me to suggest, if you please, certain causes of our literary decadence; and then to speculate on whether, and how, it may be pos-

sible to conceive of a regeneration of humane letters.

I commence with a passage from the earliest of T.S. Eliot's better-known essays, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," published in 1917. Here he touches upon emotions expressed in poetry, a subject pertinent to the present dismal endeavor of various writers to probe pruriently into Eliot's private life:

It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting . . . The emotion in his poetry will be a very complex thing, but not with the complexity of the emotions of people who have very complex or unusual emotions in life. One error, in fact, of eccentricity in poetry is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the perverse.

That last sagacious sentence may be applied to more than "poetry" in the sense of verse. Consider the very numerous schools of divinity or theology in this land, many of them richly endowed with capital assets, although not so lavishly supplied with spiritual insights. Handsome scholarships continue to attract young persons to these institutions, and those persons continue to pour out dissertations in the discipline of theology. Some element of originality is demanded in doctoral dissertations; but few young men and women, especially in our time, really are capable of first-rate original contributions to the divine science, having been reared in an intellectual climate of vulgarized Darwinism and vulgarized Freudianism. What to do?

Why, the thing to do is to search for novelty in the wrong place, and discover the perverse in new aspects of an alleged "theology": liberation theology, black theology, chicano theology, feminist theology, theology of animals, gay theology, deconstructive theology, rock theology, Lord knows what else. Often the first trumpet-blast proclaiming these new discoveries in the god-science is a denial of the dogmata upon which the

old theology was founded. The perverse offers its rewards for a time—although presently yet other and more startling shapes of the perverse must be unveiled, Dinos of the insatiable appetites being king when Zeus has been overthrown. So it is with the writing of books in our bent world. A great many young people aspire to the condition of authors, both for emoluments and for celebrity. Whole departments—nay, schools—of "creative writing" proliferate; writers' workshops and colonies provide supplementary pay to college instructors serving on their staffs; community

Vanderbilt University



John Crowe Ransom

colleges offer courses in "How to Write the Novel" and "Writing Articles for Profit" for the edification of housewives and ambitious tool-and-die makers. Meanwhile it grows increasingly difficult to find any publisher who will bring out an author's first novel; probably the novel itself is a dying form of the literary art.

Then what is the would-be writer to do? Why, devise some literary novelty; to impress a publisher, take up a fresh form of perversity—although such innovations may be difficult to imagine, the changes already having been rung on the bells of morals and politics by well-paid literary men still in the land of the living. Let me turn again to T.S. Eliot, writing in 1933 about the attractions of Marxism for a New York writer:

The literary profession is not only, in all countries, overcrowded and underpaid (the few overpaid being chiefly persons who have outlived their influence, if they ever had any); it is embarrassed by such a number of ill-trained people doing such a number of unnecessary jobs; and writing so many unnecessary books and unnecessary reviews of unnecessary books, that it has much ado to maintain its dignity as a profession at all. One is almost tempted to form the opinion that the world is at a stage at which men of letters are a superfluity. To be able therefore to envisage literature under a new aspect, to take part in the creation of a new art and new standards of literary criticism, to be provided with a whole stock of ideas and words, that is for a writer in such circumstances to be given

a new lease of life. It is not always easy, of course, in the ebullitions of a new movement, to distinguish the man who has received the living word from the man whose access of energy is the result of being relieved of the necessity of thinking for himself. Men who have stopped thinking make a powerful force.

Those sentences were written more than a half century ago, the public that used to be called "the common reader" has diminished since then, and employment for persons with literary aptitudes is confined more and more to editorial labors for trade journals, "dumbing down" already dull manuals of school-text-book publishers, and copy-writing for advertising agencies. Under such circumstances, the inducements to prostitution of literary skills looms large.

Yet T.S. Eliot instructs us that there are no lost causes, because there are no gained causes. Generation after generation, the same battles are fought again and again. The Distributists and the Agrarians never prostituted their literary talents in order to win some glittering bauble. Neither should such as you and I.

A little cheerfulness must be allowed to break in here. It seems, for instance, worth noting that the two American writers of recent years most seriously discussed by literary critics are Flannery O'Connor

and Walker Percy—both Christians endowed with moral imagination, both political conservatives, both Southerners and defenders of the traditions of the South. Those two were heritors of the Agrarians and the Fugitives. Another reason for hope: there writes to me from Moscow a young woman who knows a great deal about the Southern Agrarians, and desires to know everything about them. In Russia, as in the Ukraine and in Poland, lands that once fed most of Europe, the rural economy and society were deliberately broken by the Communist regimes. "Back to the land!" is no frivolous cry to eastern Europe nowadays, for those countries cannot be sustained indefinitely by

wheat from the United States.

Restorers of Society

Indulge me now, friends, in reminiscence.

More than sixty years ago, when I was a fourth-grader in the very northern town of Plymouth, Michigan, Twelve Southerners published a book entitled *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*. That slim volume, a heartfelt defense of the permanent things in the South's culture has been discussed ever since; a literature of assent or of disap-

approval has developed about it. Young men and women who come to study with me in my northern fastness discover this literature—even without my having commented on any of it—and read the book, night upon night, even to the witching hour of three.

Christian humanism, stern criticism of the industrial mass society, detestation of communism and other forms of collectivism, attachment to the ways of the Old South in valor and in manners—these were the principles joining the twelve Southern Agrarians who took their stand in Dixieland in 1930. Their twelve essays were approved by T. S. Eliot and some other reflective people at the time the book was published; yet for the most part the Agrarians met with hostility and ridicule. Today their book sometimes meets

with understanding, for we are farther down the track to Avernus.

Leviathan

As Louis Rubin says of the Twelve Southerners, *I'll Take My Stand* "is a rebuke to materialism, a corrective to the worship of Progress, and a reaffirmation of man's aesthetic and spiritual needs. And because the South has come so late into the industrial world, it appeals to the hungry memory within the Southerner's mind of the tranquil and leisurely Southern life that existed before the machines and superhighways came. As such the book constitutes both a reminder



Vanderbilt University

Frank Owsley

and a challenge. *What are you losing that you once possessed? Are you sure that you want to discard it entirely?*"

Despite the considerable attention paid nationally to these Agrarian writers, it was not easy for them to find publishers; or, if their writings should be published to keep them in print. Yet they persisted; and in the long run their high talents as men of letters gave them for some years, about the period of my college days, ascendancy over the realm of letters, even in Manhattan—a mild domination, lingering until recent years, when it was overthrown by the squalid oligarchs of the *New York Review of Books*. (Even here the South has made a successful counterattack, most conspicuously in the homage paid to Flannery O'Connor and Walker Percy.) As a group, the Agrarians illustrated well the remark made by Lionel Trilling, that the twentieth century writers possessing imagination were not liberals—distinctly not.

The Twelve Southerners, Donald Davidson among them, knew that the South would change. As Stark Young put it in his essay "Not in Memoriam, But in Defense," which concluded their book,

That a change is now in course all over the South is plain; and it is as plain that the South changing must be the South still, remembering that for no thing can there be any completeness that is outside its own nature, and no thing for which there is any advance save in its own kind. If this were not so, all nature by now would have dissolved in chaos and folly, nothing in it...

Yet the South's pace of change has been more rapid, these six decades past, and more overwhelming, than even the gloomiest of the Twelve Southerners expected. Old Nashville, the domicile of the Fugitives and the Agrarians, has been thoroughly demolished and uglified, Strickland's capitol on its hill besieged by the haughty office towers of state and federal bureaucracies, and of teachers' unions. Much else, in Nashville and nearly all the South, has gone by the

board—among the losses, the disappearance of Southern architectural styles.

Along with the dwindling of a distinctive Dixie has come relative economic prosperity. It is factory-town prosperity. The rural pattern of existence, which the Agrarians praised, still endures here and there south of Mason's and Dixon's Line but it has been brutally buffeted during the past sixty years.

Of the Twelve Southerners, only one—Andrew Lytle, novelist and critic remains—here in the land of the living. Modernity has been doing its worst to wipe out Southerners of their sort, in part by sweeping away—in the South and elsewhere—the sort of schooling that men like Davidson and Lytle and Warren profited by. And the welfare state has striven to efface as impoverished and culturally deprived, the old rural pattern of the South—or for that matter of Northern rural counties like that I inhabit which endured little altered until the building of the "good roads."

Tide what may betide, the Southern Agrarians will loom large in histories of American thought and letters. With liberalism in America now nearly mindless, some of the rising generation in this land are finding in Donald Davidson's prose and verse, and in the writings of other Agrarians, an understanding of personal and social order far removed from desiccated liberal attitudes.

Six decades after Donald Davidson, Andrew Lytle, Lyle Lanier, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Frank Owsley, John Gould Fletcher, H. C. Nixon, Robert Penn Warren, John Donald Wade, Henry Blue Kline, and Stark Young took up arms against Leviathan, how goes the fight?

Like the Celts of the Twilight, it seems, the Agrarians have gone forth often to battle, but never to victory. America's farmers now total perhaps five percent of the national population. The South has been subjugated a second time by the federal government, and endures a second political Reconstruction—although this time the southern economy is far from ruined. Centralization of power in Washington was carried much far-



Hilaire Belloc

Library of Congress

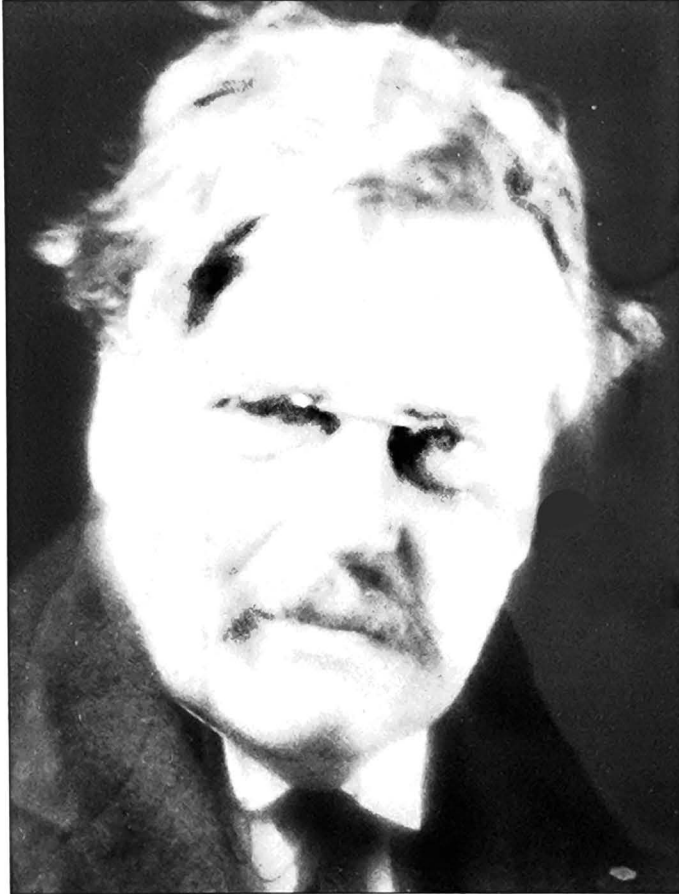
ther by Lyndon Johnson than ever it had been by Franklin Roosevelt; states still nominally sovereign are reduced to a condition little better than that of provinces. The nationwide television broadcasters are rapidly effacing any remnants of regional cultures. The public educational establishment exhorts its teachers and its charges to sing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" rather than "Dixie." In many other ways, Leviathan looms far vaster than the monster was in 1930.

And yet the predictions of the Twelve Southerners, like those of Cassandra, are being fulfilled. Our great cities, a hundred Long Streets, are nearly ruined, ravaged by crime, their population corrupted or endangered by deadly narcotics, all community destroyed. Our boasted affluence is given the lie by the swift and sinister growth of a genuine proletariat, voracious and unruly, subsisting at public expense. Our layers of governmental bureaucracy are increasingly inefficient and vexatious. Our legislatures national and state, seem willing to yield to every demand of a pressure-group, regardless of the true public interest. Our judges, or many of them, have turned demagogues. Our air is polluted badly, our countryside uglified, public taste corrupted. Our children are brought up indulgently on images of terrible violence and gross sexuality. Schooling at every level is reduced to child care, adolescent-sitting, and collegiate mating; humane letters and history are condemned. While we talk windily still of free enterprise, the industrial and commercial conglomerates move toward oligopoly on tremendous scale. Religious belief and observance have been first reduced to the ethos of sociability, and then to ignorant discourses on revolution. Leviathan, the monstrous society, has swallowed his myriads.

So I commend the conservatism of the Twelve Southerners. It is not the only mode of conservative thought, but it is an important mode. The authors of *I'll Take My Stand* did not propound a rigorous ideology or display a model of Utopia; their principal purpose it was to open eyes to the illusions of Modernism.

Southern Agrarians proclaimed when I was a child that the Southern culture is worth defending; that society is something more than the Gross National Product; that the country lane is healthier than the Long Street; that more wisdom lies in Tradition than in Scientism; that Leviathan is a devourer, not a savior. Study what the Twelve Southerners have written—Davidson especially—and you may discover that they are not mere Archaisists.

Worn out with abstraction and novelty, plagued with divided counsels, some Americans have said: "I will believe the old folks at home, who have kept alive through many treacherous outmodings some good secret of life." So Donald Davidson wrote in his chapter "The Diversity of America." He continued,



Library of Congress

G.K. Chesterton

Such moderns prefer to grasp the particular. They want something to engage both their reason and their love. They distrust the advice of John Dewey to "use the foresight of the future to refine and expand present activities." The future is not yet; it is unknowable, intangible. But the past was, the present is; of that they can be sure. So they attach themselves—or re-attach themselves—to a home-section, one of the sections, great or small, defined in the long conquest of our continental area. They seek spiritual and cultural autonomy...They are learning how to meet the subtlest and most dangerous foe of humanity—the tyranny that wears the mask of humanitarianism and benevolence. They are attacking Leviathan.

Amen to that Donald Davidson, my old friend, now passed in eternity. In very recent years, half the peoples of the world have risen to strike a blow against Leviathan; so perhaps Davidson's courageous book will be better understood, and by more people, than it was in 1938. So may it be with all the writings of Agrarians and Distributists! ☆

Russell Kirk, the renowned historian, critic and political thinker, has served on the Advisory Board of *Southern Partisan* since 1981. This article is taken from a speech delivered at the Agrarians & Distributists Symposium sponsored by Louisiana State University and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in November 1992.

The Portable Calhoun

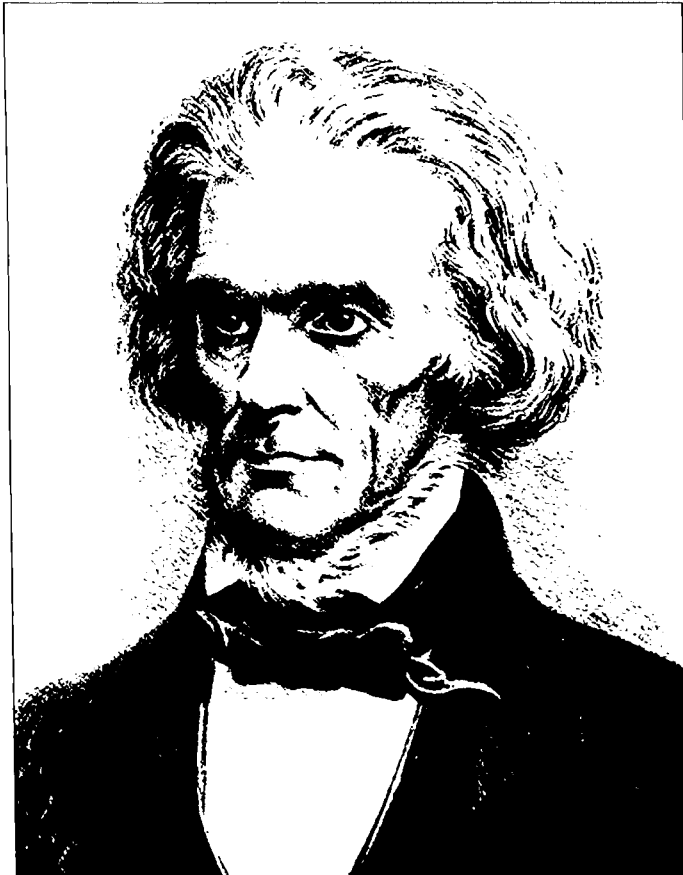
by Anthony Harrigan

**A Review of:
The Essential Calhoun
edited by Clyde N. Wilson
Transaction, 1992, 436 pages, \$39.95.**

Though he served long years as U.S. Representative, Senator, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, and Vice President, John C. Calhoun's chief importance is as a philosopher of constitutional government. Tragically, his original and prescient thinking has been neglected in the more than 140 years since his death. If his work is treated at all, it is considered part of a sectional defense. Calhoun was concerned, however, with the most fundamental of political issues—the nature of society, the character of the human condition, and the structure of government. He has been libeled by ideologically tainted historians, one of whom called him the “Marx of the master class.” His real purpose was to preserve liberty and prevent government oppression, while giving government the powers necessary to fulfill its functions. He wrote in a bare-bones style completely without the flourishes of nineteenth-century political writing. His major works remind one of Aristotle, yet they

are written in an astonishingly modern mode that brings to mind Bertrand de Jouvenal.

Professor Clyde Wilson, who has published 20 volumes of Calhoun's papers, has compiled a magnificent anthology which will endure



Calhoun as he appeared as an elder statesman in the United States Senate.

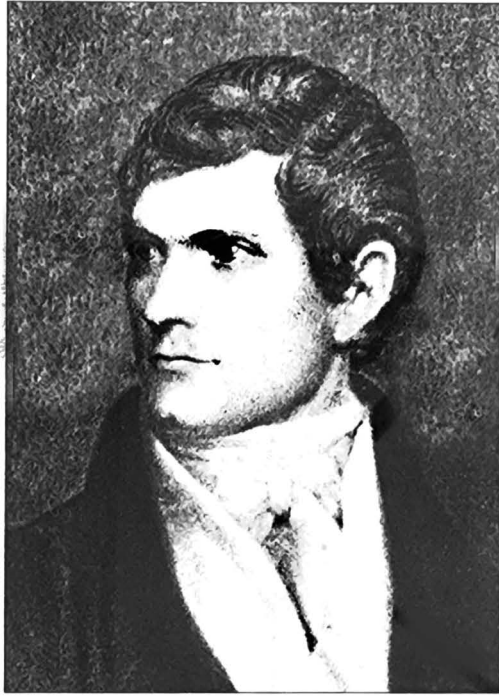
as long as Americans are interested in close reasoning about the nature of government and society. He has drawn on a rich lode of documents from Calhoun's hand, including several thousand surviving letters.

Calhoun has been styled the “cast iron man,” and the notion has prevailed that he was lacking in human warmth. This volume shows that this notion is unfounded. He always was mindful of duty, however. His central belief is clearly set forth in a letter to his daughter, Anna Maria Calhoun Clemson, in which he wrote; “I hold the duties of life to be greater than life itself, and that in performing them manfully, even against hope, our labor is not lost, but will be productive of good in after times.” He added; “no appreciation of my efforts either by the present, or after times is necessary to sustain me in struggling to do my duty in resisting wrong . . .” This statement clearly sets him apart from the modern political figures who are counterfeit statesmen.

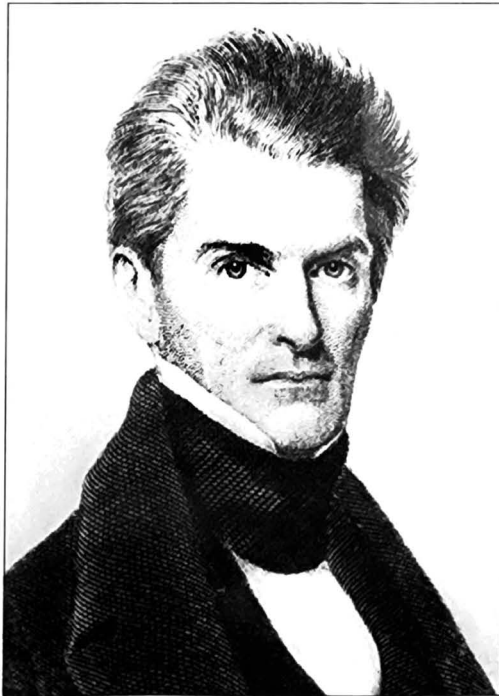
The most important section of *The Essential Calhoun*, in this writer's view is the first—the text of his “Disquisition on Government,” a short treatise which has the close reasoning and compelling power of Aristotle's *Politics*. In this disquisition he expounds his doctrine of the concurrent majority. The treatise is an analysis of liberty and power and explains how liberty is endangered by an incomplete American political system, which lacks the built-in protec-

tion of an explicit concurrent majority feature. Calhoun begins with an analysis of man as a social being and illustrates how the law of self-preservation leads to conflicts between individuals and, then, to "the tendency to a universal state of conflict." He stresses that government has "a strong tendency to disorder and abuse of its power." He exposes a major fallacy which has become a part of modern thinking, namely, that the right of suffrage is sufficient to ensure constitutional government. He envisions the struggle for power and domination in America and the conflict between different interest groups. In words that might come from a late twentieth-century analyst, he describes how the community will be divided into "two great classes: one consisting of those who, in reality, pay the taxes, and, of course, bear exclusively the burden of supporting the government, and the other who are the recipients of their proceeds." Before the middle of the nineteenth century, he foresaw the transfer-payment system of our time.

Calhoun's central argument was that liberty cannot endure if the numerical or absolute majority is to prevail at all times, if sufficient checks on majority will are not built into the system. He sought safeguards for "interest as well as numbers," warning that "to confound the numerical majority with the people" is a "radical error," for society is made up of many interests. The way to prevent tyranny in the future, he wrote, is to seek a concurrent constitutional majority, comprising the interests of all major and naturally formed communities and groups. He deemed it an "indispensable element" in a system of constitutional government. The result of not making adequate provision for the concurrent majority in American political practice has proven to be a majoritarian reign, which, though



Calhoun as a young nationalist War Hawk Congressman from South Carolina.



styled democracy, actually serves narrow interests. The American system is rapidly becoming a kakistocracy, or rule by the worst.

It is not surprising that Americans generally have ignored Calhoun's philosophical writings. He challenges fallacies and taboos of American political discourse that have grown even stronger since

Calhoun's own time and have contributed to our current civic disorders. In the "Disquisition," he confronts a major illusion, saying that weaknesses in the American political system "have their origin in the prevalent opinion that all men are born free and equal—than which nothing can be more unfounded and false." He declares that this opinion "rests upon the assumption of a fact which is contrary to universal observation...It is, indeed, difficult to explain how an opinion so destitute of all sound reason, could ever have been so extensively entertained..." Calhoun's judgment in this regard is that of Aristotle, who wrote that some men are unfit for liberty. In a society that has elevated the notion of equality to the level of theological dogma, one can be sure that Calhoun's view will be greeted with fury. It is the ultimate in political incorrectness.

Nevertheless, *The Essential Calhoun* is likely to have a strong and lasting impact on students of politics and society who are truly dedicated to underlying truth, who genuinely endeavor to understand why American society has become a collapsing society and why American government no longer serves the interests of the American people. While the Adams family of Massachusetts never had any fondness for Calhoun, one of its most prominent members, Henry Adams, understood and described the peril in democratic dogmas. He was following the great critical tradition established by John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. ☆

This review by Southern Partisan advisor and former Executive Director of the U.S. Industrial Council Anthony Harrigan originally appeared in Humanitas, the newly-redesigned interdisciplinary journal of the Natural Humanities Institute. Subscriptions to the twice-yearly journal may be had for \$12 per annum by writing NHL at 214 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Suite 470, Washington, DC 20002.

Southern Flicks

by Norman Stewart

Fried Green Tomatoes

Since Norman Lear backed John Avnet's "Fried Green Tomatoes," I passed on it when it hit the local multiplex. The closest I came to it was while waiting for a private screening of "Thunderball" and "Dirty Harry." A group of enraptured retarded kids came out of a special morning show. Somebody had just named it the Lesbian Movie of the Year, so even considering that I'd heard that angle was soft pedaled I couldn't imagine why they were seeing it.

Well, I just caught up with it on video. I hate to say it, but I was wrong to write it off so fast.

Fannie Flagg's *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* is a semi-epistolary novel about the passing of a small railroad town. A modern day framing story has middle-aged Evelyn Couch coming to terms with life, thanks to nursing home resident Ninny Threadgoode's tales of her old hometown where life revolved around Idgie Threadgoode and Ruth Bennett's cafe.

Evelyn is caught between her traditional upbringing and feminist fads. Ninny's good sense from living through saner times help her "find" herself.

Evelyn and Ninny are better developed than the Whistle Stoppers but the town's tales are the book's chief appeal. Miss Flagg sets up today's psychobabble as poor replacement for old values.

This might seem to make it appealing to the true to the heart crowd, but it's not. The vignettes are hilarious and even sometimes

touching without sinking into nostalgia. The novel is all over the place, so it was a challenge to adapt and still stay faithful to the book. Pictures have to be focused before they can move.

For the screen, Miss Flagg and the late Carol Sobieski pick up on a mystery, the death of Ruth's evil estranged husband Frank. It's introduced in the opening shot of a car being pulled from the water which gives the picture unity.

In the book and especially the movie, it's easy to miss the lesbian theme. The book is more open with everyone calling the tomboyish Idgie and the demure Ruth's relationship a crush. In the movie, and not the book, both see Buddy, Idgie's brother and Ruth's boyfriend, killed by a train. Their grief bonds them more profoundly than baby boomers playing basketball in Dockers.

The film closely follows the modern day story. There are some changes at the end but they simplify the structure and make for an effective ending in the book's spirit.

The moviemakers must have set out thinking they would make a major lesbian statement, but they don't. Between the lines, I guess we're supposed to read that today's fads are no replacement for old fashioned sisterhood. Even if you do catch that, there's no denying the fact that traditional society made that possible. As things turned out, the kinkiness is less obvious here than in most Alfred Hitchcock movies.

The modern day South is accurate. Of course, this is still a liberal

Hollywood movie with liberal clichés, especially in casting that will date it. The book avoids such foolishness, as when Evelyn seeks religion at a black church, then realizes she can never be a part of black Christianity.

The big mystery really isn't Frank's death, the denouement of which is a tall tale more than generic Southern gothic horror. It's how on earth the State of Georgia can invade Alabama and drag its natives back to Georgia for a crime that took place in Alabama.

For Hollywood, the accents are acceptable, more than that in the modern section with Jessica Tandy, Blanche DuBois herself, leading the way. In the flashbacks, at times the actors are so caught up in that technical aspect that there's no bonhomie. A more experienced director than first time Avnet might have done better.

What bothered me most was the period music. It's all rhythm and blues, no hillbilly or big band or whatever else you'd really hear in a Depression Alabama cafe. What's worse, even the 78 rpm juke box has CD clarity. The background score by Thomas Newman (of the Hollywood Newman family?) is excellent.

At best, I expected "Fried Green Tomatoes" to be like something some girl would write while curled up on a sofa, ODing on bon-bons and watching "To Kill a Mockingbird." It's one of the most charming, and Southern movies in years.

As for the teachers who took the retarded kids to it, maybe they liked the story about how God makes a pearl by putting a grain of sand in a special oyster.

Sommersby

Hollywood's reworking of France's "The Return of Martin Guerre" (1983) is set in Reconstruction Tennessee and was filmed in Virginia. Considering the dialect coach was

one Julie Adams, it's no wonder it looks like New England. But things could have been a whole lot worse.

Jack Sommersby (Richard Gere) returns to his dilapidated plantation years after the war. Everyone, including his wife Laurel (Jodie Foster), doubts his identity somewhere along the line. Despite saving the community by introducing tobacco, a trial ensues, motivated by jealousy and—surprise—racism.

Even with Jack's relative liberalism, the race card isn't played too hard. There's the obligatory Klan scene that's a logical reworking of a Guerre scene. Later, the trial judge, in the best "L.A. Law" tradition, is James Earl Jones. This leads to the bad guy getting a little jail time. Beyond this, race isn't dwelled on as much as it usually is in Southern set films.

Sommersby looks great but it's also wrong. It follows the recent visual cliché for any period movie. Tintypes may be the photographic record of the time, but there's more to recreating a period than just doing galloping tintypes. It makes life look drearier and more distant for today's viewers than it should be.

At least director Jon Amiel doesn't get so caught up in his research that every scene is a history lesson. For instance, this might be the only movie to detail early tobacco farming, but we don't see these novice tobacco farmers keeling over from the plant fumes, PC though it would have been.

There's an effective party scene early on that's loaded with local color. Everyone actually seems to know the dances. But look again. Amiel hardly shoots anyone full body. You don't see the casts feet

struggling with the steps they learned the night before. the usual problem with most period party scenes nowadays.

For Southerners, what is missing is the grace notes that would really

the effect is a generic rural America. Stephen Vincent Benet's Daniel Webster would feel right at home here.

In the French film, Martin Guerre is a petty crook. Here, Sommersby's salvation of the town is heroic, though not as much as it would have been if carpetbaggers and scalawags hadn't been absent. His tragedy would be greater, and the film would have been more effective with real mention of Reconstruction. But criticism of Reconstruction isn't on the agenda. There isn't a political statement in the film. As it is, Jack's adversaries are straw men. But at least the film is sympathetic to Southerners.

In the original film, ecclesiastic courts were criticized. Here, Jack's fate is little more than O. Henry irony. The story could have just as easily been set in the old west.

I think it was set in Reconstruction since someone realized the Klan was a perfect substitute for Guerre's fake ghosts.

Sommersby is supposed to be a sweeping love story. It ain't. Gere is a credible romantic lead. Miss Foster projects intelligence but she's not bigger than life. She comes off as a New England school marm.

It's cold because it never really addresses its period. PC is partly responsible, but I think Amiel and Company

know their audience has no idea of history. You're lucky to see any period movies nowadays for that reason. And so, of all genres, period movies have the hardest time of going from a notion to a concept.

You'll probably enjoy this more if you imagine it's set in Vermont. ☆

Film critic **Norman Stewart** lives in Hickory, North Carolina.



both photos courtesy of Warner Bros.



Richard Gere and Jodie Foster portray Jack and Laurel Sommersby in the Reconstruction Tennessee film *Sommersby*, from Warner Bros. The movie was filmed in Virginia and directed by Jon Amiel.

make it seem as if it were in the South. Of course, first and foremost is the accents. Fortunately, they don't go overboard in attempting them. As easy as it should be for trained actors, what so often happens is that they get so caught up in the sound that the chemistry with the others goes out the window. It's a baby and bath water situation.

Whether it was intended or not,

BOOK NOTES *by Bryant Burroughs*

Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec.

by Allen Buchanan.

Westview Press, 1992, 174 pages, \$15.95.

The vexing political question for liberals at the end of the twentieth century is how to support the secessionist and nationalist movements springing up in the former Soviet empire, while at the same time maintaining indignant criticism of the Southern secessionists of 1861. Put succinctly: how can one support Lithuania, Ukraine and Bosnia, but condemn South Carolina?

Allen Buchanan, professor of philosophy at the University of Arizona, attempts to provide a framework by defining both the moral justifications for and the moral arguments against the right to secede. Unfortunately, Buchanan must squint through revisionist spectacles in order to praise modern separatist movements and castigate the Confederacy. The determining difference in his revisionist scheme is that "slavery is such an abomination that the mere contemplation of it tends to swamp the pure secession issue," and because the South seceded in order to preserve slavery, it forfeited the right to secede.

But Buchanan misunderstands both the North and the South. Asserting that "the only sound moral justification for resisting Southern secession was the liberation of blacks," he startlingly argues that the South actually won the war because white Southerners continued their pre-war domination of blacks until the intervention of federal civil rights laws a century later. He blames this failure to complete the task of freeing blacks on the North's "lack of moral clarity" and "moral ambiguity concerning what the war was really being fought for."

But the moral ambiguity lies with liberal revisionists who fail to perceive that other than a few fanatical abolitionists, Northerners believed that the primary war aim was to preserve the Union. Even as Lincoln in 1861 drafted troops and threatened to invade the South, he assured Northern citizens that his "paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery." Only in 1863 did Lincoln strive to give an anti-slavery halo to the war, because he needed a holy cause to avert British and French intervention on the side of the Confederacy, and to explain the thousands of caskets returning sons to Northern mothers.

Those who marched under the Southern Cross fought to defend "hearth and roof-tree" against invading armies sent by a government that placed ideology above liberty. The Southern soldier did not fight to defend slavery any more than did Athens, Rome or the American Colonies. The Confederacy fought to defend the liberty to live life free from Northern domination and offered to abandon slavery if England would intervene to guarantee that freedom.

This book deserves the fate that its obtuse reasoning and pedantic style will ensure: gathering dust on university library shelves.

—B. B.

The Death of an Army: the Battle of Nashville & Hood's Retreat.

by Paul H. Stockdale.

Southern Heritage Press, 1992, 187 pages, \$17.95.

In his biography of General John B. Hood, John Dyer wrote that "...The Army of Tennessee had died in front of the gap at Franklin and on the hillsides of Nashville." In *The*

Death of an Army, Paul Stockdale has drawn from many eyewitness accounts to describe the last days of the Army of Tennessee.

After the horrible decimation at Franklin, Hood followed the Federal army to the fortifications at Nashville. Although his 22,000 men faced 72,000 Union infantry and cavalry, Hood hoped to lure Union General Thomas out, defeat him and capture the vast Federal supply depot at Nashville. But on the evening of the 7th a mild Tennessee December turned bitterly cold, painting the Nashville hills white with sleet and ice, and torturing a Southern army that lacked food, blankets and even shoes. The biting cold froze guns to the fingers. Tennesseans remarked that "the Yankees brought their weather as well as their army with them."

After a week Thomas edged out of the fortifications and employed his numerical advantage to turn Hood's flank. The only escape route for Hood's retreating army was protected by Compton's Hill, a high hill at the southern outskirts of Nashville. As the winter sun set on December 16, the Southern defenders on Compton's Hill sacrificed themselves to save their army. Surrounded by three Federal corps, swept by crossfire from sharpshooters and pounded by over 100 artillery guns at point-blank range, the Confederates kept up such a murderous fire that the Union general commanding the assault described the hill as "defended by the choicest troops."

The hill was renamed Shy's Hill to honor the bravery and sacrifice of William M. Shy, the young colonel commanding the famed 20th Tennessee infantry regiment. After the blue hordes finally had overwhelmed the hill's defenders, Shy's family came up from Two

Rivers mansion near Franklin and found their son's body naked, shot in the forehead and impaled on a tree with a bayonet. His mother remarked that she would to God that she had a hundred sons to die for such a cause.

As the shattered remnant of the Army of Tennessee fled from Nashville on its long 120-mile retreat, it seemed as if nature conspired with the swarming blue-clad cavalry that gave fierce pursuit. Without blankets, overcoats or shoes, many men left bloody footprints in the snow. When the temperature inched above freezing, a cold rain turned roads into quagmires of mud up to saddle girths. Nathan Bedford Forrest commanded the rearguard to protect what remained of the proud Army of Tennessee. His 1600 infantry, 3000 cavalry and battery of artillery faced 10,000 cavalry and 30,000 infantry, but Forrest fought brilliantly. At the Barricades, Anthony's Hill, and Sugar Creek, the rearguard lashed out and routed the Federal pursuers. After constant engagement for eleven days, the swift shoals of the Tennessee were reached and bridged with pontoons. The Army of Tennessee fought no more.

This book is judiciously edited by John McGlone, Editor of *The Journal of Confederate History*. It describes the last days of an army admired by its adversaries, as revealed in the words of a Union general who fought at Nashville: "I doubt if any soldiers in the world ever needed so much cumulative evidence to convince them they were beaten."

—B. B.

"For the Sake of My Country": the Diary of Col. W.W. Ward, 9th Tennessee Cavalry, Morgan's Brigade, C.S.A. edited by R.B. Rosenberg.
Southern Heritage Press, 1992, 164 pages, \$17.95

When war came William W. Ward was a prosperous lawyer in Middle Tennessee. He had opposed secession and urged compromise with

the North, but after Lincoln's call for volunteers to restore the Union by force of bayonet, Ward enlisted as a private in the 7th Tennessee infantry and fought in Virginia under Stonewall Jackson. After receiving a medical discharge in May 1862, Ward returned to Tennessee and raised a company of cavalry, which was attached to John Hunt Morgan's command.

Described as "intelligent, zealous and firm," Ward rapidly rose in rank to colonel and commanded the 9th Tennessee cavalry, which won praise as the finest fighting unit in Morgan's command. Colonel Ward took time during the Christmas raid of 1862 to marry Elizabeth "Bettie" Rucks, a dark-eyed beauty eleven years younger than her husband. Family tradition tells that the couple spent their wedding night underneath a wagon in a field.

Captured along with Morgan and many of his men during the daring Great Northern Raid in the summer of 1863, Ward was confined for eight months in the state prison in Columbus, Ohio. After helping Morgan and six men escape, Ward was punished with two months of solitary confinement and then was transferred to Fort Delaware on Pea Island in midstream Delaware River. Bunked deep within the fort's granite walls, Ward began scribbling pencil notes each day into a 4"x5" diary in order to remember what events to tell "my dear wife."

The diary's 144 pages relate thirteen months of confinement in Fort Delaware and 37 days on a Yankee schooner broiling in the July heat in Charleston harbor until Ward was exchanged in August 1864. He rejoined his old command in September and the diary's final entry is dated April 6, 1865. After the fall of Richmond, Ward's unit escorted President Davis southward until captured in Georgia. Only then did Ward return to his wife after a two year absence.

Ward's diary describes the tedium of days in prison passed only in conversation and the reading and

writing of letters. Sometimes the boredom was broken by news from faraway battlefields, such as on May 13, 1864, when the Yankees reported that Lee had surrendered in the Wilderness. Two days later Ward wrote: "Bad news all day. Lee & A.P. Hill are wounded and J.E.B. Stuart and Longstreet are dead. Lee's retreat converted into a route and Grant picking up prisoners by the thousands..."

The pages are filled with Ward's devotion to wife and country. On May 12, 1864, he wrote: "I have a dear loving wife to live for and for her I will live and for her sake I'll be cheerful..." On June 30, 1864, he wrote: "If it were not for her sorrow and that of my kin & friends I dare & defy this danger and trouble with a gleeful spirit. Great as the cross is it can be borne for the sake of my country."

He proudly compared "Bettie" to Northern women: "Modesty is much more sparingly dispensed among the northern than southern ladies. The most Yankee women I have seen are 'tom boys.' Would not like to have for a wife."

The diary was lost to Ward's family for sixty years until being discovered in a Nashville used bookstore in the mid-1980s. Dr. Rosenberg of the University of Tennessee spent five years deciphering the faint print and adding explanatory notes. Now published by Southern Heritage Press as Volume I of the Confederate Nation Series, Colonel Ward's little diary can be read by all who honor the South's sacrifice.

—B. B.

Abandoned: The Betrayal of the American Middle Class Since World War II
by William J. Quirk and R. Randall Bridwell
Madison Books, 1992, 442 pages, \$21.95.

Any lingering doubts about whether either major political party cares about the American middle class will be quickly dispelled by this angry book on the economic, cultural and political abandonment

of the plain folks in America.

The authors, both law professors at the University of South Carolina, explain that starting in the mid-1960s, the Democratic Party became infatuated with the social revolutionaries of the day and thus began to view the economic, cultural and social aspirations of the middle class as outdated, immoral, even racist.

Soon, both parties deemed wealthy campaign contributors more important to their re-election hopes than the middle class voter. Great Society economic programs and the judicial activism of the Warren, Burger and Rehnquist Courts promised more prosperity and greater equality, but after more than three decades of reconstruction, the result has been instead an "ugly landscape and a bitterly divided and bankrupt country."

Both parties wanted to spend unlimited dollar amounts on various social programs. But after the 1968 election, when Richard Nixon and George Wallace combined for 57 percent of the vote and the quintessential liberal Democrat Hubert Humphrey was defeated, both parties realized the unpopularity of their brand of social engineering. Still, neither party had any intention of changing its ways. Democrats and Republicans continued to spend our tax dollars like drunken sailors, but knowing how unpopular their programs were, they dared not ask the middle class to pay for them. Instead, they borrowed and borrowed, giving us a debt of \$4 trillion.

The authors chronicle one financial fiasco after another: The Savings and Loan "bailout" of 1989, the Social Security "rescue" of 1983, and 1986 Tax Reform Bill and the infamous 1990 Budget Deal. These elaborate schemes have one thing in common: they are direct hits on the middle class, leaving most Americans with higher taxes, less spending power, fewer tax deductions and virtually no room to save and invest for their children's future.

The most infuriating part of these bipartisan deals is that none was necessary. Instead of fleecing the taxpayers for \$500 billion over the next 30 years to bail out the S&Ls, the government would have served us better if they had simply done nothing. Instead of "saving" Social Security in 1983, the government should have left the already solvent system alone. But these stings have a purpose. The politicians can't ask us to fund their pet programs with new taxes. So while they might not like the morals of the middle class, the group is convenient as a "cash cow" and all these "grand compromises" serve to milk more tax dollars out of the increasingly alienated middle class.

Reagan loyalists will not like this book and I suspect this is why *Abandoned* may not receive the wide audience it deserves. The Reagan era gave us the 1986 bipartisan tax reform deal which brought tax rates down for the wealthy, but dismantled the deductions that were the backbone of middle class thrift and savings. Meanwhile, large corporations (American and foreign) made off like bandits, earning huge tax deductions and writeoffs. The pattern becomes familiar in chapter after chapter: the lobbyists get the handouts and tax breaks; the American public, shut out from the corridor of politics in Washington, D.C., are left with the tax burden.

The abandonment is more than political. The greatest assault on middle class values is represented by the current cultural wars which take dead aim at our Western heritage. Again, neither party has displayed any desire to take on the reigning multiculturalists; a spoiled pack of know-nothings who bring to mind Richard Weaver's description of jazz enthusiasts: "People that take pleasure in the thought of bringing down our civilization." Indeed, the multiculturalists do take great pleasure in achieving their stated goal of rewriting history to serve their own bigoted ends. Meanwhile middle class parents are forced to "shoulder the guilt

[over the sins of Western culture], inconvenience and expense [sky-rocketing tuitions] attending whatever social program or agenda the university has chosen."

Middle class parents look toward colleges and universities as their children's last hope for a decent education. Understanding this, college administrators have in turn jacked up tuition prices to ridiculous levels (they've learned something from the crowd in Washington). Routinely intimidated by the rabble complaining about "white male" Western culture, they have joined the liberal totalitarianism reigning on many college campuses by overhauling their curriculums to include the anti-Western creeds the multiculturalists revel in. The result is a totalitarian atmosphere where to quote a northeastern college president, "The idea of candor and the deeper idea of discourse is dead." The authors themselves admit that law schools are subject to rigid quota systems that are bound to discriminate against many qualified students.

The middle class abandonment is a theme all too familiar to Southerners, who, since 1968, have received all the tough rhetoric from both parties they could ask for, but no real change. At the same time Richard Nixon and the Republicans were formulating their "Southern Strategy" to win conservative Democrats, Mr. Nixon's soon-to-be attorney general John Mitchell was telling a group of civil rights lawyers to "Watch what we do, not what we say," which meant the new administration had no intention of fulfilling its Southern agenda. Consider the quota issue. In 1989, after the Supreme Court ruled in several cases against quotas and set asides, the Democrats pushed for a civil rights bill that would satisfy their constituencies and reinstate quotas. After the 1990 election, when that issue worked very well to the Republicans' advantage, party leaders chortled that they had found the "issue for the 90s." Then President Bush, after denouncing "quota leg-

islation" for over a year, signed the same kind of bill he had been attacking. All this despite the fact that Americans opposed quotas by overwhelming numbers. No matter. Another victory for bipartisanship. And there went the Republicans issue for the 90s.

The recent campaign proved to be a fine example that the Democrats have learned a thing or two from the Republicans' long reign in power. While touring the South, Bill Clinton gave his own tough speeches on the death penalty, boot camps for criminals and tax cuts for the middle class. Once elected, a different agenda has come to the forefront: Homosexuals in the military, a national abortion bill and a middle class tax *increase*.

The authors are admirably bipartisan in their criticism. If the Republicans are criticized heavily, it is only because they held executive power for 20 of the past 24 years. But it is the Democrats, with their enthusiastic embrace of '60s radicalism, who got the ball rolling by deeming the cultural values of the middle class morally reprehensible. The Republicans may not have said "Me Too!" but they took no steps to reverse the disasters of The Great Society.

Even so, the middle class voter still holds the key to future elections. But the prospects are not very encouraging. Both the Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan candidacies represented real threats to permanent government, but both men were soon subject to personal assaults and inevitably attacked as "fascist" by both the Left and Right. Liberals have used the "fascist" smear for years, but in 1992, self-styled "conservative" spokesmen such as William Bennett and Charles Krauthammer used the same term to discourage renegade candidacies.

So consider the situation. New Left comes back to power with a vengeance and the Republicans blame the religious right for their recent defeat, the middle class is not only without a leader to rally around, it lacks a political party or

a platform to stand on. One has to wonder how much longer this can continue.

—Joseph Scotchie

The Oxford Latin Course
by Maurice Balme and James Morwood.
Oxford University Press, 1991, three volumes, \$10.95.

The teaching of Latin has almost completely vanished from the curricula of public schools in the United States. This is particularly distressing for the South, whose greatest leaders—Calhoun, Jefferson, Randolph, and the Vanderbilt Agrarians were nurtured in the Classics. This new Latin text, with recommended improvements, may provide some help in this regard.

The aim of *The Oxford Latin Course's* three volumes is to get students into reading original Latin as quickly as possible. The first two parts, with twenty chapters each, are built around a narrative of the Roman poet Horace (65 B.C.—8 B.C.). In the third part students are introduced to selections from Cicero, Caesar, Catullus, Virgil, and Livy. Each lesson begins with a Latin-encaptioned cartoon which, with the help of provided vocabulary and notes, students read along with a narrative that follows. The student is then introduced to forms and grammar and practice exercises. Each chapter concludes with a Background section in English covering such topics as mythology, ancient history, religion, and daily life in ancient Rome.

The Oxford Latin Course is a well-intentioned attempt to combine the best elements of the Traditional Method, in which one learns vocabulary, grammar and forms and then proceeds to examples based on them; and the "Direct Method," by which the student studies a text at sight with the help of vocabulary and grammar given in marginal notes and attempts to deduce the meaning. The Direct Method, though it has worked well with modern spoken languages, suffers in this context, with a lan-

guage no longer spoken and possessing no living context.

Because of its emphasis on this "Direct Approach," the treatment of grammar tends to be cursory, the vocabularies incomplete, and the practice exercises too few. Admittedly, a good teacher can do wonders with a mediocre text, but unlike the old-fashioned first year Latin texts of B. L. Ullman, *The Oxford Latin Course* is not foolproof, leaving a rookie Latin teacher with the potential for being lost at sea.

The emphasis placed on getting the student into reading original Latin as quickly as possible and the background material provided gives one a sense of learning the language in a civilizational context. This is a good step forward. But in looking to a second edition, the authors would be wise to examine their work paying more attention to traditional methods of instruction.

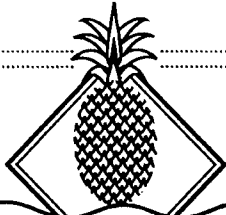
—Charles Scott Hamel

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—George Washington

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—John Crowe Ransom

ON ARISTOCRACY

...the Southern aristocracy was an aristocracy of achievement...

—Richard M. Weaver

ON URBAN DISCONTENT

The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores to the strength of the human body.

—Thomas Jefferson

ON LEE, THE IMMORTAL

Mama, I can never remember, was General Lee in the Old Testament or the New Testament?

—a small girl in Lexington, Virginia after the war

—compiled by William Freehoff

Anguished ENGLISH

by Richard Lederer

A collection of fluffs and flubs, goofs and gaffes, boners and boo boos

The following selections are from high school English teacher Richard Lederer's book *Anguished English: An Anthology of Accidental Assaults Upon Our Language*. All are unretouched by any professional humorist.

LAFFING AT MISPELLINGS

The English language is the most widely spoken in the history of our planet. The English language boasts the largest of all vocabularies and one of the most impressive bodies of literature.

But let's face it. The English language is a killer to spell correctly.

No wonder, then, that many students have succumbed to the pitfalls of English spelling by executing spectacular pratfalls in their essays and test papers.

- They gave William IV a lovely funeral. It took six men to carry the beer.

- To celebrate at feasts, the inhabitants of old England some times cut the head off the biggest bore and carried it around on a platter.
- Floods from the Mississippi may be prevented by putting big dames in the river.
- On Thanksgiving morning we could smell the foul cooking.
- My uncle suffers from sick as hell anemia.
- I am in the mists of choosing colleges.
- Women tend to get jumpy during their minstrel periods.
- The doctor told me to take it easy until the stitches were out and that there would be a permanent scare.
- In Pittsburgh they manufacture iron and steal.
- Many people believe he was a Satin worshipper.
- During peek season the beach is covered with hundreds of bikini-clad beauties.
- Thomas Gray wrote "Alergy in a Country Churchyard."
- Dickens spent his youth in prison because his father's celery was cut off.
- At that point, the vessel will be secured and slowly pulled by wire, rope, and wench.
- Koch called individual conservation the single most important faucet of the anti-drought program.
- SLUM RAISING PLAN ASSAILED
- REAGAN GOES FOR JUGGLER IN MIDWEST
- MAN ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION OF HEROINE
- LITERARCY WEEK OBSERVED
- Mr. and Mrs. Garth Robinson request the honor of your presents at the marriage of their daughter Holly to Mr. James Stockman.

Anguished English is published in the South by Wyrick and Co., 12 Exchange Street, Charleston, SC 29402.

THE SMOKE NEVER CLEARS *by Rod Gragg*

Leslie's Illustrated Civil War.
256 pages, University Press of Mississippi, \$45.00.

Nineteenth century publisher Frank Leslie pioneered the use of illustrations in newspapers, sparking a popular fascination with seeing events that continues today. His use of artwork, successfully copied by *Harper's Weekly* and other publications, produced a vast body of artwork about The War Between the States. More than 200 of Leslie's wartime illustrations were reproduced in book form in 1894, and have now been reprinted in this handsome edition.

While some illustrations are obviously fanciful—soldiers charging shoulder-to-shoulder in cookie cutter fashion—others exude reality. Photography came into popularity during the war and would eventually replace woodcut art, but these wartime illustrations convey a sense of action no camera lens could convey.

General Leonidas Polk, C.S.A.: The Fighting Bishop.
By Joseph H. Parks.
408 pages, LSU Press.

North Carolinian Leonidas Polk was a West Point graduate who put aside the sword to enter the ministry. He eventually became a bishop in the Episcopal Church and when the war came and the South needed professionally-trained officers, Polk promptly retrieved his sword. Active and prominent in the War's Western Theater, he served as a departmental commander and led his troops into battle at Shiloh, Murfreesboro and Chickamauga, becoming known as "The Fighting Bishop." He was killed in 1864. Historian Joseph Parks produced this thorough biography of Polk more than 30 years ago and now it has been republished by LSU Press.

Although a bit long at 400 pages, it is a definitive and full treatment of a major figure remembered by too many, perhaps, simply for his dual calling. Park's biography shows that Polk's contribution to the War was far more than an oddity.

The Third Texas Calvary in the Civil War.
By Douglas Hale.
347 pages, University of Oklahoma Press.

Few regiments—Confederate or Union—saw more of the war than the Third Texas Calvary. The regiment's list of engagements reads like a roll call of major battles: Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, Corinth, Vicksburg, Atlanta, Nashville. Author Douglas Hale charts the life of the Texas horse soldiers in superb detail, using official records, diaries, memoirs, letters and other primary sources to bring the unit and its men to life in convincing detail. As a regimental history, it adds an important story to the history of the War and records a valuable collection of material. The work grows weak, however, when its narrative turns philosophical and wanders into Revisionist speculation. One example: Author Hale is willing to believe the Texans went to war to preserve slavery and dissolve the Union; however, he belittles the traditional view (espoused by countless veterans) that the largely slaveless soldiers of the South fought and died for Southern independence.

During and after the War, Southern veterans clearly explained that their motivation for fighting included much more than merely a defense of slavery and for some, slavery was apparently not a motivation at all. Yet Hale dismisses this body of evidence as an "unconscious strategy of denial." Why the author would mix such politi-

cally correct speculation with his impressive regimental scholarship is puzzling.

Jubal: The Life & Times of General Jubal A. Early, C.S.A.
By Charles C. Osborne.
560 pages, Algonquin Books, \$29.95.

General Jubal Early was a remarkable concentration of contrasts—determined and unpredictable, acclaimed and controversial, obedient and unpredictable. His contribution to the Confederacy was likewise. He suffered humiliation in his 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign, but also managed to temporarily rescue the Valley from a harsh invasion and throw a serious scare into Washington with his raid on the Capital.

Jubal Early's conquests and controversies are thoroughly reported in this new biography by journalist Charles Osborne, formerly senior editor of *Time-Life Books*. The work is credibly researched and extremely well-written, but it also suffers in spots from uneven handling of history. In places the narrative is inappropriately irreverent and reads more like a contemporary news magazine than an unbiased history. Osborne also seems enamored with the philosophy promoted by the late historian Tom Connelly's book *The Marble Man*. Such a perspective, cynical of both tradition and authority, may be typical of news reporting, but should have no place in recording history.

Despite such trendy plunges into the style of "modern biography," Jubal is an engaging, provocative and gracefully written work. ☆

Rod Gragg is the author of *The Illustrated Confederate Reader and Confederate Goliath*.

DIVIDING LINE *by Samuel Francis*

The Legacy of M.E. Bradford

In the states and in the souls where Confederate flags still fly, they flutter at half-mast for M.E. Bradford, gentleman, scholar, political thinker and Good Old Rebel, who departed this world too soon at the age of 58. Yet the legacy he left to an America now being reconstructed to suit political correctness and political expediency is one that not only his Southern friends, students, colleagues and admirers should receive. The two countries he loved so much—America and the South—need to take their stand on ground he so unflinchingly defended.

Trained as a Faulkner scholar at Vanderbilt, Bradford wound up best known for his political thought and the political action to which his thought led. At the center of that thought was the South, whose native and faithful son Mel was, though his thought was not limited to it and the South he represented was a far march from the cavaliers and belles sipping brandy on the veranda that Hollywood and romance novels have inflicted on us.

Mel Bradford's South had the hard beauty of old women who have buried their sons, of Texas frontiersmen who have fought Comanches, of small farmers who worked barren fields alone and died at Shiloh for a cause that could not win. His was the South that sings the human tragedy, a drama that never leaves the stage no matter how rich, powerful and progressive its actors and spectators might swell.

It was a South that Mel knew intimately and personally. In graduate school, budding historians are instructed to study documents until the records speak to them. Documents not only spoke to Mel Bradford but carried a lifelong conver-

sation with him. Yet, as staggering as was his erudition of documents—of the American Revolution, the Civil War, British and European history, political and social philosophy, the classics of Latin, English and American literature—it was a mere shadow of what he knew firsthand.

To talk with Mel was to make an odyssey in time. He would ask a young man whom he had never met the Southerner's traditional first question—"Where are you from?"—and then proceed to tell him about whatever place that was: its history, its geography, what kind of crops its soil supported, what sort of people settled it, what its politics were in the War Between the States (the "late unpleasantness" as he called it) and why—and he could speak almost as much about New England or the Midwest. He knew the South and America by county and creek, and in debate with him the easy generalizations and abstractions in which our history is usually couched crumbled before his knowledge.

It was that deep intimacy with the past that was the core of his political theory. In 1981, when he was a candidate for the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Humanities, his neoconservative and leftist critics characteristically managed to miss the whole point of his thought. They ranted about his leadership of the Wallace Democrats in Texas in 1972, his criticism of Abraham Lincoln and his case against civil rights legislation and dismissed him as a bigot or a dinosaur.

Even after Bradford lost the nomination, columnist George Will, in an ugly little bucket of sneers,

smirked that he represented the "Nostalgic Confederate remnant in the conservative movement," while another neoconservative pronounced that "the Reagan administration no more needs to sign on Stephen Douglas Democrats than it does Tip O'Neill Democrats."

No, just stick with the country's 37 neoconservative eggheads from New York and Washington, which is what the Reagan and Bush administrations generally did. Today, of course, Republicans have forfeited the support of the rank-and-file Democrats Mel Bradford helped bring into the party in 1980. One hopes the party of Lincoln will prosper in their absence.

Yet the point of Bradford's deep knowledge of the history of a community was more than nostalgia. It spoke the truth that human society is not founded on abstract "propositions," "social contracts" or "higher laws" such as Lincoln and his political descendants invoke. A society, he argued, is "grown, not made," undesigned by human reason, "bound by blood, place and history" and should be governed in accord with them and their norms.

By contrast, political messiahs like Lincoln and the bumper-sticker crusades they launch rule by government "poured in from the top." They generate tyranny and the internecine carnage of civil war, and in the last days of this century, as in most of the rest of it, we wade in their legacy of blood.

Mel Bradford was a traditionalist whose teaching leaves us a gentler inheritance. It may be long before Americans and their leaders have the wisdom and the grace to take it up, but when we do the banners this Good Old Rebel bore will unfurl once again. ☆

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