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COVER IMAGE—Fighting the Outbreak in Hattiesburg. "Doctor Sweet and Nurse, Influenza Epidemic, 1918." Courtesy of McCain Library and Archives, University of Southern Mississippi.

Book Reviews

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"The One I Most Prized in Life": William T. Sherman and the Death of His Son

by Terrence J. Winschel

Union victory at Vicksburg proved to be the turning point in the Civil War, and it boosted the careers of Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman; but for the second general, it led to a personal tragedy from which he never recovered.

At three o'clock on a hot and muggy Mississippi afternoon, as white flags appeared along the Confederate defense line around Vicksburg, an eerie silence settled over the city that for the past forty-six days had been besieged by a relentless foe whose death-like grip had finally strangled its valiant defenders into submission. The date was July 3, 1863, and the silence bore stark witness that for the men who had remained steadfast through the harrowing experience of life under siege the limits of human endurance had been reached.

Riding out from the city was a cavalcade of officers in gray led by Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton. Accompanied by his most trusted subordinate, Maj. Gen. John S. Bowen, and aide Lt. Col. Louis Montgomery, the Confederate horsemen rode out along the Jackson Road and beyond the city's formidable defenses that had denied Union forces entry into Vicksburg for the past six weeks. Riding to meet them was a larger cavalcade of officers in blue led by Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, commander of the Union Army of the Tennessee, whose troops cheered wildly as he passed.

It had been a long and hard-fought campaign that led to this rendezvous with destiny for both Pemberton and Grant. As the two men and their subordinates dismounted, both were cognizant of the historical significance of this moment as it would determine the fate of a nation divided against itself. One was despondent and "much excited," the other "calm and stolid," betraying no emotion. A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Pemberton's decision to seek terms of surrender was based in part on his belief that he could get favorable terms on July 4. He had assured his subordinates the night before that, "I know my

TERRENCE J. WINSCHEL retired as chief historian of Vicksburg National Military Park. He is the author of several full-length works, including The Civil War Diary of the Common Soldier, Vicksburg: Fall of the Confederate Gibraltar, *and* Triumph & Defeat: The Vicksburg Campaign, *as well as many articles.*

people." In reference to Northerners, "I know their peculiar weaknesses and national vanity," he told them, and asserted that "They would yield then what could not be extorted from them at any other time." Pemberton asked Grant on what terms he would receive the surrender of the city and garrison under his command, and was visibly shaken when Grant replied that he had no terms other than an immediate and unconditional surrender. The Confederate commander snapped, "Then, sir, it is unnecessary that you and I should hold any further conversation; we will go to fighting again at once." Pemberton then angrily shook his finger in Grant's face and said, "I can assure you, sir, you will bury many more of your men before you will enter Vicksburg." They did, however, agree upon a cessation of hostilities and pledged an exchange of notes to settle on terms that were accepted the following morning.[1]

Conspicuous by his absence from this meeting was Grant's most trusted subordinate and closest friend in the army, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman. A native of Lancaster, Ohio, and West Point graduate, class of 1840, Sherman commanded the XV Corps of the Union army and had played a significant role in the campaign for Vicksburg. During the operational phase of the campaign, as Grant's army pushed deep into the interior of Mississippi, Sherman's men had captured Jackson, capital of the Magnolia State, and were the first to reach the gates of Vicksburg. But two failed assaults, on May 19 and 22, in which Sherman's corps suffered heavy loss, compelled Grant to lay siege to the city.

Desperate to save the city and its garrison, Confederate authorities ordered troops from across the South to Jackson that were organized as the Army of Relief under the command of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. The Virginian was considered by many as the South's second most able general, and Grant held him in high esteem. To counter this threat, the Union commander requested reinforcements of his own that were sent to Vicksburg by the tens of thousands. Most of these troops were used to form what became known as the "Exterior Line" that was established to

[1] J. H. Jones, "The Rank and File at Vicksburg," *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society*, vol. VII (Jackson, 1903), 29; Samuel Lockett, "Defense of Vicksburg," in Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 4 vols., (New York, 1884-1889), vol. III, 492 (hereinafter cited as Battles and Leaders.); U. S. War Department, The War of the Rebellion: The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 128 vols., (Washington, D.C., 1890-1901) series I, vol. XXIV, part I, 284-285 (hereinafter cited as O.R.; all references are to series I unless otherwise noted.); John C. Pemberton, "Terms of Surrender," Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, vol. III, 544.

protect the rear of Grant's besieging army. This formidable line of works ran from Haynes' Bluff, overlooking the Yazoo River north of Vicksburg, to the Big Black River east of the city. Grant considered defense of this line vital to the success of his operations and entrusted command of the "Exterior Line" to Sherman. Dubbing this force the Army of Observation, Sherman positioned his troops to guard the Mechanicsburg Corridor, the watershed between the Yazoo and Big Black Rivers, the area in which Johnston was most likely to approach Vicksburg. "Cump" established his headquarters at George Trible's plantation on Bear Creek, northeast of Vicksburg. Under his command the "Exterior Line" became a formidable obstacle that helped seal the fate of Vicksburg.

Johnston was keenly aware of the situation in Vicksburg as his last communication from Pemberton, dated June 23, said he could hold out fifteen days longer if there was any hope of relief. In truth, the Virginian had already written off Vicksburg and its defending army. Indeed, shortly after his arrival in Jackson on May 13, he wired the authorities in Richmond, "I am too late." Vicksburg campaign historian Edwin C. Bearss writes, "Johnston seemed to think that disaster was inevitable, and he desired to clear himself in advance of any responsibility for it, rather than bend his energy to avert it." Although Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Secretary of War James A. Seddon sent what troops they could, which swelled Johnston's force to thirty thousand men, nothing could spur the general into action. But Johnston knew that it would be the end of his career if Vicksburg surrendered and his Army of Relief remained idle in Jackson. Still, wishing to avoid combat, he delayed until July 1 to finally set his army in motion. On the afternoon of July 3, as his vanguard was within twenty miles of the city, the guns of Vicksburg fell silent. Johnston knew all too well what the silence meant. Fearing that Grant would now turn on him, he fell back to Jackson.[2]

Following his meeting with Pemberton on July 3, Grant notified Sherman, "Pemberton wants conditions to march out paroled, etc. The conditions wanted are such as I cannot give; I am to submit my propositions at 10 o'clock tonight." He closed by saying, "I want Johnston broken up as effectually as possible, and [rail] roads destroyed. I cannot say where you will find the most effective place to strike; I would say move so as to strike Canton and Jackson, whichever might seem most

[2] O.R., Vol. XXXIV, pt. 2, p. 215; Edwin C. Bearss, *The Vicksburg Campaign*, 3 vols., (Dayton, OH: Morningside Press, 1985-1986), vol. III, 530.

desirable." Sherman's elation was unabashed: "Telegraph me the moment you have Vicksburg in possession, and I will secure all the crossings of [Big] Black River, and move on Jackson or Canton, as you may advise. If you are in Vicksburg, glory, hallelujah! The best Fourth of July since 1776." Later that afternoon Grant confidently expressed to Sherman, "There is but little doubt but the enemy will surrender to-night or in the morning; make your calculations to attack Johnston; destroy the [rail] road north of Jackson."[3]

In anticipation of Vicksburg's fall, Sherman prepared his force for the drive eastward. The following day, as Grant led his victorious army into Vicksburg, Sherman's legions were already en route to the Big Black. His force, increased to thirteen divisions that totaled forty-six thousand men, quickly pushed across the river and was hot on Johnston's heels. Sherman drove his men hard and closed in on Jackson on July 10. Despite the intense heat and scarcity of fresh water, the soldiers in blue had outdistanced their supply wagons. Not wishing to storm the Jackson defenses without an adequate supply of artillery ammunition, Sherman decided to lay siege to the capital city and await his supplies. The situation was still fluid on July 12 when, due to outdated orders, a reconnaissance in force turned into an attack in which the division of Brig. Gen. Jacob Lauman was badly mauled. Sherman was livid at the useless loss of life, and Lauman was cashiered for this blunder.

Over the next few days, the Federals quickly extended their lines to the left and right until they were anchored on the Pearl River above and below Jackson. Knowing that his only hope of holding Jackson was to intercept Sherman's supply train, Johnston sent his cavalry on a wide sweep north around the Union flank. But its efforts were thwarted as the wagons were escorted by a powerful brigade of infantry. The supply wagons rumbled along and reached Sherman on the evening of July 16. Knowing that the Union guns would open in the morning, Johnston ordered his army to evacuate the city. After dark, the Confederates withdrew from their works, crossed the Pearl River, and burned the bridges behind them. The following morning, the Stars and Stripes were floating in victory atop the statehouse where Mississippi's Ordinance of Secession had been passed on January 9, 1861. Although Sherman sent a small force across the river after Johnston, due to the "intense heat,

[3] *O.R.*, Vol. XXIV, pt. 3, pp. 460-461; William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of William T. Sherman*, 2 vols., (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), vol. 1, p. 358.

dust, and fatigue of the men," he did not launch a vigorous pursuit of Johnston's retreating army.[4]

Flushed with victory, Sherman established his headquarters in the Governor's Mansion and on the evening of the 18th hosted a victory dinner with his generals. "I will perfect the work of destruction," he promised Grant. "I propose to break railroads 10 miles, south, east, and north, and out for 40 and 60 miles in spots." In addition to the destruction of railroads, machine shops and factories were also burned and by July 20 their work of destruction was mostly finished. Leaving Jackson a smoldering ruin, Sherman and his men moved back toward Vicksburg and went into bivouac along the Big Black River.[5]

The campaign for control of the Mississippi River was over, and the "Father of Waters," as President Abraham Lincoln expressed, "again flows unvexed to the sea." The Confederacy was split in two. Now trapped in the coils of the giant Anaconda, the South could not long survive.

In his report on the campaign, Grant made special note of Sherman's contribution to the victory. On July 22, he wrote directly to the president, "I would most respectfully, but urgently, recommend the promotion of Maj. Gen. W. T. Sherman, now commanding the Fifteenth Army Corps . . . to brigadier general in the Regular Army," and cited his "great fitness for any command that it may ever become necessary to intrust to [him]." Lincoln quickly gave his approval. In the aftermath of the campaign, even the press, which had criticized Sherman relentlessly thus far during the war, looked upon him favorably. No longer was he called crazy and insane, as he had been in 1862. His name was hailed in the press and too in the halls of Congress. According to his brother John, who was a U. S. senator, Sherman's "popularity was second only to that of Grant."[6]

Basking in his new-found fame, following his return from Jackson, Sherman settled into camp for the remainder of the summer for some much needed rest and reorganization of his command. The troops that he had led to victory at Jackson established Camp Sherman, which covered a vast area overlooking the Big Black River northeast of Vicksburg. The general himself established his headquarters at "Woodburne," the

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[4] *O.R.*, vol. XXIV, pt. 2, p. 528.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Henry Steele Commager, ed., *The Blue and Gray: The Story of the Civil War as Told by Participants*, 2 vols., (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), vol. 2, p. 677; *O.R.* vol. XXIV, pt. 3, p. 540; Letter, John Sherman to William T. Sherman, July 18, 1863, William T. Sherman Papers, Library of Congress.

plantation home of Parson James A. Fox, that was situated about twelve miles east of Vicksburg. He referred to the headquarters as "Polliwoggle Retreat."[7]

Although scores of his officers went home on furlough, Sherman remained with the troops. Throughout his tenure in command, Sherman frowned upon officers' wives visiting their husbands in camp believing it harmful to discipline, but now that the great campaign for control of the Mississippi River was over, the general felt confident enough to invite his family to his new camp on the Big Black. During the siege itself when his wife Ellen and the children had pleaded to visit him, Sherman wrote to his son Willy, "I wish you could see [Vicksburg] for a minute, but it is not right for children to be here, as the danger is too great." But now that the campaign was over, on July 12 Sherman took delight in inviting his family to visit. He assured his father-in-law, former U. S. senator and cabinet officer Thomas Ewing, that the camp was "one of the best possible," that it "combines comfort, retirement, safety, and beauty" and that he had "no apprehensions on the score of health." Ellen and the children were thrilled to receive his invitation and on July 26 his wife replied, "I was so overjoyed by your letter of the 12th, dearest Cump." In an outpouring of emotion, she assured her husband that "We are all so crazy to go . . . The thought of going down to you has spread sunshine over everything—all have gone to bed to dream happy dreams & my own heart is full of joy—God grant that nothing may occur to mar the happiness we anticipate."[8]

Four of their then six children traveled with Ellen to Mississippi—Minnie (12), Lizzie (10), Willy (9), and Tommy (6). As had his three siblings who journeyed to visit their father, Willy had been born in California. Their father had been stationed in California beginning in 1847 and consequently saw no action in the Mexican War—unlike so many of his contemporaries. In 1853, Sherman resigned his captaincy

[7] In a fit of whimsy, Sherman told his brother-in-law, Philemon (his wife Ellen's oldest brother), that he named the camp "Polliwoggle Retreat" as it was near a large horse pond full of frogs.

[8] Letter, William T. Sherman to William T. Sherman, Jr., June 21, 1863, Sherman Family Papers, University of Notre Dame Archives, CSHR 2/170; Brooks D. Simpson and Jean V. Berlin, eds., *Sherman's Civil War, Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman*, 1860-1865 (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 521; Letter, Ellen Sherman to William T. Sherman, July 26, 1863, Sherman Family Papers, University of Notre Dame Archives, CSHR 2/108. In family correspondence, the general spelled his son's name both Willy and Willie.

and became manager of the San Francisco branch of the St. Louis-based bank Lucas, Turner & Co. Willy was born in San Francisco on June 8, 1854. The young boy quickly became his father's favorite child, and the general anxiously awaited his arrival in Vicksburg.[9]

Ellen and the children arrived in mid-August and would spend six weeks in Mississippi. They were met by Sherman at the city's waterfront and were taken by ambulance to his headquarters. Arriving at "Woodburne," Ellen was pleased to see two large hospital tents pitched together for her use as a bedroom and parlor. Minnie and Lizzie, along with a servant brought with them from Ohio, slept in a tent next door. The two boys reveled in staying in their Uncle Charley's tent. (Capt. Charles Ewing was the youngest of the three Ewing brothers who became generals during the Civil War and served on Sherman's staff as inspector general.) Ellen's brother, Hugh, whom they called by his middle name, Boyle, commanded a brigade in Sherman's corps and was also nearby. Although she longed for her two youngest children, four-year-old Elly and two-year-old Rachel who had been left behind in Lancaster, Ellen especially relished the time spent with her brothers. Sherman biographer John Marszalek notes, "The disappointments of the past seemed far behind. The present provided a rarely felt contentment, and the future was promising. Sherman saw a smiling wife and excited children . . . At last, he was able to enjoy a long-sought success. Order and stability had finally been achieved and reigned in his family as it did in the war itself."[10]

There was much merriment for the Shermans. The family often went into Vicksburg to visit with General Grant and his wife, Julia, who were quartered in the Lum house on Washington Street. There they were frequently serenaded by various regimental bands or enjoyed singing

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[9] In addition to Willie, the children who visited Vicksburg were: Maria (Minnie) Ewing Sherman January 29, 1851-November 22, 1913; Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie) Sherman November 17, 1852-April 6, 1925; and Thomas Ewing Sherman October 12, 1856-April 29, 1933.

[10] Eleanor Mary Sherman, September 5, 1859-July 18, 1915, and Rachel Ewing Sherman, July 5, 1861-October 26, 1919. John F. Marszalek, *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion For Order*, (New York, NY: The Free Press 1993), 231. Charles Ewing was born on March 6, 1835. On May 14, 1861, he was commissioned a captain in the newly authorized 13th United States Infantry of which his foster brother and brother-in-law, William T. Sherman, was named colonel. During the Vicksburg campaign, Charles commanded Company C of the 1st Battalion. On May 19, 1863, in the first assault against the city's defenses, Ewing had his right thumb shot off while carrying the national colors.

by formerly enslaved people. Willy would sometimes stay overnight with Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson, one of Grant's corps commanders, whose headquarters was in the stately Balfour house on Crawford Street. (This house is situated next to the one used by General Pemberton as his headquarters during the siege and in which he made the decision to surrender Vicksburg.)

For Ellen and the children their days were full from dawn to dusk. "The children are happy and well and their Father is delighted to have them with him," Ellen wrote her mother, Maria Boyle Ewing. "Minnie and Willy ride horseback with him while Lizzie and Tommy drive about with me in the carriage." Ellen, a devout Catholic, had the added comfort of a Notre Dame priest, Father Joseph Carrier, who was an army chaplain. With delight she informed her mother, "Sunday we attended Mass at brother Hugh's headquarters and heard Father Carrier preach."[11]

It was an idyllic time for the family, and Sherman took pride in showing them around the siege lines. Willy, especially, who inherited his father's love for the military, took delight in collecting battlefield souvenirs. The visit was a great adventure for the young boy, and he reveled being so close to his father. A proud father later wrote, "Willie took the most intense interest in the affairs of the army," and boasted that "he was a great favorite with the soldiers, and used to ride with me on horseback in the numerous drills and reviews." One soldier wrote of Willy, "The little fellow . . . won the[ir] hearts by his winning ways and his fondness for playing soldier." Sherman's oldest boy spent much of his time with his Uncle Charlie's battalion of Regulars. The general noted that his son "learned the manual of arms and [almost daily] attended the parade and guard-mounting of the Thirteenth [U.S. Infantry], back of my camp." The men of the battalion made Willy an honorary sergeant and had a uniform made for him. It was difficult to determine who smiled more broadly as he paraded around camp in his uniform of blue, the little sergeant or his father who wore two stars on his shoulders.[12]

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[11] Anna McAllister, *Ellen Ewing: Wife of General Sherman* (New York, NY: Benziger Brothers, 1936), p. 264. Joseph C. Carrier had been born in France in 1833. He came to America in 1855 and entered the seminary. Carrier was ordained a priest in the Holy Cross community at Notre Dame in 1861 and went on to serve as a chaplain with the Sixth Missouri Infantry during the siege of Vicksburg. He died in 1904.

[12] Sherman, *Memoirs*, vol. I, 373; Richard Wheeler, Sherman's March (New York, NY: Ty Crowell Co., 1978), 14.

Even young Tommy provided moments of laughter at headquarters. One day, a group of Confederate soldiers came into camp under a flag of truce to deliver a letter to Grant. Sherman played a gracious host providing them with dinner, complete with wine and cigars afterwards. During the course of conversation, a Confederate officer said that the Federals should stop fighting because they could never conquer eight million people. Tommy, who was destined to become a Jesuit priest, honed in, "Why, father can whip you fellows every time." Laughing, one of the soldiers in gray asked how he could be so sure. The young boy proceeded to give the numbers and locations of Union troops in the area. Startled by his son's knowledge and candor, Sherman said, "Why, you young traitor, you must be court-martialed and you will probably be shot."[13]

Despite the laughter and smiles, the war was never far from Sherman's mind, and the general knew that active campaigning could resume at any time. As Sherman and his men rested along the Big Black on September 19-20, the Union Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans was routed at Chickamauga in northern Georgia and driven back to Chattanooga where it was soon besieged. General-in-Chief Henry Halleck ordered Grant to send twenty thousand troops to Chattanooga immediately. Grant, in turn, directed Sherman to organize and command the relief operations. His time of bliss was over.

Sherman was ordered to take his force upriver to Memphis and then to repair the railroad en route to Chattanooga. On September 27, Sherman moved his headquarters onto the steamboat Atlantic in preparation for the trip northward. An officer was sent to fetch Willy who was at General McPherson's headquarters at the Balfour house. Looking proud of himself and carrying a double-barreled shotgun, "Sergeant" Sherman came aboard the boat and the vessel cast off. As the boat slowly moved upstream, Sherman stood at the rail and pointed out the places where his men had fought and camped during the campaign for Vicksburg. Ellen, however, was more concerned with Minnie who had experienced a recent bout of fever and stayed with her in their cabin. Thus, no one at first noticed that Willy was also a little pale and feverish. That night he complained about diarrhea and was listless. Ellen put him to bed and called for a surgeon. Chicago Surgeon E. O. F. Roler of

[13] *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, March 16, 1896, in Mary Elizabeth Sherman Fitch Armstead Scrapbook, William T. Sherman Papers, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.

the 55th Illinois Infantry attended to the boy and initially diagnosed him with dysentery and malaria, both maladies that were common in that climate. But they are also symptoms of something far worse, even deadly—typhoid, a disease to which children are especially vulnerable. Caused by contaminated food or water that was often prevalent in army camps of the period due to poor sanitation, typhoid is a bacterial infection caused by the bacteria Salmonella typhi. Although diarrhea is an uncommon symptom, which may have led to the misdiagnosis, Willy exhibited other symptoms of the disease: high fever, weakness, vomiting, abdominal pain, dry cough, and sweating. Everyone soon realized that his life was endangered.

The boy's condition rapidly became critical, and the boat's captain, Henry McDougal, was urged to make the utmost speed to reach Memphis. But Atlantic was a slow moving vessel, and it took the boat one week to make the trip upriver during which time Willy's condition worsened. The vessel arrived in Memphis at ten thirty at night on October 2, and Willy, who was semiconscious, was taken by ambulance to the Gayoso Hotel.

Father Carrier had traveled with the family and stayed at Willy's side almost constantly. Sensing the seriousness of the boy's condition, the chaplain began to gently speak to him of heaven. "Willy then told me in very few words that he was willing to die if it was the will of God," Father Carrier wrote Ellen a few weeks later, "but it pained him to leave his father and mother." The priest continued, "He said this with an expression of such deep earnestness that I could hardly refrain from giving way to my feelings. I endeavored to soothe his sentiments of subdued regret." "Willy," I said quietly and calmly, "If God wishes to call you to Him—now—do not grieve, for He will carry you to heaven and there you will meet your good Mother and Father again." "Well," said the boy with an air of singular resignation. When his mother began to cry, the dying child reached out his hand and caressed her face.[14]

Willy drifted in and out of consciousness, waking only to inquire of the whereabouts of his prized shotgun. "He never complained," Ellen recalled. "How I wish he would have complained more!" At five o'clock in the afternoon on October 3, the young sergeant died peacefully. The grief-stricken father later wrote, "Mrs. Sherman, Minnie, Lizzie, and

[14] Stanley P. Hirshson, *The White Tecumseh: Biography of General William T. Sherman* (New York, NY: Wiley, 1997), 165-166.

Tom were with him at the time, and we all, helpless and overwhelmed, saw him die."[15]

At noon the next day, the men of the First Battalion, 13th United States Infantry, with muffled drums and arms reversed, escorted the family to the riverfront where the little steel coffin with Willy's remains was placed aboard the steamer Grey Eagle for the sorrowful journey home. Sherman accompanied his grieving wife and children on board only to say goodbye as the exigencies of war prevented him from going with them. Ellen and the children continued upstream to Cairo where they boarded a train and rode the iron rails home to Lancaster where Willy was buried.

Having placed his family on the steamer to return home, Sherman found himself alone on October 6 preparing to return to Vicksburg and the continuation of the war. From the Gayoso, he wrote his wife a letter of utter despair: "I have got up early this morning to steal a short period in which to write you, but I can hardly trust myself. Sleeping, waking, every-where I see poor little Willy. His face and form are so deeply imprinted on my memory as were deep seated the hopes I had in his future. Why oh why should this child be taken from us, leaving us full of trembling and reproaches? Though I know we did all human beings could do to arrest the ebbing tide of life, still I will always deplore my want of judgement in taking my family to so fatal a climate at so critical a period of the year . . . . To it must be traced the loss of that child on whose future I had based all the ambition I ever had."[16]

A deep sense of guilt tormented Sherman who on October 10, just prior to leaving Memphis, wrote Ellen another letter in which he confessed that he occasionally gave in to "the wish that some of those bullets that searched for my life at Vicksburg had been successful, that it might have removed the necessity for that fatal visit." A few days later he again raised the question, "Why was I not killed at Vicksburg and left Willy to grow up to care for you?" Indeed, the grieving father harbored that sense of profound guilt for the remainder of his life.[17]

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[15] McAllister, *Ellen Ewing*, 268; Sherman, Memoirs, vol. I, 374.

[16] Letter, William T. Sherman to Ellen Sherman, October 6, 1863, Sherman Family Papers, University of Notre Dame Archives, CSHR 2/07; Mark Antony de Wolfe, ed., *Home Letters of General Sherman* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), 275; Simpson and Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War*, 556.

[17] Letter, William T. Sherman to Ellen Sherman, October 10, 1863, Sherman Family Papers, University of Notre Dame Archives, CSHR 2/07; Simpson and Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War*, 556.

Perhaps in an effort to help relieve that sense of guilt and in part to comfort himself, Sherman penned a letter to his son Tommy in which he wrote, "You are now our only boy, and must take poor Willy's place, to take care of your sisters, and to fill my place when I too am gone." And in a letter to his daughter Lizzie, he stressed, "We must all now love each other the more that Willy watches us from Heaven." In a rare display of affection, Sherman, who normally closed letters to his children by simply signing his name, closed these by subscribing himself "Yr. Loving Father."[18]

Broken-hearted, Sherman also took pen in hand and poured out his grief in a note to Ulysses S. Grant. "This is the only death I have ever had in my family," he wrote in anguish, "and falling as it has so suddenly and unexpectedly on the one I most prized on earth has affected me more than any other misfortune could." He confessed, "I can hardly compose myself enough for work, but must and will do so at once," he assured his commander. (Although Grant replied with heartfelt words of comfort and support, that letter has been lost to history.) Sherman also penned words of gratitude to Captain Charles C. Smith and the men of brother Charlie's former battalion of Regulars adding in agony, "The child that bore my name . . . now floats a mere corpse, seeking a grave . . . with a weeping mother, brother, and sisters clustered about him;" and wondered in torment, "God only know why he should die thus young." "For myself, I ask no sympathy," he beseeched his men. And, as was his nature, Sherman steeled himself and closed by reaffirming his commitment to their joint cause writing, "Oh, on I must go, to meet a soldiers' fate or live to see our country rise superior to all factions." Several days later, in the midst of military matters, Sherman wrote in similar vein to Admiral David Porter. "I lost recently my little boy by sickness incurred during his visit to my camp on Big Black," he wrote in anguish. "He was my pride and hope of life, and his loss has taken from me the great incentive to excel, and now I must work on purely and exclusively for love of country and professional pride."[19]

The Angel of Death would visit the Sherman family again all too soon. Unbeknownst to the general, during the family's visit to Vicksburg,

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[18] Letter, William T. Sherman to Tommy Sherman, October 4, 1863, Sherman Family Papers, University of Notre Dame; Simpson and Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War*, 537.

[19] John Y. Simon, ed., *Papers of U. S. Grant*, 27 volumes (Carbondale, Illinois, 1967-2005), vol. IX, 274; Sherman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pp. 374-375.

Ellen became pregnant. On June 11, 1864, while her husband was battling his way toward Atlanta, Ellen gave birth to a son she named Charles Celestine. Sadly, less than six months later, the infant developed pneumonia and died on December 4. Sherman never set eyes on the baby, which only added to his grief and sorrow.[20]

The deaths of his children, especially his beloved Willy, affected Sherman as deeply as it would any father. Despite the fame and success he achieved during the war, Sherman bemoaned the fact that Willy did not live to see him become a great general and take pride in his accomplishments. Still, Sherman cherished and clung to the bond between father and son that had united them in life. In 1867, Willy's remains were moved from Lancaster to St. Louis, where the Shermans then lived, and interred in Cavalry Cemetery where Sherman regularly communed with his son. Willy was joined there by the baby, Charles Celestine, whose remains were transferred from South Bend, Indiana, and later by their mother who died on November 28, 1888. One year before his own death on February 14, 1891, Sherman left with his daughter Lizzie detailed instructions for his eventual burial. It was his expressed desire to be laid to rest alongside his "faithful wife and idolized soldier boy." On February 21, amidst solemn pomp and ceremony, the general was finally reunited with his little sergeant. Thus, for William T. Sherman, the triumph and tragedy that was Vicksburg remained the defining chapter of his life.

[20] Sherman was not alone in experiencing a father's grief during the war, for it was shared by many other Civil War notables—Robert E. Lee lost his daughter Annie, who also died of typhoid in 1862. That same year, Confederate General James Longstreet lost three children to scarlet fever. In Washington, President Abraham Lincoln lost his favorite son, also named Willie, to typhoid in 1862. And in Richmond, Confederate President Jefferson Davis lost his favorite child, Joe, who died in 1864 after falling from a balcony at the Confederate "White House."

The Menace: Fever, Pox, and Quarantine in the Hattiesburg Area, 1888–1918

by Andrew R. English

Tales from fragmentary facts connected with stories of early Hattiesburg appeared strangely reactionary and exaggerated regarding the threat of disease. Accounts of trains running through the town at full speed and conductors holding handkerchiefs over their mouths to avoid catching a fever or illness seemed a bizarre but quaint precaution. These local legends did not sound rational or even relevant to the recent world of vaccines and technology. This assumption changed abruptly with the outbreak of COVID-19, as the ingredients of dread and disbelief, when added to the detail-starved earlier stories, brought deeper understanding and perhaps a closer empathy. Panic was a genuine reaction to the threat of disease in those long-ago years. In the present day, precautions taken by those forebearers no longer seem quaint and unnecessary. Panic had suddenly reemerged, and in this century talk of quarantines and miracle cures echoes the fearful actions of late nineteenth century Americans. As the onslaught of COVID-19 continues to spread fear, panic, and an unsettling dread, it reminds us of the epidemics of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Few contagions were as feared as yellow fever.

Yellow fever, "Yellow Jack," "His Saffron Majesty," "The Saffron Scourge," or "Bronze John" as Southerners also knew it, were all variations on the jaundiced appearance or yellowed skin of the more acute cases. Black vomit, brought forth in the final stages of the sickness, was another dreaded sign of yellow fever.[1] Less color-related metaphors were also used such as the "enemy," "ardent fever," and "malignant fever," describing an outbreak in more ambiguous terms, but alarm still followed.[2]

Fever and sickness appeared in the Piney Woods area of Mississippi with both an increased frequency and fervor when the railroad boom

[1] Jo Ann Carrigan, *The Saffron Scourge: A History of Yellow Fever in Louisiana, 1796-1905* (Lafayette, LA: University of Louisiana at Lafayette Press, 2015), 8-9.

[2] Ibid., 9.

ANDREW R. ENGLISH earned his Ph.D. in history from the University of Exeter. He is a retired U.S. Air Force officer with a service history spanning the globe. He is currently a consultant in Washington, D.C.

of the 1880s created new settlements in the virgin pine forests. Those outbreaks and the responses by the local citizens among the informed and cautious, together with the disbelieving and reactionary, were haphazard and predictably human. It is chilling to compare the reactions of those living with the scourges over a century ago to our responses to COVID-19 today, as they are unnervingly similar.

Rails, Timber, and Towns

By the early summer of 1883, the New Orleans & Northeastern (N.O. & N.E.) Railroad was reaching into the interior of the Mississippi Piney Woods through two building efforts—one northeast from New Orleans, the other southwest from Meridian.[3] By June 1883, the construction of a trestle across the Leaf River was completed in the hamlet that would become Hattiesburg, and the first work train rolled across the river to supply the crews laying the rails southward.[4] Work slowed on the southern leg of the route, as construction near the swamps of the Louisiana and Mississippi boundary at the West Pearl River Bridge (trestle) was delayed due to a smallpox outbreak among the work crews at the site.[5] On October 15, 1883, the first through train traveled south from Meridian to New Orleans and with its arrival in the Crescent City, the N.O. & N.E. railroad was officially completed.[6] The new settlement of Hattiesburg was soon a bustling community, with several hundred souls and material signs of progress, including a local newspaper. That chronicle, the *Hattiesburg Herald*, was a short-lived venture as D. W. Bouie, one of the editors and part owner, died in the town on September 1, 1884, a victim of typhoid fever.[7] Other newspapers followed and regrettably so did fatalities, because as the township grew into a city, disease reappeared among the inhabitants, dispelling the population's illusions of safety from outbreaks experienced in the larger cities.

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[3] "Letter from Halloo," *St. Tammany Farmer* (Covington, LA), May 26, 1883, p. 2; "Work Begun on the New Orleans and Northeastern Railroad-Interesting Initial Proceedings," *The Weekly Clarion* (Jackson, MS), January 4, 1882, p. 2.

[4] "Rev. L. E. Hall, "Something Remembered of Hub City,"" *Hattiesburg American* (Hattiesburg, MS), May 20, 1919, 34.

[5] "Letter from Halloo," *St. Tammany Farmer*, May 26, 1883, p. 2.

[6] "The First Train," *St. Tammany Farmer*, October 20, 1883, p. 2.

[7] *The Pascagoula Democrat-Star* (Pascagoula, MS), September 5, 1884, p. 2.

Pestilence, Laws, and the Civic Good

In 1888, the rudimentary law enforcement in Hattiesburg took on an urgent duty as yellow fever appeared. On August 30, the Mississippi Board of Health ordered that "no person will be permitted to enter the State unless they possess a certificate from a health officer that they have not been exposed to Yellow Fever."[8] To insure the town was protected from those exposed to the dreaded "Yellow Jack," the town marshal organized ten guards, appointed to impose a "Shotgun Quarantine." These guards watched the trains coming into and out of town, ensuring no one got on or off.[9] In 1879, the U. S. Government created the National Board of Health in the aftermath of the great Southern 1878 yellow fever outbreak, and regulations concerning railroads were initially enforced during the early stages of the 1888 outbreak. Any train leaving an infected area had to be fumigated with sulfur, and trains traveling into an infected area could neither stop nor slow below ten miles per hour.[10] By September 1888, the guards were undoubtedly on alert as fever was reported in Jackson, and that month local guards in towns and cities across the region halted all rail traffic in the Mississippi Valley for about a week. Pressure from the railroads loosened the hold of the deputized blockaders and cooler temperatures soon ended the outbreak. By October, the first shotgun quarantine in Hattiesburg was suspended when the yellow fever scare subsided.[11]

The rule of the shotgun returned on August 9, 1890, this time in response to an outbreak of smallpox. Some sixty people fled before other villages along the N.O. & N.E. imposed a quarantine against anyone coming from Hattiesburg.[12] By late August, the outbreak, termed as a "panic" in several Mississippi newspapers, had concluded and the refugees returned to their homes.[13] Though smallpox had claimed only

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[8] "The Fever Record," *The Greenville Times* (Greenville, MS), September 1, 1888, p. 2.

[9] Otis Robertson, *Facts About Hattiesburg* (Hattiesburg, MS: Progress Book & Job Print, 1898), 15.

[10] R. Scott Huffard, Jr., "Infected Rails: Yellow Fever and Southern Railroads," *The Journal of Southern History* 79, no. 1 (February 2013): 97, 108-109.

[11] George R. Watson Sr., *Historical Hattiesburg* (Hattiesburg, MS: privately printed, 1974), 14.

[12] Robertson, *Facts About Hattiesburg* (1898), 15; "Smallpox in Mississippi," *The Evening Star*, (Washington, DC), August 12, 1890, p. 6.

[13] "The small pox panic at Hattiesburg is about over," *Oxford Eagle* (Oxford, MS),

one life, Hattiesburg and the surrounding area continued to live under the threat of seasonal outbreaks of disease. In early 1894, an Ellisville newspaper provided a brief account of thirty-five-year-old William Jenkins, who died at the sawmill village of Eastabuchie in early January. Jenkins, described as "A good citizen, upright Mason and a member of the Baptist Church," died from typhoid on January 10, 1894.[14]

Reports of disease were not always sufficient to halt the railroads. In October 1897, one Pascagoula newspaper noted that work on the Mobile, Jackson & Kansas City Railroad, then building near Hattiesburg, was "progressing notwithstanding the Yellow Fever scare."[15] Nevertheless, incidents of fever forced suspensions of some rail travel in the state. In mid-September, the partially completed Gulf & Ship Island Railroad halted travel from the coast to Hattiesburg following reports of yellow fever in Biloxi, on the orders of Dr. H. S. Gulley, the State Health officer.[16] A rumor related to a reported outbreak in Hattiesburg sparked a skirmish in area newspapers. The Ellisville newspaper hotly denied that citizens of that town had deliberately created a false claim in order to hurt business in Hattiesburg. "Hattiesburg cannot make Ellisville the victim of their folly," the irate editor from the offended town proclaimed. Not content to let the issue go without another blast, the Ellisville editor demanded the name of the accuser with the challenge to "put up or shut up."[17]

The fever outbreak and restrictions imposed by quarantines injured more than journalistic decorum and civic pride. The press of business needs led to strident criticisms of health authorities and demands for a return to normal life, even before the fever had completely abated. In

August 28, 1890, p. 2; "We have a private letter from Hattiesburg," *The Pascagoula Democrat-Star*, August 22, 1890, p. 2.

[14] "Died at Eastabuchie, Wednesday, January 10, of typhoid fever," *The New South* (Ellisville, MS), January 13, 1894, p. 3.

[15] "The Hattiesburg Citizen says that work on the Mobile, Jackson, and Kansas City Railroad," *The Pascagoula Democrat-Star*, October 29, 1897, p. 2; quoting from an undated story provided by the *Hattiesburg Citizen*.

[16] "Ordered to close traffic," *The Austin Weekly Statesman* (Austin, TX), September 16, 1897, p. 12. By this time, the Gulf & Ship Island Railroad linked Hattiesburg with the coastal city of Gulfport. See: "To Formally Open the G.& S. I. R. R.," *The Grenada Sentinel* (Grenada, MS), September 26, 1896, p. 3.

[17] "That Hattiesburg Circular Again," *The New South* (Ellisville, MS), October 16, 1897, p. 2. The Ellisville newspaper reported that the Reverend L. E. Hall had traveled from Hattiesburg to visit a friend suffering from yellow fever in nearby Augusta, but stopped short of accusing him or the town of Augusta as the source of the rumor.

Brookhaven, *The Leader* admonished: "the merchants want their mails, the people want business, and the time for harassment has passed. Jack Frost is now standing quarantine and he is the greatest conqueror of Bronze John in all the land. The people have more confidence in him than they have in a cowpen full of doctors."[18] Jack Frost won out, but Bronze John proved capable of fighting with renewed stealth and strength when warmer weather returned.

The growing towns and cities of south Mississippi made incremental urban improvements during the final years of the nineteenth century; however, outbreaks of fevers and sickness continued to occur without warning. On September 20, 1898, Hattiesburg hired an extra policeman to assist the lone police officer, Thomas Beverly (described as "a Jolly Good Fellow and a splendid officer"), to patrol the streets at night. The new man assigned to the police watch was not named but was likely a welcome member, as Beverly was required, in addition to his constabulary duties, to light and trim the street lamps.[19] The new patrolman may have served as a deterrent to crime, but Bronze John was able to slip in unseen beneath the flickering lamps and beyond the gaze of the policemen.

Later that week, lumberman Charles Rich stepped off the train from New Orleans with more than his baggage. He had been exposed to yellow fever while on a trip to the Crescent City and may have been among those who brought the illness with them.[20] Rich returned to Hattiesburg to examine the remains of the saw mill he managed, the Leaf River Lumber Company, which burned on September 24, 1898, leaving only the boiler and engine salvageable.[21] Despite the immediate needs to recover his business, the "Yellow-winged Monster" was now in the city and brought its own version of destruction. By October 9, Hattiesburg had twenty cases of yellow fever and the N.O. & N.E. ordered its trains to pass through Hattiesburg at full speed.[22] The yellow fever

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[18] "The Picayune's Mississippi Bureau observes that the State is growing," *The Leader* (Brookhaven, MS), November 10, 1897, p. 4.

[19] Watson, *Historical Hattiesburg* (1974), 15; "Hattiesburg's Efficient Police Department," *The Hattiesburg News*, September 9, 1909, p. 6. Aside from his being considered "a Jolly Good Fellow and a splendid officer," Beverly was also regarded as "a natural born policeman."

[20] "Yellow Fever in the South," *The New York Times,* October 10, 1898, p. 3.

[21] "The plant of the Leaf River Lumber," *The Free Press* (Poplarville, MS), September 29, 1898, p. 2.

[22] Huffard, "Infected Rails," *The Journal of Southern History* 79, no. 1 (February

scare mysteriously subsided, but five days after the railroad issued its order prohibiting trains from stopping in that city, Hattiesburg reported cases of smallpox.[23] By October 19, there were no new cases of the pox in the city, although there were five suspicious cases outside the cordon area.[24] The fever and pox departed almost as quickly as they came, and both would return without apparent pattern and with varying degrees of intensity.

Citizen Soldiers, Pox, and the Public

During the Spanish-American War of 1898, Americans rushed to enlist and some Hattiesburg citizens volunteered for service in Company L of the First Mississippi Infantry Regiment.[25] Captain Archie Fairly commanded the body of raw recruits mustered under arms as Hattiesburg's first fighting unit.[26] Fairly did not obtain the requisite numbers of troops from local sources, but was able to round out his company with volunteers from Columbia in neighboring Marion County.[27] From their temporary bivouac on the courthouse lawn in Hattiesburg, the troops marched to the station and boarded the train for Jackson, en route to their cantonment site at Camp Pat Henry on May 1, 1898.[28] While in Camp Henry, the Adjutant General ordered the distribution of a circular, outlining the physical requirements for those seeking active duty. The men had to have physical attributes to include lung capacity, good vision, be between eighteen and forty-five years of age, stand at least five feet four inches in height, and weigh at least 125 pounds but not more than 195 pounds. The men had to be "sound."[29]

After passing the medical screening, on May 30, 1898, the

2013), 95; "Yellow Fever in the South," *The New York Times,* October 10, 1898, p. 3.

[23] "Yellow fever is officially reported," *Greene County Herald* (Leakesville, MS), October 13, 1898, p. 3.

[24] "Mississippi Matters," *The Leader* (Brookhaven, MS), October 19, 1898, p. 2.

[25] *WPA History of Forrest County, Mississippi* (Works Progress Administration Federal Writer's Project, 1938), 260.

[26] Dunbar Rowland, "Military History of Mississippi 1803-1898," *Register of the State of Mississippi (1908)* (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, 1978), 559.

[27] *WPA History of Marion County, Mississippi* (Works Progress Administration Federal Writer's Project, 1938) "Assignment 18."

[28] Rowland, "Military History of Mississippi 1803-1898," 559.

[29] James Malcolm Robertshaw, "History of Company 'C' Second Mississippi Regiment, Spanish-American War," *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society*, vol. 1 (1916), 432.

troops moved to a point near the Georgia and Tennessee line at the Chickamauga battlefield park, for more training and larger formation drills.[30] While in this Georgia training center dubbed Camp Thomas, some of the recruits contracted typhoid fever and were furloughed home. The Army senior officers at Camp Thomas had failed to organize their cantonment properly for the long-term training and safe care of larger bodies of troops.[31]

Lieutenant Colonel Alfred A. Woodhull, deputy surgeon at Camp Thomas, described the shockingly unsanitary conditions in the camp—"The refuse from the thousands of animals and other insoluble debrisof the camp add to the aerial and indirectly to the aqueous pollution."[32] The equipment available for hospital staff was woefully insufficient for such a large gathering of troops. Not one microscope was on hand.[33] Poor drainage, inadequate sanitation, and compromised water sources led to sudden occurrences of typhoid that decimated the ranks.

Camp Thomas had approximately sixty thousand volunteer soldiers by early summer 1898, and the facilities could not provide sufficient supplies and care for that large number of men. The encampment had only a moderate appreciation of hygiene. Some local farmers sold their goods to the soldiers without adhering to the restrictions imposed by permits authorizing them to sell within the camp and without oversight regarding cleanliness and quality. They vended their questionable produce to the unsuspecting young recruits apparently without much conscience. One senior officer in the camp complained of vendors selling "indigestible pie, green fruits, pop, manufactured milk, and slop of every name and every deleterious nature."[34] Caution from the men and their officers was almost non-existent at the camp, and hundreds of the men paid for it with their lives. One writer noted the average volunteer soldier of the Spanish-American War "had little discipline, and a slight knowledge of sanitation." The typical soldier "did not accept in full faith the germ theory of disease, and was skeptical about the existence of bugs he could not see." In regards to the vendors dispensing their

[30] *WPA History of Forrest County, Mississippi*, 260.

[31] David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (New York: MacMillan Publishers, 1981), 151, 160.

[32] Ibid., 160.

[33] John M. Barry, *The Great Influenza* (New York: Viking, published by the Penguin Group, 2004), 136.

[34] Gregory Dean Chapman, "Army Life at Camp Thomas, Georgia, during the Spanish-American War," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 646.

The Replacement: Corporal Phillip J. Toomer, Company B, 3rd Regiment, Mississippi Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted at Hattiesburg, July 3, 1898. Image courtesy of Andrew English.

foods within the camp, the average ill-trained soldier "resented as an invasion of personal rights, any attempt to dictate what he should eat or drink."[35]

By late July some regiments had departed, but approximately forty-five thousand troops remained in the filthy camp, as recommendations of the medical officers were "dismissed as unrealistic or unnecessary fads."[36] Typhoid fever was the major killer of soldiers in the Spanish-American War. Of the 20,738 recruits who contracted the fever in the Army training sites, 1,590 died. Other camps suffered sickness, but not to the extreme of the encampment at Chickamauga. Camp Meade in Middletown, Pennsylvania, had the lowest number of deaths (150), but Camp Thomas suffered higher rates in part due to command indifference.[37] An Army inquiry in 1900 blamed the inexperienced line officers, many anxious for popular approval from their men, as they did not enforce latrine restrictions, and the soldiers answered nature's call without discretion. Company mess tents were sometimes only 150 feet away, and the results were disastrous.[38]

Typhoid hit with full force in August. The sick inundated the hospital, and staff could not respond with adequate care. Some patients were left in their own filth for up to twenty-four hours due to the lack of clean linens.[39] America suffered 379 combat deaths in the war with Spain, but by September 30, 1898, 425 soldiers had died on the

[35] Ibid., 651.

[36] Ibid., 651; Vincent J. Cirillo, "'The Patriotic Odor: Sanitation' and Typhoid Fever in the National Encampments during the Spanish-American War," *Army History*, no. 49 (Spring 2000), 20.

[37] Cirillo, "The Patriotic Odor," 17-18, 20.

[38] Ibid., 19-20.

[39] Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company Inc., 1994), 273.

Chickamauga training site.[40]

Camp Thomas was the most hazardous duty location of the war. An article in the *New York Herald* called it "a perfect hell on earth." Soldiers from the First Maine regiment invalided home in late August, stepped off the trains "a yellow and thin-faced lot."[41] They were among the more fortunate. Of the one hundred troops sent out from Hattiesburg, eight died from typhoid fever.[42]

Their duty ended at Columbia, Tennessee, on December 20, 1898, when the First Mississippi Regiment, U. S. Volunteers mustered out of service. Mississippi guardsman T. B. Birdsong remarked somewhat bitterly that his service, and that of his comrades, also comprised of "taking care of their own sick in camp" and by showing the nation the military weaknesses concerning the mobilization, training, and care of its volunteer soldiers.[43] This lesson was not fully heeded and would have to be relearned in a future war.

In July 1899, typhoid killed William D. Poate and his son in Hattiesburg.[44] Records are limited, but the next quarantine in Hattiesburg occurred in early 1901, when the city hired guards to seal off a residence in response to an outbreak of smallpox. The city paid C. S. King $5.12 for his three and one-half days on guard duty.[45] Locally deputized guards like King proved somewhat effective during limited incidents with a few patients requiring isolation, but a larger scale event required a more direct measure by the state.

In addition to supporting national defense, another duty performed by the Mississippi National Guard during this era was the enforcement of quarantine during periods of broad area fever scares. In the summer of 1905, towns along the lower reaches of the Pearl River were suddenly, and once again, in the clutches of yellow fever. Governor James K. Vardaman responded to the growing panic by calling out the State Guard to enforce a quarantine of the area. The State Guard planned an annual training encampment in Gulfport on August 2, but Adjutant

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[40] Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (1981), 160.

[41] Chapman, "Army Life at Camp Thomas Georgia, during the Spanish-American War," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 651, 654.

[42] *WPA History of Marion County, Mississippi*, "Assignment 18."

[43] *WPA History of Forrest County, Mississippi*, 256.

[44] "Wm. R. Poate and son, Percy, of Hattiesburg, died Tuesday," *The Magnolia Gazette* (Magnolia, MS), July 22, 1899, p. 2.

[45] *Hattiesburg Municipal Records*, McCain Library, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

General Arthur Fridge postponed the assembly to respond to the crisis.[46] Soon after receiving the mobilization order from Jackson, troops arrived and sealed off the towns of Pearlington and Napoleon.[47] Neighboring Logtown, "the prosperous and enterprising little burg," was also cordoned off by the soldiers.[48] The troops patrolled the roads, the river, and the gulf beaches, preventing anyone from entering or leaving the region. This quarantine was so severe that even the mail was halted before it reached the towns.[49] Yet despite these precautions, the fever spread further afield.

By early August 1905, a fourteen-year-old boy in Sumrall, a "prosperous and rapidly growing" sawmill town, suffered from yellow fever. Immediately upon hearing the news, the mayor of neighboring Hattiesburg placed a quarantine on any persons traveling from Sumrall on the Mississippi Central Railroad. The small nearby community of Silver Creek went further in its restrictions against Sumrall. Nothing was to offload from the trains, including passengers, baggage, or freight.[50] One careless newspaper crafted what initially appeared to be a news story, warning readers to regard the lessons of an earlier outbreak and to "Remember 1898" and acquire suitable cures. This appeal for caution was actually a thinly disguised advertisement for "Prickly Ash Bitters." Despite its claim that "half a wine glassful each morning after breakfast will keep your bowels open and healthy," there was no evidence to support the reckless claim that when used, "fewer cases of fever" were reported.[51]

More troops served on guard duty as the fever continued. In early August, Brookhaven's *The Leader,* called on Mississippians to "Meanwhile, clean up and make war on the mosquitos."[52] The first troops called out in late July, comprised about three hundred soldiers positioned

[46] "Encampment Postponed," *The Port Gibson Reveille* (Port Gibson, MS), August 3, 1905, p. 4. The encampment was to have taken place at Camp B. F. Ward in Gulfport.

[47] S. G. Thigpen, *Pearl River: Highway to Glory Land* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1965), 73.

[48] Ibid., 73; "Pearl River," *The Sea Coast Echo* (Bay St. Louis, MS), October 1, 1898, p. 4.

[49] Thigpen, *Pearl River: Highway to Glory Land*, 73.

[50] "Yellow Fever Situation," *The Leader* (Brookhaven, MS), August 5, 1905, p. 1. The mayor of Hattiesburg at this time was C. W. Rich, the same man involved in the September 1898 yellow fever outbreak.

[51] "Remember 1898," *The Columbus Weekly Dispatch* (Columbus, MS), August 24, 1905, p. 2.

[52] "Happenings in Mississippi," *The Leader* (Brookhaven, MS), August 2, 1905, p. 1.

A torn photo of Hattiesburg law enforcement and probable local posse, possibly a quarantine guard. Photo likely taken at the Palace Restaurant, Front Street in Hattiesburg by D. B. Henley, circa 1905. Photo courtesy of Andrew English and the late James McRaney of Hattiesburg.

around the southern reaches of the state, including Camp B. F. Ward in Gulfport and the home for Confederate veterans at Beauvoir on quarantine detail.[53] This blockade lasted until the first frost of autumn, when people ventured to return to their homes in the heavily infected areas. The soldiers fumigated each dwelling in Logtown, Napoleon, and Pearlington with burning sulfur prior to residents returning home.[54] After three weeks of the fumigation detail, the soldiers assembled to await the demobilization order. Yet, before they left "the beautiful and prosperous little city" of Pearlington, the company staged a special drill for the citizens, and one resident described the display as "a real celebration and everybody had a big time. We had gotten to know the soldiers well and we hated to see them go."[55]

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[53] "Soldiers Withdrawn," *The Sea Coast Echo* (Bay St. Louis, MS), October 21, 1905, p. 1. Details of specific units are scarce, but a report from the August 19, 1905, edition of *The Biloxi Herald* provides some details: "Sergeant Stokes and seven troops from Ellisville's Company B, Second Regiment of the Mississippi National Guard, established 'a line of Khaki and Blue' after they relieved a civilian guard detail at the western limits of Biloxi during the fever outbreak."

[54] Thigpen, *Pearl River: Highway to Glory Land*, 73, 76.

[55] Ibid., 73, 76; "Pearl River," *The Sea Coast Echo* (Bay St. Louis, MS), October 1, 1898, p. 4.

Urban Growth, Sanitation, and the Spread of Disease

During the 1905 yellow fever outbreak, one frustrated newspaper editor remarked that "the revelations of scientific researchers have conducted to disturb the peace of mind." The editor was both confounded and irritated by the advances of medical science and continued, "Water in our whisky and the devil in us all, what is the world coming to?" Longing for a simpler time, the editor wailed, "Oh! For an age of ignorance like our fore fathers lived in and only died of old age. It is so dangerous to think about living that we are nearly dead."[56]

By 1907, Hattiesburg had grown to a city of twenty-five thousand and boasted that it was "the Future Great City of Mississippi." The municipality had grown rapidly and was proud of its five miles of paved streets, seven miles of streetcar lines, three fire stations, "sewerage," and "[f]ine artesian water." The city also professed "[h]ealth conditions unexcelled." The appeal for more persons to move to the city may have brought more families and businesses to this railroad and timber center, but the latter two claims of the water and health conditions would soon be proved wrong.[57]

In late October 1907, C. F. Larson of the Hattiesburg Commercial Club appealed to new and prospective citizens by announcing "we have no epidemics of diphtheria, scarlet fever and membranous croup." His appeal was clever, if not disingenuous, as he also admitted to occurrences of typhoid "while not as prevalent, is not of as malignant type as encountered in the North, and we have less tuberculosis." He also sounded a note of pride by exclaiming the local incidents of "malaria is fast succumbing to the improved methods of treatment."[58] These claims were more a proclamation of aspirational civic hopes than reality based upon scientific facts.

By 1908, Hattiesburg continued to develop a semblance of a more modern urban area, and proclaimed itself "the Atlanta of Mississippi"

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[56] "The revelations of scientific researches," *Greene County Herald* (Leakesville, MS), September 29, 1905, p. 2. The Leakesville editor was quoting an undated opinion from an unknown writer of Indianola, Mississippi.

[57] "Hattiesburg Has," *Hattiesburg Daily News*, October 11, 1907, p. 4.

[58] "Secretary Larson Touches on Much-Mooted Question," *Hattiesburg Daily News*, October 20, 1907, p. 5.

when the first street cars began running in the city.[59] In a move to prevent the possible spread of disease through city schools, the school board ordered in early October 1908, that all children who had recovered from scarlet fever or other infectious diseases possess a health certificate from the county health officer, Dr. Robert Donald, prior to attending school. This precautionary measure was undertaken to "remove all danger from an epidemic resulting from the occasional cases of contagious diseases developing in the city."[60]

Fevers attacked with little warning and hospital care was no guarantee of recovery. In July 1909, Miss Pearl Mais (also identified as Mars) died at the Hattiesburg Hospital from typhoid. She had traveled to the city from Purvis to attend a training class but succumbed to the fever after an apparently brief bout of illness.[61] On August 8, Miss Viola Callahan, a trainee at the hospital school for nurses, died less than three weeks after Miss Mais, after also contracting typhoid, perhaps while on her rounds through the wards.[62]

Despite improvements in transportation and some efforts at health precautions, Hattiesburg did not retain its clean streets. In May 1913, chief sanitary inspector, Dr. W. H. Rowan, urged the citizens to "[c]lean up and keep healthy," as the conditions had deteriorated to a point where a disease outbreak was likely. In an open letter to Mayor T. E. Batson, Dr. Rowan cautioned in clear and direct language, "If Hattiesburg people are having typhoid fever, bowel troubles among children, or a prevalence of tuberculosis, or an infectious disease, the cause may safely be charged to deficient sanitation." Dr. Rowan ended his letter with a pointed warning: "if typhoid epidemic this summer, it is because the town is not clean."[63]

An effort to clean up the city would also reportedly have other cure-all benefits through the eradication of vermin, especially the vile cockroach. Some thought this bug carried typhoid fever, bubonic plague, and "possibly cancer," and as such, an appeal was made to "exterminate the cockroach."[64] Other lowly creatures received blame

[59] "Mississippi is going to have real street cars," *The Hattiesburg News*, October 3, 1908, p. 4.

[60] "Must Have Clean Bill of Health," *The Hattiesburg News*, October 2, 1908, p. 2.

[61] "Death of Miss Pearl Mars," *The Hattiesburg News*, July 19, 1909, p. 1.

[62] "Death of Miss Viola Callahan," *The Hattiesburg News*, August 9, 1909, p. 5.

[63] "Clean Up and Keep Healthy-Board of Health," *The Hattiesburg News*, May 22, 1913, p. 1.

[64] "Exterminate the Cockroach," *The Hattiesburg News*, July 30, 1914, p. 7.

for other mysterious maladies including parasitic worms as a possible cause of epilepsy in children. One south Mississippi newspaper had recklessly filled print space with what was presented as a testimonial by cautioning fearful parents: "Delays are dangerous. Don't wait for your child to have an epileptic fit. Kill at once the worms that are making her feel so poorly by giving Dr. Ball's Worm Destroyers."[65]

In July 1916, a young child in Hattiesburg was isolated from other children after a diagnosis of "infant paralysis." Health official, Dr. Robert Donald, pointed out that Hattiesburg enjoyed conditions "as not to foster the spread of such a disease." Quick to add his opinion to tamp down fears of further cases, local physician Dr. Leo H. Martin stated that "the disease is not new to the medical profession" and claimed the illness was unlikely to reoccur. Hattiesburg was fortunate, he said, as "with its fresh air, clean streets, and the character of living of the average resident of the city, there is absolutely no cause for alarm here."[66]

Hattiesburg did not keep clean streets as promoters claimed, in part due to inadequate sanitation and garbage removal. A June 1902 story in the Hattiesburg newspaper complained, "There are more brick bats and pieces of boxes and other pieces of rubbish lying in the streets of Hattiesburg than any other city of the size in the State. We have a garbage wagon but it seldom ever tackles a brick bat or a barrel."[67]

In 1909, the day sergeant at the police department was responsible for more than law enforcement duties as he was also in charge of sending the garbage wagons "to various and sundry parts of the city."[68] By the following year, the timber boom faded and revenues declined. The city sold off the trash wagons in a budget savings drive as local businesses would not fund their costs.[69] Although the city government retained a few separate garbage wagons the push for immediate economy put the city officials at cross purposes with the local business community.[70]

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[65] "Delays are dangerous," *The Alliance Eagle* (Ellisville, MS), October 16, 1890, p. 1.

[66] "No Cause Here for Alarm Over Infant Disease," *The Hattiesburg News*, July 15, 1916, p. 1. There was also an outbreak in New York City and New Jersey at that time. The two-year-old in Hattiesburg had been ill for three weeks but was recovering.

[67] "There are more brick bats and pieces of boxes," *Hattiesburg Daily Progress*, June 9, 1902, p. 4.

[68] "Hattiesburg's Efficient Police Department," *The Hattiesburg News*, September 9, 1909, p. 6.

[69] "Trash Wagons are Cut Out," *The Hattiesburg News*, February 4, 1910, p. 1.

[70] Ibid, 1; "City's Streets to be Kept Clean," *The Hattiesburg News*, February 16,

With the mule teams previously assigned to pull the trash wagons also sold off to eliminate the expense of their stabling and feed, the issue became headline news in the city.[71] Within a few weeks, the city streets commissioner proposed that the convicts in the city jail be utilized to pick up the refuse in the business district, but this was not fully workable as the businesses had to hire private wagons to haul away the rubbish.[72] In January 1911, a trash wagon was back in service and received a "warm welcome" from city businesses, as they were relieved from having to pay for private refuse carriers.[73]

Budget woes continued, and to do away with some salaries, stabling and feed charges, and maintenance costs for equipment, the city eliminated additional positions and services. By May 1911, the city fired two policemen, two firemen, and several street workers in a cost savings effort.[74] By late 1916, budget cuts and workforce limitations reduced the sanitation department to a barely functioning component of the city. Provided with one sanitation inspector, one horse-drawn wagon, and two laborers, this single wagon and work team could not keep up with the rubbish and refuse. No wagon to wash the streets was provided, indicating that the clean streets so touted in earlier local newspaper accounts, occurred only through intermittent downpours, not by design, nor through regular city maintenance.[75] The municipality had expanded from a rough railroad work camp and depot to a city of over twenty thousand in three decades. Hattiesburg had outgrown its small-town pace and needed large scale improvements to meet the needs of a growing urban center; yet, without an infusion of cash, the city could not afford the improvements.

1910, p. 1.

[71] "City's Streets to be Kept Clean," *The Hattiesburg News*, February 16, 1910, p. 1.

[72] Ibid, 1; "City's Trash Wagon Gets Warm Welcome," *The Hattiesburg News,* January 7, 1911, p. 1.

[73] "City's Trash Wagon Gets Warm Welcome," *The Hattiesburg News,* January 7, 1911, p. 1.

[74] "Commissioners continue to cut expenses," *The Hattiesburg Daily News*, May 30, 1911, p. 1. Charles Rich, the mayor who led the effort to cut the city budget in response to a fall in revenue, was back in office.

[75] J. A. Watkins, "Extra-Cantonment Zone Sanitation: Camp Shelby, Near Hattiesburg, Miss.," *Public Health Reports* (1896-1970), vol. 32, no. 5 (December 21, 1917), 2152-2153, 2162.

World War and the Pandemic

By 1916, the seemingly boundless timberlands of the Piney Woods nearer the rail lines had been clear cut with an industrial-scale, steam-driven relentlessness. Depressed local economic conditions resulting in part from the wastage of the now "disintegrated" once-virgin forests, pushed the timber workers to travel further afield for the now scarce jobs.[76] That same year, as the National Guard annual training events at Camp Swep Taylor in Jackson neared conclusion, an outbreak of diphtheria occurred in the bivouac. Some soldiers had received their pay and returned to their homes in Hattiesburg, where they reported the outbreak in the military camp. Soon, authorities quarantined Camp Taylor to control the spread of the disease.[77] Hattiesburg reported no cases of diphtheria after their soldiers returned, but outbreaks of disease would soon revisit the local area. These occurrences would again prove to a willfully disbelieving public that despite intermittent medical advances and preventative measures, they were not immune to ravages by both known and unfamiliar contagions.

When the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, the War Department faced the urgent task of raising a large army from America's small peacetime garrisons.[78] The American declaration of war turned out to be an economic godsend for the Hattiesburg area as construction jobs largely replaced sawmill work. On July 12, Secretary of War Newton Baker announced Hattiesburg as the location of a National Guard training cantonment for the mass production of a new American army. The military installation, erected on cutover timber land south of the city under the direction of chief engineer Alexander H. Twombly, was named Camp Shelby in honor of revolutionary war hero and first governor of Kentucky, Isaac Shelby.[79] Hattiesburg was not ready for the surge in manpower and animals needed to construct the new training center in the wasteland. The population doubled, but the infrastructure

[76] Ibid., 2155.

[77] "Five Diphtheria Case Reported at the Militia Camp," *The Hattiesburg News*, July 15, 1916, p. 1.

[78] "U.S. at War with Germany; President Signs Resolution," *The Evening Star* (Washington, DC), April 6, 1917, p. 1.

[79] *WPA History of Forrest County, Mississippi* (1938), 263; "Select Last Sites for Guard Camps," *The New York Times*, July 13, 1917, p. 4; "Alexander H. Twombly," *The New York Times*, June 28, 1929, p. 15; "Name Camps after Military Heroes," *The Evening Star* (Washington, DC), July 16, 1917, p. 8.

was quickly overwhelmed by the inrush.

An Army sanitary commission report from December 1917 revealed a Hattiesburg deficient in cleanliness and proper hygiene. Restaurants, barber shops, and railroad stations were not well kept. Fruit stands, sandwich shops, ice cream and soft drink vendors sold their food stuffs in an apparently unsanitary manner or as it was termed in an official report, "promiscuously."[80] The city also lacked conveniences for the newly arrived workers, as only a third of the inhabitants could access proper sewage facilities. The remainder made use of outside privies, many in "a grossly insanitary condition."[81]

Hattiesburg and Camp Shelby were situated in an area where health conditions were ripe for an outbreak of contagion. The three local meat packers slaughtered without regulation, the food service establishments were generally unclean, and the two soft drink bottling works in the city were termed in the official report "a sanitary menace." The conditions for malaria were prevalent in both Hattiesburg and Camp Shelby, and an Army report warned in language impossible to ignore: "The situation is serious." The report mentioned that the many gullies, ditches, and pools in the town and the miles of cut-over timber lands that surrounded the area between Hattiesburg and the Army encampment were natural breeding grounds for mosquitos. An expanded network of drainage ditches and oil spraying over these sites was instituted by the Army (for Camp Shelby) and by the U. S. Public Health Service for Hattiesburg and the nearby areas. On September 1, 1917, the city passed an ordinance prohibiting the retention of bottles, cans, cisterns, horse troughs, or any means to store "standing or flowing water" within the city limits unless these had wire mesh

Two bottles from the Hattiesburg Bottling Works. Unclean practices here put soldiers and civilians at risk for disease. Image courtesy of Andrew English.

[80] Watkins, "Extra-Cantonment Zone Sanitation: Camp Shelby, Near Hattiesburg, Miss.," *Public Health Reports* (1896-1970), vol. 32, no. 5, (December 21, 1917), 2156.

[81] Ibid., 2152.

to trap insects. These containers were covered or sprayed with kerosene, petroleum, or paraffin oil to kill mosquito larvae. The extensive efforts "proved satisfactory" for preventing reoccurrence of malaria and yellow fever.[82]

To improve its relationship with the Army, Hattiesburg funded another large-scale city improvement effort to expand and modernize its sanitation department. The city passed a bond to improve the sewer system and also acquired a street washer to keep the streets clean between rain showers.[83] These improvements came too late to prevent the outbreak of other diseases. Cases of meningitis, measles, and the dreaded influenza emerged in Camp Shelby and other military training cantonments across America, overwhelming the medical officers and staff members who struggled to deal with the mysterious plagues.[84]

Camp Shelby had the advantage of being built from scratch, complete with a hospital for about six hundred patients. Its capacity was about two percent of the expected training camp population, based on estimates for sick-listed soldiers provided by War Department calculations. The new hospital complex, complete with modern equipment, "miles of corridors," and initially home to "an efficient corps" of approximately fifty female Red Cross nurses, was considered state of the art. Efficiency of staff, up-to-date instruments, adequate supplies, and the physical scale of health care would nevertheless prove woefully insufficient for the outbreaks that engulfed the soldiers.[85]

In November 1917, Rose A. Young, a nurse from Winnsboro, South Carolina, died in the south Mississippi training camp, a victim of "disease."[86] By mid-January 1918, Camp Shelby had disease and non-effective rates higher than what the Army considered as "average." The encampment south of Hattiesburg reported new cases of sickness, including measles, diphtheria, and pneumonia. The rate of non-effective soldiers (those physically unfit for service from any cause) at Camp Shelby was 58.1 per 1,000 doughboys, while the national rate was 49.1.[87] The medical infrastructure at the training base was well stocked and

[82] Ibid., 2151, 2157-2159.

[83] Ibid., 2151, 2152, 2159, 2162.

[84] Lettie Gavin, *American Women in World War I* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1997), 252.

[85] "History of Conception and Building of Great Base Hospital at Camp Shelby," *The Hattiesburg News*, September 21, 1917, p. 17.

[86] Ibid., 256.

[87] "Deaths Among our Soldiers," *The New York Times*, January 27, 1918, 10.

boasted of a "perfection in operating rooms." Yet, despite other features including the "special care" given to build new sewer and water systems, the new hospital was quickly overwhelmed.[88] From September 1917 to March 1918, the recruits at Camp Shelby suffered from measles, with 46.5 percent of all deaths on the post during that period a result of measles-related pneumonia.[89] As the measles epidemic subsided and the business of training soldiers regained momentum, a far deadlier pestilence descended on this training cantonment.

In April 1918, of the twenty-six thousand troops stationed at Camp Shelby, two thousand fell ill with influenza. The female nurses, whose training had gone "far in the treatment of disease," were ill-prepared for the onslaught of contagions swirling through the recruit depots, barracks, and troop trains serving America's new army. In August 1918, another nurse, Alma M. Furr (a native of Austin, Texas), became an additional casualty of the invisible killer at Camp Shelby.[90] That summer, troop trains brought 11,645 new recruits to the camp, and the slow but inexorable march of death's unseen facilitator began. By October, influenza had "scarcely touched" the more seasoned recruits, but the summer arrivals were "decimated."[91] Although the mission to train America's drafted soldiers continued with increased realism, this cantonment, like other such sites dotted around the nation, was unable to cope with the mysterious speed and virility of the diseases descending upon them. Camp Shelby, the training facility "standing in the midst of a health giving pine forest" in the Mississippi interior, was not immune to the diseases and sicknesses associated with larger, much more densely settled cities.

The Great War ended the following month, but November 1918 would prove the end of only one round of death. By late November, the workers at a pickle canning factory in Wiggins, south of Camp Shelby, donned masks in an effort to prevent the spread of influenza at the plant. One local newspaper optimistically proclaimed, "Every member of the entire workforce were (sic) well protected from the disease."[92] In

[88] "History of Conception and Building of Great Base Hospital at Camp Shelby," *The Hattiesburg News*, September 21, 1917, p. 17.

[89] Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 149.

[90] Gavin, *American Women in World War I*, 253.

[91] Barry, *The Great Influenza*, 408.

[92] "Wearing Masks at Canning Factory," *Stone County Enterprise* (Wiggins, MS), November 23, 1918, p. 3.

December, the flu returned to Hattiesburg after a mysterious absence of several months, and the city went into lockdown to prevent its spread. The outbreak was severe enough to have "necessitated a general closing order for places of public assembly."[93] The county health board ordered "moving picture theaters," schools, and other places for public gatherings "closed on account of the prevalence of influenza."[94] One Pascagoula newspaper reissued a U. S. Public Health notice from October to remind readers of prescribed precautions to take in response to the influenza outbreaks:

> Keep your feet warm and dry.
> Do not go visiting oftener than is absolutely necessary.
> Keep out of crowds.
> Keep your sleeping room windows open at night.
> If you contact the disease, go to bed and stay there until you are well.
> Cover up each cough and sneeze. If you don't, you'll spread the disease.[95]

The rules of quarantine altered patterns of life for many, including one high school teacher living in Hattiesburg who endured a "vacation enforced by the influenza epidemic." In her case, the efforts proved successful, and she recovered from the sickness.[96]

The outbreaks of diseases, primarily during the years 1888 to 1918, descended on the inhabitants of this region with both bewildering mildness and deadly ferocity. The responses by these people living under the shadows of sudden mortality serve as harbingers for the modern day. Despite enthusiastic proclamations from a 1907 Hattiesburg newspaper of "[h]ealth conditions unexcelled," this claim disintegrated when reality provided a starkly different truth.[97] Wonder cures with no legitimate medical veracity, defiance of health orders, and demands to return to normal commercial activities were completely human reactions for those in both that time and this. Nevertheless, the diseases could not be wished away. If only it had been true.

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[93] "Watch Out for Influenza," *The Pascagoula Chronicle* (Pascagoula, MS), December 14, 1918, p. 1.

[94] "Hattiesburg.—Public schools, moving picture theaters and other places for public gatherings were ordered," *Jones County News* (*Ellisville, MS),* December 19, 1918, p. 2.

[95] "Influenza Notice," *The Pascagoula Chronicle*, October 5, 1918, 5; "Watch Out for Influenza," *The Pascagoula Chronicle*, December 14, 1918, p. 1.

[96] "Miss Lorena Arledge, the accomplished music teacher at A.H.S. and the Grammar School," *The Free Press* (Poplarville, MS), February 6, 1919, p. 3.

[97] "Hattiesburg Has," *Hattiesburg Daily News*, October 11, 1907, p. 4.

The Voice of Old Saratoga: A Revolutionary War Cannon in Natchez, Mississippi

by Jeff T. Giambrone

In the winter of 1833, the mayor and selectmen of the city of Natchez received the following request:

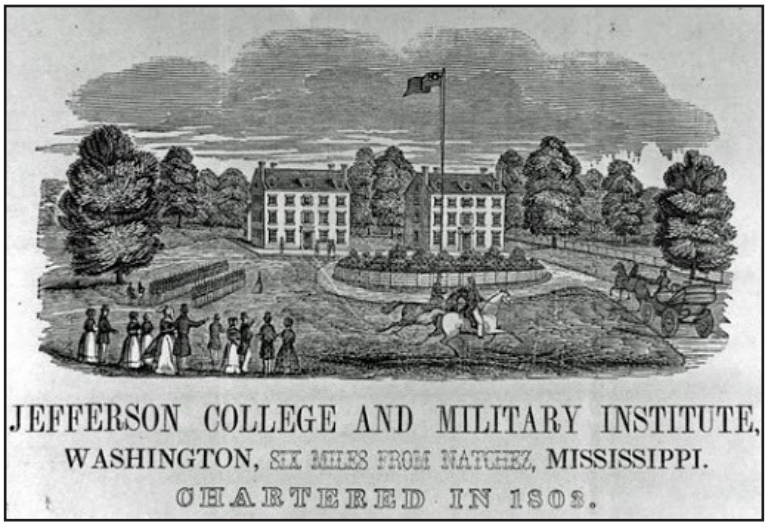
> Jefferson College, Feby. 6, 1833
> To the Prest. And Selectmen of the City of Natchez
> Gentlemen:
> Having been disappointed in receiving two pieces of artillery—I am induced to apply to your honourable body for the loan of Old Saratoga for a few days.
> Yours Very Respectfully,
> Partridge [1]

The message was written by Captain Alden Partridge, a former superintendent of the United States Military Academy at West Point, and at the time the letter was written, president of Jefferson College at Washington, Mississippi. The cannon that he asked to borrow, "Old Saratoga," was a relic of the Revolutionary War, having been captured from the British in October 1777 at the Battle of Saratoga, New York. Requesting this particular cannon probably had special meaning for Alden, as his father Samuel Partridge had fought against the British in that historic battle.[2]

[1] *Natchez Petitions*, 1824-1833, February 6, 1833. Microfilm Roll 36713, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

[2] W. A. Ellis & G. M. Dodge, *Norwich University, 1819-1911: Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor* (Montpelier, VT: The Capital City Press, 1911), vol. 2, 21. For a history of "Old Saratoga," see "That Cannon," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, August 30, 1839, 3.

JEFF T. GIAMBRONE earned a bachelor's degree in history from Mississippi State University and a master's from Mississippi College. He works as a reference librarian in the state archives. He is the author of four books, including An Illustrated Guide to the Vicksburg Campaign and National Military Park *and many articles.*



19th Century Illustration of Jefferson Military College. Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

The connection between Natchez and "Old Saratoga" dated back to 1815 with the victory of General Andrew Jackson over the British at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8 of that year. On hearing of the American triumph, the president and board of selectmen of Natchez published the following resolution:

> That the news of this morning of the defeat of the British troops, and their evacuation of their works, and precipitate retreat from the shores of the Mississippi, in the state of Louisiana, is highly important to the best interests, not only of this part of the United States, but to theAmerican family in general. Therefore thePresident and Selectmen of this city, recommend to the citizens, as a demonstration of their feelings on this occasion, the illumination of their houses, this evening at seven o'clock, by exhibiting candles in their windows, in such numbers (always odd) as to them may seem proper.[3]

In April 1815, the city of Natchez received the exciting news that "Old Hickory" himself was going to stop at Natchez on his return to his home in Tennessee. The town planned a big celebration for Andrew Jackson's arrival, and notified local resident James Foster that he was requested "on behalf of the citizens to manage and direct the firing of a federal salute in honor of the general on his arrival in town, and endeavor to

[3] *Minutes of the President & Selectmen of Natchez*, 1811-1816, January 24, 1815. Microfilm roll 36667, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

obtain a piece of ordnance and ammunition sufficient at the expense of the city for the occasion."[4]

Andrew Jackson and his family arrived in Natchez on April 22, 1815, and the *Natchez Gazette* wrote that the general "received the expressions of public veneration for his character and services by an entertainment from about 200 of the citizens of this town and vicinity."[5] There was only one minor flaw in an otherwise perfect celebration—the city of Natchez was unable to acquire a cannon to give a salute for General Jackson. *The Natchez Weekly Courier* wrote about this slight and Jackson's reaction to it.

> On his reception some of the citizens apologized to him for his not being honored with a salute as they did not possess any artillery. Gen. Jackson replied that he would obviate any difficulty of that kind here-after and immediately wrote an order for two field pieces for the city of Natchez to the officers in New Orleans who had the U.S. Artillery in charge. This order he delivered to Col. James C. Wilkins who on presenting it, obtained the cannons and brought them to Natchez.[6]

In addition to "Old Saratoga," the citizens of Natchez were gifted with a French cannon that had been cast in 1810 and captured by the English in Spain. The Americans in turn took possession of it after the Battle of New Orleans in 1815.[7] The two cannons arrived in Natchez by July 1815, as a local newspaper noted that on the Fourth of July "the dawn of day was ushered in by the discharge of cannon from the public square."[8]

On the first anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans in 1816, the city of Natchez planned a grand commemoration of the event. The president and selectmen of the city appropriated fifty dollars "for the purpose of procuring powder and defraying other incidental[s] attending the firing of a federal salute or salutes on the 8th instant in honor of the glorious victory obtained on the 8th January 1815 by the American army commanded by Major General Jackson over the British army."[9] Just a few days after the celebration, a Natchez newspaper writing

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[4] Ibid., April 19, 1815.

[5] *Natchez Gazette*, April 26, 1815, p. 2.

[6] "That Cannon," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, August 30, 1839, p. 3.

[7] "That Cannon Again," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, September 4, 1839, p. 2.

[8] "At Natchez," *Natchez Gazette*, July 13, 1815, p. 1.

[9] *Board of Selectmen Record of Accounts, 1815-1826*, January 1, 1816. Microfilm roll 36667, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

about the commemoration documented "Old Saratoga's" link to her namesake battle.

> The anniversary of the victory of the 8th January 1815, was celebrated by the "Natchez Volunteer Rifle Corps," and numerous other citizens of Natchez in a style and spirit becoming so glorious an event. "The sweet morn divine," was hailed by a federal salute from two brass pieces of artillery, accompanied with martial music. It was no diminution of the pleasure enjoyed on the occasion that the cannon employed had been captured from the enemy at Saratoga.[10]

In addition to documenting its capture at Saratoga, an 1839 article about the cannon noted the following:

> It has seen hard service, as may be inferred from the inscriptions on it, by which we are informed that it was cast by the British in 1756; as part of the spoils in Burgoyne's capture at Saratoga it fell into the hands of the Americans, and remained in active service in different parts of the United States until, with its fellow, (whose history is the same,) it was donated to the city of Natchez by Gen. Jackson.[11]

The Saratoga Campaign in September and October 1777 ended in a sweeping American victory that netted a large haul of captured British ordnance. Realizing the symbolic importance of these guns, a plan was formulated to mark them using relief carving to put the place and date of capture on the barrels. This work was done by Andrew Billings of Poughkeepsie, New York, who was contracted to mark the cannons surrendered at Saratoga. He carried out the relief work at West Point, New York, in 1783–1784. "Old Saratoga" was one of eighteen 6-pounder cannons surrendered by the British. Very few of the guns are still in existence, as their usefulness meant that they served their new American owners for many years until they were worn out and scrapped. Only three of the Saratoga 6-pounders are known to have survived.[12] "Old Saratoga" was known as a "6-pounder" because in the nomenclature of the time, cannons were classified according to the weight of the projectile they used. As a 6-pounder, the gun was designed to fire a round weighing just that amount.[13]

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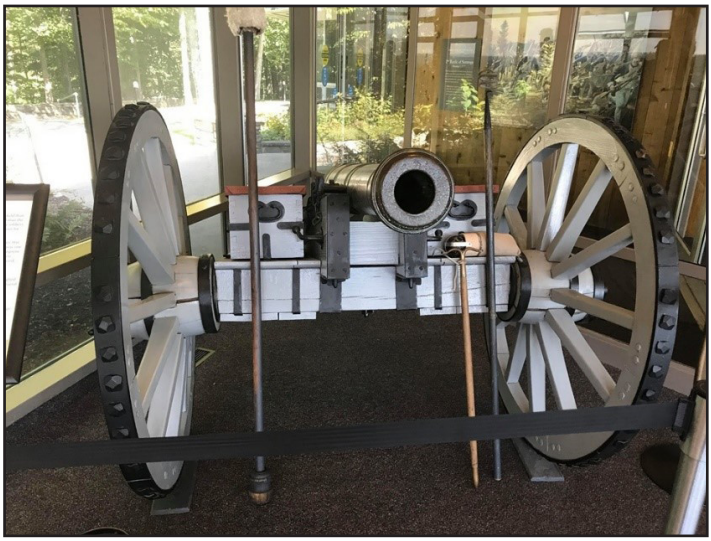
[10] "Celebration of the 8th Jan.," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), January 10, 1816, p. 2.

[11] "That Cannon," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, August 30, 1839, p. 3.

[12] Douglas R. Cubbison, *The Artillery never gained more Honour*, (Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain Press, 2007), 143-153.

[13] Ibid., 23.



Original British 6-Pounder Cannon on display at Saratoga National Historical Park—"Old Saratoga" would have looked very similar to this gun. Photo courtesy of Tommy Lofton, Mississippi Armed Forces Museum, Camp Shelby.

Although her history before arriving in Natchez is unclear at best, "Old Saratoga" is well documented after 1815. The surviving records clearly illustrate the prominent part that cannons played in the civic functions of the city for nearly half a century. While she was mostly used in a ceremonial role, on a few occasions "Old Saratoga" was called upon to defend her new home. In the early nineteenth century, Natchez had a well-deserved reputation for violence and mayhem. The city was visited by a wide variety of river traffic, and historian D. Clayton James noted that "ranking with gambling, prostitution, and drinking as the most popular vices of the town was street fighting, at which boatmen Mike Fink and James Girty became renowned."[14] In May 1817, some of the rowdies at the landing became a little too high-spirited, and stern measures had to be taken to restore order. The *Mississippi Free Trader* wrote that

> this city, or that part of it denominated Under the Hill, has, of late, been the theatre of much riot and disorder, produced by the crews of some of the boats and barges lying at the landing. The lives of two or three have been lost, and others dangerously wounded in these frays.

[14] D. Clayton James, *Antebellum Natchez* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 262.

> Not satisfied with trampling under foot the laws, these rioters have, in the most insulting manner, set at defiance all those whose duty it is to maintain order and execute the laws. On Thursday last, a barge arrived from New Orleans, with a crew of twenty stout, hale young men: on Friday night they undertook to "regulate" the Under the Hill part of the town, in doing which they wounded several men, of whom one has since died. Every attempt of the officers to arrest them on Saturday proved fruitless—they were prepared for resistance, being well furnished with arms and ammunition—They declared their ability to chastise the whole city, and their determination to do so if they should be molested. It was not until Sunday, in the afternoon, that this hopeless band was finally brought to submission. One of the brass pieces of artillery was taken off and planted on the bluff in an eligible position to bear on the barge; many of the citizens volunteered their services; a detachment of the military from the barracks in aid of the civil authorities was marched down; and finding resistance vain, they surrendered, and were conducted under a strong guard to the City Hall, where they underwent an examination.[15]

Having two field pieces at their disposal in case of trouble certainly gave some piece of mind to the citizens of Natchez. One resident wrote to the editor of *The Mississippi Free Trader* and lauded the town for its efforts to protect its citizens. In his missive, he specifically mentioned when the cannons were used to defend Natchez.

> Do you not recollect with what promptitude our two field pieces, presented to the city by the hero of New Orleans, have been drawn out on the least alarm of danger? More than a year ago, when in all probability the enemy intended to deluge us by turning the Mississippi through our streets, one of them was heroically planted upon the bluff, where it remained firmly and undeviatingly at its post for nearly six months.[16]

By 1819, a unit had been organized at Natchez to staff and fire the city's cannons—the Natchez Volunteer Artillery Company, led by Captain James K. Cook, a local newspaper editor. The new unit played a prominent role in the Fourth of July festivities in 1819. An account of the celebration recorded:

> the Natchez Volunteer corps of Artillery, commanded by Capt. James K. Cook, paraded and joined the citizens; their martial appearance, the enlivening sound of the music, and the thunder of their guns, gave an additional impulse to the proud feelings of the day.[17]

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[15] *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), May 28, 1817, p. 3.

[16] Ibid., December 20, 1817, p. 2.

[17] Ibid., July 6, 1819, p. 2.

These volunteer cannoneers wanted to look the part, so at a meeting on August 11, 1819, a resolution was adopted by the company that a uniform would be adopted. All the members were given until the first Saturday in September to obtain their uniform, and any members that did not comply and could not show good cause would "be considered as dismissed from the company."[18] To show off their new look, Captain Cook ordered all the men to assemble for a parade at city hall on the first Saturday in September wearing their uniforms and carrying their equipment.[19]

As part of the Fourth of July celebration in 1820, the citizens of Natchez honored their artillery company with a flag presentation. On accepting the banner for the battery, Captain Cook made the following address to his men:

> Soldiers—Remember this day—Look to that piece of artillery*—Reflect on the incidents connected with it. In the Revolutionary War it was captured from the enemy in one of the northern sections of our country. Upwards of forty years after, in the most southern sections of it, and by the same enemy, it was re-taken; and in a few hours again recaptured by our gallant countrymen. The capitulation of Saratoga—the Battle of New Orleans—the name of Jackson, who presented this piece to the city of Natchez, and by its common council intrusted [sic] to our care, that banner of the symbol of Republic America, and the relic of conjugal affections, are these not a more grateful combination of circumstances, presented to us than usually falls to the lot of citizen-soldiers? Do they not excite your pride in the time of profound peace? And if it be our fate to carry them with us in a time of war, you could not be cowards in the battle. *Surrendered by the Convention of Saratoga, October 17, 1777.[20]

If Captain Cook is to be believed, "Old Saratoga" was directly involved in the Battle of New Orleans, being captured by the British, and then recaptured by the Americans. This story may be true, but thus far no documentation of the cannon's use in the fight has come to light.

In 1825, "Old Saratoga" was called on to take part in a welcome celebration for a hero of the Revolutionary War. The Marquis de Lafayette was on a tour of the United States, and on April 18, he made a brief stop in Natchez as he traveled up the Mississippi River. Lafayette reviewed the Natchez militia on Tichenor's Field, but apparently by this time the Natchez Volunteer Artillery Company had disbanded, as the city's cannons were operated and fired by riflemen

[18] Ibid., August 24, 1819, p. 4.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., July 25, 1820, p. 3.

Relief carving on one of the surviving British 6-Pounder cannon marking it as being captured at the Battle of Saratoga. Photo courtesy of Saratoga National Historical Park.

under the command of Captain John Bobb. At a "beautiful promenade" overlooking the Mississippi River, Robert H. Adams delivered the main address to a joyful crowd. He praised Lafayette saying that

> while fighting the battles of our Revolution by the side of Washington, the soil on which we stand was comparatively a desert—seldom traversed except by the untutored Indian—or the roaming beasts of the forest.Since then how great the change! The Liberty for which you fought, the Independence which you helped to achieve, have caused an expansion of spirit, a march of industry, and enterprise by which the obstacles of nature have been surmounted—and the boundless forests of the west converted into a fruitful garden.[21]

General Lafayette responded by thanking the people of Mississippi for their kindness to him, and said that he was "enabled to enjoy a sight, in which none of us old American patriots, can more fully delight than I do; the sight of those wonders produced among you by the blessings of self-government."[22] After making his comments, Lafayette retired to the Steamboat Hotel, where a ball was held that night in his honor, and many toasts were made to the man hailed as "The Nation's Guest."[23]

Although "Old Saratoga" was regularly brought out for holidays and special occasions, the city did not have another dedicated artillery unit to operate her until 1839, when the Natchez Light Artillery was formed. In announcing the new unit, an advertisement noted, "This is a company we will be proud to see and which we anticipate soon to hear speak for themselves on the smoke-capped summit of the bluff. This company when organized, equipped and armed, will complete the Natchez arm of defense."[24]

A few days later, the members of the Natchez Light Artillery elected

[21] *Natchez Gazette*, April 23, 1825, p. 2.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), June 12, 1839, p. 2.

William M. Gwin captain, I.W. Satterlee 1st lieutenant, and Charles A. Lacoste 2nd lieutenant.[25]

The new artillery company quickly made a name for themselves as they managed to instigate a war of words between Natchez and their neighboring town to the south, Woodville, in Wilkinson County. The affair started with an innocuous resolution made by the Natchez Light Artillery to the president and board of selectmen of the city.

> I take the liberty of submitting to your consideration the subjoined resolution adopted at a meeting of the Natchez Light Artillery on the 6th inst., the object of which, you may peruse, is to bring about a concerted plan by which the valuable brass field piece, the fellow of our own famed "Saratoga," once loaned by this city to the authorities of Woodville, and now in the possession of the latter, can be assured. It would be of vast advantage to our corps in drilling until our battery is received from the General Government, and if there is no good reason why this trophy of by-gone days should not be reclaimed. It now affords me much pleasure to join with a committee of the city in making application for it and in taking prompt and decisive steps to insure its restoration to the city.[26]

The problem with the missing cannon had started back in July 1817, when the town of Woodville asked the city of Natchez to borrow one of their cannons for a Fourth of July celebration. The Natchez president and board of selectmen agreed to the loan of the unnamed cannon that had been gifted by Andrew Jackson along with "Old Saratoga." The celebration in Woodville was accomplished, but the town never returned the cannon, and Natchez never went to any trouble to reclaim it, at least until the Natchez Light Artillery asked for it in 1839.[27]

The Natchez city leaders duly sent their request for the cannon to Woodville, but after so many years, the people there considered the gun theirs, and they were not about to let go of it. The editor of the *Woodville Republican* published a very sarcastic reply to the Natchez demand for the cannon.

> We are sorry that our Natchez friends put themselves to the trouble of sending for our old field piece, "by the authority of the corporation of Natchez." The authority of this corporation may be very potent, but we had scarcely thought an attempt would be made to stretch it over Wilkinson County. A word of advice to the citizens of Natchez: do not cheat yourselves into the belief that your 'authority' will be considered

[25] Ibid., June 15, 1839, p. 2.

[26] *Communications to the President & Selectmen of Natchez*, July 10, 1839. Microfilm roll 36703, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

[27] "That Cannon." *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, August 30, 1839, p. 3.

> as law. Kiss and hug your Vicksburg friends as much as you please, but have delicacy enough not to proclaim it abroad, as did the two lovers in Dryden, who prayed the Deity to annihilate both time and space, but make two lovers happy; or, if you are determined to make your amour public, we tell you—you may depend on your own means for effecting it, for you shall not have our cannon to do it.[28]

Although there was much bluster between the two cities, Natchez never pressed its claim to the cannon, and so it remained in Woodville.[29] The Natchez Light Artillery very much wanted another cannon, however, and they did manage to find one, although the circumstances of its acquisition remain somewhat murky. They had this second piece by 1839, as documented in a letter written by a local resident to his niece. He described a celebration held in honor of the militia of the city of Vicksburg, which had traveled to Natchez for a grand celebration. This person noted that among the Natchez militia units in attendance at the event were "the Natchez Legion, consisting of five volunteer companies, to wit—the Old Fencibles, the Natchez Guards, the Light Guards, the Hussars, and the Artillery, with two field pieces mounted and drawn by horses, well caparisoned in military trappings."[30]

In time this new cannon was given a name as well; a local newspaper noted that "The 'Old Saratoga' and the 'Mississippi' in fine order are mounted on the Bluff and seem to look up the river in stern expectancy."[31]

In 1840, "Old Saratoga" was brought out for a truly special occasion—the return of General Andrew Jackson to Natchez. The old soldier and statesman arrived in the city on January 15 to be greeted by an excited throng of citizens who "crowded the streets, and filled the roofs and windows of every edifice in the line of procession."[32] The Natchez Light

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[28] *The Woodville Republican*, August 17, 1839.

[29] The French cannon at Woodville stayed in the town until July 1863, when it was captured during a Federal expedition led by Major Asa Worden of the 14th Wisconsin Infantry. Worden's superior, Brigadier General Thomas E. G. Ransom, wrote in his official report that the major had "captured and brought with him a beautiful 6-pounder gun, French manufacture, and said to have been used by General Jackson at New Orleans." Robert N. Scott, editor, (1889) *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), series 1, vol. XXIV, part II, 685.

[30] "Letter to a Niece," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), August 28, 1839, p. 2.

[31] "The Matches Lighted," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), July 31, 1839, p. 2.

[32] "General Jackson's Reception," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), January 16, 1840, p. 2.

Artillery and "Old Saratoga" played an important role in the welcoming ceremony for the former president, the cannoneers holding a vigil at their post overlooking the Mississippi River until:

> about nine o'clock of the morning of the 15th, they fired a gun—it was the signal for the military to assemble on the commons, for the committee of arrangements, the orator and other officers of the day, to prepare for the reception of the General. A national salute announced his arrival at the landing. During the greater part of the day, the artillery were on duty. At the close of Col. Bingaman's address, they fired another salute. While the company were enjoying themselves at the festive board, they fired round after round to the toasts given in honor of the festival. At midnight, while the youth and beauty of Adams County were enjoying the music and the dance, they were again on the heights, and gave the parting salute to the veteran soldier and patriot, as he bid farewell—a last farewell—to the city of the bluffs.[33]

Andrew Jackson's visit to Natchez had been a rousing success, and "Old Saratoga's" part in the grand celebration further ingratiated the gun in the hearts and minds of the people of Natchez. In 1841, one admirer of the cannon penned a lengthy ode entitled "*OLD SARATOGA!*" The entire work is too long to quote, but a brief mention of the dialogue is in order. The author stated that his fellow citizens should:

> tell her story to the youth around us, that the old affection which we of Natchez have cherished for the "old piece," was not without cause, and that it may live in their breasts, when they too, like us, have dwelt with fondness upon her loud roar for long years, and looked upon her as an enduring memento of the gallantry of that handful, the little band of "Rifles" which on the plains of "Orleans," stood the representatives of Natchez.[34]

Not to be outdone, two years later another anonymous writer penned a poem entitled "Old Saratoga," that started with the rousing lines, "Thou hast a voice thou brave old gun, I've heard it cleave the air. Resound along the horizon, proclaim the nation's birth day come, rejoicing with the rising sun."[35]

When parading through the city, the Natchez Light Artillery always made sure that both cannons looked their best. In such a procession in

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[33] "Gen. Jackson's Visit," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), January 21, 1840, p. 2.

[34] "OLD SARATOGA!" *Liberty Advocate* (Liberty, MS), November 18, 1841, p. 2.

[35] "Old Saratoga," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), February 2, 1843, p. 2.

1844, they were described as being "in gorgeous style, drawn by four beautiful horses, (Gen. Quitman's turn out,) ornamented with streamers, and all surmounted with a flag staff, having the banner of the United States, streaming 'like a thunder cloud against the wind.'"[36]

"Old Saratoga" stood guard over her adopted city in both good times and bad. For the good, she had seen the population of Natchez grow steadily since her arrival. In 1820, the city only had 2,184 residents; by 1850, it more than doubled that number to 4,434 inhabitants. At the start of a new decade in 1860, Natchez had 6,612 citizens, making it the largest city in the state by a wide margin, beating out the second largest city Vicksburg, which only had a population of 4,591.[37]

The gun also witnessed her fair share of hardship; historian John Hebron Moore wrote of the troubles that befell Natchez.

> The depression that plagued the entire Cotton Kingdom from 1837 to the late 1840s was a time of particular misfortune for Natchez. Disaster after disaster befell the residents of the town during these years. In 1839, abruptly falling cotton prices coupled with the aftereffects of the panic of 1837 bankrupted the Mississippi Railroad Company and the Mississippi Shipping Company. Collapse of the projected railroad between Natchez and Jackson wrote finis to the efforts of the mercantile community to tap the trade of central Mississippi.[38]

In addition to financial problems, the city of Natchez was also hit by natural disasters. In 1838 and 1839, terrible fires struck the business district, causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses.[39] To help combat future conflagrations, the city's cannons were put to use as an early warning system. In October 1839, an article about the Natchez Fire Department noted that "in case of fire hereafter there will be THREE DISCHARGES OF CANNON, in quick succession, fired by the light artillery, to notify those of our citizens who may be in the environs that their aid is needed in Natchez."[40]

The citizens of Natchez seemingly put these disasters behind them,

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[36] "The Cannon Procession," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), August 17, 1844, p. 2.

[37] Economic Research Department, Mississippi Power & Light Company. *Mississippi Statistical Summary of Population, 1800-1980*, 1983.

[38] John Hebron Moore, *The Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom in the Old Southwest* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 192.

[39] Ibid.

[40] "Natchez Fire Department," *Mississippi Free Trader and Natchez Gazette* (Natchez, MS), October 7, 1839, p. 2.

and in April 1840, the Natchez Light Artillery was called out to help celebrate the anniversary of the Adams Light Guards, one of the city's militia companies. As the event was ending, bad weather rolled in, rain came down in sheets, and "every soldier of course was as wet as a drowned rat."[41] No one was hurt in the deluge, but it was a reminder that the weather could be quite mercurial. On May 7, 1840, Natchez found out just how deadly unexpected storms could be when a tornado ripped through the city with devastating results, killing more than 300 people.[42] One witness described the storm as a "dreadful visitation of Providence," and that the survivors were "all in confusion, and surrounded by the destitute, the houseless, the wounded, and the dying. Our beautiful city is shattered as if it had been stormed by all the cannon of Austerlitz."[43]

Just six years later, Natchez faced the whirlwind again, only this time it was caused by the winds of war. A longstanding dispute over the border between Mexico and Texas boiled over into conflict, and fighting broke out in the region in April 1846. Tensions were running high, and war was expected at any moment. On May 7, 1846, Company A of the 4th Mississippi Militia Regiment posted the following advertisement in a Natchez newspaper:

> Every member of the Company is requested to hold himself in readiness a moments warning to march to the frontiers of Mexico, and should it be necessary, even to the halls of Montezuma. Mississippi to the rescue, the militia, our country's bulwark of defense and strong arm of protection, cannot be surrounded. Company A will meet at the court house when the signal of three rounds is given from old Saratoga.[44]

President James K. Polk asked for a declaration of war with Mexico, and the United States Congress did so on May 13, 1846. Polk called on the states to supplement the tiny regular army by providing 20,000 volunteers to fight in Mexico. Congress also granted the president authority to commission colonels and six brigadier generals from civilian life to lead these volunteer soldiers into battle.[45]

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[41] "The Adams Light Guards," *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), April 23, 1840, p. 1.

[42] K. Sherman-Morris, C. Wax, & M. Brown, *Mississippi Weather and Climate* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 89.

[43] "Dreadful Visitation of Providence," *The Weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, MS), May 15, 1840, p. 2.

[44] "Attention Company A," *The Mississippi Free Trader* (Jackson, MS), May 7, 1846, p. 2.

[45] Sam Olden, "Mississippi and the U.S.-Mexican War, 1846-1848," *Mississippi*

Mississippians were excited by the chance to fight for their country, but the state was only asked to furnish a single thousand man regiment for the war. Soon militia companies from all over the state were flocking to the rendezvous point at Vicksburg hoping to be picked for the regiment.[46] Among them was the Natchez Fencibles, commanded by Captain Thomas W. Clay. In an effort to recruit new soldiers to the company, an advertisement was placed in the newspaper asking that "all who are desirous of responding to the call made upon the valor and patriotism of our citizens, are earnestly desired to enroll their names at once."[47] When the Fencibles left for Vicksburg, they had a good luck charm along for the trip.

> As the *Paul Jones* ploughed her way up the Father of waters, shots were exchanged between "Old Saratoga," which favorite old gun the Fencibles took with them, and the gun of the Natchez Guards. For be it understood the Fencibles took along "Old Sal," as she is familiarly called, to stir up the citizens in, and on the way to, Vicksburg.[48]

Much to the chagrin of the eager volunteers in the Natchez Fencibles, their company was not chosen as one of the ten that would make up the 1st Mississippi Regiment. The citizens of Natchez were outraged that their local sons had been passed over, so they did what any angry people would do—they held a public meeting and passed a resolution, a part of which stated:

> resolved, that this meeting has received with deep mortification and indignation the report made to it by the officers and members of the Natchez Fencibles, and by disinterested parties, of the treatment which that gallant corps has met with at the hands of the Governor of this State and of his Receiving Officers at Vicksburg.[49]

To assuage their hurt pride, a new infantry company was formed named the "Sparrow Volunteers," commanded by Captain James D. Galbraith. This unit promptly crossed the Mississippi River and joined the 4th Louisiana Infantry regiment as Company E. It took some effort,

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History Now website, accessed August 26, 2020: https://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/mississippi-and-the-us-mexican-war-1846-1848.

[46] Ibid.

[47] "Notice to Volunteers," *Mississippi Free Trader and Natchez Gazette* (Natchez, MS), May 9, 1846, p. 2.

[48] "The Natchez Fencibles," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, June 10, 1846, p. 3.

[49] "Public Meeting," *The Natchez Weekly Courier*, June 24, 1846, p. 1.

but Natchez was going to war.[50]

As the conflict went on, the citizens of Natchez followed the news of the fighting closely, and "Old Saratoga" was used on numerous occasions to announce the glad tidings of victory. The city's cannons were used in March 1847 to mark General Zachary Taylor's victory at the Battle of Buena Vista, and the next month they fired 100 rounds to celebrate the "glorious news of the taking of Vera Cruz and castle of San Juan De Ulloa."[51]

The fighting ended in September 1847 with the capture of Mexico City by United States forces. Leading the march into the capital was the favorite son of Natchez, General John A. Quitman.[52] His fellow citizens gathered and decided to reward the general with a presentation sword, and while they were meeting, "fifty guns were fired from old Saratoga on the bluff and a splendid bonfire illuminated the scene."[53]

With the war over, the citizen-soldiers began to make their way home, and "Old Saratoga" was waiting to give them a loud and hearty welcome. No soldier got a grander reception than "Old Rough and Ready" himself, Zachary Taylor. The general arrived at Natchez by steamboat on December 22, and was greeted by "the boom of old Saratoga."[54] He was met at the landing by a reception committee, who hustled Taylor into a carriage for the trip to Institute Hall, "where the ceremony of crowning the hero by the young lady pupils of the institution took place.[55] Afterwards he was escorted to the City Hotel where a throng "of several thousands, pressed upon him eager to take by the hand the gallant man who had performed such prodigies in valor and led our arms to victory and renown against such fearful odds.[56]

The victory in the war with Mexico brought with it a host of troubles as a new decade dawned. During the 1850s the split between North

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[50] "The Sparrow Guards," *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), May 27, 1846, 2; H. G. Howell, *Mississippi rifles: A muster listing of all known Mississippi soldiers, sailors, and marines who served in the Mexican War, 1846-1848*, (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 2005), 10.

[51] *The Mississippi Free Trader (Natchez*, MS), March 25, 1847, 2; April 7, 1847, p. 2.

[52] Thomas W Cutrer, "Quitman, John Anthony." *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 3, 2020: http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fqu07.

[53] *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), September 20, 1847, p. 6.

[54] "Gen. Taylor in Natchez," *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), December 29, 1847, p. 1.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

and South over the issue of slavery grew deeper as crisis after crisis threatened to tear the country apart. The debate over slavery in the territory gained in the war with Mexico, the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, fighting in "Bloody Kansas," and John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry were just a few of the problems pushing the nation to the brink of civil war.[57]

As mentioned above, one of the stepping-stones on the road to war was something as simple as the publication of a book. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe was a powerful indictment of the institution of slavery. The work was first published in serial form in a newspaper in 1851, and the next year it came out as a book and became a huge hit, selling over 300,000 copies in the United States in its first year.[58] The novel was widely reviled in the South, and this was particularly so in Natchez, which was home to Forks of the Road, the second largest domestic slave market in the Deep South. One newspaper in the city published a scathing review of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that took up almost an entire page. Written by someone identified only as "B. W. H.," the reviewer made the following incendiary comment:

> Evidently disunion is Mrs. Stowe's highest and most sanguine expectation; with the hope of helping on this end, she has written this book. She has struck the most popular vein. Her distempered appeals are made under the cover of romance. She would launch out upon the cheerless ocean of revolution, with the same high, reckless spirit that she has recommended higher law.[59]

The ties binding the nation together were beginning to come apart; this growing rift was commented on in Natchez as well as cities and towns all over the South. In 1853, an article in a local newspaper had this to say about the upcoming Independence Day celebration.

> FOURTH OF JULY. This day, ever memorable in American history, will not be wholly forgotten in and about Natchez this year. This is as it should be. If we do not feel like having a general celebration by oration, dinner, &c, we can manifest our regard for the anniversary in social gatherings, national salutes, military parades, pic-nics, fish-fries, &c. To many this appears more democratic, more republican; but to us, the

[57] Richard Nelson Current and John Ray Skates. "Mississippi." In *Encyclopedia of the Confederacy* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 3:1046-52.

[58] Webit. (n.d.). *Uncle Tom's Cabin: A Moral Battle Cry for Freedom*. Retrieved August 31, 2020, from https://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org/harriet-beecher-stowe/uncle-toms-cabin/.

[59] "Uncle Tom's Cabin." *Natchez Daily Courier*, November 26, 1852, p. 3.

> good old-fashioned, cannon-speaking, oration-delivering, and barbecue Fourth, was what we always patriotically responded to—it seemed more like the beating pulse of a whole nation in one common cause.[60]

The article went on to say that there would be a national salute, "making old 'Saratoga' again bid defiance to tyrants from its deep-mouthed throat."[61] The "tyrants" spoken of, however, were no longer foreign; this remark was aimed at the people of the North, whom the citizens of Natchez were regarding as enemies rather than fellow countrymen.

As the sectional tensions increased, the city of Natchez began to pay more attention to its militia companies. In May 1858, a local newspaper ran a story about the past glory of the militia.

> Sixteen years ago we visited Natchez in company with the Old Claiborne Guards, that corps being the guest of the Natchez companies, and we rarely ever witnessed a more beautiful display of the true, genuine, old-fashioned "soldiering." Adams County had four volunteer companies at the time, the Fencibles, Capt. Jahen; the Natchez Guards, Capt. Page; the Adams Light Guards, Capt. Clark, and a Cavalry company, under command of Capt. B.O. Smith. As these four companies escorted the Claiborne Guards, under Col. Parkinson, up the bluff from the landing, the whole command of old Chapultepec "hisself," on a bright, balmy October morning, amid the bellowings of old Saratoga, and the shouts of a thousand voices, we thought it the handsomest day and the handsomest scene that ever gladdened our heart.[62]

The writer of these lines also urged the people of Natchez to support a build-up of the militia: "We concur most fully in the suggestions of Col. Hillyer, in favor of a renewal and revival of the volunteer spirit; it is a part of our republican plan, and it is certainly more important that it should be encouraged and kept up in the slave states than elsewhere."[63]

The militia companies in the city began to take their duties more seriously with the threat of sectional conflict looming. In August 1860, the Natchez Fencibles successfully petitioned the Natchez Board of Selectmen to use city hall as an armory and to erect gun racks within the structure. Three months later, the Fencibles offered their services to the city "for special police duty by day or night, so long as the same may be required." This offer was received with the thanks of the Board,

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[60] "Fourth of July." *Natchez Daily Courier*, June 24, 1853, p. 2.

[61] Ibid.

[62] "Volunteer Companies," *The Natchez Weekly Democrat*, May 5, 1858, p. 1.

[63] Ibid.

and the mayor was authorized to call on the company whenever he felt it was needed.[64] While the Natchez infantry companies were busy improving their ability to defend the city, it was decided to upgrade the artillery as well. The Saratoga's sister cannon was known by this time as the "General Quitman," and in December 1860, the Board of Selectmen resolved to find out how much it would cost to put the carriage into a state of "complete repair."[65]

These efforts to modernize and equip the militia took on a new importance after news of abolitionist John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, reached Natchez in October 1859. The fear of an insurrection of enslaved people was always on the minds of White Southerners, and the attack at Harper's Ferry seemed to be the proof that the Republican Party was responsible for the act. One Mississippi journalist wrote of the Republicans.

> In this murderous foray of that infamous confederacy of fanatics and brigands we have but an inadequate foretaste of the spirit which they would infuse into an Administration elevated to power upon the principles which they unblushingly avow as their political creed. With what show of reason, they, can it be assumed that the South whose rights are assailed, ought to fold her arms in fancied security, and permit such an Administration to be inaugurated over her?

The author concluded his article with this incendiary call to action. "The Irresistible Conflict has commenced. Let the Southern people take warning!"[66]

The election of Abraham Lincoln as president in November 1860 galvanized the South to act, and on January 7, 1861, the state of Mississippi opened a secession convention at the State Capitol in Jackson. Many in Natchez were not in favor of immediate secession; the rich planters had much to lose in a war, and they did not support such hasty action. People all over Mississippi were divided on the issue of secession, but as historian John K. Bettersworth explained, the differences between the two groups were rather subtle.

> Amid the welter of argumentation that ensued, Mississippians took their stand on the secession issue less upon such vague abstractions as

[64] *Natchez Board of Selectmen Minutes*, August 7, 1860; November 7, 1860. Microfilm Roll 36671, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

[65] Ibid., January 2, 1861.

[66] "The Harper's Ferry Insurrection and its Lesson," *Semi-Weekly Mississippian*. (Jackson, MS), October 25, 1859, p. 2.

> states rights than upon the solid practical ground of self-preservation. Fundamentally, both secessionists and Unionists were concerned with the perpetuation of a certain social system. Their difference lay only in the manner of accomplishment. For wealthy planters in Natchez and nonslaveholders in the Piney Woods, the status quo, evil as it was, was sufficient unto the day.[67]

On January 9, 1861, the delegates to the convention voted on the ordinance of secession that stated unequivocally, "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery—the greatest material interest of the world." The vote was 84 to 15 in favor; among those voting no were the Adams County delegates, Alexander K. Farrar and Josiah Winchester.[68]

Mississippi became the second state to leave the Union, following the lead of South Carolina. On March 29, 1861, the secession convention ratified the Confederate constitution and the state officially became part of the Confederate States of America.[69] Although many in Natchez had not wanted secession, once it was an established fact, most gave their support to the new national government. When the city celebrated the birthday of George Washington, it was noted that there was another event being recognized as well.

> The glorious demonstrations in this city on Thursday night and Friday last, were not solely in honor of Washington's Birth Day. This year another EVENT engaged public attention, and it was the natal day of the great Washington that was so appropriately selected as eminently adapted to the purposes of the demonstration. That event was the recognition and endorsement by the people of Natchez and Adams County, regardless of old party lines, of the action of Mississippi's convention of representatives of the people, in passing the Ordinance of Secession, the action of the Montgomery Convention, and the election of those distinguished Southerners, Davis and Stephens to the chief offices of the Southern Confederacy.[70]

With war now seemingly inevitable, cities all over the South began to hastily arm themselves for the coming conflict. The city of Natchez

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[67] John K. Bettersworth, *Confederate Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1943), 4-5.

[68] T. B. Smith, *The Mississippi Secession Convention: Delegates and Deliberations in Politics and War, 1861-1865.* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016), 74-79.

[69] Glover Moore, "Separation from the Union 1854-1861" In *A History of Mississippi*, vol. 1, Richard A. McLemore, ed. (Jackson, MS: University and College Press of Mississippi, 1973), 443-446.

[70] "The People Acted." *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS), March 4, 1861, p. 4.

was used as an example and lauded for its strong militia system. In an article published by a Kentucky newspaper, the militia companies of Natchez were described in great detail. The article closed with this statement. "Natchez has also two Cannon Squads, with fine brass pieces of the U.S. service pattern; and two more cannon, including the historic 'Old Saratoga' in reserve."[71] With no enemy forces near Natchez, the citizens also felt confident that their defenses could hold off any attacker. One newspaper wrote, "At Natchez, the river is rising. The sandbar is again almost covered with water. We shall soon present a good river to Uncle Sam's largest crafts, and a plenty of cannon on our levees to give them a warm reception."[72]

In April 1861, the threat to Natchez became much more serious when an urgent telegram was received by Mayor John Hunter. He quickly called for a meeting of the Board of Selectmen, and gave them the startling news.

> The mayor read a telegraphic dispatch which he had just received from the Committee of Safety of the city of Memphis, Tennessee, stating that Federal troops were concentrating at Cairo, Illinois, & that their probable object was to make a decent upon the towns on the river & therefore on motion of Mr. Dicks, it was, Resolved that one thousand dollars be appropriated from the funds of the city, to be placed under the control and disbursement of a select committee, for the purpose of purchasing powder, repairing ordnance and placing the city in such defense, as circumstances may require.[73]

The money appropriated by the Board of Selectmen was used to purchase fifty kegs of black powder, and the two modern pieces of artillery that the city had were bored, sighted, and had new accoutrements procured. One cannon also had its carriage repaired. In addition, the local foundry cast 225 round shot and 200 canister shot. Some of the money was spent on Old Saratoga as well. Upon examination the gun was found to be "defective and dangerous: she has been rebored and if after testing found safe will be mounted cheaply to be used as a salute gun and if necessary will speak for herself in service."[74] About this same time, the board of selectmen authorized the erection of a powder magazine

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[71] "Mississippi Military Affairs." *The Louisville Daily Courier* (Louisville, KY) January 22, 1861, p. 1.

[72] *Natchez Daily Courier,* January 26, 1861, p. 2.

[73] *Natchez Board of Selectmen Minutes,* April 23, 1861, Microfilm Roll 36671, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

[74] Ibid., June 4, 1861.

to safely store the city's black powder. It also gave control of the city's cannons to the Natchez Artillery Company and made it "subject to the order of the mayor."[75] Nothing came of the warning from Memphis, but if a new threat emerged, Natchez planned to be ready.

In December 1860, the city of Natchez was ordered by the Chief Ordnance Officer of Mississippi to turn over its two modern cannons, the "Governor" and "Gen. Quitman" to the state. The city fathers delayed carrying out this order as long as they could, but grudgingly turned over the guns in July 1861.[76] The people of Natchez were not happy about giving up their only means of defense, and they were quick to inform their elected officials of their dissatisfaction. General William Wallace Wood, commander of the 1st Division of the Mississippi Militia and responsible for Natchez, sent the following letter to Governor John J. Pettus in which he explained in great detail the condition of the city's defenses and why they needed their cannons back:

> Some days ago I received from the Adjt. Genl. Orders under date Dec. 11, 1860, embodying instructions from you requesting me to have forwarded to his or your address at Jackson, two certain pieces of cannon. The chief of my staff has acknowledged to the chief of yours the receipt of the letter containing those orders & has advised him that I would communicate with you direct on this subject.
>
> Very many years ago—nearly a half a century has elapsed since then—a brass six pound field piece, christened the "Saratoga" fell into the possession of our citizens. It is a trophy of war and for many years, and until within the last decade, has been our "Salute Gun" for National Anniversaries, Festivals, Gala Days, etc. That piece is honey-combed, unfit for use, and laid aside as a prized relict of other days. Subsequently, but long ago, an iron gun, of same calibre, came into the possession of our people. It has long ago, also, become unfitted for service.
>
> It was during the administration of Gov. A.G. Brown (in 1842, I think,) that he, Brown, presented to a volunteer corps of this city, called the "Natchez Guards," which corps has a peculiar charter & is subject only to the Governor's orders (see laws 1838 page) a six pounder brass field piece, which was christened the "Governor;" and shortly after he presented to another corps in this city, the "Natchez Fencibles," a similar gun, which is called the "Quitman," in honor of the first captain of that corps. Capt. J.A.T. Midderhoff, one of our most prominent lawyers, is commander of the "Guards," and Capt. Ed M. Blackburn, a physician of fine repute & practice, is commander of the "Fencibles." Bonds were given for these guns as are given for all other arms received from the state.

[75] Ibid., May 21, 1861.

[76] Ibid., July 16, 1861.

> The "Governor" is mounted fully though the Adj. General missed its "limber" which was & is in its carriage house. The "Quitman" is being mounted by the city. These guns receive such care as is ordinarily bestowed. They are needed here. This is an assailable point. They are the only cannon in this the metropolis & most exposed part of the state. They have been in our keeping for many years, and have become, as it were, part & parcel of our home & its associations. There is a marked feeling of astonishment & pain among all classes of our people on learning that Natchez might be deprived of these essential means of protection.
>
> There are now organized & organizing in the city of Natchez & county of Adams a force whose perfect efficiency requires artillery. 1st—a dragoon corps, 2d a rifle corps, 3d three infantry corps and 4th a corps of home reserve, using the double barrel shot gun, charged with buck shot. These companies are—Adams Troop, Capt. Wm. T. Martin, Natchez Fencibles, Capt. Ed M. Blackburn, Natchez Guards, Capt. J.A.T. Midderhoff, Adams Light Guard Battalion (2 companies) Lt. Col. R. Clarke, and Natchez Home Guard, Capt. W.W. Walkins Sr., total 400 men.
>
> I have communicated the contents of Genl. Sykes' letter to Capts. Midderhoff (Guards) & Blackburn (Fencibles). I hope your Excellency will view this subject as we do.[77]

Despite the appeal to the governor the ordnance was not returned, and Natchez had to cobble together a defense with what they had on hand. In November 1861, William P. Mellen, captain of the local artillery company, petitioned the board "praying that the gun 'Saratoga' be bushed so as to make her serviceable." This involved repairing the vent hole at the breech of the gun so that it could be fired using a friction primer.[78]

The shortage of cannons grew so acute that General P. G. T. Beauregard sent out the following appeal in March 1862:

> To the Planters of the Mississippi Valley:
>
> More than once a people, fighting with an enemy far less ruthless than yours; for imperiled rights not more clear and sacred than yours; for homes and a land not more worthy of resolute and unconquerable men than yours; and for interests of far less magnitude than you have now at stake, have not hesitated to melt and mould [sic] into cannon the precious bells surmounting their houses of God, which has called generations to prayer. The priesthood have ever sanctioned and

[77] Correspondence of Governor John J. Pettus; Letter from General William W. Wood dated January 8, 1861. Series 757, Microfilm Roll 1812, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

[78] Ibid, November 19, 1861.

> consecrated the conversion, in the hour of their nation's need, as one holy and acceptable in the sight of God. We want cannon as greatly as any people whoever, as history tells you—melted their church bells to supply them. And I, your General, entrusted with the command of the army embodied of your sons, your kinsmen, and your neighbors, do now call on you to send your plantation bells to the nearest railroad depot, subject to my order, to be melted into cannon for the defense of your plantations. Who will not cheerfully and promptly send me his bells under such circumstances? Be of good cheer, but time is precious.[79]

The need for cannons was so great that even an antique such as "Old Saratoga," which had been cast over a century earlier, was needed for the defense of the state of Mississippi. On March 18, 1862, the Natchez Board of Selectmen voted to loan their beloved gun to the "Confederate authorities."[80]

The citizens of Natchez responded to Beauregard's appeal by forming a committee to aid in sending plantation bells to the army. They also placed an advertisement in the newspaper calling on the planters of Adams County to "RING YOUR BELLS FOR THE LAST TIME, while this unjust and iniquitous war continues. Respond at once to the CALL OF GEN. BEAUREGARD and freely offer them to be moulded [sic] into cannon for the defense of all you hold dear."[81]

Some of the bells donated in Natchez were melted down and cast into cannons to be used by a local artillery company. While encouraging young men to join this battery, the *Natchez Daily Courier* noted that

> volunteers, who enroll themselves in the new Artillery Company now forming in Natchez, will recollect that they are to have field pieces cast here at our own foundry, and of the very first quality metal. The old "Saratoga," a sort of household fixture among us, and the numerous plantation bells thrown in to the furnace to make up a sufficiency for a battery of artillery, cannot fail of making music for the Federals when opportunity offers. Let the Company, if possible, be filled to completion before the meeting on Friday; and then let our citizens at once present them with a Natchez-made battery of six-pounders.[82]

By early April 1862, it was apparent that the Federal navy under Flag Officer David G. Farragut was preparing to run the Confederate

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[79] "Gen. Beauregard's Last Appeal," *Weekly State Journal* (Raleigh, NC), March 26, 1862, p. 3.

[80] *Natchez Board of Selectmen Minutes*, March 18, 1862. Microfilm Roll 36671, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

[81] "Planters of Adams County!!," *Natchez Daily Courier*, April 10, 1862, p. 2.

[82] *Natchez Daily Courier*, April 10, 1861, p. 1.

forts on the Mississippi River and attempt to capture New Orleans. The people of Natchez knew that if the Crescent City fell, it would only be a short time before a powerful Federal fleet was at their doorstep.[83] The long dreaded day came on May 12, 1862, when a U.S. naval vessel sailed upriver to Natchez and sent the following ultimatum to the mayor:

> In advance of the squadron now coming up the Mississippi, I am instructed by the Flag Officer to demand the surrender of the city of Natchez to the naval forces of the United States. The same terms will be accorded as those granted to New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The rights and property of all peaceable citizens shall be respected; but all property in this city belonging to the so-called Confederate States must be delivered up, and the flag of the United States must wave unmolested and respected over your town.[84]

With no troops and a minimal ability to defend the town, Natchez Mayor John Hunter sent the following reply to the U.S. naval forces:

> Sir, Your communication of the 12th inst., has been received by me and laid before the Board of Selectmen of this city and I am directed to return the following reply: Coming as a Conqueror, you need not the interposition of the city authorities to possess this place. An unfortified city, an entirely defenseless people, have no alternative but to yield to an irresistible force, or uselessly, to imperil innocent blood. Formalities are absurd in the face of such realities. So far as the city authorities can prevent, there will be no opposition to your possession of the city; they cannot, however, guarantee that your flag shall wave unmolested in the sight of an excited people: but such authority as they possess, will be exercised, for the preservation of good order in the city. As to property belonging to the Confederate States, they are not aware of any such, within the limits of the city.[85]

When Mayor Hunter sent this message to the Federal fleet, he had to be aware that "Old Saratoga" had been loaned to the Confederate authorities, and it was certainly something that the enemy would expect to be handed over. Unfortunately, the written record is entirely silent on the ultimate fate of the gun. Was she handed over to the U.S. Navy, or hidden away to be reclaimed at some future date when the tide of war had changed? Perhaps she was spirited out of town and melted down

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[83] Edwin C. Bearss, "The Armed Conflict 1861-1865," in *A History of Mississippi*, vol. 1. Richard A. McLemore, ed. (Jackson, MS: University and College Press of Mississippi, 1973), 443-446.

[84] *Natchez Board of Selectmen Minutes*, April 12, 1862. Microfilm Roll 36671, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

[85] Ibid, May 13, 1862.

to build more a more modern field piece for the war effort. For now, her ultimate fate remains unknown.

Although "Old Saratoga" had disappeared during the chaos of war, it was not the last cannon to call Natchez home. In 1876, a new militia unit was formed in the city known as the Tilden Light Artillery. This unit purchased a surplus brass 6-pounder cannon from New York for its use. The purpose for which this gun was acquired, however, was decidedly sinister. Mississippi was still being "reconstructed" by the federal government, a process which White Democrats in the state planned to bring to an end as quickly as possible. To aid in this process, White militias were being organized throughout the state, including companies of infantry, cavalry, and artillery at Natchez. Testifying before a congressional committee, Republican newspaper editor A. M. Hardy related that these military organizations "were organized as a menace to the colored people of the county."[86] With the end of Reconstruction in 1877, the cannon was put to more peaceful uses, such as in 1920, when it was used during the filming of the Civil War silent film, *Heart of Maryland*.[87]

Soon after the end of the Spanish-American War, the city of Natchez acquired another cannon when the board of aldermen passed a resolution asking "that our Congressman and Senators be requested to call on the Secretary of War and Navy and request of them the loan or gift of one of the cannons captured from the Spaniards. The same to be placed in the Memorial Park as a remembrance of the valor and courage of our soldiers and sailors in said war."[88]

The request was honored, and in early May 1900, a nineteenth century Spanish muzzle-loading cannon that had been captured in Cuba was delivered to Natchez. Some were less than impressed with the city's new war trophy. One newspaper described the gun as "a large rust-eaten iron cannon, taken from the Spanish fortifications at Santiago de Cuba." The article did charitably admit that "it will be valued not for its intrinsic worth, but as a perpetual testimony of the valor of American soldiers."[89]

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[86] *Mississippi: Testimony as to denial of elective franchise in Mississippi at the elections of 1875 and 1876: Taken under the resolution of the Senate of December 5, 1876* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1877), 136.

[87] "Heart of Maryland Company Will Leave Here on Thursday," *The Natchez Democrat*, December 1, 1920, p. 1.

[88] "Board of Aldermen," *The Natchez Democrat*, April 7, 1900, p. 4.

[89] "Spanish Cannon in Memorial Park," *The Natchez Democrat*, May 25, 1900, p. 4.

The cannon was placed on a pedestal in Memorial Park at Natchez, with a plaque proclaiming it to be a trophy taken during the Spanish-American War. It remains in the park to this day in commemoration of the local soldiers who fought in that long-ago conflict.[90]

Hopefully one day the mystery surrounding the fate of "Old Saratoga" will be solved, and it can join her Spanish cousin at Memorial Park. The ancient relic may be hidden in some long forgotten spot in Natchez, just waiting to be resurrected and returned to her former glory. And then the newspapers can proudly proclaim, as they did once long ago, that "the voice of old Saratoga peals forth this morning from the city of the bluffs."[91]

[90] Mimi Miller, "Cannon Fodder," *Natchez the Magazine*, September/October 2020, pp. 40-43.

[91] *The Natchez Weekly Courier* (Natchez, MS) July 6, 1838, p. 2.

Mississippi Historical Society Awards Prizes at the 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting

Alferdteen Harrison (right) received the Lifetime Achievement Award from President Marshall Bennett in honor of her extensive scholarly research and preservation of Mississippi history.

The Mississippi Historical Society presented the best Mississippi history book of 2021, its lifetime achievement award, teacher of the year, and other awards in recognition at its annual meeting held virtually on Friday, March 5, 2021.

Alferdteen Harrison received the Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of her extensive scholarly research and preservation of Mississippi history. Harrison served as president of the Mississippi Historical Society in 1991 and is the former director of the Margaret Walker Alexander Center at Jackson State University. Harrison is also a co-founder of the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center in downtown Jackson. She is currently leading an effort to save the Scott-Ford House in Jackson's Farish Street Historic District.

Steeped in the Blood of Racism: Black Power, Law and Order, and the 1970 Shootings at Jackson State College by Nancy Bristow, professor and chair of the History Department at the University of Puget Sound,

received the Book of the Year Award. Published by the Oxford University Press, Bristow's book focuses on the tragic 1970 shooting deaths of James Earl Green and Phillip Gibbs at Jackson State University.

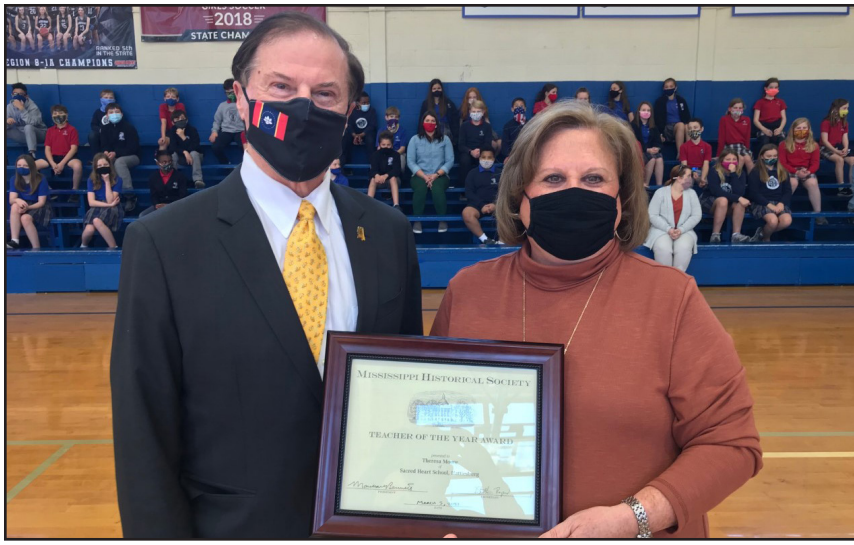
Robert Luckett, historian and director of the Margaret Walker Alexander Center at Jackson State University, received the *Journal of Mississippi History* Article of the Year Award for "James P. Coleman (1956–1960) and Mississippi Poppycock" published in the Spring/Summer 2019 issue.

Robert Luckett (right) of Jackson State University received the Journal of Mississippi History *Article of the Year Award from President Marshall Bennett.*

The Outstanding Local Historical Society Award was presented to the Woodville Civic Club for its work in the preservation of historic Woodville, one of Mississippi's oldest settlements.

The Teacher of the Year Award was presented to Theresa Moore of Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hattiesburg. Moore, a fifth and sixth grade history teacher, has served at Sacred Heart since 1995 and has more than thirty-six years of teaching experience.

Awards of Merit were presented to the Commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag for its work in the development and design of the new "In God We Trust" state flag; Friends of the Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign for its work in the preservation, education, monument restoration, and advocacy of the Vicksburg Military National Park; the city of Tupelo for renovating the Oren Dunn City Museum; the Columbus Municipal School District for its work in commemorating the histories of Union Academy and Franklin Academy; the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College for its donations of the C. C. "Tex" Hamill



The Teacher of the Year Award was presented by President Marshall Bennett (left) to Theresa Moore of Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hattiesburg.

Down South Magazine Collection and the *Dixie Press* Collection to MDAH; and the Corinth Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center, and Northeast Mississippi Community College for its collaborative work on a phone application for the Corinth Contraband Camp Project.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College president Mary Graham received two Awards of Merit. Pictured with her are MHS Secretary-Treasurer Brother Rogers, former MHS President Charles Sullivan, and MHS board member Ryan Schilling.

Judge Reuben Anderson (right) received an Award of Merit from MHS Secretary-Treasurer Brother Rogers for chairing the Commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag.

Friends of the Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign received an Award of Merit for their work on historic preservation. Pictured with President Marshall Bennett are the organization's executive director, Bess Averett, and board president, Brig. Gen. Robert Crear.

Program of the 2021 Mississippi Historical Society Annual Meeting

By Stephanie R. Rolph

The Mississippi Historical Society (MHS) held its annual meeting virtually on March 5, 2021, in response to COVID-19 pandemic. The program began on Friday morning with the board meeting and annual business meeting both occurring online.

The opening session started with a welcome by Marshall Bennett, president, MHS. The morning session was titled Mississippi as Architectural Trendsetter and featured four presentations: "Robert Edgar Bost: Natchez's Most Prolific Twentieth-Century Architect and Builder" by Chase Klugh, Historic Natchez Foundation; "Mississippi Midwestern State Capitol" by Jennifer V. O. Baughn, Mississippi Department of Archives and History; "Monument and Memory: The Illinois Memorial at the Vicksburg National Military Park" by Bill Gatlin, independent scholar; and "'His finest and purest thinking': The Mississippi Retreats of Louis Sullivan" by Jeff Rosenberg, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

Charles Westmoreland, Delta State University, presented the Book of the Year Award at lunchtime to Nancy Bristow, University of Puget Sound, for *Steeped in the Blood of Racism: Black Power, Law and Order, and the 1970 Shootings at Jackson State College*. She made an online presentation from the state of Washington. Her book recounts the death of two young African Americans, Phillip Gibbs and James Earl Green, and the wounding of twelve others when White police and highway patrolmen opened fire on African American students in front of a dormitory at Jackson State College in May 1970.

The first online afternoon session was titled Student Activism in the Civil Rights Movement. It featured three presentations: "The Civil Rights Movement in Jackson Mississippi: Newspapers as Frames of Black Protest from 1961–1963" by Randrika Henderson, University of Southern Mississippi; "Planting an Alternative Newspaper: *The Kudzu* and Community Building in Mississippi, 1964–1972" by Wayne Dowdy, independent scholar; and "Young, Black, and Powerful: Student Protests at Ole Miss during the Age of Black Power" by Jasmine Stansberry, University of Mississippi.

The final scholarly session was titled Resistance and Memory:

Free and Enslaved Laborers in Mississippi and featured two online presentations: "'Almost in a state of insurrection': The Slave Rebellion on Mrs. Polk's Plantation" by Lisa C. Childs, University of Arkansas; and "The Global Impact of Mississippi Delta Cotton: The Cotton Pickers' Monument Project" by C. Sade Turnipseed, Jackson State University.

To conclude the virtual meeting, Marshall Bennett,outgoing MHS president, introduced Stephanie R. Rolph as the new incoming president, and she adjourned the meeting. The Mississippi Historical Society is grateful to Al Wheat, director of education at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, for his technical help with the online meeting. In addition to the March 5 meeting, Wheat produced an awards video announcing award winners in lieu of an awards luncheon. This video was distributed on social media channels.

Incoming MHS President Stephanie R. Rolph with outgoing MHS President Marshall Bennett.

Mississippi Historical Society
Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting
March 5, 2021

The annual business meeting of the Mississippi Historical Society was held at 10 a.m. on Friday, March 5, 2021, via Zoom.

Marshall Bennett, president, Mississippi Historical Society (MHS), called the meeting to order and presided. William "Brother" Rogers, secretary-treasurer, MHS, acted as secretary for the meeting. Emma McRaney, assistant to the director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), recorded the minutes.

The following business was transacted:

I. The president called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and thanked everyone for attending.

II. The president suggested that the minutes of the March 5, 2020, annual meeting be approved as distributed. A motion to approve the minutes by acclamation was made by Carter Burns, seconded by Charles Westmoreland, and unanimously approved.

III. Susannah Ural presented the Nomination Committee Report. She presented officers and board members for consideration. On a motion by Dierdre Payne, seconded by Chris Goodwin, the nominations committee recommendations were unanimously approved. The nominations are listed below.

Officers for the term 2021–2022

President—Stephanie R. Rolph, Associate Professor of History, Millsaps College

Vice President (president-elect)—Daphne R. Chamberlain, Assistant Provost and Associate Professor of History, Tougaloo College

Secretary-Treasurer—Brother Rogers, Director of Programs and Communication Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Immediate Past President—Marshall Bennett, former State Treasurer

The following five individuals are nominated to serve three-year terms on the Society's Board of Directors (2021–2024):

Joyce Dixon-Lawson, retired Curator of Research and Genealogy, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

April Holm, Associate Professor of History, University of Mississippi

Amanda Clay Powers, Professor and Dean of Library Services, Mississippi University for Women

Jeff R. Rosenberg, MS Coast NHA Historic Preservation Coordinator, Office of Restoration & Resiliency, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Sheren G. Sanders, Director of Honors and Assistant Professor of History, Alcorn State University

The following two individuals are nominated to serve three-year terms on the Society's Board of Publications (2021–2024), which provides guidance to the *Journal of Mississippi History*:

Daphne R. Chamberlain, Assistant Provost and Associate Professor of History, Tougaloo College

Stephanie R. Rolph, Associate Professor of History, Millsaps College

IV. Rogers presented the financial report for the Society. He shared that the largest expense is the *Journal of Mississippi History*.

V. Page Ogden gave an update on the work of the Finance/ Investment Committee. The president expressed his gratitude for the committee's work.

VI. The president expressed his appreciation to the Program Committee. Stephanie Rolph chaired the committee and thanked her peers for their dedication in organizing an outstanding program.

VII. The president recognized and expressed appreciation for the following individuals who were completing their terms of service on the board of directors: Shennette Garrett-Scott, Latoya Norman, Deirdre Payne, Christian Pinnen, and James Robertson.

VIII. Carter Burns presented the Awards Committee Report. The awards are listed below.

Lifetime Achievement Award
Alferdteen Harrison, 1991 MHS president, co-founder of Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center, former director of Margaret Walker Alexander Center at Jackson State University

Book of the Year Award
Nancy Bristow—*Steeped in the Blood of Racism: Black Power, Law and Order, and the 1970 Shootings at Jackson State College*

***Journal of Mississippi History* Article of the Year Award**
Robert Luckett—"James P. Coleman (1956–1960) and Mississippi Poppycock" from *The Journal of Mississippi History*, Vol. 81, No. 1 and No. 2—Spring/Summer 2019

Outstanding Local Historical Society Award
Woodville Civic Club

Teacher of the Year Award
Theresa Moore, Sacred Heart School, Hattiesburg

Awards of Merit
Commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag

Corinth Contraband Camp Project, Corinth (Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center, Corinth Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Northeast Mississippi Community College)

Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign, Vicksburg

Oren Dunn City Museum, Tupelo

Columbus Municipal School District for Union Academy and Franklin Academy, Columbus

Mary Graham, President, Gulf Coast Community College, for donation of two significant collections: the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College C.C. "Tex" Hamill *Down South Magazine*

Collection and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College *Dixie Press* Collection

IX. Rogers gave an update on the publications of the *Journal of Mississippi History*. He stated that a new issue, Fall/Winter 2020, will be published soon and that the Spring/Summer 2021 issue will be published in the summer of 2021.

X. Rogers gave a report from the Publications Committee on behalf of John Marszalek. He stated that a new *Heritage of Mississippi Series* book, *Colonial Mississippi: A Borrowed Land* by Christian Pinnen and Charles Weeks, will be published soon.

XI. Rogers gave an update on *Mississippi History Now*. He stated that the Mississippi Humanities Council awarded a grant to MHS to modernize the MHN website. This work will be undertaken in the coming months.

XII. Rogers stated that the next annual meeting will be held in Hattiesburg on March 10–11, 2022. In 2023, the meeting will be held in Jackson, and then it will be in Oxford in 2024.

XIII. Al Wheat gave an update on National History Day. He also announced that MDAH is the official sponsor for Mississippi History Day.

XIV. Rogers presented resolutions of condolence for Thomas Boschert, William Scarborough, and Governor William Winter. On a motion by Robertson, seconded by Goodwin, the board voted unanimously approve the resolutions.

XV. Katie Blount provided an update on the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. She stated that despite being closed from March to May, the Department has had great success and visitors at the sites. She encouraged everyone to visit the Two Mississippi Museums to see the newest temporary exhibits—*I am a Man* and *Mississippi Distilled*.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the president.

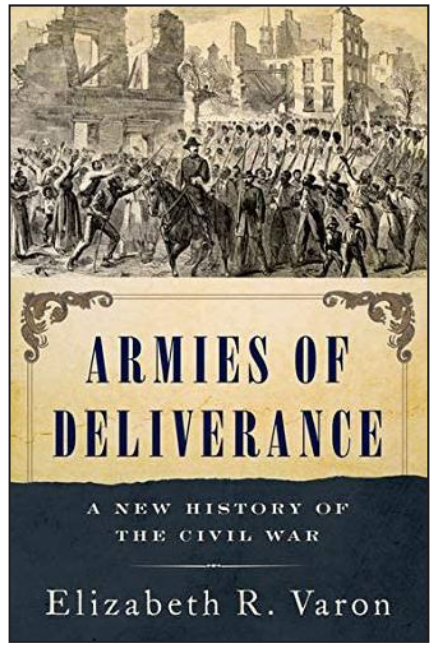
Marshall Bennett, President
William "Brother" Rogers, Secretary-Treasurer

BOOK REVIEWS

Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War

By Elizabeth R. Varon. College Edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Maps, acknowledgments, timeline, notes, suggested readings, glossary, index. Pp. xxv, 531. $29.99 paper. ISBN: 978-0-19-933539-8.)

The Civil War remains the holy grail of American historiography. We know it is vital and central, but attempts to pin it down and give it coherence feel transient and vain. This difficulty has not been made easier by the wealth of recent research on the Civil War, a literature that has vastly expanded the cast of characters, the geographical scope of its origins, and the depth of its consequences. In her new book, *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War*, Elizabeth R. Varon finds an organizing theme in the political-religious rhetoric of deliverance. Such rhetoric spanned the North-South divide. Northerners reasoned that the deluded masses of southerners needed deliverance from a slave power that had duped them, while Confederates insisted that secession was the only way to deliver (White) southerners from the corrupted civilization of northern radicals.



Varon carries this organizing theme throughout the book. Union policy in the early stages of the war clearly made room for loyal southerners, including slaveholders, to return peacefully, even as Congress passed the First Confiscation Act and received thousands of African American refugees behind Union lines. Confederates interpreted such measures as proof positive that their own people needed deliverance from an invading army that was determined to destroy its way of life. This call only intensified as African American troops appeared on the frontlines later in the war. Varon's treatment of policy goals and political disputes is nuanced throughout, mindful of how different constituencies within both polities read events in contradictory ways.

Varon also takes time to explain how historians have advanced conflicting interpretations of

events. She does so in a remarkably balanced way, without losing sight of the historical events themselves. The origin of General William T. Sherman's Special Field Order #15 is a case in point. Did the openly racist Sherman adopt the radical egalitarian field order to relieve his troops of the responsibility for caring for African American refugees from slavery? Or was it Secretary of War Edwin Stanton's work? Or did African American leaders who met with Sherman in Georgia shock him into a radical posture? Readers are invited to ponder these questions.

The book is written as narrative and concerns itself mainly with the battles, the politics, and numerous home fronts. The author is skeptical of the traditional narrative's tendency to locate "turning points," such as the Union victory at Gettysburg. Instead, Varon prefers the uncertainty and contingency that pervaded the war, yet her narrative still has flow and force. Her descriptions of the siege of Vicksburg and the battle at Antietam (and others) are not just vivid; they are moving. She achieves this effect without resorting to sentimentality, but rather by paying quiet but firm respect to the historical actors involved. Whether describing generals and soldiers on the battlefield or the southern women who led the bread riots, the human scale of the conflict is never far from view in *Armies of Deliverance*.

Varon's balanced appraisal of historical figures and modern historical controversies is admirable. General Robert E. Lee is given fair treatment. His numerous battlefield successes and the reverence with which his troops regarded him are laid out next to his miscalculation at Gettysburg and his army's kidnapping of free African Americans during its invasion of Pennsylvania. Lincoln's leadership, especially as it pertains to emancipation and equality for African Americans, is similarly treated, without heavy-handed commentary. While this is generally a virtue, at times it can be a little frustrating. Lincoln's infamous Corning Letter, in which he defended a policy of silencing wartime political dissent as treasonous, overlooks the rather chilling implications for executive power and free speech.

The book concludes with Lincoln's assassination, the brief tenure of Andrew Johnson as president, and the beginnings of Reconstruction. The war was over, but the theme of deliverance soldiered on. Johnson promised southern states deliverance from congressional overreach. Frederick Douglass praised Union troops and insisted on the righteousness of their cause, the deliverance of the nation from slavery. These themes continued into Reconstruction and beyond, both substantively and rhetorically in American politics.

Varon's new interpretation of the Civil War promises to be authoritative for some time. While it will not please everyone (nor should it, the interpretive stakes being what they are), it will introduce older and newer generations to a fresh interpretation of the war.

H. Robert Baker
Georgia State University

Hurtin' Words: Debating Family Problems in the Twentieth-Century South. By Ted Ownby. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Acknowledgements, illustrations, notes, index. Pp. xiv, 334. $90 cloth, $29.95 paper, $22.99 electronic. ISBN: 978-1-46964-700-5.)

The names Snopes, O'Hara, Fairchild, Thomas, Finch, and DuBois play an important role in the efforts of historians and literary scholars to define and illuminate the long story of the southern family. Ted Ownby joins the ranks of notable interpreters of southern families by taking on the challenge of defining and placing family life within the larger history of the region. Southern legal and cultural history come together in his latest work, *Hurtin' Words: Debating Family Problems in the Twentieth-Century South*. Ownby demonstrates successfully how people in the South discussed and defined family problems in both African American and White communities. Changing definitions of family represented cultural disruptions and helped lead to many legal changes. Legal documents, church sermons, autobiography, southern literature, and southern rock lyrics serve as the core sources for this work and allow Ownby to present a unique take on family problems and the ever-changing definition of family in the South.

Hurtin' Words adds to the scholarship on family life by looking at the way people have communicated and discussed what constitutes family and the problems found within those conversations. By showing how southerners addressed family life and problems, Ownby details the long and troubled road of shifting thought of the ideal family from a rigid, stable structure tied to landownership into a more fluid, open, and personal construct based on emotion. This work also provides new ways of linking African American and White family life to the civil rights and massive resistance movements.

Viewing the South as a multivocal and diverse region, Ownby approaches the topics of marriage, sex, divorce, familial abandonment, child rearing, and religion in a way that allows for race, class, and gender differences to form into a connected and comprehensive narrative. He uses the notion of family units being stable or in crisis to determine what family problems existed among different groups and the severity of said problems. This framework allows him to note the somewhat jarring differences between the definitions of family held by Whites and African Americans at the start of the twentieth century. Readers are able to see how these understandings morphed from rigid and land-dependent standards that allowed White families a sense of security and stability into families as networks of people who care for and respect each other, as seen in Black family reunions and modern feminist southern literature.

Ownby dedicates a large section of *Hurtin' Words* to discussing the concept of brotherhood because of the role it played in the era of the modern Civil Rights Movement. He uses changes in the definition of the word "brotherhood" to signal broader changes in the direction

and drivers of the movement. In the early stages of the Civil Rights Movement, the concept of brotherhood signaled the church-led pathway and possibility of a future where Whites and African Americans could live in harmony with each other under the "brotherhood of mankind" (106). However, massive resistance countered this ideology by insisting that African Americans were not their spiritual brothers. Brotherhood and sisterhood, therefore, ultimately came to acknowledge the connection African Americans maintained through their collective shared experiences that "meant rejecting white attempts to save African Americans or solve their problems . . . to redefine the strengths of family life among African Americans" (160).

Honoring the tradition of countless southern writers before him, Ownby follows the definition of family from its most narrow definition to its broadest interpretation. Written clearly, *Hurtin' Words* is an interesting and accessible read for anyone interested in family structure, legal history, or modern southern culture. Discussions of Mississippi can be found throughout the work, particularly in the voices of figures such as Senator James O. Eastland, Tammy Wynette, Richard Wright, and *The Sweet Potato Queens'* series. *Hurtin' Words* can comfortably fit on any bookshelf or spark deep conversation in any college course on the modern South.

Laura Kate Fortner
Delta State University

Illusions of Emancipation: The Pursuit of Freedom & Equality in the Twilight of Slavery. By Joseph P. Reidy. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. Acknowledgements, illustrations, map, notes, index. Pp. 1, 506. $39.95 Hardcover, $29.99 E-Book. ISBN: 978-1-4696-4836-1.)

Over 150 years after its bloody end, the American Civil War remains the most contested event in our nation's historical memory. Its cause, conduct, and end invariably rise to the surface of modern American political discourse. Of the war's many incidents and controversies, none draw more impassioned rhetoric and sentiment than slavery and emancipation. The war's most important legacy, the ending of chattel slavery, looms large at the center of our nation's most divisive issues: the future of Confederate monuments, the teaching of American history in public schools, the protection of civil rights, and the question of reparations. Though the study of emancipation has inspired several generations of dedicated historians, it eludes much of the general public in the darkness of misunderstanding.

Joseph P. Reidy's *Illusions of Emancipation: The Pursuit of Freedom & Equality in the Twilight of Slavery* emerges as one of several recent works to bring the story of slavery's end into full light. As a part of the Littlefield History of the Civil War Era, *Illusions* is primarily a synthesis. Reidy draws from primary and secondary sources and combines the insights of a generation of scholarship into a comprehensive work on the

war and emancipation. The author's central argument is that slavery did not end overnight but through a process that developed unevenly, at different times and places throughout the course of the war. Slavery's destruction involved untold millions of people. Its central actors were the abolitionists and enslaved people who compelled the leaders of the United States Army and government to pursue emancipation as a war aim. Through their efforts, the United States secured military victory and abolished slavery. However, within several years, differing expectations of what freedom meant among former slaves, northerners, and southerners "gave rise to a recurring" and often brutal "cycle of hope and frustration" (21). For example, the United States Army's presence in the South after the Emancipation Proclamation did not always fulfill enslaved peoples' expectations of freedom. In February 1864, General William T. Sherman led a campaign from Vicksburg to Meridian, Mississippi, liberating and escorting some eight thousand former slaves to safety. Though they had escaped bondage in Meridian, the freed people experienced dreadful conditions at refugee camps located in and around Vicksburg. For most who remained at the camps, their liberation was worth the meager conditions of refugee life. Yet, as Reidy argues, ultimately the war's outcome and the destruction of slavery failed to secure the promises of freedom—"the illusions of emancipation."

The author's major contribution to Civil War historiography is the thematic framework he uses to structure and convey his findings. Reidy organized *Illusions* into three sections, each representing a different lens through which members of the Civil War generation experienced and interpreted the war and emancipation. The trinity of Reidy's method is time, space, and the home. Historians have long employed the notions of time and space to explain their subjects. Yet, Reidy's use of the "home" as an interpretative lens is unique and provides the most insightful portion of the book. For free Americans, the nineteenth century home generally represented order, family, and respectability in a world of chaos. For slaveholding southerners, the home meant something specific and exclusive: the plantation mansion. They viewed the home as the pinnacle of wealth, mastery, and harmony in their slave society. For enslaved people, the struggle for freedom represented as much an escape from bondage as it did the creation of a home of their own, a place of refuge, order, and respectability. Reidy's framework successfully portrays how war and emancipation figuratively and quite literally destroyed the order associated with some homes while opening up the possibility of new ones for others.

Reidy's work should appeal widely to Mississippians as its principal setting is in the former Confederate states and its main actors are southerners. The author offers several passages revealing how the war and emancipation fundamentally transformed Mississippi communities such as Vicksburg and Meridian. Overall, Reidy offers the world an illustrative and comprehensive work on how emancipation was

made possible and how Americans interpreted that revolutionary event. *Illusions of Emancipation* is a powerful account from which scholars and the general public will greatly enhance their understanding of our nation's greatest crucible.

Andrew L. Hargroder
Louisiana State University

Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America. By Thomas J. Brown. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. 384 pp., 6.125 x 9.25, 87 halftones, notes, bibl., index, Paper, $29.97, 978-1-4696-5374-7.)

The 2017 removal of the Robert E. Lee memorial from Lee Circle in New Orleans made clear to the public the connection between Civil War commemoration and the national embrace of militarization and White supremacy. Though activists, journalists, sociologists, and historians had demonstrated this connection, there had been little pressure from the public for politicians to act, but a groundswell movement following the election of President Donald Trump and an increase in hate crimes brought a moment of reckoning. Thomas J. Brown in *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* traces this history by documenting Civil War memorials from the 1860s through the 1930s and linking the change in American's attitudes toward war remembrance with an increasingly militarized society.

Brown establishes the early Jeffersonian emphasis on the virtuous yeoman farmer, which reigned as the supreme vision of manhood through the early 1860s. This conceptualization, however, changed as war commemoration swept the nation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While these monuments began as a means of remembering the dead, they ultimately served to glamorize war and justify imperialism. No longer did the farmer represent the height of civic virtue, states Brown. Instead, the soldier claimed this position and stood as an example of moral rightness, and the military came to be seen as the template for an organized society.

Examining the dynamic between a militarized or a civilian citizenry, Brown analyzes the process of monument erection to uncover the often highly political nature of memorialization. Focused primarily on northern monuments, which consisted of not only statues, obelisks, and arches but also lesser known memorials such as buildings, libraries, and parks, Brown includes some discourse of southern memorials but more as counterpoints to those erected in the North. Similarly, Brown offers examples of monuments outside these regions, including monuments in Iowa and Nebraska, again, primarily in relation to how they compare to commemorations in the North. Mississippi monuments mentioned by Brown include those in Jackson, Oxford, Poplarville, Raymond, Ripley, and at the University of Mississippi and the Vicksburg National Military Park. Additionally, Brown explores the ways in which artists' visions for

these monuments were often at odds with political and military leaders and even, occasionally, the widowed wives of the men being memorialized. For Brown, the process of creating a memorial is, perhaps, more important than the memorial itself.

Dividing the book into three categories of common soldier monuments, leadership monuments, and victory monuments, Brown explores how the conflicting visions for Civil War monuments represented a society in transition. He argues that initially, beginning with attempts to commemorate the American Revolution, Americans rebelled against the representation of a militarized society by refusing to erect statues that showcased military might. By 1920, this attitude had completely reversed itself as the frenzy for such memorials pervaded commemoration efforts to the point that even southerners who lost the Civil War yet erected monuments that represented martial strength. Brown also explores how the Civil War commemorative process influenced the way Americans chose to memorialize the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II. Conversely, he addresses how these wars, along with the professionalization of the military and the consolidation of federal power, changed the messaging around the Lost Cause mythology, which eventually dominated the narrative of Civil War commemoration, thus leading to and reinforcing the militarization of American society.

Civil War monuments have served many purposes since their initial creation, from sites of grief to visual markers of White supremacy. Brown's observations in Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America contribute new insights into the growing literature on Civil War commemoration and the connections between these monuments and the changing nature of American society. He reframes the discussion of these memorials, demonstrating how the monuments are a form of cultural representation that link the Civil War with the creation of the military-industrial complex and the never-ending wars of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.

Kelly McMichael
Independent Scholar

Reconstruction Politics in a Deep South State: Alabama, 1865–1874. By William Warren Rogers, Jr. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2021. Acknowledgments, illustrations, notes, bibliography. Pp. 1, 439. $54.95 cloth. ISBN: 978-0817320744.)

Author of three earlier books on Reconstruction and the Civil War in Georgia and Alabama, University of North Georgia professor of history William Rogers has written what can only be called the comprehensive history of the politics of the Democratic and Republican parties during the nine years that followed the end of the Civil War in Alabama.

While Rogers does include a short chapter describing the ways in which ex-slaves embraced freedom during Reconstruction, the remainder of the book is reserved for those who want to dig deep into the inner workings of

the two state parties as they sought to control Alabama's state government. While there is the occasional mention of an issue with the economy or a policy coming from Washington that influences a political decision in Alabama, the bulk of the book recounts in great depth the actions of Alabama politicians–the White ones, almost all Democrats, who wanted to nullify Congressional Reconstruction and the Black ones, all Republicans, who had to have known their very freedom was at stake in the battle they were engulfed in.

For those readers who know their Mississippi Reconstruction history, Alabama was two years ahead of Mississippi in gaining readmission to the Union, and the Democrats there took back control of state government in 1874, the year before Democrats in Mississippi accomplished the same feat. The chapter describing the 1874 takeover is aptly titled "We will never submit to social equality." The "we" of course referred to White Democrats. The 102 footnotes attached to this chapter reveal an extraordinary amount of original research while the narrative would be compelling reading for any political junkie. By 1874, Washington in general and Grant in particular had largely tired of providing support to Black Republicans in the South. White Democrats took advantage of that national change of heart in Alabama in 1874 just as surely as their counterparts did in Mississippi a year later. Knowing that, while reading Rogers's account of that pivotal election, leaves one with the sense that the only reason Reconstruction "failed" was because of a lack of will from the nation's capital.

Early in the book Rogers quotes a voter saying, "Whigs and Democrats used to abuse each other very fiercely in speeches and newspapers but such things scarcely ever affected our social relations," and then makes clear that the politics and the campaigns that took place in Alabama during Reconstruction were something different. Rogers described it as "a distinct brand of politics emerged, characterized by an elemental fury and waged with ferocity," and makes sure his readers understand the source of the "elemental fury" animating White Democrats: their belief that African Americans really were inferior human beings and, thus, had no business participating in a government, much less controlling the government, that adopted laws and spent money on behalf of the entire state and its population. To quote the author: "The transcending question of race ultimately posed the greatest obstacle to sustained [Republican] party success."

Rogers gets it right in his Epilogue: "A war had been fought to preserve the racial order, and a new struggle, which Democrats determined would end differently, was underway." The "Lost Cause" doesn't stand a chance against this well-written and well-researched chronicle of Reconstruction in Alabama.

Jere Nash
Jackson, Mississippi

Fugitivism: Escaping Slavery in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1820–1860. By S. Charles Bolton. (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2019. Acknowledgements, appendix, notes, index. Pp. x, 302. $34.95 cloth. ISBN: 978-1-68226-009-9.)

In the long historiography of slavery, historians have employed a variety of terms to describe an enslaved person who left their place of bondage. Those who left temporarily are sometimes referred to as truants. Others, seeking a more permanent freedom among the southern wetlands, might be deemed maroons. But there is no term to distinguish the difference between urban and rural escapees, nor is there a way to differentiate between those who traveled north and those who remained in the area. In each case, these individuals are simply referred to as runaways. First used among enslavers to identify absent labor, the term "runaway" has been employed by scholars to mean much the same thing. But historian S. Charles Bolton contests the usage, arguing that it oversimplifies the experiences, motives, and goals of enslaved escapees. His book, *Fugitivism: Escaping Slavery in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1820–1860* endeavors to rectify this oversight. By offering up the term "fugitivism," Bolton hopes to emphasize "not only the ubiquitous nature of slave escapes, but also their collective impact on the South" (4).

Traditionally, historians have emphasized slave escapes as an act of resistance, meant to undermine the institution that held them in bondage. This interpretation, according to Bolton, is incomplete because it focuses "more attention on slavery rather than on the slave" (8). Fugitivism, while certainly an act of resistance, was also an individual choice motivated by personal desires for freedom, happiness, and self-actualization. As such, Bolton's work does not simply consider escapees as rebels, but also as people who were "willing to take dangerous risks to improve their physical, material, and psychological well-being" (8). To accomplish this, Bolton's study seeks to integrate the traditional narrative of escape with a careful consideration of the physical environment and historical context of an escapee's flight. In doing so, he has crafted a rich study that highlights the complex array of factors that made fugitivism a unique experience for each individual.

Fugitivism consists of eight chapters, each with a different thematic approach. The study begins by examining the cultural differences associated with enslaved peoples who sought permanent freedom versus those who temporarily fled from their work. Contextualizing these distinctions within the writings of Frederick Law Olmsted, Bolton demonstrates that even anti-slavery advocates disapproved of temporary fugitivism, associating it with laziness rather than a quest for freedom. The second chapter, by contrast, examines the legal and social evolution of slavery in the Lower Mississippi River Valley, particularly in Louisiana. Because Louisiana was a colony of both Spain and France prior to becoming part of the United States, this chapter offers an important opportunity to

consider the ways in which slavery was practiced and patrolled between all three governments. Following these early chapters, Fugitivism examines varying aspects of the escape experience. This includes an analysis of escapees' different destinations, the importance of the Mississippi River, and the plight of urban runaways. The last three chapters highlight the ways fugitivism shaped southern society by examining themes such as slave stealing, violence, and the Fugitive Slave Clause.

Ultimately, *Fugitivism* offers important contributions to the scholarship of slavery and enslavement in the United States. By contextualizing his work in the Lower Mississippi River Valley, Bolton demonstrates how the region's colonial background and geographical features created a unique environment for fugitivism. Furthermore, he illustrates how the practice of selling, stealing, and capturing escaped slaves, not only contributed to the regions' characteristic violence, but also exacerbated sectional tensions on the eve of the Civil War. And while there are times in which the book's narrative flow obscures the historiographical importance of the author's argument, Bolton's writing style makes the work accessible to both general interest readers and scholars alike. In short, Fugitivism does a tremendous job in reclaiming the voices, experiences, ambitions, and dreams of enslaved Americans who sought to find their own freedom.

Lindsay Rae Privette
Anderson University

Bernardo de Gálvez: Spanish Hero of the American Revolution. By Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Acknowledgements, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xi, 602, $38.00 cloth. ISBN: 9781469640792.)

By the time of the American Revolution, the Spanish Empire was on the decline. However, the Spanish still had a significant presence in the Americas and, following the defeat of the French in the Seven Years' War, were the chief rival of the British in the New World. Wishing to strike a blow against the British, the Spanish entered the American Revolution on the side of the colonists. Though their efforts were not as lauded as the French, the Spanish were instrumental in the War for Independence. Led by Bernardo de Gálvez, supreme commander of the Spanish forces in North America, the Spanish conducted military campaigns against British fortifications along the Mississippi River and later against Mobile and Pensacola. These raids hindered the British ability to concentrate all of its forces against the thirteen rebelling colonies and allowed the Continental army to survive. In his sweeping and extensive biography of Gálvez, Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia paints a picture of a competent and innovative career military man who is perhaps the best kept secret from the American Revolution.

Bernardo de Gálvez was an adventurer who enjoyed his military career full of action and daring. He rose rapidly through the Spanish

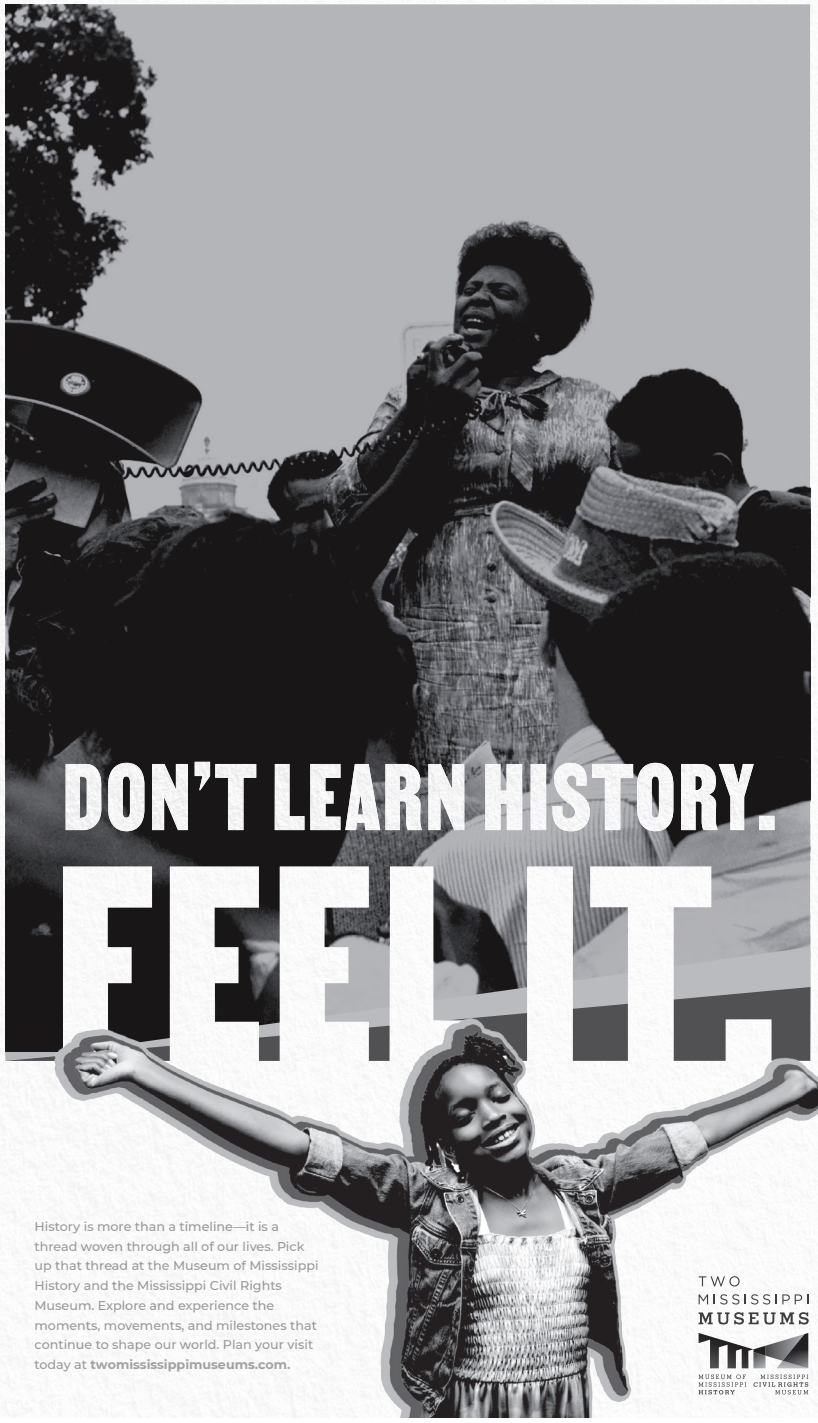
ranks, assisted by the patronage of his uncle, Jose de Gálvez. Bernardo's life offers a view of an individual deeply influenced by Enlightenment values as he was instrumental in the design and implementation of Spanish colonial reforms as well as the creation of new military technology. Gálvez reorganized Spain's northern frontier, bringing peace to a region rattled with Indian raids, corruption, and incompetence. At age thirty-three, Gálvez assumed his office as acting governor of Louisiana. There, Gálvez "transformed the province's rebellious French population into a bastion of the Spanish Empire in North America" (6). Gálvez's organized and strong leadership allowed the Spanish peace of mind when it came time to fight the British as they no longer had to worry about the local population.

In administering Louisiana, Gálvez fielded many accomplishments. He founded new towns and introduced new crops while overseeing the migration of settlers from the Canary Islands and Malaga. He managed to reorganize existing military units and created new ones and championed a policy of religious toleration. He also advocated for the principle of "public happiness," a form of welfare for poor peasants as Gálvez saw it as the duty of the government to take care of the governed. Perhaps Gálvez's most impactful policy during his time as governor was his stance on Native peoples. Having fought against the Apaches earlier in his military career, Gálvez understood the need to be impartial and acknowledge previous wrongs done to the indigenous population. With a more relaxed policy, Gálvez hoped that the Apaches would not feel threatened, which he deemed the main reason for previous attacks on Spanish settlements.

Most importantly, Gálvez facilitated most of the covert aid provided by the Spanish government to the American rebels. Though Spain was not a formal ally, Gálvez's movements against the British in the Southeast, as well as his providing of weapons, money, and other aid, helped the American war effort and proved to be a great benefit.

Quintero Saravia's biography of Gálvez draws its sources from Spanish, Mexican, and American archives. His extensive footnotes and near one-hundred-page bibliography reveal just the massive undertaking in this book. Though at times a bit dense, Saravia paints an impressive portrait of a revolutionary figure in every sense of the word. The book is accessible and does not take for granted any prior knowledge of the subject. At times, Saravia sometimes ventures too far into the life of Jose de Gálvez than he does Bernardo, but given the importance of Bernardo's uncle to his career, it is understandable. Saravia succeeds in "casting a light on the last decades of the Spanish Empire" through the eyes of a charismatic and passionate man (8). Though Gálvez lives on in America through places like his namesake Galveston, Texas, he is not as widely known. Perhaps Saravia's book will enlighten those who wish to learn more about the relatively known figure who played a pivotal role in the American Revolution.

James Bishop
Louisiana State University



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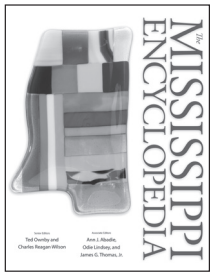

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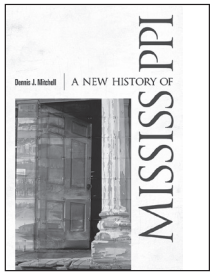

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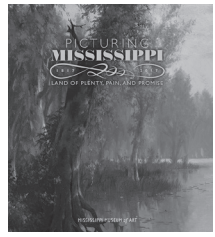

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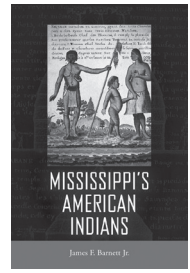

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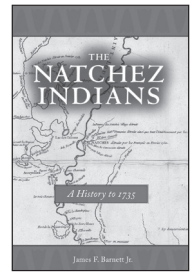

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