ABSTRACT

HULBERT, C. MATTHEW. Politics of the Black Flag: Guerrilla Memory and Southern Conservatism in the New South. (Under the direction of Dr. Susanna Michele Lee).

This thesis explores the intersection of Civil War memory and the history of conservative politics in the New South through two critical phases and its historiographic context. Phase one examines the partisan constructs of guerrilla honor, defeat, and extra-legal violence presented in *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (1877) by fire-eating Democratic newspaperman John Newman Edwards. Through his creation of "guerrilla memory," Edwards kindled a significant counter-narrative to traditional strands of early-Lost Cause mythology. More importantly, by harnessing class-based bushwhacker imagery and violence, Edwards expanded the socio-economic reach of the conservative Lost Cause and adjoined a newly important political function to social memory during Reconstruction. Phase two addresses broader concepts of race, gender, citizenship, and commemoration by tracing how guerrilla memory and its bushwhackers-turned-authors adapted to shifting standards of conservatism in the New South and attempted to situate themselves snugly within its elite ranks. While highlighting how turn-of-the-century bushwhacker memoirs adapted to increasingly powerful women, subsequent wars, and changing racial attitudes, practical light is also shed on the fundamental processes of memory itself—that is, the theoretical means by which strains of memory are created, updated, and even destroyed. Finally, this thesis includes a sweeping historiographic analysis of guerrilla memory; how historians and propagandists waged a partisan struggle over the memory of William C. Quantrill as an avenue to controlling guerrilla memory as a whole; and how the fallout from this debate

shaped—for better and worse—the study of Confederate guerrillas for decades. In the process of surveying these sources, methodological conclusions regarding the treatment of primary materials, allegedly "tainted" by the forces of social memory, are also addressed and put to rest. Overall, "Politics of the Black Flag: Guerrilla Memory and Southern Conservatism in the New South" seeks to illuminate that deeper understanding of the ways in which southern conservatism has been remembered will, in turn, lead to equally better understanding of the forces and environment that shaped it.

Politics of the Black Flag: Guerrilla Memory
and Southern Conservatism
in the New South

by
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DEDICATION

For Jerry & Becky

Go Gators.

BIOGRAPHY

Matthew C. Hulbert was born in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, and raised in Apopka, Florida. He received B.A.'s in History and Classical Studies from the University of Florida in 2008 and an M.A. in History from North Carolina State University in 2010. He will pursue a Ph.D. in History at the University of Georgia.

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Foremost, I owe tremendous thanks to my committee chair and main advisor, Dr. Susanna M. Lee, for patiently guiding the transformation of this project from half-cocked idea to thesis worthy of reckoning. Without her expertise, editorial prowess, and overall direction, this project would still probably be "Edwards" and "guerrillas" scribbled on a napkin. I cannot thank Dr. Katherine Mellen Charron enough for her always insightful and often hilarious conversation and advice. Minus her assistance, my analyses of conservative women and African American identity in the New South would have suffered greatly. Special thanks to Dr. Ken Vickery for taking the time to sit on my committee and for making my minor in African History an entertaining and worthwhile experience.

Not to be forgotten, a coterie of irreplaceable friends served as sounding boards and editors. Operating in these capacities, Laura Hepp-Bradshaw and Stephanie Schroeder more than earned their wings. Finally, no set of acknowledgments could be complete without thanking my parents, Jerry and Becky. They've seen fit to put up with me and my "creativity" for twenty-three years and show no signs of stopping.

Any errors henceforth are exclusively my own.

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INTRODUCTION

In the latter years of the American Civil War, General William Tecumseh Sherman embarked on his famous—or infamous, regional debate may smolder yet—march to the sea, leaving a charred portrait of Atlanta in rearview; thereupon, his campaign constituted a high water mark for wartime destruction in the regular theatre. In the irregular theatre, the realm of Confederate guerrillas, however, Sherman seemingly met his destructive match. The likes of Cole Younger, William "Bloody Bill" Anderson, William C. Quantrill, Harrison Trow, Samuel Hildebrand, Joseph Bailey, Sam McCorkle, and the James Brothers—Frank and Jesse—along with scores of other men called themselves "bushwhackers." And these men were not simply careless about fire.

Habitually operating outside the regular chain of command, these ultra-violent raiders routinely terrorized civilians, often regardless of ideological persuasion; utilized night skies, wooded roads, and their signature revolvers to ambush Union soldiers and exact personal revenge on neighbors; and understandably, became a controversial topic of discussion for both Union and Confederate brass between 1860 and 1865. Naturally, problems adjoin themselves to the investigation of such polarizing figures. Moreover, postbellum bushwhacker behavior does not make the task much easier. In 1870, Samuel Hildebrand lost a saloon shootout and with it his life. In 1882, Robert Ford shot Jesse James to death in Missouri, ending his famous crime spree. Other well-known ex-bushwhackers such as Frank James and Cole Younger had also been part of the fabled

James-Younger Gang, an association that landed Younger and his two brothers in prison for twenty-five years. Violent deaths such as these belie the fact that an overwhelming majority of bushwhackers returned peacefully to plow and field post-Appomattox. In short, the manner in which the vast minority of bushwhackers has infiltrated American popular culture—as Wild West gunslingers and maniacs—does not lend itself well to objective analysis from historians or the general public.

Reputations aside, these guerrillas and their memories have an important historical story to tell. More to the point, their memory *is* the story. In the last 140 years, polemicists, historians (unfortunately we cannot always draw clear distinction between the two), and ex-bushwhackers themselves have grappled to control guerrilla memory; that is, to construct a guerrilla narrative of the war designed to achieve specific socio-economic, cultural, or political ends. As a result of the burgeoning status of social memory, notable historians like David Blight, William Blair, Fitzhugh Brundage, and Gaines Foster have focused extensively on slave narratives, memorial days, commemoration activities, and elite characters—all within the context of the regular war. In 2003, T. J. Stiles' *Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War* represented one of the very few, if not the only focused look at guerrilla memory. The core of the book revolves around the idea that ex-bushwhacker Jesse James, well-known bandit and gunfighter in the postbellum period, actually committed his string of infamous robberies with strong political motivation. Essentially, Stiles contends that James amounted to a postwar Confederate terrorist of sorts. As evidence, Stiles provides the editorial work of John

Newman Edwards, widely credited as the architect of the Jesse James bandit mythology, and his arrangement with James to use the robber's celebrity status for partisan gain. Understandably, skeptics counter that James would have accepted help from any newspaper editor offering him the chance to spin criminal activity into a more acceptable form of "political activism," and Edwards certainly stood to gain from the venture as well. Nonetheless, Stiles' line of argument is convincing, it goes so far as to look *beyond* the war itself, and most importantly, focuses directly on guerrilla memory. With the exception of Stiles, guerrilla memory remains *virtually untouched* in a direct way by contemporary historians.

To properly place Edwards within the context of memory, class, and especially Reconstruction, it is important to mention that by way of his close friendship with fellow cavalryman General Joseph O. Shelby, Edwards considered himself an elite, cavalier Confederate—much more dissimilar than similar to the bushwhackers he glorified. Moreover, Edwards actually spent the first two years of Reconstruction in self-imposed Mexican exile. Along with other elite ex-Confederates such as Shelby, Sterling Price, and even Jubal Early, Edwards attempted to recreate an antebellum southern lifestyle at Carlota, the French-subsidized Confederate colony—complete with dirt cheap Mexican labor in place of African American slaves. In a letter dated April 6, 1866, Edwards railed to his sisters about Union commanders and Republicans in Congress. He described "Seward's 'little bells,' and Baker's pampered pimps," and also characterized how "Satan Sumner pulls one way" while "Iron Works Stevens [pulls] another." And, after calling

Ben Butler "bloated" and "bottled," he eventually summed the entire idea of Reconstruction up as a "carnival of broken heads."[1] In short, Edwards remained an Unreconstructed Rebel for the rest of his life.

Within this framework, guerrilla memory is best examined in two distinct phases, divided by two distinct characteristics. The first phase, spanning the end of the Civil War to roughly the 1890s, revolved around an intentional lower-class socio-economic identity and marked an apex for conservative political utility of the bushwhacker image. Chapter one, "Departing Virginia: Bushwhacking Reconstruction and Guerrilla Politics," explores how Democratic fire-eater John Newman Edwards shaped the first phase of bushwhacker identity through his book *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (1877). In the process of blueprinting how and why Edwards constructed new explanations of Confederate guerrilla honor and defeat, chapter one uncovers both an indispensible new counter-narrative to traditional arrangements of early-Lost Cause mythology and an equally important new political-usage for Civil War memory in the years promptly following the war.

The second phase, beginning approximately in 1903—with the publication of *Cole Younger's memoir, The Story of Cole Younger, By Himself*—highlighted a waning political utility for the bushwhacker image, but an upper-class vision of the New South and ex-bushwhackers within it crafted to realign the old guerrillas with southern

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[1] John Newman Edwards, "Letter to Sisters, April 6, 1866," courtesy of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, University of Missouri, Columbia.

conservatives yet again. Thus, chapter two, "Transforming Memory: Bushwhackers and New South Conservatism," appraises how bushwhackers proposed a specific vision of the New South in an attempt to update and reboot guerrilla memory for twentieth-century consumption. Consequently, by investigating how guerrillas-turned-authors like Cole Younger and John McCorkle adapted their memory narratives to deal with changing themes of race, gender, and commemoration, chapter two also reveals a great deal about early-New South conservatism itself—its leaders, its racism, its economics, its members deemed worthy of remembrance.

As a follow up to phases one and two of guerrilla memory, chapter three, entitled "The Ghosts of Bushwhacking Past, Present, and Future," chronicles the virtual-civil war between historians to define and control not only the historical record of guerrillas, but also how they should be remembered. With this in mind, chapter three deciphers why historians obsessed over guerrilla chieftain William C. Quantrill for nearly a century; why Quantrill, perhaps the best-known guerrilla of all, was never qualified to speak for most bushwhackers in the first place; and how the fallout from the battle to assign his legacy altered how historians view guerrilla memoirs and memory. Finally, chapter three confronts the future of guerrilla scholarship with particular emphasis on social memory and further explication into the twentieth century.

From *Noted Guerrillas* to bushwhacker memoirs to partisan accounts of Quantrill and the guerrilla war, these sources have all served as what Pierre Nora labels "a site of

memory." These sites, Nora opines, function as sanctified bits of history that attempt to recall or recycle the environment, *invented or real*, of the event in question. [2] Rather than offering historical representations of the South—Old or New—these narratives constituted attempts to define or reinstill specific aspects of southern culture and politics. Edwards wanted to restore Democratic political dominance, bushwhackers sought cultural rehabilitation, and various historians desired to either cut down or bolster the efforts of both. Examined collectively, they represent a critical new intersection of social memory and the history of southern conservatism. Instead of looking directly at benchmark conservative characters like Rebecca Latimer Felton or Henry W. Grady, social memory—by way of the Confederate guerrilla—presents an opportunity to work backwards and analyze how the worldviews and impact of Felton and Grady were remembered rather than just how or why they were created. As a window to the world of conservative politics, social memory constitutes a cultural barometer of political effect. Essentially, the methodological merger of remembrance and traditional political history utilizes sites of memory to create a portrait of political culture in which interpretation of memory and the forces that factored into their design can illuminate new conclusions about previously abandoned, stalemated, or difficult to approach subject matter.

Chapters one, two, and three aside, properly analyzing the role and uses of bushwhacker identity and memory in the ever-changing world of conservative southern

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[2] Pierre Nora, "Between History and Memory: Les Lieux de Memoire," *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 7-24.

politics during Reconstruction and in the New South remains critical to understanding postbellum southern conservatism. However, bushwhacker participation in conservative political culture reveals but half of the story guerrilla memory offers to tell. From lower-class to elite, from the crude backwoods of Missouri to the modern killing fields of France and Germany, from bold partisan counter-narrative to shrewdly conformist and self-serving, "Politics of the Black Flag: Guerrilla Memory and Southern Conservatism in the New South" also explores the creation, the evolution, and the motivating factors of birth and adaptation underlying a unique strain of Civil War memory. In short, what the evolution of guerrilla memory itself illustrates about the fundamental processes of social memory—how and by whom individual strains of memory are created, altered, and perhaps even destroyed—represents the second half of the larger story. Accordingly, I offer an examination of guerrilla memory, southern conservatism, and what the two tell us about the forces between 1870 and the present that shaped, changed, and continue to preserve them.

CHAPTER I

Departing Virginia: Bushwhacking Reconstruction & Guerrilla Politics

On May 5, 1889, the Kansas City *Times* eulogized, "It is not derogation to other good and brave men to say that the death of no man in Missouri would cause genuine pain and grief to so many and so different persons as that of John N. Edwards. Nor will the memory of any be so cherished."[3] Edwards, a Confederate veteran, newspaper editor, and proficient myth-maker, stood as a conservative vanguard in southern politics from the official close of regular violence at Appomattox in 1865 until his death in 1889.[4] Yet, as author of the controversial *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (1877), Edwards' area of expertise was anything but official or regular. Other movements commemorated fallen Confederates from the regular rank-and-file, but Edwards proclaimed that for the guerrilla "there was no funeral."[5] By most accounts, guerrillas— endemic to the Border States and Upper South—patrolled countrysides and rural communities under the cover of darkness, utilizing ambuscade and revolver to wreak

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[3] *John N. Edwards: Life, Writings and Tributes*, compiled by Jennie Edwards (Kansas City, MO: Jennie Edwards, 1889), 196-197.

[4] Following years of alcoholism, Edwards died before no witnesses on May, 4, 1889. Although listed as "inanation of the cardiac nerves," his official cause of death remains unclear at best. For primary account, see *John N. Edwards: Life, Writings, and Tribute*, 26-27.

[5] John Newman Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (St. Louis, MO: Bryan, Brand & Company, 1877), 13.

havoc on both Union troops and civilians unsympathetic to the cause.[6] While elite ex-Confederates scrambled to harness apotheosized imagery of Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, through *Noted Guerrillas* John Newman Edwards focused both gaze and pen squarely on the lowest, most reviled tier of guerrilla: the bushwhacker.

At first glance, Edwards appears to bestow commemoration upon a forgotten caste of Dixie's most brutal defenders. However, closer examination reveals the political agenda lurking beneath Edwards' literary sleight-of-hand; by presenting rarely-seen explanations for Confederate defeat and a variant construct of southern honor rooted in community self-regulation and extra-legal violence, Edwards sought to exploit partisan Reconstruction violence in an account of guerrilla memory tailor-made to bolster the appeal of early conservatism among lower-class whites. In penning *Noted Guerrillas*, John Newman Edwards aspired to wield social memory like a partisan hammer intended to restore concrete aspects of antebellum culture, particularly, its Democratic-dominated socio-political hierarchy.

During Reconstruction, other dissatisfied southerners took up partisan weapons as well. Prior to the Civil War, even the poorest white southerner took solace in the fact that black slaves had, and always would, occupy a rung beneath them on the social ladder. In the war's aftermath, that same tier of previously enslaved freedmen received suffrage and

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[6] In some cases, allegiance to the cause mattered less than longstanding personal vendettas, access to the materials of war, and seemingly random acts of violence.

played a significant role in several Reconstruction governments.[7] So, while poorer whites remained intransigent in their disdain for African Americans, elevated social status above them was no longer guaranteed. As a result, support from poor whites was no longer assured for the southern based Democratic Party either. Consequently, paramilitary dissent and vigilantism surfaced prominently in the form of the Ku Klux Klan, Red Shirt Organizations, and other White Leagues. In *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggle in the Rural South From Slavery to the Great Migration*, Steven Hahn expounds how the Ku Klux Klan categorically targeted "individuals, institutions, and developments" that supported Radical Republican plans to permanently elevate the social and political status of ex-slaves in the South.[8] Moreover, he asserts that "The geography of the Klan was, in essence, a map of political struggle in the Reconstruction South," and reveals that "the rifle clubs, the White Leagues, and the Red Shirts" amounted to "the true paramilitary wings of the Democratic Party." Ultimately, Hahn concludes that such violence "demonstrated that political power in the Reconstruction South grew out of the barrel of a gun."[9]

Edwards understood the extra-legal precedent well. As a newspaper editor prior to publishing *Noted Guerrillas*, he spent a decade glorifying the exploits of bushwhackers-turned-bandits Frank and Jesse James. His articles highlighted how Reconstruction

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[7]   On February 3, 1870 congress ratified the Fifteenth Amendment which effectively prohibited governments from denying suffrage to freedmen based on race, prior servitude, or color.

[8]   Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggle in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2003), 272.

[9]   Ibid., 283, 288.

politics forced the brothers into their role as proverbial southern Robin Hoods and attached a distinctly political motive to all of their robberies. Edwards transformed the violent James brothers into unlikely spokesmen for southern conservatism.[10] Around the time he published *Noted Guerrillas*, Edwards cut ties with the bandits, but the new book represented a broadening of tactics already established by his tenure as James Gang publicist. In essence, extra-legal political violence offered Edwards an encouraging contextual environment for *Noted Guerrillas*—in which he could use guerrilla violence during the war to encourage and stimulate Reconstruction violence among lower-class white southerners.

Historians of Reconstruction and the Lost Cause have generally presented southern efforts to *culturally* restore the region and explain the war as a linear, uniform movement that revolved around one monolithic narrative. Prominent studies of Civil War memory like Gaines M. Foster's *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* and William Blair's *Cities of the Dead* all focus on the commemoration of regular, often elite, soldiers and political figures. Early in the 1870s, a "Virginia coalition rooted in the Confederacy's and the South's older elite" came forward to "counteract what they perceived as the humiliation and transformation of the South that had followed northern victory." In *Ghosts of the Confederacy,* Foster details how this elite group of Virginians, led by ex-Confederate Jubal Early, founded the Southern Historical Society (SHS) in 1869 to establish a "true history of the war." The

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[10]   See T. J. Stiles, *Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2003).

"Virginia School," as they came to be known, desperately sought to explain Confederate defeat in a manner that would both preserve the South's tarnished honor and rehabilitate the reputations of elite Confederate commanders. Foster contends that following the death of Robert E. Lee in 1870, a new wave of southern nostalgia prompted the Virginians to "systematically define and exploit Confederate tradition" to "revitalize" what cultural remnants of the shattered Confederacy endured in the state. By 1876, when the SHS started publishing the *Southern Historical Society Papers* (SHSP), the organization had entrenched itself topically around a nexus of aristocratic cultural figures such as Robert E. Lee, Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, Jefferson Davis, and James "Jeb" Stuart. Essentially, "They employed the Confederate tradition to revive an earlier culture, to urge a return to the ways of a better time."[11]

According to the postwar environment sketched by David W. Blight and Michael Kammen in *Race and Reunion* and *Mystic Chords of Memory*, respectively, Edwards also belonged to a much deeper discourse of regional political turmoil and contested memories. The Presidential Election of 1876 clearly illustrated that no monolithic political power existed, North or South, a situation that effectively left various factions in both regions struggling to assume power.[12] Ex-Confederates, Northern Democrats, Scalawags, and Radical Republicans all grappled to achieve different end game scenarios

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[11] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 48-50, 56, 60.

[12] Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican from Ohio, was eventually declared the winner of the 1876 presidential election. In exchange for some 20 disputed electoral votes and victory over Samuel Tilden, a Democrat from New York, federal troops were pulled from the ex-Confederacy and Reconstruction effectively ended in 1877.

for Reconstruction: Redemption, Reunification, further punishment for the guilty South.[13]

As a Redemption-minded Bourbon Democrat, Edwards adduced a conservative—or

classically liberal—platform focused on less taxation, stimulation of independent

businesses, eliminating corruption in government, and contesting the merits of

prohibition. The postwar political morass afforded him the perfect opportunity to display

his signature panache. In a scathing critique of Radical Reconstruction, he wrote,

"Radicalism has no principle... Everything that was venerable and sacred in the country, it

has taught the people to despise. As far as it could it has defamed and derided the

constitution," and continued "States have been treated as conquered provinces, abject

criminals in the exercise of outrageous power."[14] Instead of building a cultural monument

to officials and commanders that had arguably placed disgruntled lower-class southern

whites in their state of economic plight, Edwards designed his narrative as a rabbit hole

of indoctrination for new Bourbon Democrats. Almost concurrent with the peak era of

Bourbon electoral power, Thomas F. Dixon, Jr., published his infamous novel *The*

Clansman. The book aimed to help both northern and southern audiences re-remember

the allegedly necessary nature of Reconstruction extra-legal violence through the

caricatured portrayal of lustful black freedman and noble white heroes. Eric Foner

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[13] According to David Blight, several different narratives of the war postulated by white supremacists, emancipationists, and reconciliationists vied for dominance in the immediate postwar period. He ultimately concludes that for the sake of a quick national healing process, white supremacists and reconciliationists allied against and squelched write emancipationists. See David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the University of Harvard Press, 2001). See also Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1993).

[14] Stiles, *Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War*, 246.

illustrates in *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* how the Klan served as a militant strongarm agency for the Democratic Party until the Enforcement Acts finally curbed their effectiveness by 1872.[15] However, he discloses that Klan rosters consisted mainly of elite planters, merchants, and lawyers. As claimed by one newspaper, the Klan was "not a gang of poor trash."[16] Therefore, Edwards' narrative synchronously tapped both veins of Reconstruction-era political violence—vigilantism and paramilitarism—but his call-to-arms intentionally targeted the "poor trash" with a specific agenda and political intent. Instead of simply hoping to suppress African American suffrage, violent symbolism and paramilitary undertones from *Noted Guerrillas* took on the dual-purpose of moblizing agent and propagandistic engine. In short, Edwards linked a tradition of extra-legal violence with a well-developed Bourbon platform.

Collectively, Early and other proponents of the Virginia School narrative concerned themselves little with contemporary politics. According to Foster, the Virginia School narrative of the war constituted a "revitalization movement," or tool to recall the halcyon days of southern culture and a "heroic vision of the Confederacy," not an instrument for political persuading.[17] Foster writes "the Virginians did not launch a political movement; they formed no party, offered no coherent political program or

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[15] Passed between 1870 and 1871, congress designed the Enforcement Acts to protect the voting rights of newly enfranchised African Americans.

[16] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1988), 425, 432-433.

[17] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 56-57.

ideology."[18] In his essay "Shaping Public Memory of the Civil War: Robert E. Lee, Jubal A. Early, and Douglas Southall Freeman," Gary Gallagher buttresses Foster's assertion, arguing that Early "exerted enormous influence over Confederate historiography in the late nineteenth century," but that the Virginians concerned themselves only with getting "the Confederate version of the war to print."

Accordingly, shifting attention to Edwards reveals a topical counter-narrative, but more importantly accents the *political* uses of Civil War memory in the war's immediate aftermath. In an 1866 letter, Edwards declared "It is, however, only a question of time, I think, before the Radicals triumph and commence their devastating work upon the South. Mr Johnson possesses neither the nerve, the vitriol, nor the widsom to make another Cromwell, and in the inevitable defeat of the Conservative party, the Confederate states must either submit to the greatest possible degree of social and political degredation, or appeal again to the sword. The latter I fear will never be done no matter what provocation is offered or what insult is given."[19] In short, a political fire burned brightly beneath Edwards' new maxims of guerrilla honor and defeat. Having served in General Jo Shelby's famous Iron Brigade and even having fought a duel in 1875 over remarks from a rival editor he deemed slanderous, Edwards was certainly no stranger to the sword. Much like his Lost Cause counterparts who focused on regular combatants, Edwards aspired to explain honor, death, and defeat on pro-southern terms within a similar methodological

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[18] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy,* 56.
[19] John Newman Edwards, "Letter to Tom, September 18, 1866," courtesy of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, University of Missouri, Columbia.

paradigm; but his efforts represented a distinct political turn, raising pen in place of sword to remobilize whites behind Democratic ideals and at the ballot box. Emboldened and contextualized by violent trends in Reconstruction politics and his grasp of the social bandit's appeal, Edwards attempted to channel the memory of Confederate guerrillas to displace northern political dominance and define a Lost Cause counter-narrative of the Civil War that would expand conservative appeal to lower-class white southerners. For the sake of pragmatism, Edwards' political work downplayed the role of aristocratic ideals, but he remained fully aware that socio-economic elites continued to govern the Party, and likely considered himself among their ranks. While *Noted Guerrillas* supplanted the ideals of elite commemorators by virtue of replacing them with politically viable guerrilla ideals, the book actually represented a cognizant effort to balance conservative appeal among whites and pushed strongly for the same end reality— returned southern political dominance and white supremacy. Therefore, compared to upper-crust Lost Cause narratives, guerrilla memory can be defined as both a literal guerrilla movement within the broader context of a conservative Lost Cause and as a counter-narrative strain of Civil War memory that revolved around the political usefulness of the Confederate bushwhacker.

Under these contextual circumstances, *Noted Guerrillas* represented a socio-political balancing mechanism to the early-Lost Cause movement; whereby, it simultaneously broadened popular appeal among white southerners and attached a distinct electoral component to an otherwise cultural campaign. To achieve these ends,

Edwards espoused a new construct of southern honor rooted in efficient violence

undertaken on behalf of the community. Thus, the bushwhackers' revolver, horse, and

appetite for vendetta became the propagandistic forces behind Edwards' claim that his

noted guerrillas had loyally defended lower-class white southerners from unjust Northern

invasion. Furthermore, *Noted Guerrillas* presented an alternative explanation for

Confederate defeat in which Edwards channeled the power of communalism and

detached bushwhackers and lower-class whites from the failures of elite Confederate

bureaucrats. Basically, he argued that for sake of preserving an honorable, cavalier

reputation, government officials refused to adopt the win-at-any cost tactical outlook of

Quantrill and his bushwhackers. As a result, he held, the Confederate government had put

the status of its own members before the well-being of everyday white southerners.

Shrewdly mindful of class and symbolism, John Newman Edwards developed and

unleashed guerrilla memory to bushwhack Reconstruction by championing the support of

lower-class whites for a conservative political agenda.

Methodologically speaking, the tactics of the SHSP were quite simple: elevate a

top-down coterie of venerable ex-Confederates to folk hero status, and, in the process of

deification, detach these "gallant knights" from the responsiblities of defeat.[20] According

to SHS lore, Robert E. Lee sat atop the hierarchy, while others like Thomas "Stonewall"

Jackson, James "Jeb" Stuart, and John Singleton Mosby followed him in a line of

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[20] James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 63-64.

succession that highlighted the "aristocratic cavalier" as the "ultimate symbol" of southern manhood, honor, and masculine self-worth.[21] This earliest version of memorial propaganda likened these elite officers to Christian crusaders who had defended the South in its time of greatest peril. Moreover, its designed focus on Virginians, the Army of the Northern Virginia, and lofty planter-class culture denoted a specific target demographic among socially elite Virginians and residents of the Upper South for SHSP consumership. This notion of recycled southern cultural ascendancy amounted to a promising bit of intra-regional propaganda for the well-to-do, but did little to address the plight of poor white southerners gripped in the penury of the postwar South and a shattered bank of southern traditions.

Edwards employed largely the same methodological structure of top-down officer deification to commemorate and propagandize guerrillas. The break, however, came with the assumption that the characters outlined in *Noted Guerrillas* were local insiders, or, somehow more vested in the socio-economic affairs of lower-class whites. In place of Robert E. Lee, William C. Quantrill headed the bushwhacker pantheon; in place of Virginia and the Upper South, Missouri and the Border States took center stage. Following Quantrill, notable bushwhackers such as Cole Younger, George Todd, William "Bloody Bill" Anderson, and the James brothers—Frank and Jesse—stood in for Jackson, Stuart, and Mosby. While Jubal Early and other SHS authors paid little, if any attention to the everyday Confederate private, Edwards deified the unheralded and individualistic

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[21]   Ibid.

bushwhacker wholesale. This deviation from the normal paradigm of Lost Cause commemoration provided a class-empathetic narrative of the war for lower-class whites and an entryway for Edwards into the political coliseum of class warfare.

Ignoring the fact that most bushwhackers openly partook in activities such as killing neighbors, burning crops, and outright theft, Edwards utilized his romantic prose and a never-ending steam of mythological metaphor to whitewash the behavior of his hierarchy; in fact, he virtually transformed Quantrill and company into posthumous lower-class spokesmen—with an allegorical twist—for the Bourbon platform. He compared George Todd's prowess as a warrior defending the community to the likes of Spartacus and Scipio. Per the affiliation with Spartacus, known for leading a rebellion of *white* slaves, Todd and his compatriots symbolized defenders of the "old-fashioned way" who would deliver poor conservatives from the bondage of northern radicals. For Quantrill, though, Edwards saved his flashiest invocations and took the opportunity to reaffirm his place atop the pyramid of guerrilla commemoration. Edwards claimed that Quantrill rode like Death with a "pale face."[22] He likened killings credited to Quantrill to those executed by the Angel of Death. Further, he steeped Quantrill in Christ-like attributes that would solidify his dedication to lower-class white southerners whose political support the Bourbon Democrats greatly depended upon. As told by Edwards in *Noted Guerrillas*, Quantrill foresaw his own death; yet, he fought on for the community regardless. As a martyr in the biblical sense, the book alleged that Quantrill gave his life

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[22]   Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 62, 116.

to save the southern people.[23] Finally, he wrote of Quantrill, "He was a living, breathing, aggressive, all-powerful reality—riding through the midnight, laying ambuscades by lonesome roadsides, catching marching columns by the throat, breaking in upon the flanks and tearing a suddenly surprised rear to peaces; vigilant, merciless, a terror by day and a superhuman if not supernatural thing when there was upon the earth blackness and darkness."[24] In this way, Edwards adopted the top-down system of character deification as employed by the SHS, but endowed his subjects with specific attributes designed to garner cultural support as a bridge to political allegiance from his audience.

SHAPING GUERRILLA HONOR

Divergent expressions of honor presented by Edwards and the SHS illuminated yet another critical break in the early-Lost Cause movement. The Virginia School imbued its accounts of the war with high-handed ideas of gentlemanly conduct and civilized warfare. In that regard, Robert E. Lee's sense of duty, implacable discipline, and Christian virtue served as a flashpoint for SHS glory and honor. They highlighted the paternalistic nature of Lee and Jackson as guiding lights, metaphorically underlining how elite planters had stood on traditional cavalier principles to preserve southern cultural dominance.[25] Edwards, inversely, espoused a radically different construct of southern honor. The job of the soldier, he brazenly contended, amounted to the simple act of

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23   Ibid., 390, 438.

24   Ibid., 31.

25   Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 47, 59.

killing—by any means necessary. Edwards' account of the war glorified extra-legal and *necessary* brutality rather than tenets of gentlemanly conduct or cavalier honor that had done little to actually achieve victory.

During the war, the manner in which bushwhackers had embraced brutality and massacre made them a liability to the honor of the Confederate high command. During Reconstruction, the ways in which Edwards not only embraced, but honored extra-legal brutality through guerrilla memory further ostracized bushwhackers from elite commemoration efforts like those of the Virginia School. Illuminating, then, is the manner in which regular and guerrilla constructs of honor dealt specifically with illegal forms of massacre. Edwards' blatant description of Quantrill's raid on Lawrence, Kansas, in 1863, as a "massacre" sheds immense light on his construction of "guerrilla honor."[26] In the course of the premeditated raid, Quantrill and his men singled out and killed dozens of suspected Union sympathizers. Although cautious in his presentation of gory detail, Edwards admitted to and flaunted the brutal nature of the attack. He ultimately deemed it a necessary and justified act undertaken by men fighting for southern survival. Edwards' depiction of the Lawrence Massacre grounded his counter-narrative in the current state of Reconstruction violence and called lower-class whites to fight for similar political survival. In contrast, SHS propagandists attempted to whitewash and conceal a massacre overseen by noted Lost Cause personality Nathan Bedford Forrest at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, in 1864. Accounts of the battle vary; several of them indicated that

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[26] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 190, 205.

Forrest's men massacred over two-hundred black Union soldiers. Hardly a display of cavalier duty and discipline, the coverup that ensued illustrated how differently each narrative defined and bestowed honor.[27]

To propagate guerrilla honor to lower-class whites effectively, Edwards employed a slew of symbols designed to spur positive recollection of bushwhackers, their honorable service to the community, and the political traditions to which they were now posthumously linked. Long-storied as the guerrilla weapon of choice, the revolver served Edwards as a vital icon of guerrilla honor. As a tool of death, it represented justified-homicide within the community; in terms of Reconstruction violence, it represented a partisan call-to-arms, encouraging lower-class white men to openly embrace local paramilitary politics. For example, Edwards' story of bushwhacker Cole Younger sneaking off nightly to practice with his pistol illustrated the point well. Younger, whose father had allegedly been killed by Union men, joined Quantrill's guerrilla band to avenge his death—and did so with a confirmed revolver kill at "seventy-one measured yards."[28] In similar fashion, Edwards steeped William Quantrill's pistol proficiency with symbolic meaning. According to Edwards, Quantrill secretly gained entry to and then murdered nearly an entire company of soldiers to avenge his slain brother. As the story went, each assassinated Union soldier was found with a bullet hole in the forehead—fired

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[27] Michael Fellman, Lesley J. Gordon, and Daniel E. Sutherland, eds., *This Terrible War: The Civil War and Its Aftermath* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 168-169.

[28] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 55-56.

from Quantrill's revolver.[29] So, while both stories illuminate how bushwhackers

physically brandished the revolver to correct wrongs committed against the community

by cultural outsiders, more importantly, their merciless achievements theoretically

preserved the traditional right of white southerners to regulate their personal affairs with

community-sanctioned violence. Through both folk heroes and conservative spokesmen,

guerrilla honor fundamentally endeared bushwhackers to lower-class whites by

promoting a construct of honor based in traditional symbolism and ritual individualism

that glorified and encouraged paramilitary Reconstruction violence.

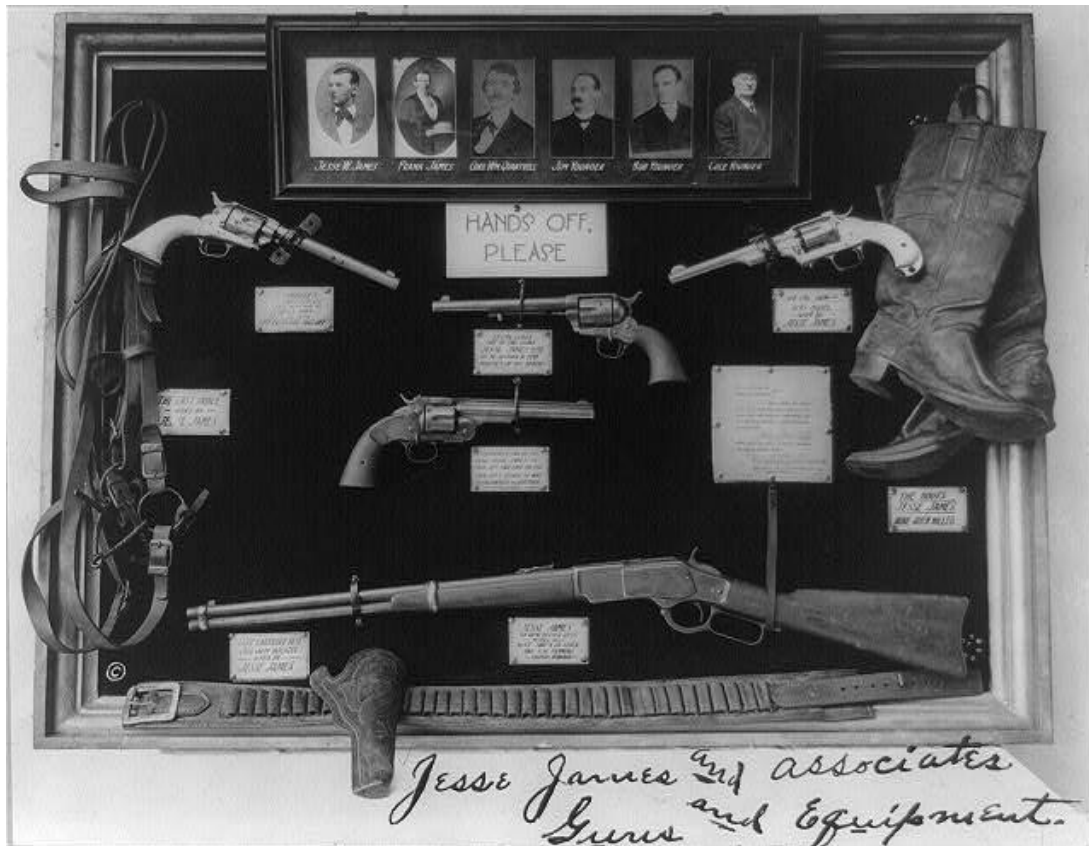[29] Ibid., 31-35; for full account see Chapter 5.

Figure 1: A display of the weapons carried by bushwhackers and later harnessed by Edwards as symbols of extra-legal violence and masculine guerrilla honor.

A variety of firearms wielded by Jesse James, William C. Quantrill and Cole Younger. "Jesse James and associates. Guns and equipment." LC-USZ62-7777 (b&w film copy neg.), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA.

In similar fashion, vendetta posed as an overarching and potent symbol of guerrilla honor and white political activism. Stories like those of Younger and Quantrill avenging murdered family members appear throughout *Noted Guerrillas*. Edwards peddled the hyperbole-laden stories to signify a number of key points, none more important than establishing the lower-class appeal of Quantrill, Younger, and the rest of his noted guerrillas. Appropriately, then, he recalled numerous stories of oppression and vengeance involving William "Bloody Bill" Anderson, Jesse and Frank James, and John McCorkle. In 1862, two of Anderson's sisters had been captured and imprisoned in what Edwards labeled a "dilapidated tenement" by a special group of Union soldiers formed to "persecute women and prey upon non-combatants." Eventually, he continued, the building collapsed and killed several prisoners—one of the Anderson women included. As a result, Edwards argued that foreign disruption of local communities *created* men like Anderson and the vendettas that allegedly fueled their ruthless guerrilla campaigns.[30] Thus, instead of rewarding the haughty honor of elite ex-Confederates, he portrayed Quantrill and company as having struggled epically to protect family and personal property—the basic pillars of any grassroots campaign. Edwards declined to include, however, that Quantrill never had a brother, nor did he note that many bushwhackers hailed from prominent slave-owning families. In fact, the scholarship of Don R. Bowen largely dispels the fraudulent notion that most of Edwards' noted guerrillas belonged to the lower-class at all. Many of the most brutal, Bowen asserts, fought so desperately to

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[30]   Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 27, 164-166.

preserve the holdings of their mildly affluent families.[31] Regardless, symbolic portrayals

of oppression like the story of Quantrill's phantom brother and subsequent vendetta

ingratiated bushwhackers and their counter-narrative with a broader demographic of

lower-class whites through the perception of a shared wartime experience. As a whole,

guerrilla honor channeled the power of cultural symbols such as the revolver, horse, and

vendetta to transform the bushwhacker into a viable spokesman and socio-economic

balancing apparatus for the conservative Lost Cause movement. This partisan

metamorphosis cemented a strong bond between wartime guerrilla violence and postwar

political violence, constituting a newly important electoral element to the early-Lost

Cause.

Much like his revolver, the bushwhacker's horse also wielded immense

metaphorical weight as an emblem of guerrilla honor. In *Noted Guerrillas*, Edwards

contended that, "Well authenticated instances are on record of a guerrillas horse standing

guard for his master," and further noted that readers could "Create a centaur out of

Bucephalus, and the idea is fixed of their swiftness and prowess."[32] Inherent to nearly

every skirmish, raid, or violent confrontation in the book, Edwards presented Quantrill

and his men as master horsemen. Of William "Bloody Bill" Anderson, Edwards declared

that "Horsemanship and prowess seemed as natural to the Missourian as aristocracy and

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[31] Don R. Bowen, "Guerrilla War in Western Missouri, 1862-1865: Historical Extensions of the Relative Deprivation Hypothesis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19, no. 1 (1977), 30-51.

[32] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 15; the name "Bucephalus" references the horse that carried Alexander the Great into several battles.

the sea were to Venice." Moreover, he insisted that Anderson had "gathered about him a band of centaurs, and rode at a gallop into terrible notoriety," and even alleged that Anderson could "swing himself to the earth and pick up a pistol as he galloped."[33] This equestrian aptitude, when coupled with imagery of the unparalleled gunfighter, bolstered the larger-than-life folk hero status of bushwhackers among downtrodden white southerners. Paramount, though, is how this "hell on four hooves" persona replaced the traditional portrait of an elite cavalier horseman in Edwards' counter-narrative with a blue-collar Robin Hood. Instead of forcing non-elite whites to identify culturally with high Confederates like Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, Edwards thereby provided the ultra-conservative bushwhacker as a class-sympathetic alternative. Edwards retooled traditional tokens of southern honor and identity to cultivate a strand of guerrilla honor that granted early-Lost Cause conservatism a wider degree of socio-economic appeal among lower-class whites.

EXPLAINING GUERRILLA DEFEAT

Framing defeat on positive terms for the conquered Confederacy represented priority number one for Jubal Early and the SHS. In rhetoric approaching the absurd, they transformed Robert E. Lee's *crushing loss* at the Battle of Gettysburg into a *positive* and powerful engine of pro-southern propaganda. To cleanse Lee's reputation of any tactical

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[33] Ibid., 164-166.

fault, SHS advocates relied on two main excuses, or "victory factors" to mitigate blame and preserve Confederate cultural superiority. First, they gathered all of the blame for defeat at Gettysburg and saddled it squarely on the shoulders of General James Longstreet. Longstreet became infamous for supposedly ignoring Lee's orders and attacking too late on the second day of the battle. He made a doubly attractive target following his postwar defection to the Republican Party. Through Longstreet, Early and his cohorts expunged Lee's guilt in the matter because his orders—orders that would have allegedly assured victory—had not been followed properly. Moreover, SHS polemicists argued that if the Confederacy had achieved victory at Gettysburg, subsequent momentum would have propelled them to total victory. Foster offers that this explanation was most appealing because "it allowed them to believe success had been possible" and in lieu of Faulkner, writes that "for the Virginians it was not yet dawn on 2 July, Longstreet was not yet late, and it all still hung in the balance."[34] The second victory factor highlights a vast disparity in the size of Union and Confederate armies. Known as the "overwhelming numbers scenario," it reasoned that southern soldiers had outfought their northern counterparts on a man-to-man basis, but the North simply had too many men.[35] Overwhelming numbers left southern masculinity intact and stole a moral victory from the closing jaws of Reconstruction. Both factors helped the SHS define Confederate defeat favorably for elite southerners and, in the process, provided any necessary rehabilitation to Robert E. Lee's reputation.

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[34] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 58.
[35] Ibid., 57-60.

To detach his noted guerrillas from Confederate defeat and further increase their grassroots appeal, Edwards constructed a cultural framework supported by intentional separation from the failed Confederate government and bushwhacker devotion to local communities and traditions. According to historian Michael Fellman in his book *Inside War: The Guerrilla War in Missouri During the American Civil War*, irregular combatants must be divided into three categories: the cavarly raider, the partisan ranger, and the bushwhacker. The first two tiers, he contends, fought within and with the support of the Confederate high command; while the bushwhacker, generally utilized the fog of war to partake in self-serving criminal behavior—rape, theft, murder. John Singleton Mosby, also known as the "Grey Ghost" was a well-known partisan ranger, while John Hunt Morgan, Joseph Shelby, and Nathan Bedford Forrest all operated as cavalry raiders during the war. From almost the beginning of *Noted Guerrillas*, Edwards attempted to set his subject, the bushwhacker, apart from other regular and irregular units to disengage them from Confederate defeat. He utilized precedents supposedly set by Francis Marion during the American Revolution to establish an individualistic persona for bushwhackers that tied them directly to the community. Because Marion, a well-known guerrilla, never broke contact with the government, Edwards refused to consider him a "true American guerrilla."[36] Furthermore, by emphasizing a divorce from government, Edwards simultaneously justified extra-legal political violence during Reconstruction and addressed a potential source of electoral apathy from his target audience. Bushwhackers,

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[36] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 29-30.

at least according to Edwards, had operated largely outside the Confederate chain of command to preserve communal order. Therefore, paramilitarism and vigilantism existed as justifable extensions of the same extra-legal violence honored in *Noted Guerrillas*. The dialectic between Edwards' anti-government disconnect and support for Reconstruction political activity bolsters the idea of guerrilla memory as a vehicle for postwar conservatism—pragmatically designed to re-collect lower-class support for the same upper-class conservatives *Noted Guerrillas* allegedly decried.

Cleverly, Edwards utilized the concocted dialogue of a meeting between bushwhacker chieftain William C. Quantrill and the Confederate high command in Richmond to legitimize guerrilla brutality, but more importantly, to delineate how universal implementation of guerrilla tactics could have turned the tides of war favorably for the South. During the encounter, Quantrill allegedly claimed he would "wage such a war and have such a war waged as to make surrender forever impossible." Throughout *Noted Guerrillas*, he favored the immediate execution of prisoners, operated under a no-surrender policy, and frequently employed massacre to break up black and foreign enlistment efforts. According to Edwards, Confederate officials rejected Quantrill's strategy and the meeting concluded with Quantrill stating, "I would win the independence of my people or I would find them graves."[37] In reality, Quantrill journeyed to Richmond with the hope of receiving a commission under the Partisan Ranger Act of 1862, which, in effect, would have brought his band of bushwhackers under the official umbrella of the

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[37] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 156-158.

Confederate command. However, Richmond's rejection of Quantrill's commission request furnished Edwards with a better opportunity to disconnect Quantrill from the command and highlight his "independent" appeal.

Quantrill's fictional frustration revealed two critical attributes of guerrilla narrative explanations for Confederate defeat. Foremost, by illustrating how elite-Confederates had rejected Quantrill's "protect the people at any cost" attitude to preserve the "reputation of the army," Edwards implied a deep socio-economic divide among white southerners, and in place of upper-class bureaucrats, offered locally-minded guerrillas as the solution to the South's problems during the war and, by extension, after the war as well for lower-class whites. Second, because bushwhackers had intentionally operated outside the regular chain of command, Reconstruction era paramilitary violence existed within the same tradition of extra-legal violence honored in *Noted Guerrillas*. Conveniently enough for Edwards, several elite-Confederate figures, including Robert E. Lee had voiced disapproval of guerrilla units, fearing that their "lack of discipline" would reflect poorly on the entire army.[38] Even Confederate raider John Singleton Mosby—a guerrilla in his own right—sought to separate himself from the stigma of Edwards' bushwhackers. In a letter, he tagged Jesse James a "lady killer" and described William C. Quantrill with equal disgust.[39] Through Quantrill's story, Edwards suggested that men

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[38] Clifford Dowdey and Louis H. Manarin, eds., *The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee* (New York: Bramhall House, 1961), 688-689.

[39] John Singleton Mosby, *Take Sides With the Truth*, edited by Peter A. Brown (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 32, 97, 134.

like Lee and Mosby had shunned extra-legal violence during the war with grave

consequences for the South; therefore, he called upon his readers not to allow the same

mistake twice.

To completely explicate the lengths that bushwhackers had endeavored to "protect

the people," Edwards glorified the Lawrence Massacre as the apex of guerrilla efficiency

and dedication. Much like Lee at Gettysburg, Quantrill's own stature as a viable

figurehead for guerrilla memory rested on Edwards' ability to spin the incident into a

propagandistic soundboard. In reality, the 1863 raid on Lawrence, Kansas, involved a

surprise attack and the wholesale slaughter of the town's unwitting residents. For

Edwards, the carnage at Lawrence represented a physical manifestation of the "type of

war" Quantrill had cruelly promised to wage in Richmond. More substantial though, is

how the Lawrence Massacre shared common logic with acts of postwar political

brutality. Case in point, the Colfax massacre—in which some two-hundred and eighty

African American militiamen in Colfax, Louisiana, were slaughtered by white rioters on

Easter Sunday in 1873—illustrates how politics and violent conflict remained intertwined

even after the war and throughout Reconstruction. In fact, following several violent

confrontations, including the Colfax Massacre, Steven Hahn maintains that the Supreme

Court failed to discourage paramilitary political violence by declaring acts to prevent it

unconstitutional.[40] He concludes, "What could, therefore, have been a red or yellow light

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[40] A well-documented massacre of freedmen killed post-surrender by southern paramilitaries on Easter Sunday,
       April 13, 1873, in Colfax, Louisiana.

in the face of paramilitarism turned into a green one."[41] Basically, as the revolver, horse, and vendetta symbolized a partisan construct of guerrilla honor, massacre and disassociation with the failed Confederate state symbolized an explanation for defeat designed to lengthen the socio-economic reach of the conservative Lost Cause and adjoin a new degree of political activism to the Movement in the 1870s.

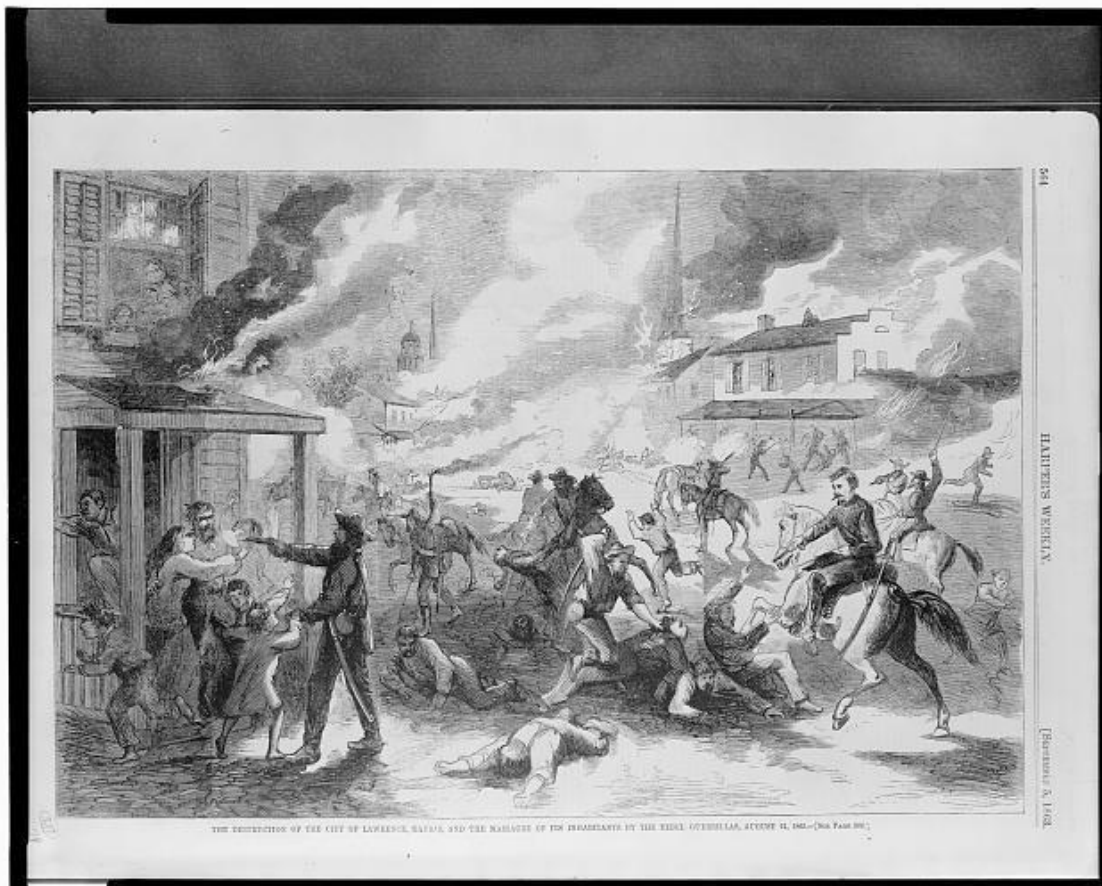[41] Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet*, 295.

Figure 2: This drawing illustrated the carnage at Lawrence. Note the female figure (far left) attempting to shield her husband from an attacking bushwhacker who, unlike in Edwards' description of the raid, does not seem to be lowering his pistol despite her efforts.

"The destruction of the city of Lawrence**,** Kansas, and the massacre of its inhabitants by the Rebel guerrillas, August 21, 1863," as originally printed by *Harper's* weekly in 1863. Illus. in AP2.H32 1863 (Case Y) [P&P], LC-USZ62-134452 (b&w film copy neg.). Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

To further solidify the disconnect from the failed Confederate government and highlight the paramilitary success of the bushwhacker, Edwards laid out a deeply set relationship between his noted guerrillas and local communities. He associated them with various local institutions and causes in a bid to present bushwhackers as devoted—albeit extra-legal and violent—advocates for lower-class white southerners. Under this model, Edwards maintained, guerrillas had dedicated themselves more to family, tradition, and local space than any overarching national government, which, by definition usurped the power of communities to self-regulate. Ironic given Edwards' tendency to weave myth, within the framework of *Noted Guerrillas* and his broader political agenda, he claimed to advance a Democratic identity that dealt "frankly and justly with the people." The reborn Party, he alleged, needed simply to regain its "discipline of the old days" but "No lullaby rhetoric, singing a soft, low song at the cradle of interpretation" would be necessary for this incarnation.[42] That said, he cautiously avoided detaching bushwhackers completely from the individual causes the Confederacy fought for—like slavery—but instead disconnected them from its blatantly upper-class ruling apparatus. By including local organizations and institutions associated with communal governance, Edwards infused his guerrilla narrative with themes designed to theoretically re-empower lower-class whites and spur them to political action during Reconstruction. As he wrote in an 1887 *Times* editorial, "The old Democratic Party regarded the individual as the unit of society, upon which the integrity of society depended entirely. The personal liberty of the

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[42] *John N. Edwards: Life, Writings and Tributes*, 91.

citizen."[43] Freemasonry and other mainstays of local autonomy and individualism enjoyed a prominent role throughout *Noted Guerrillas*. In several examples of local loyalty trumping distant national goals, Edwards noted that guerrillas spared "true southern men" because bushwhackers recognized them as members of the local Masonic Temple. Even during the bloodshed at Lawrence, Edwards proposed that experienced killer John Jarrette spared the lives of multiple men because they "gave him the Masonic sign of recognition."[44]

With this role of community defender or, what Eric Hobsbawm would call a "social bandit," Edwards presented an alternative—extra-legal—means of retaking political power and endeared bushwhackers to the lower-class whites he sought to reconnect with Bourbon conservatism.[45] Moreover, these tales of guardianship presented local, short-term victories on a daily basis intended to replace bad news from regular battlefields like Gettysburg or Antietam. One such deed of social justice involved the rescue of an innocent southern youth from an entire marching column of Union militia. After hearing of the boy's capture, five guerrillas, according to Edwards, stalked and captured a numerically superior force of "millish" just to free him.[46] In addition to children, Edwards attempted to weave women into his narrative. During the Lawrence raid, he highlighted the heroism of women in defending their husbands, but also noted

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[43] Ibid., 90.

[44] Freemasonry made several appearances throughout the narrative; specifically see Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 17, 148, 197.

[45] See Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1959).

[46] For full account of rescue see Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 113; the term "Millish" was slang for militia.

how guerrillas yielded to feminine virtue, unlike Union men who killed without proper

discretion or motivation. Clearly, Edwards fully understood the importance of attracting

not just men, but also women from the lower-class homefront with his propagandistic

narrative. In one passage, he noted that "It is probable that the nature of the work

performed by the Southern women during the war will never be understood fully nor to

its most important extent." He further stated that "Without [women's] aid, guerrilla

warfare would have been heavily handicapped." As a final link to the community, he

pushed a deep-seated connection to the land—domain of the "American pastoralist"—

inhabited by his lower-class audience. Ultimately, he sought to cement the relationship

between local space and guerrillas as its best protectors. He described George Shepherd,

another well-known killer, as having had intimate knowledge of "all the roads and

streams, all the fords and passes, all the modes of egress and ingress; all safe and

dangerous places; all the treacherous non-combatants and the trustworthy ones—

everything, indeed, the few needed to know who were fighting the many."[47] After the

war, the notion of the night riding, ultra-violent folk hero devoted to protecting the

traditional boundaries of the community and personal property was clearly intended to

strike a chord with lower-class whites and encourage them to participate in similar forms

of partisan violence.

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[47]   Ibid., 54, 196, 284.

ASSESSING GUERRILLA POLITICS

The immediate political impact of guerrilla memory can be derived less through exact

sales figures or literacy rates than by the prominence and success of its architect, John

Newman Edwards, and his political ideology. Gaines Foster argues explicitly that other,

elite groups of the early-Lost Cause movement failed to effectively "mobilize the South,"

but that their accounts of the war proved vitally important for later, more powerful

enforcers of Lost Cause sentiment like the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC)

and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). Ironically, he concludes that the

"aristocratic bias of the groups surely discouraged popular support."[48] In that light, the

anti-aristocratic bias inherent to guerrilla memory presented an opening to gain popular

support. As a result of long-term alcoholism, Edwards died in 1889. Despite this, *Noted*

Guerrillas remains the benchmark collection of bushwhacker mythology to this day.

Moreover, Edwards' personal popularity in Missouri and abroad sheds light on the

success of his best-known work. The anthology of works compiled by his widow Jennie

included dozens of personal tributes from community leaders and local newspapermen—

all of which proclaimed his endless contributions as a soldier, pundit, and author.

Congressmen, Adjutants Generals, and judges writing from Missouri to New York and

Chicago to Richmond paid their respects. More importantly, their correspondence

highlighted Edwards' status as a prominent political insider on both state and national

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[48]   Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 61-62.

circuits.[49] Furthermore, a slew of copy-cat memoirs composed by ex-bushwhackers like Harrison Trow and John McCorkle all plagiarized large tracts of the book verbatim. The fact that these men stood to gain substantially from cleansing their own sordid wartime reputations makes it unlikely that they would have adopted Edwards' counter-narrative had it not already displayed a substantial degree of success in endearing bushwhackers to southern whites and many others.[50] Finally, the benefits of hindsight warrant that Edwards' success be measured alongside the overall success of the Bourbon Democrats. In an 1887 *Times* editorial entitled "On Democracy," Edwards outlined how the Democratic Party had historically recovered from impending political ruin to defend the democratic principles of the United States. Labor, Whigs, Federals, Carpetbaggers, and Radical Republicans—all threatened at times but failed to conquer effectively southern politics, according to Edwards.[51] Therefore, Grover Cleveland's election to the Presidency of the United States in 1885 and 1893 represented yet another victory and a high water mark for the Bourbon platform. While only a fraction of the credit for Cleveland's victory may rest on the shoulders of Edwards or his noted guerrillas, it does at least illustrate the widespread popularity of the message guerrilla memory helped carry. In colloquial terms, Edwards played a minor role, but on the winning team.

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[49] *John N. Edwards: Life, Writings and Tributes*, 187-190.

[50] See Coleman Younger, *The Story of Coleman Younger, By Himself* (Chicago: The Henneberry Company, 1903); Harrison W. Trow, *Charles W. Quantrell* (Texas: J. P. Burch, 1923); and Joseph Bailey, *Confederate Guerrilla: The Civil Memoir of Joseph M. Bailey* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2007).

[51] *John N. Edwards: Life, Writings and Tributes*, 88.

CONCLUSION

Published by Democratic hardliner John Newman Edwards in 1877, *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border*, comprised the literary backbone of a guerrilla memory counter-narrative. With the book, Edwards attempted channel the memory of Confederate bushwhackers to displace northern political dominance and define a Lost Cause counter-narrative of the Civil War that would expand conservative appeal to lower-class white southerners. Much like his socially elite counterparts in Richmond—the Southern Historical Society—Edwards employed a top-down system of deification designed to explain Confederate defeat and restore the South's tarnished honor. Similar to how Jubal Early, Wade Hampton, and Fitzhugh Lee obsessed over Robert E. Lee or Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson as the ultimate symbols of southern manhood, John Newman Edwards elevated violent, extra-legal characters like William C. Quantrill, William "Bloody Bill" Anderson, and Jesse James, allegedly members of the lower-class, to equal positions of folk hero status. In doing so, Edwards presented a unique strain of southern honor constructed around brutally efficient violence and community self-regulation that justified and encouraged Reconstruction political violence. As an explanation for Confederate defeat, *Noted Guerrillas* shifted away from beleagured General James Longstreet and the "overwhelming numbers" scenario; instead Edwards proposed an alternative that de-emphasized government linkages and reinforced a cultural lineage of southern political violence. Finally, while the *Southern Historical Society Papers* catered to elite inhabitants of Virginia and the Upper South, socio-economically ostracized whites

across the former-Confederacy constituted Edwards' target audience. In short, guerrilla memory tapped prominent veins of Reconstruction era paramilitarism and political turmoil to overhaul a band of unrepentant killers into folk-hero spokesmen for the early-Lost Cause movement. Called the "Napoleon of journalism," and a "partisan in its strictest sense," Edwards' personal and literary celebrity indicated that his memory narrative successfully helped expand the socio-economic parameters of postwar conservatism through the Lost Cause by championing the political support of lower-class whites. For that reason, guerrilla memory clearly represented an important political break with and counter-narrative within the early-Lost Cause commemoration movement. Fundamentally, though, through such interaction with and within the early-Lost Cause, guerrilla memory also contributes to a more scopic process of amending and expanding how historians contemplate the intent and function of social memory.

CHAPTER II

Transforming Memory: Bushwhackers & New South Conservatism

In 1870, ex-Confederate bushwhacker Samuel Hildebrand published his autobiographical account of the guerrilla conflict that had raged across Missouri and the other Border States during the entire American Civil War. Bushwhackers like Hildebrand roamed Arcadian back roads; brandished revolver and bowie knife; imposed measures of brutality uncommon to the regular war; and many, unlike Hildebrand, failed to outlive the Confederacy. *The Life of the Sam Hildebrand*—released just two years before his death in a bar room shootout—presented readers with explicit and allegedly undiluted accounts of theft, ambush, and vendetta-fueled violence. Composed immediately after the war, the memoir lacked any apposite connection to the Lost Cause or New South. Hildebrand's memoir, and others resembling it, maximized violent symbolism and brash backwoods sentiment to establish a sympathetically viable vision of the Confederate South dependent on lower-class support. In this light, Hildebrand's narrative represented the basic ideas and symbolism espoused by John Newman Edwards, but in memoir form. With later memoirs, however, new narratives emerged to replace the Hildebrand/Edwards generation's then impolitic model of the South and the place of guerrillas within it. Indeed, ex-bushwhackers Coleman Younger (1903), John McCorkle (1914), Joseph

Bailey (1920), and Harrison Trow (1923) penned their own memoirs to lay the

foundation for a New South.

With southern extra-legal and political violence at its apogee during

Reconstruction, partisan journalist John Newman Edwards had wielded guerrilla memory

to great effect in aiding the Redemption process. Through cleverly crafted maxims of

honor and defeat grounded in extra-legal violence, Edwards harnessed William C.

Quantrill and his band of marauding bushwhackers to expand the socio-economic appeal

of the early-Lost Cause and remobilize lower-class white southerners behind conservative

political causes. Yet, with Redemption achieved by the dawn of the new century, cultural

status as champions of the lower-class—much the product of Edwards' imagination to

begin with—no longer satisfied ex-bushwhackers who had, in fact, been moderately

affluent prior to the war. Born in 1844, Cole Younger grew up as the seventh of fourteen

children on the slaveholding farm of his politically prominent father, a county judge and

state legislator in Missouri. After the war, Younger helped lead the James-Younger crime

gang and spent twenty-five years in prison following the failed Northfield robbery. He

was eventually pardoned in 1903.[52] Like Younger, John McCorkle (born in 1838) also

hailed from an agricultural Missouri family. According to his memoir, McCorkle

returned to the plow after his parole and spent the rest of his life farming.[53] Joseph

Bailey, born in 1841, fought as a regular soldier for a time before spending one year in

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[52] Cole Younger, *The Story of Cole Younger, By Himself* (Chicago, IL: The Henneberry Company, 1903), 3-11, 33-35

[53] John McCorkle, *Three Years with Quantrill* Edited by Barton, Castel, Hattway (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 12, 31.

guerrilla service. Following the war, he prospered as a farmer/merchant and married a

prominent officer in the local United Daughters of the Confederacy branch.[54] Much less

is known of Harrison Trow. Born in 1843, he did serve in Quantrill's guerrilla band, but

also illustrated a great penchant for plagiarism and identity theft—often claiming text

written by and events from the life of John Newman Edwards after his death in 1889.[55] In

their books, both Younger and McCorkle claim to have received moderate amounts of

schooling when possible. Samuel Hildebrand, by contrast, came from a poor farming

family with an even poorer antebellum reputation. Approximately thirty to thirty-five

years old during the war, Hildebrand professed to have attended just one day of school in

his entire life.[56] Not surprisingly, ex-bushwhackers in the New South sought to detach

themselves from the guerrilla legacy and identity Hildebrand represented. In effect,

guerrilla memory had to reboot, update, and adapt.

Given the notorious exploits of bushwhackers-turned-bandits like Jesse James and

Cole Younger during and after the war, most historians of the guerrilla conflict have

focused so much attention on wartime barbarism and postwar demystification of social

banditry that the transformative nature of guerrilla memory in the New South has been

largely ignored. Lost in the mix of moral revisionism, social banditry, and "historical"

works of questionable methodological and archival origins, is how as vehicles for an

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[54] Joseph M. Bailey, *Confederate Guerrilla: The Civil War Memoir of Joseph Bailey* Edited by T. Lindsay
      Baker (Fayatteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2007), xiii-xv.
[55] Harrison Trow, *Charles W. Quantrell* Edited by John P. Burch (Vega, TX: J. P. Burch, 1923), 12.
[56] Samuel S. Hildebrand, *Autobiography of Samuel S. Hildebrand: The Renowned Missouri Bushwhacker*
      Edited by Kirby Ross (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2005), 1-6.

updated bushwhacker visions of the South, these texts not only addressed, but adapted to a gamut of socio-economic and cultural fluctuations in the early twentieth century. Not coincidentally, then, gender, commemoration, and race all command prevalence. Within this framework and understanding, a calculated move to include pseudo-independent women directly complemented the ascent of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) to the elite tiers of leadership within the Lost Cause commemoration movement. The symbolic role of women in the accounts underscored their shifting role within southern culture, but also accented the gendered constructs of space inherent to early-twentieth-century conservatism. Likewise, bushwhacker outlooks on the Spanish-American War (1898-1900) and World War I (1917-1919) emphasized changing attitudes toward citizenship and commemoration by way of chivalry and reconciliation. In short, bushwhackers quickly lauded the physical might of America's newest war generation, but also manipulated cries for a return to antebellum norms of southern chivalry to reshape their own fighting pasts and cement their commemoration within a more elite context. Finally, endeavors within later guerrilla memoirs to contain—or perhaps more appropriately to mask—the South's "race problem" using the dichotomous presentation of African Americans as either lustful predators or loyal, lovable Remus figures, highlighted the dialectic struggle to situate freedman workably within an archetype of the New South that would allow for elite patterns of paternalism and violent white supremacy simultaneously. Concisely then, these main tenets formed the skeletal makeup of guerrilla memory's shrewdly crafted Confederate vision of the New South.

As windows into the lives and times recounted by their specific authors, bushwhacker memoirs from 1903 to 1923 admittedly present a slew of interpretive deadfalls related to literary self-service, outside influence, and the simple passage of time. On the other hand, that same self-serving desire to comply with newer strands of conservatism and recast themselves in a new socio-economic mold are precisely what makes these memoirs such a fruitful lens to the early-twentieth-century world of southern conservatives and memory. Therefore, with gendered shifts in Lost Cause leadership, evolving notions of citizenship and commemoration, reunited American soldiers shedding blood on foreign soil, and the ultra-complex racial framework of the New South now in mind, a new elite-oriented theme took center stage in the realm of guerrilla memory. Case in point, these ex-guerrillas proposed a twentieth-century conception of the New South to reestablish their elite roots and reintegrate themselves into mainstream American politics and culture.

REBOOTING GUERRILLA MEMORY: GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

In *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, noted southern historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown opines that in the antebellum South, "Southern male honor required that women be burdened with a multitude of negatives, a not very subtle way to preserve male initiative in the never-ending battle of the sexes."[57] Under the terms of this gender "arrangement" in which female power existed mainly within the domestic sphere,

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[57] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 227.

the initially-male led trajectory of Lost Cause literary and intellectual leadership

beginning immediately after the Civil War should surprise few. Granted, Ladies'

Memorial Associations (LMA) began work reinterring the fallen and participating in

Memorial Day parades at short notice following the war. Yet, from the outset, elite men

took the helm of the Lost Cause and essentially failed in their quest to culturally and

politically replicate the antebellum South. Succeeding this early period of male

underachievement, a potent assembly of affluent, conservative women commandeered

oversight of the Lost Cause commemoration movement.

As Cole Younger in 1903, John McCorkle in 1914, and Joseph Bailey in 1920

illustrated, ex-bushwhackers sought to culturally refine and update guerrilla memory for

the twentieth century. To do so, they intended to rehabilitate the sordid wartime

reputation of the bushwhacker and reintegrate themselves into the mainstream, elite-

driven branch of the conservative Lost Cause. Considered the lowliest tier of all

Confederate guerrillas, memorializing bushwhackers did not represent a priority for the

aristocratic Daughters—but ex-bushwhackers certainly took notice of these powerful

conservative women. To depart from the outdated, lower-class Hildebrand model of

guerrilla memoir, ex-bushwhackers broadcasted a vision of the New South designed to

recast themselves as elite. To meet this end, Younger, McCorkle, and Bailey understood

that devoted praise to the elite women of the New South represented a necessary gesture

for inclusion in the socio-political world these women policed.[58] Thus, bushwhackers filled their narratives with strong-willed, independent women capable of sharing the risks of war equally with men. In short, ex-bushwhackers recognized that elite southern women constituted the toll masters of southern tradition through the Lost Cause and penned their memoirs correspondingly.

As a byproduct of this new gendered *quid pro quo* relationship—an imperative piece of the new, self-serving vision of the South offered by ex-bushwhackers—guerrilla memory also provides a vital glimpse into the ambit of female power within turn-of-the-century southern conservatism. The immense leverage over cultural, and in many cases political, affairs of the New South held by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) rests at the center of a quarrelsome historical debate concerning the possible overthrow of traditional southern gender roles. Without question, the UDC utilized Wyatt-Brown's "multitude of negatives," but in a manner that allowed them to maximize their culture-defining abilities within the public space allotted to them by male counterparts. However, whether or not conservative women wielded power from within their gendered space to reset the place of female identity within the broader context of southern conservatism remains unsettled. In short, did conservative women consciously harness their role as defender of Confederate culture—a framework that handcuffed them in a position of virtue, purity, and male-dominated helplessness—to spur just the opposite: an increased share of socio-political authority? Oddly enough, as a result of

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[58] Karen Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2003).

how they treated gender to restore their place in elite conservatism, the memoirs of Confederate bushwhackers may help formulate more precise answers to such questions.

In the wake of Confederate defeat, a commemoration movement known generally as the Lost Cause materialized in Richmond, Virginia. Under the watchful eye of elite ex-officers and officials such as Dabney H. Maury, Wade Hampton, Fitzhugh Lee, and most of all Jubal A. Early, this movement attempted to define the war on the best terms possible for the shattered Confederacy and rehabilitate the cavalier-dominated, white supremacist culture that had pillared its formation. In 1869, the Southern Historical Society (SHS) formed, and by 1876 began publishing the *Southern Historical Society Papers* (SHSP). For the next two decades, the Lost Cause took its marching orders from Richmond. Gaines Foster asserts that the Virginians—recognized collectively as the "Virginia School"—"sought to justify their own conduct by ardently defending the actions of the South, or, as they would have put it, by establishing the truth of history." Essentially, SHS lore deified a core group of elite Confederate heroes whose ranks included Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, and James "Jeb" Stuart. As the beau ideal of cavalier honor and genteel virtue, Early and company transformed each man in this coterie into a paragon of southern manhood and civility. Despite spawning mythic imagery that persists to this day, the Virginia School fundamentally failed to wield Confederate tradition effectively. Foster concludes that the "organizations of the Virginia coalition never succeeded in mobilizing the South," because "southerners had little interest in revitalization based on a Confederate vision."

In the end, he adjudges that, "Some other group would have to give voice to the ghosts of the Confederacy."[59] Conservative southern women heard the call and wasted little time assuming jurisdiction.

In *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, Karen L. Cox asserts that beginning in the 1890s and lasting through the 1920s, the UDC took over collective leadership of the Lost Cause movement. That said, white women had played a prominent role in commemorating Confederate dead since the surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. As early as 1868, Annie Kyle and other upper-crust women formed Ladies' Memorial Associations and spearheaded fundraising efforts for monuments and statues, including one of the first in a Fayetteville, North Carolina, cemetery. As noted by Cox, while elite ex-Confederate men had attempted to refight the war and vindicate themselves, the real job of rehabilitating southern manhood and glorifying the everyday Confederate rank-and-file had fallen squarely on the shoulders of women and LMAs. "Even in the face of Federal control," she maintains, women aptly harnessed the power of gender to successfully memorialize men and began taking more and more responsibility on monument drives and the organization of commemoration day ceremonies. In 1894, the United Daughters of the Confederacy officially formed in Atlanta, Georgia. Similar to the Virginia School administration they eventually replaced, the women of the UDC sought to honor Confederate veterans, but in a way that would encourage the spread of Jim Crow politics,

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[59]   Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 52-55, 62.

white supremacy, and the doctrine of states' rights. Cox proposes that "Within the first ten years of its founding, the UDC became one of the most socially and politically effective organizations in the region—in large part because of the size and influence of its membership."[60]

Several examples indicate how conservative southern women possessed and employed a degree of socio-political power not in accordance with traditional perceptions of the domestic sphere or feminine identity. For example, in 1899, the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) requested aid from the UDC to erect a monument to Jefferson Davis, to which the Daughters replied that they would assist only in a position of complete authority.[61] Likewise, the overwhelming success of their monument campaign underpinned the regional influence of the UDC. Under the supervision of the Daughters, nearly "every city, town, and state of the ex-Confederacy" harbored a statue or marker of some sort.[62] Onlookers of these monuments throughout the South may question the power of conservative women on the grounds that they are not prominently featured in many—if any—of the best-known monuments. However, more careful observers will recall the familiar slogans which note that the monument was usually *paid for* by the UDC—likely a more realistic indication of power than mere topical presence. Private sector enforcement fell easily within the range of UDC influence as well. In 1911, University of Florida professor Enoch M. Banks found out about crossing the UDC the

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[60]   Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 9, 84.
[61]   Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 174.
[62]   Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 83.

hard way. In a progressive-minded article, Banks offered that the South had been wrong to secede, prompting the state chapter of the UDC to call for his resignation and "rumors circulated that the legislature might cut the university's funding."[63] As noted by C. Vann Woodward, "Professor Banks was peremptorily fired for his pains."[64] Finally, the United Daughters of the Confederacy held colossal power over the curriculum, textbooks, and educational direction of southern children. Flags found their way into classrooms; textbooks deemed unfriendly to the South were replaced; and a broad swath of children were indoctrinated into the Lost Cause via children's chapters of adult organizations like the UDC and Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV).[65] In this sense, the women of the UDC represented both the vanguard force behind re-establishing southern culture at the turn-of-the-century and as the main catalyst ensuring the endurance of the Lost Cause.

In this portrait of the New South, elite women amount to a critical driving force in both cultural and political realms. Controversy rages over whether or not powerful conservative women pushed the traditional boundaries of feminine space or whether they did so intentionally. In *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1986-1920*, Glenda Gilmore outlines how politically-minded men attempted, with much success, to trap southern women within a subservient identity model that revolved around "the politics of rape." [66] While obedient black men

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[63] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 188.
[64] C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South 1887-1913* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 446.
[65] See Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 173; and Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 121-122.
[66] Glenda E. Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina,*

and women occupied one half of the New South's racial dichotomy, Gilmore stresses that

a disloyal predator out to rape white women lurked just on the other side. According to

Gilmore, elite white men and women fostered the stereotype of black men as sexual

predators as an excuse to beget political violence—via lynching—against them. The

"politics of rape," then, became a way to curb the increased power of newly enfranchised

black men, but also a viable tool for regulating the sexual behavior of lower-class white

women to prevent miscegenation. In *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and*

the Women's Campaign Against Lynching, Jacqueline Dowd Hall exposes how lynching

served as a ritual "dramatization of hierarchical power relationships based both on gender

and on race" in which men held the upper-hand.[67] Therefore, for women to have

exercised authority outside this assigned feminine space would clearly have upset the

crucial balance of gender in conservative southern politics. While Foster argues that most

Daughters "clung to social gentility or traditional roles," Cox counters that most studies

of the Lost Cause "have neglected to fully describe or analyze the role of women in

shaping the Lost Cause" and that women "are primarily responsible for the impact that

the Lost Cause had on the South in the twentieth century."[68]

1896-1920 (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 105, 118, 72; briefly, the "politics of rape" generally involved white men constraining lower-class white women to "the pedestal" by imbuing them with interminable chaste, purity, and helpless that undoubtedly attracted the lustful advances of predatory black men.

[67] Jacqueline Dowd Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching* (New York, NY: Columbia, 1979), 157-157.

[68] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 173; Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 3-5.

With this backstory in mind, ex-bushwhackers composing memoirs post-1900 sought to update guerrilla memory with a vision of the South designed to recast themselves as elite southern conservatives. As a vehicle to casting off the once politically useful, yet plebian aura of Edwards and Hildebrand, Younger, McCorkle, and Bailey proposed a Confederate version of the New South in which gender relations had changed substantially since the publications of *Noted Guerrillas* (1877) or *The Life of Sam Hildebrand* (1870). So with guerrilla memory clearly reacting to and working through shifts in southern culture and taking notice—albeit self-serving notice—of the UDC's powerful new female leaders, bushwhacker memoirs also help tell the story of how women rose to power in the southern conservative movement. By narrating a story about women through the minds of men, guerrilla memory actually aids in celebrating rather than impeding what the ascension of powerful women illuminated about gender relations in the New South more broadly. Gauging the structural sincerity of female prominence within male memoirs serves as a parallel gauge to male awareness and gradual acceptance of fluctuating gender norms.

Published in 1870 and preceding the rise of the UDC, *The Life of Sam Hildebrand* positively portrayed southern women sporadically—mainly Hildebrand's wife and mother—but made no concerted effort to honor them as a *collective group*.[69] By 1900, however, elite southern women had achieved new standards of authority and Cole Younger's *The Story of Cole Younger, as told by Himself*, published in 1903, acutely

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[69]   See Hildebrand, *Autobiography of Samuel Hildebrand*.

noted the newly prominent place of women in conservative space. Unlike Hildebrand,

whose tale used women in a subsidiary capacity, Younger bluntly stated that, "I should

like to say something of the ladies who have honored me with their presence. But as I

have been a bachelor all of my life I scarcely know what to say. I do know, though, that

they are the divine creatures of a divine creator; I do know that they are the high

priestesses of this land; and, too, God could not be everywhere, so He made women."

Later, Younger recounted an anecdote telling of his desire to appease elite conservative

women:

Perhaps you have heard of banquets "for gentlemen only." Well, it was upon one of these occasions that one of the guests was called upon to respond to a toast—"The Ladies." There being no ladies present, he felt safe in his remarks. "I do not believe," he said, "that there are any real, true women living any more." The guest opposite him sprang to his feet and shouted: "I hope that the speaker refers only to his own female relations." I never could understand, either, when a man goes wrong it is called "misfortune," while if a woman goes wrong it is called "shame." But I presume, being in prison twenty-five years, I am naturally dull, and should not question a world I have not lived in for a quarter of a century. I tell you, my friends, that I know very little of women, but of one thing I am morally certain: If the front seats of Paradise are not reserved for women, I am willing to take a back seat with them.[70]

Written subsequent to his release from prison, Younger's tribute to the ladies of the New

South immediately revealed—despite his claim of unfamiliarity—that he understood their

socio-political prowess and that to recast himself in an elite context, Younger needed to

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[70]   Younger, *The Story of Cole Younger*, 159-160.

appease the guardians of elite southern culture.[71] Appropriately, then, as the first guerrilla

to publish a major memoir after the turn-of-the-century, Younger freely confessed his

inability to set down adequately elegant prose in honor of women. At first glance,

Younger's description of women as "divine creatures" or "high priestesses" may call to

mind terminology designed to constrain women to "the pedestal" and their duties in the

domestic realm. However, as proclaimed by C. Vann. Woodward in *Origins of the New*

South, 1877-1913, the Lost Cause failed to operate in a "religious" capacity until

conservative women of the UDC ascended to lead it.[72] Thus, Younger's churchly homage

to women fit snugly within the context of powerful Daughters serving as the directors of

a cultural religion rooted in Confederate tradition and as regional brokers of socio-

political power across the South. While the nature of his praise for women does still link

them to traditional gender norms as embodiments of feminine virtue and purity, the fact

that Younger and all proceeding guerrilla authors axiomatically pay their "laudatory

dues" attests to more than simply lip service. Point in fact: Younger's anecdote of the

banquet toast takes a direct, albeit qualified, jab at gender relationships in the South. He

openly decries the "shame" heaped upon women for failing to cooperate and obey within

the boundaries of southern gender norms, but, Younger also tempers the statement,

referring to his time in prison as a possible excuse if other men did not agree with him.

The veiled shot at southern gender relations actually mirrored the situation faced by the

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[71]   In 1876, Cole Younger and two of his brothers were captured after a failed attempted to rob the First
       National Bank of Northfield, Minnesota. Stories differ, but one account claims that the James-Younger Gang
       targeted the bank because they believed it held Union General Benjamin Butler's money.
[72]   Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 156.

same women Younger sought to praise. Even elite members of the UDC realized that an

overly public upheaval of gender norms was out of the question and might have

threatened their powerbase—but half-criticisms and cloaked attacks on inequality were

not off limits. In short, Younger fully grasped and accepted the powerful new role of

conservative southern women. To recast guerrilla memory in an upper-class context,

Younger sketched a vision of southern gender relations designed to situate his own

memorial account under the umbrella of the mainstream Lost Cause. To do so, he knew,

he had to pay the gatekeepers, who, not coincidentally, were affluent white women.

Published at the zenith of UDC power, John McCorkle's 1914 memoir *Three*

Years with Quantrill marked a quantitative increase and an improvement in prose with the

esteem offered to southern women; whereby, instead of a stand-alone paragraph or

section devoted to women, McCorkle's own personal story provided him with an easy

way to disperse strong-willed women throughout his narrative. During the war,

McCorkle's female relatives had been among the civilian women killed by the collapse of

a Union prison in Kansas City. According to McCorkle, his participation in the guerrilla

war owed its origins to that moment and from the threatened kidnapping of his cousin,

Mollie, should he not join the Union militia. He explained that, "When we returned from

the singing school, Mollie Wiggington told us that there had been a company of Federal

soldiers there that evening, leaving an order for George and me to come to Independence

the next Monday to join the State Militia, and that unless we did report, that they would

come back and take Mollie and put her in prison and hold her until we did report."[73] Later

in the book, McCorkle described how various women had aided the bushwhacker cause.

One instance in particular stands out, though, because unlike Younger, who simply

honored women, McCorkle infused his narrative with an element of danger shared

between the sexes. His cousin Mollie, previously threatened by Federal soldiers,

according to McCorkle, risked the punishment for wartime espionage to help arm the

bushwhackers. "Mollie immediately told her friends she had decided to make a visit to

Illinois and was several days busily engaged in packing her trunk, which contained a

false bottom. Leaving for Illinois and, taking her trunk with her, she visited Will and

other relatives for about a week and when she returned to Missouri, there were 35,000

pistol caps between the two bottoms of her trunk."[74] Notably, McCorkle did not go so far

as to replace men as the rightful participants of combat—a necessary source of elite

southern chivalry. However, he did recall Molly operating in as dangerous a capacity as

possible that could simultaneously display her independent strength and situate her safely

still within the boundaries of acceptable feminine behavior.

Toward the end of his memoir, McCorkle included another story designed to both

display the virtue of southern women and, similar to Younger and his prison excuse, to

rein imagery of the independent woman from his pistol-cap story back down to a

manageable size. "While waiting to hear from General Palmer, it was reported to Captain

Mead that two men had outraged a woman living in the country. Captain Mead tried for

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[73] McCorkle, *Three Years with Quantrill*, 51.
[74] Ibid., 157.

several days to apprehend them, but failed. Frank James then told him that he could take six of his men and capture these two fiends." James and his posse caught the two men—and shot both to death.[75] Essentially, the tale indicated that men, blue and gray, felt compelled to protect southern women from "outrages" that inevitably implied rape—and therefore retained some degree of necessary physical control over them. McCorkle's coupling of this story with the courageous, independent action of his cousin Mollie depicts a conflicted understanding of how to portray women in the New South. On one hand, strong women like Mollie had taken on important roles to defend the South during the war—just as the UDC purported to do in the postwar era. On the other, though, McCorkle still felt the need to include an example that would, at least theoretically, restore traditional gender boundaries and the need for men to protect "pure, innocent" women from imprisonment in a "Northern Dungeon" where they would have met a fate "more terrible than death itself."[76] The conundrum, then, amounted to preserving masculine identity while simultaneously paying necessary tribute to powerful women. In essence, McCorkle's update to the new, elite brand of guerrilla memory designated that the southern damsel in distress would not disappear completely, but with women taking a prominent position on the front lines of southern cultural defense, she would no longer be so helpless. Without dispute, McCorkle's desire to refurbish his own reputation and assure the preservation of his wartime memories by offering a vision of the South that would convert guerrilla memory into an elite entity shaped his assessment of women and

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[75] Ibid., 212.
[76] Ibid., 51-52.

gender in the New South. But, in this case, as with other twentieth-century guerrillas, the same self-service which prompted McCorkle to reboot guerrilla memory also brought forth the window through which to view and analyze the role of women in southern conservatism as a convenient, but viable byproduct.

Despite the UDC-fueled prominence of women in narratives by Younger and McCorkle, Joseph Bailey's 1920 account entitled *Confederate Guerrilla: The Civil War Memoir of Joseph Bailey* arguably sheds the greatest light on the symbiotic relationship between guerrilla memory and the rise of female Lost Cause leadership. Bailey, the husband of a prominent officer within the UDC, actually gave a copy of the memoir to his wife's local chapter. Like McCorkle, Bailey delineated situations intended to display a strong element of *shared* danger and risk between men and women throughout the Civil War. In one story, he described how a company of Union soldiers approached himself and a female companion. "Amid a shower of bullets, the danger from which was shared equally by my sweetheart and me, I mounted my horse and began the race for my life." Another tale, engineered to highlight the self-sustaining abilities of strong-willed southern women, involved his wife and others trekking miles to attain food. They "walked that distance crossing mountains and wading swiftly flowing mountain streams; bought a half bushel of corn each and carried it home on their shoulders to make bread for hungry children," he wrote. Also noteworthy is the manner in which Bailey described scenes of mortality. The following, a passage typical of Bailey's memoir, denotes vagueness likely designed to shield women from the graphic realities of war: "Of the four

men riding behind, two were killed and two captured, one of whom was mortally wounded and died a day or so later."[77] Bailey's attempt to protect the most important members of his audience—the women of the UDC—from graphic descriptions of violence was steeped in irony given that women, as noted by Bailey himself, had shared in the violent dangers of the war and were heavily exposed to the postwar lynching phenomenon.

After expounding the virtue of southern women throughout the book, Bailey included an entire dedication titled "Heroism of Southern Women." In it, he recalled the story of a young southern maiden that carried a wounded Confederate boy to a "secluded place in dense woods over a mile distant" and then braved weather and fear to wait all night with the boy until he died. He told that, "Miss Baines volunteered to keep a lone vigil over his lifeless form, while the other two went to homes not far away for help. Alone with the dead, no light save fleeting glimpses of the stars overhead." He continued, "But her courage never faltered and she kept the lone watch till help came, when they carried the body to a house about a mile distant." Bailey concluded that "This incident, one of many heroic acts of southern women, will portray in some measure the fortitude and courage of women in the War Between the States."[78] In Bailey's account, the image of the strong-willed woman proactively defending the South from northern invasion first seen in McCorkle's memoir bloomed into what many may have perceived as outright flattery. Yet, given the situations overcome by women at war and on the home front,

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[77]   Bailey, *Civil War Guerrilla*, 49, 54, 69.
[78]   Ibid.*, 49, 69, 71.

Bailey's portrayal of Baines holds water in a general sense. As Bailey attempted to recast guerrilla memory in an elite, twentieth-century context, his new vision of the South included courageous women similar to his own wife—assumed to be affluent. More importantly, though, Bailey does not just tell the Baines story to highlight wartime courage. In many ways, the tale metaphorically conceded the leadership role taken by women after the war watching over and commemorating the Confederate dead. To some degree, the fact that Bailey gifted a copy of his memoir to his wife's UDC chapter coupled with the specific language of the Baines story goes so far as to imply that he recognized and accepted that women, not men, had kept "vigil" over Confederate—and in turn conservative—tradition and were largely responsible for revamping southern manhood in the New South. In short, Bailey fully grasped that to reboot guerrilla memory in a way that would make it socio-politically and, in turn, culturally viable in the twentieth century he had to move away from its outdated, nineteenth-century, lower-class roots and adapt the ex-bushwhacker vision of the South to incorporate very powerful conservative women.

The adulations garnered by womanhood from Younger, McCorkle, and Bailey do not prove definitively how individual women felt about expanding, or even abolishing traditional gender roles. Yet, bushwhacker memoirs *do* reveal how southern men conceived the authority of elite women—and in this case *perception* may outweigh reality. Thus, as men who desperately sought rehabilitated reputations and acceptance by the mainstream branch of the conservative Lost Cause, bushwhackers delineated a vision

of the New South which mirrored the escalating position of power *they felt women had*

achieved. Even so, bushwhackers, especially Younger and McCorkle, showed clear

ambivalence over how to properly recognize the new socio-political authority of women

in print—which could imply that the inclusion of strong-willed women amounted more to

a token gesture rather than genuine recognition. The answer rests within the memoirs

themselves. Younger attempted to qualify his praise of powerful women with self-

deprecation. McCorkle tempered the strong-willed, danger-sharing women throughout his

story with male characters still capable of corralling these new-model women. But if

Younger and McCorkle had merely been paying lip service to women in a way that most

male readers would have understood, why qualify already token remarks at all? If the

comments constituted praise perceived to be genuine, enough so to worry bushwhackers

over their reception with a male audience possibly not understanding of new gender roles,

then the comments would not qualify as trivial or token to begin with. Moreover, moving

from Younger and McCorkle to Bailey's full-on display of adoration for powerful women

indicates a successive change in the overall trajectory of bushwhacker narratives.

Younger, McCorkle, and Bailey do not simply "plug in" powerful women; they gradually

altered the structure of guerrilla memoirs to incorporate them extensively and provide a

literary product suitable for "ladies" to consume. In this way, the evolution or updating of

guerrilla memory, admittedly motivated by self-service and shaped by a slew of socio-

political factors, can be used to illuminate how southern men saw elite women as more

than just gears or levers in a rape-gender political machine; instead, as the toll masters of

southern culture and Lost Cause tradition, the literary tariffs paid to these women underline that gender roles did gradually change—whether or not all women involved intended it—and that men were at least aware of the trend.

REFRAMING GUERRILLA CHIVALRY AND COMMEMORATION

Unlike Sam Hildebrand in 1870, guerrillas writing in the twentieth century had to contend with changing views of chivalry, commemoration, and even military service; and, unlike Hildebrand, these ex-bushwhackers had to live in the New South, not just write about it. Guerrilla memory needed a makeover. With this in mind, Cole Younger and Harrison Trow set out to employ their memoirs in a manner that would revamp guerrilla memory for the twentieth century and realign themselves with the elite ranks of southern conservatives. To do so, however, each concocted a unique blend of old tradition and new trend—all with the same goal of preserving their *own* wartime memories and crafting the nefarious reputation of the Civil War guerrilla into something palatable for New South demographics. On one level, these memoirs highlight how guerrillas sought to qualify themselves for remembrance by recasting, either through adoption or rejection, their commemorative credentials contextually with new axioms of honorable combat service. In turn, they validate contemporary historiographical arguments pertaining to perceptive shifts in American chivalry and military service. On another level, the memoirs of Younger and Trow deftly illustrate the much broader struggle of ex-bushwhackers—along with nearly their entire generation of soldiers—to keep the Civil

War relevant in American culture as more and more time passed. Much like conclusions drawn about gender in the New South as a byproduct of bushwhackers updating guerrilla memory, as Younger and Trow attempted to transform guerrilla memory into an elite concept with regard to commemoration, the vision of the New South they offered left behind a window through which to assess the process of memory itself. They highlight how Americans thought about themselves, their memories, how to commemorate them, and how those being remembered reacted against changing trends within this process.

As a direct result of women venturing out of the domestic sphere to exert palpable influence on the socio-political and cultural affairs of the New South—and all across the restored Union in the form of progressive activism—many turn-of-the-century Americans noted a perceived decline in male chivalry. In *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Phillipine-American Wars* (1998), Kristin L. Hoganson spotlights these sentiments, writing that, "Many of those who fretted about a decline in chivalry regarded the assertive New Woman as evidence of that decline, for at the heart of chivalry was the juxtaposition of feminine vulnerability and masculine power."[79] As a retort, Hoganson offers two justifications used by women accused of operating outside the traditional paradigm of gender, power, and activism. "Women involved in purity (meaning antiprostitution) campaigns and other social reforms justified their activism by saying that men were unable or unwilling to fulfill

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[79] Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 45.

their chivalric duties." On the other hand, some women, cognizant of the consequences of conceding power to male chivalry, argued that "the sooner chivalry died, the better."[80] Therefore, she investigates how Americans harnessed a few months of activity in the Spanish-American War (1898) to reverse the trend. Foremost, in the Cuban revolutionaries struggling to break away from Spanish imperial power, American proponents of the war, for both cultural and commercial reasons, found a viable underdog; an underdog for whom martial aid would equal a restored sense of American civil valor and chivalry. Hoganson identifies, "The Cuban sympathizers who portrayed the Cuban struggle as a struggle over chivalry tapped American's anxieties about themselves" and continues that a " number of Americans rooted for the Cubans in order to express their commitment to chivalric principles."[81] As occupants of the New South rushed to claim their share of newly-polished American chivalry, ex-bushwhackers took care not to be left out of the mix.

Following the cessation of the Spanish-American War—which lasted from April to August—Hoganson reveals how Americans collectively forgot all about their Cuban allies and utilized the quick, total victory as a catalyst for new notions of manhood, commemoration, and most importantly, American chivalry. In essence, the newly highlighted fighting prowess of American men once again meant that military service "exemplified the highest ideals of citizenship"[82] In addition, imagery of ex-Union and

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 54.
[82] Ibid., 110.

Confederate soldiers fighting under the same flag provided positive gains for both sides. To ex-Union soldiers, the sight of ex-Confederates defending the American flag reiterated their victory in the Civil War. To ex-Rebels, the Spanish-American War and the opportunity to prove their worth and renew their status as citizens of the (re)United States was invaluable. However, the Spanish-American War also spawned a shift in the commemoration of American veterans. Hoganson cleverly uncovers how a new generation of returning veterans not only started to replace the aging Civil War generation of veterans, but more critically, their service in Cuba altered the criteria for remembrance in the first place. Instead of noble purposes and honorable intentions, the new wave of commemoration focused more explicitly on physical abilities and concrete military feats of power. In addition, it helped counterbalance new attention given to women.[83]

In his autobiography, Younger included this tract on Cuba and the Spanish-American War:

I am not exactly a lead man, but it may surprise you to know that I have been shot between twenty and thirty times and am now carrying over a dozen bullets which have never been extracted. How proud I should have been had I been scarred battling for the honor and glory of my country. Those wounds I received while wearing the gray, I've ever been proud of, and my regret is that I did not receive the rest of them during the war with Spain, for the freedom of Cuba and the honor and glory of this great and glorious republic. But, alas, they were not, and it is a memory embalmed that nails a man to the cross. I was in prison when the war with Cuba was inaugurated, a war that will never pass from memory while hearts beat responsive to the glory of battle in the cause of humanity. How men turned from the path of peace, and seizing the sword, followed the flag! As the blue ranks of American soldiery scaled the heights of heroism, and the smoke rose from the hot altars of the battle gods and freedom's wrongs avenged, so the memory of Cuba's independence will go down in history, glorious as our own revolution—'76 and '98—twin

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[83] Ibid., 109.

jewels set in the crown of sister centuries. Spain and the world have learned that beneath the folds of our nation's flag there lurks a power as irresistible as the wrath of God. Sleep on, side by side in the dim vaults of eternity, Manila Bay and Bunker Hill, Lexington and Santiago, Ticonderoga and San Juan, glorious rounds in Columbia's ladder of fame, growing colossal as the ages roll. Yes, I was in prison than, and let me tell you, dear friends, I do not hesitate to say that God permits few men to suffer as I did, when I awoke to the full realization that I was wearing the stripes instead of a uniform of my country. Remember, friends, I do not uphold war for commercial pillage. War is a terrible thing, and leads men sometimes out of the common avenues of life. Without reference to myself, men of this land, let me tell you emphatically, dispassionately, and absolutely that war makes savages of men, and dethrones them from reason. It is too often sugarcoated with the word "patriotism" to make it bearable and men call it "National honor.[84]

In his tribute to the victorious servicemen of the Spanish-American War, Younger affirmed the validity of valiant manhood and the soldier citizen, written nearly a century later. From the very beginning, Younger sought to situate himself within the new boundaries of twentieth-century commemoration. While he remained proud of wearing "the gray," he focused extensively on the physical merits of his service—the startling number of wounds he received—rather than the nobleness of the cause that spurred them. At fifty-four-years of age, Younger's regret that he could not participate in the conflict brings two key points to the surface: first, that ex-Confederates found the Spanish-American War a great tool to re-establish not only their personal citizenship, but also their personal chivalry. Second, Younger understood that Civil War service no longer held a monopoly on remembrance activities. Therefore, while Younger could not fight in Cuba, he could at the very least reframe his Civil War service and update guerrilla

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[84]   Younger, *The Story of Cole Younger*, 150-151.

memory in a way that would help preserve it against the force of later veterans seeking to replace him. In short, the imprisoned Younger missed an excellent opportunity to prove his "American-ness" and update his resume for commemoration—and elite status—by fighting "the next war." So, when Younger claimed to suffer greatly by the realization that his fatigues were prison, not military issue, he wholeheartedly meant it.

Finally, the conclusion of Younger's thoughts on the war in Cuba underscored both the complexity of the political situation surrounding it and the virtual tightrope Younger walked to expand his potential audience and cleanse his personal reputation. As noted by Hoganson, many Americans who disapproved of intervention in Cuba did so as a protest to jingoism (hyper-nationalistic foreign policy), or, more specifically, to impede the industrialists and politicians who stood to gain windfall profits providing the contracts and materials of war. Thereupon, Younger's assertion that he did not "uphold war for commercial pillage" and his proceeding explanation of war and its terrors, accented that the war was not unanimously supported by all Americans—so as it supposedly healed old wounds, the Spanish-American War also opened new ones in American society. Very similar to how Younger qualified progressive comments about women with the pseudo-excuse that he had been in prison for twenty-five years, his plea to the war's dissenters again emphasizes his desire for acceptance and the "catch-all" quality of the southern vision offered by ex-bushwhackers in the New South.

Like Younger, Harrison Trow included a section of his 1923 memoir *Charles W. Quantrell: A True History of his Guerrilla Warfare on the Missouri and Kansas Border*

during the Civil War of 1861 to 1865 on foreign wars and commemoration. Unlike

Younger, Trow refused to acknowledge that subsequent wars—he talked specifically

about World War I—had unseated the commemorative monopoly once held by the Civil

War generation and made an all out attempt to reframe bushwhacker service as worth

remembering even when set against a modern context. With irony in tow, Trow

essentially updated guerrilla memory, and his commemorative resume, for the New South

by contending that guerrilla memory did not need to be updated. So, as Trow asserted

that veterans responded to new norms of remembrance, he also recast his role by

rejecting those new norms as opposed to Younger's brand of compliance. On the very

last page of his memoir, which among other things, "borrowed" large tracts of text from

John Newman Edwards' *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (1877), Trow

opined:

> During the World War, in conversation with friends, I told them to take away from
> Germany her airplanes, gases and machine guns, and if it were possible to call Quantrell's
> old band together, of which at no time were there over three hundred and fifty men, all
> told, under Todd, Poole, Yager, Anderson, Younger, Jarrett, Haller, Quantrell, and myself,
> I could take these three hundred and fifty men and go to Berlin in a gallop, for history
> does not now and never will know the power there was in the Quantrell band. It has been
> given up long ago that they were the most frightening devils the world has ever known or
> ever will know.[85]

Writing several years after Younger, Trow then had to contend with two new waves of

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[85]   Trow, *Charles W. Quantrell*, 266; misspellings of Quantrill's name, as found in Trow's memoir were
       common well into the twentieth century.

veterans—opponents for commemoration—as opposed to just the Spanish-American War generation, a decent portion of which were ex-Confederates to start. Bold almost to the point of ridiculousness, Trow's contention that Quantrill's "old band," now in their 70s and 80s, could have conquered the German Empire with Civil War era weaponry broadcasted a pair of crucial ideas. First, the fact that Trow felt obligated to include this anti-tribute to the soldiers of World War I illustrated that shifts in commemoration affected real people in the New South—none of whom wanted to become relics of the Old South. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Trow was clearly not interested in renegotiating the requirements for commemoration; that is, while Younger understood that newer waves of veterans would eventually replace the Civil War generation and ex-bushwhackers needed to preserve what they could, Trow not only scoffed at resetting himself or his comrades within the context of "new commemoration," but he bluntly countered those models by essentially stating that older meant better and that the world would "never know" another group of veterans as worthy of remembrance as the Civil War generation. By way of his stubbornness, Trow basically argued that his service as a "frightening devil" constituted the ultimate form of chivalry—the most *elite* strain of honor possible—and that no subsequent war could unseat the similar experiences of the Civil War generation.

In writing tributes and anti-tributes to the Spanish-American War and World War I, respectively, Younger and Trow again illuminate how bushwhackers, out of necessity, evolved past Sam Hildebrand's 1870 memoir and adapted their memories of the Civil

War to correspond directly with a vision of the New South that would secure their places within elite conservatism and preserve their memory narratives. As Younger, McCorkle, and Bailey gradually integrated powerful women into their memoirs as a means to appease the newly empowered, elite conservative women, Younger and Trow also recast their memorial accounts to accommodate new models of American chivalry, fighting citizenship, and commemoration. As a consequence, they illustrated the mechanisms through which Americans sought to repair their reunited, but culturally divided nation. Curiously, while Younger and Trow each accentuated the physical nature of their service to comply with new social and cultural standards, each took a different route to upgrading guerrilla memory for the twentieth century. Younger attempted to reboot guerrilla memory in a way that could cope with changing maxims of chivalry and commemoration. Trow, however, cleverly modernized it by arguing that no such modernization was necessary in the first place. Essentially, to Trow, updating the requirements for commemoration only required reminding Americans of the exploits and prowess of the Civil War generation—not molding it to fit Spanish-American or World War I standards. That said, both Younger and Trow advanced a vision of the New South in which the ex-bushwhacker qualified for admission into the mainstream Lost Cause, and by consequence, back to antebellum levels of elite conservative status. Finally, as Americans fought new wars, Younger and Trow demonstrated clearly how the Civil War generation coped with the weakening of their memory monopoly. The divergent approaches utilized by each to stay commemoratively viable reveals how Civil War

veterans dealt with new rules of remembrance in the New South and remained indicative of a much wider struggle to preserve the Civil War's cultural relevance as firsthand contact with it gradually faded.

REMUS VS. RAPIST: BUSHWHACKERS ON RACE IN THE NEW SOUTH

Late in 1886, Henry W. Grady addressed the New England Society in New York; the motif of his speech: the racialized economy of the New South. Known widely as the "spokesman" of the New South, Grady began his remarks by offering that, "'There was a South of slavery and secession – but that South is dead. There is a South of Union and freedom – that South, thank God, is living, breathing, growing every hour.'" In a calculated bid to lure the support of northern investors and their capital—crucial to rebuilding the southern economy—Grady outlined a duplicitous framework in which the South was not particularly sorry, or ready to apologize for slavery, but, would acknowledge and embrace the new economic opportunities revealed as a result of abolition. He stated, "The South found her jewel in the toad's head of defeat," but also maintained that the South "has nothing to take back." With this apathetic, "arrangement" behind him, Grady turned to racial discord, the issue that most haunted potential investors and remained the largest possible impediment to the flow of northern funding below the Mason-Dixon Line. "But what of the negro?" Grady petitioned his audience—the answer already in mind. "Have we solved the problem he presents or progressed in honor and equity towards the solution?" Grady's answer was a resounding yes. Of black

southerners, he opined, "We have found out that in the general summary the free negro counts more than he did as a slave," and continued that citizens of the New South sought to "put business above politics."[86] The rosy portrait Grady painted of New South race and economics ignored a bubbling cauldron of white supremacy and racial violence that extended into every state of the ex-Confederacy, yet his humorous explanations for defeat, remorse, and the future found critical acclaim with both northern and southern audiences. So, how did southerners—whose race problem was anything but solved at the turn-of-the-century—reshape African American identity to fit within the requirements of the New South economic model? Simply put, they harnessed crude, but very powerful identity models: the loyal, Uncle Remus figure against the disloyal, interracial rapist. Ex-bushwhackers took quick notice and put dichotomy to work in their narratives as a way to bolster their transition to elite status and update guerrilla memory in the twentieth century.

Ex-bushwhackers writing for New South audiences harnessed a racial dichotomy to align themselves ideologically and culturally with other elite southern conservatives. But where did the popular foundations of this Remus identity come from and what does its widespread use as a tool of New South racial economics reveal about African American status and identity? Though originally stemming from the antebellum proslavery arguments of southern paternalists, the best-known incarnation of the loyal

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[86] Henry W. Grady quoted in Raymond B. Nixon, *Henry W. Grady: Spokesman of the New South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 340, 345, 346, 347-348.

slave hailed from postbellum Atlanta.[87] The literary character named Uncle Remus first spilled from the pen of Joel Chandler Harris, a newspaper editor in Atlanta, in late-1870s and found his way into a book, *Uncle Remus: His Songs and Sayings*, by 1881. Known for his "mastery" of the "negro dialect," Chandler's stories of Remus involved the aged ex-slave telling folk stories to a young white boy about the Old South. His cast of well-known characters included Br'er Rabbit, Fox, Bear, and the infamous Tar-Baby. Through Remus and his Aesopian stories, Harris projected a loyal, but above all else, docile paragon of black men. Sharply contrasting the notion of an uncontrolled interracial predator, Uncle Remus, his tales, and the idyllic setting in which he recounted them, set the standard for what constituted a "good" African American, and offered a degree of artificial comfort to theoretically concerned northern audiences. In effect, through Remus' kind and content interaction with a young white child and the morals of his stories—which often dripped of patronization and condescension toward African Americans—Joel Chandler Harris suggested that the South had already overcome its race problem, because non-southern outsiders had not understood the problem correctly and exaggerated it from the start.[88]

As perhaps one of the best known female advocates for the southern brand of rape-politics, Rebecca Latimer Felton went so far as to openly challenge the ability of

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[87] For a more complete explanation of antebellum slave identities and proslavery arguments see William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1864, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 77-97.

[88] See Joel Chandler Harris, *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899) and Joel Chandler Harris, *Uncle Remus and the Little Boy* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1910).

white men to protect their women from black predators in a bid to spur even more

lynching. Felton declared that white farmers were "soft on the rape of white women by

black men," and concluded that "Neglectful white men had let things deteriorate to the

point that lynching of black rapists was the only remedy."[89] And, as noted by Hall,

lynching remained popular well into the twentieth century and particularly prevalent at

the times Younger, McCorkle, and Trow published their memoirs. Between 1899 and

1903, 455 black were lynched; Younger released his memoir in 1903. Between 1914 and

1918, 264 black men were lynched; McCorkle published his memoir in 1914, just one

short year before D. W. Griffith transformed Thomas Dixon's *The Clansman* into an

international film phenomenon. Hall opines that the film "harnessed the enormous myth-

making potential of the modern film to a pernicious set of racist stereotypes and sexual

obsessions."[90] Finally, between 1919 and 1923, 273 black men were lynched; Trow

released his memoir in 1923.[91] Basically, as highlighted by Hall, some of the most

recognizable southern politicians, James K. Vardaman, Coleman L. Blease, and even

"Pitchfork" Ben Tillman "built political careers around 'The Crime of Rape.'"[92] And, as

Gilmore argues, "White women's support was crucial" to resurrecting white supremacy

politics in the New South.[93] Certainly, though, that support was only made crucial by the

creation of the black antagonist, without which the politics of rape could not have

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[89] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 105; and see Crystal Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[90] Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry*, 149.

[91] Ibid., 134.

[92] Ibid., 146.

[93] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 118.

functioned. Felton and other elite advocates of the gender-race-rape political machine propitiously stereotyped and vilified black men—influence that would have undoubtedly helped shape narratives composed by ex-bushwhackers like Younger, McCorkle, and Trow as they determined to project a new version of guerrilla that counted them among those same elite advocates. Most important, though, these memory narratives also highlight that even when black men and women "won" in these memoirs, or in the vision of the New South they represented, *they still lost by default*. From Rube and the "rebel negro" to Uncle Remus, even the most "generous" depictions of black characters inevitably involved stereotypical ex-slaves serving, or even dying for the Confederate cause—a trend that must have surprised the countless numbers of African American men and women who fled to the protection of Union lines and even took up arms against the Confederacy.

With regard to the changed status of women and shifting views of reconciliation and commemoration, turn-of-the-century bushwhacker memoirs came a long way from Sam Hildebrand's 1870 account of the war, *The Life of Samuel Hildebrand*. However, in the area of race, the exodus of Younger, McCorkle, and Trow from Hildebrand's memoir came less in the major ideas offered—none are particularly fond of African Americans or abolition—than in the fashion, coarse or calculated, of their presentations. Uncouth to the end, Hildebrand happily recounted the execution of numerous black men, free and slave, always under the justification that they were dishonest, disloyal, or murderous. Near the end of his memoir, Hildebrand updated readers on the state of a young African American

child he had abducted after killing the boy's father. After the close of the war, he said, "The negro boy I had taken from Free Jim in St. Francois county still remained with me; he was free, I suppose, but he seemed to prefer good living and light work to "free starvation.""[94] Two paramount points justify Hildebrand's use of race as an initial reference point for later guerrilla memoirs: first, Hildebrand includes no instances of black men as sexual predators or interracial rapists; second, Hildebrand was clearly unready to concede *any* merits of abolition, which in his mind only resulted in "free starvation." In the twentieth-century southern cultural model offered by later bushwhacker memoirs, both ideas became central to updating guerrilla memory in an elite conservative context. Younger, McCorkle, and Trow diligently outlined racial dichotomies in their memoirs that instantly supported elite-contrived New South economic models and paternalist rhetoric necessary to reinforce elite-controlled white supremacist politics. Consequently, ex-bushwhackers imbued themselves—and hoped other elite conservatives would follow suit—with a higher degree of socio-economic, and thereby cultural standing in the New South. Last but certainly not forgotten, what conclusions about the status of African Americans in the South can be drawn from this racial version of the New South proposed by ex-bushwhackers to update guerrilla memory?

In his 1903 memoir, Cole Younger much more cautiously outlined the feud over slavery between Kansas and his native Missouri, eventually conceding that abolition was

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[94]   Hildebrand, *Autobiography of Samuel Hildebrand*, 110, 136, 148, 157.

a just end to the peculiar institution, but also qualified that statement by discrediting the true motive of the "Jayhawkers." According to Younger, most Kansan-raiders had taken little interest in abolishing slavery, and spent most of their time plundering the farms and personal property of law-abiding, slave-owning families like his own.[95] Later in his account, Younger retold the story of a twelve-year-old-boy being tortured and eventually killed by Union soldiers for refusing to provide information about his father, a known Confederate sympathizer. However, in Younger's version of the story, a loyal slave made the bushwhackers aware of the incident, and only then were they able to exact what he considered due vengeance. "A negro servant who had witnessed the seizure of his young master, had fled for the timber, and came upon a party of a dozen of us, including Quantrell and myself. As he quickly told us the story, we made our plans, and ambushed at the 'Blue Cut,' a deep pass on the road the soldiers must take back to Independence." In another instance, Younger relayed how his "faithful negro servant, 'Aunt Suse,' had been hung up in the barn in a vain endeavor to make her reveal the whereabouts of my mother's sons and money; my dead father's fortune had been stolen and scattered to the winds; but our farms were left, and had I been given an opportunity to till them in peace it would have saved four wasted lives."[96] Again, in Younger's memoir, slaves—even when facing mortal danger—remained happily loyal to their Confederate masters. Much in keeping with Grady's speech to the New England Society, Cole Younger's account of the war issued a conditional admission of fault with regard to slavery, but went on to

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[95] Younger, *The Story of Cole Younger*, 57.
[96] Ibid., 23, 70.

portray an environment full of loyal slaves ready to die for their oppressors. Not coincidentally, ex-bushwhackers like Younger are not reticent to remind readers that they hailed from prominent families—families affluent enough to own multiple slaves. Clearly, then, through selective memory, Younger desired to insert his own narrative into the gamut of acceptable literature in the New South tradition. By purporting that black slaves and white masters had harbored little tension before and during the Civil War, Younger subsequently offered that the postwar South was a racially-friendly, peaceful place worthy of northern investment. At the same time, Younger conspicuously situated himself among the ranks of antebellum era slave owners; hinting, in some sense, that he and guerrilla memory both belonged back among the ranks of affluent southern conservatives in the postbellum era.

Writing a decade after Younger, John McCorkle inculcated his memoir with many of the same sentiments; in fact, McCorkle even included a story about Cole Younger riding to visit his grandmother, and upon the approach of Union soldiers, "a negro woman came and told him the Federals were coming."[97] However, while Younger saw fit only to delineate stereotypes in keeping with the Harris-like paternalist tradition of loyal slaves and harmonious race relations, McCorkle composed his narrative to feature a blatant racial dichotomy. By pitting Rube, the stereotypically loyal black man, against "Jack Mann, the notorious negro," McCorkle utilized the best of both worlds—on one hand, he illustrated how well black and white men could get along—when the black men

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[97] McCorkle, *Three Years with Quantrill*, 99.

were properly subordinate—but also how when race relations went sour, blame fell on the shoulders of a "black fiend" like Jack Mann. While chasing a wagon, several bushwhackers captured a free-black man named Rube. Before the bushwhackers could kill him, Rube pleaded to speak with Captain George Todd, who, by chance, was leading the guerrilla unit. As Todd caught sight of him, he proclaimed "by God, it's Rube!" and added "Boys, the first man that hurts this nigger, I will kill." Upon later explanation, Todd informed the other bushwhackers how Rube, a local barber, had loyally hid him from Union soldiers and fed him dutifully throughout the winter of 1862. [98]

On the same page Rube, whom the bushwhackers referred to as Todd's "pet nigger," joined the guerrillas on their ride, McCorkle also introduced readers to Rube's counterpart named Jack Mann. According to McCorkle, Mann was known to white southerners in Missouri for aiding Jayhawker raids and more importantly, though, for being "exceedingly insulting to the Southern people and especially the women." In one case, McCorkle even alleged that Mann had undressed before and directly insulted the wife of Dick Maddox, one of Quantrill's more notorious bushwhackers. The insults and offences directed specifically at southern women undoubtedly implied crimes or lewd behavior of a sexual nature. After a short while, McCorkle communicated that Mann's guards could no longer stand his presence and shot him—which prompted gunfights

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[98] Ibid., 138-139.

among the other guerrillas, then angry that they had not been allowed to personally

dispatch the implied rapist. [99]

At first glance, McCorkle's assignment of drastically positive and negative

stereotypical characteristics to Rube and Mann may seem strange, erratic to say the least.

In reality, though, the fundamental identity conflict he engineered between the two black

men was indicative of the vision of the New South McCorkle proposed as a means to

racially update, or modernize guerrilla memory in the twentieth century. For cheerleaders

of the New South's "new" outlook on race, Rube made an ideal case in point for how

black and white men could peacefully interact in the South with elite white politicians in

charge. On the other hand, Mann gave white supremacists looking to buttress southern

partisanship via the politics of rape an abounding reason to pick up and endorse his

memoir. In short, McCorkle's elite-oriented vision of the New South made guerrilla

memory universally attractive to southern conservatives—especially those in positions of

great power: the Gradys, Harrises, and Feltons of the world. Very similar to how

bushwhackers simultaneously posed conflicting imagery of independent and dependent

women to appease different demographics of power in the New South political makeup,

so too was the case with regard to black identity. However, unlike power eventually

conceded to elite conservative women, it warrants reporting that even in the most positive

of circumstances, black men and women found themselves relegated to second-class,

inferior status in bushwhacker narratives.

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[99] Ibid., 141-142.

Finally, Harrison Trow's memoir, penned in 1923, built upon the themes presented by Younger and the dichotomy galvanized by McCorkle, but also provided a capstone for bushwhacker perception of black identity and race in the New South. According to Trow, "'The only prisoner I ever shot during the war,' relates Captain Trow, 'was a 'nigger' I captured on guard at Independence, Missouri, who claimed that he had killed his master and burned his house and barns." As an end to justice, Trow explained that, "I shot him in the forehead just above the eyes," and to make sure the disloyal slave had been executed, said "I even put my finger in the bullet hole to be sure I had him." For whatever reason, perhaps due to the severity of disloyalty claimed by this particular man, Trow took an unusual interest in confirming his death. After shooting the runaway slave in the head and personally probing the wound, Trow went so far as to shoot him in the foot to finally confirm the kill. Ironically—and to be frank, quite unbelievably—Trow recounted that many years later in a saloon, "There I met the 'nigger' whom I thought dead."[100] After establishing that the black man in the bar was the victim Trow had left for dead, he joked that the two shared a drink. Presumably, Trow sought to temper the violent execution with a happier ending. Ironically, the same audience Trow felt compelled to shield from his brutality—elite women, economic movers and shakers, cautious politicians—were generally the same audience front and center at spectacle lynchings across the New South. Agreed-upon-fictions such as this were not uncommon, then, just an understood part of southern conservative politics. In any case, the event symbolized, in

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[100] Trow, *Charles W. Quantrell*, 57-58.

theory at least, that the South had moved past slavery, no longer held the grudge against black men worthy of worrying the northern investors elite southerners courted to restore their fortunes, and that the matter had been settled with a longstanding southern custom: a drink. Like McCorkle, Trow also included the story of Cole Younger, then dead (d. 1916), and his loyal slave. According to Trow, as the company of Union soldiers descended on the Younger home, "an old negro woman—a former slave—with extraordinary presence of mind blew out the light, snatched a coverlet from the bed, [and] threw it over her shoulder." She ordered Younger to "Get behind me, Marse Cole, quick," and then supposedly snuck him out of the house. To Trow, the loyal slave became a hero. "Unquestionably a rebel negro, she was persecuted often and often for her opinion's sake, and hung up twice by militia to make her tell the whereabouts of Guerrillas. True to her people and her cause, she died at last in the ardor of devotion."[101]

Interestingly enough, the semi-biographical introduction to Trow's memoir implied that he, himself, did not hail from a slave owning or even mildly affluent family. However, he did repeat the previously published Younger story to insinuate that while he had not owned slaves, a clear marker of financial status, Younger's socio-economic persona represented bushwhackers well enough to count for those who did not. Under this arrangement, Trow still belonged amongst the upper-classes because bushwhackers, by default, had not been members of the lower-class before the war. To that point, when Trow referenced that the slave stayed true to "her people," he undoubtedly meant to her

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[101] Ibid., 119-120.

owners—but through clever ambiguity left the statement open for interpretation, interpretation that allowed readers to include Trow amongst those "people" and thus amongst the ranks of more wealthy slave owning families. That aside, Trow's version of the story does not come free of problematic entanglements. First, he chose to counterbalance the murderous, disloyal black man with a devoted and loyal black woman. In this case, though, while Trow clearly strayed from McCorkle's clear cut masculine dichotomy; his own self-serving "creative license" still bolsters that argument that ex-bushwhackers proactively altered their memories, constructed a vision of the New South designed to update guerrilla memory, and, in turn, indoctrinate themselves into the upper-crust of southern conservatism and society. That Trow told a more detailed version of Younger's story than Younger himself is suspicious; that he molded the story's black protagonist into a devout "rebel negro" immediately tied the tale back to the elite-created tradition of Uncle Remus—both clearly represented ultra-stereotyped characters that *did not exist* in reality.

Out of self-preservative necessity, Younger, McCorkle, and Trow all utilized a deeply conflicted, yet socially, culturally, and politically effective racial and gendered dichotomy in their memoirs. A clear break from the obsolete style of racial rhetoric used by Samuel Hildebrand in 1870, ex-bushwhackers writing in the twentieth century sought to update how guerrilla memory dealt with "the race problem" to ingratiate themselves with conservative elites and improve their cultural foothold in the New South. Following Henry W. Grady's assertion that the conservative New South had assuaged any

antebellum racial woes, these old guerrillas offered audiences accounts intended to underscore harmony between the races—harmony aimed at procuring the northern capital affluent southern conservatives required to remain powerful. Generally, they did so through the lens of loyal slaves defending Confederate guerrilla masters and living happily within the white-dominated socio-political hierarchy of the Old South. In this way, Joel Chandler Harris' iconic Uncle Remus, born to publication in 1881, gave Younger, McCorkle, and Trow a clear model of acceptable black identity to emulate. In stark contrast to the ridiculous image of the "rebel negro" eventually proposed by Harrison Trow in 1923, ex-bushwhackers also needed to employ negative racial imagery to safely align themselves within the rigid guidelines of New South white supremacy and the politics of rape. As an excuse to commit acts of violence against newly-enfranchised black men, the purity of white women—particularly poor white women, not usually the elite ladies of the UDC—and accusations of rape formed the legal backbone of a resurgent southern political machine enforced via lynching and intimidation. Ex-bushwhackers amended and shaped their memories of the war to serve as literary and cultural endorsements for the standards of New South conservatism passed down by elites such as Harris, Felton, and Grady. In exchange for such ancillary compliance, Younger, McCorkle, and Trow all hoped to secure their places among such elite figures and assure the preservation of their rebooted memory narratives.

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to update guerrilla memory after the turn-of-the-century and recast themselves as members of the New South's conservative elite, ex-bushwhackers Cole Younger, John McCorkle, Joseph Bailey, and Harrison Trow broke from the socio-political standards of nineteenth-century guerrilla accounts laid out by John Newman Edwards and Samuel Hildebrand. After the war, Edwards and Hildebrand closely associated bushwhackers with the lower class to help expand the socio-economic parameters of the southern conservative movement, aid the Redemption process, and attach a greater degree of political viability to otherwise impolitic guerrilla figures. But, by 1900, bushwhackers-turned-authors pieced together a new vision of the South in which themes of gender, chivalry, commemoration, and race were strategically intertwined. From newly empowered elite conservative women, to positioning guerrilla memory with and against the changing tides of chivalry and conservativism in the wake of contemporary wars, to the contradictory and utilitarian nature of New South race relations, bushwhackers desperately sought to redeem their personal reputations and remain culturally prominent. They used their memoirs to sketch a conservative South, a restored Union, a world in which they belonged to the same upper-class conservative coterie their narratives were designed to appease. In essence, the evolution of guerrilla memory represented self-preservation at its finest. Without question, such self-service widely disqualifies Younger, McCorkle, Bailey, and Trow as reliable sources regarding

the times they alleged to remember decades after the fact. That said, as indicators of the prevailing trends within southern conservatism in the early twentieth century, these memory narratives morph into fruitful lenses capable of illuminating the oft-forgotten byproducts and causes of such trends: changing concepts of gender and female authority in conservative politics; maxims of chivalry and the shifting process of commemoration behind which human faces stood ready to fight for continued cultural relevance; and the plight of African American identity in the New South.

CHAPTER III

The Ghosts of Bushwhacking Past, Present, & Future

"I therefore claim to show, not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact." - Claude Levi-Strauss

The vast majority of academic work concerning Civil War guerrillas tends to centralize research around judgment of wartime tactics—brutality—and effectiveness, explaining why a few southerners became guerrillas—or why guerrillas became bushwhackers—and debunking a dense cloud of myth surrounding more infamous characters like William C. Quantrill. As the main impetus for guerrilla memory in the early-postbellum period, John Newman Edwards' *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* (1877) represented the first shot in a "historical civil war." To the victor: the power to analyze and delineate how Confederate bushwhackers should and would be remembered. Without question, the battles continue to rage one-hundred and thirty-three years later. Since Edwards, a slew of capable historians have entered the morass. Unfortunately, though, the vast majority have failed to escape the grasp of his original polemic trap. Designed as a propagandistic showpiece, *Noted Guerrillas* fused popular notions of social banditry and extra-legal violence to morph Quantrill's band of Missouri bushwhackers into Democratic spokesmen capable of courting the political support of lower-class white southerners. Devoid of proper citation and full of wildly unrealistic assertions, Edwards' work became

a mythological tinderbox. Rather than dissect the myths that pillared *Noted Guerrillas* piecemeal, Edwards' earliest historical critics, beginning with William Connelley in 1909, chose to lambaste the book and its main character, Quantrill, with commensurate degrees of ahistorical ammunition. What started as a name-calling contest between historians turned into an all-out food fight and propped up faulty lines of inquiry for over a century. The memoirs of other Confederate bushwhackers such as Cole Younger, Harrison Trow, John McCorkle, and Joseph Bailey constituted the fallout from this battle; more precisely, by allowing the Quantrill debate to overshadow these guerrillas, historians ignored opportunities to harness their memories as viable sources of research.

As the linchpin of *Noted Guerrillas*, undoubtedly the literary origin of all this historiographical mayhem, William C. Quantrill's role in the formation of guerrilla history and memory warrants proper recognition, clarification, and understanding. Foremost, therefore, is the question of what sort of socio-economic representative William C. Quantrill constituted for most of the bushwhackers in his *adopted* state of Missouri? Guerrilla historians, while arguing over minute points in Quantrill's personal life, his responsibility for civilian bloodletting, and his general predisposition for devilishness, have habitually—and incorrectly—assumed that "figuring out" the alleged "chieftain of all guerrilla chieftains," in turn, meant understanding all bushwhackers. Social data contends otherwise; whereby, time spent utilizing Quantrill as a real world lens to studying other bushwhackers has likely been time wasted. Thus, in the process of examining Quantrill helter-skelter, scholars have essentially handcuffed themselves to the

debate topically and overlooked the memoirs of the very men allegedly commanded by Quantrill—the very men they sought to explain through Quantrill. Consequently, the operational myths warned against by Claude Levi-Strauss have run wild and greatly impeded more relevant research of Confederate guerrillas: their day-to-day lives, the socio-economic and cultural factors that shaped their identities, and how they, along with thousands of other veterans, coped with life after the close of official violence.

What follows is the historiographical summarization of a debate framed largely around the wrong questions—a fatally flawed lineage of inquiry—and the elements that prompted, as well as expose it. As a result of such narrow topical focus, well-known Confederates like Frank and Jesse James, along with Cole Younger, have long since been poached and culturally adjoined to the realm of western bandits and gunfighters. They are slowly being reclaimed in the twenty-first century, but a blueprint of the historical schism that nearly lost them for good may, hopefully, help catalyze the process. Furthermore, this not-so-secret revelation that scholarly work on Confederate guerrillas should extend beyond Quantrill, Missouri, and bushwhacker brutality between 1860 and 1865 to include broader conceptions of cultural and political impact, and even memory well into the twentieth century should ruffle not just a few feathers. Accordingly, also included is a brief road map of sorts contrived to make sense, and perhaps predict the future of a field that, by virtue of very recently leaving its Quantrillian manacles behind, should become a true Wild West for historians.

QUANTRILL—THE MAN BEHIND "THE MUSTACHE"

Before examining how and why historians spent a century arguing over Quantrill's status

as a cultural figurehead for all bushwhackers and the Pandora's Box of historical

problems associated with such distinction, Quantrill's socio-economic relationship to the

group of men he supposedly represented must be addressed, decided upon, and finally

buried. In "Guerrilla War in Western Missouri, 1862-1865: Historical Extensions of the

Relative Deprivation Hypothesis," Don R. Bowen attempts to explain why guerrilla

violence sprang up in Jackson County, Missouri—home county to the majority of

Quantrill's men. Bowen utilizes an impressive array of social data to shed light on the

socio-economic identity of bushwhackers. First, he highlights how a combined 90.8% of

guerrillas from Jackon County were born in Missouri or another southern state.

Moreover, he reveals that 87% of guerrillas from Jackson County belonged to parents

born in the South. Perhaps most interesting, Bowen expounds that in 1860, 55.6% of

traceable bushwhackers hailed from slave-owning families. Further, these families owned

a mean quantity of 7.4 slaves, more than double the quantity held by other county

slaveowners. All together, these figures indicate that the average bushwhacker, although

young—Bowen notes that only 101 were 21 years or older in 1860—came from a

somewhat affluent to affluent socio-economic background rooted in a hierarchy of

slaveownership and southern tradition. Also of note, in a poll of bushwhacker leadership

and their kinship ties within the guerrilla conflict, Quantrill represented the lone man

without at least one active relation. Ultimately, Bowen classified bushwhackers as the

sons of "local rural elites" that took such ultra-violent action to preserve their socio-economic status.[102] Similarly, Mark Geiger's "Indebtedness and the Origins of Guerrilla Violence in Civil War Missouri," contends that violence in several counties of Western Missouri reached such critical mass due to a failed financial scheme that stripped several local elites of their farms and fortunes. Local indebtedness, Geiger holds, likely accounted for a noteworthy portion of guerrilla activity among Western Missourians.[103] Both studies objectively present an iconic bushwhacker born in Missouri or the South, of a southern family that owned slaves, and with some form of financial dispossession compelling them to irregular brutality.

Born in Canal Dover, Ohio, in 1837, Quantrill belonged to a northern family without property holdings to speak of in Missouri or anywhere else in the South. Moreover, Quantrill failed to arrive along the border until circia 1856, and at that point was a known anti-slavery advocate. Several historians point out that Quantrill worked to free slaves on the underground railroad—albeit at a price—and his shift toward pro-slavery sentiment only occurred when it became financially beneficial to him personally. Either way, Quantrill's family owned no slaves, nor did they partake in farming. The Quantrills, the majority of whom still lived in Ohio, went untouched by Geiger's economic dispossession. Therefore, Quantrill faced no threat to his virtually non-existent

[102] Don R. Bowen, "Guerrilla War in Western Missouri, 1862-1865: Historical Extensions of the Relative Deprivation Hypothesis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19, no. 1 (1977), 39, 43-44, 47-49; Don R. Bowen, "Quantrill, James, Younger, et al.: Leadership in a Guerrilla Movement, Missouri, 1861-1865," *Military Affairs* 41, no. 1 (1977), 45-46.
[103] Mark W. Geiger, "Indebtedness and the Origins of Guerrilla Violence in Civil War Missouri," *The Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 1 (2009), 49-82, esp. 75-77.

social status or personal wealth. Cole Younger, a rider in Quantrill's brigade, provides a

blunt contrast with his personal memoir *The Story of Cole Younger, by Himself* (1903). In

it, Younger recounted his family's social prominence, their slaveholdings, and their

gentlemanly ties to southern tradition.[104] In addition, Younger, like most of his comrades,

fought alongside brothers and cousins in the guerrilla conflict. To fit in with the group,

Quantrill went so far as to fabricate a murdered brother—simultaneously providing

himself with motive to raid along the border. And now, when juxtaposed with the

"everyday bushwhacker" the pointlessness of the following debate over Quantrill

becomes all the more clear. One notorious character out of thousands who fought as Civil

War guerrillas dominated the landscape of historical work on the topic for over a century;

yet, all the while, was a cultural outsider to the collective guerrilla movement he

allegedly figureheaded.

THE QUANTRILL MYTH: A CENTURY OF MISGUIDED DEBATE

The bitter historiographic debate to define William C. Quantrill and, in turn, "his"

bushwhackers became tantamount to a war of words between partisan historians fighting

disagreeable myth and hyperbole with equal doses of agreeable myth and hyperbole.

With instigating belligerents clearly outlined in the forms of John Newman Edwards and

William E. Connelley, the scholarly study of Confederate guerrillas constituted the main

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[104] Younger, *The Story of Cole Younger*, 1-3.

casualties of war. Essentially, the contest to control Quantrill's legacy—operating as an assumed blanket identity for many of the best-known bushwhackers—spawned a self-perpetuating cycle of misdirection in which the controversy surrounding Quantrill preserved his false socio-economic status and increasingly overshadowed the valuable historical stories other bushwhacker sources had to tell.

To accouter *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border* with the best possible chance of re-attracting lower-class white southerners back to the Democratic Party via a mix of social bandit mythology and symbolic extra-legal violence, John Newman Edwards needed a cornerstone spokesman. In William C. Quantrill, leader of Missouri's most famous—or infamous—band of bushwhackers, Edwards found his guerrilla virtuoso. Over the course of the book, he constructed a larger-than-life, folk-hero persona around Quantrill. For each and every category Edwards employed to symbolically highlight a class-cultural connection between the lower-class and his rustic guerrillas—horsemanship, community self-regulation, proficiency with firearms— Quantrill sat atop the totem as the ultimate bushwhacker. In turn, Edwards argued, Quantrill also represented the ultimate Rebel.

According to Edwards, Quantrill "was to the Guerrillas their voice in tumult, their beacon in a crisis, and their hand in action," even going so far as to describe him as "a living, breathing aggressive, all-powerful reality—riding through the midnight, laying ambuscades by lonesome roadsides, catching marching columns by the throat, breaking

in upon the flanks and tearing a suddenly surprised rear to pieces; vigilant, merciless, a

terror by day and superhuman if not a supernatural thing when there was upon the earth

blackness and darkness." Moreover, he opined that "From him [Quantrill] sprang all the

other Guerrilla leaders and bands which belong largely to Missouri and the part Missouri

took in the civil war."[105] *Noted Guerrillas* decreed that Quantrill had been the

mastermind behind the highly successful Lawrence Massacre; that the bloodbath there

amounted to a crucial Confederate victory; and that the Confederate high command

blundered greatly by not adopting similar tactics.

In this context, Edwards proposed that Missouri's largest contribution to the Civil

War had been bushwhackers, and as the chief of all bushwhackers, Quantrill cashed in

credit for all of their activities. In effect, Edwards turned Quantrill into the paradigm by

which all other bushwhackers were judged—and into half of the comparative socio-

economic relationship to which subsequent historians assumed they belonged. With

ironic foresight given the circumstances, Edwards even quipped: "History cannot hesitate

over him, however, nor abandon him to the imagination of the romancers—those

cosmopolitan people who personify him as the type of a race which reappears in every

country that is pretty to foreigner—the legitimate bandit in conflict with conquest."[106]

But Edwards had already assumed the role of romancer, and by cordoning bushwhacker

identity into the twenty-three letters that spelled out William Charles Quantrill's name, he

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[105] Edwards, *Noted Guerrillas*, 31.
[106] Ibid.

fired the opening shot of a vehement historical struggle to control and dictate guerrilla history.

In 1909, William Elsey Connelley stepped forward to become Edwards' arch nemesis in the historical Quantrill-bushwhacker debate. First, though, it bears mention that by accepting Quantrill as the main emphasis of debate, Connelley verified that Edwards had been successful in his portrayal of Quantrill in *Noted Guerrillas*. With *Quantrill and the Border Wars*, Connelley waged total war against William C. Quantrill using the same sorts of ahistorical tactics Edwards had used to apotheosize him. Primarily, Connelley generated an analysis of Quantrill's personal and physical traits— clearly influenced by Progressive Era, Social Darwinist maxims of inherited vice— constructed to illuminate that he was "the bloodiest man known to the annals of America."[107]

After describing Quantrill's father, Thomas Henry Quantrill as a man of questionable character, Connelley turned to the guerrilla's brother, Thomas, Jr., describing him as "a vile, base, worthless, despicable but petty scoundrel." Next, Connelley outlined how Quantrill abandoned his financially-strapped mother and ultimately concluded that the "Quantrill's exhibit the usual characteristics of a family deficient in sound moral fiber developing in a community where there is little restraint of personal inclinations and where condemnation by public conscience is fitful and feeble."

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[107] William E. Connelley, *Quantrill & the Border Wars* (New York: Smithmark, 1909), 7.

In short, he argued that the Quantrill bloodline harbored a criminal gene, or a magical propensity for inherited vice. "They [his parents] endowed him with depravity, bestowed upon him the portion of degeneracy. In cruelty and a thirst for blood he towered above the men of his time," said Connelley, who continued that, "In him [Quantrill] was exemplified the terrible and immutable law of heredity. He grew into the gory monster whose baleful shadow falls upon all who share the kindred blood." As a result of his inherited evil, Connelley argued that as a child, Quantrill tortured a variety of animals, running the gamut from snakes to cows, horses to dogs. "His nose was curved and sinister," Connelley described, also stating that, "There was murder in every gleam of his strange glittering eyes."[108]

Of Edwards, Connelley conceded that "Major Edwards believed what he wrote, for he was an honest man," but that "He had no correct information on the subject." Later, Connelley argued: "the work of Major Edwards is the most pretentious on the subject," and offered "it contains such ridiculous statements and bald untruths." Finally, Connelley took issue with Edwards' biased battle descriptions involving Quantrill's guerrilla band. "Thus it always is in the work of Major Edwards. Quantrill escapes without loss, or with an insignificant loss, when he retreats. And he always inflicts immense loss on the Union soldiers." Fundamentally, William Connelley sought to turn the same "supernatural" forces used by Edwards to transform Quantrill into a folk-hero against the bushwhacker chieftain. Rather than a superhuman, Confederate killing

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[108] Ibid., 30, 34, 40-41, 43-44.

machine, Connelley described an intrinsically evil boy who abused animals, abandoned

his mother, and simply fulfilled his destiny to "bring woe upon the land."[109] With irony

similar to Edwards' assessment of Quantrill's treatment by historians and posterity,

Connelley purported that, "There has been no definite information. All has been myth,

doubt, assertion, beautiful generalization, conjecture."[110] In both cases, Levi-Strauss

likely claims the last laugh. Thus, following *Noted Guerrillas* and *Quantrill and the*

Border Wars, each side had fired shots to wrestle control of guerrilla history from the

other—but by cementing the historical gaze upon Quantrill, they also set historians onto a

faulty course that would last for decades.

Half a century later in 1955, Jay Monaghan's *Civil War on the Western Border,*

1854-1965, constituted by most accounts a well-planned, evenhanded assessment of

wartime activity in the Border States. However, in describing engagements from

Carthage to Wilson's Creek, Lexington to Pea Ridge, and Lawrence to Centralia even

Monaghan could not escape the Quantrill-dominated Edwards-Connelley model when

dealing with guerrillas. In the relatively few instances Monaghan saw fit to include

irregular activity—a startling paucity given the sheer number of irregulars that operated

in and around the Border States—he further entrenched the "lascivious-lipped" Quantrill,

with his "ready smile" as the figurehead of all guerrillas operating in the area."[111] Perhaps

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[109] Ibid., 159, 168-169, 246.
[110] Ibid., 7.
[111] James Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955), 168.

most startling, though, is Monaghan's assertion—sans citation—that "Quantrill had a

plan now to eclipse that glowing achievement [Lawrence]. He would ride to Washington

and assassinate the President. With thirty followers disguised in blue uniforms as the

Fourth Missouri Cavalry, and with forged papers of identification in his pocket, Quantrill

mounted his horse Charley and rode east."[112] In quick order, Monaghan validated the

false notion that Quantrill capably stood in as representative for most, if not all,

bushwhackers in the Border States. Moreover, he took a page directly from the Connelley

playbook and included an unsubstantiated presidential assassination plot in the book's

conclusion. Essentially, the passage of time cut down somewhat on the bitterness with

which Connelley had replied to Edwards, but Monaghan missed the opportunity to

redirect the context in which scholars approached both guerrillas and bushwhackers.

Carl Breihan's *Quantrill and His Civil War Guerrillas*, first printed in 1959,

symbolized another entry into the debate started by Edwards and Connelley over William

C. Quantrill and the bushwhackers. Clearly siding with the Connelley school of thought,

Breihan outlined several of the same hereditary vices and character flaws: "Cruelty was

part of Quantrill's nature," and continued "When a young boy he liked to catch two cats,

tie their tails together and hang them over a wire fence or clothesline, and watch them

claw and fight frantically until both were dead."[113] In describing Quantrill, Breihan said

"He was slim and well formed, but there was an indefinable something about him—

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[112] Ibid., 345.

[113] Carl W. Breihan, *Quantrill and his Civil War Guerrillas* (New York, NY: Promontory Press, 1959), 17.

perhaps the shifty eyes or the cruel mouth, which caused people to dislike him at first

sight." Most troubling though, is the manner in which Breihan actually addressed

Quantrill's role as leader—and false socio-economic representative—of the Missouri

bushwhackers.

> The many intelligent people in the Southland who persist in depicting Quantrill as a brave
> and misunderstood commander must be ignorant of the facts, for there is nothing in the
> documents to warrant their admiration. As a matter of fact and record, Quantrill never
> rode with all his men on any raid except one—for the pillage at Lawrence, Kansas, he
> was accompanied by three hundred men. At all other times, he sent out a small
> detachment of from twenty to thirty (occasionally as many as fifty) under the command
> of his lieutenants who owed him no actual allegiance.[114]

The main problem, then, is that Breihan's book is entitled *Quantrill and **His** Civil War*

Guerrillas (my emphasis). So again, rather than harness evidence to dismantle the

Quantrill myth fostered by Edwards, Breihan chose to argue that Quantrill was the leader

of the bushwhackers to justify his criticism, concluding Quantrill constituted the "all-time

champion of murder," but at the same time, argued that Quantrill was not actually the

true leader, in which case his criticism would not seem necessary in the first place. In the

book's conclusion, the confusion resurfaces: "He [Quantrill] had held his followers

because of his cleverness and his fast thinking in emergencies, but he was never really

liked, not even by his closest associate, William H. Gregg, who had long been his aide-

de-camp." Yet again, Breihan validated that Quantrill led the bushwhackers, but only

enough to set up his next jab. Finally, Breihan related that "rumor had it (on good

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[114] Ibid., 24, 26.

authority)" that Quantrill was planning to assassinate President Lincoln in Washington, D. C., but upon learning of his assassination by John Wilkes Booth, proclaimed "'Good! Now I am saved the trouble!'"[115] As with Connelley and Monaghan before him, Breihan addressed the propagandistic portrait of Quantrill built by John Newman Edwards as a reputable historical account, and in turn, fought back using the same sorts of observation that he cried foul of in the Edwards account. Because this debate over Quantrill, who once again did not even remotely begin to serve as a good socio-economic representative of other Missouri bushwhackers, or the broader guerrilla war, attention consumed by shifty eyes, criminal genes, and supernatural pistol accuracy could have been utilized elsewhere in the field of guerrilla studies.

In 1975, forces from what can loosely be called the "Edwards camp" struck back in the form of Donald Hale's *We Rode With Quantrill: Quantrill and the Guerrilla War as told by the Men and Women Who Were with Him with a True Sketch of Quantrill's Life*. Hale, who dedicated the book to the memory of his grandfather, a veteran of Quantrill's command, took umbrage with the types of stories told by Monaghan and Breihan, but especially Connelley. In the preface of *We Rode With Quantrill*, Hale described Connelley as "prejudiced" against Quantrill and argued that Connelley "tried to make Quantrill a cold hearted villain."[116] Throughout the book, Hale included evidence clearly designed to counter examples proposed by Connelley, Monaghan, and Breihan.

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[115] Ibid., 27, 162.
[116] Donald R. Hale, *We Rode With Quantrill* (Clinton, MO: The Printery, 1975), 5.

With the exception of one practical joke involving a pig (which he claimed was not harmed), Hale offered testimony that "that was the only time he was ever known to be guilty of anything approaching cruelty." Later in the book, Hale explored the events of and leading up to what he labeled "the so called" Massacre at Lawrence. The raid, which took place in August, 1863, involved Quantrill and his bushwhacker unit ambushing the town, targeting soldier and civilian, and claiming well over one-hundred lives. But, rather than analyze and contextualize the event, Hale simply accepted and listed the justifying reasons offered by bushwhackers themselves as fact. Towards the end of the book, Hale redressed Connelley yet again, claiming that, "he is usually the accepted historian of Quantrill and the guerrilla war. More writers and historians copy from him than any other writer who wrote about Quantrill and his men."[117] Hale found particular chagrin with Connelley because while he correctly noted that Connelley is perhaps the best-known Quantrill historian, Connelley was also Quantrill's harshest critic. Thus, Hale all but spelled out that even in 1975, the guerrilla war was nearly inseparable from Quantrill, and historians were more interested in arguing the merits of Quantrill's childhood activities and cruelty than anything approaching proper historical analysis—let alone the notion that Quantrill might not have had much in common with the men he led, regardless of whether or not they liked him, and how that might change the way historians would look at bushwhackers and the guerrilla war. *We Rode With Quantrill* concluded by stating: "I leave it up to you, the reader, to draw your own conclusions as to what kind of man

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[117] Ibid.,, 8-9, 191.

William Clarke Quantrill really was. Hero? Or Villain?"[118] Obviously, Edwards,

Connelley, Monaghan, Breihan, and Hale had already made up their own minds.

Shortly after Hale, a pair of articles by Don R. Bowen signaled a tremendous shift

in the course of guerrilla scholarship. Published in 1977, "Quantrill, James, Younger, et

al: Leadership in a Guerrilla Movement, Missouri, 1861-1865" and "Guerrilla War in

Western Missouri, 1862-1865: Historical Extensions of the Relative Deprivation

Hypothesis," affirmed that Quantrill did not constitute a legitimate socio-economic,

cultural, or behavioral representation of his men. In short, Bowen's social data

illuminated a new path away from the flashy Quantrill back toward the bushwhacker he

so poorly represented. Finally then, the old debate over Quantrill's potential insanity,

cruelty, and status as a socio-economic or cultural figurehead of the guerrilla war could

be put to rest. For the record, beneath the surface, both sides in the Quantrill debate made

somewhat valid points about the guerrilla captain—none of which, however, really ever

mattered much to better understanding the guerrilla war or bushwhackers more broadly.

That said, were several of Quantrill's actions before and during the war defensible? Of

course not. Did John Newman Edwards build and shape Quantrill into a hero of myth for

downtrodden white southerners? Absolutely. Did the century-long debate to define

Quantrill, and, in turn define the legacy of Confederate bushwhackers yield a greater

understanding or them or much historical progress? Unfortunately, it did not. Granted,

nearly any historian of the Border States will concede that Quantrill orchestrated the

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[118] Ibid., 193.

Lawrence Massacre—the apex of guerrilla activity—but such events hardly illuminate what factors created the bushwhacker, how he inhabited the role on a daily basis, or what other bands of irregulars did during the war. Therefore, Bowen makes clear that new primary roads must be traveled to better understand the Confederate bushwhacker. Not coincidentally, the bushwhacker memoirs once overridden by the supposedly sinister curve of Quantrill's mustache remain in wait for historians to mine objectively and utilize.

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF GUERRILLA HISTORY

Since the 1980s, the general direction of guerrilla history has shifted dramatically. With few exceptions, the Quantrillian debate seems over—no clear victor ever emerged. That said, its legacy continues to help shape and give context to later scholarship on Confederate guerrillas with specific regard to how historians continue to remember and treat guerrilla memory. An immense amount of "catch up work" waits for historians. As a result of the move away from myth-laden history that once enveloped Quantrill, historians of the guerrilla war have tolerated an unfortunate backlash against "questionable" or "self-serving" primary material. Given the mythological foundations of the Quantrill debate, its chronological length, and the fact that none would care to repeat it, their caution is both noted and appreciated. With this grain of salt stored away, however, bushwhacker memoirs—once ignored, now stigmatized—will undoubtedly

prove necessary to expanding both the range and thematic approaches necessary to better understand Confederate guerrillas. In particular, Michael Fellman's *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (1989) and Daniel E. Sutherland's *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (2009) highlighted the legacy of the Quantrill debate in guerrilla memory, its after-effects, its importance.

Hailed as the high-water mark in guerrilla scholarship since its release, Michael Fellman's *Inside War* presented the atrocities committed by bushwhackers—murder, theft, rape, massacre—with frightful realism. In his attempt to deflate the image of guerrillas as romantic outlaws, Fellman successfully portrayed the likes of William C. Quantrill and his bushwhacking associates as bloodthirsty young glory hunters. Fellman's psycho-analytical breakdown of the Missouri bushwhacker to explain violence and brutality represented the last traces of Connelley's attempt to answer Edwards by undercutting the foundations of social bandit mythology with "interesting" personal blueprints of his noted guerrillas. Even so, in most cases, the disparaging tone of his brutally honest critique is wholly justified. However, problems with *Inside War* quickly surface through the manner in which Fellman handled postwar guerrilla memoirs—thankfully, by 1989, guerrilla historians had begun citing primary source material. To be sure, his claim that bushwhackers designed these after-the-fact accounts to whitewash aspects of their behavior during the guerrilla war resided on solid ground. That said, Fellman came in well short of placing ex-bushwhacker memoirs by Samuel Hildebrand,

John McCorkle, or Cole Younger, among others, within a meaningful postwar context. In this way, *Inside War* was indicative of the stigma adjoined to guerrilla memoirs as part of the Quantrill debate's legacy. In essence, Fellman deftly revealed what the memoirs fail to do: erase the bloodstained legacy of Missouri's most violent Civil War characters; but neglected to outline how the memoirs were actually complex products of and windows into their turn-of-the-century southern environment. In fairness, *Inside War* is a remarkable guide to Civil War guerrillas in Missouri. Thereupon, it is also widely reflective of how historians waged a civil war to control guerrilla memory as a means to changing the legacy of the Civil War; how the Quantrill debate still plays a consequential role in how historians treat guerrilla memory; and how the transformative nature of guerrilla memory in the New South has been largely ignored.

Published in 2009, Daniel Sutherland's *A Savage Conflict* represents a new landmark in guerrilla scholarship and provides crucial new details pertaining to how historians have remembered guerrilla memory. While Fellman provided an encyclopedic blueprint of guerrilla and bushwhacker activity in Missouri during the Civil War, Sutherland did so for nearly every state that saw irregular activity. By breaking the (then not so) United States down into regions, Sutherland carefully examined the broader causes, allegiances, modes of violence, home front impact, and most critically, the overall impact of guerrilla warfare in each region. Eventually, he concluded that the guerrilla war was actually a national war and those guerrillas—bushwhackers included—played a decisive role in determining strategy, policy, and outcome between 1860 and 1865. In

short, Sutherland assigned the guerrilla war a vital impact on the Civil War. This new

importance immediately sheds light on why so many pundits and historians spent a

century struggling to define and control how guerrillas would and should be remembered:

the guerrilla war was much more widespread, it touched far more people, and affected a

great deal more in the broader scheme of the Civil War than most today realize. In similar

fashion, Sutherland's portrait of a guerrilla war engulfing far more than simply the

Border States underlined how a counter-narrative like Edwards' had the potential to be so

politically useful by revealing just how many people and states could have connected

with the brand of guerrilla and mythology he peddled. And, finally, what of Quantrill—

the character Edwards predicted would be suffered by historians forever? He made a

brief, though warranted appearance in *A Savage Conflict*, operating as a small variable

within a much larger equation as he should have been all along.

  With the work of Stiles and Sutherland in mind, the future of guerrilla scholarship

seems both wide open to new ideas and endlessly promising. Geiger's excellent research

aside, *causality* remains a major question for the field to address. As Sutherland

illuminates, different guerrilla groups operated in almost every pocket of the

Confederacy—uncovering and explaining the different factors that motivated these

men—and women—to raise arms, as well as the factors that turned them into guerrillas

would not only fill in lacunae of information regarding guerrillas, but would speak

volumes about the fractured nature and conflicted cultures of the broader society that

produced them. After the Civil War, most surviving guerrillas did not embark on dime

novel crime sprees like Jesse and Frank James—or find themselves deified by the likes of John Newman Edwards. But, with regard to geographic locale, cultural assimilation, and political affiliation, what did happen to them? If the few who left memoirs like Cole Younger are any indication, they attempted to live and preserve their relevance just like other, regular veterans of the war.

This path leads directly to guerrilla memory: who shaped it; who controlled it, what different strains of it existed; what factors forced it to change; and finally, how is it still with us today? During the course of very early research on John Newman Edwards and his role in shaping guerrilla memory, I happened across a copy of Breihan's *Quantrill and His Civil War Guerrillas*. At the very end of the book, Breihan alphabetically lists a roster of the Quantrill band. On the very last page, under "W," a previous holder of the library book had penciled "Wales, Josie" into the list. For those not familiar, Josie Wales is the main character played by Clint Eastwood in *The Outlaw Josie Wales*—a fictional film overly sympathetic to Confederate bushwhackers released in 1976. The chance encounter with that particular copy of Breihan's book illuminates, if nothing else, that the cultural impact of Confederate guerrillas did not end in 1865, 1877, 1900, 1955, or even 2009. For this reason, understanding the role of guerrilla memory, that is memory of guerrillas and memory by guerrillas, from Appomattox to *the present* should represent a top priority for guerrilla scholars. Memory itself is a rapidly expanding historical subfield with definite staying power; historians have probably only begun to

scratch the surface of guerrilla material. Combined, the two should return immense profit.

CONCLUSION

In 1877, John Newman Edwards molded guerrilla memory into a political tool designed to push back against Republican-led politics in the ex-Confederacy. In 1909, when William E. Connelley decided to fight the fire eating Edwards on his own terms, he ignited a firestorm of debate over William C. Quantrill that overshadowed the study of Confederate guerrillas for a century. Revisiting Levi-Strauss, Edwards, Connelley, Monaghan, Breihan, and Hale certainly allowed myth to operate unabated, *unrecognized* as history. To be fair, Quantrill embodied any author's, let alone biographer's dream subject—a hero to some, a murderer to most, a killer to anyone familiar with primary sources. So, while it may be wrong to assume that the cloud of myth enveloping Civil War guerrillas will ever disappear or operate with full disclosure, at the very least, Quantrill was the *wrong* subject needed to progress the study of Confederate guerrillas. In the 1970s and 1980s, the old mold began to crack and guerrilla scholarship finally moved past Quantrill, who had never historically spoken for the bushwhackers to start, and began addressing more relevant historical topics. Much has been accomplished since this topical "turn," but the field remains a well waiting for historians to tap. The work of Michael Fellman and Daniel Sutherland illustrate how the legacy of the Quantrill debate continues to shape and contextualize guerrilla memory—but also reveals why the debate was so important to start. With the work of Michael Fellman, Daniel Sutherland, and T. J.

Stiles, along with Don Bowen and Mark Geiger now catalogued, guerrilla historians must look past 1860 to 1865 and assess the impact of guerrillas—their politics, their memory, within the Lost Cause, within southern culture, within American culture—well into the present day.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this odyssey through the realms of the Confederate guerrilla, Civil War memory, and southern conservatism, we began with a juxtaposition of destructive prowess—a comparison of the almost unbelievable carnage left behind by William T. Sherman and a group of notorious men called bushwhackers. The analogy is admittedly borrowed. In the 1968 film *Bandolero*, two brothers played by Jimmy Stewart and Dean Martin debate why one (Stewart's character) had chosen to ride with Sherman, while the other (Martin's character) had chosen to ride with Quantrill. In the end, Stewart's character concludes—with the sage-like quality you would expect from Jimmy Stewart— that Sherman "was war" but Quantrill, well, that was "just mean." But as evidenced by its multiple phases and the firestorm of historical debate that continues to surround it, guerrilla memory's story is clearly not so simple.

The first phase of guerrilla memory relied mainly on the pen of fire-eating Democratic pundit Major John Newman Edwards. In 1877, the ex-Confederate cavalryman published, *Noted Guerrillas, Or, The Warfare of the Border*. In the book, Edwards transformed Quantrill's bushwhacker unit into a roster of politically viable social bandits. Through cleverly constructed and class-empathetic symbolism, Edwards spun the bushwhacker into a recruiting mechanism for lower-class whites, effectively expanding the socio-economic parameters of the early-Lost Cause and the southern wing of the Democratic Party. Extra-legal wartime bushwhacker violence paralleled

Reconstruction era extra-legal violence; *Noted Guerrillas* urged emphatically that lower-

class whites not fail to reclaim political power through paramilitarism and vigilantism as

upper-crust Confederate leaders had during the war. In short, by presenting bushwhackers

as the most efficient means of protecting local communities and political-cultural self-

regulation during the war, Edwards posed that violent efficiency after the war remained

the best possible way to preserve southern autonomy. Above all else, Edwards argued

that as Confederate Robin Hoods, Quantrill and his men had cared more about and taken

more steps to protect local southern communities than the haughty, out-of-touch

bureaucrats in the Confederate command—so partisan loyalty was not only requested, it

was owed. Edwards provided a model of wartime violence useful for the postwar era.

Thus, Major Edwards used his bushwhacker propaganda to garner support for many of

those same elite ex-Confederate figures. In the process, he created a counter-narrative to

the Lost Cause and adjoined a specific electoral or political element to memory

previously untapped by elites writing from Richmond.

The broader role of memory after the Civil War, therefore, represents a critical

link to understanding guerrilla memory specifically. Controlled by elite ex-Confederates,

the Richmond-based "Lost Cause movement" deified a core group of the best-known

Confederate commanders and figures: Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, Thomas

"Stonewall" Jackson, and James "Jeb" Stuart. As icons of elite status, virtue, and power,

these men became vehicles for shamed Confederate leaders to restore their own battered

reputations and explain defeat on terms that would allow their cultural patriarchy over

lower-class whites to remain intact. At the core of their operations, the elite ex-Confederates who blueprinted the early-Lost Cause wished to *culturally* restore the South. As alleged bastions of chivalry, honor, and plantation culture, Lee and company stood culturally opposed to nearly everything Quantrill and his marauders came to represent during Reconstruction and Redemption.

Another bit of irony attached itself to the second phase of guerrilla memory. This time, though, it was the bushwhackers who felt its impact. Southerners proved extremely capable of wielding political violence: by 1877 Redeemers had successfully stamped out nearly all traces of Reconstruction in the South. By the 1890s, with a Democrat again walking the lawns of the White House, the political necessity attached to Confederate bushwhackers as spokesmen for conservative partisan violence had evaporated. Realizing that Confederate bushwhackers were in danger of losing relevance in the commemoration movement, as well as American culture in general, a wave of ex-bushwhackers penned narratives beginning in 1903 and ending in 1923. Their goal: update and reboot guerrilla memory to remain culturally and politically viable in the New South. That said, things had changed since Sam Hildebrand wrote his brashly graphic narrative in 1870. For one thing, the South had reentered the Union. For another, soldiers from both regions fought side-by-side on foreign soil, first in Cuba, then Europe. With regard to gender, race, and subsequently economic schools of thought—spearheaded by Henry Grady and the ladies of the United Daughters of the Confederacy—elite characters ascended to dominate twentieth-century southern conservatism. Ultimately, ex-bushwhackers Cole Younger,

Sam McCorkle, Joseph Bailey, and Harrison Trow deemed the Edwards paradigm of guerrilla memory obsolete. They strove to recast bushwhackers in a new vision of the New South that morphed their memories of the war to comply with the rise of powerful conservative women, modernizing standards of commemoration, and the racial framework necessary to maximize southern economic recovery and future potential.

As a result of the evolving nature of guerrilla memory, critical historical observations can be made on a wide gamut of substantive and theoretical planes. Foremost, the adaptation of guerrilla memory to its different environments in phases one and two illustrate the changing nature of southern conservativism from Reconstruction well into the twentieth century—arguably even the twenty-first. On the surface, Edwards' propagandistic *Noted Guerrillas* exposes an important counter-narrative to the "mainstream" Lost Cause; deeper, though, his construction of an electorally conscious memory narrative illustrates a new political use for memory rarely seen while examining the early-Lost Cause. Finally, with regard to memory, as a process and a cultural object, the corresponding shifts in southern political culture and the content of bushwhacker memoirs reveals how strains of memory are created and altered by individuals and societies in the struggle to remain among those strains worth remembering.[119]

While guerrilla memory rests with seeming snugness in phases one and two, guerrilla scholarship in the big picture has not always looked so neat. In fact, more often

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[119] Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "'You Must Remember This': Autobiography as Social Critique," the *Journal of American History* 85, no. 2 (September 1998).

than not, historians of guerrillas and the guerrilla conflict have focused obsessively on William C. Quantrill as the answer to uncovering what made such rough riding, violent men tick. The infatuation with Quantrill solidifies two key points: first, that Edwards was successful in warping the guerrilla leader into a figurehead for all bushwhackers, which required a response from dissenting critics who considered Quantrill a murderer, not a hero; second, that in many cases defining the legacy of Confederate bushwhackers constituted a political affair for historians still trying to control the broader legacy of secession and the war. In effect, a civil war of sorts erupted to define Quantrill the man in the hopes that his story would bring order to the chaos of the guerrilla war. But William C. Quantrill, whether considered a social bandit or bloodthirsty devil, made a remarkably poor socio-economic representative of other bushwhackers—even the men in his command. In consequence, Quantrill's hold on guerrilla memory also exists in two distinct phases. First, as a result of the historical attention commanded by Quantrill, historians undoubtedly ignored the viable published memoirs of other bushwhackers. Second, because the Quantrill debate grounded itself so heavily in myth, even after its end historians continue to view the memoirs of bushwhackers associated with Quantrill as equally "tainted" by myth and therefore unsuitable as primary evidence. The protocol regarding the use of admittedly self-serving texts written by historians and authors, as well as wildly self-serving memoirs written by ex-bushwhackers entails two options. The first, a quick fix, would amount to simply abandoning these sources or assuming that their self-serving origins left them tainted as primary historical documents. The correct

option, however, amounts to recognizing and interpreting that self-service as a window to the factors that shaped it. Thus, as documents indicative of the events or times they allege to remember bushwhacker memoirs bring a minefield's worth of baggage. As documents indicative of change these sources not only prove bountiful, they excel. Therefore, while Quantrill's story remains the stuff of legendary cocktail party debate, as a lens of inquiry for guerrilla studies, it failed miserably and its legacy continues to play a role in guerrilla memory even now.

"Politics of the Black Flag: Guerrilla Memory and Southern Conservatism in the New South" resides at the intersection of social memory and the history of conservative politics in the South. By examining the evolution of guerrilla memory, Lost Cause counter-narrative, and the political functions of Civil War memory, this project addresses the processes of memory and its uses in exploring the broadest themes of gender, race, class, and commemoration as they related to politics in a region and a nation struggling to cope in the wake of massive bloodshed and a new century. On the whole, the result is a cultural portrait of conservative politics in the New South as painted by an unlikely artist: the Confederate bushwhacker.

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