“I WILL NOT DISOWN THE LOVE NOR REPENT THE SERVICE”: RETHINKING RECONSTRUCTION CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS 1865-1877

by

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

In his work on Civil War monuments, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*, Kirk Savage proposes that "the shift from slavery to freedom…was the cataclysmic event and the central dilemma of the [nineteenth] century" for the United States.[1] In truth, it would not be absurd to say the issue of slavery and the presence of the enslaved and their descendants has been the central issue and throughline of the entire history of the United States. Therefore, it should be no surprise that monuments to the Civil War, a conflict fought over slavery, were not merely of interest to small groups, and their messages were not esoteric ones disconnected from the larger public. In the case of Confederate memorials, they were both responsible for inculcating the Lost Cause myth, the idea that secession and the Civil War were not primarily to preserve the institution of slavery, and part of a larger cultural movement to rehabilitate the Confederate, and thus Southern, image.

From the earliest days of Reconstruction, the period from 1865 to 1877 concerned with the reintegration of former Confederate states, the nation faced the issue of how to memorialize the catastrophe, destruction, and, in the minds of some, triumph of the Civil War. Because the South fought this war to preserve slavery, it faced a dilemma. Could it be that the upkeep of the thing which most of the 'civilized world' agreed was a moral abomination be the reason the South pressed forward into a destructive war?[2] The war left the Southern landscape ravaged. But more importantly, the war had destroyed the Southern spirit. Not only was the Confederacy the loser in an incredibly hard-fought war, but its aftermath left the South in a state of poverty,

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[1] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 3.

[2] Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens acknowledged this in Alexander H. Stephens, *Public and Private, with Letters and Speeches, before, during and since the War*, ed. Henry Cleveland (Philadelphia, PA: National Publishing Company, 1866), 721, https://archive.org/details/alexanderhstephe6114clev/page/n9/mode/2up.

disarray, and humiliation. Of course, everyone knew that slavery was the cause of the war. Each state made that point clear in its secession documents. In the immediate aftermath, however, it did not have to be; a revisionist history could win the day.

To survive in the post-war reality, the South's narrative needed to change. During Reconstruction, the Confederate cause was only ever expressed as vaguely having to do with the upholding of states' rights and the principles of liberty. On a broadside advertising their fundraising fair for a memorial to their Confederate dead, the Athens LMA (Ladies Memorial Association) appealed to their fellow citizens to donate so they could erect a monument "as white and spotless, as the cause for which they died was pure and holy."[3] Despite their intent to never dare utter what that cause truly was, consider how clear it would have been to a Black citizen what was truly being honoured and celebrated.

As David Blight discusses in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, Black people could not be a part of the revisionist Confederate story. It was paramount that they remained out of the picture so that Southerners could rehabilitate the Confederate, and thereby their own, image.[4] Certainly, though proponents of the Lost Cause eventually began to idealize and defend slavery, this did not begin on a wide scale until the early twentieth century. Crucially, the rehabilitation of the Confederacy, through the memorialization and celebration of anything but slavery, laid the groundwork for such a shift to take place in the coming decades.

The scope of this paper will be limited to monuments built during Reconstruction, 1865-1877. This end date is necessarily arbitrary and therefore excludes some monuments which are of the same kind as the rest in the study (certain monuments were commissioned in the 1870s but

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[3] Akela Reason, "Heritage and Hate: Teaching Confederate Monuments with Archives," *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 4, https://doi.org/10.24926/24716839.2216.
[4] David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), 79.

not completed until after 1877). The end date, however, needed to be firm because, though a monument may have been planned or partially built during Reconstruction, the final product, sometimes finished much later, would inevitably be influenced by factors that were not present during Reconstruction. It makes sense to place the end with Reconstruction's conclussion because there is no debate that later monuments were celebratory, thus making their inclusion in such a study unnecessary.

The sources that make up the foundation of this thesis are the monuments themselves. The way I have compiled my collection of monuments is fairly simple, although incredibly arduous. Essentially, I scoured every presently available database of Confederate monuments and sorted them into my time period. Unfortunately, the existing databases are incomplete and, in many cases, contain incorrect information. Because of this reality, every monument under consideration in this study needed to be backed with some primary source evidence for its date of erection. The few which I could not independently verify were excluded. My list presently includes forty-five Reconstruction Confederate monuments, more than in any other database I could find. An invaluable source for this study has been the Historical Marker Database, which, in many cases, houses the only quality photos of these monuments. A detailed inspection of each one that is digitally accessible was conducted. Many monuments include similar features so not every monument needs to be mentioned explicitly.

An inevitable limitation of this study is that the monuments which receive the most attention are the ones for which the most accompanying digital primary sources exist. I understand that this does slant my most detailed analysis towards monuments that happen to have digitized copies of newspapers which mention them or speeches given at their dedications. Despite this limitation, there are things which I can glean from monuments whose only digitized

information is their pictures. Also, the number of monuments which do have sufficient digitized accompanying literature is high enough to make strongly supported conclusions.

What I seek to show through particular examples, spread over more than a decade and in some cases over one thousand kilometres apart, are consistent themes. Not every monument will be as good an example as another for a particular function but the collection of monuments in their totality is indicative of striking and overarching functions.

However, monuments are far from the only sources that will constitute this research. Newspapers and published speeches make up the majority of accompanying sources, but legal documents, broadsides and other works of literature are integral, too. While the digital availability of these documents is limited, the ones which are accessible give invaluable insight into motivations behind the erection of the monuments.

Much scholarly work has been done on both the history of Civil War memorialization and monuments, as well as the public memory that they inform and are a consequence of. As it relates to Confederate monuments and the public memory that motivated them, Gaines Foster's *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, and Kirk Savage's *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves* acknowledge that the rehabilitation of Confederates, and Southerners generally, was a major motivating factor in the creation of Civil War memorials in the South. However, for the Reconstruction period, they fail to acknowledge the clear political interests embedded in them. Foster cites examples of the memorials and their ceremonies "defend[ing] the nobility of their actions and purity of their motives."[5] And yet, he still argues they were apolitical, in part, by highlighting that Black people sometimes contributed to the memorial effort.[6] He also downplays the importance of speeches,

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[5] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 42.
[6] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 46.

claiming they were "a small and perhaps not very important part of the memorial movement."[7] I will argue that precisely the opposite was true. Though the speeches by nature of only occurring at dedications would be a small part of the movement, they are immensely important as they are often the best articulations of a monument's purpose. Savage, too, acknowledges that these memorials were often inscribed with statements attesting to the justness of the Confederacy's cause, yet dismisses them as purely ornamental.[8]

In Cynthia Mills's introduction to the edited collection, *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory*, she proposes that these memorials played a different role compared to how they are used and perceived today.[9] While it is true that the aspect of grieving was a unique function of the memorials at the time of their creation, she errs in assuming that these monuments were neutral at their erection but only politicized later. This point is one that this thesis will contend by arguing that monuments in general, but particularly these Confederate memorials, are not only things that later people projected meaning onto, which of course they are, but also things that were put up for particular reasons in their time. As Savage remarks in *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, "in defining the past, we define our present."[10] That is, what people choose to highlight in their presentation of the past says a great deal about the preoccupations of their present.

The works in this field tend to split the creation of Confederate monuments into two distinct eras: the Reconstruction period of grief and mourning and the Jim Crow, the post-Reconstruction era of intense racial segregation, period of celebrating the history of slavery. W.

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[7] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 43.
[8] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 179.
[9] Cynthia Mills, "Introduction," in *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), XXIV.
[10] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 4.

Stuart Towns, in *Enduring Legacy: Rhetoric and Ritual of the Lost Cause*, argues that as the South began to rise economically after Reconstruction, "monuments began to serve not just as symbols of grief and mourning, but also as defiant public symbols of the Lost Cause and the glorious 'Old South.'"[11] This is often expressed by noting the larger shift in the 1890s toward public-facing monuments and away from ones in graveyards. In *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, Foster argues that because the Reconstruction era memorials were almost always placed in graveyards, away from society writ large, they were symbols of a society that had accepted its defeat and was placing distance between its everyday life and its lost cause.[12] Adam Domby, in *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory*, posits that "the transition from cemetery to public square paralleled a changing purpose of these monuments as they increasingly served as celebratory markers instead of sober memorials." However, his point is weakened somewhat due to his admission that the Reconstruction memorials were not exclusively in cemeteries.[13] While I agree that these two eras should be separated, as the role of mourning in this period is unique, I will show that these monuments represent much more than mourning the dead. This thesis will not spend any time discussing the merits of the argument that the monuments of the Jim Crow period were celebratory, as it is neither relevant to the motivations of Southerners during Reconstruction, nor a point that I contend.

Karen Cox, a historian of the South who has written multiple works on Confederate monuments and Lost Cause ideology, argues in *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight for Racial Justice* that there was a shift post-Reconstruction from

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[11] W. Stuart Towns, *Enduring Legacy: Rhetoric and Ritual of the Lost Cause* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 34.
[12] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 45.
[13] Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville, VA: The University of Virginia Press, 2020), 23.

bereavement to celebration.[14] While I agree with her, as I do with the others, that the scale and kind of monuments changed during Jim Crow, I disagree that Reconstruction ideology was bereft of anything except mourning. Cox argues that after Reconstruction, "the Lost Cause became ritualized into a full-blown celebration of the Confederacy, its defenders, and white supremacy."[15] The problem with this narrative is that it fails to recognize that Confederate memorials were and have always been about all those things.

This thesis will be informed in large part by the conceptions of postwar Southern cultural memory discussed in Savage's *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, David Blight's *Race and Reunion*, and Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*. One of Savage's main arguments is that the postwar South looked to, as much as possible, erase Black Americans and the legacy of slavery from their memorialization.[16] Blight argues this as well, by making the point that it was necessary to erase slavery from the memory of the Civil War during these early years so that the Confederate dead could be venerated without acknowledging the harsh truth that they died for the cause of slavery.[17] Savage also emphasizes the implications of the intense focus on soldiers and military figures, like Robert E. Lee, as opposed to political figures. He argues that this allowed the South to memorialize without having to deal with the political implications of the war, again pushing slavery out of the picture.[18] What these works are lacking is a more specific study of the memorials, as Savage is more concerned with later monuments, and Blight's work is more concerned with the expression of public memory generally and therefore only spends a limited amount of time on the subject.

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[14] Karen L. Cox, *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight for Racial Justice* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 29
[15] Cox, *No Common Ground*, 33.
[16] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 129.
[17] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 79.
[18] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 131.

However, their general frameworks of how the South sought to deal with the loss of the Civil War, generally and through monuments, will be incredibly useful to consider in this paper's investigation of the Reconstruction-era memorials.

Schivelbusch's work argues that societies that lose wars go through similar processes in their attempts to deal with the loss. The first stage he describes is the initial dreamland state where all blame for the defeat is shifted away from the general population.[19] In the context of the Confederacy, he outlines how this stage lasted for two years, until 1867 when Radical Republicans began to enforce a more transformational Reconstruction policy.[20] After 1867, then, the Lost Cause shifted from being a nostalgic idea to "the ideology of white supremacy, indeed an instrument of repression."[21] Though his work is silent on the issue of monuments, his framework for the creation of post-war fantasies, while not precisely the same as my own, is a useful one to consider in this context.

Many are familiar with the boom in all forms of public history (plays, films, monuments, books) in celebration of the Lost Cause and Confederacy during the Jim Crow era, especially from the turn of the twentieth century onward. This is not to mention the fact that academic historians widely adopted a sympathetic view of the antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction South during the same period.[22] However, the foundations laid for that movement in the immediate aftermath of the war are not only equally historically relevant but critical for understanding how that movement came to be. It is on this point that this thesis will contribute to the study of Confederate monuments and memorialization. For the reasons I outline above, what

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[19] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson Chase (New York, NY: Metropolitan Books, 2003), 10.
[20] Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 75-76.
[21] Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 76.
[22] Eric Foner, "Foreword," in *The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction*, eds. John David Smith, and J. Vincent Lowery (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2013), xi.

I term as the traditional narrative is incomplete and does an unsatisfactory job in explaining the multi-faceted functions performed by Reconstruction Confederate monuments.

Undeniably, the grief and suffering felt by Southerners were major determining factors in motivating them to memorialize their dead through monuments. Despite this, I argue that they served other equal if not more prominent goals. Those goals perpetuated, not only through explicit declarations, but also through glaring omissions, the belief that the Confederate cause was about something other than slavery and was therefore worthy of admiration. I argue the Confederate memorials of the Reconstruction period should not be viewed as apolitical but as serving three specific functions in addition to mourning: the veneration of the soldier, the reorientation of the Confederate cause, and the celebration of the Confederate cause.

Section One: The Traditional Narrative

Although this thesis argues that there were other prominent functions served by Reconstruction monuments, this argument should not be misconstrued as a wholesale rejection of the traditional narrative, that they were to assist mourning, but rather as a supplement to it. That is, there is truth in it, but it comes woefully short of encapsulating the spirit which motivated their creation. Because grieving the loss of life was a function, it is necessary to briefly discuss the ways in which monuments forwarded that end.

The standard argument regarding the earliest monuments goes along the lines of what historian Kirk Savage proposes: "The earliest such memorials were simple shafts often erected in town cemeteries and dedicated to soldiers who had died in the war. They were funereal, and for good reason." He goes further than most by distinguishing between these and later soldier monuments, but still argues they primarily have to do with the soldier's duty rather than anything to do with a particular nation or ideology.[23] While there is more to add to this story, the general framework of this argument is sound and can be found in the monuments. A good example of one such monument is the 1869 Confederate monument in the Old City Cemetery in Lynchburg, Virginia. It is exactly as Savage describes the archetypal early monument: a tall white obelisk with the inscriptions of the eleven Confederate States and three border states, followed by "soldiers sleep here."[24] This is ostensibly purely funereal and does not make mention of the Confederacy, at least not explicitly (the states listed implicitly say what it is about).

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[23] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 162, 179.
[24] Southern Memorial Association, *Confederate Monument*, 1869, Lynchburg, VA, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=168957.

Figure 1. 1869 Lynchburg, VA Confederate Monument

Much of this argument is also applicable to more explicitly celebratory monuments. While it falls short of encapsulating the full intent of these monuments there are undoubtedly funereal components that are still integral. An example that will need further evaluation later, but which can be usefully examined in part now is another monument from 1869, erected in Cynthiana, Kentucky. This monument is also a tall, white obelisk located within a cemetery. In the *Covington Journal*, a section on the soldiers interred at the site proclaims that the "monument [was] erected to perpetuate their memory."[25] This is in line with the standard narrative: white obelisk, in a graveyard, and surrounded by buried soldiers. By these facts alone, it would seem the erection of the monument was solely to remember the lives of those lost.

[25]"Following Confederate Dead Buried at Battle Grove Cemetery," *Covington Journal*, December 4, 1869, https://genealogy.kentonlibrary.org/archives/news/cj/1869/12_04.pdf .

Figure 2. 1869 Cynthiana, KY, monument to Confederate Dead

The aim of this short section has been to show that there is a connection between the grief and mourning of Southerners and the motivations for Reconstruction monument-building. Certainly, that is what these monuments are ostensibly primarily about, and that point is not up for contention. However, scholars who study monuments and their related issues make a few points that complicate the matter.

Kirk Savage, despite his dismissal of early monuments as funereal only, argues that built into the DNA of monuments, especially of the nineteenth century, is the assumption that the ideas they espouse are sacrosanct and therefore apolitical. But this assumption, of course, loses sight of the fact that the collective memories which influence monuments are "complicated fictions, manufactured to serve ideological ends."[26] James Loewen, in *Lies Across America*, makes a similar point about how monuments tend to trivialize difficult questions: "Most

[26] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 6-7.

monuments and markers ignore them and proclaim flatly, 'whatever happened was good.' Things worth thinking about are converted into things taken for granted." He makes it clear that these concerns are not merely nitpicky but are consequential. Real injustice can be overlooked by an overly simplistic view of the past.[27] These are things that, upon closer examination, have not been adequately considered by most scholars in explaining the function of Reconstruction memorials. One cannot simply take for granted that, because the monuments erected during Reconstruction are mostly inconspicuous, they served no purpose beyond remembering the lives of those who perished. The rest of this thesis critically assesses the reasons for memorialization that have been obfuscated by time and overshadowed by the later overwhelmingly celebratory monuments.

[27] James W. Loewen, *Lies across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York, NY: New Press, 1999), 26.

Section Two: The Veneration of the Soldier

With the conclusion of the Civil War in 1865, the South was crushed. During the Civil War, the South lost twenty percent of its adult white male population. Practically every family would have lost a father, son, or husband to the effort. The scorched earth strategy of the North was responsible for immense destruction of property, which left the enemy devastated. [28] Not only did it lose its men and property, but also its dignity. When it came to thinking about how to remember the war and the great losses inflicted upon both sides, the sectional divide that led to, and existed during, the war persisted. The defeat, followed by the inherently top-down orientation of Reconstruction in which officials from the North tried to remake the South, was seen as an assault on Southern identity more broadly. The feeling of a patronizing and imposing North, which had existed long before the war, but was incredibly heightened in its aftermath, necessitated the rehabilitation of the white Southerner, done through widespread efforts to venerate the Confederate soldier.

But this does not fully explain why the movement was so forceful and passionate. The movement to celebrate the soldiers gained momentum and passion from the argument that the conflict was unfair. James M. Smythe, a member of the Monumental Association of Georgia, expressed as much in a call for his fellow citizens to support the creation of a memorial in Augusta, when he described the soldiers' prompt response in "rush[ing] to the unequal struggle."[29] In many ways, they were right to argue this point. One of the things which drew the most ire of Southerners was the scorched-earth strategies of General Sherman, which were seen as indicative of the North's military inferiority. They argued the North could not win an equal

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[28] Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 38.

[29] James M. Smythe, "The Confederate Monument," (Augusta, GA, 1872), ms4299, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries, https://dlg.usg.edu/record/guan_4299_bro1872c6undersized?canvas=0&x=1031&y=1536&w=9138

head-to-head matchup, so had to resort to unfair, unchristian tactics.[30] This argument was useful for framing the defeat not as a failure on the part of Southern men. On the contrary, they fought fair and, it was argued, would have won on an equal playing field because of their military superiority.

Another contributing factor to the glorification of the soldier was the imposition of Reconstruction on the South. Not only was the South militarily defeated, but to it, it felt as though the North's hate and false sense of superiority that motivated the war was simply continuing after. It was not enough to kill its men and burn its cities to the ground; the North still wanted to dominate after the surrender. This is a point that Wolfgang Schivelbusch makes. He argues that Reconstruction was particularly conducive to exacerbating tension as the victorious Union reabsorbed the Southern states on its terms. Because the North was not looking to return the Southern states to the "status quo ante," but rather to radically transform their society, Southerners interpreted this as another punitive attack on their identity.[31] This feeling is summed up in many such cases, one of which is an 1866 letter to Thaddeus Stevens, a key Republican and proponent of Reconstruction, quoted by David Blight in *Race and Reunion*, where a Virginian asks Stevens to let off on the South for a while so it can regroup. He further asks whether Stevens loves Black people or hates Southern whites more.[32] The sentiment behind this question is revealing. It was not only the imposition that was problematic, but what was being imposed. The transformation proposed during Reconstruction was both economic and social. While it was a given that slavery would be abolished, the imposition of the Black man as a legal equal was cataclysmic for many Southern whites. To many, Black enfranchisement was seen as simply

[30] Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 61-62
[31] Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 58.
[32] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 48.

another method by which to stomp on the already downtrodden Southern white.[33] As is often the case, there was a grain of truth to the concerns, as some Northerners were genuinely fueled by a desire for retribution, rather than a sincere desire to empower Black Americans. Despite this reality, much of the grounding for these beliefs was based in sentiment rather than reality. However, the fact remains that they were deeply held, which is what matters.

The oppositional nature of the memorial movement was also fueled by the fact that the federal and most state governments were not going to pay for memorials to Confederate soldiers. The impetus to create Ladies Memorial Associations (LMAs) was primarily spurred because of the sad state of Confederate graves.[34] This proved in the minds of Southerners that, despite the official end of hostilities, the sectional divide remained. To reference Smythe again, he argued for memorialization on the basis of the North doing the same for its people. He, like many others, believed that all people should honour their military dead.[35] Along with forwarding the idea that it is right for a people to commemorate those who did their duty and took up the call to fight, it also exemplifies the sentiment that these are two different peoples. Despite sharing a nation again, they are not of the same kind. From the Southern perspective, the Southern white man, at the hands of Northern authorities, had been militarily crushed, economically devastated, politically disenfranchised, and racially humiliated. Memorialization, thus, offered a prime avenue to restore the dignity of the Confederate soldier and with him the rest of Southern white society.

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[33] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 52.
[34] Catherine W. Bishir, "'A Strong Force of Ladies': Women, Politics, and Confederate Memorial Associations in Nineteenth-Century Raleigh," in *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 4.
[35] Smythe, "The Confederate Monument."

The memorialization movement worked together with the efforts to properly bury Confederate soldiers. This is why many, but importantly not all, Reconstruction-era memorials are found in cemeteries. To facilitate their creation and care, private groups were set up, the most common of which were LMAs.[36] These organizations were responsible for raising the funds necessary to build and maintain the monuments. The fact that these organizations were so successful immediately after the war is indicative of broad support, but particularly great support from upper-class Southerners. This is especially striking considering the depressed economic state of most Southerners on account of the war. Despite organizations being largely financed by elites, the high attendance at unveiling ceremonies and other events is indicative of a widespread movement.[37]

An 1871 monument erected in Eucheeanna,[38] Florida (now located in DeFuniak Springs) to the Confederate dead of Walton County was inscribed with a poem which speaks to the idea of soldier veneration irrespective of any factors other than their service:

> When the spirit free deserts the body as it must
> What matter where the lifeless form dissolves itself again to dust.
> 'Twere sweet indeed to close our eyes with those we cherish near;
> And wafted upwards by their sighs, soar to some calmer sphere;
> But whether on the scaffold high, or in the battle van
> The fittest place where man can die, is where he dies for man.[39]

These excerpts were taken from "Where Man Should Die," first published in a book of Irish poems in 1845.[40] To be clear, this was not a novel idea by any means, evidenced by "It is sweet and honorable to die for one's country," a phrase attributed to the Roman poet Horace, being

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[36] Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies," 3-4.
[37] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 44-45.
[38] Sometimes spelled "Euchee Anna."
[39] Walton County Female Memorial Association, *Monument to Walton County Confederate Dead*, 1871, Eucheeanna, FL, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=39775.
[40] M. J. Barry, "Where Man Should Die," in *The Spirit of the Nation: Ballads and Songs by the Writers of "The Nation," With Original and Ancient Music, Arranged for the Voice and Piano-forte*, ed. Thomas Osborne Davis (Dublin: James Duffy, 1845), 223-224, https://archive.org/details/spiritnationcon00dublgoog/page/n8/mode/2up.

inscribed on a Confederate monument in Charles Town, West Virginia.[41] Despite the concept not being new, it was useful for Southerners because it forwarded the idea that, regardless of the war's result or the cause they died for, there was still something honourable and brave about heeding the call to battle. In this way, Southerners could come to terms with the war and their loss. The facts of what happened could be ignored if they were irrelevant to the reasons for the celebration of the soldiers themselves.

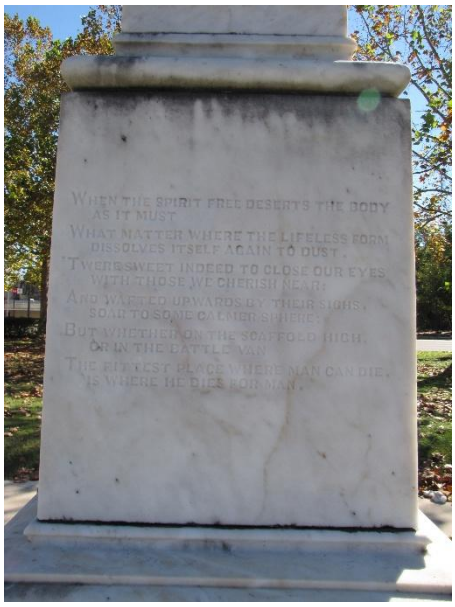

Figure 3. Inscription on 1871 Walton County, FL Monument

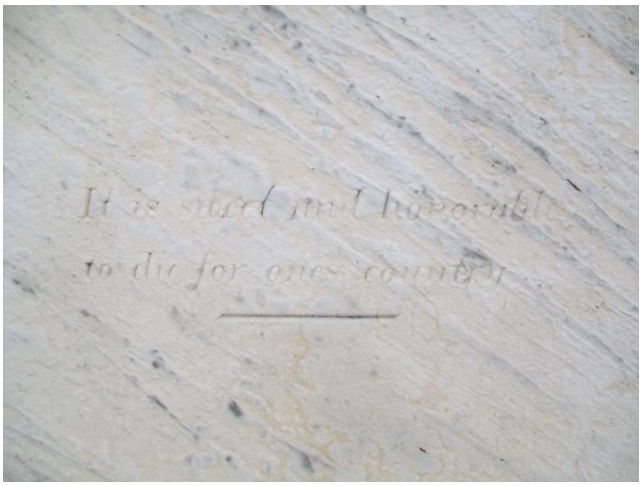

Figure 4. Inscription on 1871 Charles Town, WV monument

[41] Lee Memorial Association of Jefferson County, *Monument to Confederate Dead*, 1871, Charles Town, WV, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=103464.

Section Three: The Reorientation of the Confederate Cause

Though I have established the veneration of the soldier as a key function of Reconstruction monuments, the place of the Confederate cause in this equation still requires examination. As I have shown, the veneration of the soldier allowed Southerners to 'forget' that the war was about slavery. But, if not the actual cause, what replaced it in public memory? It is undeniable that the monuments post-Reconstruction were celebratory of the cause and of the antebellum South, up to the point of romanticizing slavery. Reconstruction's monuments hold a different place than those, for sure, but not in the sense that the traditional understanding outlines. As will be analyzed in the fourth section, these monuments served a celebratory function, but what precisely they were celebrating needs to be established first. The cause for which these monuments were erected differs from both the actual Confederate cause, as outlined during secession, and the romanticized cause associated with the twentieth century.

Prior to outlining the roles these monuments played in reorienting the cause, it is necessary to establish what the Confederate cause actually was. It will be difficult to see the blurring of lines that the monuments sought to accomplish if the cause is not established. The issue of what the Confederate cause was has been contentious as far back as the immediate end of the war and these monuments are indicative of that contention. However, while it is true that no movement can be pinned down to a singular motivation, it is evident in the case of the Confederacy that one concern was supreme.

Given that the Confederacy was not some amorphous idea but a political entity, it makes sense to refer to its founding documents as indicators of its cause. The two kinds of documents I will refer to are the secession documents and the Confederate Constitution. The secession documents are integral to pinning down the cause of secession, as their express purpose was to

legally justify it. Of the states to secede, four (South Carolina, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia) created longer documents officially listing their reasons for doing so, in addition to the declarations of secession that all Confederate States passed. South Carolina was the first to secede, and its document made clear the primary cause of secession. It pointed to the infringement of Article IV, section 2, clause 3 of the US Constitution, which stipulated that "no person held to service or labour in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due." Although this is not the only grievance listed in the document, the sentence following it indicates its chief importance to secession: "This stipulation was so material to the compact, that without it that compact would not have been made."[42] To rephrase this, South Carolina's claim was that the clause protecting the rights of slaveholders was so important that it (and the other slaveholding states) would not have signed the Constitution without its inclusion. Therefore, while infringements upon slavery were not the only concerns, they were the only ones which made secession the sole remedy. Both Texas and Georgia's secession documents reiterated the same point, while Mississippi's document put it even more forthrightly: "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery."[43] Furthermore, each document situated its state within

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[42] South Carolina, convention, *Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union*, (SC: 1860), website, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_scarsec.asp (accessed January 15, 2026).

[43] Texas, convention, *Declaration of the Causes Which Impel the State of Texas to Secede from the Federal Union: also the Ordinance of Secession* (Austin, TX: Herald office, 1861), Pdf, https://www.loc.gov/item/95139713/ ; Georgia, convention, *Georgia Secession* (GA: 1861), website, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_geosec.asp (accessed January 15, 2026) ; Mississippi, convention, *A Declaration of the Immediate Causes which Induce and Justify the Secession of the State of Mississippi from the Federal Union* (MS: 1861), website, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_missec.asp (accessed January 15, 2026).

the sectional divide of Northern non-slaveholding states and Southern slaveholding states. Unlike the rationales offered up after the war, nothing about these declarations were vague.

But, of course, those documents were only justifications for secession, one may argue, and not enforceable law within the Confederacy. Therefore, it makes sense to compare the reasons espoused in those documents to the Confederacy's Constitution. As was the case in the secession documents, slavery was not the sole concern addressed in the Confederate Constitution. Although it largely copies, word for word, the text of the US Constitution, there are some significant changes.[44] Given that the secession documents cited the infringement of the property rights of Southern slaveholding states as the impetus for secession, it should come as no surprise that one of the major changes made to the Confederate Constitution was the enshrinement of slavery in law, through a ban on legislation which "den[ied] or impair[ed] the right of property in negro slaves."[45] Though the US Constitution had clauses to protect the rights of slaveholders, the practice was not guaranteed and was therefore subject to both state and federal legislation. This clause alongside the states' justifications for secession refutes the idea that states' rights generally were of prime concern. The right to maintain the institution of slavery trumped that concern and constituted the necessity for seceding.

Now that it has been established that Confederates explicitly professed and codified their cause to be the protection of slavery before the war, the reorientation during Reconstruction through monument will be apparent. Reorientation of the Confederate cause in the Reconstruction South was integral to a Southern understanding of their place in America. As

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[44] A side-by-side comparison of the documents can be found at "Constitutions of the United States and Confederate States: A Comparison," *Civil Discourse*, August 12, 2019, https://civildiscourse-historyblog.com/blog/2019/7/31/constitutions-of-the-united-states-and-confederate-states-a-comparison.

[45] Confederate States of America, *Constitution of the Confederate States* (Montgomery, AL: 1861), website, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_csa.asp (accessed January 15, 2026), art. 1, sec. 9, cl. 4.

previously discussed, the celebration of the soldier was part of the effort to deflect from the political origins of the war, but it was not the only function. And though that function was sufficient for positioning the dead as honourable, there would still be questions as to the greater motivations for rebellion. To reintegrate into the United States, it would be necessary for the South to reposition its cause as the truly patriotic one, committed to the ideals of the Constitution. Better yet, to position the war as not a campaign to protect the inherently anti-liberty institution of slavery but in fact a necessary move to protect America from nefarious actors that wished to subjugate its people.

One way in which these monuments looked to reorient the cause was through what they did not include. Of the dozens of monuments considered in this study, not one refers to or depicts slavery. In Kirk Savage's study of Civil War monuments he posits that the first Confederate monument to make reference to slavery was to "faithful slaves," erected in Fort Mill, South Carolina in 1896, nearly two decades after the end of Reconstruction.[46] Though written in the early twentieth century, Henry James's observations about Richmond, Virginia, which Savage points to, describe the eerie feeling aroused in witnessing a society unwilling to acknowledge its past. As an outsider, he arrived expecting to see the legacy of slavery but instead found a place "blank and void."[47] The South's inability to portray and reckon with its own history made that history even more glaring.

Every Reconstruction Confederate monument was mute on the issue of slavery, but some directly pointed to other causes. In some cases, like Cynthiana's monument, the inscriptions are not original to Reconstruction, as primary sources describe them as blank.[48] For the ones that do

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[46] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 157.
[47] Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 154.
[48] Traveller, "Southern Sentiments," *Independent Statesman*, September 30, 1880, *Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers* https://link-gale

include original inscriptions, many point directly to a reoriented cause. One of the earliest Confederate monuments was erected in 1867 in Romney, West Virginia and includes an inscription honouring its county's soldiers "who fell in defence of Southern Rights."[49] As will be evidenced by the more fleshed-out speeches, the condensing of the issue to simply Southern rights was not for lack of time but because it was necessary to obscure the cause, away from slavery, to enable the whitewashing of an ignoble cause.

Figure 5. 1867 Romney, WV Confederate monument

For the monuments that had no inscriptions, the speeches made at their unveiling are often the best windows into the inspiration for their creation and the functions they served in their communities. The unveiling ceremonies were no small events either. In many cases, depending on the scale of the monuments, they acted as citywide celebrations. For example, the October 26, 1875 unveiling of the Stonewall Jackson monument in Richmond, Virginia, on the

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com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/apps/doc/GT3016079269/NCNP?u=uvictoria&sid=bookmarkNCNP&pg=1&xid=120ea3f9 ; "Multiple News Items," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, June 15, 1869, *Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers*. https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/apps/doc/GT3007295404/NCNP?u=uvictoria&sid=bookmark-NCNP&pg=1&xid=82c7c28f.

[49] The Daughters of Old Hampshire, *Confederate Memorial*, 1867, Romney, WV, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=159296

State Capitol grounds, was reported to have been attended by forty thousand people as "business [was] abandoned and the streets thronged."[50] Not only that, but the day of the unveiling was accompanied by a special edition of one of Richmond's biggest newspapers, *The Daily Dispatch*, which included extensive details about the statue, the day's festivities, and the life of Jackson.[51]

Figure 6. 1875 Stonewall Jackson Monument Richmond, VA

A speech given that day by Governor James Kemper embodies the ideals of reorientation, as he looked to the statue as a reminder to reunify but to also 'remember' what it was that created the disunification in the first place. On the first point, he proclaimed that the monument was a reminder that in the "reunified common country" the principles of "impartial justice and impartial right, to the North and to the South" must be the cornerstones of the nation. He went on to remark that the statue "stands forth a mute protest before the world against that rule of tyrants

[50] "Jackson!,"*The Daily Dispatch*, October 27, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-27/ed-1/.
[51] *The Daily Dispatch*, October 26, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-26/ed-1/.

which, wanting faith in the instincts of honor, would distrust and degrade a brave and proud but unfortunate people."[52] It was this fine balance that the monuments had to stride. On one hand, former Confederates such as the Governor wanted to reunify, to put the past behind them. On the other, they wanted to justify the cause they, and their Confederate dead fought for. Those two things are at odds with each other if one remembers the sentiments from the secession documents. They are, however, completely compatible with each other if the cause was reoriented into a just and necessary action to remind people, using Kemper's own terminology, that the tyrannical North infringing on the liberties of the South was intolerable.

It is, then, unsurprising that the issue would so often be framed in this way. This was done at less notable events, too, taking place in graveyards at the unveiling of white obelisks, in contrast to grand unveilings of monuments like Jackson's held at the Virginia State Capitol. To return to the monument to Confederate dead in Cynthiana, Kentucky, its unveiling and dedication was accompanied by a speech which included many of the same sentiments as those expressed six years later in Richmond. At the event, a former Confederate, William Campbell Preston Breckinridge, in defense of the monument and of the cause it represented 'reminded' the crowd what the Confederate cause was: "Before any ordinance of secession, prior to any act of resistance, the South was deliberately, fiercely, insultingly thrust from her share in the Government, which, with threats and maledictions, was seized to be used against her interests, her property, and her honor."[53] Though more forcefully stated here, the sentiment is along the same lines as that which was expressed in Richmond. Both monuments forwarded that the North, or more precisely, its representatives who had gained control of the federal government through

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[52] Moses D Hoge, and James Lawson Kemper, *Inauguration of the Jackson Statue* (Richmond, VA: 1875), Pdf, https://www.loc.gov/item/10006752/, 2.
[53] Traveller, "Southern Sentiments."

the election of Republicans, acted nefariously, threatening the South. Breckinridge mentioned the threatening of the South's interests and property, but what exactly those interests or that property was went unsaid, which contrasts with the explicit statements made immediately preceding the Civil War.

There was, however, one glaring issue that could not be resolved through any vague and euphemistic reorientation of the Confederate cause. That issue was that the Confederate cause and reunification on the basis of equality under the law were inherently at odds. As hard as former Confederates like Kemper and Breckinridge tried to assimilate the Confederate cause with a unified future, they could not. While it was one thing to say the cause was about anything but race, it was entirely another to expect the public to behave as though that was the case. The debate surrounding the unveiling festivities for the aforementioned Stonewall Jackson monument sums up this disconnect well.

As discussed, the basic sentiment that was expressed as it relates to these monuments was that they represented a cause motivated by something other than the preservation of African slavery. Some mix of sectionalism, tyranny, and the trampling of general constitutional liberty tended to make up the argument. Assuming this was the case, there would, one would imagine, be no problems as it related to the inclusion of Black Southerners in ceremonies. Those organizing the ceremony accompanying the unveiling of Jackson's monument, Governor Kemper and General Henry Heth, the acting chief marshal, were amenable to Richmond Black organizations which desired to take part, in the spirit of reconciliation.[54] This announcement, however, was met with incredible backlash by the public. General Jubal Early, one of the key

[54] "The Inauguration of Jackson's Statue," *The Daily Dispatch*, October 19, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-19/ed-1/ ; "Inauguration of the Jackson Statue-A Falsehood Nailed-And Other Matters Noted," *The Daily Dispatch*, October 22, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-22/ed-1/.

figures who planned to attend, sent a scathing letter to one of the assistant marshals after reading news that Black citizens would be allowed to participate. He wrote that their inclusion would be "an indignity to the memory of Jackson and an insult to all Confederates who shall attend the inauguration of the statue, and in fact to all who cannot attend." He further stated that he would not attend should they be included as planned.[55] Similarly, General Bradley T. Johnson was so horrified by the notion that he may have been responsible for their inclusion that he had it made known, on the front page of the news no less, that he was in no way involved in the decision-making surrounding who was invited. The article made sure to point the blame directly at Kemper and Heth.[56]

The public outrage became so palpable that on the day before the proceedings, Heth, after announcing the order of the procession, made an impassioned plea to the public in favour of including Black citizens. In his plea he attempted to put to bed any rumours of potential race mixing during the procession, a concern raised by Early, among others.[57] He assured the public that the Black procession would remain at the very back, "miles apart" from the white troops leading the main procession. In concluding his "Card to the Public," he asked that the public remain harmonious and united as their enemies would surely like to see them divided.[58] Ultimately, though, the reality of the situation clashed with the contradictory rhetoric. Despite being listed the day before the event as the tenth and final group, to start two blocks behind the

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[55] Early to General, October 22, 1875, Library of Virginia Manuscripts and Special Collections, https://i0.wp.com/uncommonwealth.lva.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/43755_b3f3_065.jpg?fit=3087%2C3982&ssl=1, https://i0.wp.com/uncommonwealth.lva.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/43775_b3f3_065b.jpg?fit=3163%2C3972&ssl=1.

[56] "Inauguration of the Jackson Statue-A Falsehood Nailed-And Other Matters Noted."

[57] Early to General, October 22, 1875.

[58] Henry Heth, "A Card to the Public," *The Daily Dispatch*, October 25, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-25/ed-1/.

last white group, the "colored volunteers, colored societies and colored citizens" were not present in the procession as evidenced by their disappearance from the program and recap of the event the day after.[59]

Just as Black Southerners' place in the origin of the war was eliminated from commemoration through monument, so too were they from the events. The masses, evidenced by their outrage, understood that Black people had no place in their cause and were better pushed to the sidelines. It was much easier for them to essentially pretend as though Black Southerners did not exist than contend with the uncomfortable reality that their very existence brought to light. The same reasons which led to the exclusion of Black Southerners' central role in the representation of history through monument, necessitated their physical separation from the celebration of that sanitized history. The presence of Black people was the greatest reminder of slavery. As David W. Blight argues, Black people could not be part of the Civil War story during Reconstruction. Only later, after time had warped memories could they be introduced back into the narrative, not as an oppressed people, but as loyal and content slaves.[60]

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[59] "Unveiling the Jackson Statue," *The Daily Dispatch*, October 25, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-25/ed-1/ ; "The Procession," *The Daily Dispatch*, October 27, 1875, https://www.loc.gov/item/sn84024738/1875-10-27/ed-1/.

[60] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 79.

Section Four: The Celebration of the Confederate Cause

The veneration of the soldier and the reorientation of the cause nicely lead to the logical conclusion that is the celebration of the Confederate cause. With the cause firmly shifted from something that in the reunited nation would surely be taboo, to something worthy of admiration, celebration could now be done without contradicting that paradoxical fantasy I outlined in the previous section. In this section, as in the last two, I will examine particular celebratory monument features, celebratory elements of dedication speeches, as well as celebratory rhetoric in written documents related to memorialization. As much as possible, this section will reintroduce monuments from past sections to illustrate the degree to which many of these monuments explicitly illustrate each function. Additionally, however, as in sections past, I will introduce a few more monuments to demonstrate the breadth of these functions across the totality of Reconstruction monuments.

It is this portion of my analysis that is most at odds with the traditional narrative. While the prior two sections certainly add new depth to Reconstruction monuments that have been labeled as only funereal, the veneration of Confederate soldiers and a reorientation of the cause do not necessarily in isolation contradict the idea that these monuments were primarily disconnected from the cause. At the same time, of course, as I have shown, each function works in tandem with the others, making an isolated study of any one of the functions, including the funereal one, inadequate.

As I have done in past sections, it is useful to see examples of this function at play in a variety of monuments, regardless of the shape they take or the space they occupy. To return to a monument that I have previously analyzed, the monument in Cynthiana, Kentucky is one example, of a few, which contains one of the more boldfaced representations of celebration: a

Confederate flag. The flag engraved into this monument is not the incredibly recognizable Confederate battle flag still widely used by many today, but a variation of the "Stars and Bars," evidenced by both the clustering of stars in the upper left corner, and a contemporary account which describes it as such.[61] Two other monuments draped in Confederate flags can be found in Kentucky, Crab Orchard erected in 1872 and Bowling Green in 1876.[62] They are perhaps inspired by Cynthiana—Breckinridge gave the speech at Bowling Green as well—but both designs are quite different.[63] As mentioned, the Bowling Green monument also features the "Stars and Bars" draped over the obelisk. It, however, has another striking symbol. Engraved onto one side of the monument is the painting "The Lost Cause," originally created by Henry Mosler.[64] The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, quoting a Bowling Green publication, described it as such:

> From the apex of the marble shaft hang the Southern flag and the warrior's useless sword. On the western side is carved "The Lost Cause." The tattered and grief-stricken soldier leans on his musket in front of the ruins that once sheltered his wife and little ones.[65]

The inclusion of this painting is indicative of how the erection of monuments, even in the early days of Reconstruction, was part of the larger Lost Cause movement. One of the main purposes of this study has been to show how one cannot disconnect the memorialization movement from the rest of the public sentiment in the South. While the acknowledgment that the sword has been rendered useless is an acknowledgement of defeat, this defeat, as I outlined in the section on

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[61] Cynthiana Confederate Memorial Association, *Cynthiana Confederate Memorial*, 1869, Cynthiana, KY, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=172625 ; "Multiple News Items," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*

[62] *Crab Orchard Cemetery Confederate Memorial*, 1872, Crab Orchard, KY, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=258045 ; Citizens of Warren County, *Confederate Monument of Bowling Green*, 1876, Bowling Green, KY, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=123091.

[63] "Confederate Monument at Bowling Green, Ky," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, February 7, 1876, *Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers*. https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/apps/doc/GT3003888333/NCNP?u=uvictoria&sid=bookmark-NCNP&pg=5&xid=db539d5a.

[64] Citizens of Warren County, *Confederate Monument of Bowling Green*.

[65] "Confederate Monument at Bowling Green, Ky," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

reorientation, is a regrettable one. The defeat is regrettable because the cause was just and therefore something worthy of lamenting. The painting "The Lost Cause" forwards this same idea.

Figure 7. 1872 Confederate monument, Crab Orchard, KY draped with the "Stars and Bars"

Figure 8. 1876 Confederate Monument, Bowling Green, KY displaying the "Stars and Bars" and Lost Cause engraving

The way that these symbols are celebratory is fairly self-evident. One cannot concurrently argue that such monuments are indicative of putting a close on the ideals of the Confederacy when they are draped with the flag of that cause. To use an analogy, I think one can see how ridiculous it would be for someone to similarly argue that a hypothetical monument to World War II German dead draped with a Nazi flag is purely funereal. Independent of anything else I will present in this section, or have already presented in the sections past, the presence of

these symbols alone calls into question the traditional narrative as put forward by Savage and Foster and which has been accepted into the more recent works of Domby, Cox, and Towns.

A further example of celebration engraved in stone can be found in the Confederate monument erected in Harrisonburg, Virginia in 1876. Engraved into the sides are two inscriptions that celebrate the cause: "1876. / In memory of men / who with their lives / vindicated / the principles of / 1776." and "The / Southern Soldier / Died for his Country / Success is not Patriotism / Defeat is not Rebellion."[66] The first inscription speaks to the concept of the Confederacy as the bastion of Constitutional liberty but goes further to uplift Confederates to the level of the American revolutionaries of 1776. The second continues the rhetoric of the South as the true patriots but takes a further, ironic stance that accuses the North of crafting a fake version of events wherein by victory alone they are the patriots and by defeat alone the Southerners are rebels. As should be evident, these quotes are equally indicative of soldier veneration and the reorientation of the cause. And this must be the case, because it is soldier veneration and especially the reorientation of the cause that made celebration of the Confederacy not just acceptable but a moral imperative.

This idea of the moral imperative to celebrate the cause is especially present in the speeches which accompanied the unveiling or dedication of monuments. To show this, I will return to Breckinridge's 1869 speech, the speeches given in 1875 in Richmond, and introduce one more speech given by Wade Hampton in Warrenton, Virginia in 1877.

In returning to Cynthiana, it is important to recall how Breckinridge began his speech. As is examined in the previous section, to reorient the cause, his initial rhetoric was crafted to

[66] Ladies Memorial Association, *Confederate Monument*, 1876, Harrisonburg, VA, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=16487.

convince whoever was in attendance that the cause for which the Confederacy fought was just. After establishing that the cause was just, he uses that 'truth' to argue in favour of celebration:

> May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and my right-arm wither in its socket; may she I love and the children born to us, turn from my embrace with scorn, when I acknowledge that the cause was not worthy of the people, not worthy the untold suffering, the countless hardships, the priceless lives given to it. Dead though it be, forever lost, I loved it with the unutterable fervor of my heart, giving the best years of my life to its service. I will not disown the love nor repent the service. Mark him who would do otherwise, and trust him not.[67]

This is the logical outcome of reorienting the cause away from something uncomfortable to something admirable. Of course, the just, patriotic, and noble cause would be something that any good person would celebrate. As Breckinridge outlines, the kind of person who did not celebrate such a cause would be liable to be scorned and justifiably marked as unscrupulous by any decent person. It is overwhelmingly clear, then, that celebration is not an optional part of the memorialization movement but a required one. As with the Bowling Green monument, there is an acknowledgement of the cause being lost but that recognition is only relevant as a means to illuminate the injustice of its defeat. However, the cause was not lost in an ideological sense. Breckinridge makes that point certain. The cause was lost in a literal sense (the Confederacy lost the war), but, to use Breckinridge's words, the love of the supposed ideals was well and truly alive.

This same rhetoric can be found when returning to the festivities surrounding the Stonewall Jackson monument in Richmond, Virginia. Governor Kemper, too, began his speech by reorienting the cause. Additionally, as mentioned before, his speech emphasized the unity, but not forgiveness, that both North and South should strive for going forward. Kemper argues that all Americans "should perpetuate impartial honor to whom honor is due." In that spirit, therefore,

[67] Traveller, "Southern Sentiments."

he proclaimed the statue to attest to the "honor, homage, [and] reverence for the heroism of our past." [68] Like with Breckinridge, the goodness of the cause makes it imperative that it is celebrated. The interesting difference, however, is that Kemper also used unity as a justification for celebration. That is, because the two sections were now reunited, they should all be able to respect and celebrate Jackson, and the cause he fought for, because ultimately, regardless of what Northerners may say, the principles for which he fought were just.

In his speech at the event, Moses D. Hoge, a minister and friend of Jackson, iterated these same points, in favour of the moral duty to respect Jackson and his Confederate cause:

> We come to honor the memory of one who was the impersonation of our Confederate cause, and whose genius illumined the great contest which has recently ended, and which made an epoch not only in our own history, but in that of the age. We assert no monopoly in the glory of that leader. It was his happy lot to command, even while he lived, the respect and admiration of right-minded and right-hearted men in every part of this land, and in all lands.[69]

Not to overstate this point, but it is striking the ways in which the Confederacy was framed as something that all good people had an obligation to celebrate. Reorienting away from slavery made this possible as the Confederacy could be reimagined, not as something which a significant portion of the nation decried as immoral, but an institution whose *raison d'être* was the very same as the Patriots of 1776.

The last example under examination is a speech given by Wade Hampton, a former Confederate who became Governor of South Carolina, at the dedication of a Confederate monument in Warrenton, Virginia, erected in 1877.[70] Unlike Breckinridge and Kemper, Hampton, in his speech, reiterates many of the same points regarding the just nature of the cause

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[68] Hoge, and Kemper, *Inauguration of the Jackson Statue*, 2.
[69] Hoge, and Kemper, *Inauguration of the Jackson Statue*, 4.
[70] Ladies Memorial Association of Fauquier, *Warrenton Cemetery Confederate Dead Monument*, 1877, Warrenton, VA, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=166728.

but without any of the conciliatory remarks towards the North. He in fact does the precise opposite, for example, referring to them as "enemies" and "deluded."[71] His speech touches on the idea I mentioned earlier, in the context of Breckinridge, about how though the Confederacy lost militarily, the ideals must live on. If it seems as though I have overstated the degree to which celebration of the Confederacy was demanded on a moral level, any idea of that is put to rest by the analogy that Hampton used to justify the continued celebration of the Confederacy. Hampton argued that, like Jesus Christ, the physical death of the Confederacy was no reason to admit defeat. As with Jesus, goodness could not be defeated: "When our Divine Master perished on the cross, did the doctrines for which he died perish with him?"[72] This comparison is indicative of the grand authority and righteousness associated with the Confederate Cause.

Staying in much the same realm, he then moved from comparisons to God to the pantheon of American figures. In this section of his speech, he posited that to call Lee and Davis traitors would be to call Washington and Jefferson traitors. Furthermore, like others, he argued the principles of the Confederacy were precisely the same as those in the Declaration of Independence. Therefore, if the North were right, Washington would be the villain and Benedict Arnold the Patriot. Such points certainly would have resonated with the Virginian attendees who certainly would not want to disparage their two greatest heroes of the founding era. As such, he proclaimed that, because they had truth on their side, they needed to "assert and maintain [their] faith" because God would vindicate them. [73]

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[71] Wade Hampton, "Memorial Address," in *The Southern Student's Hand-Book of Selections for Reading and Oratory*, ed. John G. James (A.S. Barnes & Co., 1879), 220, 222, https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/do-pdf:gb0494.
[72] Hampton, "Memorial Address," 221.
[73] Hampton, "Memorial Address," 221.

Figure 9. 1877 Confederate monument, Warrenton, VA, in front of which Hampton gave his address

Each example in this section works directly against the traditional narrative's notion that these monuments were indicative of a movement which, unlike those in later decades, was funereal, somber, and "ritualistically acknowledged the death of [the Southern] cause."[74] What this section and the preceding one have done in concert is show, contrary to the traditional narrative, that there was a coherent historical justification for the war, which spanned across place and time during Reconstruction, leading to similar expressions of celebration.

[74] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 45.

Conclusion

Through the functions of soldier veneration, the reorientation of the cause, and the celebration of the cause, Confederate Reconstruction monuments can be seen as significantly more complex than the traditional narrative affords them. What makes this point most evident is the ways in which the impetus for these memorial monuments was influenced by the larger trends of postwar Southern cultural memory.

The historians Savage, Blight, and Schivelbusch all generally agree that the public memory of the Confederacy in the postwar South looked to change the ways in which it was perceived. By pushing Black Southerners to the sidelines of society and history, public memory could be shaped in such a way as to forget, for a time, their central role in the Confederate ideology, which paved the way for the fantasy world described by Schivelbusch. Surprisingly, however, none of these scholars, nor any others, have applied this consensus view to a study of Reconstruction monuments. Somehow or another, these monuments have been placed in a separate category and are seen not as products of the above ways of thinking but as purely somber, funereal markers. As this thesis has outlined, those two points are at loggerheads, made most evident by the speeches given at monument dedications which espoused the beliefs of the consensus view on Southern public memory and not a specialized view crafted only for the context of Reconstruction monuments.

Where the traditional narrative is right is in its acknowledgment about the uniqueness of the funereal component as it relates to Reconstruction Confederate monuments. Undoubtedly, it is this function of Reconstruction monuments that clearly delineate them from the Jim Crow monuments, erected with no funereal function in mind. In the traditional narrative, however, this key distinction is overstated and upgraded to Reconstruction monuments' sole function. Scholars

who subscribe to the traditional narrative tend, therefore, to overemphasize the elements which confirm this conclusion. A common example of this occurring is in the focus on graveyards, a funereal setting, as evidence, while completely disregarding the speeches which proliferated rhetoric completely unrelated to the function of mourning.

In examining all monument aspects (setting, physical monument elements, accompanying rhetoric), the presence of the additional three functions become apparent. All four functions interact with each other and cannot stand alone. To return again to Loewen's advice, it is imperative to avoid seeing monuments as neutral things that simplify difficult questions. If a monument seems to say nothing, or just one thing, it is almost certainly speaking to myriad other issues, which can be revealed if one looks beyond the most baseline assessments of their meaning.

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