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Robert Figueira and Stephen Lowe  
Co-Editors

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The co-editors are especially indebted to those colleagues who reviewed papers for publication. Their comments and suggestions have greatly improved the quality of the papers presented here. Reviewers for the 2005 volume were:

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## Contents

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Into the Maw of Dixie: The Freedom Rides, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Race in South Carolina .....	1
<i>Derek Charles Catsam, University of Texas of the Permian Basin</i>	
The Merci Train for South Carolina: When France and the Palmetto State were Friends, 1947–1949 .....	21
<i>Fritz Hamer, South Carolina State Museum</i>	
Built By the Border: South of the Border and Border Business 1950–1965 .....	33
<i>Laura Koser, University of South Carolina</i>	
Conflict and the Courts: Common Law, Star Chamber, Coroners’ Inquests, and the King’s Almoner in Early Modern England .....	49
<i>Carol Loar, University of South Carolina Upstate</i>	
The Cross and the Elephant: Southern White Evangelicals’ Commitment to the Republican Party, 1960–1994 .....	61
<i>Daniel K. Williams, Brown University</i>	
The Revolution Outside Her Window: New Light Shed on the March 1917 Russian Revolution from the Papers of VAD Nurse Dorothy N. Seymour .....	72
<i>Joyce Wood, Anderson College</i>	
A Notice to Contributors Concerning Style .....	89
Minutes of the Seventy-Fourth Annual Meeting 6 March 2003 .....	91



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## **Into the Maw of Dixie: The Freedom Rides, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Race in South Carolina**

Derek Charles Catsam

### **Crossing the Rubicon: The Freedom Ride Enters the Deep South**

ON 9 MAY 1961 THE FREEDOM RIDERS LEFT CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA, scene of the first arrest on their journey, and crossed into South Carolina. They had been on the road for just a few days, having passed from Washington, through Virginia and North Carolina and to the precipice of the Deep South since 4 May. Fifty-seven-year-old Frances Bergman, one of two white female Riders, confided in a letter, “Frankly I am scared, but if I feel this way how must the Negro members of the group feel[?] And they are all such fine people – all so different in background yet we meet on this common problem and work as one. This is a thrilling experience and one I would not have missed. Signing off – keep your fingers crossed.”<sup>1</sup>

South Carolina marked the group’s entrée into the Deep South. V.O. Key wrote about the “harshness and ceaselessness of race discussion in South Carolina,” attributing this to the very high percentage of black South Carolinians.<sup>2</sup> No “Progressive Plutocracy,” as Key had labeled North Carolina, or “Museum Piece,” his term for Virginia, South Carolina was a state where “preoccupation with the Negro stifles political conflict.”<sup>3</sup> In other areas of political life there could be dissent aplenty, but not on the issue of race. Where North Carolina and Virginia had a visible and in some ways proud history of moderation on the race question, South Carolina had an apodictic history of race demagoguery second perhaps only to Mississippi’s.

South Carolina in 1960 was rural and poor. Even among southern states, the poorest in the country and the most denigrated based on most social and economic indicators, South Carolina ranked near the bottom, usually contending for the lowest rung with Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Lowcountry politicians dominated the state’s legislature, leaving representatives from South Carolina’s few densely populated pockets with little access to the levers of power. Not surprisingly, this rural control gave the neobourbons a stranglehold on the politics of race.<sup>4</sup>

The political climate went hand in hand with the cultural climate of much of South Carolina. Bob Jones University proved to be a bulwark against integration and just about any other form of social advancement among South Carolina’s fundamentalist white denizens. The state’s political leadership thus spent a good deal of time courting the Jones dynasty and the student body at the fundamentalist stronghold.<sup>5</sup>

Other institutions buttressed Bob Jones to support the segregationism made famous by Strom Thurmond, erstwhile Dixiecrat.

Not surprisingly, then, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision created a frenzy of activity and fulmination on the part of South Carolina's political elite. As in other states, politicians proved willing to throw out the baby with the bathwater by endangering all of public education in order to prevent even token integration. Even prior to the decision, when the South Carolina portion of *Brown* wound its way through the court system for its inevitable showdown with *Plessy v. Ferguson*, State Senator L. Marion Gressette headed up a fifteen-member committee in the legislature to address ways to confront the onslaught of integration that would be the first such body in the country. The formation of the Gressette Committee came after the legislature had already passed a series of "preparedness measures." These included authorizing local school authorities to lease public school facilities to private interests, and placing hurdles before students who wanted to transfer from one school to another, thus giving local officials the ability to prevent black students from transferring to white schools. Gressette's group further engineered the passage of an amendment to the state constitution that took responsibility of providing free public schools from South Carolina; in November 1952 the state's white population passed the amendment by a greater than two-to-one majority. The black belt lowcountry overwhelmingly supported the amendment. The counties in the Piedmont upcountry did not; five of them actually rejected it, to no avail.<sup>6</sup>

After *Brown* things got worse. The state was one of the first to pass an interposition resolution.<sup>7</sup> By 1956 the legislature passed laws to deny state funds to "any school from which, and for any school to which, any pupil may transfer pursuant to, or in consequence of, an order of any court."<sup>8</sup> The legislature repealed mandatory attendance laws, eliminated tenure for teachers, and handed almost all control to local authorities.<sup>9</sup> Segregation had been the coin of the realm in the Palmetto State for the duration of the twentieth century and particularly after the onset of World War II. Because the state had mobilized early, there was little need for the emergence of a wholly new policy or set of policies to respond to the new realities *Brown* had wrought<sup>10</sup> This is especially true since South Carolina had provided much of the impetus for the emergence of the Dixiecrats in 1948, including the party's vigorous, virile presidential nominee, Governor Strom Thurmond.<sup>11</sup> The state's leadership thus spent most of the 1950s ensuring the continued adherence to Jim Crow by further codifying practice into law, tinkering with what worked rather than creating segregation anew.

Perhaps paradoxically, for all of the state's rigorous commitment to segregation, the emergence of hard-core segregationist organizations did not follow. The best historian of the reign of the Citizens' Council, Neil McMillen, has called South

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Carolina one of the “weak sisters of the Deep South.”<sup>12</sup> Although the Citizens’ Councils quickly established dominance among those groups that did emerge, the amount of organization paled when compared with their brethren to the south and west. Part of this can be explained by internal problems within the leadership of resistance groups. And the lack of more respectable groups was largely beside the point in South Carolina. The hard-core segregationists, hooded ku kluxers and other night riders engaging in acts of sabotage and terrorism under the cover of dark, could step into those areas that the state itself had not addressed.<sup>13</sup> The state already had such an ingrained culture of resistance, particularly among the solons in the state government, that such organized groups became superfluous.<sup>14</sup> When the masses are already rallying there is little need for a pep squad.

And rallying they were. But despite the rage, there was also an active and undaunted civil rights movement going on in South Carolina. It was small, and while most of the attention was thrust upon Greensboro and other locales, towns and cities such as Rock Hill encountered their own sit-in campaigns away from the glare of all but local media. In the 1940s a local group, South Carolina’s Progressive Democratic Party, proved to be one of the most active and effective bi-racial political organizations in the region, and it served as something of a precursor to the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party of 1964.<sup>15</sup> Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the NAACP had small footholds in the state, most notably in Summerton, South Carolina, where the Legal Defense Fund began cobbling together the series of cases that would culminate in *Brown v. Board*. By 1960, however, the students had taken control, engaging in sit-ins throughout the state, including in Orangeburg (where there was substantial violence from both white onlookers and overmatched police), Florence, Columbia, Denmark, Sumter, and most important for what would happen during the Freedom Rides, Rock Hill.<sup>16</sup>

#### **“Confused Friends”: Rock Hill**

South Carolina had followed the same historical pattern as most of the rest of the southern states when it came to the imposition of racial stratification on interstate transport. The state did not require Jim Crow cars until 1898, and even then some observers thought the rules to be foolish.<sup>17</sup> The Charleston *News and Courier*, for example, wrote “as we have got on fairly well for a third of a century, including a long period of reconstruction, we can probably get on just as well hereafter without it, and certainly so extreme a measure [as Jim Crow railroad cars] should not be adopted and enforced without added urgent cause.”<sup>18</sup>

South Carolinians found urgency in the cause of segregation, however, and by the middle of the twentieth century the Palmetto State had as tortured a Jim Crow

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code as any place in the South. By the post-World-War-II period there were intermittent challenges to the laws on streetcars, trains, and buses, but these tests found even less recourse than did those in Virginia and North Carolina, where at least occasionally the courts would provide a hint of the impending collapse of separate but equal through decisions chipping away at the doctrine. In what the radical journalist Stetson Kennedy called a “typical” case, 55-year-old Negro school teacher, Fannye Casanave of South Claiborne, South Carolina, was forcibly removed from a bus by police officers after she refused to move to the back upon command of the driver. The police took her to jail in a paddy wagon despite the fact that she was sitting in the section reserved for black patrons. The bus driver had compressed the black section in order to provide more seating for whites. When Cassanave refused to move the bus driver announced “you’re in the white section now. You’re violating the law; so move, nigger!” before summoning the police.<sup>19</sup>

By the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s individuals had lodged a number of complaints, often with the support of the NAACP and the Legal Defense Fund, against South Carolina airports, bus terminals, and rail stations protesting Jim Crow.<sup>20</sup> Segregationists reacted predictably when the Interstate Commerce Commission in 1955 finally banned segregation in interstate transport and when the Supreme Court in 1956 outlawed segregation on even intrastate public transportation.<sup>21</sup> In 1957 Rock Hill’s black population mobilized a boycott of the city’s buses after a 23-year-old, Allene Austin, was ordered to leave her seat next to a white woman.<sup>22</sup> In October 1959, baseball legend and integration pioneer Jackie Robinson encountered South Carolina’s unwillingness gently to accede to ICC or court mandates when he and three colleagues were ordered out of the waiting room of the Greenville airport when he was returning from being the guest speaker for the South Carolina branches of the NAACP. This led to a prayer pilgrimage and protest by the Greenville Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and CORE on 1 January 1960. The program included a “sit-down protest” at the Greenville airport’s white waiting room. The protest garnered the support of an array of South Carolina’s civil rights leaders.<sup>23</sup> Thus when the Freedom Riders entered uncharted territory by crossing into South Carolina, they were not entering a state unfamiliar with challenges to the Jim Crow system of seating and service, though they did enter a state largely unaccustomed to successful challenges to the *status quo*.

Rock Hill was the first Freedom Ride stop in South Carolina. A textile manufacturing town of about 33,000 people in 1961, just twenty miles or so south of Charlotte, Rock Hill was one of the few communities in the state that had experienced sustained sit-ins as part of the explosion of student activism in the previous year and

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a quarter. The community had an active group of CORE students who had begun a protracted sit-in campaign on the eve of the first anniversary of the Greensboro sit-in.<sup>24</sup> The first challenges had actually occurred nearly a year earlier; beginning on Lincoln's birthday in February 1960 and continuing sporadically throughout the year, Friendship Junior College students engaged in sit-ins. The Rock Hill sit-ins were South Carolina's first; 31 January 1961 marked an intensification of the Rock Hill campaign, as ten protesters sat down at Rock Hill's segregated McCrory's lunch counter prepared to go from sit-in to jail-in.<sup>25</sup>

The connecting rods between the sit-ins in South Carolina and the Freedom Rides were CORE field secretaries and South Carolina natives Thomas Gaither and Jim McCain. Gaither had led a student movement in Orangeburg a year earlier and moved on to Rock Hill to try to aid organization there. When Gaither sat in with nine black students from Friendship Junior College at the lunch counter it began a series of events that ratcheted tension to a near breaking point by the arrival of the Freedom Ride.<sup>26</sup>

The presiding judge, Billie D. Hayes, seemed momentarily surprised when police Lieutenant Thomas first testified that the students had been locked up "three to 15 seconds" after he had ordered them from the premises. He later would change this testimony to between three and fifteen minutes. The officer was clearly confused during cross examination, and he asked for and received a brief respite from testimony before proceeding. Judge Hayes stated that the students clearly had not been granted enough time to leave the store, and the activists began to think that they might actually win a civil rights case in a South Carolina court. The students pleaded not guilty, but Hayes nonetheless found the group guilty and sentenced them to thirty days of hard labor or a \$100 fine. The fine would be \$200 if they chose to go forward with an appeal.<sup>27</sup> Nine of the ten chose to serve jail time rather than pay a fine, implementing perhaps the first "jail, no bail" tactic in the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>28</sup> The group had decided to take this stance if they were arrested in the process of protests at a CORE workshop in Orangeburg the previous December. As Thomas Gaither recounted after his Rock Hill arrest, "the only thing they had to beat us over the head with was a threat of sending us to jail. So we disarmed them by using the only weapon we had left – jail without bail. It was the only practical thing we could do. It upset them quite a bit."<sup>29</sup> Eight Friendship College students and Thomas Gaither served a sentence of thirty days on a York County road gang for their sit-in.<sup>30</sup>

Some parents were not thrilled by the actions of their offspring, and many feared for the safety of their children on a southern road crew. Nonetheless most of the parents came around when they saw the commitment of the group. John Gaines, one of the protesters, recalled that his grandparents, with whom he lived, were at first

filled with trepidation. Gaines' grandmother scolded him for being disobedient when he said that he had to go to jail. "But once I got locked up, she was quite changed. She came to the jail and asked me if I was all right, or needed anything." His great-grandmother was still mystified when, after trying to bring \$200 bail money for Gaines' release, her great-grandson refused the money. She was afraid that the authorities would work him too hard and that he would be unable to handle it. He puzzled her by responding that "it was a privilege for a Negro to go to jail for his rights." As another student concluded, "If requesting first-class citizenship in the South is to be regarded as a crime, then I will gladly go back to jail again. The whole thing has just strengthened my conviction that human suffering can assist social change."<sup>31</sup> Their time in jail and on the road gang was arduous, but they received tremendous support, including a caravan of visitors, and on Lincoln's birthday more than a thousand local citizens engaged in a pilgrimage to Rock Hill on behalf of the imprisoned activists. They also relied on one another over the course of their weeks in confinement.<sup>32</sup>

Jim McCain too had long been active in civil rights circles in South Carolina and across the South. He had been a CORE field secretary since 1957, and he was largely responsible for helping coordinate CORE activities across the South.<sup>33</sup> He took a hands-on role in most anything the organization did, in South Carolina in particular.<sup>34</sup> He quickly took an active roll in the Rock Hill student protests.

By 1961, with the active support of Gaither and McCain, Rock Hill had become a focal point of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) strategy. The students picked up the Rock Hill protest from CORE, which had called upon the new student movement across the South to join in on the Rock Hill protests. This once again reveals the sometimes uneasy but ultimately inevitable linkages between competing groups. At a February meeting of the SNCC coordinating committee at the Butler YMCA in Atlanta, the group unanimously chose to support the Rock Hill protestors, and it dispatched Ella Baker and Connie Curry to go ahead on a reconnaissance mission. Baker and Curry investigated the situation and interrogated arrested activists. They reached out to parents of the arrestees, ensured that there was sufficient legal support, and contacted the media.<sup>35</sup>

After Baker and Curry returned to Georgia, four SNCC activists traveled to Rock Hill from Atlanta to attempt to join those already in jail. The names of the four who arrived in South Carolina that February read like a "Who's Who" of the student protest movement. Diane Nash, one of John Lewis' colleagues in the Nashville Movement, Charles Jones of nearby Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, Ruby Doris Smith of Spelman College, and Virginia Union's Charles Sherrod all descended upon Rock Hill to fulfill SNCC executive secretary Ed King's admonition to black students

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across the South to join their colleagues in sit ins and in the jails. “Only by this type of action,” he declared, “can we show that the non-violent movement against segregation is not a local issue for just the individual community, but rather a united movement of all those who believe in equality.”<sup>36</sup> This would not be the last time this group of activists, particularly Diane Nash, would synchronize with the Freedom Riders.

The Rock Hill movement largely failed when the arrival and subsequent arrest of the four newcomers did not signal the start of a great student awakening in Rock Hill in 1961, and the city’s officials refused to yield to the protests. However, as the historian Clayborne Carson has argued, Rock Hill did reveal “the willingness of activists associated with SNCC to become involved whenever a confrontation with segregationist forces developed.” It further “contributed to the process of building a sense of group identity among militant students.”<sup>37</sup> This would prove especially important in the weeks to come on the Freedom Rides when student activists would provide a front line phalanx for the continuing struggle. Numan Bartley has gone so far as to argue that the Freedom Rides “provided SNCC with a mission.”<sup>38</sup> John Lewis has similarly argued that SNCC demonstrated that it “was organized and aggressive enough to” pull together activists from different protest sites to work together at a flashpoint.<sup>39</sup>

As if to throw the contrasts between the two Carolinas into sharp relief, Frank Porter Graham gave a speech at a women’s school in Rock Hill, Winthrop College, in 1961 in the midst of the city’s protests, which embroiled him in controversy. At Winthrop, Graham spoke from a general speech that he had given a number of times across the South. Depending on his venue, he deviated from the text to make relevant asides. At no time did his words cause passionate reaction one way or the other.<sup>40</sup> However, in Rock Hill he deviated from his speech, which generally lauded the ideals of the founding generation of Americans, and which he surely intended as an oblique defense of American traditions of justice, freedom, and liberty, including civil rights. This led to a chain of events he could not have anticipated.

Referring to the Rock Hill sit-ins, Graham averred, “The Southern youth movements for the same service for the same price did not have its origin in Moscow but in Carpenters Hall in Philadelphia, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 1776.” This was a less-than-subtle jab at those who baselessly asserted that the Civil Rights Movement was Communist-backed. Within days the South Carolina House of Representatives publicly condemned Winthrop for hosting “a known agitator and advocator of circumvention of laws of this state.” The censure drew wide commentary, pro and con, across the region, and Graham, not surprisingly, received letters of both support and hate after the rebuke from the solons in Columbia. In a column that he sent to his national syndicate and published in his own *Carolina Israelite*, legendary Charlotte edi-

tor Harry Golden asked, presumably rhetorically, "What's the matter with South Carolina? What has happened to its great tradition of freedom?"<sup>41</sup>

As Graham and the student protesters had discovered, in April 1961 South Carolina's "great tradition of freedom" did not extend to the civil rights arena. John Lewis noted that the student protest "had the effect of angering the citizens of Rock Hill."<sup>42</sup> Certainly Graham's speech and the response to it reveal that actions and words in support of civil rights could result in unintended consequences. The results of this were visible on 9 May when the first busload of Freedom Riders debarked from the bus at the Greyhound station that afternoon. As Joe Perkins dealt with the legal pillar of segregation in Charlotte, John Lewis and others discovered its twin pillar, the threat of violence, in Rock Hill.

Unbeknownst to the Freedom Riders, a third pillar, federal government inaction, was also at work in Washington. On the morning of the arrival in Rock Hill, scant days after Robert Kennedy had given a seemingly unambiguous statement of support for civil rights before an audience at the University of Georgia, Presidential Press Secretary Pierre Salinger announced that the administration was backing off from legislative action on the putative Democratic agenda of civil rights. Georgia Governor Ernest Vandiver also announced that the president had promised not to use federal force to enforce integration in Georgia.<sup>43</sup> This outraged vigilant civil rights activists, who denounced the president's seeming capriciousness on the issue of civil rights. Roy Wilkins claimed that the president's actions in making such deals amounted to "an offering of a cactus bouquet" to the movement.<sup>44</sup>

None of this had much effect on the Freedom Riders on 9 May. Their concerns were more imminent than government waffling and backroom maneuvering. Upon their arrival, Lewis and the others knew the group was in trouble almost immediately. Local papers had announced the arrival of "CORE tourers" engaged in a "mobile sit-in."<sup>45</sup> The phrase "Freedom Riders" had not yet entered the popular lexicon. Hank Thomas recalls hearing someone announce "here come the niggers."<sup>46</sup>

Lewis walked with Albert Bigelow toward the white waiting room where they ran into young white men who could have been pulled directly from central casting. Several of them were recognizable to locals as having recently participated in violence against civil rights activists in Rock Hill.<sup>47</sup> They congregated around the pinball machines and leaned in the doorway, drawing on cigarettes and carrying the insouciant bearing of the aimlessly arrogant. Two of the young men stood guardian over the doorway to the waiting room. Both wore leather jackets and ducktail haircuts. One spoke up as Lewis tried to pass. Pointing to a door with the "colored" sign designating the mandates of Jim Crow, he snarled something to the effect of "other side, nigger."<sup>48</sup>

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Perhaps as a result of his extensive experience and training in the practice of nonviolent, direct-action protest, Lewis was not afraid or nervous. He responded almost by rote with the justification the group had prepped up in Washington. "I have a right to go here on the grounds of the Supreme Court decision in the *Boynton* case."<sup>49</sup> Despite (or perhaps because of) what James Farmer called Lewis' "ministerial dignity," the young men were not impressed.<sup>50</sup> "Shit on that," one of them replied.<sup>51</sup>

A group of ruffians descended upon Lewis. One of the young men punched Lewis in the side of the head. Another blow struck him square in the face. Before he knew it he fell and hard kicks were raining his sides as the taste of blood filled his mouth. At this point Albert Bigelow stepped in between the prostrate Lewis and his assailants. The sight of the big ex-navy captain caused the scene to freeze momentarily as the thugs sized up this potential thorn in their sides. Apparently the fact that Bigelow did not look prepared to fight them emboldened the attackers and they began punching Bigelow. They must have been glad that the older man did not fight back, because it took several of their punches to fell him to one knee.

Bigelow, who was a strong advocate of the Quaker belief that "there is God in every man" recounted his experience in the bus station assault at a mass meeting later that night. "I think people like" the ones who attacked him in the station "are confused friends." During the beating "I tasted a little this afternoon of what Gandhi called the sweetness of the opponent's violence."<sup>52</sup> Even as his attackers hit him and brought him to one knee he attempted to discuss the matter with the most aggressive of the men. He told Moses Newson of the *Afro*, "If this man . . . has that of God in him, there must be some way that I can reach it. I've got to understand that the truth as he sees it is just as real to him as my truth is to me. I tried to surprise him with moral justice." Ultimately he wanted to tell his attacker "I understand why you acted as you did but I think we might reach a better understanding to each other by thinking about it. I'd like to enlarge his horizon." Giving it thought for a second, Bigelow conceded, "under the circumstances, maybe this was not the time to reason with him." But at the same time he truly believed "they will only understand direct-action," which he understood to be the responsibility "to do something you have a right to do, irrespective of the results."<sup>53</sup>

Meanwhile, as Bigelow attempted futilely to engage with the rabble, Genevieve Hughes became embroiled in the confrontation. As she approached the mass of bodies in an attempt to step in between them and forestall more attacks on her peers the surging whites knocked Hughes down. This seemed to draw chivalrous reactions from a nearby police officer who, up until that point, had merely been watching the events before him. He began separating the aggressors from their passive victims and said something to the effect of "All right boys. Y'all have done about enough now. Get

on home.”<sup>54</sup> Hank Thomas, who was next in line to receive a beating, today recalls, “I didn’t relish it. But we were supposed to act nonchalant, like this doesn’t disturb me. That’s the image we were projecting – my mind is fixed on what I’m supposed to do. The most difficult thing to do is to appear unafraid when you are scared to death.”<sup>55</sup>

Almost immediately more police arrived. One officer sympathetically asked if Lewis, Bigelow, and Hughes wanted to press charges. By this point Lewis was wobbly but back on his feet, feeling sharp pain above his eyes and on his ribs. He later noted wryly, “my lower lip was bleeding pretty heavily. I’ve always had very sensitive lips. They bleed easily.”<sup>56</sup> Following their Gandhian dictates the group refused to press charges. Bigelow told the officer “we don’t think that’s the way to settle these things.”<sup>57</sup> This seemed to leave the officer nonplused. Here he was, having made an offer to help the group bring charges against white men who had visited violence upon them in the name of Jim Crow, and they left him out to dry by refusing what Taylor Branch has called “his politically risky offer.”<sup>58</sup> As Lewis later justified their actions:

Our struggle was not against one person or against a small group of people like those who attacked us that morning. The struggle was against a *system*, the system that helped produce people like that. We didn’t see these young guys that attacked us that day as the problem. We saw them as victims. The problem was much bigger, and to focus on these individuals would be nothing more than a distraction, a sideshow that would draw attention away from where it belonged, which in this case was the sanctioned system of segregation in the entire South.<sup>59</sup>

After refusing to press charges the Riders entered the “white” waiting room and received service. Colleagues attended to Lewis’ wounds, applying bandages and attempting to reduce the swelling on his face. A few hours later, when the Trailways bus pulled up to the Oakland Avenue bus terminal that served all non-Greyhound buses, some of the hoodlums were still gathered in cars. They did not attack the second group, which had missed the earlier drama, but instead followed them a few blocks as they headed toward Friendship Junior College, the locus of the Rock Hill protests from a few months earlier. When they arrived they saw that the Trailways terminal was locked up and vacant, the result of the company’s response to the Friendship student sit-ins. The next day, after mass meetings at the college, the Trailways “white” waiting room was reopened. A group went in and successfully tested the facility. Another group did the same at the Greyhound station. There was no revival of the previous day’s violence.<sup>60</sup> The Freedom Riders had won the Battle of Rock Hill through nonviolent action even though they had suffered the only casualties.

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At first it was a relatively hidden battle. The 10 May Rock Hill *Evening Herald* announced in a tiny article at the bottom of page one that no incidents had been reported as the group left bound for points South.<sup>61</sup> However a longer article inside the paper reported that the “bi-racial tourists” announced at a mass meeting in Rock Hill’s New Mt. Olivet AME Zion Church the night before that they were unable to use the facilities because “a welcoming committee of hoodlums” had attacked them.<sup>62</sup> An article in the *Charlotte Observer* confirmed the “bus riders’ claim” through witnesses.<sup>63</sup>

That night the group met with another warm reception at a mass meeting. The audience wanted to hear from the newest heroes in the freedom struggle. James Farmer and Elton Cox spoke that night. Though still a young man, Cox had established himself as quite a powerful orator who, in Farmer’s words “brought the ‘amens’ rising to a crescendo throughout his talks.”<sup>64</sup> Moses Newson of the Baltimore *Afro-American* observed that Cox was “a natural for this role” of public speaker and “the rostrum would not be the same without him.”<sup>65</sup> As a consequence of his impressive speaking style, he had earned the nickname “Belton Elton.”

Events in Rock Hill began to change the historical status of this little band of bus riders. Violence seemed to have accomplished what a series of letters to a whole range of local, state, and national officials as well as to an array of media outlets had not: it drew attention. It garnered press. It raised awareness. In short, the beatings in Rock Hill brought the Freedom Rides to the national stage, where they would play a run that would last several months, and the effects of which would go down in history.

Of course the Rock Hill incident was still relatively minor. The national news media would continue to focus on Alan Shepard’s 5 May orbiting of the Earth in NASA’s first manned rocket, another step in the ongoing phase to put a man on the moon.<sup>66</sup> The space program had captured the imagination of Americans and made them reconsider the possible. So too would the Freedom Riders challenge possibility and, in so doing, inspire Americans in a different, more earthbound, way.

#### **“This might be my last day”: Winnsboro**

On 10 May the Freedom Riders reunited with Joe Perkins after his acquittal in Charlotte. After Perkins’ bus pulled into Rock Hill, several of the Freedom Riders alighted to join him and continue the trip south. Perkins had been arrested in Charlotte for attempting to use a whites’ only shoe shine stand and then refusing to move when he had been refused service. This led his colleagues to joke that Perkins had engaged in the first “shoe in” in the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>67</sup> In Charlotte, Recorder’s Court Judge Howard B. Arbuckle had asked three questions pertinent to Perkins’ case: Was the barber shop part of the bus station, which dealt in interstate commerce? Was Perkins

engaged in interstate commerce? Was Perkins refused service strictly because of his race? To all three questions, the judge answered in the affirmative. Perkins' lawyer Thomas Wyche had challenged the arrest on constitutional grounds. Invoking the *Boynton* decision, Wyche asked Arbuckle to decide upon the question that the court had not decided in *Boynton*, namely whether the state could be prevented from using its police powers to enforce private discrimination. Despite the testimony of Grady N. Williams, the shop's assistant manager, who testified that the shoeshine boy at the stand told Perkins "we don't wait on colored people in the barber shop," Arbuckle punted. He decided that there was not enough evidence to convict Perkins of trespassing.<sup>68</sup>

That was a victory of sorts for Perkins and the Freedom Ride. Perkins left Charlotte that afternoon with Ed Blankenheim, who had accompanied the accused for support and in keeping with the Freedom Ride policy of making sure that anyone who was arrested or otherwise in trouble had someone with them for whatever help they may have been able to provide. The two met up with the Freedom Ride in Rock Hill several hours after the big events of the day. Perkins' arrest had marked the first casualty of the Ride, and he was welcomed back to the group with a warm, inquisitive reception.

During this time John Lewis had to leave the group for a few days in order to interview for a fellowship with the American Friends Service Committee that would eventually send him to India, where he would strengthen his commitment to non-violent direct action. He would miss epochal events.

The rest of the group continued its way through South Carolina, where there was a great deal more excitement, starting in Chester, a brief stopover between Rock Hill and their next destination, Sumter. As a result of the brouhaha in Rock Hill the day before, the doors of the waiting room in Chester had been hastily festooned with "closed" signs. The group had intended to eat lunch at this stop, but instead they continued on, making an impromptu respite in Winnsboro, which Jim Peck called "an ultrasegregationist little town." The events in Winnsboro "happened so quickly," according to Peck, "it seemed like a film being rolled too fast."<sup>69</sup>

Upon leaving the bus, Peck followed Henry Thomas to the white lunchroom where they both sat at the counter. A waitress told Thomas to "go around to the other side."<sup>70</sup> Almost immediately after Thomas refused, the restaurant proprietor rushed off to call the police, who arrived within minutes. One of the officers stepped up to Thomas and told him "Come with me, boy!"<sup>71</sup> This marked the first arrest for sitting in at a terminal lunch counter on the Freedom Ride. When Peck tried to intervene, he too was placed under arrest. It all happened so quickly that the rest of the riders did not immediately react. However Frances Bergman, the designated observer of the day's attempt, "got off the bus and faced the hate filled town alone" in order to

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find out what was to happen to Thomas and Peck.<sup>72</sup> At one point she was told “to get out of town” after inquiring about the arrests.<sup>73</sup> She forged on nonetheless.

In jail the two were segregated. They were not allowed to communicate with one another while they waited several hours to find out the charges against them. The arresting officers were not even sure about whether to post charges, and if so, what charges to make against the civil rights activists. The officer who initially took Thomas into custody wanted to throw the book at the two right away. The officer who drove them to jail, however, thought it best to wait until they consulted with the police chief. The driver prevailed. The Winnsboro police eventually levied a trespassing charge against Thomas and booked Peck for disorderly conduct and interfering with arrest. They were initially held on \$100 bond each for trial the next day, though Winnsboro police and Fairfield County’s sheriff’s office denied that any arrests had taken place.<sup>74</sup> In keeping with the “jail - no bail” policy of their Rock Hill cohort, the two refused to post bond. The police had also discovered the small bottle of liquor that Peck had recently purchased in Charlotte. They charged him with violating an obscure and little-enforced prohibition against possessing an open container of alcohol not bearing required South Carolina tax stamps.<sup>75</sup> Apparently local officials had realized that recent Supreme Court dictates would cause their case too much difficulty, and so, they dropped all but Peck’s charges for the tax stamp violation.<sup>76</sup>

The circumstances of their releases, however, differed considerably. Perhaps in an effort to scare him, the police released Thomas in the dead of night. Segregationists in car and on foot still patrolled the town. Thomas was a little concerned by his release and the circumstances surrounding it. He would later recall how “all those old movies I had seen about blacks being taken out of southern jails in the middle of the night, they began to come back to me.”<sup>77</sup> When Thomas asked the police where they were going, one responded something to the effect of “well, you wanted to go to the bus station to get out of town, didn’t you? So we’re taking you there.”<sup>78</sup> It was too late for him to catch a bus, and the station was about to close upon his arrival. Gangs of surly white men were assembled at the bus station when he returned, many more than should have been at a bus station nearing closing time and with no buses set to arrive or depart late at night. Thomas recalled the situation he confronted many years later. “In front of the bus station was a crowd of good ol’ boys and I was supposed to be the entertainment for the night. The police took off. I didn’t see any guns, but they had sticks and baseball bats. That’s when the moment of truth hit me: this might be my last day.”<sup>79</sup> When he showed reluctance to get out of the cruiser, one of the cops tapped his gun, as if to tell Thomas he had no say in the matter.<sup>80</sup> Apparently the law and the lawless had brokered a deal in which Thomas

would be given up to send a message to those who would mount a challenge to Jim Crow in Winnsboro. Thomas somehow managed to collect himself, and with the crowd watching in disbelief, he walked back to the waiting room that had been the scene of his previous transgression, and he purchased a candy bar. He explained to Moses Newson, "There was a great deal of pride in it. When I got out of that car everybody was watching to see which way I would go."<sup>81</sup>

Fortunately for Thomas he had something of a guardian angel watching over him in the form of a local black minister, who had been following him since his arrest at the behest of CORE. Almost as soon as the police left Thomas to his fate at the bus station, the minister pulled up and told Thomas to get in the car. "He didn't have to tell me twice. That brave man . . . he was the only thing that saved me. We hightailed it out of there. We expected gunshots any second, but they didn't come. He told me to stay down. I did."<sup>82</sup> The Reverend Cecil A. (C.A.) Ivory, who was prominent in local civil rights circles, got Thomas to Sumter unscathed and relieved. Thus was a potential disaster averted, as the situation had all of the makings of a Deep South lynching under cover of darkness and with the tacit consent of local authorities.

Peck's release was less harrowing. Although one of the segregationists had parked his car so that his lights shone directly into Peck's cell, the white activist did not run the gauntlet that Thomas had faced. Police kept him in custody until dawn, at which point a car load of people, including Farmer, Jim McCain, and Attorney Ernest A. Finney Jr. drove over from McCain's Sumter home to pick him up and post the \$100 bond for his liquor violation. His case was never heard in the magistrate's court. Meanwhile Thomas had arrived at McCain's house earlier, and so when Peck returned the two men shared a meaningful handshake.<sup>83</sup>

After these frightening incidents the group was relieved to take a scheduled day off in Sumter on 11 May. The entire group was finally together again, minus John Lewis, at Morris College, where they were quartered during their layover. Morris was a historically black college that had been the center of student protests in Sumter since March 1960. Attempts to integrate the Sumter station did not materialize because of the chaos that had dispersed the group and made a test risky and logistically difficult. Although most of the events had slipped under the national radar, the Freedom Ride had proven to be the catalyst for volatile reaction that its participants had expected in Washington. On Friday 12 May the group boarded buses headed for Georgia. Their solemn moods matched the realization of how much had changed since the relatively easy days in Virginia less than a week earlier. They were now in the Deep South.

## NOTES

1. Frances Bergman to "CORE Friends," 9 May 1961. CORE papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
2. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, 130.
3. *Ibid.*, 131.
4. See Dewey Grantham, *The Democratic South*, (University of Georgia Press, 1963), 88; Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 19.
5. Robert Sherrill has a fascinating chapter, "An Interlude: God and Bob Jones University," in his book *Gothic Politics in the Deep South: Stars of the New Confederacy*, (New York, Grossman Publishers, 1968), 216–34. Long before it became part of the cultural lexicon in the 2000 election, Bob Jones University served as a rallying place for fundamentalist conservatism in South Carolina.
6. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 45.
7. *Ibid.*, 131.
8. *Race Relations Law Reporter* I (February, 1956), 241, quoted in *Ibid.* 76–77.
9. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 77.
10. See Bryant Simon, "Race Reactions: African American Organizing, Liberalism, and White Working-Class Politics in Postwar South Carolina," 239–59, *passim*, in Dailey, et. al. *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics From Civil War to Civil Rights*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Simon reveals that there was a window of opportunity in the 1930s when black and white workers began to mobilize politically across racial lines, but the onset of war coupled with racial demagoguery brought the politics of racism back to the fore. Simon's essay thus follows in the spirit and historiographical lineage of not one, but two of C. Vann Woodward's traditions – the first being that the South never had an inexorable path of racism and Jim Crow that it must follow (which Woodward most famously made in *Origins of the New South* and *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*), and secondly that uneasy alliances among poor and working-class whites and blacks often suffered failure as a consequence of racial demagoguery (for Woodward the case study came in his biography of Tom Watson). Appropriately, Woodward wrote the introduction for *Jumpin' Jim Crow* and the editors dedicated the collection to him. This was Woodward's last scholarly publication, and it came out after his 1999 death.
11. On the Dixiecrat revolt see especially Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932–1968*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2001) and Frederickson's essay in *Jumpin' Jim Crow*, " 'As a Man I am Interested in State's Rights': Gender, Race and the Family in the Dixiecrat Party, 1948–1950," 260–74. See also Sherrill's chapter "Strom Thurmond: 1948 and All That," in *Gothic Politics in the Deep South*, 235–54, *passim*.
12. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 73. McMillen's observations on South Carolina are relatively brief but quite astute in explaining South Carolina's culture of resistance.
13. See, for example, Tim Tyson "Dynamite and the 'Silent South': A Story From the Second Reconstruction in South Carolina," in Dailey, et. al. *Jumpin' Jim Crow*, 275–97, *passim*.
14. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 73–80, *passim*.
15. Frederickson, " 'As a Man I am Interested in State's Rights': Gender, Race and the Family in the Dixiecrat Party, 1948–1950," 264.

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16. See Southern Regional Council, "The Student Protest Movement, Winter 1960," xix–xxv, Mitchell Memorial Library, Cox Collection, Box X, #45.
  17. Woodward, *Strange Career*, 67.
  18. Quoted in Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White*, 24.
  19. Kennedy, *Jim Crow Guide*, 178.
  20. See NAACP Papers, Group III Box A107, Folder: "General Office File: Discrimination – Airports" and Box A111, Folder: "General Office File: Discrimination, Transportation, General, 1960–1962." These folders contain a number of complaints about segregation and mistreatment in South Carolina and across the South, including at the Charleston and Greenville airports, and on buses in Charleston, Summerville, and Spartanburg.
  21. See James T. McCain papers, Clippings File, "1956–1957, Clippings SC: Re: Transportation," South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
  22. Charleston *News and Courier*, August 2, 1957; *The State*, August 2, 1957.
  23. Greenville Interdenominational Alliance and Greenville CORE, 12 November 1959 mailing; CORE Press release, November 23, 1959; both in McCain Papers, Box 1.
  24. On Rock Hill, see William Pendleton Moore, "Tell them we in the South are dissatisfied": *Politics of Race and Civil Rights Activism in Rock Hill*, MA Thesis, University of South Carolina, 2002.
  25. For a first-hand account of the Rock Hill protests and jail-ins see Thomas Gaither, "Jailed-In," CORE pamphlet, South Caroliniana Library.
  26. Friendship was South Carolina's oldest junior college, having been established in 1891.
  27. "Excerpts from Ted Poston's (*New York Post*) Interview With Rock Hill Students," CORE mailing, Segregation and Integration, Miscellaneous Collection, Acc. # 131, Folder 3, Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University.
  28. Gaither, "Jailed-In."
  29. "Excerpts from Ted Poston's (*New York Post*) Interview With Rock Hill Students," CORE mailing, Segregation and Integration, Miscellaneous Collection, Acc. # 131, Folder 3, Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University.
  30. Gaither, "Jailed-In."
  31. Quoted in *Ibid.* and in "Excerpts from Ted Poston's (*New York Post*) Interview With Rock Hill Students," CORE mailing. Gaines' story would also provide the foundation for a CORE fundraising letter from Harry Belafonte. See Belafonte letter, William D. Workman, Jr. papers, Box 33, Modern Political Collections, South Caroliniana Library.
  32. Gaither, "Jailed-In."
  33. See McCain obituary, *The State*, 6 June 2003.
  34. As evidence of this see McCain's appointment calendars, McCain Papers, Box 1.
  35. Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 264.
  36. Quoted in Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995) 32.

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37. *Ibid.* 32. Rhoda Blumberg and Meier and Rudwick also argue that the Rock Hill sit-ins, though aborted, were an important moment in providing a model and example for the student struggle.
38. Bartley, *The New South, 1945–1980*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 306.
39. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142.
40. Text of speech; Frank Porter Graham letter of 12 April, 1961; Both in Frank Porter Graham Papers, Collection 1819, Subseries 1.2, Box 61, Folder: “1961: Negroes and Race Relations: Winthrop Speech,” Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina.
41. Golden to Graham, April 5, 1961; Golden, “What’s the Matter With South Carolina?”; *The Crusader*, 7 April 1961; Various letters to Graham; all in Graham Papers.
42. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142.
43. Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 414–15. The administration’s sense that they were caught in a conundrum on civil rights is illustrated in an internal White House memo that Louis Martin sent to Ted Sorenson when the Freedom Riders were in South Carolina. Martin does not espouse a position for the President to take, but rather paints a picture of the tenuous position in which the Kennedys found themselves. He does reveal that the black vote can be especially crucial in the North, and his concluding words remind Sorenson how “the sharp edge of Negro resentment over racial discrimination can cut like a knife inside the ghetto.” Martin memorandum to Sorenson, 10 May 1961, RFK Attorney General Papers, Box 66, Folder, “White House: Memoranda, 4.1961–6/1961,” JFK Library.
44. Quoted in Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 415. A few years later, Wilkins did recall how just a couple of months before the Freedom Ride, in March 1961, the President worked to desegregate lodging facilities in South Carolina for the Civil War Centennial Commission’s celebration in Charleston. Roy Wilkins Oral history, JFK Library.
45. Rock Hill, SC, *Evening Herald*, 5 May 1961 (first quotation), 8 May 1961 (second quotation). The *Charlotte Observer* had also announced the arrival of the group in Charlotte and in a small article on 5 May the newspaper covered the plans for the group’s mass meeting in Rock Hill.
46. Quoted in The *Times-Picayune*, (New Orleans), 7 April 2001.
47. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 118–19. Peck, *CORElator* article, May 1961.
48. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142. Jim Farmer asserts that the young tough said “Get to the other side, boy, where the niggers go.” *Lay Bare the Heart*, 199. Suffice it to say that reconstructing dialogue in the midst of the heat of events is an imprecise art at best, even with the (in this case conflicting) testimony of participants, and one should be wary of historians who blithely reconstruct conversations precisely across the gaping transom of time and place.
49. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142. Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 199.
50. Quoted in Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 199.
51. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142.
52. Quoted in Baltimore *Afro-American*, 13 May 1961.
53. Quoted in *ibid.*
54. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 142. Farmer’s account of the officer’s words differs slightly, albeit inconsequentially.

55. Quoted in The *Times-Picayune*, (New Orleans), 7 April , 2001.
56. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 143.
57. Quoted in Rock Hill *Evening Herald*, May 10, 1961.
58. Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 416.
59. Lewis, *Walking With the Wind*, 143.
60. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 118–19. Peck, *CORElator* article, May 1961, 2.
61. Rock Hill *Evening Herald*, 10 May 1961, 1.
62. Quoted in *ibid.* in an article inside the newspaper.
63. The *Charlotte Observer*, 10 May 1961.
64. Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 199–200.
65. Baltimore *Afro-American*, May 13, 1961.
66. See, for example, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* from 6–10 May.
67. See Baltimore *Afro-American*, 13 May 1961; James Peck, *Freedom Ride* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1961) 118.
68. The *Charlotte Observer*, 11 May 1961.
69. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 121. Peck, *Corelator* article, 2. In the article Peck describes Winnsboro as being “as ultra-segregationist as Alabama.”
70. Baltimore *Afro-American*, 13 May 1961.
71. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 121. Peck, *Corelator* article, 2.
72. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 121. Peck, *Corelator* article, 2.
73. Baltimore *Afro-American*, May 13, 1961.
74. *Charlotte Observer*, 11 May 1961.
75. Baltimore *Afro-American*, 13 May 1961. *Charlotte Observer*, 12 May 1961.
76. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 121–22. Peck, *Corelator* article, 2.
77. Quoted in The *Times-Picayune*, (New Orleans), 7 April 2001. Thomas mistakenly conflates the incident in Rock Hill and the incident in Winnsboro. Nonetheless there is no reason to doubt the basic contours of his recollections, which jibe with the writings and memories of Jim Peck.
78. Quoted in Halberstam, *The Children*, 257. Halberstam too places the incident in Rock Hill. I use Halberstam only as a source for quotations from participants whom he interviewed.
79. Quoted in The *Times-Picayune*, (New Orleans), 7 April 2001.
80. Halberstam, *The Children*, 257.
81. Quoted in Baltimore *Afro-American*, 13 May 1961.
82. Quoted in The *Times-Picayune*, (New Orleans), 7 April 2001.
83. Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 123.

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## The Merci Train for South Carolina: When France and the Palmetto State were Friends, 1947–1949

Fritz Hamer

*“France stood by us a long time ago. And I say today  
Viva [sic!] La France, Long Live France.”<sup>1</sup>*

SO PROCLAIMED GOVERNOR STROM THURMOND on a cold February day in 1949 while standing in Spartanburg’s railway station. South Carolina’s chief executive and other political dignitaries had come to welcome an unusual gift from the people of France. It was a small boxcar, a token of appreciation from an ally recovering from the ravages of four years of German occupation. The diminutive freight car of this type had been the backbone of the French rail system before World War I. This one was now filled with objects ranging from the simplest child’s drawings to impressive works of art, all contributed by citizens of France. It was just one of forty-nine sent across the Atlantic a month before as part of what became known as the Gratitude or Merci Train, a sign of appreciation for American aid donated to the French during 1948. In light of the current political disagreements between the United States and France, this early post-war cooperation is perhaps one of the highest points in Franco-American relations during the last half-century. Not surprisingly, such good relations are virtually forgotten today on both sides of the Atlantic. This study briefly examines how this gift of appreciation came about, what role the Palmetto State played in helping the American national aid effort, and what plans South Carolina’s government and citizen groups made to receive and display the French boxcar. As in most endeavors involving many organizations and communities, we shall see that the gift to South Carolina led to disagreements and jealousies across the state that were aggravated, in part, by miscommunications between interested parties.

Franco-American relations have had many rough periods. Through most of the twentieth century, the two governments in Paris and Washington have rarely agreed about international policy except during the two World Wars. Yet, as noted above, the people of both nations showed rare appreciation for the other in the late 1940s. This began when one American journalist saw a need for his fellow citizens to assist France and other destitute European allies through individual contributions rather than relying just on U.S. government aid. Since 1945 Congress had donated thousands of tons of food and supplies to Western Europe in the early post-war era, yet such assistance seemed to some observers an impersonal, if not calculated, policy.

Drew Pearson, a prominent *Washington Post* columnist, had followed the plight of post-war Europe with concern. He feared that recipients of his government's aid did not believe it came with purely humanitarian motives, but instead represented just a calculated move to combat the communist infiltration of Western Europe. This concern struck Pearson forcefully in early 1947 when he read a story that a single Soviet shipload of grain had arrived in Marseilles with huge fanfare and celebrations.<sup>2</sup>

To stem this perceived public relations threat of a communist challenge to American aid, the journalist decided that his countrymen needed to show their concern from the heart. To do so, he wrote several columns in October and early November 1947 suggesting that individuals across the nation donate food, clothes, and other aid that would be sent to France and its neighbors as a token of American support and sacrifice. He believed that by keeping the government out of the equation, Western Europeans could better appreciate the American heartland's concern and willingness to help. At the same time, of course, such assistance could steer them away from Moscow's allure. Pearson's syndicated columns appeared in hundreds of newspapers across the nation. In one of them he advocated "a movement by American people to stint on their own dinner tables to help neighbors in distress who in turn are helped to make democracy live." While such aid might seem easy for Americans to give because they had not suffered warfare on the homefront, the donation campaign also coincided with the early phase of the federal government's national appeal to all citizens to reduce their consumption of grains and meats. In early October 1947 President Truman called on all Americans to pledge themselves to meatless Tuesdays and abstain from poultry and eggs on Thursdays to make more food available to struggling Europe. Later in the fall, the liquor industry agreed to reduce its consumption of grain for its products. Yet even with this government appeal for personal sacrifice, Pearson's idea quickly caught on across the nation.<sup>3</sup>

Initially the columnist planned the stocking of a single rail freight car, which would start in Los Angeles and go across the nation picking up contributions from people along the way as it headed for New York City. By contributing \$10,000 of his own funds Pearson hoped the car could be filled by the time it reached its eastern destination. Even before the journey began, however, the response was far beyond anything he could have imagined. Prior to leaving California, the lone boxcar quickly grew into what became known as the "Friendship Train." On 7 November 1947 a huge crowd came to celebrate the start of the trip and donated food and clothing for twelve cars. In addition, citizens in northwestern states and Hawaii sent thousands of pounds of contributions to meet the train before it exited the state. As the Friendship Train's national chairman, Pearson soon began receiving messages from across

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the country regarding the contributions that were waiting for his caravan as it headed east. When the Friendship Train reached New York City eleven days later, it comprised 275 cars. Pearson's campaign had caught on to such a degree that another two trains were started along southern and northern routes. The southern train's final destination was Philadelphia, while the northern train, like the Friendship Train, finished its journey in New York City. The three trains totaled at least five hundred cars that hauled primarily dry foods, clothes, and canned milk; one or more cars freighted sixteen tons of vitamins, surgical preparations, and related items donated by 10,000 Rexall druggists.<sup>4</sup>

Over the next month several shiploads of rail cars left New York for France and Italy. When the first shipment arrived in Le Havre, France, on the 17 December 1947, the French greeted the American gifts with great fanfare. The train received the same reception as it wound its way east and distributed donations to French communities along the way. Often local dignitaries in each community insisted that the American journalists and officials on board drink more alcohol than they desired. Pearson commented that the locals made it impossible not to accept a toast of one of France's many famous vintages. "You had to be able to drink champagne early in the morning, because at every station you had to sample the wines."<sup>5</sup>

As one might expect, South Carolina participated in a less coherent fashion. The upstate contributed four carloads of food and clothing to the national train. The leader of this effort, Greenville insurance executive Broadus Bailey, coordinated the region's collection with the assistance of local veterans' groups. Using local newspapers and radio stations, Bailey and his associates solicited funds from schools, churches, women's clubs, and the Grange. Subsequently the proceeds were used to purchase supplies of food and clothes to fill their rail cars, which proceeded to the Northeast and were included in one of the shipments sent to France at the end of 1947.<sup>6</sup>

Instead of following the upstate's lead in contributing to the national Friendship Train, communities in other parts of the state organized their own programs and adopted individual communities in France to which they sent food, clothes, and other needed goods following local donation drives. Aiken, Columbia, St. George, Kingstree, and other cities and towns responded in this fashion. One of the largest local efforts was that undertaken by Charleston, which adopted the village of Flers-de-l'Orne in Normandy. Charleston's director of Promotional Development, J. Francis Brenner, led the campaign with Mayor William McG. Morrison's full support. Civic organizations, schools, churches, and businesses from the area contributed food, clothing, and funds that were collected at city fire stations. The Charleston campaign

began in December 1947, had its most intensive phase in January, and ended the following month with full-page local newspaper ad campaigns in the *News and Courier* and appeals over the radio. Businesses placed small solicitations in their own regular ads. A local furniture store that sold appliances and furniture included this plea in one of its promotions: "Let's everyone help the people of Flers."<sup>7</sup> The finale of the donation drive was a "Public Card Party" at the end of February. Nearly one thousand people paid admission to eat and dance, and the proceeds were employed to buy more supplies for Flers. Brenner used his connections to persuade the local Carolina Shipping Company to donate space on one of its cargo vessels to ship the contributions to France. The vessel, re-christened the *Charleston Bounty* for the special voyage, left Charleston on 17 March 1948 with the city's 100 tons of donations. As had happened when the Friendship Train distributed goods in France a few months before, in April 1948 the citizens of Flers also welcomed these gifts from the South Carolina Lowcountry. Columbia followed a similar formula to help the French town of Berck, located south of Boulogne, about the same time as the Charleston campaign came to an end.<sup>8</sup>

Needless to say, the Friendship Train, whether the national program or the local versions, represented a huge success for American charity and humanitarian principles. It was not long before the French, in appreciation, started a campaign to return the favor. The idea to send a train full of articles to America began with a French veteran and employee of its rail system, Andre Picard. Like Pearson, he hoped to promote a plan for his countrymen to fill one boxcar with French-made articles. Once Picard's plan began to circulate in cafes and communities across France, it quickly outgrew his original idea. Its appeal was more than one man could handle, and soon the National Headquarters of the French War Veterans Association assumed responsibility and expanded the plan. Now it was proposed to fill forty-nine boxcars with gifts from citizens all over France, one boxcar for each of the forty-eight states, with the forty-ninth to be shared between the District of Columbia and Hawaii.<sup>9</sup>

The cars used to collect and transport the gifts had a direct tie with American veterans of both world wars. They were small general freight vehicles built between 1872 and 1885, and during World War I they became the essential (albeit primitive) means of transporting thousands of American doughboys from the French coast to the front lines. This function was repeated in the Second World War when American GIs used the same rolling stock to cross France for the final push against the German Wehrmacht. Measuring only twenty-nine feet long and nine feet wide with a weight of twelve tons, these rail cars had become known as *Quarante et Huite* (forty and eights) because each could hold a maximum of forty men or eight horses. Quite old

by the railway standards of the day, the cars had to be collected from rail yards all over France. Each was given a new coat of paint and sent to Paris; soon they rolled into the Channel port of Le Havre.<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, collection centers were established throughout France to collect the contributions of over six million families. Many items were personal family “treasures” such as children’s rough drawings, ashtrays made of broken mirrors, and wooden shoes. More highly crafted gifts given by dignitaries and organizations included works of art such as Benjamin Franklin’s bust by the great French sculptor, Jean Antoine Houdon (1741–1828), fifty rare paintings, and—from the Society of Parisian Couturiers—forty-nine hand crafted dolls dressed in fashions from 1796 to 1906. Perhaps the most heartfelt offering came from a disabled veteran who had carved a gavel out of a tree that came from the World War I battlefield of Belleau Woods. In all, 52,000 packaged or crated gifts were sent to Le Havre and packed into the “forty and eights.” In December 1948 the freighter *Magellan* shipped the forty-nine cars across the Atlantic to Weehauken, New Jersey.<sup>11</sup>

As the vessel entered port, the painted message “Merci, America” was prominently emblazoned on the hull amidships in large block letters. Waves of Air Force planes flew overhead in recognition of the French gifts, while fireboats sent columns of spray into the wintry sky. Once the ship was safely tied to the pier, the cars were unloaded by dock workers who volunteered their services. Shortly before *Magellan* had left France, Congress joined in the generous mood of the day by passing a special bill waiving import duties for the Merci Train. New York’s own “forty and eight” received a ticker tape parade down Broadway loaded on the back of a flatbed trailer. More than two hundred thousand people lined the route shouting their approval with “you’re welcome” to the people of France.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the other forty-eight rail cars were separated into three trains with destinations to New England, the West and the South. As had been the case in New York City, each state gave a big welcome for its Merci car. But while the public expressions of appreciation were genuine in all venues, some state organizers were unable to show the same joy when it came to cooperating among themselves. In some states veterans’ organizations that had shown little or no support for the Friendship Train now claimed their right to accept their state’s Merci car. As Drew Pearson arranged for the “forty and eights” to be received by each state, he sometimes became exasperated with veterans’ organizations. According to the journalist, the American Legion in California, “which did almost nothing for the Friendship Train,” now “wanted” their state’s Merci car. A similar problem arose in South Carolina. Before that state’s “forty and eight” had even arrived in Spartanburg, jealousy and hard feelings between

local leaders and veterans groups had already begun as they argued over who should accept and control the car. Greenville businessman Broadus Bailey, a veteran of World War I, had served in the next war as the city's director of civil defense. As previously mentioned, he had spearheaded the Greenville participation in the national Friendship Train. Based on his and his associates' efforts to assist Pearson's national effort, Bailey argued that he and the local Greenville veterans' chapters were the only ones in the state with the "right" to take custody of South Carolina's Merci car.<sup>13</sup> Since Pearson had selected Bailey as the custodian for the state's Merci car, the latter had considerable justification. As far as Bailey knew, no other section of the state had participated in the national Friendship Train. Consequently, if what he characterized as the "gratitude train" arrived in South Carolina and other sections of the state also received this gift as well, then "the people of the Piedmont area would simply be furious and justly so."<sup>14</sup>

Needless to say, this claim caused resentment among other veterans groups and communities in the Palmetto State, particularly the state chapter of the veterans' branch organization called the "Palmetto Grand[e] Voiture du South Carolina [de] La Société des Quarante Hommes et Eight [sic!] Chevaux." This national organization was organized in 1920 under the auspices of the American Legion by World War I veterans who had ridden the "forty and eights" during their service in France. The organization continued to attract members after 1945 from those former GIs who had followed in their fathers' wake to ride the same cars during the last year of the second war. In 1948 the Palmetto *chef*, or director of the Grand Voiture, was George Levy, a Sumter attorney and veteran of World War I. Governor Thurmond appointed him and the state's American Legion commander to arrange the car's tour and the distribution of its contents. But since the Greenville area had been the only section of the state that had contributed to the national Friendship Train, Pearson had considered Bailey the only logical choice to assume responsibility for the Merci car. As a result, friction between Levy and Bailey's upstate organization already had surfaced two months before the Merci car arrived in Spartanburg. Levy soon protested to the governor that Bailey had excluded his organization from arranging the car's itinerary. Perhaps if the governor had known of Bailey's earlier designation by Pearson, some of the antagonism that followed could have been avoided. But Thurmond did not, and thus became embroiled in a difficult situation. The collision between Pearson's intentions and Thurmond's action ensured disagreement between the upstate and the remainder of South Carolina, and thereby ultimately diminished the goodwill originally created when the Merci Train began its journey through the United States.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the squabbles, however, community leaders and organizations in many parts of the state wanted to know how they might have the car routed through their

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town. Interest in receiving articles from the car led to citizens' inquiries. Thurmond received many letters about the matter. The Garden Club of Latta wrote Thurmond more than a month before the Merci car arrived in South Carolina requesting a "tree" from the car. In nearby Bennettsville, State Senator Paul Wallace solicited on behalf of the local French *Sans Souci* Club "one of these gifts" from the French. Charleston's own Francis Brenner contacted the governor just before the Merci car's arrival to inquire about the "plans for distribution you have made" for the contents from the "forty and eight" to the rest of the state.<sup>16</sup>

In response to numerous inquiries the state's chief executive made it clear that he was not in charge of distribution of the car's contents. In December 1948 he told one person that the American Legion in South Carolina and the Palmetto Grand Voiture would arrange the distribution. But after learning in a letter from Drew Pearson (the National Chair of the Merci Train) that Bailey had been appointed as the state chair, the governor seemed to reverse himself. Thurmond began referring inquiries to Bailey and his Greenville committee as well, even though he still suggested that Levy also be approached. By late winter 1949 the discontent over the Merci car became a growing sore point.<sup>17</sup>

For some unknown reason, Mayor Frank Owens of Columbia tried to work out a compromise in late January 1949. He had come into office in 1946 and had led his city's local Gratitude train donation during the spring of the previous year. He suggested to Pearson that while Bailey should keep his role as state chair when the Merci car arrived in Greenville, other veterans groups in the state should be given a role in determining the car's future itinerary. The mayor argued that many communities deserved recognition for adopting their own French towns and sending donations. Although they had not contributed to the national train, he thought these communities should nevertheless get to see the state's "forty and eight." Besides, he reminded Pearson, some of these communities had wanted to contribute to the original national effort; Owens himself and other community leaders had asked – in unheeded requests made directly to the Washington columnist – that a section of the Friendship train come through their region of South Carolina. Whether this line of argument had any influence on Pearson or Bailey appears unlikely, for Owens's attempt to forge a compromise bore no fruit. The Merci car remained in Greenville for five months after its arrival.<sup>18</sup>

Bailey's and the Greenville committee's lack of cooperation with Levy also exasperated a number of communities in the state. Even though the national committee expected each car to travel to as many towns and cities as feasible within each state, Bailey seemed reluctant to allow the Merci car outside the bounds of Greenville

after its arrival in his city in February 1949. And while its first stop had been Spartanburg, the boxcar and its contents spent just an hour or so there before heading to its neighbor to the west, where it was unloaded and its artifacts were placed on display in the Civic Art Gallery. There they remained until the South Carolina American Legion annual meeting in July. Once the veterans left town, the Greenville custodians finally allowed the rail car itself and some gifts to travel to communities throughout the state, but only if the latter had received an invitation from the car's Greenville coordinators. Those communities that accepted then had to take on the charges for its transport to their town.<sup>19</sup>

Because of the arbitrary way the Greenville committee arranged the Merci car's itinerary, at least one observer grew disenchanted with the car's long stay in Greenville. In spite of all the initial publicity when it came to Spartanburg and Greenville in February 1949, one disgruntled Spartanburg leader – Louis Changeux, manager of Spartanburg's Piedmont Club – asked the governor a year and half later what had happened to the state's "forty and eight." In fact, Changeux called it a "ghost car" since its whereabouts seemed unknown. And the rail car never returned to Spartanburg, although it did have brief stops in other towns, including Charleston and Columbia, despite the rancor its arrival had engendered.<sup>20</sup>

The exact itinerary of the "forty and eight" during its subsequent state tour is unknown. Charleston welcomed it for a time in late 1949 or early 1950 and received some of the Merci car's contents. The Charleston Museum became that community's main recipient, and some artifacts still remain part of its collection, including a brass lamp, assorted Neolithic stone tools, Merovingian iron projectile points and knives, and pottery from the same era. Other articles given to the city found homes in other institutions or with individuals. Several French books from the Merci car were distributed to libraries in the Charleston community. Mrs. C.A. Graiser received a set of earrings and brooch, while Mrs. Morrison received a copper cake mold. Nonetheless, Greenville appeared to receive the bulk of the car's contents in the end. Unfortunately only one artifact can still be located there, namely a wooden sculpture replica by the Italian Florentine firm of Bartolozzi e Maioli now in the collection of the Greenville County Library. The fashion doll from Paris allotted to South Carolina and other artwork that came with the Merci car cannot be located to date. Work continues to track the whereabouts of these and the remaining items.<sup>21</sup>

Fortunately, the final disposition of the state's "forty and eight" rail car is better known. Once its tour ended, the Merci car returned to Greenville and found a home at McPherson Park for two and half decades. Over time it began to deteriorate and by the early 1970s appeared, according to the Merci Car Book, in "bad shape." In

1973 the local Auxiliary Unit 3 of the American Legion took on the job of restoring the car and had it moved to another park in the same city. By the end of the following decade it had fallen into neglect once more. In the early 1990s local American Legion members decided that it needed a new home and offered it to the recently-opened State Museum in Columbia. After this offer was declined, another home was found in Columbia behind the American Legion post on Pickens Street. There it now stands refurbished again and protected by an aluminum roof.<sup>22</sup>

In conclusion, this preliminary study has tried to resurrect a small, brief, but also interesting chapter in the volatile saga of Franco-American relations. It shows how grassroots campaigns of assistance can become great community-wide efforts that governments do not need to coordinate. Although the reception South Carolina gave its French gift was tarnished by miscommunications and jealousies within the state, it is important to note that through their local support alone many towns and cities across the Palmetto State provided aid to an old ally. Some questions remain for future research. What motivated ordinary Americans – in South Carolina and throughout the land – to contribute to the Friendship Train? Put another way, what roles did simple humanitarianism, affection for a recent wartime ally, and fear of the communist threat play in this charitable effort? How did South Carolina communities besides Greenville and Charleston organize and carry-out their own aid projects for France and Western Europe unrelated to the Friendship Train? What motivated South Carolina communities to receive the *Merci* car, and which communities were involved? For the author and other museum curators there is also the question regarding the fate of the car's contents, whether extant today or lost. Stay tuned, there is still more to this story!

#### NOTES

1. The *State*, 10 February 1949. The author wishes to thank the following colleagues for providing research aid and suggestions for this article: Susan Hiott, Clemson University Special Collections; Suzanne Case, Greenville Public Library, Greenville, SC; Mrs. John S. Conway, Greenville, SC; Jan Hiester, Judy Logan and Sharon Bennett, Charleston Museum, Charleston, SC; Francis Brenner, St. Johns Island, SC; and Molly Hennen of Minneapolis, MN for reading and reviewing this paper.
2. On Pearson's origination of this idea see Herman Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines: The World of Drew Pearson* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 147–64 and the *New York Times* (hereafter *NYT*), 8 November 1947. My discussion in the following paragraph relies heavily on Klurfeld's analysis. For information on Franco-American relations during the twentieth century see Bernard Poiretste, *Francaises: Les Relations transatlantiques, The French-American relationship, (with Conversations in English translations included)* (Nashville, TN: Champs-Elysees audiopublications, 2003); the author thanks Jean Marie E. Mille of Columbia, SC for sharing his copy of this insightful examination of the relations between the two nations.

3. On Truman's appeal to the nation see the *Charleston News and Courier* (hereafter *CNC*), 6 October 1947; on the need to save grain see *CNC*, 3, 4 October 1947, and *NYT*, 27 November 1947.
4. *NYT*, 7, 12, 14, 15, and 23 November 1947; Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines*, 147–49.
5. For these and other details on the Train's reception in France see Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines*, 156–60, and *NYT*, 18 December 1947.
6. On Bailey's biography see the *Greenville News* (hereafter *GN*), 17 June 1980. For details about activities in the Upstate see Bailey to George Levy, 6 December 1948, Strom Thurmond Papers, Clemson University Special Collections (hereafter *STP*).
7. For this advertisement see *CNC*, 23 January 1948. For similar ads by other businesses see *CNC*, 26, 29, 30 January 1948, and for a full page ad see 13 January 1948; all of these are in clippings file folder "Adoption of Flers de L'Orne," Francis Brenner Collection, Archives of the Charleston Museum (hereafter Brenner Coll.).
8. In reference to the securing of the cargo vessel and its trip to France the author spoke with Francis Brenner in his Charleston home on Johns Island; see notes from interview, 12 December 2003, in possession of the author, and *CNC*, 17 March and 25 April 1948, Brenner Coll. For Columbia donations for Berck see John H. Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community, 1740–1990* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993) 453. Not only did other South Carolina communities implement their own donation programs, but the same charitable impulse was also manifest in other communities, including Schenectady, NY. This town adopted Chambois. See untitled clipping in Brenner Coll., possibly from *CNC*, 25 April 1948. For details about other Palmetto state communities that adopted French towns see Mayor Frank Owens (Columbia) to Drew Pearson, 31 January 1949, *STP*. These towns were Orangeburg, Summerville, Georgetown, Beaufort, and Ridgeville.
9. For information about the French plan to thank the United States see C.W. Ardery to George Levy, 28 July 1948, *STP*; Palmetto Grand Voiture du South Carolina . . . Merci Box Car Memorial Book, June 24, 1983, copy on file at the South Carolina Room at the Greenville County Public Library, Greenville, SC (hereafter Merci Car Book). See also Manuel A. Conley, "Merci, America: How a Whole Nation Said Thank You," *American Heritage* 32, number 6, October–November 1981, 94–96.
10. For details on the "forty and eight" cars see Conley, "Merci America," 94–95, and Merci Box Book.
11. For published account of the French Merci Train see Conley, "Merci, America," 94–96; there are several websites that also discuss the Merci Train in various levels of detail and accuracy. See, for example, [http://www.rypn.org/Merci/SC\\_ANDY\\_DOLAK.htm](http://www.rypn.org/Merci/SC_ANDY_DOLAK.htm).
12. See previous note. Also see Tyler Abell (ed.), *Drew Pearson Diaries, 1949–1959* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1974), 18–19.
13. For the best illustration of this disagreement within South Carolina see Bailey to George Levy, 6 December 1948; Levy to Bailey, 31 January 1949; Levy to Governor Strom Thurmond, 14 December 1948; all three letters in *STP*.
14. Bailey to Levy, 6 December 1948, *STP*. For Pearson's frustration with some Legion posts in California see Abell, *Drew Pearson Diaries*, 21.

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15. Thurmond to Bailey, 3 December 1948; Levy to Thurmond, 14 December 1948; Ardery to Levy, 28 July 1948, all three letters in STP.
  16. Marian L. Allen (Latta, SC) to Thurmond, 11 December 1948; Brenner to Thurmond, 31 January 1949; Paul A. Wallace (State Senator, Marlboro County) to Thurmond, 7 December 1948, all three letters in STP.
  17. The reason for Thurmond's shift is still unknown and more research is needed to elucidate how and when his plans for coordinating the Merci Car changed. See the letter of complaint by Levy to Bailey, 31 January 1949, along with Thurmond to Bailey, 3 December 1948, which reports the Governor's original appointment; both letters in STP.
  18. See Owens to Pearson, 31 January 1949, STP.
  19. C.M. Gaffney, Jr. (American Legion Post #3) to Thurmond, 1 March 1949, STP.
  20. Louis Changeux to Thurmond, 20 October 1950; Bailey to Changeux, 23 October 1950; both letters in STP.
  21. The author examined the records of the Charleston Museum and some of the relevant artifacts in their collection. For distribution of books by the Museum to libraries in the Charleston area, see the Museum's archival file on the "Gratitude Train Objects," which includes several letters thanking the museum: Mary Powers (College of Charleston Library) to Milby Burton, 14 April 1950, and John Potts (Avery Institute) to Milby Burton, 28 April 1950. For other articles given to individuals see the following letters in the same file: Milby Burton to Mrs. C.A. Graiser, 7 April 1950, and to Mrs. Morrison, 10 April 1950. For the Italian replica the author visited the Greenville County Public Library, where the staff of the South Carolina Room allowed him to examine the piece. For a pictorial study of the Paris-made gift dolls placed on the Merci Train see Michelle Murphy, *Two Centuries of French Fashion* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1949); according to Murphy (see foreword) all of the train's dolls were donated to the Brooklyn Museum in order to keep the collection intact.
  22. For the story about the car's later history in South Carolina see *Merci Car Book*. The author has viewed the car in its current location on Pickens Street many times and recalls that the American Legion offered it to the State Museum in the early 1990s. Because of its size and the immense upkeep it required, the Museum had to refuse its inclusion due to budget constraints.



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## **Built By the Border: South of the Border and Border Business, 1950–1965**

Laura Koser

**F**OR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS, travelers drawn by a barrage of brightly colored bill boards have been compelled to investigate South of the Border. South Carolina's answer to roadside attractions such as South Dakota's Wall Drug and Frank Redford's chain of Wigwam Village motels has been and remains South of the Border, the sombrero-clad monument to kitsch located on Highway 301 and Interstate 95. Standing mere yards from the South Carolina / North Carolina line, South of the Border's unique location fundamentally affected the development of this well-known South Carolina business between 1950 and 1965.

South of the Border's prominent location on the border encouraged the implementation of "taboo" border products, or the sale of items illegal in other states and locations, as well as an early shift in business focus from local trade to the tourist trade. The decision to pursue "border" business shaped a unique South Carolina landmark and also mirrored the growth of roadside culture in South Carolina in the years leading up to the construction of the Interstate System. This paper examines the expansion of South of the Border from a border-based beer distribution company to a massive tourist complex as a set of opportunities and challenges presented by its location. Touching on diverse issues such as attitudes in South Carolina towards liquor, race relations, and the expansion of the Interstate System, this paper informs the somewhat limited study of roadside attractions and culture in South Carolina and illuminates the history of a one-of-a-kind creation of the South Carolina border.

Opened on 9 January 1950 by owner and creator Alan Schafer, South of the Border began as a brightly painted eighteen by thirty-six foot one-story building set on three acres of land purchased by Schafer from a local farmer for \$500. Constructed and stocked for less than \$5000, one employee recalled that the business consisted of "two bathrooms . . . six stools, a counter and a place to wash glasses." Schafer identified the original South of the Border as a "beer depot." The purpose of this small but well placed business was to provide a destination at which thirsty local residents could buy and consume beer.<sup>2</sup>

Schafer's depot was well placed to sell beer. In February 1948, Robeson County, North Carolina directly across the border from the site of Schafer's new business

voted to outlaw the previously legal sale of beer.<sup>3</sup> Schafer selected a spot near Hamer, South Carolina, to build his new business.<sup>4</sup> The actual spot on which the building was constructed had been the site of the Mount Zion Baptist Church from 1864 until 1874, when the church moved one mile east.<sup>5</sup> The location of Schafer's new enterprise on the former Mount Zion site reflects the utility of the site for Schafer's purposes. Most of the congregation of Mount Zion had lived in Robeson County, North Carolina, and had crossed the border weekly to attend services.<sup>6</sup> Beyond the sale of beer and alcohol, the state border did not divide the populations of the neighboring counties when it came to social activities and economic opportunities.

Schafer was not the first to decide to open a business in response to demand for beer on the North Carolina side of the state border. A store owned by North Carolina resident Mrs. E.D. King had previously stood near the border on Highway 301, and had been, according to the *Dillon Herald*, ". . . the last chance place on the Highway to buy beer before getting into Robeson County," which by 1949, the paper noted, was "bone dry." Five months before Schafer built his new business King's store had been destroyed when dynamite was thrown through a window.<sup>7</sup> The border might provide an attractive location for profiting from the ban on beer in Robeson County, but it was not necessarily a safe location.

At the outset of his new business venture in 1950, Alan Schafer was well aware of the dangers and difficulties of selling beer and alcohol in a politically and religiously conservative region. His decision to open a beer depot on the border was motivated by more than just the opportunity to profit from increased demand for a banned product. By 1950, Schafer was president of one of the largest beer distribution companies in the South, the Schafer Distributing Company. Opening South of the Border provided Schafer not only with new income, but also with a place to showcase the product that had already made him and his family a small fortune—beer.

Born in Little Rock, South Carolina, in 1915, Alan Schafer grew up comfortably as part of Dillon County's small but active Jewish community. In 1930, Schafer left home to study journalism at the University of South Carolina but was called home during his senior year when his grandfather died. Schafer was needed to help his father, Samuel, run the family business, a general mercantile store.<sup>8</sup>

For two years, Alan Schafer, his father, and younger brothers struggled to keep the store open. Hit hard by the Great Depression, people in Dillon County were reluctant to spend what little money they still had.<sup>9</sup> Schafer's autobiographical entry in *The Story of the South Carolina Low Country* recalls that after he returned from the university, his business career began when he realized that people were willing to pay seventy-five cents for a bottle of beer when they were not willing to pay for much else. Following

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the repeal of Prohibition by the ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment in 1933, beer became the main support of the Schafer family. Samuel Schafer began driving shipments in from Baltimore on a regular basis.<sup>10</sup> It was Alan Schafer's realization, however, that supposedly led the family to decide to sell the store and focus its efforts on distributing beer.<sup>11</sup> This decision would be the first step toward Alan Schafer's establishment of his own business and the creation of South of the Border.

Selling the store in 1935, Samuel Schafer, with his sons, founded the Schafer Distributing Company.<sup>12</sup> Beginning with two pick up trucks to make deliveries, the business soon grew to twelve trucks distributing beer not only to the surrounding area but all over South Carolina and parts of Georgia.<sup>13</sup> Rather than competing in the shrinking market for general merchandise in Little Rock, the Schafers turned instead to a large and expanding market for beer.

The early success of this new venture was in part due to the Schafers' role as wholesalers of Miller High Life, a very popular beer. High Life was Miller's "flagship" beer in the 1930s. Introduced as the "champagne of beer" in 1906, Miller celebrated the end of Prohibition in 1933 by sending Franklin D. Roosevelt a case of High Life. This was only one of many actions that constituted a massive effort on the part of Miller to promote the popularity of its beer.<sup>14</sup> The Schafer Distributing Company started business at the height of this popular campaign and quickly reaped the benefits, opening warehouses throughout South Carolina.<sup>15</sup>

Alan Schafer inherited the Distribution Company when his father died in August 1945. Shortly afterwards, Schafer began to exhibit the skill for promotion that would later become apparent in billboards and advertisements for South of the Border. In August 1948, Schafer unveiled a plan to raise awareness of the economic benefits the legal beer and wine industry provided to Dillon County both locally and through the border trade. Visibly flexing his financial muscle, Schafer paid every employee on his weekly \$4,000 payroll in two-dollar bills for two weeks. Schafer hoped, the *Dillon Herald* advised, that Dillonites would remember "... that legally controlled alcoholic beverages contribute a vital share to the prosperity and well-being of the Town, County, and State."<sup>16</sup>

As he was promoting the economic importance of his business, Schafer also was becoming politically prominent in Dillon. In 1948, following the Supreme Court ruling that opened Democratic primaries to African American voters, Schafer made a concentrated effort to "register as many black voters as I could at my home precinct, Little Rock."<sup>17</sup> As a result, Schafer later related, he became a "pariah among most whites in the county" and boycotts were arranged of Schafer Distributing Company. According to Schafer, "Groups of Klansmen began following my beer trucks around, urging

white retailers not to buy”<sup>18</sup> The two 1948 Dillon Democratic primaries were held in August, the same month Schafer launched his two-dollar campaign. Although Schafer never publicly made a connection, it is reasonable to argue that the two-dollar bills flooding Dillon County represented an effort to strike back against the boycotts his efforts to register black voters brought about. The Schafer Distribution Company survived, Schafer concluded, from “. . . having solid loyalty in the black accounts.”<sup>19</sup>

Surviving the Ku Klux Klan threats during the 1948 boycott, the location of Schafer’s new depot on a well-traveled highway at the border between a wet county and a dry county placed it in a sensitive position. The reluctance of many pro-temperance South Carolinians to have a concrete beer depot as the first sight for travelers entering the state soon forced Schafer to change the direction of his business.

According to the South of the Border story created and disseminated by Schafer in numerous advertisements, pamphlets, publications, and interviews, South of the Border opened as a beer depot but quickly turned to selling sandwiches when “hungry Yankees in shiny cars” made the demand for a quick-stop restaurant in the area apparent.<sup>20</sup> Schafer’s decision to begin selling food, however, was prompted not just by the abundance of “hungry Yankees,” but was mandated by the law. In a 1993 interview with Brett Bursey, Schafer stated that he “. . . got a call one day from the Governor’s Office . . . Strom Thurmond was Governor then. The Sheriff in Robeson County (North Carolina) was raising hell, and the Governor suggested I change the name of the place to ‘South of the Border Drive-in’.”<sup>21</sup> Whatever the impetus to begin serving food at the border, the business quickly grew.

A year after opening, South of the Border looked more like an upscale diner than a simple beer and sandwich stand along the roadside. The structure of the growing business as pictured in an August 1951 advertisement is similar to homemade- and factory-made diners prevalent elsewhere in the country, resembling a boxcar or trolley car.<sup>22</sup> Schafer’s selection of bright pink and yellow colors for the early incarnations of South of the Border not only ensured it would stand out from the miles of fields that surrounded it, but also mirrored current diner design trends. By the 1950s diner manufacturers were using “. . . combinations of pink, turquoise, aqua, rose, chartreuse, and coral” inside and outside of diners to attract a growing number of female patrons and to stay in touch with in home design.<sup>23</sup> Schafer noted that he opened South of the Border in 1950 with “ten stools and one employee.”<sup>24</sup> Photographs taken in the South of the Border Restaurant in 1958 show counter-style seating similar to that found in diners still in use by patrons.<sup>25</sup> Schafer’s location was prime territory for a diner because it was located both on a “high-volume highway” in an area welcoming burgeoning industries such as the Selma Hosiery Company.<sup>26</sup>

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One motive for Schafer's decision to model a business admittedly opened to sell beer to locals from Robeson and Dillon counties after diners found in other parts of the country is that the diner format was paired with the concept of twenty-four-hour service. Already open every Sunday since January, 1950, South of the Border announced that it would expand its I.A.M. to I.P.M. hours to twenty-four-hour service in May, 1951.<sup>27</sup> This created more opportunities to profit from late night travelers on U.S. 301, and opened a new local market. In July 1949 the Dillon City Council mandated a "curfew" on beer sales in Dillon "between midnight and sunrise." Far outside of the city limits, Schafer's business was unaffected by the ban and was certainly able to profit from the added beer business it generated during 1950 and 1951.<sup>28</sup> Once again, Schafer profited from a ban on beer by being on the right side of a border.

In 1950, Schafer was already working to compete with a quickly growing field of competing restaurants and other businesses along Highway 301.<sup>29</sup> Schafer's competitive attempt to create both a place to sell beer and a restaurant that women would not be ashamed to be seen in was the genesis of his expansion upon a theme. Originally having nothing to do with Mexico or Mexican food, the beer stand's location on the border between wet and dry counties was the focus of the establishment and also formed the basis for the "character" of the place. According to the South of the Border story promoted by Schafer in advertising and interviews, the name for the growing business was inspired when supplies for the construction site were delivered to "Schafer project: south of the border;" Schafer adapted and expanded upon a "south of the border" theme.<sup>30</sup> Evelyn Schafer Hechtkopf, Schafer's half sister, recalled that the name was arrived at through a contest sponsored by the Schafer Distribution Company in late 1949.<sup>31</sup>

Regardless of how the name "South of the Border" originated, its use was not originally tied to a Mexican theme. By May 1951, Schafer had expanded his business twice, adding two rooms to the original structure.<sup>32</sup> A centered wooden sign now identified the noticeable building to traffic passing on Highway 301 as "South of the Border." An additional sign advertised that the restaurant was "air conditioned" and signs painted on the front of the building in script identified two separate dining rooms: the central South of the Border restaurant and the Champagne Room.<sup>33</sup>

The South of the Border built in 1950 pictured in the May, 1951 advertisement was focused on beer, and not just any beer, but on Miller High Life. Schafer's early addition (in February 1950) of the Champagne Room referred not to the actual bubbly beverage, but to High Life—"The Champagne of Beer."<sup>34</sup> Built on the border to increase sales of Schafer Distributing's number one product, South of the Border

was originally themed to promote the image of the “high life.” With a combined menu of universal favorites such as steaks and chops, milkshakes and hamburgers, and more exotic fare such as filet mignon and Hungarian goulash, South of the Border became known for good food as well as beer.<sup>35</sup> With entertainment, such as popular music from a jukebox, South of the Border became a destination for a “high life” almost anyone could afford.<sup>36</sup>

Other opportunities were becoming apparent on the border. In a June 1952 editorial, *Dillon Herald* editor A.B. Jordan cited statistics estimating that “9,000 people (were) passing through Dillon every twenty-four hours.”<sup>37</sup> In response to the explosion of travelers, Jordan argued that in Dillon County, “motor court fever [was] running high” and hailed “. . . the many attractive establishments displaying all the colors of Joseph’s coat that beckon the thousands of weary tourists that pass every twenty-four hours.”<sup>38</sup> Hotels, motels, gas stations and restaurants sprang up along U.S. 301 hoping to attract travelers in need of a rest, a meal, or a tank of gas. During this era of motel and tourist industry expansion, Highway 301 became known as “Dillon’s Gold Coast.” Expansion to meet this economic opportunity was a natural next step for Schafer’s already booming business.

In April 1952, Schafer announced plans to construct a \$100,000 “tourist court” to the south of his “now famous restaurant.” The announcement in the *Dillon Herald* of the construction of “twenty single story ultra modern units” highlighted a new focus on modernity at South of the Border.<sup>39</sup> In order to compete with national chains designed to lure travelers with the assumption of nation-wide regularity in quality, Schafer had to guarantee motorists that the experience he provided could compete in terms of style and comfort with the growing number of motels along Highway 301.

Schafer’s solution was to promote the idea of modernity as much as possible. As competition along the roadways increased in the 1930s and 1940s, unique roadside destinations and architectural novelties such as Frank Redford’s Wigwam Village motel in Horse Cave, Kentucky, appeared.<sup>40</sup> In the 1950s, however, such oddities were no longer needed to pull in travelers. All post-war motels needed to attract patrons were bright neon signs and modern looking buildings.<sup>41</sup> A postcard image of South of the Border as it appeared in 1953 presents Schafer’s attempt at incorporating “ultramodern” design into the outer façade of South of the Border. The earlier structure of the beer stand is gone or completely covered. Replacing it is a familiarly rectangular 1950s roadside design with a stylized v-shaped overhang.<sup>42</sup> Such alterations reflected a common trend in independent diners, restaurants, and motels whose owners were now competing with national chains.<sup>43</sup> Independent businesses, such as South of the Border, adopted this new style—the Googie or California

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Coffee Shop style—because it represented a new roadside vernacular that spoke of cleanliness, efficiency, and comfort to prospective customers.<sup>44</sup>

Along with the image of clean, modern comfort, Schafer's motor court also benefited from an image of convenience. The location of the motor court and restaurant on the border made it the first stop in South Carolina for travelers going south on Highway 301. Passage into a new state provided a milestone for some travelers, encouraging them to stop for a rest. Schafer certainly promoted South of the Border's role as the first stop in South Carolina by building his business up as a welcome center to the state. An early billboard located at the border, facing north read, in Schafer's characteristic style, "Welcome to South Carolina, the best state with the most beautiful gals!"<sup>45</sup> Schafer's location also benefited his new motel in terms of mileage covered by motorists driving south on 301. South of the Border is located 617 miles south of New York City and 694 miles north of Miami, placing it roughly in the middle of most Florida-bound motorists' trips.<sup>46</sup> This placed South of the Border eleven or twelve hours away from either city, making it a convenient stopping place for road-weary drivers.<sup>47</sup>

For some travelers, South of the Border provided safety as well as modernity and convenience. The number of African American motorists had been steadily increasing along with the number of white motorists since the 1920s. The mobility and freedom provided by the open road was sullied for African Americans in some part, however, due to threat of violence when traveling through unfamiliar and often unfriendly areas. African American motorists traveling through the South had to be particularly careful in finding safe places to sleep and eat along the road because, as *Washington Post* writer Courtland Milloy wrote of travel in the 1950s, "So many black travelers were just not making it to their destinations."<sup>48</sup> Schafer on numerous occasions emphatically stated that South of the Border was the "only place a black person could get a meal and a room, no questions asked" in South Carolina. "The only thing we looked at," according to Schafer, "was the color of the money."<sup>49</sup>

Not integrated in the current sense of the word, with a separate section for African American patrons, many African Americans living in or passing through South Carolina nevertheless patronized South of the Border in the 1950s and 1960s, visiting on family vacations or as a stop over on their honeymoons. Their patronage indicates that Schafer's food and accommodations were "decent" enough for some to stop and stay. Serving African Americans albeit separately, before the Congress of Racial Equality's Freedom Highways Campaign of 1962 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, South of the Border provided a measure of safety as well as comfort and convenience for African American travelers on U.S. 301.<sup>50</sup>

Even as he emphasized modernity, comfort, and safety, Schafer began to expand upon another aspect of his growing business: the south of the border theme. On vacation, people sought to escape from their everyday lives but only on a safe and entertaining level. In order to appeal to this desire, small business owners like Schafer often turned to kitsch to attract business.<sup>51</sup> Kitch is the appropriation of what is “real” for the creation of “fake” reproductions for mass manufacture and consumption.<sup>52</sup> Pandering to a desire for kitsch led to the creation of attractions and souvenirs that were viewed as being strange, occasionally ugly, and generally cheaply made. Donald Featherstone, designer of the pink plastic yard flamingo explained this phenomenon best when he stated simply “Before plastics, only rich people could afford to have bad taste.”<sup>53</sup> Middle class America had new disposable income and often spent it on the strange, the odd, or the unusual.

Schafer began to expand upon the previously unarticulated, now seemingly obvious, Mexican connotations of the phrase “south of the border.” The massive sombrero atop the revamped South of the Border shown in the postcard image from 1953, for example, was Schafer’s first attempt to catch the eye of passing travelers with the exotic south of the border theme. Adopted shortly after the expansion from beer stand to restaurant, the sombrero reflected a move to more family oriented products and away, in some extent, from imagery related to Miller High Life. The yellow sombrero came to identify South of the Border on hundreds of billboards, and after seeing it for hundreds of miles, it became a focal point for travelers who began to wonder what was under the big sombrero. Later, this same use of visual imagery and association would inspire sombrero-shaped buildings and would crown the South of the Border complex with a huge sombrero-topped tower. Schafer used kitsch to make South of the Border increasingly visible, and soon the theme was integrated into every part of the property.

Schafer’s expansion of the Mexican theme into food and merchandising at South of the Border played on an image of Mexican culture that had been stewing in American popular culture since the early 1920s. Between 1920 and 1935, cultural relations between Mexico and the United States “flowered,” and both realistic and fictive images of Mexican culture worked their way into the American mind.<sup>54</sup> The popular image of Mexico that appeared at South of the Border was particularly affected by the Mexican image in movies of the 1930s and 1940s. During this period “Hollywood’s Mexico” consisted of “the U.S.-Mexican border as a specific region and the rest of Mexico as an undifferentiated mass.”<sup>55</sup>

Schafer’s selection of a Mexican theme tapped into an American fascination with Mexican culture that was paired with a desire to avoid many of the perceived

less savory experiences of Mexico.<sup>56</sup> While originally identifying the Mexican theme at South of the Border with the visual device of the giant yellow sombrero alone, Schafer soon expanded upon it with his own version of the pop culture image of a Mexican – Pedro.<sup>57</sup> Schafer admitted in a 1990 interview that he created the character of Pedro because his customers demanded such a figure. So many customers asked Schafer “where’s the Mexican that runs this place?” that he created Pedro to fulfill their expectations.<sup>58</sup> The resulting figure, a slightly paunchy, sombrero-clad, mustachioed man who speaks in his unique pun-filled “Pedro-speak” from hundreds of billboards and thousands of pieces of merchandise, came to represent South of the Border more than any other aspect of the business.

Schafer’s use of Mexican stereotypes extended to and even dictated South of the Border’s merchandise. Around 1955, Schafer opened the Mexico Shop at the border, selling stereotypical Mexican craft and curio items such as sombreros and woven straw purses. In opening new South of the Border stores after 1955, Schafer incorporated the popular association of Mexico with cheap curios and wares in selecting the items he sold. Some items, such as the ashtrays, tee shirts, hats, mugs, and beer steins stamped with South of the Border logos had little or nothing to do with Mexico. Others, such as the spices sold at the Nutte House, fabrics offered at Pedro’s Linen Shop (a factory outlet), and the affordable leather handbags and belts sold at the Leather Shop, did invoke a Mexican shopping experience.<sup>59</sup>

A 1948 *Collier’s Magazine* cartoon by Mary Gibson depicts two middle-aged women carting off a pile of sombreros, clay pots, and other curio items while in the background a mustachioed man wearing a sombrero turns to a woman next to him and quips “beats me what they do with the junk when they get it home.”<sup>60</sup> Schafer, who admitted in a 1990 interview “hardly ever will we [South of the Border] buy anything for resale that is useful,” shared the feeling. Schafer added that he only wished he knew why people bought the items they did.<sup>61</sup> One factor behind Schafer’s original success selling basically “useless” novelty items in the 1950s and 1960s was the simple fact that the “average” American family was making more money annually, and after years of depression scrimping and wartime saving, they were ready to spend.

Fully aware by 1953 that his menus, place mats, and for-sale items stamped with the South of the Border logo were sought-after souvenirs, Schafer expanded his merchandising with out-of-town visitors in mind.<sup>62</sup> Further playing off perceived images of the Mexican-United States border, Schafer began adding other border-based trades and services. Much like the sale of beer to Robeson County residents, many of products and services that Schafer opted to offer were banned or illegal in other states. This played off a perception, visible in movies of the 1940s and 1950s, that

identified border towns with corruption, vice, and danger. Mexican border towns were, in other words, a place where illegal and forbidden activities took place.<sup>63</sup> By selling items that were taboo in other states, Schafer created a demand for certain products by making motorists feel that they were free from the restraints of home.

A notable example still common at state borders today is the sale of fireworks. In 1962, Schafer opened Pedro's Arsenal, a large fireworks outlet that advertised "Fireworks and Beer to Go." The Arsenal burned in 1965, but was soon replaced by a larger facility now entitled Fort Pedro.<sup>64</sup> A second fireworks outlet, Rocket City, joined Fort Pedro in the early 1970s, and in 1994 South of the Border was cited as the second largest wholesale distributor of fireworks in the United States.<sup>65</sup> Fireworks remain an important aspect of South of the Border today.

A less explosive but more scandalous trade—adult entertainment—was also peddled by South of the Border early on. In 1958, the Mexico Shop included a "Men Only—Ladies Keep Out" section that would later grow into Pedro's Dirty Old Man Shop.<sup>66</sup> Pictures from inside the "Men's Only Section" from the mid-1960s reveal *Playboy* style magazines, pin-ups, and cigars, which were tame in comparison to the soft-core porn and sex toys sold by Pedro's Dirty Old Man Shop in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>67</sup> The inclusion of a limited access adult store at South of the Border not only appealed to adult guests with yet another type of kitsch that was obviously not aimed at children, but also tied into a less scandalous border trade that had been booming in Dillon County for a long time—marriage.

Couples seeking to avoid North Carolina's tough marriage licensing and age requirements had long inundated Dillon County. During World War II, marriage-licensing fees were actually lowered because some local legislators felt that probate court judges were profiting too much off the thousands of Ft. Bragg soldiers who came to Dillon to get married.<sup>68</sup> Political struggles continued over profit from licensing fees even as Schafer catered to this booming business by advertising "heir conditioned" honeymoon suites.<sup>69</sup> As the 1950s ended and the 1960s progressed, South of the Border was the site of bachelor parties, bridal luncheons, wedding ceremonies, and receptions. Much later, adult entertainment at the border would expand to include legal gambling, such as bingo, video poker games, and currently, the South Carolina Education Lottery.

Representing another step away from a local-product-defined business and toward a tourist-based roadside attraction, the inclusion of border businesses reinforced the growing recognition of South of the Border as a landmark or milestone on the way to and from Florida. By selling items and services that were illegal in some neighboring states, Schafer further delineated the state border, and provided a marker

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for long-distance drivers letting them know that they were entering a new state and were therefore slightly closer to their final destination.

Increasingly, some motorists were choosing to make South of the Border a requisite stop on their trips south (or north). As one letter reprinted in the 26 February 1965 edition of *Borderlines* remarked “We made our trip complete by stopping at your place going down and coming back. We are looking forward to coming back next summer and Pedro’s will be our first and last stop.”<sup>70</sup> More motorists, in fact, were making annual trips to Florida where established attractions such as Cypress Gardens, Silver Springs, and Weeki Wachee Springs drew millions of visitors each year.<sup>71</sup>

Highway 301 had always been teeming with Florida-bound motorists, but the opening between 1963 and 1965 of large sections of the new north-south limited-access interstate corridor, Interstate 95, meant that many motorists were already making portions of their trip faster and with fewer stops.<sup>72</sup> On 16 December 1964 the North Carolina Highway Commission announced that the North Carolina terminus of I-95 would be at the point where the state border was crossed by the railroad, meaning that the necessary relocation of Highway 301 would result in an interchange on the interstate at South of the Border.<sup>73</sup> In January 1965, the South Carolina State Highway Department announced a change to the design of the interchange that was expected to “. . . end complaints by some Dillon interests that the original version favored South of the Border motel operator Alan Schafer.”<sup>74</sup> While many other motels and businesses were preparing to close their doors, Schafer accepted the required destruction of several buildings of the motel for the new interchange design.<sup>75</sup>

With the construction of the first South Carolina exit on I-95 at his doorstep, Schafer’s increasingly visible South of the Border would literally become the border. With motorists moving faster and becoming increasingly motivated to reach their destinations, Schafer found it necessary in the early 1960s to expend more effort to encourage motorists stop. Already aware that the Mexican theme of South of the Border was his chief draw, Schafer responded by further expanding the “Mexican presence” in billboards, on merchandising, and by adding more attractions featuring Pedro, including the now famous giant “Pedro” sign in the parking lot of the Mexico Shop. In 1965, his efforts expanded beyond the forced remodeling of his property required by interstate construction into a \$100,000 improvement program to remodel and redecorate every aspect of the restaurant, motel, stores, and attractions in anticipation of “extra beezness” he expected to flood in during the coming summer.<sup>76</sup>

Schafer’s preparations in 1965 were more than just for the summer rush, but rather were early measures to insure that South of the Border would be able to

attract the “new” motorists on Interstate 95. This new breed of interstate travelers seemed to have their speedometers locked on seventy-five miles per hour and their mind set on the ever-growing number of tourist attractions glittering in the Florida sun. Such travelers, it was worried, did not have the time or interest to stop along the way or to gather souvenirs along the roadside. In truth, however, the speed-demon interstate traveler and the souvenir-hunting highway motorist were still one and the same. Schafer and other entrepreneurs of the roadside only needed to provide them with a good enough reason to stop.

Schafer’s development of South of the Border from a diner-sized beer depot into a massive 250-acre complex of constantly changing attractions represents the continued evolution of the attempt to get motorists to stop. Between 1950 and 1965, South of the Border’s focus shifted from providing local residents and occasional incidental tourists with a defined product to creating an image attractive to tourists. Locally centered regional stopping places transformed during this period into massive strips of exit ramp attractions. Schafer’s embrace of “border” products presages the development of roadside culture along the Interstate System.

The passage into a new state over an invisible borderline on the interstates is today demarcated by businesses pandering to border trades. Borders today are commonly designated by fireworks stands, outlet malls, attractions offering regional souvenirs (such as citrus fruit at the Florida border) or even more adult fare.<sup>77</sup> Billboards much like those created by Alan Schafer in the early 1950s often promote these businesses to approaching motorists for hundreds of miles. Created to take advantage of the business opportunities along the South Carolina/North Carolina border, South of the Border in turn became a model for other South Carolina roadside businesses and attractions. In its continued ability to pull travelers almost against their will off the interstate, however, South of the Border continues an openly kitsch-based tradition of highway entrepreneurship and remains a unique and world famous product of the South Carolina roadside.

#### NOTES

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72. "Interstate Highways Half Finished," *Dillon Herald*, 16 October 1964, 6.
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## **Conflict and the Courts: Common Law, Star Chamber, Coroners' Inquests, and the King's Almoner in Early Modern England**

Carol Loar

**B**Y THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, the institution of the coroner had been in place for roughly four hundred years. Established to investigate suspicious deaths and accidents, the coroner's inquest determined not only the cause of death, but also, in cases of suicide and accident, the value of goods to be forfeited to the Crown. All coroner's inquests were subject to review by the Court of King's Bench. Nonetheless, after c.1585 the King's Almoner and his deputies began to encroach on the inquests and demanded an increasingly central role. Since the middle ages, this royal officer had exercised the right to collect certain forfeited goods and distribute them as he saw fit, but it was only during the mid-1580s that he began to exert increasing pressure on coroners and jurors in an attempt to influence both procedures and verdicts. These incursions did not go unchallenged: in a growing debate over the relative powers and jurisdictions between the common law courts (such as King's Bench) and the prerogative courts (such as Star Chamber), the coroner's inquest soon became a focal point of a dispute centered at the highest reaches of government. An examination of the suits filed by the Almoner in Star Chamber reveals that the Almoner's actions were often also a direct challenge to the independence of the coroner's inquest and threatened to end the inquest's role as a local judge of fact, as an indicator of local ideas of justice, and as an arbiter of guilt or innocence. The Almoner's activities regarding coroners' inquests thus expose tensions between local communities and the state, and within the state itself during a period in which the central government's powers over local communities were in transition.

Before we can examine the challenge that the Almoner posed to the independence of the coroner's inquest, it is important to understand exactly what was supposed to happen at an inquest. In theory, its course was straightforward. Following an accidental death, suspected suicide, homicide, or upon the discovery of any unexplained death, the constable or other reliable individual summoned the coroner. The coroner then issued warrants to the constables of three or four of the surrounding parishes, ordering them to summon a jury. The power and authority of the coroner in these matters were almost absolute, something that J.A. Sharpe has described as "quasi-magisterial powers."<sup>1</sup> The coroner decided which of the potential jurors would be sworn in, and "interested parties had no right to challenge any of them."<sup>2</sup>

The jurors delivered their verdict after they had examined the body and the scene, and had listened to the testimony of witnesses concerning the death.

By law, the goods and chattels of those found guilty of homicide or suicide were owed to the crown—specifically, in the case of suicides, to the King’s Almoner, who, in theory, distributed them as alms. According to one sixteenth-century legal manual, in cases of homicide and suicide the coroner and jury should immediately identify and appraise all of the slayers’ goods and chattels “as if they should straightway be sold.”<sup>3</sup> In cases of accidental death, any object that “moved to the death” was designated a deodand (i.e., something that is given to God) and was likewise forfeited to the Almoner, also to be distributed as alms “for the benefit of the soul of the dead person,” as one contemporary put it.<sup>4</sup> Should the Almoner be dissatisfied with either the verdict or the appraisal of the goods, he could (and often did) file suit in Star Chamber.

Once the Almoner began interfering in inquests, his actions took several forms. At the most basic level he demanded that coroners swear in particular witnesses or adjourn inquests until certain witnesses could appear. The witnesses in question were persons whose testimony would, as expected, support the Almoner’s desired verdict. At the inquest into Alex Goodyn’s death in 1595, for example, the Almoner, Anthony Watson, complained that the witnesses his deputy had subpoenaed had not appeared.<sup>5</sup> Whether the Almoner or his deputy had any legal right to compel witnesses to attend an inquest is doubtful. Even the coroner’s powers in this matter were limited: he could issue warrants for jurors and witnesses to attend an inquest, but should they fail to appear, he had no recourse against them.<sup>6</sup>

At least one Almoner did succeed in gaining a temporary halt to the proceedings. Clearly suspecting that the jurors at the 1560 inquest into William Ponder’s death were about to find the death an accident rather than a suicide, the deputy almoner, a certain Morley, pressured the coroner into adjourning the inquest. According to one defendant, the jurors were unanimous in their verdict; several of them had “set their hands thereunto . . . [and] the rest would have done the like if Mr. Morley had not made a stay with the same matter.”<sup>7</sup> It was only a temporary respite for the Almoner, however, for the jury eventually returned a verdict of accidental death in the case.

Other deputy almoners began to demand that they be the ones to conduct inventories of the goods and chattels of *felones de se* (suicides). In several cases, defendants were charged with refusing to allow the Almoner to take an inventory of the deceased man’s goods.<sup>8</sup> It was the coroner’s responsibility not only to conduct an inventory, but also to note in the inquest the value of the goods and in whose custody they remained. Coroners who failed to fulfill this part of their duties regularly found

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themselves before the Court of King's Bench, the common law court charged with supervising and disciplining wayward coroners and inquest jurors. That the Almoner's charges were instituted in Star Chamber is further evidence that he was taking unto himself duties and responsibilities to which he was arguably not entitled.

At least one coroner found himself at the wrong end of the Almoner's wrath over two inventories. In 1616 the Almoner, Lancelot Andrewes, demanded that the Wiltshire coroner Harry Shuter turn over to him not only the inventories, but also the completed inquest verdicts in two cases of suicide. The coroner refused to do so, arguing that it was not the Almoner's place to demand these items. Instead, he submitted them to King's Bench as the law required him to do—and found himself facing a Star Chamber suit. What is even more remarkable in this case is that Andrewes's deputy offered to pay the coroner “such reasonable fees as he would demand.”<sup>9</sup> Coroners' fees were set by statute and came from the goods of *felones de se* or from the justices of gaol delivery at the semi-annual assizes. Once again, by offering to pay the coroner, the Almoner took on a role for which he had no express authority, and by doing so, he threatened the independence of the coroner's inquest.

At an even more intrusive level, some deputy almoners demanded the right to help select jury members despite the fact that the choice of jurors had long been established as the sole prerogative of the coroner. The composition of inquest juries was a perennial topic of complaint of the Almoner in both deodand and suicide cases. Coroners' choices of inquest jurors prompted a standard litany of grievances, namely that the Almoner considered these men either too closely connected to the deceased or completely ignorant regarding the victim. In one especially lengthy case that began in 1594, the Almoner (Richard Fletcher) complained that the Cheshire coroner (Hamnet Warberton) discharged “all the most substantial and indifferent men which were called and were there present . . . and would most willingly have served” on the jury. In addition, the coroner reportedly refused the Almoner's demands to include as jurors men whom the coroner had already dismissed.<sup>10</sup> That he had no legal standing regarding the selection of the jury did not deter the Almoner; he promptly filed suit against the coroner and others.

Perhaps the most egregious attempts to usurp the coroners' duties and authority involves the Almoners' attempts to influence the outcomes of inquests. Not only did one deputy almoner, Cuthbert Orfare, allegedly “terrify and threaten” a Cumberland coroner and jury in 1621, but he also “in further molestation and threat” to several of the jurors, filed suit against them in Star Chamber.<sup>11</sup> According to the jurors, Orfare's actions were intended to force them to return the verdict that he wanted in the inquest. He certainly wasted no time: he began the suit before the jury

had actually rendered its verdict. In this instance the sacrosanct character of the verdict in a coroner's inquest was clearly in jeopardy.

Matthew Clarke, deputy almoner in Lincolnshire, went even further in 1620, and assumed what amounted to the role of a prosecutor in a coroner's inquest. Clarke not only informed the coroner of Francis Tredway's death and the "great probability" that it was suicide, but he also delivered the coroner's warrant to the constables, who then summoned potential jurors. Subsequently Clarke spoke to the jurors at the beginning of the inquest, just as a prosecutor provides opening arguments in a modern jury trial. He told them that the deceased had committed suicide after leaving behind a suicide note. He went on to describe the location where the death had occurred as a "devious place," implying that the deceased must have intended suicide. In Clarke's mind, no one with legitimate business frequented that spot. Finally, he told the jurors exactly what they would see when they viewed the body: they would find "tokens that the said Francis had endeavored to strangle himself and that for proof there was a garter found about his neck . . . and that by reason of the straining of the same garter, there was a red circlet to be found about [Francis's] neck."<sup>12</sup> The coroner's actions during this inquest remain a mystery, but according to one of the jurors, "nothing was done [in the inquest] without the special approbation and good liking" of Clarke, who not only tried to direct the jury's verdict, but also accompanied them to the site where Tredway had apparently entered the river and died.<sup>13</sup> This deputy almoner had partially succeeded, at the very least, in extending his authority and power, though the jury refused to accept his version of events and give the verdict he wanted. Perhaps others may have been even more successful: juries may well have returned the verdicts the Almoner wanted, thus keeping themselves out of Star Chamber and rendering the Almoner's involvement in such matters invisible to historians.

It is difficult to say with certainty why the Almoners' tactics changed so noticeably during the last third of Elizabeth I's reign.<sup>14</sup> After all, the Almoner had had the right to sue in Star Chamber for suicides' goods and deodands since 1540, if not slightly earlier. In the absence of the relevant records for this period, we can only speculate regarding the reasons that prompted successive Almoners' increased efforts to control inquests and shape jury verdicts. Both professed concerns—the augmentation of the King's alms and the desire to see that those who tried to circumvent the law were punished—may have contributed to the increasing pressure that Almoners placed on coroners and their juries.

The economic difficulties and increasing polarization of English society in the late-sixteenth century are well documented.<sup>15</sup> A soaring population, a level of inflation that saw prices increase four- or five-fold, and wages that failed to keep pace with

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prices all increased the need for charity. Analysis of charitable bequests from this period suggests that philanthropy declined dramatically during Elizabeth's reign.<sup>16</sup> Thus, at a time when the numbers of persons in need of poor relief was rising, private aid fell below levels of the early-sixteenth century. Nor was public aid sufficient to meet the shortfall.<sup>17</sup> Before 1660 the poor laws were inadequate to cope with the level of poverty. As one historian has summed up the situation, "poor rates were too low and the number of the poor too large."<sup>18</sup>

Whether the Almoners were responding to these pressures is unclear. Given the level of discussion about poverty and the efforts of the Tudor state to institute regular poor relief measures, they could hardly be unaware of the extent—or at least the perceived extent—of poverty. Intrusions into the coroners' inquests may indeed have stemmed from a desire for funds that would, presumably, augment the monarch's alms. Reconciling this position with what we know of many of the arrangements Almoners made over deodands and suicides' goods and chattels is difficult, however, and suggests that these officers were not as charitably minded as they claimed.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, personal economic need may have prompted the Almoners to take a more active role in coroners' inquests. One group that found its financial position noticeably diminished by the end of the sixteenth century was the bishops, from whose ranks the Almoners were appointed. They clearly did not prosper during Elizabeth's reign. Though inflation played a role, the bishops' incomes seem to have been more the victim of the Crown, which brought a variety of methods to bear upon them: forced leases of properties under unfavorable terms; forced sales of rich estates; and forced exchanges of estates (which were more inflation-proof) for tithes (which were not).<sup>20</sup> By one estimate, for example, in 1580 the Bishop of London's income in real terms in 1580 was only 37 percent of what it had been during 1515 to 1518.<sup>21</sup> Even allowing for inaccuracies implicit in the limitations of available evidence, the scale of the problem cannot be discounted. In the face of such a substantial reduction in earnings, the possibility cannot be dismissed that the alms the coroners' inquests produced went to supplement the Almoners' income. How the Almoners may have used any additional income remains a mystery. In the absence of the Almoners' financial records for the period, we can only guess at possible uses: personal enrichment, some diocesan project, acts of piety, or poor relief of some sort and breadth.

If the Almoners did pocket the proceeds—or a significant portion of them—from coroners' inquests, their actions would have been in keeping with those of other early modern officials who were not reluctant to use their positions to supplement what were often admittedly small salaries, if not to enrich themselves. Corruption among bureaucrats became more common and visible precisely in this period. Admittedly,

“corruption” is a modern characterization of behaviors and events; the practices in which many officials engaged drew their contemporaries’ opprobrium upon them only when their demands were too blatant or their actions rendered them incapable of fulfilling their duties.<sup>22</sup> In this climate it would be surprising if the Almoners and their deputies did not keep at least a portion of what was gained from coroners’ inquests.<sup>23</sup>

One must also consider the possibility that the Almoner was responding to increased corruption surrounding inquests that involved deodands and suicides’ goods. Certainly the bills of complaint filed in Star Chamber urged that court to punish transgressors in such matters lest their actions breed contempt for the law and their “perilous and evil examples” embolden and inspire others to commit similar offenses. While this explanation might account for those suits filed against private individuals, it is inadequate to account for the Almoners’ actions towards coroners and jurors. The responsibility for disciplining coroners and jurors belonged to King’s Bench, which should have acted in those cases. In light of the efforts by Tudor-Stuart governments to ensure that the machinery of justice run smoothly and properly, it is unlikely that King’s Bench would have allowed to go unnoticed and unpunished such flagrant abuses as those the Almoners alleged in their bills of complaint.

The late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries also saw heightened efforts on the part of the state to tighten its hold over the minds and actions of its people. Even historians who are critical of the idea of a “Tudor revolution in government” acknowledge that the state’s power and authority were greater in 1600 than at any earlier time.<sup>24</sup> That the Almoners would be included in this trend toward greater central governmental control is not surprising. Still, the question of timing remains: why did they begin to assert themselves only in the late-sixteenth century? In addition to the factors previously discussed, one critical change occurred at that time. Late Elizabethan bishops were very different from their predecessors in political belief, ecclesiology, and theology. This new generation of bishops was much more likely to assert an authority based on the “divine right” of the episcopacy.<sup>25</sup> As John Guy has recently argued, they also believed that “the prerogative was an administrative tool which could and should be exploited and expanded to improve the revenues and increase the power of the government.”<sup>26</sup> Seen in this light, the Almoners’ activities with regard to coroners’ inquests would have been part of a larger pattern of beliefs and practices, a part that, nevertheless, did not go unchallenged.

As the Almoners began to encroach on the jurisdiction of the coroner’s inquest, coroners, jurors, and assize judges generally opposed their efforts.<sup>27</sup> One common area of dispute between the Almoners and the coroners revolved around the issue of coroners’ fees in suicide cases. According to a statute passed in 1487, coroners were entitled

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to a fee of a mark (13s. 4d.) for every inquest “taken upon the view of the body slain.”<sup>28</sup> Although the wording of the statute was ambiguous, coroners regularly took or were paid this fee for suicide cases. On several occasions Almoners took exception to this practice. In one case in 1593, a coroner defended himself before Star Chamber by quoting the statute at length, reminding the court that the statute expressly stated that when coroners were accused of taking fees illegally, the justices of assize and gaol delivery—not the Almoner—were to investigate, adjudicate, and punish the transgressors.<sup>29</sup>

Other issues were even more contentious. In one bitterly contested deodand case from 1620 the coroner, Edward Hardpenny, appealed the matter to an assize judge in an attempt to stave off the Almoner’s suit. The deceased, John Wallis, had fallen from his horse and died; the jury found that the horse, saddle, and bridle were deodand, but refused to include a purse full of money, which had been attached to the saddle. After reviewing the inquest, the judge, Sir Humfrey Winch, sided with the coroner’s jury and recommended giving the purse to Wallis’s widow. Winch also promised to put his decision into writing, but was transferred to another circuit before he did so. At the next assize, the coroner then put the matter before Winch’s successor, Sir Henry Montague, who agreed with both the coroner’s jury and his predecessor’s opinion regarding the disposition of money in this case.<sup>30</sup> Although the Almoner responded by filing suit in Star Chamber, the assize judges’ rulings were clearly intended to protect the independence and integrity of the coroner’s inquest.

This tactic of appealing to assize judges was popular with coroners and jurors who felt themselves “harassed” by Almoners and deputy almoners during inquests. Though the records do not always reveal the outcomes, petitioners who sought the support of an assize judge (or, on occasion, a common lawyer) seem to have found that both judges and lawyers sided with them rather than the Almoner. The jurors at the 1619 inquest into Francis Marshall’s death reportedly told the coroner that they had been “advised by good counsel” that the coroner was obliged to accept their verdict, whether he agreed with it or not.<sup>31</sup> Harry Shuter, a coroner who had refused in 1616 to turn over either inventories or inquest verdicts to the Almoner, did so on the advice of a prominent and well-connected attorney, who reminded Shuter that the law required that the inquests and inventories be submitted to the assize judges.<sup>32</sup> And as we have seen, two different assize judges agreed with a Kent coroner’s jury in the deodand dispute surrounding John Wallis’s death.<sup>33</sup>

Two cases wherein common law judges sided with coroners’ juries are particularly revealing. One of these involves Cuthbert Orfare, the deputy almoner, who in 1621 had reportedly threatened and terrified the coroner and jury into adjourning.

The jurors appealed the matter to Sir Thomas Chamberlin, Justice of Assize, who upon review “bade the coroner to take the verdict.” The judge then rebuked the coroner, telling him that he had “done the jury wrong” in refusing to accept its verdict.<sup>34</sup> In the second case, the coroner’s jury at the 1595 inquest into the death of Alex Goodyn had difficulty agreeing on a verdict. The inquest had apparently been adjourned several times before the coroner and jurors were summoned to appear before the justices of gaol delivery at Exeter Castle.<sup>35</sup> According to the jurors, the Almoner’s deputy had informed the justices of the “manner of the death of the said Alex” and asked them to intervene. The justices summoned the coroner, who did “deliver unto them the effect of the evidence which was given touching the manner of [Goodyn’s] death.” Clearly the deputy almoner’s and the coroner’s versions differed substantially. In a remarkable show of support for the jury, the justices then told the court that if they were on the jury, “they would not find that the said Alex Goodyn did drown himself.” The inquest jurors promptly returned a verdict in which they claimed that a certain “John-above-the-Wind” had caused Goodyn’s death.<sup>36</sup> Not only is the justices’ support for the jurors revealing, but also it is significant that they found the coroner’s version of the events more credible than the deputy almoner’s. Their actions were an unobvious way of reminding everybody present that it was the coroner whose authority mattered, and that an inquest jury’s verdict outweighed the deputy almoner’s opinion.

Most of these Star Chamber cases dealt with procedural matters: the impaneling of a jury, the swearing-in of witnesses, and the rendering of a verdict. But when it came to the interpretation of the law of deodands, matters became especially heated. The Almoners and their deputies naturally argued for the most literal interpretation of the law possible: *everything* that was in motion at the time of the death must be forfeited. The law of deodands could and did lead to inequities and absurdities, and the owners of deodands frequently found themselves in an untenable position. Thomas Morley, for example, complained 1608 that he had no legal remedy against the man who borrowed Morley’s cart, a cart that was involved in the death of a child.<sup>37</sup> Whether or not the driver had been negligent, it was Morley who had to forfeit the cart and its contents, which were his main business asset. In effect he was being punished, he asserted, for the actions of another, against whom he claimed he had no legal recourse. In the Wallis case mentioned previously, the Almoner was technically correct in his literal understanding of the law. If the horse, saddle, and bridle were in motion when the deceased fell from the horse to his death, then so too was the money in the bag attached to the saddle. But as Sir Humphrey Winch, the Justice of Assize, said, “he did not see how the said moneys could be any cause of the death of the said Wallis.”<sup>38</sup> This attitude was echoed in the late-eighteenth century by Ed-

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ward Umfreville, who wrote that deodands used to be adjudged by the rule so often cited by Almoners, as in the case just mentioned above. But, as Umfreville also added, “the Practice seems to be more moderate at this Day; and to find that only to be the Deodand or Forfeiture, which immediately causes the Death.”<sup>39</sup> The Almoner’s interpretation of the law, so vigorously prosecuted after 1585, eventually lost out to that of the common lawyers after the Restoration.

This pattern of conflict between common law judges and Star Chamber appeared in other guises as well. Although assize judges seemed worried about Almoners encroaching upon the judges’ jurisdiction over coroners, the leading practitioner in and theorist of Star Chamber, William Hudson (1577?–1625), was even more concerned that Star Chamber itself was being threatened by the “increasing assertiveness” of “the common-law courts of King’s Bench and Common Pleas.”<sup>40</sup> The fact that the judicial panel in Star Chamber included two common law judges probably increased his anxiety, and Hudson was careful to note that on several occasions these common law judges found themselves voting against the majority when it came to interpreting Star Chamber’s powers.<sup>41</sup>

Nor was the animosity only on Hudson’s side. Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in the early-seventeenth century, feared the growth of Star Chamber’s power at the expense of King’s Bench. He asserted that “of all the High and Honourable Courts of Justice this [*coram nobis in Camera Stellata*] ought to be kept within his proper bounds and jurisdiction.”<sup>42</sup> He translated his words into action as well, regularly voting in the King’s Bench to disallow “Star Chamber’s writ of privilege.”<sup>43</sup>

Hudson defended both the Almoner’s right to sue in Star Chamber and the tactics he employed there. Hudson argued that it was crucial that the Almoner be allowed to utilize the might of Star Chamber, for the estates of *felones de se* “rest in men’s hands in secret; so that if there be not a strict means to sift the same out, when he is dead, it will hardly be discovered: and therefore the examination upon oath which is in the court, is very necessary to help the king to his right.”<sup>44</sup> For that reason, according to Hudson, Star Chamber allowed the Almoner greater latitude for prosecuting “without the strict restraint of the rules of the court, whereby all other suitors are straitened.”<sup>45</sup> This alleged freedom from obeying the rules was one of the activities that so aggravated common-law practitioners like Coke.

The complexity of the system of courts in early modern England and the overlapping jurisdictions they enjoyed undoubtedly contributed to the animosity between people like Hudson and Coke and to the skirmishes between the courts they championed. Though King’s Bench clearly had jurisdiction over coroners’ inquests, the

Almoner's right to sue in Star Chamber for deodands and suicides' goods meant that, to some extent, clashes were inevitable. Had the Almoners been content with waiting for the verdict before filing suits that charged coroners and jurors with false practices, the conflicts might well have stayed muted or submerged. The Almoner found himself in open opposition to assize judges only when he insisted on involving himself directly in coroners' inquests and assumed a role for which he had no express statutory or common-law authority. Only then did these disputes find their way into the records.

With the abolition of Star Chamber and the other prerogative courts in 1641, the coroner apparently regained his "quasi-magisterial powers."<sup>46</sup> John Adams, describing the role of the coroner in 1700, said "Tis he that *summons* whom he *pleases* to be of the Jury, and to these he gives *what Charge he please*; the Examination of the Witnesses [and] the Summing up the Evidence is done *by him*."<sup>47</sup> While an acceptance of Adams's statements at face value may be naive, the absence of Star Chamber as a constant threat and the resistance of King's Bench to the unprecedented interference of the Almoners removed any need that coroners and juries may have otherwise felt to propitiate the latter. Such circumstances thus restored and preserved the independence of the coroner's inquest.

#### NOTES

1. J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England 1550–1750* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), 33.
2. R.F. Hunnisett *The Medieval Coroner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 17.
3. F. Pulton, *An Abstract of all the Penal Statutes* (London, 1579), 65–66.
4. John Wilkinson, *A Treatise . . . Concerning the Office and authorities of Coroners and Sherifes* (London, 1651), 23.
5. The National Archives: Public Record Office: (hereafter TNA: PRO) STAC 5/A12/19. Though it was the deputy almoners who actually intervened in inquests, the suits were always filed by the Almoner; had he disagreed with or disapproved of the deputies' actions, it is unlikely that these suits would have been filed or the deputies' actions continued.
6. Edward Umfreville, *Lex Coronatoria: Or, the Office and Duty of Coroners* (London, 1761), 2:183.
7. TNA: PRO STAC 5/A10/20.
8. See, for example, TNA: PRO STAC 5/A32/33.
9. TNA: PRO STAC 8/2/37.
10. TNA: PRO STAC 5/A21/21.
11. TNA: PRO STAC 8/3/16.
12. TNA: PRO STAC 8/3/5.
13. *Ibid.* In Clarke's version of events, the deceased had attempted to strangle or hang himself with a garter; when that failed, he threw himself into the river. The jurors found Clarke's scenario

less than convincing. Clarke's failure to produce the promised suicide note further swayed the jury against his rendition of the facts.

14. John Guy has recently argued that 1585 marks the beginning of a "second reign of Elizabeth." Politically, diplomatically, economically, and religiously the changes were dramatic and marked a real shift from the first part of her reign. John Guy, "The 1590s: The Second Reign of Elizabeth I?" in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1–19.

15. See for example, D.M. Palliser, *The Age of Elizabeth: England Under the Later Tudors, 1547–1603*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Longman, 1992), 111–186; Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580–1680* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982), 121–148; and Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London and New York: Longman, 1988), 37–55.

16. W.K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480–1660* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), 246–50; W. G. Bittle and R. T. Lane, "Inflation and Philanthropy in England: A Re-assessment of W. K. Jordan's Data," *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 19 (1976): 203–10; A. D. Dyer, *Worcester in the Sixteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1973), 241.

17. Paul Slack, *The English Poor Law, 1531–1782*, Studies in Economic and Social History (London: Macmillan, 1990), 27.

18. *Ibid.*, 53.

19. The Almoner regularly rewarded informants with forfeited money and goods; he also sold forfeited goods and chattels to interested people and, at other times seems to have given the forfeited goods to others. Only rarely does financial need seem to have entered into the transactions. See Carol Loar, "Go and Seek the Crowner": *Coroners' Inquests and the Pursuit of Justice* (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1998), 153–74.

20. Palliser, *The Age of Elizabeth*, 121–22.

21. *Ibid.*, 137. Palliser admits that the estimate may not be entirely accurate; still, the scale of the problem is worth noting.

22. John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 393–95.

23. It was probably easy for the deputy almoners to take a cut of the proceeds: while the value of the deodand or goods was usually listed in the inquest, the deputies seem to have had a fair amount of latitude in how they sold the goods. It would have been child's play simply to under-report the value at which goods were sold.

24. G.R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953). For criticism of Elton's thesis, see Christopher Coleman and David Starkey, eds., *Revolution Reassessed: Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

25. John Guy, "The Elizabethan Establishment and the Ecclesiastical Polity," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 126–27.

26. *Ibid.*, 149.

27. It has recently been argued that the court of King's Bench and the King's Almoner engaged in complementary activities. Two scholars claim that from 1540 "the two most prestigious tribunals in the land were working in tandem and with unprecedented efficiency." See Michael MacDonald

and Terence Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 26–28. As this study shows, however, the justices of King’s Bench, in their guise as assize judges, often resisted the Almoners’ activities with regard to coroners’ inquests.

28. 3 Hen VII. c.2. *Statutes of the Realm* (London: Dawson’s of Pall Mall, 1816, repr. 1963), 2:511–12.
29. TNA: PRO STAC 5/A21/11. See also Edward Coke, *The Fourth Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England* (London, 1644), 159.
30. TNA: PRO STAC 8/1/22.
31. TNA: PRO STAC 8/3/4.
32. TNA: PRO STAC 8/2/37.
33. TNA: PRO STAC 8/1/22. The attorney in question worked for Sir Anthony Mildmay, who held a number of positions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.
34. TNA: PRO STAC 8/3/16.
35. TNA: PRO STAC 5/A12/19. Justices of gaol delivery and justices of assize are generally the same people operating under different, but concurrent, commissions. In the former capacity they heard pleas involving jailed suspects, in the latter all pleas brought before the Assizes. See Penry Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 410.
36. TNA: PRO STAC 5/A12/19. Names like John-above-the-Wind, John Style, etc. were legal fictions used to avoid returning a verdict of death by person or persons unknown, which many believed to be a legally insufficient verdict. In other cases, these “fictitious perpetrators” could also be found “guilty” when a trial jury was unwilling to convict a real person for a crime, regardless of guilt, as in cases of masters murdering servants or children.
37. TNA: PRO STAC 8/1/38.
38. TNA: PRO STAC 8/1/22. Because Star Chamber verdicts and the Almoners’ records have disappeared, there is no way to determine who ultimately received the money.
39. Umfreville, *Lex Coronatoria*, 1:93–94.
40. Thomas G. Barnes, “Mr. Hudson’s Star Chamber” in *Tudor Rule and Revolution*, ed. DeLloyd J. Guth and John W. McKenna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 296.
41. *Ibid.*, 306.
42. Edward Coke, *The Fourth Part of the Institutes*, 4th ed. (London, 1669), 60–1, cited in Barnes, “Mr. Hudson’s Star Chamber,” 305. The bracketed passage is from Barnes.
43. Barnes, “Mr. Hudson’s Star Chamber,” 304. On the relationship between the various courts, see David Loades, *Tudor Government* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 71–79.
44. William Hudson, *A Treatise of the Court of Star Chamber*, in *Collectanea Juridica*, ed. F. Hargraves (London, 1792; repr. Littleton, CO: Fred B. Rothman, 1980), 2:137.
45. *Ibid.*, 2:138.
46. J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550–1750* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), 33.
47. John Adams, *An Essay Concerning Self-Murther* (London, 1700), 128.

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**The Cross and the Elephant:  
Southern White Evangelicals' Commitment to the  
Republican Party, 1960–1994**

Daniel K. Williams

WHEN TELEVANGELIST JERRY FALWELL mobilized several million evangelical voters through his Moral Majority organization in 1980, journalists expressed surprise at what they viewed as an unprecedented commitment of southern conservative Protestant Christians to the Republican Party. The news media implied that southern evangelicals had traditionally been inclined to stay away from the polls or cast their ballots for centrist Democrats such as Jimmy Carter.<sup>1</sup> That had been and still was true for many evangelicals in the South. But for numerous others, Falwell's Moral Majority was neither the beginning nor the end of their commitment to the GOP.

Most scholars who have studied the rise of the Christian Right have viewed the cultural conflicts of the 1970s as the catalysts for the southern evangelical conversion to the Republican party. William Martin, Kenneth Heineman, Matthew Moen, Sara Diamond, and others have focused on controversies over abortion, sex education, secular humanism, the ERA, gay rights, and the freedom of Christian schools during the 1970s and 1980s in order to explain why evangelicals became Republicans.<sup>2</sup> A few scholars, such as Clyde Wilcox and Duane Murray Oldfield, have broadened their analysis of the Christian Right to include a study of the fundamentalist anticommunist organizations of the 1950s and 1960s, but few studies of the Christian Right chronicle the political thought of the large number of southern evangelicals who began shifting toward the Republican party in the two decades preceding the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> Southern political historians such as Earl and Merle Black, Thomas B. and Mary D. Edsall, Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, and Alexander Lamis have pointed out that southern whites outside of religious circles began leaning toward the Republican party as early as the 1950s, and that they did so mainly because of race and economics.<sup>4</sup> This study will show that the political loyalties of southern white evangelicals, a group that most of the classic studies on southern politics have largely ignored, paralleled the electoral positions of their non-religious neighbors. When southern whites of all religious backgrounds began voting for Republican presidential candidates in the 1950s and 1960s, evangelicals did likewise. Southern conservative Protestants shared their non-evangelical neighbors' concerns about race, economics, and Communism, but they also used religious ideology to justify their voting choices. By the late 1970s, their religious and moral concerns began to eclipse their earlier interest in opposing federal

civil rights legislation, Communism, and increased federal social welfare spending. Scholars have been correct to look for the origins of the Christian Right in the moral controversies of the 1970s, but in the process of analyzing the rise of Christian conservatism they have largely overlooked the deeper roots of evangelical Republican partisanship.

As early as the 1940s and 1950s, a few southern fundamentalists, most notably John R. Rice, endorsed Republican candidates in religious publications.<sup>5</sup> While Rice's fundamentalist views differed from those of mainstream southern evangelicals in matters of theology and politics, by 1960 many southern white evangelicals, including self-styled fundamentalists, were ready to vote Republican at the presidential level, especially because the Democratic nominee, Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, was a Catholic.

Most southern conservative Protestants who opposed Kennedy did so largely because of the candidate's religion. A Catholic president, they feared, would violate the principle of church-state separation by increasing the political power of his church, and would thereby jeopardize Americans' religious freedom. Ramsay Pollard, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said that he would not "stand by and keep [his] mouth shut when a man under control of the Catholic Church runs for Presidency of the United States." He went on to observe that he expected the "vast majority" of Southern Baptists to cast their ballots against Kennedy.<sup>6</sup> The Southern Baptist Convention urged its members to give close consideration to a presidential candidate's religion when deciding whom to support in a presidential election, and several smaller denominations, including the Assemblies of God and a few independent Baptist associations, passed resolutions objecting to the election of a Catholic as president of the United States.<sup>7</sup> Bob Jones, Sr., reflected a fundamentalist consensus when he told the faculty at his university that electing Kennedy would be "dangerous and unwise."<sup>8</sup>

Kennedy's religion provided the primary justification for southern conservative Protestants' denunciations of the Democratic candidate, but the Massachusetts senator's political views also alienated many southern fundamentalists. Carl McIntire, a New Jersey Presbyterian minister whose daily radio broadcasts were carried on dozens of stations throughout the South, wrote that he was worried by Kennedy's "views on the extreme left."<sup>9</sup> After Kennedy was elected, served three years in office, and was assassinated, John R. Rice, editor of the leading southern fundamentalist paper (*The Sword of the Lord*), characterized the Democratic president as a "socialist" who had been guilty of "wasteful, prodigal, wicked spending."<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, southern white Protestants' widespread opposition to Kennedy's candidacy did not signal a partisan position as much as it did an anti-Catholic sentiment.

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In contrast, Barry Goldwater's presidential candidacy of 1964 divided evangelical voters along ideological lines. For the previous two decades, northern evangelicals had combined their religion with anticommunist preaching, but southern conservative Protestants waited until the 1950s to join the anticommunist movement. Carl McIntire began broadcasting his anticommunist sermons on southern radio stations in the late 1950s, and Billy James Hargis, a native southerner, started issuing his nationally distributed denunciations of Communism shortly thereafter.<sup>11</sup> Southern fundamentalists who had become staunch anticommunists decided that Goldwater offered a clear "choice, not an echo." Hargis hung a large picture of Goldwater at his 1963 Christian Crusade convention, and McIntire gave highly favorable coverage to the Arizona senator's campaign, saying that he "seems to be the only anticommunist running."<sup>12</sup> John R. Rice told his *Sword of the Lord* readers that Goldwater "offered a stronger opposition to the oppression of a too-strong central government taking away the liberties and rights of the people, wasting more money and keeping the government in the hands of bureaucrats."<sup>13</sup> A group of Bob Jones University faculty and administrators even chartered a "Goldwater bus" to campaign for the Republican presidential candidate.<sup>14</sup>

Like many other white southerners, fundamentalists and evangelicals in the South also supported Goldwater because he had voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which Bob Jones, Jr. denounced as the beginning of a "police state in America."<sup>15</sup> Conservative Protestant preachers echoed their non-religious neighbors when they used the rhetoric of anticommunism and political conservatism to oppose the civil rights movement. Billy James Hargis accused Martin Luther King, Jr., of "serving the cause of Marxist upheaval in our country," while G. Archer Weniger called King a "Communist front Negro sit-in leader."<sup>16</sup> John R. Rice wrote a tract opposing desegregation and interracial marriage, and Bob Jones University continued to exclude African Americans until the 1970s.<sup>17</sup> Many Southern Baptists and moderate evangelicals who distanced themselves from the more conservative fundamentalists on theological issues nonetheless opposed the civil rights movement just as strongly as Jones, Rice, and Hargis did. In the early 1960s, Southern Baptist president Herschel Hobbs expressed his opposition to Martin Luther King's goals and tactics, and stated his support for a political position that he characterized as "conservative on Civil Rights."<sup>18</sup> Conservative evangelicals and fundamentalists favored Goldwater's stance on a broad range of issues, some of which had little to do with race relations or Communism. For instance, fundamentalists such as Carl McIntire were impressed by the Republican presidential candidate's support for school prayer, a position that enabled Goldwater to accuse the Democrats of an "utter disregard for

God” when their party platform neglected to mention the issue.<sup>19</sup> But although conservative southern Protestants placed some importance on these religious issues, they supported Goldwater for many of the same reasons that other white southerners did: they wanted a candidate who would maintain “law and order” by opposing Communism, welfare spending, and civil rights legislation.

Although southern anticommunist radio preachers strongly supported the Arizona senator, many southern evangelicals were still content to remain on the sidelines of the political contest. Billy Graham declined to support Goldwater, and most likely cast his ballot for Democratic incumbent Lyndon Johnson.<sup>20</sup> Southern Baptist Convention president Wayne Dehoney said that the presidential candidates of both parties championed values that he considered “basic in our Baptist tradition,” and he declined to state his partisan preference.<sup>21</sup> Goldwater received the support of many southern conservative Protestants, but his candidacy did not engender an explicitly religious movement in favor of the GOP.

In the wake of Goldwater’s candidacy, some Republican candidates made overt bids for southern evangelical votes. Tennessee Republican senatorial candidates Howard Baker and William Brock made support for school prayer a prominent part of their campaign platforms in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>22</sup> At the presidential level, Richard Nixon’s campaign of 1968 capitalized on the candidate’s friendship with evangelical leader Billy Graham by running television ads highlighting the preacher’s support for the Republican candidate. Nixon urged Graham to take an active role in his 1972 reelection effort, and although Graham was reluctant to appear too overtly partisan, he did make his support for Nixon very clear.<sup>23</sup> That same year, Southern Baptist Conference president Carl Bates invited Nixon to address his organization’s annual meeting, an unprecedented step for a denomination that hitherto had not had an American president address their assembly. Several Southern Baptist pastors criticized Bates for engaging in what appeared to be a case of partisan politicking only a few months before a presidential election, but he defended his actions by arguing that Nixon was a “born-again” Christian who deserved to be a keynote speaker at the denominational convention.<sup>24</sup>

Aside from the issue of school prayer, which encouraged some conservative Protestants to favor Goldwater over Johnson in 1964, and abortion, which led a few evangelicals to support Nixon over the pro-choice candidate George McGovern in 1972, religious issues nonetheless played a relatively minor role in presidential elections before 1976. Southern conservative Protestants supported Republican presidential candidates for many of the same reasons that induced white non-evangelical southerners to vote for conservatives. Like many other southerners, most white fundamentalists and

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evangelicals denounced the civil rights movement and loudly proclaimed their opposition to Communism and high levels of social welfare spending. They favored a tough-minded “law-and-order” approach to the civil rights and antiwar demonstrations, which they blamed on the liberal policies of Democratic politicians.<sup>25</sup> While they often offered a religious justification for their political views, their conservatism was often indistinguishable from that of non-evangelical white southerners. They were just as receptive as other southerners to Richard Nixon’s “southern strategy,” which had little to do with religious issues, and when they lauded Strom Thurmond, it was usually because of his opposition to civil rights, rather than his support of school prayer.<sup>26</sup>

George Wallace’s third-party presidential candidacy in 1968 offered a rival choice for southern evangelicals who otherwise might have been inclined to support the Republican candidate. How many votes Wallace received among southern fundamentalists and evangelicals is unclear, but the data do not indicate that he received a disproportionate amount. A *Christianity Today* poll of Southern Baptist pastors in Florida and Louisiana showed that white Baptist preachers were neither more nor less likely than other white southerners to support the Alabama governor’s bid for the presidency.<sup>27</sup> John R. Rice wrote in *The Sword of the Lord* that he intended to vote for Nixon, not Wallace, in 1968.<sup>28</sup> Polls indicated that Wallace’s support came primarily from white southerners with fundamentalist beliefs who rarely attended church, but not from active church members of conservative denominations.<sup>29</sup> It appears that Wallace’s candidacy did not pose a serious threat to southern evangelicals’ growing affinity for the Republican Party.

The candidacy in 1976 of Democratic Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia, a Southern Baptist Sunday school teacher and self-proclaimed “born-again” Christian, only temporarily interrupted the movement of southern evangelicals into the Republican Party. A Louis Harris survey showed that Jimmy Carter received 56 percent of the nation’s white Baptist vote, an unusually high percentage for a religious group that had previously voted Republican at the presidential level.<sup>30</sup> Yet not all southern conservative Protestants supported Carter. W.A. Criswell, the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, America’s largest Southern Baptist congregation, voted for Republican incumbent Gerald Ford, as did several leading fundamentalists and evangelicals, including Jerry Falwell. Carter’s October 1976 interview with *Playboy* magazine provided the ostensible reason for conservative evangelicals’ denunciation of the Democratic candidate, but some also worried that he was a “big spender” on social welfare programs who would not advance their agenda while in office.<sup>31</sup>

They had reason to be concerned. As president, Carter disappointed evangelicals by taking liberal positions on social issues. He came from the moderate

wing of the Southern Baptist Convention, and like other moderates, he believed issues of church and state should be so strictly separated as to preclude the pursuit of an explicitly "Christian" agenda in governmental policy. In addition, Carter, like other Southern Baptist moderates, did not place great importance on issues that seemed vital to conservatives in the Southern Baptist Convention. While the latter viewed antiabortion legislation as a top priority, Carter saw no need for a pro-life constitutional amendment. He supported the Equal Rights Amendment, while many fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals who took a traditional view of gender roles strongly opposed it. Staunchly anticommunist fundamentalists, reflecting the view that their churches had taken since the 1950s, were bothered by Carter's willingness to engage in disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union.<sup>32</sup> Televangelists had begun denouncing Carter even before Ronald Reagan announced his candidacy, but when the former California governor entered the Republican primaries, conservative evangelicals stepped up their attacks against the president and rallied to Reagan's campaign.<sup>33</sup>

Since the 1960s, large numbers of southern white conservative Protestants had favored a strong military and limited government. By the late 1970s, they were also looking for a candidate who would take conservative positions on issues such as abortion, school prayer, feminism, gay rights, the teaching of evolutionary theory, and "secular humanism." Reagan took conservative positions on all of these issues.<sup>34</sup> The political action group Christians for Reagan sent out mass mailings to evangelicals to help the California conservative in his bid for the White House, and evangelicals began distributing copies of the campaign tract *Reagan: A Man of Faith*.<sup>35</sup> Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority did not explicitly endorse Reagan, but Falwell made no secret of his partisan preferences, and most people rightly assumed that the three million voters that Falwell's organization claimed to have registered would not cast their ballots for Carter.<sup>36</sup>

The Religious Right, which most analysts identified mainly with the Moral Majority, received a record amount of news coverage in 1980. Journalists were astounded by the sudden rise of a religious voting bloc that they had never before considered a political force. Falwell succeeded in publicizing the Religious Right's political agenda to an unprecedented degree, but subsequent studies showed that the Moral Majority and other similar organizations in actuality had very small constituencies and their impact on the election was minimal. The Moral Majority appealed mainly to members of the Baptist Bible Fellowship; few Southern Baptists, Pentecostals, or members of other theologically conservative denominations joined the Moral Majority in large numbers.<sup>37</sup> Public opinion polls showed that even in politically conservative, evangelical, southern communities, only a narrow percentage of the population supported the Moral Majority.<sup>38</sup> Falwell was politically influen-

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tial only in limited circles, and he had neither the audience nor the political skills to engineer a sweeping conversion of conservative evangelicals to the Republican Party, a process which was already occurring even without his influence.

The leaders of the 15-million-member Southern Baptist Convention had a much larger constituency than Falwell, and when they altered the political direction of their denomination, the change had a far greater effect on southern politics than the activities of the Moral Majority. In 1979, theological conservatives wrested control of the Southern Baptist Convention from the hands of the denomination's moderates. Conflicting interpretations of biblical inerrancy defined the two factions, but the opposing sides also differed in their views on church-state relations and moral legislation. Conservatives believed that abortion was tantamount to murder, and that the denomination's social agencies and lobbying organizations should devote most of their time to promoting the pro-life cause. Conservatives also generally favored school prayer and were strongly opposed to homosexual rights. Moderates placed greater emphasis on the separation of church and state, and therefore thought that the denomination had no business trying to legislate Christian morality. They were also not nearly as concerned about abortion as the conservatives were. Many of the denomination's moderates strongly supported Carter in 1976, but most of the conservatives who won control of the denomination in 1979 favored Republican candidates.<sup>39</sup> Only a few hints of that partisanship appeared in 1980, but by the end of the decade, it was clear that the Southern Baptist Convention was no longer the bastion of Democratic loyalty that it had once been.

In 1980, the Convention moved away from the moderately pro-choice stance on abortion that it had officially held since the early 1970s, and passed a resolution condemning abortion.<sup>40</sup> In 1982, the Convention reversed its longstanding opposition to prayer in public schools, and passed a resolution that favored school prayer.<sup>41</sup> In the late 1980s, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission moved its sociopolitical efforts away from poverty relief and toward pro-life activism and other social conservative causes.<sup>42</sup> In 1988, Paige Patterson, one of the leading Southern Baptist conservatives, stated that of the major contenders for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, only Senator Al Gore of Tennessee, a moderate liberal who supported some socially conservative causes, would be acceptable.<sup>43</sup> By the early 1990s, however, even Southern Baptist centrist Democrats were too liberal for the Southern Baptist Convention's leaders. Many Southern Baptist leaders engaged in a lengthy feud with Bill Clinton, a member of their own denomination, when they continually criticized his stance on homosexual rights and abortion.<sup>44</sup> The denomination's increased emphasis on social conservatism resulted in changed party loyalties. In 1980, only 29 percent of

Southern Baptist pastors were Republicans, but by 1984, that percentage had increased to 66 percent.<sup>45</sup> By the mid-1990s, Southern Baptist clergy were more heavily Republican than ministers in any other denomination except the Assemblies of God.<sup>46</sup>

When Christian conservative activist and broadcaster Pat Robertson ran for president in the 1988 Republican Party primaries, he was able to mobilize some formerly politically inactive Pentecostals and charismatics, but many Christian conservative leaders gave their support to other Republican presidential contenders, such as George Bush and Jack Kemp.<sup>47</sup> Yet Robertson's presidential primary candidacy had a greater impact on southern politics than pundits assumed at the time, because it allowed him to compile a mailing list that formed the nucleus for the Christian Coalition, the organization that he created in 1989. While Robertson provided the public persona for the Christian Coalition, Ralph Reed, a newly-minted Ph.D. and a shrewd political operative, gave the organization its strategic vision and enabled it to become a potent political force. The Christian Coalition was the first conservative religious organization with a systematic plan for achieving political power. Until the 1980s, many southern evangelicals, like other white southerners, voted Republican at the presidential level, while casting their ballots for Democrats in congressional and state elections. Reed taught evangelicals to identify with a political party at all levels, and he went beyond that by showing conservative Christians that they could not only influence local elections, but also control the Republican Party itself.<sup>48</sup>

The Christian Coalition thus marked the culmination of a long political conversion process for southern white evangelicals. In the 1960s and early 1970s their Republican voting patterns reflected their staunch anticommunism and conservative views on race and public finance, but by 1980 they had also found explicitly religious and moral reasons to cast their ballot for the Republican ticket. As abortion, homosexual rights, and school prayer became vital issues for Southern Baptists and other evangelicals, southern conservative Protestants became increasingly willing not only to vote Republican, but also to identify with the GOP and campaign for Republican Party candidates at every level. The Christian Coalition completed that process by teaching evangelicals how to influence the direction of their newfound party. By 1994, white southern evangelicals were not only voting Republican, but also reshaping the party to fit their own Christian vision of what politics should be.

#### NOTES

1. See, for instance, "A Tide of Born-Again Politics," *Newsweek*, 15 September 1980, 28–29.
2. William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway Books, 1996); Kenneth J. Heineman, *God is a Conservative: Religion, Politics, and Morality in Christian*

*America* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Matthew C. Moen, *The Christian Right and Congress* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989); Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Boston: South End Press, 1989).

3. Duane Murray Oldfield, *The Right and the Righteous: The Christian Right Confronts the Republican Party* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996); Clyde Wilcox, *Onward Christian Soldiers? The Religious Right in American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996).

4. Earl Black and Merle Black, *Politics and Society in the South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); Thomas Byrne Edsall with Mary D. Edsall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991); Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, *The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequences Since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Alexander P. Lamis, *The Two-Party South*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

5. John R. Rice, *The Sword of the Lord*, 15 August 1952, 12. Rice, Carl McIntire, Billy James Hargis, and Bob Jones, Sr. held to fundamentalist theological and political views that differed from the more moderate evangelicalism of the Southern Baptist Convention. Throughout this paper, I reserve the word “fundamentalist” for self-identified members of the twentieth-century Protestant fundamentalist movement, while I use the term “evangelical” to refer to a much broader contingent of Protestants who proclaimed the necessity of being “born again” and whose theological views were similar to those of Billy Graham, *Christianity Today* magazine, or the National Association of Evangelicals. Several erstwhile fundamentalists, including Jerry Falwell, later began referring to themselves as evangelicals.

6. “Attack on Catholics,” *New York Times*, 11 February 1960, 29.

7. See three articles in the *New York Times*: “Attack on Catholics,” 11 February 1960, 29; “A Catholic President Opposed,” 5 August 1960, 7; “Religious Issue Raised,” 3 September 1960, 20.

8. Alan Ehrenhalt, “Greenville, South Carolina: Power Shifts in a Southern City as Groups That Took Orders Learn How to Give Them,” *Governing*, September 1988, 52.

9. *Christian Beacon*, 29 September 1960, 2.

10. John R. Rice, “Why Did God Allow Kennedy’s Death?” *The Sword of the Lord*, 24 January 1964, 7.

11. Reese Cleghorn, *Radicalism: Southern Style: A Commentary on Regional Extremism of the Right* (Atlanta: The Southern Regional Council, 1968), 19; Peter T. Beckman, “The Right Wing and the Christian Faith” (Ph.D. dissertation., U. of Chicago, 1968), 161–63.

12. Erling Jorstad, *The Politics of Doomsday: Fundamentalists of the Far Right* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 100, 118–19.

13. *Christian Beacon*, 17 September 1964, 2.

14. Larry L. King, “Bob Jones University: The Buckle on the Bible Belt,” *Harper’s*, June 1966, 51, 53.

15. Ehrenhalt, “Greenville,” 52.

16. Billy James Hargis, “A Second Look at Selma,” *The Weekly Crusader*, 23 April 1965; G. Archer Weniger, *The Blu-Print*, 15 November 1960.

17. Bill J. Leonard, “A Theology for Racism: Southern Fundamentalists and the Civil Rights Movement,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, Winter 1999, 52–53; Bob Jones, Jr., “A Statement from the

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- President of Bob Jones University" [1970], "Bob Jones University" folder, G. Archer Weniger Files, Fundamentalism File, J.S. Mack Library, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC. Rice published his tract, *Negro and White*, as a reaction against the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).
18. Herschel H. Hobbs to Louie D. Newton, 13 September 1961, folder 22-2, Herschel H. Hobbs Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.
19. Carl McIntire, *Christian Beacon*, 27 August 1964, 8; "Goldwater Endorses School Prayers," *Christian Century*, 21 October 1964, 1292.
20. William Martin, *A Prophet With Honor: The Billy Graham Story* (New York: William Morrow, 1991), 302.
21. "A Question of Values," *Christianity Today*, 20 November 1964, 44.
22. Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 93-94.
23. Martin, *A Prophet With Honor*, 354, 395-98.
24. Carl E. Bates to William Covington, Jr., 10 March 1972, Folder 1, Carl E. Bates Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.
25. *The Sword of the Lord*, 26 January 1968, 6.
26. Herschel H. Hobbs to Richard Nixon, 28 February 1969, folder 27-1, Herschel H. Hobbs Papers, Southern Baptist Library and Archives, Nashville, TN; John R. Rice, *Sword of the Lord*, 13 December 1968, 2; Noel Smith, "James Strom Thurmond: A Man of Principle," *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 2 October 1964, 1-5.
27. Wallace Henley, "The Clergy on George Wallace," *Christianity Today*, 25 October 1968, 36-37.
28. John R. Rice, *The Sword of the Lord*, 26 January 1968, 6.
29. Anthony M. Orum, "Religion and the Rise of the Radical White: The Case of Southern Wallace Support in 1968," *Social Science Quarterly*, 51 (1970), 683-86.
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31. Myra MacPherson, "Evangelical Fervor for Carter Fades," *Des Moines Register*, 27 September 1976, 4A.
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35. Robert Digitale, "A Christian in Transition: Leader of Religious Right Lobbies Less, Reflects More," *The [Santa Rosa, CA] Press Democrat*, 18 December 1988. See also Direct Mail from Christians for Reagan, [1980], folder "Reagan, Ronald," G. Archer Weniger Files, Fundamentalism File, J.S. Mack Library, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC; and Ellen M. Rosenberg, *The Southern Baptists: A Subculture in Transition* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 191.
36. William B. Hixton, Jr., *Search for the American Right Wing: An Analysis of the Social Science Record, 1955-1987* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 237.
37. See Robert C. Liebman, "Mobilizing the Moral Majority," in Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, eds., *The New Christian Right: Mobilization and Legitimation* (New York: Aldine, 1983), 61; Clyde Wilcox, *God's Warriors: The Christian Right in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 96.
38. Anson Shupe and William A. Stacey, *Born Again Politics and the Moral Majority: What Social Surveys Really Show* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 40, 90-94.
39. See Barry Hankins, *Uneasy in Babylon: Southern Baptist Conservatives and American Culture* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002), 43, 109; *Light*, November / December 1992; "Southern Baptists and the White House," *The Baptist Standard*, 31 January 1979, 6.
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41. Barry Hankins, "Principle, Perception, and Position: Why Southern Baptist Conservatives Differ From Moderates on Church-State Issues," *Journal of Church and State*, 40 (1998), 359.
42. Hankins, "Principle," 189-90. This statement is also based on an examination of issues of the Christian Life Commission's *Light* magazine from 1978 to 1990.
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44. "Reaction to Clinton's Election Victory Varies," *The Baptist Standard*, 11 November 1992, 3.
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**The Revolution Outside Her Window:  
New Light Shed on the March 1917 Russian Revolution  
from the Papers of VAD Nurse Dorothy N. Seymour**

Joyce Wood

THE AUTUMN OF 1916 saw much of the world focused on the brutal fighting along the Somme River in France and on the failing Russian offensive on the eastern front. In the United States, attention was directed towards a presidential election campaign in which a popular slogan for the leading (and ultimately successful) candidate was “He kept us out of war.” But the history of those months is more than the great events followed on a wide scale, for the accounts of individual experiences can also give texture and meaning to those momentous times. Such is the case for Dorothy Nina Seymour, who arrived that autumn in Russia and as a volunteer nurse watched the Russian Revolution unfold outside her hospital window during the following spring.

“The revolution we’ve all been expecting daily has come. . . .” So Dorothy Seymour wrote to her mother on 15 March 1917 as the mobs swirled down the street in front of the Anglo-Russian hospital where she worked in Petrograd (the former and current St. Petersburg).<sup>2</sup> How did this young woman end up in a ringside seat at one of the twentieth century’s most influential events? What light can her observations shed on the events of that difficult winter in Russia leading up to the first revolution of 1917?

One of the great pleasures of historical research is the chance discovery of gems of information when investigating something else. Such was the case with the diary and letters of Dorothy N. Seymour, whose materials were donated to the British Imperial War Museum Department of Documents in 1995. While examining her contributions to the activities of British volunteer nurses on the western front in World War I, I discovered that she had also served a six-month term of service in Petrograd.

A remarkable feature noted by many observers in August 1914 was the patriotic fervor with which large segments of the populations of the combatant nations greeted the war. In Great Britain long lines of young men crowded the recruiting stations; many young women, equally as fervent as their male relatives and friends, sought ways to express their patriotism through service. But they found few means open to them. One was to volunteer their assistance in the most socially acceptable—not to mention romanticized—field of medical service. Olive Dent reflected the frustration of many women at not being able to participate directly in the nation’s defense. Realizing that nurses would be needed, she asked, “Why not go and learn to be a

nurse while the Kitchener men were learning to be soldiers?"<sup>3</sup> An organizational structure had been already established through voluntary organizations such as the St. John's Ambulance Association and the British Red Cross Society, which had been created in 1905.<sup>4</sup> These voluntary organizations were augmented by a government-sanctioned addition, the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) that were to play, especially for women, a significant part in the British medical effort in World War I. As would be the case with later British and American female military personnel, the acronym VAD would also be used—as Seymour's letters and diary indicated—to denote an individual member of a detachment.

The formation of the Voluntary Aid Detachments was part of the implementation of the provisions of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act passed in 1907 and amended in 1909 and 1910. The act proposed the establishment of a modern home defense force. The Detachments were to be organized

to fill certain gaps in the medical service of the Territorial Force, and to afford members of the civil population an opportunity of allowing themselves and their efforts to be organized and coordinated efficiently during a war in the home territory. . . . each Detachment should be capable of being used either as a clearing hospital, a rest station, or an ambulance train personnel, as the circumstances of the moment in time of war might demand.<sup>5</sup>

Once war came in 1914, the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John, both of which had provided the initial first aid and home nursing certificate training for the VAD nurses, were put under the governance of a Joint War Committee.<sup>6</sup> Requirements for nurses set by the British Red Cross Society's headquarters at Devonshire House included the submission of references, an age range between 23 to 38 (21 to 48 later in the war), and a one month probationary period which, if satisfactory, would be followed by an invitation to sign a contract for six months service at a home hospital. VAD nurses—who were exclusively female—lived in the quarters provided, wore the specified uniform, received required inoculations as well as allowances for food, washing and travel expenses, earned leave of seven days in the first six months and fourteen days in the second six months as circumstances permitted, and lastly, were paid a salary of £20 per year, to be increased by £2. 10s. each six months until the maximum of £30 was attained. At the end of her six-month contract, a VAD nurse could apply to her matron for a transfer to another hospital, a hospital ship, or foreign service in France, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Malta, Serbia, and Russia.<sup>7</sup> The VAD nurses initially were women from comfortable backgrounds and carefully chosen to epitomize the ideal nurse, one with selfless devotion to the care

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of the patient, so that the “amateur nurse, the mere sentimentalist or even the adventuress who sees possibilities at such times” could be weeded out.<sup>8</sup> Dorothy N. Seymour certainly fit this profile, as she came from a socially prominent military family: she was the daughter of General Lord William Frederick Ernest Seymour and granddaughter of Admiral of the Fleet Sir George Francis Seymour and a Woman of the Bedchamber to Princess Christian.<sup>9</sup>

The first contingent of VAD nurses to go abroad went to France in October 1914, led by the commandant-in-chief, Dame Katherine Furse. They were quickly followed by others, among them Seymour’s detachment, which was sent in November to set up a Red Cross hospital in Wimereux. She served until the early months of 1916 in several hospitals behind the front lines, filling her letters and diaries with rich details of the nursing challenges she faced, of tensions and friendships among the staff, and of pleasures and entertainments—not all of which fit inside the rules—that provided some balance to the difficult conditions.

Her next contract sent her to Russia in September 1916. As one of the staff assigned to the Anglo-Russian Hospital in Petrograd, she left Newcastle on 9 September, reached Bergen (Norway) on 11 September, and arrived by train in Petrograd at 11:30 p.m. on 15 September. During her subsequent time in Russia, her letters to her mother and to her sister Freda tended to be more personal and detailed than her diary. Letters were subject to censorship, however, and she did write on one occasion that “There’s alot [sic!] I’d like to say but can’t.”<sup>10</sup> The thirty-one diary pages for the period from 9 September 1916 through 18 March 1917 focused more on her activities and events taking place around her. VAD personnel were not supposed to keep diaries, although many did; some circumvented the rules by writing very detailed letters and instructing their recipients to keep and compile them.<sup>11</sup>

Both the Anglo-Russian hospital and the residence quarters for the staff were located in the heart of Petrograd. The house at 12 Vladimirsky Prospect, in which the VAD nurses were quartered, provided four large rooms divided into comfortable cubicles. Her cubicle had a window, a situation with which she was quite pleased. As comfortable as the conditions were, she was surprised at how much grumbling went on among the residents.<sup>12</sup> The hospital, housed in a palace owned by Grand Duke Dimitry Seignis, was located nearby on the Nevsky Prospect, a major thoroughfare, and was “very beautiful . . . rather overpowering after Wimereux hotels.”<sup>13</sup> She noted that

all the tapestry covered up with wood. Wonderful fireplaces & ceilings[,] though & doors. We have been very busy so only have an hour off each day so I haven’t seen much but the view from the windows is lovely. One of the small rivers or canals from the Nevy

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goes just past and the Dow[ager] Emp[resses'] Palace all pink just opposite & [a]longside a lovely green carved wooden palace.<sup>14</sup>

She described the hospital staff as compatible, unlike some of the situations she had faced in France. She described the matron as a “delightful woman,” and the nurses as “a very nice lot and we are awfully well treated by them.” A doctor even asked for two VAD nurses if he was ever ordered to set up a field station.<sup>15</sup> His request was unusual because trained medical staff often held VAD nurses in low esteem. In contrast, at one of the previous hospitals in France where Seymour had worked, she described everyone so unhappy that “all Sisters fight staff nurses & staff nurses fight V.A.D.s.”<sup>16</sup> Because staff had been brought in from field hospitals for the winter and additional hospitals had not been established in other Petrograd locations, the Anglo-Russian Hospital was very overstaffed. Seymour also observed that she was “in luck” because she had been assigned to the “bandaging room” so had “always plenty to do but some of the other V.A.D.s have a deadly time.”<sup>17</sup>

The patients in the hospital were Russian, most of whom, she observed, were not “able to read or write, but all able to sing in parts which they do all day.”<sup>18</sup> They delighted in attempting to teach her to speak Russian words; and the staff enjoyed taking them out for drives, described as an “expensive amusement but some have been on the same ward 9 months as no one takes these men out or gives them teas and they love it.”<sup>19</sup> One patient from Siberia, who had never been out of the hospital since his arrival the previous March, was very excited by his opportunity to tour Petrograd, the first large city he had ever seen.<sup>20</sup>

The metropolis caught Seymour’s interest as well; it was more lovely along the Neva River than she had anticipated,<sup>21</sup> especially as she had initially found Petrograd “very smelly, very large and very unwarlike, much more so than London.”<sup>22</sup> The biggest surprise was that “the ordinary Russian seems to take very little interest in the war.”<sup>23</sup> Perhaps the ordinary Petrograder felt a sense of distance both physically and mentally from the war, and thus was less likely to exhibit the interest in politics that Seymour expected. Much of the letter and diary content of her first months in Petrograd focused on a busy social life in the British and aristocratic Russian communities. She observed:

It’s so odd there being no trace of the war here, heaps of men about, dinners and plays going on, the only thing no changes for dinner . . . but it’s the only sign except the prices of everything which are ruinous. The canals are all filled up with barges bringing wood to burn as there is no coal here. Even the railway engines burn wood.<sup>24</sup>

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Even in these glamorous social settings, however, she sensed intimations of things to come. For example, the difficulties of daily life, specifically in getting food, surfaced in a conversation with Maud and Samuel Hoare of the British legation. Seymour noted that “Luckily being Red Cross we are very well fed.”<sup>25</sup> At this juncture Seymour may also have been trying to allay her family’s concerns for her well-being and safety. Similarly, in her 4 November 1916 letter to her mother she noted that reports of an unspecified disturbing incident were exaggerated by the German press; Seymour reassured her mother of the “absolute protection” provided a hospital.<sup>26</sup>

The other portent of the future came in a comment in the 21 September letter to her sister, in which she pointed out that “[p]olitics are thrilling out here but it’s difficult to get a grasp of them at all, it’s such a glorious muddle.”<sup>27</sup> The arbitrary nature of the Russian government came close to home, however, when she commented on the Grand Duke Oxenburg’s hospital inspections that resulted in “matrons and nurses galore in prison” whenever he found conditions unsatisfactory. She reported that he had even threatened both the mayor and sanitary inspector of Petrograd with prison.<sup>28</sup> The diary also noted an increasingly contentious atmosphere—what she called “rows”—in the Russian parliament or Duma, especially over the appointees who were running government affairs while the Czar directed the war at the front. The 25 November entry discussed the removal of the highly unpopular Boris Stürmer, who had served as prime minister and foreign minister. The appointment of Alexander Protopopov as interior minister, which led to mass resignations by the other cabinet members, was noted in the diary entries of 7 and 11 January 1917.

An important aspect of the rising frustration in the Duma was that the Czar relied too much on Czarina Alexandra, whom he loved and trusted most, for the determination of national affairs. She, in turn, relied on the peasant mystic and adventurer, Gregory Rasputin, for guidance and advice. Never a popular figure in Russia on account of her German ancestry, aloofness, and isolation, Alexandra greatly alienated Russian public opinion by her growing dependence on Rasputin. We now know that her devotion to her family, personal health problems, and the all-consuming anxiety she suffered due to her only son and youngest child Alexei’s hemophilia made her vulnerable to the manipulative wiles of Rasputin. His advice went far beyond the Czarevich’s health and resulted in his influence in such matters as political appointments and military decisions at the front. Lurid rumors flew around, and many members of the nobility saw in Rasputin the potential demise of imperial Russia. Such sentiments eventually led to a conspiracy to eliminate him.

Alexandra’s aloofness, isolation, and imperious manner in the face of rising dissatisfaction and declining confidence in the government could be seen in

Seymour's diary entries. Leading members of the court attempted to break through her isolation in the hope that if she truly understood the situation, she would then embrace changes that would head off the impending crisis. Seymour describes one such attempt in a 16 December entry:

“Russian princes & Vassiliuoff went to Czarina told her facts of case—[the] result[: they are] removed from Petrograd till end of war then to leave Russia. Empress receives no one.”<sup>29</sup>

Another instance of the Czarina's isolation appeared in Seymour's 4 November letter to her mother wherein she discussed a visit arranged for her to see the Czar's country home, Tsarkoe Selo. She described it as

the most wonderful place I've ever seen, positively made one gasp with the beauty of it . . . as very few are allowed in. The whole thing is looked after by the Tsar's special regiment of huge Cosacks and they were hanging about guarding every stone. . . .<sup>30</sup>

In February 1917 Seymour returned to the palace, this time for lunch as a guest of the Czarina. She and Lady Sybil Grey were taken to Tsarkoe Selo in great state. Seymour sketched the imperial footman's elaborate hat in the diary. They lunched with two of the Czarina's ladies-in-waiting, Baroness Sophie Buxhoeveden and Countess Anastasia Henrikov. The meal was followed by a visit with the Czarina and her daughter, Grand Duchess Olga, which lasted nearly two hours. The Czarina wore “purple velvet, sable and amethysts;” Seymour thought her “lovely, very human & sense of humour, [with] desperately sad eyes, haunted, whole atmosphere heavy with tragedy.” Grand Duchess Olga was wearing “nurse[']s clothes, pretty eyes, rest of face nice little round thing, but very pleasant & unformal.” She went on to observe that Olga “[i]s evidently a pacifist, & the war & its horrors on her nerves.” The sense of foreboding Seymour felt in that palace made her feel that she could “believe anything of Rasputin's influence there.”<sup>31</sup>

This pleasant social occasion contrasted with the next two diary entries. The 10 February entry described the Czarina's visit to Novgorod the previous week, where she was met by the governor with full ceremony. When Alexandra demanded to see a “famous but disreputable palmist” who was unknown to the governor, the result was what Seymour called a “dreadful scene.” The governor was replaced the next day.<sup>32</sup> On 18 February Seymour reported an incident that occurred on 6 January: one of the Czar's personal guards had fired twice at the Czarina, but the bullets only grazed her shoulder. He was “supposed to have shot himself” and “his body was carried out of the palace within an hour.”<sup>33</sup>

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Rasputin first appeared in the diary on 1 December 1916, when Seymour noted that he visited the Czar's headquarters at the front. Her next entry came on 30 December, the day of his murder by a group of conspirators, two of whom came to her hospital for treatment that evening. Grand Duke Dimitri Pavlovich's arm was wounded in the assassination and in a sling, while Prince Felix Yussoufov had a "hurt throat." The diary entries updated the details about the conspiracy and murder as she learned them, information that is now well-known. Clearly Seymour received a relatively accurate account quite close to the event.<sup>34</sup> She also provided several interesting, albeit cryptic, details. The first was the presence of Grand Duke Dimitri under house arrest "here. Telephone tapped, all here watched."<sup>35</sup> Her diary entries for 6 and 14 January noted both Dimitri's departure from his palace (where he was under arrest) at 2 A.M. for the Caucasus and his arrival there "much knocked about." Of the ten grand dukes expelled as a result of the conspiracy, she reported, Archduke Nicholas Michaelovich was exiled to the only one of his six estates that had no house. Archduchess Marie Pavlova was banished to the countryside, and her sons, Andrei and Boris, were "sent to different ends of Russia." The other two of the foursome that actually carried out the murder, Grand Duke Constantin and V. M. Puriskevitch (a deputy of the Duma), were "sent into the frontline trenches."<sup>36</sup> The royal family and the secret police did not stop there. Seymour reported that the metropolitan of Petrograd, who had been "forced to take burial service" for Rasputin's secret, early morning funeral ceremony, was sent to a monastery "to learn to hold his tongue."<sup>37</sup>

Seymour wanted very much to go to Moscow while she was in Russia, and her visit there was reported in diary entries for 21 and 22 February. Beginning with these entries, greater prominence is given to the rapid acceleration in the deterioration of conditions as well as to the exploding frustrations of the Russian people. The entries on those dates highlight two features that were to become critical in the unfolding events of the coming revolution. First, she described the electoral success of the Progressive Bloc, which so distressed Interior Minister Protopopov that he ordered new elections for the Duma. When even more Bloc deputies were elected, Protopopov declared the vote void. The Progressive Bloc, formed in 1915, brought together a variety of different political groups in the interest of bringing more democratic reform to Russia, such as according to the Duma the prerogative of confirming Czarist appointments. By early 1917 this group had a significant presence in the Duma.<sup>38</sup> The other critical issue noted in the diary, one that helped to touch off the March revolution, concerned the shortages of necessities such as fuel and, especially, food. Seymour observed:

Trains all stopt [sic!] for fortnight to bring food into Moscow & Petrograd as there is none, but after stopping trains and preparing foods they found that all the wagons were at the front so food can't get in! People standing all night in streets waiting to get into food shops. . . . Train of coal 56 trucks long started for Petrograd from Siberia, each station on way unloaded a truck & engine arrived at Petrograd alone.<sup>39</sup>

Also while in Moscow, Seymour heard that the streets of Petrograd were filled with people. With the re-opening of the Duma, tensions escalated as the three regiments of guards stationed in the city were "sent away as they were too openly progressive." Of the three cavalry units sent to replace them, two refused to go and the third "proved so disloyal" that it also was sent away. These troops were replaced by Cossacks; according to posted notices, they "could fire at any crowd of people they meet to disperse them. Also machine guns ready."<sup>40</sup>

When Seymour returned to Petrograd after her visit to Moscow, she found the streets filled with police and Cossacks; twenty-five soldiers were on guard in the hospital. At this time most of her pertinent observations came largely from her diary; only two letters from these days are available. The 9 March diary entry described how Cossacks on horseback moved through the street crowds to break them up but refused to fire on them when ordered to do so. Seymour described an interesting synergy developing between the Cossacks and the crowds, as the former now galloped back and forth, waving their hats to the crowd's cheers. She also reported that the "Minister of Interior says that there is no possibility of getting bread into Petrograd & this is the beginning of the end. [General Alexei] Brusilov [the commander of the Eighth army at the front] has telegraph[ed] to Czar that he has no bread for army." Meanwhile the hospital had received orders to evacuate, but events accelerated so quickly that the orders were never carried out.<sup>41</sup>

The revolutionary activity reached a peak between 10 and 12 March. The streets were initially quiet on the morning of 10 March, she observed, lined with soldiers and police. Then the surging crowds appeared, swelled by striking workers from the mills at Ladaga and other places around Petrograd. It was later estimated that they numbered circa 300,000 people.<sup>42</sup> Tension mounted on Nevsky Prospect. When the Cossacks were ordered to chase the crowd, the "people knelt in front of front line of cossacks imploring [them] not to move & they didn't." By the afternoon, however, violence occurred when a machine gun fired on the crowd from the Kazan Cathedral. The hail of bullets

killed a good many & one man standing on Fontanka Bridge far from crowd. Hearse & horse ambulance both very antediluvian

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[sic!] wander up and down Nevsky ready to remove all bits—One of the heads of police killed by bomb, several others killed. 17 trams overturned and smashed—. . .<sup>43</sup>

The violence became more widespread the next day (11 March) as the infantry fired on the crowds on Nevsky Prospect; this only scattered the demonstrators briefly before they returned. The Cossacks began turning on the police when the latter tried to get them to fire on the crowd. In one case, a Cossack officer beheaded a police officer with his sword.<sup>44</sup>

On 12 March Seymour noted that merely the section of Nevsky Prospect where the hospital was located had 200 killed and wounded, some of whom were treated in the facility. The Czar prorogued the Duma and dismissed Protopopov from office, but it was “too late.” Four regiments of guards had already killed their officers and gone over to the crowds. The soldiers who hitherto had guarded the hospital joined them. Fighting continued through the day, as the Courts of Justice were set ablaze and trucks full of revolutionaries waving swords passed by; one truck stopped and distributed ammunition outside the hospital. Seymour was part of a group of five persons who had a very tense nighttime return to their quarters on Vladimirsky Prospect; she and her companions came “under rather heavy fire from police in windows above armed with revolvers.”<sup>45</sup> The rest of the staff could not get out of the hospital that night, a time that she described as “lively.” Yelling mobs tried unsuccessfully to get into both the hospital and staff quarters. Meanwhile, the revolutionaries in the Duma were trying to form a government; they “published proclamations to try & get people to leave off firing in streets & go home—. . .”<sup>46</sup>

The diary entry for 13 March described continued shooting in the streets as bands of soldiers and revolutionaries fired “into air or otherwise as best amuses them . . . shooting at every thing and every body.” Looting had broken out around the city, especially after the mob accidentally opened a prison and “let out criminals who then made for treasury & did pretty good amount of robbing.” All the staff at the Vladimirsky residence came to stay at the hospital, which was searched by the revolutionaries later in the day. In the evening Seymour reported shots fired into the hospital as machine guns dueled outside.<sup>47</sup> The unrest continued on 14 March as groups of “over adequately armed . . . soldiers & people” passed with prisoners in their midst, “fur coated gentlemen very hustled. 100’s of sailors with red flags passed.” Wounded persons continued to be treated at the hospital, some of them “drunk brandishing swords.” Shops nearby were looted on 15 March and the police station set on fire, with the “Head man” tied up and thrown on the fire. Parties of armed men came by. One group demanded that they lower the Russian imperial flag “as it was no longer their flag.” A second group wanted

“25 suits of clothes,” and when refused, the officer “brandished” his sword and said, “It is not a request, it’s an *order!*!” The hospital was also used as a speaking venue by a deputy of the Duma who took the opportunity to announce the plans under discussion for changes, since the Czar had now accepted the new government.<sup>48</sup> Seymour’s letter to her mother dated 15 March gave these details of the previous wild night:

We had one or two scary moments, one last night at the Vladimirsky . . . when a drunken mob spent the night in the kitchen and every soul had a rifle or a revolver which he let off at intervals. It was like a shilling shocker [i.e., cheap thriller novel] night and what gave me fits was that the orderly of our ward thought he’d see if I was safe in the middle of the night, so came and looked into my cubicle, and I could only see a soldier in uniform and thought it was one of the mob with a revolver.<sup>49</sup>

Seymour’s diary entries for these days also noted that newspapers were printed three times a day and distributed by trucks; as copies were thrown down, “everyone rushes [knocking] each other over to get them.” The papers announced new members of the government and gave “fresh orders for keeping order.”<sup>50</sup>

The Duma had its hands full in creating a new government as the Czarist government collapsed. On 16 March the Czar abdicated in favor of a regency for his son Alexei, and Seymour noted the popular reaction as “Uproar!!! House of Romanov not wanted.”<sup>51</sup> In her 15 March letter to her mother she observed that “[t]he educated revolutionists want one thing and the mob another.”<sup>52</sup> In the 16 March diary entry she remarked that the Czar had abdicated for Alexei as well, and that the heir next in line, Grand Duke Michael, had also abdicated. For her this meant “[t]he whole of the dynasty & Czar has asked that the whole of Russia should be allowed the choice of what they want instead.” The next day she reported that the Czar had turned over his crown; her last diary entry in Russia, dated 18 March, noted that the “Czarist flag [was] pulled down Red flag hoisted with ceremony. . . .” Rumor had it that “the [imperial] family [is] to go to Denmark almost at once.” Unfortunately for Nicholas, Alexandra, and their children, that was not to occur.<sup>53</sup>

On the more personal side, Seymour reported the tragicomical experience of an acquaintance she only identifies as “Flavell,” who arrived from the front in the midst of all this upheaval without a clue as to what was going on.

Nothing known [by him] at all even at Kiev. [He] Arrived at station, couldn’t make out what was up, but as nothing [was there]

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to take him, started to walk & was faced by student with revolver. Their languages didn't fit but luckily student grasped he was Eng., so more mystified than ever he came on.<sup>54</sup>

Another of Seymour's observations concerned the food shortages in the city as the revolution raged in the streets. On 15 March she stated that "[f]ood getting low & no way of getting [more?]. Everyone at Hotel Europe without food till yesterday." Two days later she bluntly wrote, "no food for 24 hours—very unpleasant."<sup>55</sup>

Apparently things had quieted down sufficiently on 16 March so that she was able to walk around the area to view the damage. She saw that food shops were open with soldiers as "shopmen and students at pay desks." Observing the places that were looted and burned, she noted "[Nineteen?] houses all burnt with care, houses on each side nicely watered to prevent fire spreading." By 17 March, she reported "All quiet." Another change from the previous days' patterns was seen when yet another group of "[s]tudents & soldiers armed to the teeth arrived with load of wine as a gift. All wine shops and hotels have been searched & contents divided among hospitals." On the streets, "everyone wears a red ribbon."<sup>56</sup> Her last letter from Russia (20 March) summarized conditions:

Things are fairly quiet here for the moment. They say there are rows in the outside towns now, and they are still a little nervous here, as neither the workmen nor the soldiers will go back to their job and parade the streets all day long and how they are to be made to go, no one can see. Regiments of cossacks with red banners, singing as they go, wander about the Nevsky and the infantry don't even keep together.<sup>57</sup>

The conditions in Petrograd and the fact that her six-month contract was about up both impelled Seymour to begin the process of securing passage home. On 20 March, her diary described the crisis she faced when she could not get back her passport, which had disappeared at the police station. The information for this time period is sketchy, so it is unclear as to whether or not she finally did get her passport. In any event, on 24 March she got a seat on a train to Bergen, but had to leave her luggage behind. From Bergen, she endured a dangerous and uncomfortable voyage on the *HMS Vulture* across the North Sea to Aberdeen.<sup>58</sup>

After her return to England, there was a break in the letters and diary until July 1917, when she was stationed at an officers' hospital in Essex. In February 1918 she returned to France and served in several administrative positions; she ended the war as the VAD controller of a motor convoy unit. She remained in France after

the end of the war, wrapped up the duties of the convoy, and returned home on 13 May 1919. Later that year she married General Sir Henry Jackson and launched a new phase in her life.<sup>59</sup>

What we have in Seymour's diary and letters is a fairly neutral account of the events of the first revolution in Russia in 1917. Clearly herself a member of the upper classes, and socially familiar with a number of the major historical figures of the time, she did not seem particularly to sympathize with the plight of the Russian aristocracy. At the same time, she reported what she saw of the suffering of the ordinary Russian people with whom she had contact—albeit limited—and described such encounters with the same clear-eyed balance that she used in her discussion of the Russian aristocracy. An awareness of the importance and value of preserving her experiences for future generations was also evident in both the diary and letters. For example, when telling her mother that the Czarina had sent her an invitation, Seymour wrote:

It will be interesting, as she [is] busy making history that will count large in the future & I want to see for myself what she is like, it will be too annoying if they start a revolution before I have time to get down to see her.<sup>60</sup>

Although Seymour had "society connections" and considerable experience from her service in France during 1915–16, her letters and diary clearly show the perspective of a person for whom the Russian assignment was a new and exciting adventure. These texts exhibit not only a combination of fascination with and acceptance of the culture and existing conditions in which she found herself, but also afford the glimpse of an empathetic person with concerns about family, friends, and favorite animals at home.<sup>61</sup> In contrast to the well-known memoirs of important eyewitnesses and participants in the Russian Revolutions, such as Maurice Paléologue (the French ambassador in Russia), V.V. Shulgin (a member of the Duma), or Leon Trotsky (a Bolshevik revolutionary leader), her letters and diary supply the viewpoint of an ordinary person. In the midst of doing her job she had the opportunity to watch the unfolding events that brought to an end one major epoch in Russian history—the Romanov empire—and launched what became one of the twentieth century's great, and ultimately disappointing, experiments in totalitarian social and political reform under the Soviet system. While Seymour's accounts support what is generally known today about the Russian Revolution of March 1917, the reader of her diary and letters encounters the intimate personal voice of an eyewitness caught momentarily in the maelstrom of change.

## NOTES

1. Dorothy Nina Seymour, letter to mother, 15 March 1917, "Miss D.N. Seymour," Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents 95/28/1 (hereafter cited as: Seymour, letter...)
2. Czar Nicholas II changed the name of the capital city from the German St. Petersburg to the Slavic Petrograd on 31 August 1914 as part of the patriotic fervor that accompanied the onset of World War I. See Robert K. Massie, *Nicholas and Alexandra* (New York: Laurel/Dell, 1967), 281 (hereafter cited as: Massie).
3. Olive Dent, *A V.A.D. in France* (London: Grant Richards Ltd., 1917), 15.
4. The British Order of St. John of Jerusalem drew its inspiration from the medieval religious military order of the Hospital of St. John in Jerusalem. By 1900 it was composed of several organizations, including the St. John Ambulance Association and St. John Ambulance Brigade. The British Red Cross Society was one of the national societies founded as part of the International Red Cross created by the Geneva Convention of 1864. See Hilary St. George Saunders, *The Red Cross and the White: A short history of the joint war organization of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem during the war 1939–1945* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1949), 1–5.
5. *Reports by the Joint War Committee and the Joint War Finance Committee of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England on Voluntary Aid rendered to the Sick and Wounded at Home and Abroad and to the British Prisoners of War, 1914–1919, with Appendices* (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1921), Appendix VI, 692 (hereafter cited as: *Reports*). See also Beryl Oliver, *The British Red Cross in Action* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 207.
6. *Reports*, 1-2.
7. *Reports*, 192-3, 197; Mary Frances Billington, *The Red Cross in War: Woman's Part in the Relief of Suffering*, *Daily Telegraph War Books* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), 55. Trained nurses received a salary of £40 per year. A General Services Section was also created in 1915 to provide a wide variety of other services besides nursing; see *Reports*, 198.
8. Billington, *The Red Cross in War*, 55. The Red Cross in other countries faced this same issue as well. Margaret H. Darrow describes the "true" nurse" in the French Red Cross as a "secularized and trained" nun; the "false" nurse" as the society lady, "fashionable . . . ignorant and independent." See Margaret H. Darrow, "French Volunteer Nursing and the Myth of War Experience in World War I," *American Historical Review* 101 (1996), 94-95.
9. "The First World War Papers of Miss D.N. Seymour," Imperial War Museum 95/28/1, introduction. Seymour's parents, General Lord William Frederick Ernest Seymour (1838-1915) and Hon. Eva Caroline Douglas-Pennant (1852-1934), were married in 1871. See "General Lord William Frederick Ernest Seymour," *Our Family History: thePeerage.com, A genealogical survey of the peerage of Britain as well as the royal families of Europe*, Darryl Lundy, compiler, accessed 28 June 2004, <http://www.thepeerage.com/p4595.htm> (hereafter cited as "thePeerage.com"). Princess Christian (1846-1923) was the married title of Princess Helena, a daughter of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, and wife of Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein. "Princess Helena, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein," *Fact Index*, accessed 29 June 2004, <http://www.fact-index.com/p/pr>.
10. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar). The Julian calendar was in use in Russia until the Bolshevik government switched to

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the Gregorian calendar on February 1/14, 1918. After September 1916 Seymour uses the Gregorian calendar, which is the practice followed in the text of this study.

11. Seymour's diary pages are 3 1/2 inches long and 2 3/4 inches wide; they are written on both sides in increasingly cramped script as space ran out, with ink that bled through the pages. VAD nurse Alice Mackinnon recalled instructions against taking pictures or keeping a diary; see typescript memoirs, Women, Liddle Collection, Brotherton Library, University of Leeds. Canadian VAD nurse Marjorie Starr typed up her letters as a diary; see 5 October 1915, typescript diary, Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents 81/12/1.
12. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar); letter, typescript transcript, Oct. 24 [1916].
13. Seymour, typescript transcript letter, 3 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 16 September in the Gregorian calendar).
14. Seymour, letter to Freda, 21 September [1916] (Gregorian calendar, 8 September in the Julian calendar). Seymour's sister's full name was Mary Freda; see "thePeerage.com."
15. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar), and letter, typescript transcript, 24 October [1916].
16. Dorothy Nina Seymour, Diary, 12 December 1915, "Miss D.N. Seymour," Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents 95/28/1 (hereafter cited as Seymour, Diary).
17. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar), and letters, typescript transcript, 24 October and 4 November [1916]; Seymour, Diary, 16 September 1916. All diary entries are according to the Gregorian calendar.
18. Seymour, letter to Freda, 21 September [1916] (Gregorian calendar, 8 September in the Julian calendar).
19. Ibid., and Seymour, letter, typescript transcript, 14 October [1916].
20. Seymour, letter to mother, 4 November [1916].
21. Seymour, letter to Freda, 21 September [1916] (Gregorian calendar, 8 September in the Julian calendar).
22. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September [1916] (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar).
23. Ibid. In a 4 November letter, she again tells her mother, "No Russian ever mentions the war, it is so odd." Massie (362) comments on the "blithe indifference to the war" in Petrograd society in the last months of 1916.
24. Seymour, letter to mother, 22 September [1916]. It is unclear whether this is her last use of the Julian calendar before switching exclusively to the Gregorian calendar, or if the letter was written over a period of time. If the 22 September entry is according to the Julian calendar, then the date in the Gregorian calendar is 4 October. Only portions of this letter are available. The next letter is dated 14 October.
25. Seymour, letter to Freda, 21 September [1916] (Gregorian calendar, 8 September in the Julian calendar).

26. Seymour, letter to mother, 4 November [1916]. Seymour gives no further details. However, Maurice Paléologue, French ambassador to Russia, reports a 5 November 1916 conversation with a General identified only as "W" in which the latter expressed much concern about the reliability of the Petrograd garrison after a mutiny occurred a week earlier. See *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, translated by F.A. Holt (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925) volume III, chapter III, in *EuroDocs: Primary Historical Documents from Western Europe*, Richard Hacken, ed., (2004), [www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/memoir/FrAmbRus/pal3-03.htm](http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/memoir/FrAmbRus/pal3-03.htm). Massie (357) describes an incident in October 1916 in Petrograd in which two infantry regiments sent to disperse striking workers shot at police instead and were suppressed by four regiments of Cossacks.
27. Seymour, letter to Freda, 21 September [1916] (Gregorian calendar; 8 September in the Gregorian calendar).
28. Seymour, Diary, 16 December 1916.
29. Perhaps Seymour referred here to Father Alexander Vassiliev, Court Chaplain; Seymour, Diary, 16 December 1916. Massie (387-88) describes such a confrontation between the Czarina and Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich.
30. Seymour, letter to mother, 4 November [1916].
31. Seymour, Diary, typescript transcript of diary, 4 February 1917. Massie (386) notes British visitor Sir Henry Wilson's impression of an "air of sadness and resignation" on the part of the Czarina.
32. His replacement was the nephew of Boris Stürmer, the former Foreign Minister. The nephew had lost his position as a governor when the Germans invaded Poland and needed a source of income. Seymour, Diary, 10 February 1917.
33. Seymour, Diary, 18 February 1917.
34. Seymour, Diary, 30 December 1916, and 1, 2, 7, 14, 15, 21 January 1917. The one aspect of the murder not mentioned in the Diary was the use of poison. For further information on Rasputin's death, see Massie, 368-90, and Rene Fulop-Miller, *Rasputin: The Holy Devil* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1962), 362-68. Also, Paléologue's entries for 30 December 1916, and 6 and 8 January 1917 give much detail on the assassination; see *Memoirs*, volume III, chapter V.
35. Seymour, Diary, 2 January 1917. Seymour does not give further details. However, Maurice Paléologue on 1 January 1917 noted that the Grand Duke Dimitri was "confined under police observation to his palace on the Nevsky Prospekt." On 8 January he reported that Grand Duke Dimitri was sent to Kasvin in Persia; see *Memoirs*, volume III, chapter V.
36. Seymour, Diary, 2, 6, 14, 15, 21 January 1917. Massie notes (388-89) that Marie Pavlova, the widow of the Czar's eldest uncle, Grand Duke Vladimir, greatly resented Alexandra. Also, he adds (380) that Puriskevich went free because he was a deputy of the Duma.
37. Seymour, Diary, 7 and 15 January 1917. Here she may have been in error. Both Fulop-Miller (*Rasputin*, 366) and Paléologue (5 January 1917 entry, *Memoirs*, volume III chapter V) identify the Court Chaplain, Father Vassiliev, as the one conducting Rasputin's burial service. Metropolitan Pitirim of Petrograd held the highest position in the Russian Orthodox Church as a result of Rasputin's influence and was considered, according to Massie (348), as "Rasputin's protégé." See also Paléologue's comments on Pitirim in the 8 January 1916 entry in *Memoirs*, volume II, chapter V.

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38. V.V. Shulgin, *The Years: Memoirs of a Member of the Russian Duma, 1906–1917*, tr. Tanya Davis (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1984), 242–43; and Georg von Rauch, *A History of Soviet Russia*, 5th ed., tr. Peter and Annette Jacobsohn (New York: Praeger, 1967), 36.
  39. Seymour, Diary, 22 February 1917.
  40. Ibid. In the diary the date 23 February accompanies this entry but is marked out.
  41. Seymour, Diary, 9 March 1917. She does not mention the women’s march on 8 March, International Women’s Day, which is often considered the first day of the revolution. Michael J. Lyons, *World War I: A Short History*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 2000), 213.
  42. Seymour, Diary, 10, 11 and 12 March 1917; Lyons, *World War I*, 213.
  43. Seymour, Diary, 10 March 1917.
  44. Ibid., 11 March 1917.
  45. Ibid., 12 March 1917.
  46. Ibid.
  47. Ibid., 13 and 17 March 1917.
  48. Ibid., 14, 15 and 16 March 1917.
  49. Seymour, letter to mother, 15 March [1917].
  50. Seymour, Diary, March 14, 15 and 16, 1917.
  51. Ibid. On March 15 she recorded that four regiments had been sent from the front to re-establish order, but once they had arrived, they had killed their officers and joined the “mob.” Five thousand police from the Baltic provinces arrived at Finland Station in the evening to find that the “Whole of Petrograd rushed to meet them - fighting going on.”
  52. Seymour, letter to mother, 15 March [1917].
  53. Seymour, Diary, 14, 16, 17 and 18 March 1917.
  54. Ibid., 16 March 1917.
  55. Ibid., 14 March 1917; typescript transcript of diary, 17 March 1917.
  56. Seymour, Diary, 16 and 17 March 1917.
  57. Seymour, typescript transcript of letter, 20 March [1917].
  58. Seymour, Diary, typescript transcript, 20 and 24 March 1917; “The First World War Papers of Miss D.N. Seymour,” Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents 95/28/1, introduction.
  59. Seymour, Diary, typescript transcript, 1918–1919, and “The First World War Papers of Miss D.N. Seymour,” Imperial War Museum, Department of Documents 95/28/1, introduction.
  60. Seymour, letter to mother, 1 December [1916].
  61. Seymour, letter to mother, 6 September (Julian calendar, 19 September in the Gregorian calendar), and 1 December [1916].

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## A Notice to Contributors Concerning Style

The editorial committee invites submission of manuscripts from authors of papers presented at the annual meeting. On the recommendation of reviewers and editors, manuscripts may be published in *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association*.

In general, manuscripts should not exceed 4500 words (about eighteen double-spaced pages) including endnotes. As soon as possible after the annual meeting, authors should submit two paper copies and one electronic copy to the editor(s) for review. The electronic copy must be submitted on a PC-compatible diskette written in MS Word for Windows or WordPerfect for Windows. Email attachments are acceptable, but in any event, two paper copies must be submitted. The electronic text should be flush left and double-spaced, with as little special formatting as possible. Do not paginate the electronic version of the paper. All copies should use 12-point type in the Times New Roman font. Do not include a title page, but instead place your name and title at the top of the first page. Please use margins of one inch throughout your paper and space only once between sentences. Indent five spaces without quotation marks all quotations five or more lines in length.

Documentation should be provided in endnotes, not at the foot of each page. At the end of the text of your paper double-space, then type the word "NOTES" centered between the margins. List endnotes in Arabic numerical sequence, each number followed by a period and space, and then the text of the endnote. Endnotes should be flush left and single-spaced. If your word-processing program demands the raised footnote numeral, it will be acceptable. Foreign words and titles of books or journals should be italicized. For the rest, *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association* adheres in matters of general usage to the fourteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.



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**Minutes of the Seventy-fourth Annual Meeting**  
6 March 2004

The South Carolina Historical Association held its seventy-fourth annual meeting on Saturday, 6 March 2004 at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. Registration was conducted in the Alumni Building from 8:30 A.M. until 9:30 A.M., with coffee and freshly baked goodies available in Room 107. Concurrent sessions began at 9:30 A.M.

**Session I** (9:30 – 10:45 A.M.)

**A. Aspects of the Sectional Conflict, 1830–1860** (*Alumni Building 108*)

“Sam Houston, Tennessean,” Joseph T. Stukes (Francis Marion University); “Printing Press Affray: The Charles Ball Controversy,” Dino L. Bryant (Texas Tech University); Commenter: Thomas M. Downey (University of South Carolina, Columbia)

**B. Southern Undergraduate Culture during the Interwar Years** (*Alumni Building 109*)

“‘Fighting Whiskey and Immorality’ at Auburn: Jazz Age Youth Culture and Southern Campus Life during the 1920s,” L. Andrew Doyle (Winthrop University); “The Maturation of the Winthrop Woman: Social and Cultural Changes during the Interwar Years,” Leslee Elliott (Winthrop University); Commenter: Melissa Walker (Converse College)

**C. Artists & Entrepreneurs in Mid-Twentieth Century South Carolina** (*Alumni Building 110*)

“Documenting Displacement: Jack Delano and the Santee-Cooper Landscape,” T. Robert Hart (Furman University); “Robert Reynolds (Bob) Jones, Sr.: Entrepreneur,” James A. Dunlap, III (University of South Carolina Upstate); “Built by the Border: *South of the Border* and *Border Business, 1950–1965*,” Laura E. Koser (University of South Carolina, Columbia); Commenter: Eldred E. Prince, Jr. (Coastal Carolina University)

**D. Controversies in Sixteenth-Century England and Twentieth-Century Africa** (*Alumni Building 111*)

“Conflicts and the Courts: Common Law, Star Chamber, and Coroners’ Inquests in Early Modern England,” Carol Loar (University of South Carolina Upstate); “Scottish Missionaries and the Female Circumcision Controversy in Kenya, 1900–1930,” Kenneth N. Mufuka (Lander University); Commenter: Linda Hayner (Bob Jones University)

**Break** (10:45 – 11:00 A.M.)

**Session 2** (11:00 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.)

**A. Life in Colonial and Early National South Carolina** (*Alumni Building 108*)

“Yellow Fever in the South: Matthew Irvine’s Treatise on the Dreaded Disease,” Jane M. Marion (Converse College); Commenter: Paul Horne (SC Education Oversight Committee)

**B. Two Views of Antebellum and Civil War South Carolina** (*Alumni Building 109*)

“Literature, Philosophy, and a Turkish Spy: A Review of Early-Nineteenth Century Circulations Records of the Charleston Library Society,” Jane Aldrich (College of Charleston); “Valley Forge Was Paradise Compared To It’: A Community Study of Columbia’s Civil War Prison Camps,” John Christiansen (University of South Carolina, Columbia); Commenter: W. Eric Emerson (South Carolina Historical Society)

**C. The Rise of the Republican Party in the Late-Twentieth Century** (*Alumni Building 110*)

“General William C. Westmoreland’s Bid for Governor as a Republican: Could He Be Another ‘Eisenhower’ and Change the Political Status Quo in South Carolina?,” Jason R. Kirby (University of South Carolina, Columbia); “The Cross and the Elephant: Southern White Evangelicals’ Commitment to the Republican Party, 1960–1994,” Daniel K. Williams (Brown University); “Into the Maw of Dixie: The Freedom Rides, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Race in South Carolina,” Derek Charles Catsam (Minnesota State University, Mankato); Commenter: Jack Bass (College of Charleston)

**D. War and Revolution in the Early-Twentieth Century** (*Alumni Building 111*)

“Pen and Sword: The Experience of John S. Reynolds, Jr., in the Great War, 1917–1918,” Elizabeth Cassidy West (University of South Carolina Archives); “There’s A Revolution Out My Window! New Light Shed on the 1917 Russian Revolution from the Papers of VAD Dorothy Seymour,” Joyce Wood (Anderson College); Commenter: Robert B. McCormick (University of South Carolina Upstate)

**Break** (12:15 – 12:30 P.M.)

**Luncheon, annual business meeting, and keynote address** (12:30 – 2:00 P.M.)

*Red Room, Dixon-McKenzie Dining Common*

Following a delicious buffet luncheon prepared by the Bob Jones University dining service, SCHA President Tracy Power called the meeting to order at 1:22 P.M. Tracy welcomed all members and guests, and extended thanks to all who had worked to plan the annual meeting. Special thanks were extended to Bob Jones University for hosting us this year, and to Linda Hayner for making all local arrangements. Tracy also thanked those who presented papers and who served as commenters in the sessions, and the SCHA Executive Board members for the work they do throughout

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the year. He reminded members of the two concurrent sessions after today's luncheon and also urged everyone to visit the museum and gallery.

**Officers' reports**

**Secretary**—Ron Cox thanked the members for their encouraging comments regarding the Newsletter and repeated his yearly appeal for members to continue to submit information for inclusion.

**Treasurer's Report** – Rodger Stroup discussed the SCHA's finances, noting that a few paper copies were available on each table. The Association finished the last year with deficit of \$700, which we should make up this year due to a decrease in the cost of the *Proceedings* and the raising of annual membership dues. The best way to ensure financial solvency, however, is to increase membership, and Rodger urged all present to encourage colleagues to join the Association. Generally, our savings account balances unchanged, although not much is being earned in the way of interest. Regarding the *Newsletter*, if anyone is not receiving it electronically, please let Rodger know.

**Announcements**

Tracy reminded everyone that the Association's seventy-fifth Annual Meeting will be Saturday, 5 March 2005 at SC Archives & History Center in Columbia.

**Keynote speaker**

Tracy introduced the keynote speaker, Debbie Spear (Historic Greenville Foundation) who spoke about the plans for the History Museum of Upcountry South Carolina. Noting that the project is still a "museum in the making," Ms. Spear discussed the philosophy of the museum, where the project now stands, and its major challenges. The museum's goal is to make history available and so enticing that all will be able to participate in conversation and thought about who we are, who we've been, and why. The museum will provide a forum for different ideas to meet and be discussed.

**Additional business**

Following the keynote address, President Tracy Power called on Secretary Ron Cox to present the report of the Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee reported that Sam Thomas, this past year's Vice President, has resigned his position on the Executive Board and will not serve as President for the coming year. Andy Myers (University of South Carolina Upstate) has agreed to accept nomination to serve as a new at-large member of the Board.

The Nominating Committee recommended and nominated the following slate of officers for 2004–2005:

*President*—Tracy Power (SC Department of Archives & History)

*Vice President*—Robin Copp (South Caroliniana Library, USC Columbia)

*Secretary*—Ron Cox (USC Lancaster)

*Treasurer*—Rodger Stroup (SC Department of Archives & History)

*At-Large members:*

Bernard Powers (College of Charleston)

Wink Prince (Coastal Carolina University)

Andy Myers (USC Upstate)

*Co-editors for the Proceedings*

Steve Lowe (USC Extended Graduate Campus)

Robert Figueira (Lander University)

No additional nominations were received from the floor and the slate of officers was approved unanimously.

Tracy then noted that the Association was especially pleased to have Dr. Keith Wagner from Newberry College here with us today. A longtime member of the Association, Dr. Wagner has been at Newberry since 1972 and is an authority on nineteenth-century economic US history, with a special interest in railroad history. The SCHA joins his colleagues at Newberry in recognizing his contributions to the profession and to higher education in SC for more than three decades.

#### **New business**

Fritz Hamer (SC Museum) asked if there were any way as an organization that we can send something to USC President Sorensen regarding our support of McKissick Museum. On behalf of the SCHA, Tracy will send to President Sorensen a letter of support of McKissick's research and exhibits.

With no additional business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 2 P.M.

#### **Self-guided tours of museum and gallery (2:45 – 5:00 P.M.)**

##### **Session 3 (2:30 – 4:00 P.M.)**

##### **A. South Carolina Culture & Society in the Cold War Era (*Alumni Building 108*)**

“When France Was Appreciated: The Friendship and Merci Trains and South Carolinians, 1948–1950,” Fritz Hamer (South Carolina State Museum); “Balancing Segregation and Education: The Role of the Gressette Committee,” Rebekah Dobrasko (University of South Carolina, Columbia); Commenter: Shirley A. Hickson (North Greenville College)

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**B. Case Studies in Understanding the Development of Civil War Memory in South Carolina** (*Alumni Building 110*)

“Rewriting History: The Evolution of Memory and the Burning of Columbia,” Elizabeth Coker (University of South Carolina, Columbia); “Phoenix Rising: The Progression of Civil War Monuments in South Carolina from the Private to the Public Sphere,” Kristina K. Dunn (University of South Carolina, Columbia); “The ‘Reenactment’ of the Battle of Aiken: Its History, Its Participants, Its Audience, Its Meaning,” James O. Farmer (University of South Carolina, Aiken); Commenter: Rodger E. Stroup (SC Department of Archives & History)

Respectfully submitted,

M. Ron Cox, Jr. Ph.D.  
Secretary, South Carolina Historical Association  
USC Lancaster

