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IDENTITY, DISSENT, AND THE ROOTS OF GEORGIA'S MIDDLE CLASS, 1848-1865

A Dissertation
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by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation, which focuses on Georgia from 1848 until 1865, argues that a middle class formed in the state during the antebellum period. By the time secession occurred, the class coalesced around an ideology based upon modernization, industrialization, reform, occupation, politics, and northern influence. These factors led the doctors, lawyers, merchants, ministers, shopkeepers, and artisans who made up Georgia's middle class to view themselves as different than Georgians above or below them on the economic scale. The feeling was often mutual, as the rich viewed the middle class as a threat due to their income and education level while the poor were envious of the middle class. Many middle class occupations, especially merchants and shopkeepers, began to be seen as dangerous, greedy outliers in the southern community. The middle class, the negative view asserted, were more interested in money and did not harmonize in the otherwise virtuous, agrarian society. This study continues through the end of the Civil War and argues that the middle class in Georgia was a source of dissent and opposed secession and then the Confederacy. This is not to say that *all* middle class Georgians opposed secession or the war, but many middle class Georgians vehemently opposed secession and never accepted the Confederacy. Even if they did, many quickly turned their back once it was obvious the war was not going to be short and the Confederacy was taking away many civil liberties. These were not poor, mountain folk as many previous studies have identified those who dissented from the southern cause. Instead, these were successful, mostly urban men and women who felt the war would ruin them economically while at the same time the planters, who had become their political enemies, continued to dominate power in the state post-secession. All of these factors

led many middle class Georgians to reject secession and the Confederacy. In turn, the antebellum middle class in Georgia laid the foundation for the post-war power structure and the rise of the southern middle class in the New South era.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Focusing on a group of white men and women with moderate income, engaged in professional and commercial occupations, this study draws on an array of sources to argue that a middle class formed in Georgia in the 1850s. Furthermore, this study argues that a significant number of these men and women dissented from elements of the culture of their state and region. Rather than regarding urbanization, industrialization, and the North with suspicion or trying to slavishly imitate planters, Georgia's middle class embraced cultural and economic modernization, embodied by championing efforts to diversify the economy beyond agriculture, provide state-funded public education, and challenging traditional gender roles, to name but three. This had ramifications for the political arena, as many middling Georgians believed the progress and change they sought for their state was best achieved through collaborative economic pursuits between the North and South. Due to this, a majority of middle-class Georgians opposed secession and calls for southern nationalism and many opposed the Confederacy once war broke out between the sections. Thus, this study not only examines the origins and development of the middle class in Georgia and sheds new light on class relations in the state, it also contributes to the understanding of the scope and source of dissent in the state and region.

This dissertation is part of a broader historiographical shift that attempts to open up research into the realities of the antebellum South's society and economy. The contrast between

the economically progressive North and economically backward South has been pervasive in the popular and academic histories of the Civil War Era. Because the South is naturally compared to the North, it appears the South was "premodern" to some historians.[1] Whereas the North had a growing and vital manufacturing sector, the South lacked manufacturing growth. There is no doubt that the slave states, including Georgia, were predominantly agricultural and the North was the region with the concentration of manufacturing growth. There is no doubt that there were profound differences between the antebellum North and South. However, as Gavin Wright argued, historians need to avoid "macro generalizations" about the differences between the two regions because it closes off research of southern economic actors "on the ground."[2]

This study takes on Wright's call to action, utilizing a micro approach by focusing on the state of Georgia from 1848 to 1865. Emphasis was placed on Georgia for various reasons. The state was at the forefront of industrialization efforts among states in the Lower South. The focus on industrialization in turn led to the growth of towns and cities and the rise of professional and business occupations. These occupations had existed for years, but practitioners in the late antebellum period sought to differentiate themselves in the public sector from amateurs by seeking certified training, forming professional societies, and publishing specialized journals. These groups sought social mobility for their children through education and developed an identity based around hard work, frugality, and ambition. By 1860, roughly twenty percent of the enumerated population of the state were working in middling professions.[3] Within these urban areas, many middling Georgians competed with elites for political and economic power.

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[1] John Ashworth, *The Republic in Crisis, 1848-1861* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 11-12.
[2] Gavin Wright, foreword to *Technology, Innovation, and Southern Industrialization from the Antebellum Era to the Computer Age* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008), ix.
[3] *Population of the United States of 1860, State of Georgia, Table No. 6-Occupations*, 77.

One of the contributions of this dissertation is the argument that a southern middle class existed before, and during, the Civil War. The majority of earlier scholarship has placed the emergence of a southern middle class as occurring in the post-war years as part of the New South.[4] Although the starting point for when exactly the middle class emerged varies among these scholars, they all place it after the Civil War. They argue that, in the pre-war South, there were only two classes: the wealthy, planter elite and the poor whites. If there was a third class, that consisted of African American slaves. These scholars did, however, point to the origins of New South boosters in the Old South. Eminent historian C. Vann Woodward argued that postwar boosters of the New South had ideological roots in the antebellum Whig Party. Furthermore, Woodward and other historians indicated that persistent loyalty to Whig ideals influenced Reconstruction politics. Yet, Woodward maintained that the bankers, business owners, and doctors that made up the New South leadership were a new force in southern society.[5]

As such, this dissertation joins numerous scholars in the past two decades who have focused on the promotion and growth of manufacturing and industrialization in the South. Due to this, studies of the emergence of the southern middle class have also appeared, challenging the interpretation that the middle class did not appear until after the Civil War. Jonathan Daniel Wells and Jennifer R. Green have been the main proponents of an antebellum emergence of a

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[4] The best known example is C. Van Woodward, *The Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951) but others include Edward Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Myth-Making* (New York: Knopf, 1970); George Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967).
[5] Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 152.

southern middle class.[6] In his study, Wells bases his definition of the emerging middle class

upon occupation. Wells argues that the development of a southern middle class can be most

easily identified among the professional group that emerged in the late antebellum years. This

professional group included merchants, doctors, ministers, teachers, and lawyers, among others.

Wells finds that the men, and sometimes women, in these occupations often seized upon northern

middle-class ideas regarding gender roles, education, politics, and modernization.[7] Although

Green also takes a macro approach to the southern middle class, she homes in on military

education as a type of schooling that the emerging southern middle class utilized to educate their

sons and to attempt to provide social advancement. Green argues that middle class southerners

could not afford to send their sons to universities, but military schools, which were post-primary

but not collegiate, were often cheaper, awarded scholarships, and did not require knowledge of

the classics or languages for entrance.[8] Military academies provided an opportunity for

secondary schooling and, Green argues, played a significant role in the formation of the middle

class, the development of professionalization, and the definition of social mobility.

Some historians have taken the example of Wells and Green that focus on the middle

class writ large, but focused on individual occupations. Frank Byrne concentrates on the

merchants of the South, arguing that merchant families embraced the South, but were not of the

South. Merchants traveled to northern cities, achieved high levels of education, and promoted

the expansion of business in the region. Byrne places merchants firmly in the middle class and

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[6] Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004)
[7] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 5-17.
[8] Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class*, 4-7.

argues that merchants formed their own unique cultural identity.[9] Michelle Gillespie studied

artisans in Georgia and found that strong class conflicts emerged as social and economic

opportunities declined for artisans in the state. Gillespie finds that artisans banded together and

successfully fought for legislation that protected their profession from competition with enslaved

artisans.[10] In a similar vein, Timothy Lockley studied interactions between nonslaveholding

whites and African Americans in lowcountry Georgia and found that shopkeepers and merchants

in Savannah often clashed with the planter elite and their allies over trading with slaves. These

shopkeepers, store owners, grocers, and merchants sought out protections on the local level, just

as artisans did on the state level.[11]

What all of these more recent works speak to is a collective identity based upon

occupation. When the term "middle class" is used by the historians discussed above and in this

study, the phrase denotes commercial and professional interests associated with urban areas.

Although these groups did not coalesce into a shared consciousness in the antebellum period,

there is evidence they shared a particular set of values and beliefs. E.P. Thompson called on

historians to view class "as a historical relationship shaped by both economic relations of

production and cultural modes."[12] This study examines the middle class in Georgia from

Thompson's perspective, considering class as an objective component of the social order and a

cultural construction.

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[9] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006)

[10] Michelle Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World: White Artisans in Slaveholding Georgia, 1789-1860* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004 edition)

[11] Timothy James Lockley, *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750-1860* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2001)

[12] Thompson quoted in Daniel J. Walkowitz, *Working with Class: Social Workers and the Politics of Middle-Class Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 6.

The methodology for identifying and documenting middle-class Georgians came largely from occupation and income. Professional and commercial people saw their careers as an important way to distinguish themselves and felt a career as a doctor, grocer, or teacher might afford them higher status socially. Middle-class Georgians were primarily of moderate economic means and their occupations typically connected them to northern counterparts. The latter gave the middle class in the state different ideas about culture, such as the virtues of industrialization and urbanization. Thus, middling Georgians were in the middle of the social and economic order while their ideological construction was based upon adopted cultural values from the North. Therefore, this study sought out letters, papers, and diaries of men and women from professional and commercial families from all over the state. People were only ruled out of the group if they were, for example, merchants, but incredibly wealthy. They may have still held similar ideological views as a merchant with moderate income, but for the sake of consistency only those of moderate economic means were included.

Members of the urban middle class differed ideologically from large slaveholders, the small capitalist class, yeoman farmers, and poor whites. The middle class criticized large slaveholders for a supposed lack of interest in modernization and industrialization projects. The middle class criticized poor whites and yeoman farmers, who often distrusted and denigrated town life and attempts at education reform.[13] Yet, it is important to point out that any definition of class is fluid. While the individual members of the middle class in Georgia which were included in this work perceived opposition from planters, the yeomanry, and poor whites, the reality is class distinctions were sometimes not as clear. Some of the men and women in the professional and commercial families may have aspired to own a plantation. It was not

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[13] Jonathan Daniel Wells, "The Southern Middle Class," *The Journal of Southern History*, 75 no. 3 (August 2009), 651-662.

uncommon for storekeepers or merchants to own slaves, either as laborers or house staff. These slaveholding middling Georgians were still included in the group studied because they retained the cultural worldview that non-slaveholding middle-class Georgians held.

Slavery was pervasive in the economy of Georgia, even after transitions in the state permitted the emergence of the middle class. Although the majority of middling Georgians perceived opposition from planters and some believed slavery made large slaveholders and their families lazy and tempted by excessive luxury, there were no calls for abolition. Middle-class Georgians called for protections from having to compete with enslaved people working in their field, such as artisans, but most middle-class Georgians believed slavery could be part of the plan to industrialize.[14]

It appears that for many middling Georgians the goal was to transition from a slave society to a society with slaves. The distinction, in this case, was that slavery could exist and even flourish, but the stranglehold planters had on political power needed to be challenged in order for modernization to move forward. This was because, again whether real or perceived, planters were seen as opponents to education reform, the expansion of banking, and the growth of urban areas.

Scholars of southern industrialization add to these findings. In his study of South Carolina, Tom Downey argues that commercial and industrial interests clashed with the planter-dominated political economy of the state.[15] Chad Morgan found that Georgia witnessed significant economic growth during the Civil War, but finds that industrialization consolidated

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[14] Michael J. Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 98-135.
[15] Tom Downey, *Planting a Capitalist South: Masters, Merchants, and Manufacturers in the Southern Interior, 1790-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006)

the power of the planters, which left many middling proponents of modernization fuming.[16] In

his study of antebellum Athens, Michael Gagnon finds that supporters of manufacturing in the

city were also interested in promoting social and educational reforms. The network of

manufacturing supporters Gagnon studies believed reform, economic improvements, and

business interests were all bound together. Although they believed slavery and industrialization

could coexist, promoters of manufacturing saw large slaveholders as impediments to the social

and educational reforms they envisioned.[17]

      The first part of this study is an attempt to take the terrific work done by scholars such as

Gillespie, Lockley, and Gagnon and expand upon it. Rather than looking at one occupation or

city in Georgia, this project examines the entire middle class of the state. This study concludes

that there was a middle class in the state by the 1850s. This is significant because this group of

men and women not only formed the roots of the New South, they also pushed forward with

attempts to modernize the state in the Old South. Openly and aggressively, Georgia's middle

class upheld industrialization and urbanization as positive goods, argued for public education,

and wanted an active government to assist in achieving these goals. They formed groups to

promote their interests, often in opposition to their neighbors. They stridently opposed calls for

southern nationalism and secession.

      The scope of dissent is one area in which this study disagrees with most other studies of

the southern middle class and that discussion makes up the final two chapters of this work.

While historians such as Wells and Byrne acknowledge that many middle-class southerners

opposed secession, they assert that middle-class southerners overwhelmingly supported the

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[16] Chad Morgan, *Planters' Progress: Modernizing Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005)
[17] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 47-97.

Confederacy and do not discuss any middling Unionists or anti-Confederates.[18] In Georgia,

based upon research done for this project, there was a sizable minority of middle-class urban

residents who actively and passively resisted the Confederacy and undermined the war effort.

This is an important contribution because the traditional demographics ascribed to Unionists or

anti-Confederates, both in the state and in the South in general, is poor and rural. Furthermore,

opponents of the Confederacy are almost always depicted as living in hilly or mountainous areas

where slavery could not take root.[19] While this depiction is true, it has become the only group of

people, along with enslaved men and women, associated with dissent from the Confederacy.

Instead, this project argues that middling Georgians in urban areas opposed the Confederate war

effort and contributed to the failure of Confederate nationalism.   Although admittedly in smaller

numbers than their poor white brethren, middling, urban Georgians opposed and evaded

conscription and impressment, attempted to avoid military service, led peace movements,

deserted or encouraged desertion, and were discouraged by government takeovers of industries.

All of these actions contributed to the ultimate demise of the Confederacy.

In Georgia, there are seven factors that led not only to the rise of a middle class, but also

to that group self-identifying and seeing themselves as different than other Georgians and

southerners. Those factors are: occupation; belief in modernization and industrialization;

politics; education; support of reform; urban residence; and northern influence. These seven

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[18] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 228; Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 121-143.

[19] For but some examples, see Victoria Bynum, *The Long Shadow of the Civil War: Southern Dissent and Its Legacies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); John C. Inscoe and Robert C. Kenzer, eds., *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004); David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: The New Press, 2010); Williams, *Georgia's Civil War: Conflict on the Home Front* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2017); Williams, *Rich Man's War: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1999); Williams, Teresa Crisp Williams, and David Carlson, *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's War: Class and Dissent in Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002); Keri Leigh Merritt, *Masterless Men: Poor Whites and Slavery in the Antebellum South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Keith Hebert, *The Long Civil War in the North Georgia Mountains: Confederate Nationalism, Sectionalism, and White Supremacy in Bartow County, Georgia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2017)

factors, which often intermingled or layered, created an ideology that was influenced by the northern middle class, but remained distinctly southern. It remained distinctly southern because, after all, these people lived in Georgia and no matter how much they wanted to emulate aspects of the North, they had to do so within the parameters of the South. These seven criteria are my own creation, although they were influenced by the work of historians heretofore cited.

Occupation

As Wells first asserted, occupation played a vital role in determining who constituted the southern middle class. A class of merchants, doctors, lawyers, ministers, teachers, and artisans emerged in the 1850s as white southern men began to occupy nonagricultural, nonmanual positions. These were positions that were expanding during the late antebellum period due to the growing cost of becoming a slaveholder. As the price of slaves and land rapidly grew, more and more white southern men began to look for occupations outside of farming and agriculture. In fact, the 1850 and 1860 censuses show that the rates of farming in the South were decreasing and by 1860 the occupations of merchant, doctor, minister, and attorney were the most common professional occupations in Georgia.[20]

The men who assumed these professional occupations hoped that white-collar jobs could serve as launching pads for not only a successful career, but also social acceptance. Being a lawyer or doctor or minister conveyed some sense of status in the community for these could be considered prestigious occupations. However, the occupations of the middle class could also set them apart. The nature of white-collar work was different than that of other southerners, most of whom still worked in agriculture. However, there also became a growing sense in southern society that men in professional occupations (with the exception of ministers) were too worried

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[20] *Population of the United States of 1860, State of Georgia, Table No. 6-Occupations*, 77.

about money and put profits above all. There was especially a fear of merchants and

businessmen, who newspaper editors and politicians often painted as similar to greedy,

capitalistic Yankees.[21]

The majority of middle class southerners engaged in occupations that required clients,

which led to white-collar workers advertising and selling their services or goods. In other words,

middle class southerners engaged in the marketplace. This did not distinguish them from poor or

rich southerners, who also utilized stores to buy and sell goods, doctors to heal them, and

lawyers to represent them. However, because the middle class professionals were the ones

selling goods for profit or suing to collect debts, they were seen as an unscrupulous and

dangerous aspect of an otherwise virtuous and stable agrarian economy. Poor industrial workers

and yeoman farmers saw professionals as necessary to acquire goods, but resented their success

and influence. Planters and agricultural elites saw the middle class as a threat due to their

education and burgeoning wealth.[22] The southern middle class, therefore, may have been in the

middle economically, but they were becoming "others" socially.

<u>Support for Modernization and Industrialization</u>

Given the occupations of middle class Georgians, it is likely no surprise that they

supported efforts to modernize and industrialize the South. To be clear, this was not something

that only the middle class supported in Georgia in the South, as historians Tom Downey and

Chad Morgan have shown.[23] While some large slaveholders did support internal improvements

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[21] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 41-42.
[22] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 42.
[23] Downey, *Planting a Capitalist South*; Morgan, *Planters' Progress*. Downey, who focuses on South Carolina, finds that a mixture of planters, businessmen, and industrialists wanted to bring banks, railroads, stores, canals, roads, and factories to the South to diversify the economy beyond plantation agriculture. Morgan, who focuses on Georgia during the Civil War, finds that large slaveholders dove into industrializing the state once war began.

as a way to get their agricultural product to market quicker and as a way to invest capital, it does not appear they were the majority in the slaveholding class. In fact, historian Robert E. Wright finds that many planters feared industrialization and modernization projects because they "weakened slavery by crowding out investment in slaves."[24] Rather than investing in businesses or internal improvements, planters typically invested their capital in more slaves, more land, and more cotton.

Planters' lack of investment into internal improvements and other modernization projects is exactly why the burgeoning middle class supported such investment. As stated earlier, the occupations of middle class Georgians compelled them to support modernization. After all, a merchant needed stable commercial markets to succeed. If nothing else, it was pragmatic for many of the southern middle class to support modernization. Beyond that, though, middle class Georgians saw themselves as leading citizens of their community and region and felt they were owed the deference that was usually reserved for the planter elite.[25] As the price of slaves and land continued to rise in the antebellum period, investing in industrialization and modernization was a way for middle class Georgians to try to challenge the planters economically, socially, and politically. They could be at the vanguard of the modernization movement, which could reap dividends in a variety of ways.

The support of modernization and industrialization put middle class Georgians at odds with their white brethren.   Because many of the middle class were self-made, they felt hard work, education, and tangible skills were the path to success for individuals and the region.

Morgan argues that this had long been the goal for many planters in Georgia and the war gave them the platform to accomplish the goal.

[24] Robert E. Wright, "Corporate Entrepreneurship in the Antebellum South," in *Southern Society and Its Transformations, 1790-1860* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), 205.

[25] For examples of this attitude, see Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 49-50.

However, they also felt the slave system did not necessarily reward those virtues and

industrialization would force the South to diversify socially and economically. This was not an

attitude only held by businessmen or merchants, though. John W. Heidt, a teacher in Savannah,

wrote a letter to his future wife which spoke of a recent sermon he heard. Heidt related how the

minister complained of "the idleness" of elite children raised in the South, stating that their

parents prevented them from being blacksmiths, carpenters, or shoemakers, all of which were

"respectable" jobs.[26] The middle class attempted to change the definition of what it meant to

succeed in the South. One did not have to aspire to being a planter to be a success, but could be

a merchant or teacher and still have influence in their community.

<center>Whig Politics</center>

In order to attain their economic and social goals, the middle class had to forge their own

path politically. A majority of Georgians with professional occupations began to view the

Democratic Party, which generally ruled the South during the antebellum period, as one that did

not represent their interests. While Andrew Jackson railed against banks, called for small

government, and emphasized egalitarianism, the emerging middle class favored a large,

proactive government and were wary of catering to the masses.

The southern middle class found their political home in the Whig Party, which was

founded in 1833 and rose to prominence in the 1840s. The Whig Party was seen as modernizers

and Georgians who favored modernization flocked to their ranks. Middle class Georgians

favored a program of economic development and diversification as a cure for the state's

economic woes of the late 1830s and the Whigs offered a political party that could achieve these

economic goals. White-collar professionals also felt that they could get elite planters on board

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[26] John W. Heidt to Leila Villard, John W. Heidt Letters, MS 0380, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

by mixing capital and labor, agriculture and commerce, and even the North and South to reduce friction between slaveholders and non-slaveholders and ease any potential sectional conflict over slavery.[27]

This appeal paid dividends in the 1840s and early 1850s as the Whig Party in Georgia was overwhelmingly supported in the black belt areas of the state. There were many planters in this area of the state that favored a diversified economy. When planters received good returns on their agricultural products, their prosperity brought more tax revenues. Utilizing the Whig Party, middle class Georgians argued that these public funds should be used on internal improvement projects.[28] The party gave middling Georgians a place at the table in creating a social and economic order that rested on a strong, diversified economy and civic involvement.

This, however, ended up leading to conflict between the middle class and those both above and below them on the economic scale. Because they made up the bulk of the voters of the Whig Party in Georgia, middle class men in the state felt they should be among the leadership of the party. However, as was true throughout the South, the leadership, both locally and at the state level, was often made up of planters. Thus, there was much internal squabbling and a fear by middle class Georgians that the Whig Party in their state would represent the interests of the planters more than merchants, teachers, and lawyers. The dissolution of the Whig Party in the early 1850s over the expansion of slavery westward and the ardent states-rights position of many planters and slaveholders seemed to confirm what middle class Georgians feared: the planters had used the Whig Party as a vehicle for their own economic and political

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[27] Anthony Gene Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 110.
[28] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 155.

goals, which more and more middle class men were beginning to think were incompatible with their own goals.[29]

While one may assume that this would lead the middle class to unite with yeoman farmers and white unskilled workers to take power from the planters, that was not to be. A coalition did not come to fruition partly due to animosity and partly due to simple party politics. For the former, the middle class was resented by lower classes because they were more successful and had a level of influence that the poor did not have.[30] The latter was also a problem too, though, as the Democrats utilized egalitarian language to gain the votes of the lower classes whereas the Whigs were elitist and argued for an educated electorate, which would have left most poor whites and yeoman farmers in the cold politically.[31] In addition, historian Anthony Gene Carey has found that political party affiliation in Georgia was consistent throughout the antebellum period, even when officially there was no opposition party to the Democrats. Thus, even once the Whigs folded, adherents of the party jumped on the bandwagon of any oppositional party to the Democrats, be it the Know-Nothings or the Constitutional Unionists.[32] Consistent adherence to rival political parties prevented poor whites and middling whites from joining together to oppose the political stranglehold of the elites.

<u>Support for Education</u>

One of the true markers that distinguished the middling class was its access to, and support of, education. Jonathan Daniel Wells finds that economic betterment became central to middle-class ideology in the antebellum North and South. Each generation was expected to

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[29] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 165-167.

[30] For an example of the class conflict in Georgia during this time, see Williams, *Rich Man's War*

[31] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 49-51.

[32] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 184-212. See also Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South, 1860-1877," *The Journal of Southern History* 27 (August 1961), 305-329, for another argument in favor of Whig ideology persisting after the party's demise.

exceed the previous in terms of wealth and possessions and education became the key to improvement.[33] However, the South lacked public schools and most middle class families could not afford to hire private tutors or send their children to universities. What occurred, then, was twofold. First, an increasingly politically assertive middle class began to advocate for public, primary education. Second, in order to accommodate non-elites who wished to send their children to post-primary schools, academies, military schools, and institutes were founded throughout the South. These schools, termed "higher schooling" by historians Nancy Beadie and Kim Tolley, were not colleges or universities, but they were also beyond common schools.[34]

Middling Georgians advocated for taxes to be used to build and staff public schools. Planters, who would have borne the brunt of the tax-paying, had little interest in supporting public education. For one, they were averse to paying taxes, but the planters had no need for public education since, by and large, they could afford to hire private tutors or send their children to boarding schools in the North. Furthermore, in 1817 the State of Georgia established a "Poor School Fund" to create what were colloquially known as "pauper schools." Although the state subsidized these academies, they were still often poorly funded and taught by teachers who had little formal training. What resulted was that the schools were associated with the poorest of the poor and gained a social stigma. The stigma was so bad that some counties in Georgia refused to participate in the program and the program was discontinued by 1850, although some of the schools survived until the late 1850s with local funding.[35] While records indicate that some of the poorest families in Georgia did utilize the pauper schools, middle class families did not send their children to such schools. Instead, the burgeoning middle class requested increased state

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[33] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 133.
[34] Nancy Beadie and Kim Tolley, eds., *Chartered Schools: Two-Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002)
[35] Betty Boggs, ed., *Poor School Book, 1845-1858* (Cartersville, GA: Bartow County GenWeb, 2011)

funding (the pauper schools were technically state funded, but still received very little money) to establish schools and train teachers in order to adopt a public school system modeled on the North.[36]

Once established, these public schools could provide a stepping stone to post-primary schools that the pauper schools could not. Although historian Jennifer Green focuses solely on military schools that opened during this period, she finds that the growth of "higher schooling" of all kinds was driven by the emerging southern middle class. These families typically could not afford to send their children to colleges or universities nor were their children able to pass the entrance exams that required knowledge of the classics and languages such as Latin, knowledge that could often only be attained through private tutors or boarding schools. The new academies, institutes, seminaries, and military schools offered cheaper tuition and scholarships, which was appealing, and easier entrance exams. In the classroom, the new post-primary schools emphasized science and math, which catered to the career expectations of the middle class students.[37]

The emphasis on education permeated the home as well. The construction of railroads and canals in the 1820s and 1830s greatly improved mobility, which in turn greatly expanded the network of cultural and intellectual connections. This can be seen by the growing number of newspapers and magazines that were published in Georgia in the late antebellum period as well as the intense interest in Northern periodicals. In his research, Bertram Holland Flanders found at least twenty-two literary periodicals that were founded in the state between 1837 and 1865. Additionally, Flanders found another forty-nine magazines and periodicals that covered

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[36] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 134-135.
[37] Green, *Military Education*, 8-10.

agricultural, medical, and religious topics that were published in the same time period.[38] Clearly, Georgians were interested in reading for both educational and entertainment purposes.

The reading public in Georgia, and the South in general, was intensely interested in magazines, newspapers, and books from the North and Europe. The periodical press became "fundamental to Southern intellectual life" and although numerous periodicals were formed in the South, the majority of the reading public consumed those published in the North.[39] Philadelphia's *Saturday Evening Post* and New York's *Harper's Magazine* were extremely popular, even when sectional hostilities were growing in the 1850s. Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas of Augusta constantly wrote in her diary of the excitement of reading northern works and trading them with her sister and friends.[40] This held true with books as well. Sales for books steadily increased in the South during the antebellum period. From 1857-1861, southerners bought more books from the North than in the previous ten years combined.[41] Many of the seemingly voracious reading public were middle class men and women and their children.

<u>Support for Reform</u>

Part and parcel with the support of public education, middle class families in Georgia supported reform measures of various kinds. There were two integral components of the middle class family that led to the support of reform. First, due in no small part to their occupations, middle class families embraced a social ethic that called upon the individual to do what was best for the community.[42] There was certainly a level of need to protect one's own self-interest if one

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[38] Bertram Holland Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines: Literary Periodicals to 1865* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1944), vi-vii.
[39] Michael O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860, Volume I* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 529.
[40] Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas Diaries, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, NC.
[41] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 55.
[42] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 50.

had a professional occupation, but there was also a belief in hard work, frugality, and self-improvement. Many middle class families felt that they could help those below them because they knew what it was to work hard and make something of oneself. Planters, it was thought, were often born with a silver spoon in their mouth and could not relate to those below them. Second, women played a vital role in the public sphere in middle class families. This led to increased support for gender reform, but also to middle class women becoming leaders in reform movements of all kinds.

The role of women in southern middle class families goes against all of the tropes of the Old South woman. Many middle class women became merchants, teachers, editors, and writers. The wives and daughters of merchants, grocers, and shopkeepers often worked in the store when their husband or father was traveling. Many widows of merchants and shopkeepers took over the businesses themselves.[43] Because education was so important to middle class southerners, many women became teachers and many middle class men married teachers. The wives often remained in their teaching position, both because of the extra income but also because they found it personally rewarding.[44] Many women became editors of the growing number of periodicals or authors. For example, Miss C.W. Barber was the editor of the *Southern Literary Companion*, published in Newnan, Georgia, and Mary E. Bryan was the editor, at the ripe age of sixteen, of the *Georgia Literary and Temperance Crusader*, based in Atlanta. Both used their platform as editors to argue for women's rights in education and the workplace.[45] Cyrena Stone, of Atlanta, became a well-known author in the 1850s and she contributed to many newspapers and

[43] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 111.
[44] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 86.
[45] Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines*, 157-160.

magazines in Georgia. None of the above examples used pseudonyms as there appeared to be growing acceptance of women in the southern literary community.

The role of middle class women in the marketplace was not only opposed to the ideology of separate spheres that seemed to permeate so much of antebellum southern life, but it also gave women both a platform to discuss reform as well as the self-assuredness to become leaders in reform movements. This was, no doubt, also aided by the fact that education of both sexes was an important goal of the southern middle class. As early as the 1820s, middle class women were involved in movements, including temperance, moral reform, prison reform, and women's rights.[46] Middle class women in Georgia cities that were industrializing during the antebellum period, such as Columbus and Augusta, pushed for reform for the growing number of poor women and children working in cotton mills.[47]

Women were not the only ones active in reform movements. Men started professional associations that would exclude amateurs, fight for political and economic rights, and establish guidelines for specialized training and practices. The men behind these organizations often thought they were doing a public service by rooting out "quackery" and putting down "knavery."[48] The doctors, lawyers, merchants, and artisans who founded and joined these professional associations thought the organizations could make their professions more trustworthy by codifying who could join their ranks.

Urban Residence

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[46] Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women in Antebellum Reform* (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000)
[47] Michelle Gillespie, "To Harden A Lady's Hand: Gender Politics, Racial Realities, and Women Millworkers in Antebellum Georgia," 284, in *The Old South: New Studies of Society and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2008) edited by J. William Harris.
[48] Jonathan Daniel Wells, "Professionalization and the Middle Class," 158.

Although there were members of the burgeoning middle class in rural areas, by and large middling Georgians lived in urban areas. On the eve of the Civil War, Savannah was the only city in the state that more than 20,000 residents but as industrialization grew in the state, the population of several towns began to rise. By 1850, Georgia led all southern states in manufacturing profits and output. Macon, Columbus, and Milledgeville became manufacturing centers and saw their population soar throughout the 1850s. Augusta had more than a dozen textile factories in 1850 and was being dubbed the "Lowell of the South."[49] The city seeing the largest growth was Atlanta, which quadrupled in size between 1850 and 1860 and would be the largest city in the state by 1862.[50]

In earlier decades, Georgia began to lose population as people moved west to attempt to make their fortune in the cotton-rich lands of Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, and Louisiana, but industrialization was a way to try to keep Georgians in the state and it largely worked. The rise in population in more recently founded cities such as Columbus, Atlanta, and Macon was largely due to the opening of mills in those towns. Macon, for example, grew from a former Creek meeting site to central Georgia's largest city in the 1850s through "commercial development."[51] These cities served as manufacturing hubs, but also as commercial marketplaces for both the city's residents and rural residents nearby.

While the overwhelming majority of Georgia's white population still lived in rural areas, the growing urbanization of the late antebellum period and the Civil War years was a vital component of the growing middle class ideology. Urban areas gave propertyless white men

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[49] Gillespie, "To Harden a Lady's Hand," 278-9.
[50] John C. Inscoe, ed., *The Civil War in Georgia: A New Georgia Encyclopedia Companion* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011), 25.
[51] Joseph P. Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation South, 1800-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 74.

unattached to agriculture a degree of political power unprecedented to that time. Richard

Wayne, who was the mayor of Savannah twice in the 1850s, ran on a ticket that promised

shopkeepers and businessmen he would not restrict trade on Sundays. Furthermore, Wayne

made little attempt to strictly enforce liquor laws in the city or other city ordinances that store

owners deemed opposed to business.[52] Wayne ran on a platform meant to appease urban

merchants and store owners and largely succeeded.

Part of the fear of Savannah's elite and others like them was the fear that non-elites

would use the democratization of the vote to punish privileged minorities. Population growth in

Georgia's urban areas increasingly gave more power to ordinary voters, few of whom were

slaveholders or had any intention of becoming one. Georgia's elites feared that they would lose

their status as privileged minorities due to the democratization of the vote that would occur due

to the rising population in the cities. Thus, as sectional tensions grew, southern nationalists

began a growing crusade against urbanization and its occupants, arguing cities harbored

disorderly groups who threatened southern culture.[53] Thomas R.R. Cobb, one of Georgia's

leading southern nationalists, argued that the state should avoid urbanization, as all it would

bring was the strikes and riots that disrupted northern society.[54]

While Cobb might have been able to rouse his rural compatriots, no matter their

economic status, with talk of common interests and unification based upon race, class divisions

began to take precedence in urban Georgia.[55] This was partly due to the fact that middling

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[52] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 92.
[53] Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 5.
[54] Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism*, 55.
[55] Whether there was unanimity based upon race in rural Georgia is hotly debated. In J. William Harris' *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society: White Liberty and Black Slavery in Augusta's Hinterlands* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), the author argues that slave-owners created an ideology of liberty and a web of personal relationships between classes to contain division, although division did arise during the Civil War. On the

Georgians continued to have issues with their slaveholding neighbors. In Savannah, white

mechanics, carpenters, and artisans were forced to compete with slaves for jobs and asked the

local government for legal restrictions against blacks being employed in certain professions.

Timothy Lockley finds that when Democrats led the city government, no such legal restrictions

were passed, which led many white workers to support Whigs and other competing parties. In

December 1860, white butchers asked the recently elected mayor Richard Arnold, who had

defeated the aforementioned Richard Wayne, to ban slaves and free blacks from selling meat but

the mayor declined, arguing that white butchers would take "great advantage" of any monopoly

granted them.[56] Increasingly, white workers in Savannah began to feel that lawmakers and their

planter allies had no desire to assist them.

This was true in the whole of the state, not just Savannah. Historian Michelle Gillespie

found in her study of white artisans in Georgia that there was increasing tension in Atlanta,

Augusta, and Macon between artisans, who wanted protections for their livelihood, and planters,

who wished to rent out their slaves.[57] While artisans wanted protection, merchants and

shopkeepers drew the ire of planters because they were willing to sell goods to whomever had

money, including slaves. While planters and their government allies tried to curtail the trade to

certain days and times or making it harder (i.e., more expensive) to obtain licenses to open stores

or sell certain goods, these measures failed to make a dent in the exchange of goods between

shopkeepers and slaves.[58] What emerged from the 1840s forward were elections for local

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other hand, historian David Williams has published several works, including *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's War: Class and Dissent in Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), which argue that class divisions existed in Georgia before the war and the war only exacerbated them.

[56] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 72-74.

[57] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*

[58] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 61-68; Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 76-92.

government that pitted traditional elites against representatives of the middle class. As industrialization and urbanization grew, the battle for power in these areas only increased.

<u>Embrace of Northern Influence</u>

A defining characteristic in the southern middle class, in Georgia and throughout the region, was the influence of northern culture. They were not alone in exposure to the North, as historian William Scarborough has shown that elite slaveholders traveled to the North for vacation and many sent their children to northern boarding schools and universities.[59] However, by their very nature of being elite, this was a very small percentage of the southern population. The southern middle class being exposed to northern culture, therefore, is all the more important because they were the non-elites consuming and interpreting northern culture in a different way than their elite, slaveholding counterparts.

In many ways, elite southerners used northern culture for their benefit and advantage while leaving it in the North while middle class southerners wanted to export parts of northern culture to the South. As mentioned earlier, middle class Georgians wanted to take the northern blueprint for public education and industrialization and bring it to the state. There was also an interest in reform movements that originated in the North.

How did this northern influence upon the southern middle class come to fruition? Like their elite counterparts, some middle class southerners did travel to the North for vacation and a small minority sent their children to northern schools. However, the bulk of northern influence came from three factors. First, many southern middle class professionals either traveled to northern states for business or built a financial network across the United States. These men

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[59] William Kauffman Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House: Elite Slaveholders of the Mid-Nineteenth Century South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003)

reveled in their ties, which they felt were cosmopolitan. Beyond that, these ties also proved

fruitful for southern merchants and storekeepers, who traded and consumed northern goods.[60]

Second, as mentioned earlier, many southern middle class men and women read northern

publications and enjoyed northern intellectual culture. These publications had wide-ranging

consequences for Georgia's middle class ideology, imbuing northern ideas regarding technology,

the benefits of manufacturing, education, and the role of women in society, among others.[61]

There is a reason Augusta was called the "Lowell of the South" and Georgia was increasingly

referred to as the "Empire State" as industrialists sought to make Georgia the southern version of

northern industrial and economic development. Increasingly, the desire to make Georgia more

like the North put the middle class at odds with elite Georgians. Third, although they were far

from the majority, there were numerous middle class Georgians who were born in the North and

moved South as adults. Sarah Lawrence Griffin, who edited two women's magazines, moved to

Georgia from Massachusetts in 1835. Cyrena Stone, an author and ardent Unionist, was a

Vermont native who moved to Georgia with her husband in 1854. Samuel Richards, a bookstore

owner, moved to Atlanta from New York in the 1840s. These are but three examples, but there

are many more. Northern-born middle class Georgians tended to retain family and economic ties

to the North and often attempted to bridge the gap between the two regions.

These three factors led middle class Georgians to have a different view of the North than

many of their fellow citizens. Many had respect and even affection for the North and its culture.

There was a dynamism to northerners that many middle class southerners, who valued hard work

and self-improvement, felt needed to be emulated because it was sorely lacking from the South.[62]

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[60] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 11-12.
[61] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 42.
[62] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 98-102.

Due to their economic and cultural ties to the North, many middle class Georgians were off-put

by extreme southern nationalism and felt the two regions could coexist and flourish. For many,

this belief continued, and in some cases intensified, amid increased sectional strife.

CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY IN GEORGIA

Beginning in the late 1820s, Georgians began to show a growing interest in expanding manufacturing ventures in their state. Originally, this was born of a desire to avoid tariffs, which were viewed as benefitting northern industrialists while hurting southern agriculturalists. Suddenly, some Georgians believed that investing in industry may be a worthwhile venture. Yet, as this chapter will argue, the discussion of the potential benefits of manufacturing had unintended consequences. Not only was industrialization discussed as a potentially positive addition to the state, but it was quickly mentioned as an alternative to reliance on agriculture as the only economic source. The calls for manufacturing and industrialization during the late 1820s and 1830s became the genesis for the growth of Georgia's antebellum middle class.

In 1849, Solomon Heydenfelt, an Alabama judge, wrote to Georgia Governor George W. Towns, sending along an analysis of Georgia's slave problems. As Heydenfelt saw it, "the South has the germ of a special and unknown anti-slavery party" and Georgia was front and center because the state had largely repudiated extreme southern nationalism. Heydenfelt believed some of the problem was that Georgia's artisans regarded "the slaves as a rival in production" which, he feared, would lead to an erosion of support for the slave system and the end of political

and economic power of slaveholders.[63] Around the same time, Charleston merchant H.W.C.

Conner wrote to Senator John C. Calhoun. Although both were South Carolinians, Conner wrote

to complain of the opposition in Georgia cities to Calhoun's radical southern rights movement.

Conner said that antislavery sentiment and opposition to the doctrine of states' rights was

particularly evident in Savannah and Augusta, two cities that "are becoming daily more and

more unsound" due to the presence of foreigners and the influence of northerners.[64]

As Heydenfelt and Conner were writing their letters, Georgia's cities were growing,

buoyed by a growth in manufacturing. The state claimed the title of "Empire State" of the South

and this was predicated on the concentrated growth of industry in Savannah, Augusta, Columbus,

Atlanta, and Macon. A New Yorker visiting Savannah described it as having "a spirit of

enterprise that could honor any place in the country." It was full of "plain, old fashioned, hard

working men and women."[65] One South Carolina upcountry man was less impressed, suggesting

that trade should be directed away from Savannah because the city was an "off-shoot from

Yankeedom." Augusta was deemed "nothing but a northern city on Southern soil" by a

Charleston man.[66] The fact that South Carolinians found Georgia's cities to be so repugnant

should come as little surprise. This is not because Georgia's neighbor to the north lacked cities

themselves (in fact, Charleston was among the biggest cities in the South), but it was because

Georgia's artisans, merchants, doctors, lawyers, and others of the middling sort benefited from

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[63] Richard Shryock, *Georgia and the Union in 1850* (New York: AMS Press, 1926), 36.
[64] H.W. Conner to John C. Calhoun, January 12, 1849 in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1900), 1188-1190.
[65] Richard Wade, *Slavery in the Cities: The South, 1820-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 8.
[66] Shryock, *Georgia and the Union in 1850*, 83.

the state's relatively broad suffrage and the lack of a highly developed aristocratic tradition, which distinguished the two states markedly.[67]

Both of these factors were vital components to the growth of the middle class in Georgia, not just as a class, but also as an economic and political force. Georgia began to industrialize in the early 1830s and while agriculture dwarfed industry in the state right up until secession and the Civil War, the growth of factories and mills in Georgia had several consequences. The earliest industrialization in the state tended to be cotton mills and other textile manufacturers, but these industries led to others: paper mills, gas works, foundries, banks, insurance companies, and railroads, to name but a few. Industry beget industry. Invariably, this led to the growth of the towns and villages where the industries were located, leading cities such as Savannah and Augusta to only grow bigger, while smaller locales such as Athens, Macon, and Atlanta grew in size and importance due to factories located there. Columbus, for example, was founded in 1828 and by 1860 was already being called "the Lowell of the South." As the cities and towns grew, more and more people moved into them so now there were merchants opening shops and doctors and lawyers opening practices. These types of occupations existed in Georgia for decades, but now they were proliferating.

There was an additional factor to this growth of middling Georgians as the nineteenth century moved forward. Prior to the founding of industries in the state, the route to becoming successful economically, politically, and socially was through becoming a planter. Many white men may start as lawyers, but the dream was to become a planter. However, this was changing during the 1840s as land and slaves became more expensive. By 1850, as many as 25 percent of white, native-born Georgians lived outside of the state, many chasing dreams of land that was

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[67] Fred Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," *Civil War History* (Vol. XXVII, 1981), 223.

not "played out" in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.[68] The ability to become a planter was always extremely hard to attain, but by the 1850s it was nearly impossible to all those except the extraordinarily wealthy. That meant that for many white men, the avenue to maintain or improve their social, economic, and political status was through professional, nonagricultural careers.[69] For the majority of these men, it meant moving to a city or large town. Therefore, even in a relatively short span of time, the growth of industry in Georgia had dramatic effects on the social, political, economic, and demographic landscape of the state.

Beginnings

In the late 1820s, many people in Georgia became interested in textile manufacturing. Cotton prices dropped throughout the decade as foreign countries, most notably England, reduced demand. When cotton prices were high, many Georgians were content on expanding their agricultural production over developing industry in the state. However, as cotton prices fell, suddenly there was an interest in diversifying the economy.

It made sense that textile manufacturing was the industry Georgians decided to invest in. After all, the argument was readily made that the South as a whole was dependent upon other regions for manufactured goods. Why not invest in manufacturing to decrease this dependence, while at the same time profiting from this new venture?[70] As the editor of the *Georgia Courier* of Augusta noted in 1827, thus far the South had "cultivated cotton, cotton, cotton, and bought everything else…It is time we should be roused by some means or other to see, that such a

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[68] James David Miller, *South by Southwest: Planter Emigration and Identity in the Slave South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 19.

[69] For a discussion of this, see Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 150-159.

[70] Michael J. Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 13-14.

course of conduct will inevitably terminate in our ultimate poverty and ruin. Let us manufacture, because it is our best policy."[71]

At the same time as cotton prices plummeted, manufacturers in northern states began lobbying for a protective tariff. This was not entirely new. In fact, after the War of 1812, the Democratic-Republican Party pushed for a stronger central government, which would include a central bank, government-subsidized transportation projects, and a protective tariff to protect fledgling American industries. The latter would raise the price of foreign manufacturers, thus making locally produced goods the cheaper option.[72]

Southerners resisted protective tariffs from the beginning. For many, the issue was that tariffs raised the prices on imported finished goods, which the region consumed at a much higher rate than other Americans. The Georgia Legislature condemned the tariff as "ruinous to commerce and agriculture" and claimed it was "to secure a hateful monopoly to a combination of importunate manufacturers."[73] Combined with the fact that the tax revenues from increased tariffs would largely go to subsidize industrialization, which was occurring outside the South by and large, many Georgians felt they were receiving little in return for the increased tax burden they were taking on.[74] Furthermore, popular belief was that only the South created national wealth since the region exported cotton to Britain and France. In an 1828 editorial, the *Athenian*

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[71] As quoted in J.G. Johnson, "Notes on Manufacturing in Antebellum Georgia," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (1932): 219.

[72] Richard E. Ellis, *The Union at Risk: Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights, and the Nullification Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 42-43.

[73] E. Merton Coulter, "The Nullification Movement in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (March 1921): 4.

[74] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 14-15.

made this very point, asking "What have the Northern States to give to Great Britain and France as an equivalent for the manufactures they send to the United States?"[75]

The discussion around the "Tariff of Abominations," as it came to be known, soon shifted in Georgia from discourses on republican ideology to one of economic dependence. While South Carolina debated nullifying Federal law and even seceding from the Union, Georgia voters and politicians proved unwilling to take such drastic measures. However, there were practical ways Georgians could voice their displeasure with the tariff. Politicians and newspaper editors argued that the southern economy needed to diversify and this would strengthen the political position of the South in the Union. Less dependence on other regions meant more power, both economically and politically. The solution, therefore, to the problem of dependence on the North and Europe for manufactured goods was for the South to start making these goods themselves, wherever possible. [76]

The initial exhortation by advocates of home production was simply for household production of goods. One letter writer in Athens declared that Georgians "have nothing to do but turn our attention to home productions" such as "woolens, cotton bagging, broad cloths, hats, shoes, boots."[77] If people did not make it at home, perhaps they could buy from a local artisan. Despite the scarcity of artisans and the hardships of making everything by hand at home, the movement gained momentum. The students of the University of Georgia pushed for homespun to be the students' official uniform and the college's trustees complied.[78] The exhortations for home productions kept the idea of industrialization in the public discussion, but it became obvious that home production of goods was a short-term solution. Home production might be

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[75] *Athenian* (Athens, GA), January 25, 1828.
[76] Coulter, "Nullification Movement in Georgia," 5-8.
[77] *Athenian*, July 22, 1828.
[78] Coulter, "Nullification Movement in Georgia," 8.

feasible for clothes and food, but many other types of goods could not be produced solely at home or by local artisans. And boycotting all imports seemed unfeasible as well.

Living in a state that produced a bounty of cotton, the obvious solution to many Georgians was to create cotton factories throughout the state. As early as January 1828, the newspaper in Athens was calling for the immediate establishment of cotton factories on the grounds that southerners had sufficient capital and business sense. The editor of the newspaper went as far as to declare that the South could out-produce their northern counterparts because raw materials cost less in the South and slave labor could be utilized to further cut costs. Editor O.P. Shaw further argued that the South's superior climate would allow for the use of water power in the winter and vast southern forests could provide fuel for steam-engines.[79] At a meeting of over one thousand people at the University of Georgia in August 1828, a resolution was passed calling for the state to set to work promoting manufacturing, even suggesting an excise tax be placed on imports if necessary.[80]

Rather than competing with southern agriculture, Georgia's proponents of industrialization argued that local efforts to industrialize could actually boost agriculture. Newspaper editors in Savannah and Athens suggested cotton bagging and rope as items that could be produced at cotton factories. These could be used to reduce the costs of agricultural production. After all, if Georgia factories produced these items, planters would not have to pay for expensive imported hemp bagging or rope to bind cotton bales. The editor of the Savannah *Statesman and Patriot* estimated this would save Georgia planters $40,000 annually.[81] Athens planter William Dearing was readily converted and began pushing for the opening of textile

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[79] *Athenian*, January 4, 1828.
[80] *Athenian*, August 12, 1828.
[81] *Savannah Statesman and Patriot*, August 26, 1828.

mills, arguing it would save him and fellow planters money. Dearing and those like him argued

that the other value of focusing on producing textiles would be that Georgia's planters would be

buying the bagging and rope from local producers, not northern or European manufacturers, and

it would surely be cheaper to boot. [82]   One of the first mills in the Augusta area created "Georgia

plains," woolen goods that could be made into clothes for slaves. These became "exceedingly

popular among the planters in Georgia" because they only cost "half the price" of "British

plains."[83] The Eatonton Manufacturing Company of Milledgeville claimed in an 1834

advertisement that they could help planters because their "Cotton and Woollen Manufactory"

could be used to supply cheap "Negroes' winter clothing."[84] The savings that Dearing and the

Eatonton company pointed to could then be reinvested in further agricultural and industrial

pursuits. The State Agricultural Society was formed in the early 1840s to "collect and diffuse

information concerning agriculture and its kindred arts."[85] Although seemingly unrelated to

industrialization, the Society was made up of planters and professionals who wanted to diversify

the state's economy, but still retain agriculture as the bedrock.

There was a fear, though, that industrializing would threaten southern society. As many

other Georgia newspapers sounded the trumpet in favor of industrializing, the editor of

Milledgeville's *Georgia Journal* warned that Georgians should "be true to themselves" and

oppose the tariffs, but this did not necessarily mean the state needed to build factories

themselves. Instead, all Georgians, and southerners too for that matter, should "insist on the

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[82] J. Patrick McCarthy, Jr., "Commercial Development and University Reform in Antebellum Athens: William Mitchell as Entrepreneur, Engineer, and Educator," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* (Vol. LXXXIII, No. 1), 8-9.
[83] Charles C. Jones, Jr., "Pioneer Manufacturing in Richmond County, Georgia," *The Textile History Review* 5, no. 3 (July 1964): 80.
[84] Milledgeville *Federal Union* as quoted in Johnson, "Notes on Manufacturing in Antebellum Georgia," 221.
[85] Athens *Southern Banner*, July 29, 1842.

unconditional repeal of every law that has for its purpose the protection of manufactures."[86] Wanting the repeal of tariffs did not equate with the expansion of domestic manufacturers. After all, there would be social consequences with industrializing the state. One article in an Athens newspaper discussed child labor in England and the North, arguing that children who worked in factories often had impaired morals.[87] If factories were built in Georgia, surely child labor would be used and society would be damaged.

The morality of children certainly struck a chord with Georgians, but what became a more visceral fear was that of what factory work could do to women. There were two overriding fears when it came to women in the workplace. First, women would lose their domestic virtue by working in factories. It would make them tougher, dirtier, and more like men. One newspaper editor went as far as to argue that "women become men in the female costume" by taking industrial jobs. The second fear was that, as wage earners, women would become more independent. Several Georgia newspaper editors pointed to strikes by female workers in northern factories. The takeaway from these strikes was not just that women were exerting themselves by making demands, but also emasculating northern men into submitting to women's demands.[88] If Georgia planned to industrialize, they needed to plan so that women would either not be needed as workers or would not be able to gain any power from working.

If children and women would be corrupted by factory work, so too could the men who worked there. There were the typical diatribes regarding the differences between workers of the North and South, which argued that even a slave in the South worked "seldom more than half" as

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[86] *Georgia Journal* (Milledgeville), August 9, 1828.
[87] *Athenian*, March 9, 1827.
[88] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 23.

hard or long as an industrial worker "at the North."[89] These tropes that argued white yeoman

farmers and even slaves in the South were better off, in all respects, from northern industrial

workers had been circulated throughout the South for many years. As Georgians debated the

merits of industrializing to end their reliance on northern manufactures, the debate became less

about abstract discussions of who had the better society or defending the "peculiar institution"

and more about what the real social consequences of industrialization could be.

The real fear was class conflict. The thinking in many southern circles was that industrial

workers would never be masters of their trade or make enough money to open their own shop.

Therefore, the workers were dependent, economically, on someone else, which, the thinking

went, also made them politically dependent on others. Self-employment, one newspaper article

argued, was necessary for individual political independence and that would always remain out of

reach for factory workers.[90] A potential snowball effect could result: reduced political

participation by workers and artisans which would lead to reduced social cohesion which would

lead to class conflict.

This dim view of the potential effects of growing industrialization in Georgia was not

only held by newspaper writers. Augustin Clayton, who grew up in Augusta and moved to

Athens as an adult, was one of the leading proponents of industrialization and also served in the

Georgia House of Representatives, Georgia Senate, and the United States House of

Representatives. Having supported, and even invested in, the construction of a cotton mill in

Athens in 1827, Clayton was well aware of the potential economic benefits of southern economic

independence, but Clayton favored slaves being utilized as factory workers. During a speech to

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[89] Jeffrey Robert Young, ed., *Proslavery and Sectional Thought in the Early South, 1740-1829: An Anthology* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 250.
[90] *Athenian*, March 9, 1827.

Congress in 1832, he stated he would rather live with the anxiety of a possible slave rebellion than deal with the class rebellions that occurred in England and New England. After all, England was forced "to keep a standing force to overawe the turbulence of the manufacturing operatives" to keep the peace. In New England, factory workers were little more than slaves themselves, as they owed their livelihood to another. As Clayton said before his fellow Congressmen, "A slave is a slave; the color of the skin does not relieve oppression; and depend upon it, white slaves are as dangerous as black ones, and all experience hath shown they are quite as ungovernable."[91]

Clayton's point was that although there were tangible economic benefits of establishing factories in Georgia, and the South as a whole, there were potential societal changes that could occur that many southerners would not find beneficial. The other factor at play was that many of the politicians who supported measures to increase manufacturing in the South were doing so from a defensive standpoint, as a way to get back at the rest of the country for the tariffs. Thus, many of the early supporters of industrialization in Georgia, and the South as a whole, wanted to reap the potential economic and political benefits of industrializing, while minimizing any potential social upheaval. To put it another way, they wanted to industrialize the region, but not have industry change the "southern way of life."

<center>The Georgia Model</center>

One way to try to achieve a balance between industrializing but not disrupting society was to emphasize smaller, local, rural factories. As the Milledgeville *Georgia Journal*'s editor argued, if large factories were the ones who needed protection by a tariff, Georgia should engage

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[91] *Gales and Seaton's Register of Debates in Congress* (Washington, D.C.), 22nd Congress, 1st session, vol. 8, part 3, 3555.

in small-scale manufacturing to reduce the risk of needing tariffs for protection.[92] The editor of

the Athens newspaper agreed, arguing that the state need not try to emulate the North, but should

focus on creating small factories that would be close to the cotton supply. After all, that was

what the state, and the South as a whole, needed—to manufacture their own cotton crops. No

need to build massive factories. Instead, perhaps each county could build a factory. As the

editor of the Athens paper summed it up: "Let us commence on a small scale, with caution, and

[invest] such funds as we can spare…in small establishments."[93]

There was a second way to avoid the social upheaval of the North, if Georgia were to

industrialize, namely industrial slavery. This would also surely benefit many of the men who

had money to invest in modernization projects. Industrial slavery became an ideal way to

advocate for southern manufacturing while at the same time proposing a non-threatening labor

force. Additionally, by proposing that slaves become industrial workers, Georgia's early

advocates for industrialization were not going to make white men become beholden to factory

managers. After all, if northern factory workers were worse off than slaves, why make white

southern men work in these factories? Another factor that made industrial slavery appealing was

that it would benefit slaveholders who would have the capital to invest in industrialization and

the slaves to hire out as factory workers. Thus, the power structure would not be shifted by

industrialization. Indicative of this mindset was William Dearing, an Athens planter who pushed

very hard for textile factories to open in the city in the early 1830s, but only with the

employment of slave labor. [94]

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[92] *Georgia Journal* (Milledgeville), August 19, 1828.
[93] *Athenian*, August 19, 1828.
[94] McCarthy, "Commercial Development and University Reform in Antebellum Athens," 8-9.

Although this chapter has focused mainly on the proponents of industrialization projects, there were many Georgians who were opposed to the state constructing factories. As discussed earlier, there were fears that industrialization would have a negative effect upon the state's social fabric and although proponents of industrialization tried to meet this threat by advocating for industrial slavery, many opponents did not think slaves could make up the entirety of the factory workforce. The editor of the *Georgia Journal*, which served as the mouthpiece for the state's Democratic Party, encapsulated this belief when he wrote, "We were opposed,…to manufactures on a large scale, from considerations connected with the effect of the business uniformly has on the character, and habits of those who work in them."[95] Another Democratic newspaper editor feared the calls for industrialization were simply an attempt by the newly founded Whig Party to take power in the state. As such, manufacturing could be welcomed "provided it does not tend to the adoption of those principles of the 'American System'."[96] Others simply feared that the factories would fail financially and would, therefore, be a waste of time and capital.

More and more, though, there began to be a growing acceptance of the idea of industrialization as a necessary evil. The same editor of the *Georgia Journal* who was worried about what would happen when white workers became the overwhelming employees of factories also argued that "we are now…compelled, as a choice of evils, to congratulate our fellow citizens on the establishment of factories in our own state. It goes against the grain for sure."[97] The editor of the *Athenian* assured his readers that those who set up the mills in Athens had done something "against which their political convictions are most unquestionably at war…it is to be regarded as a measure unquestionably defensive."[98] The establishment of factories had been

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[95] *Georgia Journal*, April 6, 1830.
[96] *Georgian* (Savannah), March 20, 1829.
[97] *Georgia Journal*, April 6, 1830.
[98] *Athenian*, March 21, 1829.

foisted upon the South by the Tariff of Abominations, but it did not mean that many of the proponents of industrialization necessarily wanted to introduce manufacturing to the state. Simply put, they were compelled to by outside factors. Or, at least that was the way it was promoted to the public.

Under these auspices, some of the first factories in the state began to open in the late 1820s and early 1830s. In March 1829, the Georgia Factory in Athens broke ground. The local newspaper reported that this was "the first step towards a very important change in the productive industry of the country. The experiment is an eventful one—the period, however, has arrived when no other alternative is left but to strike for commercial freedom." The principals of the factory agreed, arguing in a groundbreaking ceremony at the end of the month that they opposed federal subsidization through increased tariffs, but also mentioning that there was a great opportunity to earn a profit and change the course of history. It gave an overwhelming "feeling of independence" to all involved. [99]

The Georgia Factory was the ideal example of the small, rural factory that early industrial boosters advocated for. By 1835, two other factories joined the Georgia Factory in the Athens area and there was talk of building one or two more. The town remained isolated from other towns of any size in Georgia, if for nothing else than due to poor roads.[100] There were many waterways in the area and that was part of the appeal of building factories nearby, but outside markets were still hard to reach. Therefore, the three factories were essentially serving Athens and the surrounding area. As promised, factories in Georgia were being built to serve the needs of the local residents, not the entire state or region.

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[99] *Athenian*, March 31, 1829.
[100] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 30.

The relative isolation of factories serving the immediate area had unforeseen consequences. Rather than being fierce competitors, the owners of competing factories often became connected and often collaborated on projects. While there were not necessarily formal partnerships, the directors and board members of factories acted as leaders of their community in concert. In many ways, though, this should be of little surprise since so many of Georgia's early industrial boosters strove to avoid conflict at all costs. Thus, there could be competition in theory among the factories for customers, but in reality cooperation served community interests best and so Georgia's early industrial leaders often united on local committees.

The cooperative spirit speaks to one of the most difficult balancing acts some of the early proponents of industrialization faced. On the one hand, industrial development was advocated as a response to tariffs. Therefore, the goal of industrialization, at least as it was pitched to the public, was not simply to turn a profit, but to provide jobs, reasonably priced, locally made goods for consumers, and a degree of political independence for all involved. The factories should turn a profit, but the ideal model was still to remain small because, as one newspaper editor argued, southern markets possessed limited buyers so there was no need for excessive competition or a surplus of goods that demand did not necessitate.[101] Sticking with the limited, local model would allow for Georgia's industries to not only reduce the risk of rampant competition, but also to share financial and physical resources. On the other hand, though, as Georgia's industries did grow in terms of output and profits, the factories and textile mills began to reinvest in themselves, expanding and diversifying their facilities and manufactures.

<u>Inevitable Expansion</u>

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[101] Athens *Southern Banner*, August 18, 1846.

Beyond reinvesting in their own facilities, owners of mills and proponents of industrialization began to advocate in favor of building railroads throughout the state. Although ostensibly to serve their local community, soon the railroad boom had more to do with exporting Georgia-made wares to the West and Europe. In the early 1830s, towns and cities such as Augusta, Savannah, Macon, Athens, and Columbus received charters to begin railroads, but the initial efforts met with limited success. Utilizing the newfound entrepreneurial spirit, leaders in Athens received a state charter to unify the various efforts under one umbrella, the Georgia Railroad. The goal was to connect not only various cities and towns throughout the state, but to also connect Georgia to Cincinnati via Knoxville.[102] By 1834 the first shares of the railroad were being sold and the venture was so successful that the headquarters were moved from Athens to the larger city of Augusta in 1841.

Much like the growth of industry in the state as a whole, the development of the railroad in Georgia encouraged manufacturing in the state, but not always in direct ways. The need for iron products for the railroad was originally met by imports, but soon the railroad companies had their own machine shops for repairs, carpentry work, and to produce rolling stock. The railroad indirectly promoted the growth of industry in Georgia by taking business away from formerly booming river ports such as Columbus, Macon, and Augusta. Those cities' economies were largely driven by profitable cotton warehousing and trading centers, but as the railroads grew in the 1840s, there was a significant decline in business as the railroad could haul cotton goods

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[102] Mary G. Cumming, *The Georgia Railroad and Banking Company: An Historic Narrative* (Augusta, GA: Walton Printing Company, 1945), 14-30.

directly to the sea ports of Savannah, Charleston, and Mobile.[103] With jobs and revenue being

lost, Georgia's interior cities turned to industry to prop up their economies.

Results were impressive. While it is true that Georgia's industrial growth was still tiny

compared to that of any New England state, in just a decade's time, the newly minted "Empire

State of the South" became the Deep South's leading manufacturer. By 1850, Macon led the

entire South in producing heavy machinery, including gold-crushing machinery that was used

during the California Gold Rush. The city also became a center of steam engine manufacturing,

led by Findlay's Steam Engine Manufactory, one of the largest industrial plants south of

Philadelphia. Columbus' textile industry boomed, making the city second to only Richmond in

overall manufacturing in the region. Textiles also thrived in Augusta, which was soon called the

"Lowell of the South." The state went from having nineteen textile factories in 1840 to forty by

1851. In fact, Georgia led all states south of Pennsylvania in textile production.[104]

Perhaps most impressively, though, was not only how quickly industry took off in

Georgia, but how quickly it diversified. Columbus, Macon, Savannah, Atlanta, and Augusta all

had iron foundries. By 1856, the state was third in the South, behind Virginia and Tennessee, in

iron production. After northwest Georgia was opened to white settlement in the 1830s, coal

mining and copper smelting became significant industries in the area. Entire towns were created

due to the expansion of industry in the state. The village of Etowah was created to produce pig

iron, nails, spikes, flour, skillets, gold and copper mines, and coal that supplied the Western and

Atlantic Railroad. Griswoldville was founded outside Atlanta in 1850 by Connecticut-native

Samuel Griswold as an industrial village to solely make cotton gins. In 1836, also outside

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[103] Robert S. Davis, "The First Golden Age of Georgia Industry, 1828-1860," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 72, no. 4 (1988): 700.
[104] Ibid., 700-701.

Atlanta, Roswell King established a colony of former coastal Georgia residents and by 1851 the

town of Roswell was the site of one of the state's largest and most profitable textile operations.

In 1855, Englishman James Noble moved his iron operations from Pennsylvania to Rome,

Georgia, a sleepy town in the Appalachian foothills that had been founded in 1834 but was

sparsely populated to that point. The iron foundry soon produced steamboat engines and boilers

as well as railroad machinery. Thanks in no small part to the foundry's success, the population

nearly doubled to just over 4,000 by 1860.[105]

The most famous example of a Georgia town founded strictly due to industry and

growing from there is Atlanta, which was a direct outgrowth of the railroad boom. In 1836, the

Georgia General Assembly voted to build the Western and Atlantic Railroad from Savannah to

Chattanooga and eventually the Midwest. The initial route ran southward from Chattanooga to

the Chattahoochee River, where it would then turn east to Savannah. The terminus on the river

would become Atlanta, which was first known simply as "Terminus." The town was soon

renamed Thrasherville after a local merchant who built a general store in the area. By 1842, the

town was renamed again, this time to Marthasville to honor the Governor's daughter. At the

time, the town had but 30 residents. But as the railroad and industry grew, so too did the town,

renamed one final time to Atlanta in 1847.[106] Atlanta grew because it was at the terminus of

several railroads and that brought industrial growth. By 1860 Georgia had the most extensive

system of rail lines in the Deep South and was second only to Virginia in the region as a whole.

This is what spurred Atlanta's growth, still being a terminus as it originally was upon its

founding, and more and more industries moved in.[107] Textile mills, lumberyards, and machine

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[105] Davis, "First Golden Age of Georgia Industry," 702-703.

[106] Marc Wortman, *The Bonfire: The Siege and Burning of Atlanta* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2009), 69-84.

[107] John C. Inscoe, ed., *The Civil War in Georgia: A New Georgia Encyclopedia Companion* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011), 27-29.

shops, among others, sprung up and merchants, artisans, lawyers, and doctors moved in. The

Atlanta Rolling Mill was established in 1857 and a scant two years later employed 130 men and

churned out thirty tons of iron products per day. The establishment was one of only three in the

entire South that could make or restore railroad tracks. Winship's Iron Works and the Atlanta

Machine Works were two other iron foundries founded in the city around the same time.[108] The

growth was astonishing. Atlanta had nearly quadrupled in size since 1850, with over 9,550

residents by 1860, and was the state's fourth largest city, less than 100 residents behind

Columbus.[109]

Atlanta also epitomized the "danger" in the growth of industry, which was the potential

for the growth of the communities that surrounded the factories and mills. As Michael Gagnon

argues in his work on the growth of industrialization in Athens, many of Georgia's first

industrialists worried that industrialization inevitably led to urbanization, which would increase

class conflict. The key to avoiding class conflict while still increasing industrial activity was to

utilize "the cultural differences that manifested themselves in the southern economy."[110]

Namely, this meant slavery. The problem for those who feared urbanization, though, was that

the newer, rapidly growing cities such as Columbus, Atlanta, and Macon did not feature urban

slavery in as great of numbers as the older, established cities of Savannah and Augusta. In fact,

while the slave population in Savannah and Augusta was around 33% of all total residents in the

1850s, in the newer cities it was around 20%.[111] Slavery was simply not vital or necessary for

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[108] Davis, "Golden Age of Georgia Industry," 703, 711.
[109] Inscoe, *Civil War in Georgia*, 25.
[110] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 205.
[111] Inscoe, ed., *Civil War in Georgia*, 25.

the newer industries to flourish and, in fact, boosters of industry in Georgia began to argue that the supply of cheap white labor was a distinct advantage for manufacturing in the state.[112]

While Georgia's industrialists primarily employed free white laborers, both male and female, there was always a tacit threat that slaves could be used if necessary, which industrial leaders hoped would stamp out any potential class issues. Because poor whites were the overwhelming majority of the front line labor force, historians such as Gagnon have argued that the industrialists largely succeeded in stamping out labor issues such as those seen in the North and while that may be true, it misses at least two points. First, stamping out labor unrest, such as strikes, does not mean that class issues did not exist and did not manifest themselves in other ways. Second, and more importantly for this study, the growth of industry did lead to urbanization in Georgia which in turn led to a growth of professions to serve the expanding towns and cities. It was the creation of these professions as a legitimate way to earn a living as well as social status that led to the formation of a middle class in Georgia. This unintended consequence of industrialization would cause class conflict in urban areas, but not solely from the workforce, as industrial leaders and leery politicians supposed, but from a wholly different group that believed industrialization could be used to modernize, and improve, the South.

By 1850, the gospel of industrialization had not fully taken root in Georgia, but it certainly had many strong advocates. The language and rhetoric that surrounded support of manufacturing would be utilized by the growing middle class in their calls for the modernization of the state and region, which were exemplified partially by industrialization. The following chapters will look at the differing ways the ideology of the middle class grew out of calls for the growth of manufacturing in the state.

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[112] Johnson, "Notes on Manufacturing," 226-230.

CHAPTER II

PROFESSION

Profession was a vital component of the middle class worldview in antebellum Georgia. White men formed associations and clubs based upon their professions. They sought protections from amateurs and enslaved persons. Their profession often had them come in contact with northerners, either due to travel or by correspondence. By the 1850s, becoming a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or engineer was viewed as a way to achieve social mobility and economic security. Therefore, this chapter will argue that profession was a vital factor in the growth of the middle class in Georgia, not only because middle class professions grew during the late antebellum period, but also because identity based around profession led middling Georgians to view themselves as apart from other members of their community.

When choosing a career, most Georgians decided upon a path that would bring them money and prestige. Prior to growing industrialization and, in turn, urbanization in Georgia, the surest route to money and prestige was achieved by becoming a planter. Many men in professions such as law or commerce assumed they could build up enough wealth at their occupation to then join the agricultural elite and leave their previous profession behind.[113] This is not to say that there was a guarantee one would be successful in this endeavor or even that someone would ever achieve planter status, but the ideal of the planter and all it encompassed

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[113] This is part of a theory of the planter parvenu put forth in James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Knopf, 1990)

economically, politically, and socially was still the dream for many white Georgians.[114] This

was because planters often had wealth, but even if they were heavily in debt, they still held status

in the community. That did not change due to industrialization efforts in Georgia from 1828

forward. However, the growth of industry in the state did allow for a redefinition of how one

could gain status through occupation.[115] The professions of middle-class Georgians allowed for

the potential of upward mobility, while also distinguishing them from those above or below

them.

    As is the case today, one could typically only select an occupation one could access. In

other words, an occupation one was not only qualified for, but also would be considered eligible

for by prospective employers. This was largely dictated by education and experience as well as

social class. As the price of land and slaves rose throughout the 1850s, the growing

industrialization and urbanization of Georgia allowed white middle-class men, and sometimes

women, to enter professional careers to maintain or improve their social status. This was vital to

the formation of the middle-class in Georgia because it allowed an entire group of people to

redefine status in their own image.[116] No longer was education, wealth, prestige, and political

leadership only the domain of the planters. No longer was the path to upward mobility only

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[114] There are multiple sources that discuss the difficulty of achieving the dream of becoming a planter. But two examples are James Oakes, *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998 edition), 37-68 especially, and William Kauffman Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House: Elite Slaveholders of the Mid-Nineteenth Century South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 122-174 and 217-237. For examples of both the ideal of rising to planter status as well as the difficulties on the road to doing so in Georgia specifically, see Michelle Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World: White Artisans in Slaveholding Georgia, 1789-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004 edition), 1-35.

[115] Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in the Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 83-84, argues that, while problematic, the clearest mode of analysis is occupation when examining an increase in status.

[116] For this same argument regarding the South as a whole, see Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 151-159.

through owning plantations and slaves.[117] Professional, nonagricultural careers grew in Georgia throughout the 1850s, providing the state's emerging middle class with income, status, and a platform to challenge the planters' vision.

Not surprisingly, this also made some of the professions of the middle-class susceptible to attack. While doctors and lawyers were often respected and seen as a natural part of the community, they could be targets of scorn and ridicule. White men and women who took up positions as merchants and shopkeepers were often vilified as outsiders to the Jeffersonian vision of the South, caring only about money and not their fellow man. Many merchants and shopkeepers traveled North to buy merchandise and their traveling to bustling Yankee urban areas was seen as a negative influence upon their character. Furthermore, many merchants and shopkeepers would deal with any customers, black or white, slave or free. This often put them at odds with local slaveholders as well as the local government, who sought to restrict the ability of slaves to purchase goods. Artisans sought out special legislation to protect their interests and not allow slaves to work in their area of expertise, often clashing with slave owners and government officials. Finally, many white women became teachers, some of them emigrating from the North, and some were willing to argue in the public sphere in support of greater rights for women, making them targets of scorn.

What emerged, then, was a growing middle-class ideology that was partially built around profession. The local and state government classified people by occupation, further cementing

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[117] Although there have been many books written that emphasize the capitalist orientation of planters, most still argue that few men entered professions and attaining planter status was the only real way to attain mobility socially and economically. For example, see Laurence Shore, *Southern Capitalists: The Ideological Leadership of an Elite, 1832-1885* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013) discusses how slavery and other industries interlocked in the capitalist system, but still focuses on the planter vision of modernizing the South.

profession as a marker of identity.[118] Certain professions that middle-class men and women

occupied began to take on an "other" status within the community. That made the Georgians in

those occupations view themselves as different from their neighbors. However, it was not just

the attempt to make merchants or shopkeepers feel like outsiders that allowed the professional

status of middle-class Georgians to coalesce into ideology. White men and women in these

professions began to form professional organizations and societies that allowed them to interact

with their peers (often both inside their own state and the South, but also the United States as a

whole) to further bolster an identity that was based around their profession and the status that

their vocation accorded.

<u>"Fully ripe for the harvest": The Potential for Mobility through Industrial Work</u>

In terms of the emergence of a middle class in Georgia, a vital component of

industrialization efforts in the state were the opportunities industrializing created. Not only did

industrialization create job opportunities in the industries themselves, but the growth of industry

promoted the growth of towns and cities, which created even more jobs. The range of

occupations that were available in towns and cities provided a variety of paths that white

southerners with some education could pursue.[119] Additionally, the rising middle class provided

a new market for storekeepers, artisans, doctors, lawyers, and others who offered goods or

services.

The emergence of the railroad, as mentioned in the previous chapter, had much to do with

this expansion of career opportunities, as well as the growth of towns and cities that served as

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[118] Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 189.
[119] Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 8.

major railroad centers. In her study of Georgia artisans, Michele Gillespie finds that many artisans in urban areas were losing work in the late 1840s and early 1850s as manufacturers began to import cheap, mass-produced materials from the North. The arrival of the railroad allowed many of these skilled artisans, especially in Atlanta, Savannah, and Macon, to find work as mechanics in the railroad foundries, machine shops, and repair facilities. Such men built the first railroad cars made in the state in 1851 at a machine works in Augusta and the by the mid-1850s the Central Railroad of Savannah employed carpenters and machinists to build engines and passenger cars.[120]

As the railroad companies grew and new ones sprang up, native Georgians, other southerners, and northern mechanics and engineers flocked to the towns and cities. The railroad industry put out promotional literature in an attempt to lure northern mechanics southward. One such advertisement claimed that Georgia was "fully ripe for the harvest" and paying good wages.[121] Because competition was somewhat limited, those who excelled at their work could quickly work their way up the corporate structure. William Morrill Wadley moved to Georgia from New Hampshire in the 1830s and worked on various projects, including the building of Fort Pulaski near Savannah. He was trained as a blacksmith and began working for the Central Railroad in that capacity in 1849. Just three years later he was the chief engineer of the Western and Atlantic Railroad and eventually went back to the Central Railroad as the superintendent.[122] Wadley's story shows that someone with skill and ambition could utilize the railroad industry as a new form of mobility.

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[120] Michele Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World: White Artisans in Slaveholding Georgia, 1789-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004 edition), 99-100.
[121] Robert Scott Davis, Jr., "Robert Findlay: Antebellum Iron Founder of Macon," *Journal of Southwestern Georgia History* 3 (1985): 19.
[122] Robert C. Black III, *The Railroads of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 107-109.

The emergence of factories also required the use of skilled labor. Although the overwhelming majority of workers in mills and factories tended to be poor, unskilled white women and children, these same industries hired mechanics and machinists to build, maintain, and service buildings and equipment. There was a subtle, yet important shift in hiring these positions. When Georgia's industries were first being built in the late 1820s and early 1830s, the manufacturers often turned to Northern or European "experts" to build and maintain their mills and plants, hired for their technical expertise.[123] As home grown skilled workers gained experience throughout the 1840s, they took over the lower managerial jobs within factories. This surely saved the factory owners money, but it also provided a steady source of income and a respectable career for local white men. One such example is Benjamin Davis, who was generically listed as a factory operative at Athens' Georgia Factory in 1850. At that time, Davis was seventeen and still lived with his father. Ten years later, Davis had risen through the ranks to become a presser, which was a much more specific job title than operative and required more skill. Furthermore, Davis now lived on his own and was married. All of this can be gleaned from the census records; beyond that, though, what it tells us is that by staying at the factory, Benjamin Davis not only rose through the ranks at the Georgia Factory, but he also now had the income to marry and move out on his own.[124]

Men like Davis were not uncommon in the factories and mills of Georgia. Often starting out as operatives as children or young adults, many white men rose through the ranks to become upper-level workers. They were not necessarily skilled artisans, but they held experience in carding, drawing, dying, pressing, reeling, ruling, spinning, and weaving that allowed them to

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[123] Michael Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 66-71.
[124] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 61.

train and supervise workers who had less experience. As Michael Gagnon argues in his work on Athens factories, these workers could be conflated with lower management since the factory often contained very few skilled workers and many of the upper-level workers were the boss for their particular department.[125] It would often take time, as Benjamin Davis' example shows, for one to rise in the ranks, but once someone did, their promotion entailed increased pay, job duties, and status.

The ability to rise up the ranks was not always enough to attract sufficient local, educated workers. To become a factory superintendent usually required a lengthy apprenticeship and apprentices typically were from well-off families or families where textile work was passed down. Since the latter did not exist when Georgia's factories were first built, the superintendents, often imported from the North, attempted to persuade local boys to apprentice to learn the trade, but with limited success. Henry Merrell, the Superintendent of the Roswell Factory, complained that he could not attract the sons of the local gentry to come to the factory for apprenticeships to learn his job. Merrell found that the boys resisted because of an abhorrence of manual labor, as well as having multiple options at their disposal.[126] John W. Heidt, a lawyer, clothing manufacturer, and banker in Savannah, had a similar issue when trying to find apprentices for his cloth production endeavor. Heidt, writing to his future wife, complained of "the idleness" of elite children in the city, arguing that "our people labor under a delusion" if they thought their children were too good to do manual work.[127] What factory leadership did, then, was begin to teach the technical end of industrial production to non-elite

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[125] Ibid., 62.
[126] James L. Skinner, ed., *The Autobiography of Henry Merrell: Industrial Missionary of the South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 167-168.
[127] John W. Heidt to Leila Villard, December 10, 1863, John W. Heidt letters, MS 380, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

youths instead so that by the mid-1850s there was a succession of homegrown, middle-class men leading Georgia's factories.

Another route to advancement through factory work was clerking. Clerking was often a way for young men from the middling ranks to achieve social and financial advancement, but without undertaking manual labor as factory operatives. Clerical workers included bookkeepers, accountants, agents, and sales people. As of 1850, there were over 2,100 clerks in Georgia, making it the sixth largest occupation in the state and easily the biggest among the professional occupations.[128] By 1860, there were nearly 4,000 clerks, almost doubling the total of ten years earlier.[129] As Ira Berlin and Herbert Gutman point out, "Every southern city housed a small army of clerks" and the Empire State was no different.[130] Factories and mills hired clerks to balance accounts and serve as bookkeepers. Much like the process of hiring leadership positions, in the beginning of the industrialization process the factories looked for men who were already educated in bookkeeping and could do the job from day one without substantial training. In 1847, the Georgia Factory of Athens advertised a clerk position and requested "a Married man, who has some knowledge of accounts…none others need apply."[131] The clerks up until the early 1850s were typically in their thirties or forties and had prior experience in business. Often times, these men went from having a job title of simply "clerk" to something more substantial, such as "bookkeeper." This was a subtle difference, but it showed that one could advance from a clerkship to a lifelong career without ever leaving the factory in which the clerkship began. By the late 1850s these men who started as clerks began training younger men, usually either

[128] U.S. Department of the Census, *The Seventh Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Robert Armstrong, 1853), 376.

[129] U.S. Department of the Census, *The Eighth Census: Population of the United States in 1860*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 77.

[130] Ira Berlin and Herbert G. Gutman, "Natives and Immigrants, Free Men and Slaves: Urban Workingmen in the Antebellum American South," *American Historical Review* 88 (December 1983): 1192.

[131] Athens *Southern Banner*, October 21, 1847.

graduates of colleges or family members of the factory owner, for future positions in management.[132]

<u>"All the learned professions": Lawyers, Doctors, and Professionalization</u>

The growth of industry in Georgia opened up new possibilities for upward mobility in factory and mill careers that heretofore did not exist or were severely limited in number. Growing industrialization did not create the occupations of doctor or lawyer, but these occupations saw a significant shift during the 1840s and 1850s just the same. As has been argued by both Jonathan Daniel Wells and Jennifer R. Green, two historians who have written extensively on the emerging southern middle-class, a central component of the emergence of the middle-class in the region was the support for and encouragement of professionalization.[133] Professionalization entailed both the legitimation of professional careers as well as a focus on professional status.[134] Careers in the law were well established by the 1840s and 1850s, but for many lawyers and judges the goal was to use the law as a stepping stone to land and slave ownership. However, as the path to achieving planter status became harder and harder during the late antebellum period, white men who pursued careers in law attempted to replace the basis of social position with goals they could attain, such as education, professionalization, and interpersonal relationships.[135]

Pursuing a career in law required very little qualifications in Georgia during the nineteenth century. One did not need a degree in law, or a degree or education of any kind for that matter. In fact, based upon a 1789 law passed by the Georgia General Assembly, one just

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[132] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 73.
[133] Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class*, 154-155; Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 166-167.
[134] Arno J. Mayer, "The Lower Middle Class as a Historical Problem," *Journal of Modern History* 47 (September 1975), 429.
[135] Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class*, 155.

needed to pass an oral examination by a superior court judge and provide sufficient evidence of "moral rectitude."[136] By the late antebellum period, many of the men who pursued a career in law did have a college education, but the lack of a requirement for schooling made the occupation of law attractive. Most lawyers apprenticed under a practicing attorney or simply studied to pass the oral exam on their own time. Even those who apprenticed may not receive much of an education. One historian of law education in Georgia finds that in the 1840s and 1850s "young men seeking to enter the legal profession continued, as in the past, to read law in the office of an attorney who was often too busy with his own practice to give adequate supervision to his students."[137] One of Georgia's most famous antebellum lawyers, Alexander Stephens, was so "dissatisfied" with his training at the law office of a Warrenton attorney that he left and debated whether he really wanted to be a lawyer after all.[138] A student at a law school in Augusta wrote that he had learned more in one semester at the school "than I should have done in *two years* in a Lawyer's office, with the *scanty* attention generally paid to the student by their preceptors."[139]

Because of the varied education or training that future lawyers received, it is not surprising that practicing lawyers had a great variety of success and experience. Some lawyers examined constitutional issues, debating matters of interpretation. These were lawyers who spent their time researching and writing. Most lawyers, however, were beginning to specialize as trial attorneys in criminal law or civil law, often trying cases related to debt collection. Richard H. Clark, who served as a lawyer and judge in Savannah, remembered years later that

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[136] Jonathan M. Bryant, *How Curious a Land: Conflict and Change in Greene County, Georgia, 1850-1885* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 50.
[137] Thomas Rogers Hunter, "Litchfield on the Savannah: William Tracy Gould and the Deep South's First Law School," *Journal of Southern Legal History 19* (2011), 177.
[138] Thomas E. Schott, *Alexander Stephens of Georgia: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 24.
[139] Milledgeville *Georgia Journal*, January 13, 1835.

even during the late antebellum period there was always the threat that a person could be "confined for debt." Clark recalled debtors having to walk on Savannah's streets "with the letters J.B. on them," which stood for "jail bounds."[140] Historian Jonathan Bryant finds that "an astonishing number of people…delayed or even refused to pay their debts" in Greene County during the 1850s and this kept the county's lawyers busy as an astonishing 80 percent of all civil cases heard in the county from March 1859 to September 1861 were suits to collect debts.[141] In Georgia's urban areas, contract law appeared and quickly became dominant. Lawyers in Savannah, Augusta, Columbus, Athens, Macon, and Atlanta provided much of the organizing structure necessary for a modern commercial system.

No matter the specialization, most men pursued a career in law because they thought it would provide social and economic mobility. After leaving his apprenticeship in Warrenton and visiting family for several months, Alexander Stephens began to study law on his own time because he had a "burning desire to improve…his low station in the social hierarchy" and he thought a career in law would provide just that.[142] Stephens was not alone, as many young white men entered the legal profession because they thought it could aid their social mobility, and often times it could. Successful lawyers could accumulate wealth and status and, therefore, enter politics.[143] This was the route that men such as Stephens took in Georgia in the 1820s until the late 1840s. However, there began to be a shift during the 1840s and especially the 1850s. The law could still be a route to wealth and status, but during the decade before the Civil War there was a concentration of landownership and a rise in land values. The average value of land

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[140] Lollie Belle Wylie, ed., *Memoirs of Judge Richard H. Clark* (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1898), 99-100.
[141] Bryant, *How Curious a Land*, 50-51.
[142] Schott, *Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia*, 25.
[143] Daniel H. Calhoun, *Professional Lives in America: Structure and Aspiration, 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 59-87. Calhoun argues that a profession in law did, in fact, aid a man's social mobility.

in Georgia rose by 46.6 percent during the decade while the number of landowners dropped by nearly 20 percent.[144] What this meant for aspirant lawyers, or lawyers who aspired to own land and slaves, was that becoming a lawyer did not beget becoming a planter and politician. Instead, the law became a career unto itself.

What emerged, then, during the late antebellum years was a division among lawyers. On the one hand were the sons of rich planters and businessmen and on the other, the sons of the emerging middle class. Many times, the number of lawyers from elite backgrounds versus those who were of the middling sort depended on location. In rural areas of Georgia, a majority of the lawyers tended to come from families that had property and a social reputation, partially because in rural areas it cost more to read law under the guidance of a mentor. Furthermore, in Georgia's rural areas where cotton was king, lawyers often held only modest power in the community because they had no real influence on the labor relationships, the financing, or the marketing components of cotton production.[145] In urban areas, however, the practice of the law was easier to break in to because there were more potential mentors, who charged less to train young aspirants. Furthermore, there was greater opportunity to become influential. Through contract law, lawyers in the cities played a central role in the economy's development, thus giving them power that rural attorneys often lacked.[146] James Montgomery Calhoun moved his law practice from rural Decatur to the growing city of Atlanta in 1852. Just one year later, Calhoun's practice was flourishing and he had built an elegant house.   Within ten years, Calhoun would be mayor.[147] Amherst Stone emigrated to Georgia from Vermont in 1848 and by 1850 had a law

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[144] James C. Bonner, "Profile of a Late Ante-Bellum Community," *American Historical Review 49* (July 1944), 666.
[145] Bryant, *How Curious a Land*, 51-54.
[146] For one example, in Savannah lawyer George Anderson Mercer's diary, nearly every daily entry discusses writing contracts. George Anderson Mercer Diary, #503, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
[147] Wortman, *The Bonfire*, 69-71.

practice with a fellow Vermonter in Atlanta. Within a short time, Stone helped found an

academy and was engaged in commercial ventures such as banking and railroad projects.[148]

Neither Calhoun nor Stone came to Atlanta as rich men, but they are examples that show in

urban areas there was an opportunity to become a "self-made man" through a career in law that

just did not exist in rural parts of Georgia.

Perhaps because of this growing divide among rural and urban lawyers, practitioners of

law attempted to create a specialized identity, which allowed for increasing self-awareness, and

this movement was often led by lawyers in Georgia's cities. This was one of the integral

components of the emergence of the middle-class in Georgia. Although there was not

necessarily an awareness among all middle-class professions that they were uniquely situated in

Georgia's society, there did become an increasing identity based upon occupation. As such, one

saw himself as a lawyer, which was a distinct group. This was true of doctors, merchants,

artisans, and the like. Because of this self-identity, there was a concurrent push for ways to seek

distinctions between professionals and amateurs.[149] There suddenly became a drive to not only

establish law schools in Georgia, but also to teach the law as a science. William Gould, an

emigrant from Connecticut who opened the first law school in the state at Augusta, argued that

the law should be taught as a science because it was "a system of connected rational principles"

and not "a code of arbitrary but authoritative rules and dogmas."[150]

The desire to teach law as a science would prove divisive, again dividing the emerging

middle class from their elite brethren. When arriving in Augusta from Litchfield, Connecticut,

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[148] Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 12-15.
[149] Jonathan Daniel Wells, "Professionalization and the Southern Middle Class," in *Southern Society and Its Transformations, 1790-1860* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), 170.
[150] Hunter, "Litchfield on the Savannah," 182.

William Gould was appalled that the Georgia Legislature had struck down a state law that required prospective attorneys to study the law for a specific length of time before sitting for their examination to practice. Worse still, Gould discovered that the legislature "regularly pass special statutes" admitting persons to the bar who were not yet the required age of twenty-one.[151] Many of these special dispensations were made for the children of wealthy families. Gould founded his law school in Augusta with the idea that one needed a proper legal education to become a lawyer, regardless of status. Others felt like the current system was just fine. In response to a speech Gould gave, an editor of the *Southern Literary Journal and Magazine of Arts* argued that the idea that one should have to study the law for a set amount of time before taking their examination was foolish. After all, "proficiency in the law…depends far more upon natural endowments…than upon the period that is devoted to plodding through the elementary studies. Mere study and reading…will never make a stupid man an astute and profound lawyer." The only real requirement should be that "the candidate be a respectable man."[152] A letter to the editor in the Augusta *Chronicle* argued that there was "no necessity" for a specialized law school at all, for "all our most learned jurists and eminent lawyers…go from the plow, the Academy, or the College, to the Bar."[153]

The "respectable men" of Georgia who did send their sons to law school more often than not sent them to northern colleges and universities. Surely part of this was because there were only a handful of dedicated law schools in the South in the antebellum period.[154] One Georgian complained, though, that even esteemed southern schools such as the University of Virginia were

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[151] William Tracy Gould, *An Address, Introductory to the Second Course of Lectures, in the Law School, at Augusta, Georgia, Delivered, March 11, 1835* (Augusta, GA: G. Robertson, 1835), 1.
[152] *Southern Literary Journal and Magazine of Arts* (March 1836), 77.
[153] Augusta (GA) *Daily Chronicle and Sentinel*, November 25, 1858.
[154] Georgia's first law school was founded by Gould in 1833 and there were three other law schools founded in the state before the Civil War. Other law schools in the South included University of North Carolina, University of Virginia, William and Mary, Louisville, Tulane, Cumberland, and University of Mississippi.

"considered too far South for the sons of our wealthy citizens to receive a legal education." To the editor of the newspaper who wrote these words, the only reason young men from the South went to northern schools for legal education was because southern schools cost "less money" and were, therefore, considered less prestigious.[155] What occurred, then, was that the majority of the students who attended Georgia's first law school tended to be "largely self educated" and came from middling families.[156]

The ideal of the lawyer to those critical of ventures such as Gould's law school was of the lawyer-statesman. As explained by the *Southern Literary Messenger*, the lawyer-statesman was someone who was willing to sacrifice his own self-interest for the greater good of the public. A key component of this was that the lawyer-statesman was a member of the elite. That way he did not need income from his law practice so he was able to put self-interest aside. Furthermore, the lawyer-statesman could utilize his legal talents for public benefit in other arenas such as banking and politics.[157] Proponents of the lawyer-statesman ideal argued that the democratization of professions such as the law was eroding them and the modern educational techniques utilized by schools such as Gould's were producing lawyers with no real talent or knowledge. The larger problem, though, was that modern lawyers were nothing but "talentless money-grubbers" who cared nothing for the public good and only for expanding their own wallet.[158] Because the legal profession was expanding to include non-elites, there was a clear danger that the decent, gentlemanly society of lawyers was being crushed by "all the vulgar *bourgeois* qualities" that the modern lawyer embraced.[159] The lawyer-statesman ideal was dying because "a growing

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[155] Columbus (GA) *Enquirer*, July 30, 1850.
[156] Hunter, "Litchfield on the Savannah," 208.
[157] *Southern Literary Messenger*, 4, No. 2 (February 1838), 4, No. 6 (June 1838)
[158] Christopher Neff, "Those Cunning Spiders, the Lawyers: In Search of an Antebellum Legal Ethos," *The Journal of the Legal Profession*, 33, No. 317 (2009), 331-332.
[159] *Southern Literary Messenger*, 1, No. 4 (December 1834), 154-155.

multitude" of modern lawyers "disgrace the profession after they are in it, who in a scramble after livelihood are debasing the noblest of professions into the meanest of avocations, who instead of being leaders and looked up to for advice and guidance, are despised hangers-on."[160] The implication was clear: because middling men were utilizing the law as a career to earn their living, they were now more interested in making money than serving the public good.

The retort to such disparaging remarks by those who wanted a more defined and rigorous educational legal system was two-pronged. First, educational boosters such as Gould argued that by opening law schools, future lawyers would be better educated and therefore better able to do their jobs. Rather than just sitting around reading books at their mentor's office or using cronyism to be allowed to practice law, Gould argued his students would learn Georgia's law through actual practice by utilizing mock trials and attending real trials in Augusta.[161] Better training would lead to better performance which would lead to better public opinion.[162] Second, opening up the profession to the middle class would not be a bad thing, but instead had positive benefits. Unlike the elite who became lawyers as something to do before they moved on to politics or agriculture, the middling lawyer would hone his craft through industry, self-discipline, and self-improvement. This would be beneficial to the lawyer himself, but also to the public welfare. In this way, the modern lawyer could, in fact, serve the public by being better at the profession than previous lawyers who divided their time between different avocations.[163] The modern lawyer would achieve success through hard work, not through birthright or patronage.

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[160] Russell G. Pearce, "Lawyers as America's Governing Class: The Formation and Dissolution of the Original Understanding of the American Lawyer's Role," *The University of Chicago Law School Roundtable* 8 (2001), 396.
[161] Hunter, "Litchfield on the Savannah," 208.
[162] It would appear that despite the ideal of the lawyer-statesman and despite the fact that the number of lawyers was growing throughout the country in the antebellum period, lawyers as a group were not well regarded by the general public. In fact, it appears lawyers had a very bad reputation. See Christopher Neff, "Those Cunning Spiders, the Lawyers," 338-340.
[163] Wells, "Professionalization and the Middle Class," 170.

A similar pattern developed among white male Georgians pursuing careers in medicine. For those who wished to become doctors, much of the late antebellum period was spent attempting to redefine their field. As Steven Stowe shows in his look at doctors in the South in the mid-nineteenth century, there was a sizable shift in the medical community during this time. Doctors were not all college educated or trained and many relied on differing approaches to healing, often based on tonics, elixirs, and other homemade remedies. There was a shift beginning in the late 1830s that accelerated in the latter part of the antebellum period. Suddenly there was a thrust for doctors to have credentials and men who earned M.D. degrees became outspoken regarding people they deemed quacks, who were a scourge to public health and the reputation of physicians. Instead of relying on home remedies or folk practices, medical doctors embraced book learning, natural science, observation of the body, and professionalizing their field through medical societies, formal education, and establishment of medical journals to increase medical knowledge generally.[164]

Medical doctors who attended medical schools and were learning new techniques for treating the human body sought to differentiate themselves by creating professional societies that would exclude amateurs, fight for political and economic advantages, and establish guidelines for specialized training and practice.[165] Medical societies began to pop up in all the southern states and Georgia was among the leaders, with the Medical Association of Georgia formed in 1849. The statewide medical society was preceded by numerous local societies, with Savannah forming a medical board of examiners in 1804 and the Medical Society of Augusta was created

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[164] Steven M. Stowe, *Doctoring the South: Southern Physicians and Everyday Medicine in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 2.
[165] Wells, "Professionalization and the Middle Class," 158.

in 1822.[166] One Georgia doctor argued that the founding of a medical society was necessary because "they are an impetus to talent, and will eventually root out quackery, and put down knavery."[167] Much like the previously discussed lawyers, doctors in antebellum Georgia were fighting for professional respect. The field was full of "traditional" practices and largely unregulated and patients had little faith in the knowledge, training, or abilities of their physicians.[168] In many ways, calling a doctor was a last resort.

The way to assuage public fears was to create professional standards. Medical doctors of the antebellum period saw two particular benefits to establishing standards for their profession. First, it would allow them to define their profession. In doing so, they would not be able to eliminate quackery and knavery, but they could at least marginalize purveyors of traditional modes of healing. The Savannah medical board of examiners was formed partially to "concern themselves with the qualifications of those who were to enter the practice of medicine and/or pharmacy."[169] When the Medical Society of Augusta formed in 1822, a law was passed that placed in the societies hands the responsibility for granting medical licenses in the city.[170] Defining the profession meant that medical doctors could establish educational standards and create a code of ethics.[171] Much like the previously discussed education of lawyers, there were no specific guidelines in Georgia for how long a person had to study before becoming a doctor. By creating educational standards, doctors could lay out how long someone had to study before being ready to practice.

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[166] Robert Cumming Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia, 1733-1959* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1959), 139.
[167] H.A. Ramsay, "Medical Society of North Carolina, 1853," *Georgia Blister and Critic* 1 (July 1854), 124.
[168] Stowe, *Doctoring the South*, 7.
[169] Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia*, 139.
[170] Medical Society of Augusta, Georgia, *The Constitution, Medical Police, and Extract from the by-laws of the Medical Society of Augusta, Georgia* (Augusta: Chronicle and Advertiser Office, 1823)
[171] Wells, "Professionalization and the Middle Class," 163.

Second, all of this, the doctors thought, would make the profession more respectable to the public. Antebellum doctors in Georgia tended to see a variety of patients. Although having a doctor visit your home could be expensive, doctors often accepted things such as food or clothing as payment. Therefore, enslaved men, women, and children, rich planters, and poor whites were all potential patients.[172] Respect for the profession, therefore, did not just signify social respect, but also had ramifications for how doctors made a living. An essential reason why medical doctors wanted to run off "quacks" was because they were often competition. And cheap competition at that. As Steven Stowe points out in his work on southern physicians, becoming a doctor was not a route to riches as it was not "financially lucrative for the great majority of practitioners."[173] Therefore, there was an economic incentive to standardization.

Georgia was at the forefront of the attempts to turn the discussion of standards into actual practice. Beyond the founding of various local medical societies, the Medical College of Georgia was the third such institution founded in the South, opening their doors in Augusta in 1828 and conferring the first M.D. degrees to four students in 1833. The College was a direct outgrowth of the Medical Society of Augusta, with Dr. Milton Antony, the Vice President of the Society, advocating to the state legislature the necessity of a medical school in Georgia.[174] An early advertisement for the school stated that they were looking for "the honest, zealous, progressive physician" who would be subjected to rigorous training and coursework.[175] Students would take courses in various sciences as well as pathology, surgery, obstetrics, and other

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[172] Julia M. Rosenbloom and Robert B. Schonberger, "Toward an Understanding of the Equality of Pain: Crawford Long and the Development of Anesthesia in Antebellum Georgia," *Journal of Anesthesia History* 1 (2015), 16-17.
[173] Stowe, *Doctoring the South*, 10.
[174] Phinizy Spalding, *The History of the Medical College of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 3-19.
[175] Milton Anthony, "Reviews and Extracts," *Southern Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (June 1836), 29.

subjects to prepare them to be able to diagnose and treat a range of diseases. In essence, the Medical College was training general practitioners.

Similarly, to the debates surrounding the opening of William Gould's law school in Augusta, one of the initial debates the Medical College faced regarded how long students should have to attend before graduating. Although the Medical College was the only of its kind in the state, because more and more schools were opening in the South, a vital aspect of the debate regarding the total length of time needed to complete an M.D. centered on economic competition. Southern medical schools still did not have a good reputation so wealthy students went to northern medical schools. Therefore, the competition for middle class students was fierce and although longer terms would mean more money for the schools, and better trained doctors, longer terms could also mean losing students to competing colleges. Beyond this, though, historian Steven Stowe finds that the southern medical colleges were conflicted over whether they should hold longer terms and be seen as focused on esoteric knowledge or shorter terms to supply doctors for their communities.[176]

When the Medical College of Georgia opened their doors in 1828 they only conferred Bachelor's degrees and that required students to attend one four-month term to earn their degree. Seeing how this would limit the number of students willing to attend, in May 1830 the College was authorized to confer the M.D. degree upon completing two terms of four months each.[177] The leadership of the Medical College quickly did an about face, expanding the term to six months, arguing that the four-month term was arbitrary and the six-month term would better serve the students. This flew in the face of convention not only in the South but nationally as well and the decision by the Augusta school was met largely with derision. Clearly ahead of

[176] Stowe, *Doctoring the South*, 23.
[177] Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia*, 256.

their time (the American Medical Association would cite the Medical College of Georgia when calling for longer terms in 1848), the school decided to go back to a four-month term amid the criticism.[178]

The criticism may seem odd or arbitrary in retrospect, but the heart of the debate over terms centered on whether the Medical College of Georgia would be able to turn out a supply of doctors quickly enough to serve the state. This revealed a tension, found not only in the community but also within the school itself, regarding how the college could best balance their ideal of a learned physician while still graduating enough doctors to attend to the needs of the public. If longer terms were not the answer, the Medical College began to offer optional courses to allow students to expand their learning beyond just the requirements. This allowed the professors to teach classes of their own interests and many faculty were receptive to the idea of extracurriculars because it mirrored what was happening in European schools.[179] The main reason the Medical College of Georgia offered the courses was to offer students hands-on experience. The school began offering a gross anatomy course which provided "ample opportunities" for students to gain experience with a cadaver.[180] Students did not have to take these extra courses, but in the college's annual announcements, the language made it sound as if any student not enrolling in these classes would be missing out on something important.

Although these classes remained outside the realm of the requirements throughout the antebellum period, they were part of a larger movement which questioned the established way of doing things. It was clear that students who attended the extra courses would have a broader and deeper intellectual understanding of medicine than those who did not. Despite charges of elitism

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[178] Spalding, *History of the Medical College of Georgia*, 28.
[179] Stowe, *Doctoring the South*, 25.
[180] Medical College of Georgia, "Annual Announcement," (Augusta, GA: N.p., 1858), 12.

by older doctors or rival healers, the Medical College of Georgia inculcated a sense of intellectualism by giving awards for essay writing, continuing to require a written M.D. thesis, and establishing a medical journal to disseminate ideas and research. The Medical College's trustees and faculty stressed, and even promoted, the written word, maintaining that as a learned man, a physician had to be able to express himself in writing.[181]

In an attempt to bridge the intellectual side, while also staying firm to their belief in raising professional standards, the Medical College of Georgia began publishing a journal in 1836. In the inaugural issue of the *Southern Medical and Surgical Journal*, the editors claimed that medical journals were important as a "means of collecting and communicating important information in a condensed form." The journal was cheap, which the editors thought was important because doctors in the state were "scattered over a thinly populated…country, in which the labours of the physicians are most arduous and their renumeration inadequate, few individuals can command money to purchase or leisure to read a sufficient number of books to enable them to keep pace with the improvements that are constantly made in medicine."[182] The college's journal could fill this gap, keeping doctors throughout the state informed of the advancements in medicine long after they left the classroom.

Another reason to make the journal cheap was to help it serve as a focal point for physicians throughout the state, whether in the city or in rural areas. The rationale was easy to understand; after all, once established, the Medical College of Georgia strove to graduate doctors who would elevate the status of the profession. As such, the medical journals denounced the "quacks" and uneducated healers who their graduates would have to compete against for patients. The Atlanta Medical College opened its doors in May 1855 and in the opening year,

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[181] Spalding, *History of the Medical College of Georgia*, 34-35.
[182] "Introduction," *Southern Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (June 1836): 1.

the college published the *Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal*. In the first issue, Dr. John P.

Logan, who served as the editor, was forced to admit that the "pretension and actual ignorance,

which has so often been found in the ranks of the medical profession" led the common citizen to

have very little faith in doctors. Logan went on to argue that the founding of the College and its

journal could assist in drawing distinctions between quacks and trained professionals.[183]

The next logical step was to create professional organizations and societies that would

share information throughout the state, region, and country to further differentiate M.D.s from

the uneducated. The journals of the Medical College of Georgia and the Atlanta Medical

College often published proceedings of country and town meetings of associations on the local

level. The journals also looked to national organizations, as the *Atlanta Medical and Surgical

Journal* often published the proceedings of the American Medical Association, the British

Association for the Advancement of Medical Science, and the Illinois State Medical Society.[184]

Georgia physicians such as Dr. Robert Battey of Rome and Dr. John S. Pemberton, who lived in

Columbus and then Atlanta, were early members of the American Pharmaceutical Association.

They were active in the national organization, with Dr. Battey serving as the Vice President of

the APA in 1856.[185] As Jonathan Daniel Wells has argued in his work on professionalization in

the antebellum South, these associations served to advocate for the professional interests of

physicians, provided fellowship, and allowed for an exchange of information. This was certainly

true of men such as Battey and Pemberton, who often reported on the APA meetings in

Georgia's medical journals. Furthermore, the professional associations helped members

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[183] John P. Logan, "Medicine as it is," *Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (September 1855): 5.
[184] See "Proceedings," *Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (June 1856): 636-640 and "Address by the President of the Illinois State Medical Society," *Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal* 2 (December 1856): 205-215.
[185] Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia*, 142-143.

establish a code of ethics that differentiated them from non-members.[186] These were all ways to attempt to marginalize anyone who tried to practice medicine but did not join the medical associations.

Most importantly for this study, though, is that doctors used the medical journals and societies to advance their professional and class interests. The journals and societies could be, and were, used to lobby for the interests of doctors and physicians. As discussed earlier, as early as 1804 a medical society was formed in Savannah to advocate for a law to be passed in the city which would govern who was to practice medicine or dispense medicines. In 1822 in Augusta, a medical society was formed and a law was passed that made the local society responsible for granting licenses for medicine. In 1849, the Medical Association of Georgia was formed to represent the interests of doctors and physicians throughout the state. At its formation, the Medical Association was clear that its goals included not only concerning itself with any problems that may confront the profession, but more importantly, the Association would focus on plans for education and legislation.[187] The Association was rather successful at the latter, successfully lobbying the state legislature to pass laws that provided pay for any physician or surgeon that was requested to conduct a postmortem by a sheriff or coroner of a county and allowed physicians to control the issuance of licenses to pharmacists, thus giving doctors control of who could dispense medicines.[188]

By founding medical colleges, journals, and associations, the doctors and physicians in Georgia were attempting to raise professional standards of their vocation while at the same time seeking to distance themselves from amateurs, hucksters, and quacks. The goal was for the

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[186] Wells, "Professionalization of the Middle Class," 166.
[187] Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia*, 139-140.
[188] Wilson, *Drugs and Pharmacy in the Life of Georgia,* 286, 319.

modern antebellum doctor to be better educated and more equipped to serve the public as well as in a place of power in terms of determining who could join their ranks. Professionalization allowed Georgia's doctors to distinguish themselves not only from the amateur competition, but also from the average worker, laborer, or small-scale farmer in society at large.

<center>"All earthly bliss…in wealth": Georgia's Merchants and Shopkeepers</center>

More than doctors, lawyers, or any other profession, merchants and shopkeepers of Georgia were perhaps the people most unlike their neighbors. In a society that was largely agrarian and praised republicanism that was personified by farmers and mechanics, merchants and shopkeepers were middlemen who produced nothing. They were not farming the land or making manufactured goods like an artisan, but simply buying and selling goods. This made them a target for ridicule, but could also make them economically comfortable. At a time when very few non-elite southerners traveled, merchants annually went on trips to the North to buy goods, typically visiting cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston. Merchant families sent their children to state universities, colleges, and local academies while elites sent their children to northern schools or hired tutors who came to their homes. Despite the fact that the southern ideal was for the woman to remain in the home, many merchants and shopkeepers' wives and daughters worked in their stores and shops. During the Civil War years, many operated the business or store while the husband or son was away. Because of their economic success and their urban residence, merchants and shopkeepers often held political power that is not always ascribed to the "middling sort" in the region.[189]

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[189] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1860* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 2-3.

From political speeches to newspaper editorials to novels, merchants were often vilified as outsiders, no better than Yankees in their love of money. After all, much like the previously discussed lawyers, merchants and shopkeepers did not make or produce anything so the only way they could make money was by selling things. This meant, unlike the idealized yeoman farmers or mechanics, merchants did not have the public good in mind, but just their own. This is actually what led to the coalescence of the merchants and shopkeepers as a group. Considering that Georgia's merchants and shopkeepers were not a unified community per se, what bound the merchants and shopkeepers together was when their interests conflicted with other social groups. When they felt their livelihood was threatened by laws attempting to force businesses to close on Sundays, shopkeepers in Savannah got together and formed the Savannah Grocer's Association in an attempt to push back.[190] By the 1850s, Atlanta had a business-based economy, with over 20% of the population working in commercial jobs and seventy-seven stores in the city. The merchants and shopkeepers of the city unified to hold considerable power in the City Council.[191]

Because they were not tied to the boom and bust nature of the agricultural sector, merchants and shopkeepers tended to remain socially mobile and this also helped unify the group.[192] Much like the previously discussed doctors and lawyers of Georgia in the 1840s and 1850s, merchants and shopkeepers stayed in the profession, seeing their long-term economic, social, and political interests represented and safeguarded within the vocation. Merchants and shopkeepers could hold a level of influence in the community that was typically reserved for the planters. To be sure, merchants did not often hold as much power as their richer, slaveholding

[190] Timothy James Lockley, *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750-1860* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2001), 101.
[191] Wendy Hammond Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 5-7.
[192] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 3.

white brethren, but in Georgia's urban areas, merchants and shopkeepers could band together to exercise surprising authority. Even in more rural areas, though, merchants held a level of power and influence not seen among yeoman farmers or laborers.[193] This gave merchants a reason to believe they could attain upward mobility by staying in their field and not chasing dreams of becoming a planter.

As the market economy grew in Georgia during the late antebellum period, the deep involvement between merchants and shopkeepers in the market became more apparent and distinguished them even further from their neighbors who were farmers or planters. Recently, scholars have pointed out the role slaveholders played in the development of a capitalist system in the South, but there is a vital difference between planters and merchants: merchants built their lives on the ability to conduct daily business transactions. Their livelihood depended on buying and selling goods on a daily basis. This was not true of planters. As historian Frank Byrne has argued in his work on merchants, shopkeepers, and grocers throughout the South, "the worldview of these commercial families" was "radically defined" by their work. "The daily routines that merchants performed in their trade manifested the liberal capitalist gospel they and their families embraced."[194]

The daily routines that Byrne discusses gave merchants and shopkeepers a worldview that was distinct from most other Georgians. Although the merchants and shopkeepers of the state attempted to accumulate and invest money and rise up the social ladder like the planters, their methods of earning and the things they often chose to invest their money in distinguished them from planters and yeomen alike. This distinction is important because merchants themselves discussed how their personal identity and values came from their economic activity

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[193] Bryant, *How Curious A Land*, 49.
[194] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 14.

and profession. Letters from merchants show that many valued frugality, hard work, and individualism. Charles Cotton, a merchant from Macon, wrote his daughter during a trip to Saratoga Springs, New York, to impress upon her that she needed to work hard because "it will depend altogether with yourself" whether she would have personal discipline, something needed for appropriate behavior.[195] Isaac Scott, a merchant in Macon and Savannah, discussed in his diary how "industrious habits" and "a good reputation for honesty" were vital to succeeding in business.[196]

Cotton and Scott needed to work hard and have a reputation for honesty if they were to survive, for their families' daily survival depended upon them succeeding in the commercial sector. Settlements of nearly any size contained a store. In Cassville, a small town that was incorporated in 1833 but did not start growing until the 1840s, there were "numerous merchants" that ran eight dry goods and general stores and the town became a rival to nearby Rome, considered the capital of "Cherokee Georgia," because of the commerce in the town.[197] However, most merchants and shopkeepers established themselves in Georgia's larger towns and cities. By 1840, Savannah had over 650 commercial tradespeople and by 1854 over 13.5 percent of Atlanta's population was made up of merchants, shopkeepers, and grocers.[198] In Georgia's urban areas, the amount of merchants grew throughout the antebellum period, suggesting that while there were certainly people who failed in the occupation, there were a great many more who remained in the profession and at least made a living, if not more than that.

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[195] Charles Cotton to "My Dear Daughter," August 29, 1838, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[196] Isaac Scott diary typescript, Middle Georgia Archives, Macon, Georgia.
[197] Alexa Ilene Claremont, "Creators of Community: Cassville, Georgia, 1850-1880" (master's thesis, University of Georgia, 2005), 21.
[198] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 16.

The growth in the number of merchants in Georgia's cities and large towns points to the important economic role that merchants played in these areas. In turn, their economic success often gave merchants and shopkeepers influence in southern communities politically and socially. In his study of Greene County, historian Jonathan Bryant finds that in the county seat of Greensboro, merchants possessed "influence in the community" in the 1850s as market forces grew in the region.[199] Merchants and shopkeepers stocked goods from all over—the local area, the state, the region, the North, and sometimes even Western Europe. The spread of the railroad during this time period allowed merchants to acquire goods from distant areas and made them seem exotic and worldly. In places like Atlanta, economic growth spurred by the railroads led to commercial growth and by the 1850s "most of the products" sold in the Gate City's stores were "imported from manufacturing establishments in the North."[200]

As a city like Atlanta suggests, that saw rapid growth in the late antebellum years, town boosters and regional spokesmen often linked the success of their area with the amount of stores in their town and the goods carried within those stores. The editor of the Athens *Southern Banner* argued in an 1843 editorial that the city needed a link to the railroad, partially so merchants could help encourage economic growth. Otherwise residents would go to Augusta or Charleston to seek out "better stocks, and get them cheaper" and take that potential revenue away from Athens.[201] An Atlanta newspaper boasted in 1847 that bringing trade would "elevate" and "improve" the young town and help it grow.[202] One newspaper correspondent crowed that thanks to the town's merchants and shopkeepers, Atlanta's "wives and daughters…wear the

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[199] Bryant, *How Curious a Land*, 49.
[200] Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 7.
[201] Athens *Southern Banner*, August 24, 1843.
[202] *Southern Miscellany and Upper Georgia Whig* (Atlanta), December 4, 1847.

costliest fabrics that…Europe can produce."[203] Merchants and shopkeepers, therefore, were

necessary for a town to grow and prosper, stocking both essential commodities and exotic

extravagances. In order for Georgia's cities and towns to succeed, they had to have commerce

carried on by local merchants who resided there. Merchants naturally went to towns and cities as

the thing they needed were customers, so urban areas made business sense.

Despite the fact that it lagged behind the North, the South was becoming a commercial

society and merchants and shopkeepers were at the forefront of this movement. As much as that

made them necessary for the growth of towns and cities, it also made them a target for ridicule

and scorn. The South as a whole, and Georgia in particular, was becoming more commercially

oriented, but the ideal still remained the virtuous Jeffersonian yeoman farmer. Merchants and

storekeepers, even those who were native-born, were viewed as outsiders and were a "perennial

source of discontent" for small farmers.[204] This was partially due to the lack of banks in Georgia

and the South as a whole. Because the state and region lacked banks, people often had to

approach family, friends, or local planters or businessmen for credit. Merchants did not often

give out loans to customers, but they would often sell goods on credit. In the area around

Augusta, planters would extend loans for political or social considerations, but merchants often

had to sell goods on credit simply to survive since many customers did not have cash on hand.[205]

If their neighbors or customers did not pay their loans, merchants and shopkeepers would

have to attempt to the collect the debt. Often times, it was this act that caused consternation

about merchants. Many merchants turned to the courts to collect debts from customers, but,

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[203] Atlanta *Weekly Intelligencer*, November 4, 1854.
[204] Ronald L.F. Davis, "The Southern Merchant: A Perennial Source of Discontent," in *The Southern Enigma: Essays on Race, Class, and Folk Culture*, edited by Walter J. Fraser and Winfred B. Moore (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 131.
[205] J. William Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society: White Liberty and Black Slavery in Augusta's Hinterlands* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 97-99.

perhaps surprisingly, it appears public sympathy typically rested with the shirking customers. Some people argued that merchants were reckless with their credit and sold goods on credit too easily.[206] A group of citizens in Athens announced a meeting to discuss "a crisis…in the commercial affairs" of the state. The announcement argued that merchants were enriching themselves "at our expense," were in league with the North and should not benefit from protection by the courts.[207] In the preface to his diary, Georgia merchant Isaac Scott claimed that he had "never been entangled in lawsuits with my creditors or neighbors" partially because he did not think he "could collect by law out of a dishonest debtor."[208] Scott lays most of the blame with the dishonest debtor, but there is clearly a presumption that the courts would not have taken the side of a merchant.

Scott had good reason to believe that taking debtors to court may not pay off in the long run. Although the courts may find in favor of the merchant, there was often little merchants or shopkeepers could do to force collection. As historian Frank Byrne points out in his work on southern merchants, the retail operators "learned in time" that they "would accumulate a certain amount of bad debt on their books" because, in the end, enforcement of court victories against debtors was infrequent at best.[209] In his memoirs, Judge Garnett Andrews remembered that "Sheriffs and Clerks have resigned" their office rather than collecting debts.[210] Andrews further related how merchants would often use young lawyers to plead their case, something that the debtors could not afford to do. The former judge could not understand "such a fuss" over an

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[206] David F. Weiman, "Farmers and the Market in Antebellum America: A View from the Georgia Upcountry," *The Journal of Economic History* 47 (No. 3, September 1987), 631.
[207] Spencer Bidwell King, Jr., *Georgia Voices: A Documentary History to 1872* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1966), 144.
[208] Isaac Scott diary typescript, Middle Georgia Archives, Macon, GA.
[209] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 41.
[210] Garnett Andrews, *Reminiscences of an Old Georgia Lawyer* (Atlanta: Franklin Steam Printing House, 1870), 19.

outstanding account and pointed out that debtors could often appeal to a jury under Georgia law and the juries would typically find in favor of the debtors.[211]

It was not just judges and juries that had critical opinions of merchants and shopkeepers. Indeed, those who shaped public opinion in Georgia viewed merchants with suspicion. Newspaper editors, politicians, and novelists all fostered a critical view of merchants and shopkeepers. At minimum, merchants were portrayed as too interested in money and, therefore, willing to dupe farmers and laborers into buying more than necessary, putting the customers in debt. Part of the problem was that merchants and shopkeepers were necessary. Put another way, many Georgians were dependent upon merchants and shopkeepers for food, medicine, clothes, and other necessities.[212] As is often the case in a dependent relationship, Georgians both needed and resented merchants exactly for that reason. Newspaper editors and politicians would discuss a lively retail trade as paramount to the success of Georgia's towns and cities, but would just as easily denounce the influence of commercialism on the character of the people. Commercialism was necessary, but had evil possibilities if left unchecked.[213]

Merchants and shopkeepers were seen as outsiders because of their role in the market. Conservative Georgians who saw growing commercialization as a threat to the ideal of the virtuous agrarian economy argued that merchants and shopkeepers were either northerners who emigrated to the state or they were natives who had been sullied by making their identity solely based on selling merchandise. This played out in popular literature of the time. In Augustus Baldwin Longstreet's classic work, *Georgia Scenes*, the character Evelina Caroline Smith, the

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[211] Ibid., 30.
[212] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 41-42.
[213] For examples of this phenomena in Georgia, see David F. Weiman, "Urban Growth on the Periphery of the Antebellum Cotton Belt: Atlanta, 1847-1860," *The Journal of Economic History* 48 (No. 2, June 1988), 259-272 and W.K. Wood, "A Note on Pro-Urbanism and Urbanization in the Antebellum South: Augusta, Georgia, 1820-1860," *Richmond County History* 6 (1974), 23-31.

daughter of a "unlettered merchant," survives off of "admiration and flattery."[214] Her father proves to be a man who cares more about wealth than character. Longstreet's story reveals Mr. Smith to be astute when it comes to making a dollar, but morally bankrupt, willing to defraud creditors and showing little interest in family or community.

Longstreet was a native Georgian, but even southern writers who did not reside in the state set cautionary tales of merchants in the Empire State of the South. William Gilmore Simms, perhaps the South's most famous writer of his time, was born and lived his entire life in Charleston, South Carolina, often viewed as a rival to Georgia's chief port city, Savannah. In 1834, Simms published *Guy Rivers: A Tale of Georgia*, which largely focuses on the life of a gentleman named Ralph Colleton, on the Georgia frontier. During the course of the novel, Colleton encounters Jared Bunch, a greedy peddler from Connecticut. Bunch is described as a man who would take the soul out of your body, a swindler of old women, and a social parasite.[215] Bunch is a weak character who can only survive the rough and tumble Georgia frontier through his commercial machinations. For Simms, he is a total outsider who can never adapt to the southern way of life, not only because he is a native of the North, but also because, as a merchant, he values money over anything else.

Newspaper editors targeted merchants as well, despite the fact that merchants often advertised in newspapers, helping keep them afloat. In a story in the Macon *Telegraph*, merchants were described as "knights of the yardstick" who would use a "magic wand with which ladies are coaxed into making useless purchases and ruining unlucky husbands."[216] As with Simms' story, the overt message was clear: merchants and shopkeepers would prey upon

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[214] Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, *Georgia Scenes; Characters, Incidents in the First Half Century of the Republic* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1855), 94.
[215] William Gilmore Simms, *Guy Rivers: A Tale of Georgia* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1834)
[216] Macon *Telegraph* (July 12, 1842)

the weaker sex and swindle them or sell them unnecessary goods. The editor of the Augusta *Daily Chronicle & Sentinel* agreed, writing that "good citizens" were the "victims of the retailers." The editor went so far as to argue that the government should pass laws limiting what merchants and shopkeepers could sell.[217]

The latter idea would lead to a clash between merchants and politicians who took public calls to regulate merchants and crafted policy based upon that suggestion. One of the issues that consistently cropped up in Georgia, whether in rural or urban areas, was the fact that shopkeepers would sell or trade goods with slaves. In and around Savannah, "shopkeepers cared little" whether slaves "had their owner's or overseer's consent to trade."[218] Part of the reason white shopkeepers were willing to risk the wrath of local slaveholders was because enslaved men and women often had cash or traded goods for their purchases. Unlike some white customers who needed credit or loans, enslaved men and women did not accrue debt that they may not pay back. In his study of the Georgia Lowcountry around Savannah, Timothy James Lockley finds that "even rich planters" often did not have cash and would have to barter or buy on credit.[219] Shopkeepers were willing to sell to slaves because they had cash and that cash income was often vital. David Paterson finds the same occurrence in Thomaston, a village in the Georgia upcountry. Not only did bondspeople spend "cash in the formal economy" of the village marketplaces, but "the cash they spent in the country and village stores were vital to the rural economy."[220]

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[217] Augusta *Daily Chronicle & Sentinel* (October 19, 1852)
[218] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 77.
[219] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 78.
[220] David E. Paterson, "Slavery, Slaves, and Cash in a Georgia Village, 1825-1865," *The Journal of Southern History* 4 (November 2009), 881.

Whether in Savannah or Thomaston, slaveholders and non-slaveholders alike often found the trade between white shopkeepers and slaves troubling. Not all trading between shopkeepers and slaves was illicit. Enslaved men and women who had tickets from their owners were allowed to trade with the only restriction on obtaining articles such as alcohol and weapons. Enslaved people with no ticket were allowed to trade produce, fruit, and fish. However, the exception for tickets was often exploited by slaves and white shopkeepers and traders alike. Tickets were often forged and then used to protect illegal trading activity.[221] Furthermore, some shopkeepers were willing to sell the slaves nearly anything, from foodstuffs to luxury items to alcohol, so long as they had cash on hand to pay for it.

The illicit trade flew in the face of state laws such as the patrol system, the proscription against slaves conducting business in their own names, and the illegitimacy of slave-owned property. In Savannah in the 1850s, the slave patrol began not only looking for slaves wandering off their home without a pass, but also attempted to arrest any slaves purchasing goods outside the city limits. During the same time period, shopkeepers were barred from the city watch for fear they would not prevent thefts by slaves from which they might later profit.[222] Some planters were bothered by the trade because they thought it made slaves less dependent on the plantation. As Roswell King, an overseer on a plantation south of Savannah, argued, "no Negro, with a well stocked poultry house, a small crop advancing, a canoe partly finished, or a few tubs unsold, all of which he calculates to enjoy, will ever run away."[223]

Planters went so far as to form their own patrols. The Savannah River Anti-Slave Traffick Association was formed in November 1846 to combat the "growing traffick carried on

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[221] Timothy J. Lockley, "Trading Encounters between Non-Elite Whites and African Americans in Savannah, 1790-1860," *The Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 1 (February 2000), 27-28.
[222] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 117.
[223] Lockley, "Trading Encounters," 27.

with slaves by white persons and chiefly by retailers of spirituous liquors." The regulations of

the Association went so far as to accuse the illicit trade of making masters and slaves "to look

upon each other as natural enemies." The Association was also worried that the goods the slaves

traded with shopkeepers were likely stolen and not a product of the enslaved people

themselves.[224] A similar organization was formed in Effingham County in 1859, this one with

the explicit goal of controlling the liquor trade with slaves.[225]

Other organizations, such as the Sabbath Union in Savannah, were formed due to the fact

that many shops remained open on Sunday. In her work on the Georgia Lowcountry, Betty

Wood finds that as early as 1829 the City Council of Savannah was split on whether to regulate

Sunday trade. While some desired stricter regulation of the Sunday market, others thought any

change would be unenforceable and likely would not affect illicit trade.[226] The Sabbath Union

put pressure on city officials to change the city ordinance that allowed the retail trade on

Sundays. A group of "Grocers and Traders" formed their own organization in 1836 to petition

the city to keep the Sunday trade open. For the rest of the antebellum period, Savannah's city

council and mayoral elections largely centered around stances on Sunday trading laws. Timothy

James Lockley finds that in the 1840s and 1850s "civic power changed hands many times

between those supported by the elite and those backed by the shopkeepers."[227] When candidates

backed by the elite won, Sabbath ordinances were renewed and enforced whereas when

candidates backed by shopkeepers and merchants won, the ordinances were either revoked or not

enforced. Charles Colcock Jones, a wealthy local planter, explained that the Sunday ordinances

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[224] *Preamble and Regulations of the Savannah River Anti-Slave Traffick Association* (n.p., 1846)
[225] Clarence L. Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 6.
[226] Betty Wood, *Women's Work, Men's Work: The Informal Slave Economies of Lowcountry Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 140-159.
[227] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 93-94.

were important to enforce because when they were not, "the…condition of the city is anything but desirable."[228]

The struggle over ordinances and illicit trade highlights the tension between merchants and planters. Many merchants relied upon planters as customers while planters and small farmers often utilized storekeepers as factors who sold or shipped cotton north. In Americus, the store R. Johnson and Company sold cotton to a New York merchant while also selling merchandise to planters they received from the same New York merchant.[229] While many merchants relied upon the plantation agricultural system to flourish, there was also a sense of antagonism between the two sides. For merchants who viewed economic diversification as the way forward for the state, planters were viewed as an impediment to progress. Large slaveholders were thought to be barriers to any hope for material progress.[230] Planters who were cash poor relied upon credit from merchants for food and some basic supplies. This indebtedness bred animosity at times from planters who accused merchants of being dishonest. One planter accused Macon merchants of being "shavers", a term used to describe a person who is extortionate.[231]

To combat the power of men such as Jones, merchants and shopkeepers began to gather in organizations to promote their interests, both economically and politically. These organizations could be used to promote business interests, but they could just as easily be used to advocate against taxes or fees levied on businesses or to coordinate political efforts. The latter

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[228] Charles C. Jones to Rev. C.C. Jones, October 6, 11, 1859, in Robert Manson Myers, ed., *The Children of Pride: A True Story of Georgia and the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 525.

[229] Harold D. Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800-1925* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), 79.

[230] For one example, see Chad Morgan, "Progressive Slaveholders: Planters, Intellectuals, and Georgia's Antebellum Economic Development," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 86, Issue 3 (Fall 2002), 398-423.

[231] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois,* 75.

was due to efforts by merchants and shopkeepers to champion industrialization and modernity while others, such as Jones, sought to protect an agrarian tradition that seemed endangered.[232] Beginning in the late 1850s, a group of merchants, businessmen, and teachers met in the Lynch brothers' store in Atlanta to discuss politics, going so far as to form a league to represent their combined interests.[233] By the time the group of Atlanta merchants and businessmen were forming their league, it was obvious to many of their fellow professional brethren that the political and socioeconomic system stunted their development and made them "subservient to plantation agriculture."[234] They would utilize opposition political parties, which will be discussed later, to give voice to their concerns.

<div align="center">"Yankees, Foreigners, and Traitors": Georgia's Artisans</div>

More than any other group of Georgia's emerging middle class, artisans were organized and used that organization to advocate for rights for their group. In many ways, the emerging middle class in Georgia was not a coherent group as doctors, lawyers, merchants, artisans, and teachers did not always work together or see themselves as similar. However, if any one group among these professions saw themselves linked together with their brethren in the same occupation, it was artisans. Especially in urban areas, artisans banded together, largely looking for protections from encroachments made upon their trades by slaves from nearby plantations, who were either hired out to work in Georgia's towns and cities or came to town on a weekly basis to sell their handiwork. Thus, white artisans often clashed with plantation owners as well as industrial leaders who were willing to use slave labor. It should be noted that most of

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[232] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 62; Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 166-168.
[233] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 38-39.
[234] Numan V. Bartley, *The Creation of Modern Georgia: Second Edition* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1990), 28.

Georgia's artisans did not oppose slavery, but instead felt the institution should be utilized for agricultural labor only.[235]

The rationale of white artisans for keeping slaves out of artisanal jobs further highlights what allowed that group of men to band together as a group—artisan labor was skilled labor. Even as immigrants, especially Irish immigrants in Savannah, entered the workforce, white artisans seemed willing to accept competition from fellow white men, but when they faced competition from black men and that competition drove their wages down, that was deemed unacceptable. White artisans tried to appeal to racial solidarity and argued that having white men vie for jobs with enslaved men brought the white artisans down to the same level as the slaves, but the appeals came to no avail, mainly because it was a matter of dollars and cents.[236] For example, historian Michele Gillespie estimates that slave artisans cost the Athens carriage-and-wagon making shop of E.R. Hodgson and his two brothers approximately $219 per year, while a white skilled carriage maker cost about $780 per year to do the exact same job.[237] It made fiduciary sense to hire slaves to do skilled jobs. Because of this, artisans banded together to form associations to represent their interests, arguing that skilled labor was the domain of white men.

Despite the power of slaveholders in Georgia's politics, the collective power of white artisans was a force to be reckoned with. Despite masters considering it a usurpation of their rights, in 1846 white artisans in Macon were able to convince the city council to prohibit slaves from practicing any trades within the city limits.[238] Just three years later, on the state level, white

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[235] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 189-190.
[236] Fred Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," *Civil War History* 27, no. 3 (1981), 222-223.
[237] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 112-114.
[238] Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism*, 75.

artisans secured legislation that placed a heavy tax on slaves who hired out their own time.[239]

These gains did not foster white solidarity, but instead led to accusations that white artisans were

putting their own vocations ahead of/ societal good. The editor of the *Columbus Times* argued

that there was little difference between the exclusion that white artisans advocated and outright

emancipation. After all, if slave labor was not allowed to diversify beyond the agricultural

sector, the institution "must perish."[240] The fear of what may occur if too many white workers

were displaced by slaves was a real concern. One agricultural reformer argued that slaves should

be confined "to the soil thus to elevate and open the mechanic trades to the non-slaveholders

around them."[241]

White artisans were not willing to sit idly by as black artisans undercut their economic

opportunities despite the backlash from slaveholders and newspaper editors. Despite calls for

solidarity, by the late antebellum era many craftsmen and artisans, especially in Georgia's older

cities, seemed to have less of a chance for upward mobility. This was partially due to the fact

that, like many of the other occupations we have examined, upward mobility for artisans often

meant rising to becoming slaveholders. However, as opportunities to become a slaveholder

lessened in the 1850s due to rising prices of both slaves and land, the expectation for upward

mobility was still there, but the reality to actually achieve said mobility typically was not. The

overall picture for employment opportunities, even for skilled laborers, varied wildly and was

generally insecure. Some artisans and mechanics had to take a variety of jobs, sometimes

traveling to multiple towns over the course of a single year to survive.[242] Thus, on the eve of the

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[239] Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants," 224.

[240] Ralph Flanders, *Plantation Slavery in Georgia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1933), 205.

[241] *Southern Cultivator* 19 (1861), 14.

[242] For examples in Georgia, see Dudley S. Johnson, "William Harris Garland: Mechanic of the Old South," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (March 1961): 41-56 and Dale Couch, "John Riley Hopkins: A Nineteenth Century Cabinetmaker," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 28 (1984): 43-55.

Civil War, craftsmen, artisans, and mechanics were challenging the use of black artisans in a more sustained and strenuous fashion, viewing the competition as the reason for their lack of mobility and unsettled employment patterns.[243]

"Good teachers are in demand": The Professionalization of Teaching

Historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown once noted that teaching positions in the South were often "filled by incompetents, drunkards, and sometimes ignorant bullies."[244] However, during the 1840s and 1850s calls for education reform intensified, an aspect of which would support increased pay and training for teachers. Although education reform will be covered in much greater detail in a later chapter, one must understand the cycle of events that drove this. As the middle class emerged in Georgia, and other parts of the South, there were calls for public education on the secondary level as well as higher education options for those who could not afford universities or colleges in the region or the North. Part and parcel with these calls for education reform were requests for more teachers, and better trained ones at that. The argument was summed up by an author in the *Southern Ladies' Book* in an 1840 essay on the opening of the Georgia Female College: there should be funding for "pupils, to whom no charge for Tuition shall be made, who are thoroughly trained for teaching" and those newly trained teachers could then "distribute the blessings of education to a class of the community hitherto debarred access, even to the elements of knowledge."[245]

There is a clear indication that more and more southerners wanted greater access to education during this time period. One letter writer in Calhoun, Georgia, in an attempt to

[243] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 170-171.
[244] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 186-187.
[245] "Georgia Female College—Its Origins, Plans, and Prospects," *Southern Ladies' Book* 1 (February 1840): 73.

persuade William Sydnor Thomson to take a job as a teacher at a school that was being built in the town, assured Thomson that he could make a good salary because "good teachers are in demand…Many men who can scarcely read or write their names, wish to educate their children, and in most instances, are fully able to do so."[246] The editor of the *Georgia Journal and Messenger* in Macon consistently wrote editorials arguing that "the eradication of vice and the promotion of virtue and good morals" was reliant upon "free education" for Macon's white children.[247] In another article, the editor complained that the city's schools had too many applicants and not enough teachers and feared that "unless our public spirited citizens will devise the necessary means" to hire more teachers, "at least fifty boys will be left idlers in our streets, only to contract vicious habits."[248] In Cassville, the percentage of children attending school rose from 25% in 1850 to 48% in 1860.[249] More Georgians wanted education and when the opportunity arose, more Georgians were sending their children to school.

With greater rates of children attending school and greater demand for teachers came increased social status for the teaching profession. As Wyatt-Brown pointed out, many teachers in the South were seen as incompetents who could find no better occupation, but much like with the other professions we have discussed thus far, more and more young men and women entered the profession during the late antebellum era and many of these new teachers were educated and committed to teaching as a profession. Because of this commitment, there was an attempt to legitimize the profession through professional associations and periodicals. In Columbus, the *Southern School Journal* was founded in 1853 as a publication to give teachers and others

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[246] M.L.R. McClatchy to W.S. Thomson, July 17, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[247] *Georgia Journal and Messenger*, May 27, 1857.
[248] Ibid., August 17, 1859.
[249] Claremont, "Creators of Community," 24-25.

interested in education a forum to discuss schools, curriculum, and advocate for increased funds for the educational needs of the state.[250]

Much as has been seen with doctors, lawyers, and other professions that the emerging middle class entered, the goal of the professional associations and publications was to promote the profession to make it more attractive for prospective teachers who may enter the field, especially with the growth of southern colleges, universities, and academies during the time period. Evangelical academies, colleges, and seminaries were founded in Georgia throughout the late antebellum period. The goal of these was partially to provide an educated clergy to evangelize, but a further goal was to provide teachers to encourage true republicanism by teaching the poor. Many of the clergy of the state were proponents of public education and utilized evangelical schools as places to train teachers.[251]

The growing interest in education led to a "rising consciousness of the teachers, which led them to think of their work as a profession capable of discussion and betterment."[252] There was a push in Georgia to form an association of teachers in order to adopt a "uniform, rational, radical, and philosophical mode of instruction."[253] Out of this, the Teachers Society and Board of Education of the State of Georgia was formed in 1831 to determine whether teachers in the state should receive qualifications to teach. Much like attempts by doctors and lawyers to professionalize, teachers wanted to exercise authority over who was deemed qualified to hold the title of teacher. One newspaper editor thought this was a great idea, hoping that the society

[250] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 148-149.
[251] Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 105-114.
[252] E. Merton Coulter, "Antebellum Academy Movement in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (December 1921), 26.
[253] *Georgia Journal* (Milledgeville), June 16, 1831.

would weed out the "ignorant pedagogue" which would allow teaching to become "a *system*, subject to the rules of science, conducted by intelligent and moral professors."[254]

As a natural outgrowth of a teacher's society, several periodicals for teachers were founded in the state. In the 1830s, *The Georgia Academician and Southern Journal of Education* was published by R.C. Brown in order to give teachers a medium of expression to discuss teaching strategies. The journal only lasted a year.[255] Similar periodicals, such as the *Southern School Journal* and the *Educational Journal and Family Monthly*, were published for at least a few years in the 1850s. All told, eight periodicals devoted exclusively to discussing teaching techniques and curriculum were published in Georgia from 1833 to 1861.[256] Although none of the periodicals lasted long, it is proof of the growing attempt to professionalize teaching and to make teaching a more honored profession in the state.

Unlike previous professions discussed, teaching was a prospective employment field for women. In this respect, the growth of teaching as a socially acceptable profession, for both men and women, cannot be divorced from the value of education rising in Georgia and the region. As the movement for education gained momentum, there was a call for academies and public schools to be coeducational, but there were also numerous schools founded in Georgia during the late antebellum era by women for women.[257] This gave the teachers at these schools autonomy and authority that was rarely afforded to women. The female teachers not only taught, but also recruited students, maintained facilities, and managed financial records and accounts. Anne Fannie Gorham, a young woman who lived in Hamilton, Georgia, discussed in her diary how her sister, who was starting a school, often had to go "around trying" to recruit local children to

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[254] *Macon Messenger*, December 29, 1831.
[255] Coulter, "Antebellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 27.
[256] Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines*, 216-220.
[257] Coulter, "Antebellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 20.

enroll.[258] Female teachers were expected to combine all the duties of a teacher while at the same time representing the school they worked for in public, often required to socialize and exchange pleasantries with the foremost citizens of the town, county, or even state. Some teachers, such as Amelia Akehurst Lines, who taught in and around Atlanta for over three decades, constantly wrote how tired they were because of these duties.[259]

For some women, this autonomy and authority was empowering and led them to advocate for other reforms. While we will look at the middle class attempts at reform in a later chapter, it is necessary to link the growth of teaching as a viable profession for women and the growth of Georgia's women becoming involved in reform movements. Susan Nye Hutchinson, a native New Yorker who moved to North Carolina and then Georgia to teach, was one such woman. Hutchinson was motivated by the Second Great Awakening to teach and over time she evolved from a modest teacher to an ambitious career woman who used her position to argue that men and women were equal in intellect and should be afforded the same educational opportunities. To that end, Hutchison left her position as a teacher in Raleigh, North Carolina, and established her own school in Augusta, Georgia. Hutchinson's journals show that she was motivated by the example of other female educators and, in turn, she motivated some of her own students to pursue teaching as a career. Some of her own teaching assistants in Augusta went on to become principals of other female academies. Hutchinson used domestic language to justify female teaching and leadership in education, but she also used it as a way to distract from her larger message of the importance of education to prepare women "for any situation in life to which they

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[258] Anne Fannie Gorham Diary Collection, Columbus State University Archives, Columbus, Georgia.
[259] Amelia Akehurst Lines, *To Raise Myself a Little: The Diaries and Letters of Jennie, a Georgia Teacher, 1851-1886* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1982), 17-40.

may hereafter be called."[260] Hutchinson was advocating for education to not just prepare women for domestic life, but also to join the labor force outside the home. Because of this, Hutchinson's schools taught rigorous courses on subjects she deemed useful.

Hutchinson was not alone in her critiques of female education. William Carey Richards, a Baptist minister who edited the *Orion*, a monthly magazine published in Athens, wrote that young women took too many courses and schools did not have their female students stick to these courses long enough. Instead, it appeared young women were being taught several different things, but not long enough for them to master any one subject. Richards wrote that "the estimate which is made of the period necessary to educate a young girl…is far, *far* too low."[261] A woman who wrote a letter to Richards' *Orion* stated that "it seems now to be admitted, that a cultivated mind, will not necessarily make a useless woman" and advocated for women to "to improve and cultivate their intellectual natures."[262] In an address to the Greensboro Female College in Jefferson County, Georgia, Reverend David Gardiner Phillips utilized a strategy similar to Hutchinson as he argued that "the elevation of humanity depends upon the Christian education of women" because women were "the greatest natural educator of society" due to their role as wives and mothers. However, much like Hutchinson, Phillips used domestic rhetoric to somewhat hide the fact he was also discussing equality, stating later in his address that women could be "intellectual giants" who could make "purely original and independent work" for "human improvement and social advancement."[263] Mary E. Bryan, an author and editor of Atlanta's *Georgia Literary and Temperance Crusader* argued that women

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[260] Kim Tolley, *Heading South to Teacher: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson, 1815-1845* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 138.
[261] William Carey Richards, "Editor's Department," *The Orion* (December 1842), 122.
[262] "Female Education," *The Orion* 3 (October 1843), 61.
[263] David Gardiner Phillips papers, ms 3753, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.

were the intellectual equal of men and should be taught the same way in schools. Bryan further

stated that women should pursue work outside the home "not heeding the criticism of men" who

would try to confine the intellectual pursuits of women.[264]

Despite vocal support from both men and women, those who advocated for the equality

of women faced criticism. It was one thing for women to work (although some people obviously

were opposed to that as well), but for women to assert the authority and autonomy they may

experience in the workplace as teachers and expect the same in society as a whole was not

something many people were willing to tolerate. While it appears support for education for

women was fairly universal in Georgia, the editor of an Atlanta newspaper cautioned women not

to do anything that would encourage disaffection among their gender.[265] When discussing the

Greensboro Female College, Dr. Joseph R. Wilson thought it was good that the girls of the town

were getting a Presbyterian, college education, but he also advised: "Let your women keep silent

in church." A newspaper writer for the Greensboro *Weekly Gazette* stated that the women of the

college were educated "both for parlor and kitchen" and thought this was a good thing for the

graduates would make "good wives."[266] The implication was clear: do not let education or work

as a teacher let you believe that you should be afforded more rights or have your influence go

beyond the domestic sphere as a wife or mother. As we will see in a later chapter, many women

who worked as teachers did not heed this advice.

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[264] Bertram Holland Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines: Literary Periodicals to 1865* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1944), 162.
[265] Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 135.
[266] Bryant, *How Curious a Land*, 22-23.

Complex Relationships

Professionalism and class interests became intertwined and played a decisive role in the identity of middle-class Georgians. Professionalization allowed middling Georgians to separate themselves from others, which in turn created a complex relationship to the elite and lower classes. Professional associations were designed to exclude amateurs and fight for political and economic advantages. These associates advocated for established guidelines and specialized education and training for who could become a lawyer, doctor, dentist, or teacher. This allowed professionals in these occupations to express a sense of distinctiveness from the rest of society and to engage in collective activity to shape public opinion.[267] It did not require professional associations of doctors or lawyers for this type of collective action to occur. Artisans, for example, banded together throughout Georgia to advocate for laws that would protect them and exclude slaves from working in their field.[268]

Middling Georgians wanted progress and professionalization was a vital component of this. By excluding those deemed unqualified, it would allow for those educated and trained to represent that particular occupation. As Dr. Joseph Logan of the Atlanta Medical College argued in 1855, the public had to be shown that medicine was a science and that required removing uneducated conmen who were guided by "pretension and actual ignorance." Sharp distinctions had to be drawn between trained professionals and charlatans.[269] By regulating who could work in certain professions, middle-class Georgians hoped to elevate their status, provide access to wealth, and protect their earning potential by limiting access to clients. Furthermore, by creating licensing boards and codes of ethics, laypeople could be excluded from these occupations.

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[267] Wells, "Professionalization of the Middle Class," 159.
[268] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 67-74.
[269] Joseph P. Logan, "Medicine as it is," *Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal* 1 (September 1855), 1.

Raising standards could also justify higher fees.[270] The combination of requiring educational

standards and charging higher fees led to conflict with lower- and working-class Georgians who

would now be excluded from working in these fields due to lack of education and could often not

afford the cost to employ a doctor, dentist, or lawyer.

Friction occurred between the elites and middle-class as well. Based on the extant

evidence, the vast majority of middling Georgians did not have substantial critiques of slavery

and did not see any need to eradicate the system from the state. It was believed that economic

diversification and slavery could co-exist, so long as slaveholders allowed it. Benjamin F. Perry,

a South Carolinian with ties to railroad projects in Georgia, argued that "the manufacturing must

be combined with the agricultural system."[271] Yet, the perception among men such as Perry and

other middle class advocates of industrialization and modernization was that planters needed to

substantially change their thinking and actions in order for manufacturing to take root in the state

and region. Rather than put their profits in manufacturing enterprises, planters instead reinvested

in cotton and slaves. Rather than send their children to Georgia's universities or schools, they

sent them to northern institutions or hired northern tutors. Simply put, planters and other large

slaveholders were viewed as opponents of economic and cultural progress.[272] Whether large

slaveholders were in reality opposed to industrialization remains contested, but it is clear that

middling Georgians perceived that planters hindered attempts at economic diversification.

Although a lawyer in Georgia may not view an artisan in the state as someone who held

similar beliefs, this lack of shared consciousness does not mitigate the fact that middling

Georgians of a variety of professions did, in fact, hold similar ideological views by the late

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[270] Wells, "Professionalization of the Middle Class," 163-164.
[271] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 194.
[272] Ibid., 197.

antebellum period. One's profession was seen as a way to distinguish oneself. It denoted a

tangible skill and a certain level of education. It could also set middling Georgians against those

above or below them. Profession was one of the characteristics that distinguished the middle

class and they sought to maintain those distinctions.

CHAPTER III

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND REFORM EFFORTS: MODERNIZATION IN MULTIPLE FORMS

As discussed in chapter one, industry began to grow in Georgia from 1828 until 1850. This drove the rise of various professions as well as the growth of several cities and towns in Georgia as a further factor into the growth of Georgia's middle class. This chapter will pick up where chapter one left off, focusing on the growing support for modernization and industrialization efforts, largely driven by the middle class. This chapter will argue that middle class Georgians favored modernization efforts for several reasons. First, it was thought that further diversification of the economy would make the state, and perhaps the region, less dependent on slave labor. Second, if the economy diversified, so members of Georgia's middle class thought, there would be more room for their class to gain social standing, benefit economically, and expand their political power. Finally, if the middle class could make strides socially, economically, and politically, it would put them in a place to help steer the state toward modernizing in areas beyond just industry. In brief, if modernization efforts took hold, the middle class was poised to be among the leaders charting the future of Georgia in the mold they chose, not the planter class.

<u>Rapid Growth: The Rise of Industry in Georgia in the 1850s</u>

In two different editorials that appeared in the Milledgeville *Federal Union* in the late 1840s, the paper declared that Athens was "like a northern manufacturing town" due to the

"railroad, and her factories in full operation, and like them, her condition is flourishing."

Columbus, the paper declared, should henceforth be called "the Lowell of the South" because of

its successful cotton manufacturers and textile mills.[273] During the final decade before the Civil

War, the cotton mill and textile industry came of age, thanks to both a boom in cotton during the

decade and more efficient applications of steam and water power. Fall-line cities such as

Augusta, Columbus, and Macon had large industrial expansion while towns such as Athens,

Roswell, Rome, and Sparta saw exponential growth that was driven by industry. By 1860,

Georgia led the South in the number of textile workers and Georgia led all lower South states in

capital invested in manufacturing and in the value of manufacturing products produced.[274] No

wonder it was called the Empire State of the South.

Georgia was one of the earliest proponents of building cotton and textile mills, in no

small part because it made sense to many Georgians that they should keep the cotton that was

being grown on home soil within the state's borders to be manufactured rather than send the crop

up North or overseas. As early as the 1820s, a handful of manufacturing establishments were

founded and by 1848 the state had thirty-two textile factories.[275] The 1850s, though, would

feature a more far-reaching interest, which envisioned a fundamental change in the character of

the economic enterprise of the state. Some planters were interested in industry that revolved

around agriculture and many of the early advocates of industrialization focused on the promotion

of cotton manufacturing.[276] While that was the driving force behind Georgia's early

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[273] Milledgeville *Federal Union* April 1, 1845 and November 28, 1848.
[274] John C. Inscoe, ed., *The Civil War in Georgia: A New Georgia Encyclopedia Companion* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011), 28.
[275] Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 168.
[276] Herbert Collins, "The Southern Industrial Gospel Before 1860," *The Journal of Southern History* 12, no. 3 (August 1946), 394-396.

industrialization efforts, advocates of industrialization argued that true modernization and diversification meant expanding industry beyond just cotton manufacturing.

Members of the growing middle class were not the only vocal proponents of Georgia diversifying its industries to include steam engine manufacturing, iron foundries, coal and copper mines, and machine shops. Of all the heavy industries, the iron industry is the one that expanded the most during the 1850s. At the beginning of the decade, Macon was already the heavy machinery center of the Lower South, driven mainly by Robert Findlay's Iron Works. Findlay was born in Scotland in 1808 and emigrated to New York in 1828, citing woodworking as his occupation. At some point in the early 1830s, Findlay went to work in the pioneer stationary steam engine and locomotive works of Matthias W. Baldwin, based in Philadelphia. The Panic of 1837 put Baldwin in dire financial straits and forced him to lay off many workers. Although Findlay was not laid off, he did not think Baldwin's enterprise would ever recover and so Findlay took a job in November 1838 with Macon's Monroe Railroad as the principal machinist. Findlay left the railroad within a year to open his own business as a wheelwright and machinist, offering to repair any machinery needed for mills, factories, or plantations. In October 1839, Findlay became a partner, with two other men, in the Macon Iron and Brass Works, which advertised that it would work on steamboats, cotton gins, sawmills, grist mills, and factory machinery. Just two years later, Findlay had bought out his partners.[277]

Findlay would become Georgia's most famous industrialist of the antebellum era, but he was not alone, even in Macon. Findlay's success led others to attempt to emulate him. By the mid-1850s, there were three other iron foundries in Macon as well as two small iron and brass works. Macon became the antebellum machinery center of the state. In addition, there were two

[277] Robert Scott Davis, Jr., "Robert Findlay: Antebellum Iron Founder of Macon," *Journal of Southwest Georgia History* 3 (1985), 17-22.

companies manufacturing furniture, two making carriages and coaches, and others working with tin, metal, and wood. This "industrial progress" was a driving force behind the growth of Macon as a financial and commercial center.[278] What is perhaps more important is the industries of Macon utilized goods from other Georgia manufacturing centers. For example, Findlay's firm used iron from north Georgia and coal from Georgia mines while many of Findlay's goods were sold to rail lines and mills within the state.[279]

Macon was the leader, but was not alone in promoting heavy industry. By the early 1850s, Columbus and Savannah had two iron foundries each while Atlanta, Griffin, Rome, and Augusta had one each. By 1856, only Virginia and Tennessee produced more iron than Georgia.[280] All of this was driven by the growth of the railroad. Not only were many of the iron foundries in Georgia's cities and towns providing materials for the railroad by taking Georgia ore and making it into pig iron, but they were also building steam engines, replacement parts, and conducting repairs for the smaller railroad lines. The larger railroad lines, such as the Western and Atlantic and the Central of Georgia, had their own machine shops, where they employed craftsmen, artisans, and mechanics to build and repair everything from the locomotives to the woodworking to the tracks the trains ran on. By the 1850s, the development of the railroad network made it possible for Georgia's manufacturers to reach clientele in other areas. For example, when Findlay cast the largest cog wheel ever made in the state, his foundry made the wheel and the railroad transported it to a Putnam County flour mill that ordered it. As one

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[278] John A. Eisterhold, "Commercial, Financial, and Industrial Macon, Georgia, During the 1840's," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (December 1969), 425-426.
[279] Davis, "Robert Findlay," 24.
[280] Robert Scott Davis, Jr., "The First Golden Age of Georgia Industry, 1828-1860," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 72, no. 4 (1988), 701-702.

historian of Findlay points out, just a decade earlier, the foundry, rail line, and mill did not exist.[281]

This was all part of a transportation revolution that was finalized during this time period. Beginning in the mid-1830s, Georgians were certainly interested in the possibilities the railroad afforded, especially once a rail line was built in neighboring South Carolina, partially to siphon off trade to Savannah. The Georgia Railroad, with a goal of linking Augusta and Athens, was the first attempt to build an extended railroad line in the state in 1833, but the line met with fierce opposition, mainly from cotton factors who felt the commercialization of the countryside would relocate business from trade centers like Augusta to the interior towns along the line.[282] Promoters argued that the railroad would enrich everyone by increasing the business of all the towns, yet Augusta's factors remained suspicious. The die was cast, though, and railroad projects began to crop up throughout the state. The Central Railroad of Georgia was chartered in 1833 to run from Savannah to Macon and the state-owned Western and Atlantic was founded in 1836 with a long-term goal to run from the Chattahoochee River to Chattanooga.[283] Many smaller lines were formed in the 1840s to piggyback off of the bigger projects.

Although there was a flurry of activity in the 1830s and 1840s with the chartering and initial laying of lines, the state's railroad system greatly expanded and began to open up new markets during the 1850s. The Western and Atlantic, which was conceived in 1836, did not actually complete its road from the Chattahoochee River, eventually based at Atlanta, to Chattanooga until 1851. The Georgia Railroad, originally designed to go from Augusta to

[281] Davis, Jr., "Robert Findlay," 24.

[282] Michael J. Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 151.

[283] Spencer B. King, Jr., *Georgia Voices: A Documentary History to 1872* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1966), 132.

Athens, expanded southward to Madison and westward to Atlanta to connect with the W&A. In 1857, the Georgia line would expand even further westward to West Point, on the Alabama border near Montgomery.[284] In 1856, the Atlantic and Gulf Railroad broke ground to connect Savannah to Thomasville, in southwest Georgia, through Brunswick. At this point, becoming a stop on a railroad line was necessary for economic success. As the editor of the Thomasville *Southern Enterprise* argued when discussing the proposed connection to Savannah, a railroad coming to the town would mean that Thomasville was "assuredly destined, in a few years, to become a place of consequence—the queen city of Southern Georgia!"[285]

The editor was correct, as at railroad junctions and termini towns grew into cities while towns that were not connected to a rail line withered and died. Thomasville went from a regionally important, but isolated town in southwestern Georgia, to one that was connected to Tallahassee and Jacksonville in Florida as well as Savannah, Macon, Atlanta, Augusta, and Columbus by the railroad. Suddenly, with a railroad, the town "became an integral part of the rest of Georgia."[286] The Upcountry of the state saw similar growth patterns to Thomasville. The state-owned Western and Atlantic Railroad, running from Atlanta to Chattanooga, was *the* vital component to the growth of the area, according to historian Frederick Gates. The region went from an isolated locale that survived off a semi-subsistence, barter-oriented system to one that was engaged in the system of production and exchange seen in other parts of the Empire State of the South. Suddenly, Upcountry towns such as Marietta, Cartersville, Rome, and Dalton grew in

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[284] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 157-165.
[285] Thomasville *Southern Enterprise*, June 12, 1855.
[286] William Warren Rogers, *Antebellum Thomas County, 1825-1861* (Tallahassee: The Florida State University, 1963), 49.

importance and the area saw population growth explode in the twenty-one counties served by the Western and Atlantic.[287]

It is no surprise that industry grew up along the route of the Western and Atlantic. Mark Anthony Cooper purchased a furnace and mill in Bartow County and turned it into the self-sufficient village of Etowah. Cooper shipped pig iron, nails, spikes, flour, skillets, gold, copper, and coal on the W&A to foundries, mills, and machine shops in Atlanta, Macon, and Columbus as well as enterprises as far away as Chattanooga and Charleston. Robert Findlay, for one, utilized Cooper's pig iron almost exclusively.[288] Connecticut-native Samuel Griswold founded his own industrial village, Griswoldville, outside of Atlanta, near the W&A tracks. Griswold's village was devoted solely to manufacturing cotton gins. One of Georgia's largest and most profitable textile operations was in Roswell, also outside Atlanta. James Noble moved his iron operations from Pennsylvania to Rome in 1855 and soon his foundry was producing steamboat engines and boilers.[289] In 1848, Rome had less than one thousand residents, but by the end of the 1850s, the town had more than 4,000 residents "and it had become the marketing center" of the surrounding area, filled with "several large merchants."[290]

No place in Georgia, though, quite represents the effect the railroad could have on growth than Atlanta. The city grew from a spot along the Chattahoochee River that was chosen as the southern terminus for the Western and Atlantic Railroad, simply based on geography, in 1842 to a regional metropolis that integrated cities and towns in the Upcountry and was a wholesale

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[287] Frederick B. Gates, "The Impact of the Western and Atlantic Railroad on the Development of the Georgia Upcountry, 1840-1860," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 91, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 169-184.
[288] Richard G. Wright and Kenneth H. Wheeler, "New Men in the Old South: Joseph Brown and his Associates in Georgia's Etowah Valley," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 363-387.
[289] Davis, Jr., "First Golden Age of Georgia Industry," 701-702.
[290] David F. Weiman, "Farmers and the Market in Antebellum America: A View from the Georgia Upcountry," *The Journal of Economic History* 47, no. 3 (September 1987), 631.

distribution center that competed with Georgia's river and port cities for the expanding trade of

the interior of the state in 1860. This rapid growth was driven by the ever-expanding rail

network. By the early 1850s, Atlanta was linked to the outside world by four different rail lines

and due to its position in the transport system, the city developed into the market center of the

Upcountry as well as central and southwestern Georgia. Suddenly, the upstart city was taking

commerce away from Augusta, Macon, and Columbus.[291] Lured by the expanding markets,

merchants came to set up wholesale and retail stores and the city attracted other white men to be

employed in commerce, transportation, and skilled labor related to city-building, mainly in

construction. As early as 1850, over 75% of all the white male labor force in the city engaged in

occupations dealing with commerce, transportation, communications, or skilled trades.[292]

Throughout Georgia, not just in Atlanta, railroad construction opened new markets and

expanded the job opportunities available. As the example of Atlanta shows, often those jobs

associated to commerce and skilled labor related to the railroads and these professions were

typically the domain of the middle class. Although Augusta was a well-established city by the

time the railroad arrived, historian of the city W.K. Wood argues that the number of

manufacturing establishments, factors, merchants, bankers, shops, and professional services such

as doctors and lawyers grew exponentially after the Georgia Railroad was connected to the

Western and Atlantic in the early 1850s.[293] Even in a city the size of Augusta, when the railroad

came, growth in both population and jobs came with it. Athens was one of the earliest towns in

Georgia to advocate for industrialization and investing in railroads and the effect was seen in the

occupational structure of the town by the 1850s. Around fifty-five percent of all workers in the

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[291] David F. Weiman, "Urban Growth on the Periphery of the Antebellum Cotton Belt: Atlanta, 1847-1860," *The Journal of Economic History* 48, no. 2 (June 1988), 262-264.

[292] Manuscript Census, Georgia, DeKalb County, 1850, schedule 1.

[293] W.K. Wood, "A Note on Pro-Urbanism and Urbanization in the Antebellum South: Augusta, Georgia, 1820-1860," *Richmond County History* 6 (1974), 25-26.

town pursued middle class professions such as merchant, lawyer, banker, clerk, insurance salesman, bookkeeper, wholesaler of dry goods and groceries, professor, physician, and skilled labor such as railroad brakemen, tailors, and watchmakers.[294] Although in all of these towns and cities much of the business activity was directly involved in providing goods and services to the surrounding area, members of these professions often utilized the rail lines to make connections with fellow professionals, or customers, in other parts of Georgia or, at times, in other states altogether.

A New and Profitable Impulse: Internal Improvement Projects Beget Reform Movements

The railroad helped push rapid growth for the manufacturing sector in the state during the 1850s. From 1850 to 1860, the amount of capital invested in manufacturing establishments within the state doubled and was the most invested among Lower South states. During the same time period, the value of manufacturing products made in the state more than doubled and again Georgia was the leader among Lower South states in that category.[295] The middle class of the state hailed the growth of cities and manufacturing as a sign economic progress, but in order to further that progress, internal improvement projects were necessary. As historian Jonathan Daniel Wells has explained, "a virtual mania for such projects…gripped the South in the 1850s."[296] The projects largely focused on economic objectives, such as promotion of a bank, railroad, or canal, but the enthusiasm for internal improvements was part of a larger goal to transform the state and region not only economically, but also socially and politically. The belief was that economic progress was conducive to cultural advancement. Modernization did not just

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[294] Frank J. Huffman, Jr., "Town and Country in the South, 1850-1880: A Comparison of Urban and Rural Social Structures," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 76 (Summer 1977), 373-374.
[295] Donald B. Dodd, comp., *Historical Statistics of the United States*: *Two Centuries of the Census, 1790-1990* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 313-336.
[296] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 169.

mean of the economy, but also of southern society. Middle-class Georgians believed that transformation of the economy would eventually transform all facets of life in the state. Economic improvements led to material progress, which in turn led to moral reform. Advocating for internal improvements, then, became part of the larger worldview of the nascent middle class.

A vital aspect of the support for internal improvements was an attempt to make the state more respectable. Michael Gagnon, in his study of industrialization in Athens, finds that industrialization for its own merit did not drive support for internal improvements in the area. Instead, he finds that the spectrum of people who supported improvements did so partially because they saw these efforts as a way to enhance the respectability of the town, hoping to add to the cultural offerings and seeking to entice new residents. Perhaps most importantly for this study, Gagnon argues that the activities surrounding improvement efforts "created an aura of respectability that acted as a social portal for upwardly mobile members of the lower classes in Athens." The support for these projects allowed middle class Athenians to become town leaders in "nearly every civic endeavor." [297]

Some of the support for improvements was seen as part of a larger competition among the states in the Union. As an editor for the Athens *Southern Banner* wrote, if Georgians failed to promote and support modernization efforts "we must soon sink far below the station assigned us by a beneficent Providence among our fellows."[298] Augustin Clayton, an early advocate for industrialization, argued in a speech that "there is a rivalship" between the states "in all the great purposes of Internal Improvement, Education, and Domestic Manufactures. Shall we decline to enter the lists of such a grand and spirited contest?"[299] The implication was clear—if Georgia

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[297] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 99.
[298] Athens *Southern Banner*, December 10, 1836.
[299] *Athenian*, December 15, 1829.

was to retain its influence, it needed to keep pace with other states in physical, economic, intellectual, cultural, and social improvements.

Although planters and other elites supported industrialization and internal improvement efforts, one area differentiated middle class supporters from those higher on the economic and social ladder. While many Georgians supported railroad, banking, canal, and other similar "modernization" efforts, there was a general fear that material and technological progress would have negative political and moral ramifications. The elites did not want to alter the social or economic ladder, but instead viewed improvement projects as a way to sustain or add to their status. Middle-class Georgians, on the other hand, often viewed improvement projects as a chance at advancement, a way to climb the ladder by taking leading roles in local or even statewide undertakings.[300]

A somewhat natural outgrowth of this view was to look to the North as an example for the types of reform movements that were necessary to gain respectability. Middle-class Georgians, therefore, embraced concepts such as frugality, self-discipline, charity, and honesty as virtues that were necessary for a modern society.[301] Despite the popular scholarly belief that antebellum reform movements had no impact in the South, in Georgia one finds that reform movements actually played a significant role in the antebellum era and were widely supported by the growing middle class. As Augustin Clayton wrote, during this "age of improvement" people should "husband the resources of the country" to improve their own lot in life and the world

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[300] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 98-99.
[301] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 86.

around them.[302] This impetus led middle class Georgians to support education reform, temperance, relief for the poor, and labor reform.

One of the best examples of this effort to blend differing facets of modernization with reform can be seen in the career of Dr. Richard Arnold. Born in Savannah, the son of a Rhode Island merchant, Arnold endured hardships as a child after his parents died, but was able to receive a good education thanks to benefactors. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania's Medical School, Arnold returned to Savannah to start his medical practice and soon bought and edited the *Savannah Georgian* newspaper.   While conducting research into yellow fever at his medical practice, Arnold used his editorship to advocate for modernization efforts, especially the numerous railroad projects that were being discussed in the area. To a friend Arnold wrote, "I am in hopes that it will infuse a new vigor into our city and give an impetus to business of all kinds."[303] Arnold became active in local politics, serving as Mayor of Savannah for six terms, health officer, chairman of the Board of Aldermen, and chairman of the Board of Education and eventually served in the Georgia House of Representatives and Senate. During his time in politics, Arnold pushed for sanitary reforms and helped found the Georgia Historical Society. In addition, Arnold found time to be involved in the founding of the American Medical Association in 1846 and was one of the original founders of the Medical Association of Georgia in 1851. Arnold was a founder of, and teacher at, the Savannah Medical School. In his capacity as a physician, Arnold increasingly reached across sectional boundaries to attend conferences and conventions and to meet with colleagues. It was in no small measure due to his exposure to northern education and colleagues that Arnold became a champion for

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[302] Athens *Southern Banner*, August 3, 1833.
[303] Richard H. Shryock, ed., *The Letters of Richard D. Arnold, M.D., 1808-1876* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1929), 15.

economic and cultural progress. Arnold was nothing less than a booster for Savannah, arguing

that the city could blend economic, political, and social modernization to become a leader of

Georgia's progress.[304]

An Interesting Experiment: Education Reform

Arnold was an extreme success story, but his is a tale of how many middle-class

Georgians envisioned their own path to advancement. Each generation expected to exceed the

wealth and possessions of its parents, and education was the key to improvement. The idea that

education could allow their children to progress even further made education reform the number

one priority for many middle-class Georgians and became central to middle-class ideology.[305]

While the elite could send their children to expensive schools in the North or hire private tutors,

the middle-class desired primary schools for young children and what we would consider

vocational education for teenagers and young adults. As was the case with the Savannah

Medical School, many times schools were founded, operated, and taught by middle-class men

and women. The vocation of teaching became a viable career for both sexes. The educational

awakening of the time led to a rising consciousness among teachers, who felt their profession

was one that could be bettered through professionalization.[306] Access to education became one

of the driving factors in the growth of the middle-class in not only Georgia, but throughout the

entire country.

The push for educational reform would also place the growing middle-class in increased

conflict with the planters and rich businessmen of Georgia for two reasons. First, many middle-

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[304] Jacqueline Jones, *Saving Savannah: The City and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2009), 27.
[305] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 133; In Frank J. Byrne's study of merchants in the South, he argues that merchants' "emphasis upon education helped demarcate a cultural boundary" between themselves and "most other white Southerners outside the planter class." Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 77.
[306] Coulter, "The Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 25-26.

class families wanted the state to use taxes to pay for free public education, something that they wished to model after the example of northern states. Rich Georgians, who were largely planters and businessmen, opposed this, because they would bear the brunt of the tax burden, which was largely based upon property taxes, and they would not utilize the service of the public schools. Why pay for something you would not use? Second, education was seen as a way for the growing middle-class to enrich themselves socially and economically and, thus, made them a threat to the elites of the state. Rather than the elites being the only ones with higher education, there would be a new group of people who were educated and could use that education to challenge the elite of the state for political positions and perhaps even careers.

The topic of education reform was the one area, more than any other, where middling Georgians nearly coalesced into a coherent class. Of all the topics of discussion in this work, the topic of education reform was one with near unanimous support from middle-class Georgians. The importance of publicly funded education became a key element of the ideology of the group and by the 1840s and 1850s, reformers were using political means to support increased funding for education while also establishing schools and training teachers. What also brought those supporting education reform together was the resistance, either real or perceived, public education received from planters. Commercial and professional people may have shared some economic and financial interests with planters, but on education reform they were on opposite sides. Whenever a proposal to use state property taxes to support common schools emerged, it met fierce resistance and this was largely blamed on planters.[307] There were, of course, some planters who did support education reform, but, despite that, middling Georgians saw the planters as the main opposition to increased state funding for education.

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[307] Peter Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South: Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 65.

In 1822, the state of Georgia created a Poor School Fund for children whose parents were unable to pay tuition. The fund would allow a child to attend school for three years to learn basics such as reading, writing, and math. However, the benefits of the "pauper schools" that arose from the fund "proved limited" because the schools were associated with poor yeomen, were poorly funded, and were typically taught by teachers with little formal training. Attendance at the schools was never very high, partially because attendance "served as public announcement of the parents' poverty—and disgrace."[308] In Bryan County, outside Savannah, there were 164 students who were "entitled to the poor school fund" in 1847, but no more than 16 actually attended the local poor school.[309] Middling families also eschewed the pauper schools because many middle-class Georgians did not like the idea of an educational system that would further perpetuate and reinforce distinctions between students of rich families and those of all other families.[310] If the publicly funded schools were not good enough for everyone, then they need not bother exist.

There was certainly an element of resentment among those who advocated for public education against the planters, but also yeomen farmers. Middle-class Georgians felt that the planters did not want to pay for education for all while the yeomen farmers lacked interest in educating their children, happy to just work their land. Although middle-class Georgians may have been able to find allies among the poor and yeomen, it seems evident that many middle-class Georgians, especially those who did have formal education, looked down upon those they

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[308] Harold W. Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood: Methodist Bishop, Editor, and Educator* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1965), 11.

[309] George Washington Towns collection, 1972. MS 3464 (M). Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.

[310] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 134.

deemed beneath them.[311] Furthermore, yeomen farmers in the north Georgia upcountry "tended to work against state spending projects" intended to aid educational endeavors and this bred resentment from the middle-class.[312]

What further irritated middle-class supporters of public education was the fact yeomen had supported Baptist theologian and educator Adiel Sherwood's attempts to open a "manual labor" school in the early 1830s in Eatonton, which Sherwood expressly designed to assuage Baptist's fears of education making their sons effeminate or being on the model of "New England refinement," which was deemed the "wrong kind of education."[313] Many Baptists in the state opposed the idea of education because they believed men who "labor in order to acquire information, and set themselves up as a gentleman" became "too good to take hold of a plough or hoe."[314] This was part of a larger movement of antimissionary Baptists in the state who viewed educational advancement as opposed to their religious salvation.[315] This was in direct contrast with many middle-class Georgians, who explicitly looked to the North as a model for how to upgrade the quality of the education system in the state and wanted "access to public education that could provide intellectual improvement for all classes" because they believed the republic could endure only through an educated citizenry.[316]

Middle-class Georgians also disliked the manual labor schools because they were encouraged by the upper classes. While the state offered little support to the idea of public education, the Georgia State Senate felt it was "the duty of the Legislature to aid" manual labor

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[311] E. Merton Coulter, "The Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (December 1921), 24-25.

[312] Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South*, 71.

[313] Jarrett Burch, "Adiel Sherwood: Religious Pioneer of Nineteenth-Century Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (Spring 2003), 38-39.

[314] Milledgeville *Federal Union*, July 16, 1831.

[315] Frederick A. Bode, "The Formation of Evangelical Communities in Middle Georgia: Twiggs County, 1820-1861," *Journal of Southern History* 60, no. 4 (November 1994), 711.

[316] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 136.

schools because they were founded for "such laudable purposes."[317] Groups of elites formed

educational societies that promoted the manual labor schools and attempted to coopt the

opportunity for formal education of white children of lesser means. Many Georgians saw this as

an attempt by the elite to control them through charity.[318]

The disavowal of manual labor schools tied in to a larger discussion of curriculum.

While some argued for primary schools that would teach basic literacy and math to students,

middle-class education reformers favored northern pedagogical philosophies that focused on

applied mathematics and science. By the 1840s, many middling Georgians were well aware of

northern educational reformers such as Horace Mann and Henry Barnard and wrote to them

looking for advice on creating public schools in the state. Georgia politician Herschel V.

Johnson wrote to Mann asking about his *Common School Journal* and then obtained an entire set

of the journal. Johnson stated he would read the journal "to my children and require them to

read it, until they shall become familiar with its every sentiment and thought."[319]

Georgians sought out northern reformers such as Mann and Barnard in order to develop a

school system that emulated institutions and principles in the North. As historian Jonathan

Daniel Wells points out, southern education reformers were not interested in education reform in

the abstract, but wanted to utilize examples of common school education in the North and extract

it to the South.[320] This was seen in Georgia through the rise of the academy movement, which

were grammar schools that occupied a niche between basic primary education and the university

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[317] Spencer B. King, Jr., *Georgia Voices: A Documentary History to 1872* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1966), 216.
[318] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 107-108.
[319] H.V. Johnson to Horace Mann, March 8, 1847, in Edgar W. Knight, *A Documentary History of Education in the South before 1860*, Vol. 4, *Educational Theories and Practices* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 344.
[320] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 144.

system. Whether called academies, institutes, seminaries, or schools, these functioned for postprimary education and have recently been labeled "higher schooling."[321] Unlike academies for rich students that emphasized Greek, Latin, and the classics, the emphasis at academies founded or supported by the middle-class focused on courses that could not only assist students in gaining entrance to a university, but could also help them prepare for a career. This makes even more sense when one realizes that many of Georgia's advocates for educational reform were also those who supported industrialization efforts.[322]

The premise was that the careers industrialization and other modernization efforts were creating needed an educated workforce. The academies founded by the middle-class beginning in the 1840s were viewed as a way to create such an educated work force. These academies used the northern model and broke their schools into departments, allowing them to cover a variety of subjects. Young children, typically starting at age five, would be in the first department, focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic. As students got older and matriculated upward, the second department afforded instruction in grammar, composition, astronomy, history, and philosophy, among other subjects. Depending on the academy, some would offer a classical department that taught Latin, Greek, and similar subjects that would be required to pass an entrance exam to enter the University of Georgia, for example, but these courses were usually optional and cost more.[323] Many, however, ignored classical subjects as non-essential for practical people and unnecessary for most of the children who attended the academy.[324] Often, academies in the 1840s and especially the 1850s would have a department to prepare students who wished to

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[321] Nancy Beadle and Kim Tolley, eds., *Chartered Schools: Two-Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002), 3.
[322] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 104.
[323] Coulter, "The Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 32-33.
[324] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 109.

pursue a career in "science and the business of life" and taught subjects such as algebra, surveying, geometry, and various sciences.[325]

The scientific and vocational nature of the academies was a product of national curricular reform, which was focused on reducing costs by eliminating unnecessary courses. While colleges and universities required knowledge of classical languages for admission, which often required years of tutoring or attendance at expensive preparatory schools, educational reformers in the 1840s and 1850s rejected the study of classical languages as incongruent with the career aspirations of their students. The intensive study of classics was still prevalent at southern state universities, which required extensive primary education.[326] Governor Wilson Lumpkin complained that higher education was for "none but the wealthy" because of the "expenses incident to classical education."[327] As an alternative, some small colleges and academies, which would fall under the higher schooling category, emphasized scientific and mathematical studies, specifically catering to young men's career expectations. A secondary benefit was that this made educational costs more affordable, as students who did not plan on attending state universities could avoid extensive primary education and take fewer courses once in the academy of their choosing.[328]

Congruent with the railroad boom, scientific, mathematic, and military academies sprang up during the late antebellum period in Georgia, as did small colleges, many of which focused on medicine, the law, or religious education. The commonality between all of these endeavors was a focus on practical education. As Keith Bohannon points out in a study of the Georgia Military

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[325] Coulter, "The Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 33.
[326] See Timothy J. Williams, *Intellectual Manhood: University, Self, and Society in the Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 47.
[327] *Journal of the House of Representatives* (1834), 20.
[328] Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9.

Institute, the school and its benefactors "almost always stressed the civilian benefits of their school, especially in engineering and scientific professions."[329] Practical education tended to be tied to science and the process of scientific inquiry. Even the denominational academies and colleges that sprung up in the late antebellum period focused on scientific education. The all-male Cherokee Baptist College in Cassville, which was founded in 1854, focused their courses primarily around English literature, mathematics, and natural sciences.[330] Unlike the manual labor schools that were founded in the 1830s, the religious academies and colleges of the late antebellum era were largely founded by educated ministers who sought to provide an opportunity for all children in Georgia to acquire "education in a classless system." The "existing stratification" of education outraged many religious leaders, who felt access to education was a public moral good.[331]

The benefits of a practical education were meant to be seen in the professional careers that graduates would embark upon and the vocational advantages of scientific fields of study.[332] This was purposefully done to challenge the classical education inherent in universities and elite academies. While the University of Georgia slowly incorporated science, higher schooling establishments fully embraced science education as not only vocational, but as a way to entice parents. Scientific education would prepare their children for careers. The Georgia Military Institute, while stressing that students would learn infantry and artillery tactics in their first year, also pointed out in their *Regulations* that cadets only had to take French and could also take courses in drafting, engineering, and architecture. Furthermore, the mathematics courses that

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[329] Keith Bohannon, "Cadets, Drillmasters, Draft Dodgers, and Soldiers: The Georgia Military Institute During the Civil War," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 79 (no.1, Spring 1995), 6.
[330] Alexa Ilene Claremont, "Creators of Community: Cassville, Georgia, 1850-1880," (Master's Thesis, University of Georgia, 2005), 18.
[331] Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood*, 11.
[332] Green, *Military Education*, 132.

cadets would take were focused on applied math, meaning that the courses would prepare cadets for careers in surveying, mechanics, and construction.[333] When the Chatham Academy opened in Savannah in 1841, the school did offer optional courses in Latin and Greek, but the bulk of the courses focused on practical courses that could lead to careers, such as surveying, navigation, natural sciences, geography, and modern history.[334]

Higher schooling institutions emphasized that students should not waste their effort on the time and labor needed to master dead languages or impractical math as it was not commensurate with the results they would accomplish. The professors, leaders, boards, and advocates of these academies were well aware that many middle-class parents wanted to see results from their children's education and therefore emphasized the practical, career-based aspects of their curriculum. The Board of Visitors at GMI explained that they understood "that a large number of our citizens does not design to have their sons enter one of the learned professions. They are able and anxious to educate them; but when educated they expect them to become businessmen, engineers, architects, manufacturers, merchants…To qualify young men for these avocations, in this 'age of physical progress,' a thorough scientific education is obviously the best."[335] The Board realized that they were bound to bring employment to their graduates and the scientific curriculum specifically recommended careers.

The practical education that was offered was extremely popular, so much so that the University of Georgia began to see a dwindling number of students throughout the 1850s. William Mitchell, an Athens education reformer, argued before the State Legislature, who

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[333] *Regulations of the Georgia Military Institute, Marietta, Georgia* (n.p., January 1853), 4.
[334] *Chatham Academy. Savannah…It is the wish of the principal of Chatham Academy…*Broadside 1841.C4 (Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia)
[335] *Report by the Board of Visitors of the Georgia Military Institute, To his Excellency, Howell Cobb, Governor of the State of Georgia For 1853* (n.p., 1853), 13.

controlled funding, that the university had to embrace "education in practical knowledge and application" in order to entice more students. Mitchell felt that education "should respond to the wants of our age" and the university should be a place "where learning and knowledge which qualify men for all the varied avocations of useful human pursuits may be acquired." Mitchell had a radical proposal: to create three different schools at the university which would scientifically train professionals in law, agriculture, and the applied sciences of the industrial arts. Mitchell argued that the state needed to value commerce and industry just as much as the "more advanced States of the North" and embracing practical education would do just that. Georgia needed to develop railroads, manufacturers, and mines and Mitchell's proposed School of Applied Sciences would train young men to build railroads, buildings, bridges, and machinery; instruct them in commercial chemistry and "the manufacture of various articles of commercial value or common use"; and teach them how to mine.[336]

Mitchell requested $80,000 to create the three schools, but the price was too steep for the State Legislature, which wanted to keep taxes low and not draw the ire of planters who opposed tax hikes. Mitchell's proposal, which was made in 1855, was so unpopular that all members of the faculty and administration who favored his proposal were fired. In the end, Mitchell got the last laugh as, after suffering declining enrollment every year from 1853 to 1858, the University of Georgia finally implemented Mitchell's proposal, adding schools of law, agriculture, applied sciences, medicine, and commerce.[337] Therefore, by the end of the antebellum period, even the elitist state university eventually embraced the practical education that reformers promoted.

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[336] Coulter, *College Life in the Old South*, 183-184.
[337] J. Patrick McCarthy, Jr., "Commercial Development and University Reform in Antebellum Athens: William Mitchell as Entrepreneur, Engineer, and Educator," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 83, no. 1 (Spring 1999), 21-23.

The practical program was seen as integrally tied with the idea of progress. The focus on scientific education was part of a concern over technological advancement that was seen among education reformers. The importance of scientific and technological developments and learning about them was that they accompanied social improvements that could benefit the state as well. With greater access to scientific education, progress could be seen in other areas. The higher schooling establishments were seen as doing their part to advance progress in the state and the region by democratizing education. As historian Jennifer R. Green argues, middle-class southerners viewed progress as intricately tied to modern developments, technology, and careers.[338] The practical curriculum promoted this progress, as graduates of the higher schooling academies and colleges went on to pursue careers in engineering, surveying, law, business, medicine, and teaching, all vocations dominated by the middle class in Georgia and all vocations that were seeing a rising level of professionalization and standardization due to the influence of a middling, educated workforce desirous of respect for their career field and expertise.

Denominational Education Reform

The manual labor schools that religious denominations in the state founded in the 1830s floundered and were quickly transformed into church-related academies, colleges, and seminaries. When the Baptist-founded Mercer Institute, which began as a manual labor school in 1833, finally closed its Manual Labor Department in 1845 (Mercer Institute had become Mercer College in 1837), *The Christian Index* reported that "not a student shed a tear over its grave, and if the faculty wept, their tears were unobserved by us."[339] The manual labor schools were wildly unpopular among not only the students and faculty of Mercer, but also throughout the state. As discussed earlier, the manual labor schools received praise from rich benefactors and state

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[338] Green, *Military Education*, 150.
[339] *The Christian Index* (Washington, GA), January 3, 1845.

politicians; however, this seemed to only make the schools more unpopular among the public. The perception was that the rich and powerful were trying to control those with less money and power through promoting manual labor education. This belief was likely confirmed when a Presbyterian manual labor school in Athens reported that their students were not admitted "to social equality with young gentlemen in the University [of Georgia] classes."[340] Although it was religious conventions, such as the Georgia Baptist Convention that opened Mercer, that founded the manual labor schools, the religious groups were also among the first to conclude that educating the populace would require more than simply teaching people to read, write, and labor.

Most of Georgia's preachers favored providing at least rudimentary education through Sunday schools, but during the later antebellum period there was a rush to form higher schooling institutions in order to provide an educated populace, which they thought would better evangelize and reform the state.[341] One Baptist had been opposed to education, but he was converted to the idea because "the world is becoming more enlightened, especially in towns" and it was the "duty of the preachers to keep pace with others."[342] This coincided with a growing concern among clergy regarding the dissipating authority of the church in the offices of government and society. Georgia was a state dominated by Christianity, but it was also a pluralistic society in that Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, and Unitarians were found throughout the state. The freedom to choose religious affiliation gave individuals a

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[340] Coulter, "Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 24.
[341] Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 103-105.
[342] *Federal Union* (Milledgeville), July 16, 1831.

position of power over the church.[343] In response, churches became competing institutions and liberal ministers utilized education as a way to gain converts.

To be sure, many ministers were total believers in the cause of education reform and were among the movement's staunchest supporters. The effort to establish a state system of public education "was supported by the better educated ministers," many of whom worked as professors at the denominational colleges.[344] Various denominations were behind the founding of the Georgia Educational Society in 1823, which promoted equal opportunity in education for the poor as well as providing ministers with a modern education.[345] That being said, the power of the minister hinged on the ability to maintain popular confidence and therefore gain the public's loyalty. Because of the loss of traditional authority, many ministers found grassroots organizing, utilizing print culture to engage in public debate, and leading reform movements as the key to gaining confidence and loyalty.[346] The rush to open higher schooling institutions in Georgia was part of this effort to gain public trust. At first, Presbyterians and Methodists used the education reform movement as a way to distance themselves from Baptists, who were seen as opposed to anything beyond rudimentary education. Eventually, though, even the Baptists, especially the missionary variety, began to see the appeal of denominational schools as a way to promote fellowship. The religious higher schooling movement was led by more liberal ministers, willing to embrace a rational spirituality that granted reason, science, and philosophy as authoritative discourses on par with religion.[347] At Emory, teachers utilized books by Hugh Miller, a geologist who challenged the literal Biblical estimation of the age of the Earth, to debate the idea

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[343] T. Gregory Harvey, *Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2006), 31-33.
[344] Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood*, 11.
[345] Coulter, "Ante-Bellum Academy Movement in Georgia," 27.
[346] Harvey, *Creating the Culture of Reform in America*, 34.
[347] Startup, *The Root of All Evil*, 110-111.

of organic evolution.[348] As early as 1845, Joseph LeConte was teaching the theory of evolution at Oglethorpe College, a Presbyterian school, and James Woodrow took up LeConte's teaching after the latter took a position at the University of Georgia. Both men felt that there was no essential conflict between the Bible and science and therefore evolution could be taught at a denominational school.[349] Furthermore, this embrace was a practical matter as religious schools had to compete with secular institutions for students.

Just as with secular academies and colleges, religious higher schooling institutions intended to prepare their students for careers through practical curriculum, in part yielding to the competition for students. But this was also part of the overall educational mission of the church schools. At Mercer College in Penfield, which was originally founded as an institute in 1833, there was a fear among the faculty and administrators that the planter class was not living up to the Christian or republican ideal. As John Leadley Dagg, a professor at the college, put it, the wealthier class had a tendency toward "boasting" because their wealth was often based upon lineage and not hard work.[350] Therefore, the focus at Mercer was not on a classical education for elites, but on practical education. The denominational schools' primary function was to train preachers and missionaries. In addition, though, they provided many young men, and women, with the knowledge needed for social and political service.[351]

The faculty and administrators at Mercer were worried about materialism corrupting their students and took measures to protect them from temptation. However, it was also felt that if the scholars were taught the proper moral convictions, even if they ended up being lawyers or merchants, two careers that were often denigrated, their moral fortitude would make their

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[348] Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood*, 23-24.
[349] Allen P. Tankersley, *College Life at Old Oglethorpe* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1951), 78-81.
[350] J.L. Dagg, "Brief Notes of a Discourse on 1st Corinthians, 13th Chapter," *Christian Index*, July 29, 1836.
[351] Startup, *The Root of All Evil*, 114.

influence felt wherever they ended up. The church schools could produce lawyers, for example, that would be ruled by moral conviction, not monetary interest.[352] There was no reason a student could not receive an education and spiritual improvement. James R. Thomas, the President of Emory during the late 1850s, felt that education could be used to expand both "the intellectual and moral forces" of the students.[353] The schools sought to teach their students frugality, benevolence, and discipline, all traits that the growing middle-class cherished too.

The founding of church schools with practical education was also part of the conviction that lower and middle-class students should have access to higher education. Even in the late antebellum period, many people in the state believed that higher education was the special prerogative of the upper classes. This was partially due to the fact that one needed a classical education to attend most state universities, but it was also because the cost of college was prohibitive for most families that were not wealthy. George F. Pierce, a leading figure in the church school movement in the state, disagreed, arguing that church schools should bring "education down from the upper walks of life to the humble and needy."[354] The founders of church schools kept tuition low, which sometimes saddled the schools with serious debt, but the goal was to reach as many students as possible through affordability.

To accomplish this, church schools promoted tolerance between denominations, accepting students of various faiths. Whether a student was an adherent of their particular sect or not does not seem to have mattered to the denominational schools. A visitor to Monroe Female University, which was founded by Baptists in 1855, explained that he was a Methodist, but he was inspired by the President of Monroe, who "never endeavors to induce his pupils, in the least,

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[352] Spright Dowell, *A History of Mercer University, 1833-1953* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1958), 43.
[353] *The Educational Repository and Family Monthly* I (January 1860), 4-9.
[354] Albea Godbold, *The Church College in the Old South* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1944), 59.

in regard to religious predilections."[355] In 1852, Pierce, then President of Emory College,

founded by Methodists, gave a speech lauding the educational efforts of Baptist and Presbyterian

educators and argued that all denominational schools were collaborators in the same cause. He

further stated that any assertion that the church schools were intolerant toward other faiths was

no more than the jealous and vindictive imagination of supporters of the state universities and

colleges.[356] Pierce was not necessarily wrong, either, as the Board of Trustees of the University

of Georgia complained that "denominational institutions" were stealing their students away due

to "vigorous sectarian patronage."[357]

The same curriculum reform that other higher schooling institutions instituted was found

at the denominational schools as well. At Mercer, one benefactor saw no use for "Latin and

Greek" and was happy to hear that the college was focused on practical subjects like grammar

and geography in order to allow young men to "labor industriously."[358] Adiel Sherwood, a

Baptist minister and founder of Mercer, argued that denominational schools should focus on

"higher branches of mathematics" to prepare their students for careers.[359] When Oglethorpe

College was founded, the goal was to train "the minds of the rising generation and in the study of

useful science" because although the school had been founded to educate future ministers, the

founders also knew that most of the students who matriculated through Oglethorpe had no

intention of joining the ministry.[360] Emory offered courses in the classics, but the bulk of their

classes were in physical sciences, applied mathematics, civil engineering, modern languages, and

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[355] Elbert W.G. Boogher, *Secondary Education in Georgia, 1732-1858* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), 274-275.
[356] George G. Smith, *The Life and Times of George Foster Pierce, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with a Sketch of Lovick Pierce, His Father* (Sparta, GA: Hancock Publishing, 1888), 170.
[357] Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood*, 18.
[358] *The Christian Index* (Washington, GA), July 16, 1831.
[359] Adiel Sherwood, *A Gazetteer of the State of Georgia* (Washington City: n.p., 1837), 321.
[360] Tankersley, *College Life at Old Oglethorpe*, vii.

political history. Five out of every six Emory graduates ended up in a vocation that was non-denominational and so the courses offered reflected this fact. Of course, Emory students were exhorted to join the ranks of the ministry, but professors such as Gustavus J. Orr upheld law, medicine, and teaching as fine careers for graduating students.[361] The work of the denominational colleges was so successful that, according to one historian of the University of Georgia, by 1856 many parents in the state felt the denominational colleges would provide the best educational advantages for their children. This was no doubt due to the focus on practical education over the classical curriculum that the University of Georgia still utilized.[362]

Women's Education

The push for education reform among the growing middle-class in Georgia was not just for men. In fact, many middle-class families were just as anxious for their daughters to receive an education. This was partially due to the occupations that the middle-class chose. As discussed earlier, women often worked in stores run by their families and were quickly becoming a large proportion of the teachers. Just as with their sons, middle-class parents believed their daughters could better themselves through education too. For most middle-class males, this meant pursuing an education that would put them on a career path. For middle-class females, the education could help them achieve career goals, but just as often it was a way to improve socially and morally in order to be a good mother, wife, or daughter. As a family friend related to Elizabeth Watson Cotton, regarding Cotton's daughter Eliza attending school, the influence a woman could have on her "Husband and children is of incalculable importance…A Wife's daily example, will produce an effect upon the mind of the Husband, which must be productive of

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[361] Mann, *Atticus Greene Haygood*, 26.
[362] E. Merton Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), 248-253.

good."[363] The push for female education was largely centered upon teaching young ladies self-discipline, time management, order, and neatness, all ideals that the growing middle-class idealized. Additionally, some reformers argued in favor of teaching young women practical skills that they could utilize by need or interest.

Education for women was almost exclusively the prerogative of the rich so the fact that middle-class families were sending their daughters to school and advocating for public education for all children, male and female, was groundbreaking. The education that rich southerners utilized was one to inculcate a Southern version of femininity. By promoting liberal arts curriculum, combined with a focus on ladylike values and etiquette, Southern schools encouraged the ideal of the Southern lady or Southern belle while also creating a marker of class distinction.[364] The focus on such perfunctory education was derided by many reformers. George F. Pierce, who served as President at the Georgia Female College and then Emory, thought the obsession with gentility was damaging to the potential of girls and young women to learn more about weighty subjects. Pierce argued that women were taught that "a graceful step was more" important than "a useful thought…But the world is beginning to learn that life is not a holy day [holiday], in which woman simply ministers to man's amusements." Pierce further argued that there were duties, including domestic responsibilities, that required "more substantial qualifications than *polite* education (so called) can ever furnish."[365]

Pierce was not necessarily advocating for women to learn about subjects that would put them in the workforce, but he was arguing for a shift in the social order. Namely, Pierce felt that

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[363] C.E. Seymour to My Dear Mrs. Cotton, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[364] Christie Anne Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 3-4.
[365] George Foster Pierce, "Georgia Female College—Its Origins, Plan and Prospects," *Southern Ladies' Book* I (February 1840), 73.

because female education focused largely on fashion, manners, dancing, and music, there was an idleness to the women of Georgia and the South. The Reverend L. Pierce, who resided in Wynnton, just outside Columbus, complained that "the wealthy and fashion ridden have made education of little general and practical value" for young ladies.[366] The obsession with fashionable dress led many to believe that education for women was just fashionable schooling, with elite women receiving superficial education. Reformers such as Pierce, and many evangelicals like him, boasted that women served vital functions as teachers, mothers, and wives and should be educated as such. As Reverend David Gardiner Phillips told the graduating class at the Greensboro Female College in 1861, in her role as a mother, women were "the greatest natural educator of society."[367]

In the Macon-based *Southern Ladies' Book*, which was operated in close concert with the Georgia Female College, critics such as George Pierce advocated a meaningful education for women, one that befitted their role in society. Evangelicals like Pierce argued that women should learn substantive subjects that would help them to be wise mothers, which would allow them to impart knowledge to their children.[368] This argument certainly contained class undertones, as writers in the journal argued that the obsession with fashion and luxury among the rich of Georgia was a corrupting influence on the state. Furthermore, there was a clear insinuation that the fashionable education that rich young ladies received would not lead to them being mothers and wives that would teach their children or husbands Christian humbleness and simplicity. There would be too much focus on appearance rather than the mind. This type of

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[366] George Foster Pierce, "The Education of the Poor," *Southern Ladies' Book* I (April 1840), 222.
[367] David Gardiner Phillips papers, MS 3753, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[368] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 76.

education debased the creative intellect and injured the spirit by making people focus on "the accumulation of wealth by any shape or means."[369]

As Phillips argued in his speech at Greensboro Female College, "the elevation of humanity depends upon the Christian education of women."[370] A cultivated mind would not make a woman useless or incompatible to marriage, but instead would allow her to help advance civilization. When the Bibb County Female Academy opened in 1850, "A Friend to Education" wrote in to the newspaper to explain that the people of Macon should support the academy because "the children sent to this School will have their *morals, minds, and manners* diligently cultivated."[371] Religiously inspired educational feminism such as this did not just argue for women to solely be nurturers. Instead, these advocates argued that women should be able to enjoy the fruits of education and literary experience. Charles Cotton, a merchant in Savannah who traveled throughout the North, wrote his daughter from New York to say that he was "delighted to hear that you are all attentive to your studies" and because of that, he could take her on future business trips "to give you an opportunity for seeing many of the great natural curiosities that you read about…"[372] Cotton's daughter would be able to enjoy the benefits of her education, just as the reformers wished.

Perhaps the most radical aspect of this argument was that women were on the same intellectual plain as men and should be given the same education. This was part of a broader discussion brought about by the Second Great Awakening, which would have ramifications for the emerging middle-class culture of the state. As part of the egalitarian discussions that the

[369] Samuel Strong, "Southern Literature," *Southern Ladies' Book* II (August 1840), 90.
[370] David Gardiner Phillips papers, MS 3753, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[371] *Georgia Journal and Messenger* (Macon), January 23, 1850.
[372] Charles Cotton to My Dear Daughter, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Second Great Awakening brought about, many educational reformers began to argue that culture and custom, not any innate biological handicaps, had held women's education back in Georgia.[373] George Pierce wrote in the *Southern Ladies' Book* that "irrational education and the pestiferous customs which have sprung to life beneath its culture" was the main separator between male and female education.[374] A writer who witnessed the examination of pupils of a female academy in Athens came away convinced that only the "most envious, jealous-minded man cannot but admit the equality of the female mind with that of the male, unless his candour and honesty have become entirely subservient to his arrogance and vanity."[375]

It was not only men who spoke on behalf of women, but female writers used their position to promote the cause of intellectual development for women. Mary Edwards Bryan, a writer and then editor of the newspaper *Temperance Banner*, called upon southern women to take education and literature seriously, arguing that women were the intellectual equal of men. Conversation and common intellectual interests would be vital for a marriage to succeed, Bryan argued, and therefore "knowledge of domestic affairs" would not be enough education for women. Intellectually, men and women were on the same level and Bryan advised women to exercise their brains to have spirited conversations about literature with their husbands.[376]

This view that women were intellectually equal with men can be seen in the founding of the Georgia Female College, which opened its doors in 1839 after having been chartered three years earlier. In Macon, the world's first degree-granting women's college opened, despite being in a region that had conservative views of womanhood. From the beginning the explicit goal

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[373] Frederick A. Bode, "A Common Sphere: White Evangelicals and Gender in Antebellum Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 79 (Winter 1995), 779-780.
[374] George F. Pierce, "Introduction," *Southern Ladies' Book* I (January 1840), 2.
[375] *Athenian* (Athens, GA), June 9, 1829.
[376] *Temperance Banner* (Penfield, GA), February 11, 1858.

was to provide an education that equaled those of men's colleges. *The Circular* for the college in 1842 proclaimed that "the object of the founders of the College was to give our daughters as good a disciplinary education as was offered by the best colleges for our sons."[377] Driven by George Pierce, the first President of the college and a firm believer in education reform, the school emphasized training in mathematics and natural sciences, as well as philosophy, history, literature, and ancient and modern languages. Despite offering courses on ancient languages, a prospective student did not need to know Greek or Latin to be admitted to the school, which allowed many non-elites to send their daughters to the Macon institution. Overall, the goal was to prove that women were just as able to attain a college education as men and should be afforded the opportunity.[378]

This view was not without criticism. Despite, or perhaps because of, the presence of the Georgia Female College in Macon, an editorial in the local newspaper argued that women's education was "small business" and there did not need to be a college for women because they did not have the "external brilliancy" of men. The author was quick to say that women should be elevated "to their proper standard" but argued that a female college was unnecessary and would likely only have "pompous patronage."[379] A letter writer to the *Southern Recorder* of Milledgeville accused Wesleyan Female College of teaching infidelity and libertinism to their students and argued that they were able to do this because their female charges were not smart enough to understand what they were being taught.[380] There was a clear insinuation that male students could not be duped in such a way. Final examinations for higher schooling students, at both male and female institutions, were public and a writer for the Savannah *Daily Morning*

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[377] Elizabeth Barber Young, *A Study of the Curricula of Seven Selected Women's Colleges of the Southern States* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University Press, 1932), 51.
[378] Young, *A Study of the Curricula…*, 51.
[379] *Macon Georgia Telegraph*, June 2, 1840.
[380] *Southern Recorder* (Milledgeville, GA), September 27, 1853.

News attended the examination of the Georgia Female College in 1854. After witnessing this event, the author extolled the virtues of the idea of educating women, but concluded that the "female intellect" could not grasp the "larger truths of Mathematics" as a man could. He did come away impressed by the "recitation of the study of Astronomy" and concluded that it was clear women could master some subjects, but not others that were more apt to be understood by men.[381]

There was not only criticism regarding the supposition that the female intellect was equal to that of the male, but there was some criticism of the idea of female education altogether. One writer argued that any woman who asked for education and rights was simply not interested in "performing her *duties*" as a woman.[382] Another letter writer agreed with this sentiment, arguing that in this "'age of improvement'" the mania for female education was ridiculous. After all, "it matters not how accomplished a young lady may be, how many languages she can speak" if her education does not "render her attractive." The writer was worried that the education women were receiving would not make them fit for "encountering the trials and cares of life" and lamented that young women would not end up performing their duties in "the grand old style of our mothers and grandmothers." In the end, the writer was sure that these new female educational institutions were setting their charges up for failure, rendering them unattractive to the opposite sex and unfit for their roles as mothers and wives.[383]

The role of education for women was still generally intended to prepare them for roles as teachers to their children and not to prepare them for careers outside the home. Despite this, though, educational reformers who started women's academies and colleges after the Second

[381] *Daily Morning News* (Savannah, GA), July 8, 1854.
[382] *The Southern Banner* (Athens, GA), March 16, 1839.
[383] *The Southern Banner* (Athens, GA), October 19, 1854.

Great Awakening tended to institute the practical curriculum that was seen in men's higher schooling institutions of the time. William Carey Richards argued in 1842 that the education women were receiving at that time "at many of our female schools" was "far, *far* too low." Instead, Richards argued that women needed to be taught sciences, history, and philosophy so they could understand "the meaning" of the world around them.[384] When the Cassville Female College opened its doors in 1855, they listened to Richards, focusing their curriculum around mathematics, natural sciences, and literature.[385] When a new female seminary advertised its opening in an Athens newspaper, it stressed that young ladies would receive an education in "the practical purposes of life." This meant a focus on literature, science, and music.[386] In many ways, the curriculum of the Georgia Female College mixed the liberal arts education that one would find at the University of Georgia with the practical education that one found at higher schooling institutions. Although a student could focus on classics to earn their degree, historian Christie Anne Farnham finds that most Georgia Female College students opted to focus on a diploma in English that required courses in grammar, literature, mathematics, science, history, and rhetoric.[387] There seemed to be a lack of interest among the students in ancient languages and that track of study.

Some schools did base curriculum off of the idea that their students may indeed work outside the home, although in very specific capacities. While planters often impressed upon their daughters the importance of education, they also firmly discouraged their daughters from becoming teachers.[388] In the higher schooling establishments with middle-class students, however, there was a concentration in teaching young women practical skills that they could use

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[384] *The Orion* vol. II, no. 2 (December 1842), 122-123.
[385] Claremont, "Creators of Community," 17.
[386] *Athenian* (Athens, GA), September 21, 1827.
[387] Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle*, 27.
[388] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 84.

as wives and mothers, but there was also an acknowledgement that graduates may end up teaching school themselves, driven by financial need or interest. This was partially due to the fact that many of the female seminaries and colleges founded in the state were often staffed with women educators. Literature was also a realm deemed open to women and there was much attention given to grammar, English literature, and writing compositions.[389] In a rare sentiment, one editor even argued that the female institutions in Athens needed to inculcate industry because "idleness is the worst enemy for a girl." This included practical education that would teach women to work because if you are not rich, you have to "labor or starve."[390] To be sure, this was not the norm, but there were institutions that prepared young women to be teachers, writers, and editors.

The work of middle-class education reformers was not complete by the end of the antebellum era, but they made significant strides. In 1840, there were 11 colleges and universities in Georgia. By 1860, there were 32, educating over 3,300 students. Academies, which were always popular in the state but tended to be training grounds for the wealthy in the 1830s and 1840s, rose from 176 in 1840 to 242 in 1860, with an enrollment of over 11,000 students. The greatest progress was seen in common schools. Efforts to create a state-wide system of public schools were incomplete by 1860, but Governor Joseph Brown began to establish a comprehensive system for the state's white children in 1858. Common schools, which were haphazard in terms of quality but which would be best served by Brown's effort, rose from 601 in 1840 to 1,752 in 1860 and were serving over 56,000 pupils. All told, these differing educational institutions also employed nearly 2,500 teachers.[391] These gains were not

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[389] Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle*, 76-77.
[390] *Southern Recorder* (Milledgeville, GA), August 23, 1859.
[391] King, *Georgia Voices*, 203.

only due to middle-class Georgians and their desire for a public education system or their patronage of higher schooling establishments, but middle-class Georgians were among the most vocal proponents of education reform in the state and without their support, it is doubtful the state would have made as much progress as it had by the end of the antebellum era.

<center>Temperance and Other Reform Movements</center>

Although the reform movements of the antebellum period have received significant scholarly attention, the focus has largely been on movements in the North. However, the spirit of the Second Great Awakening led many southerners to become involved in reform movements as well. There was a fear that reforming efforts would be linked with antislavery sentiment, although recent scholarship shows that fear did not dissuade advocates of reform. Especially in urban areas, there was an active reform spirit in the South, driven by social and economic forces occurring in a modernizing society. Historians such as Ian Tyrrell and William Rorabaugh found that artisans, entrepreneurs, and merchants advocated for temperance.[392] Douglas Carlson finds that temperance efforts in the Deep South had the same evolution, ideology, and appeal as in the North.[393] Jonathan Daniel Wells found that organizations dedicated to reforming southern society sprung up throughout the region due to the evangelical fervor of the Second Great Awakening.[394] Just as in the North, women became involved in charity and benevolent activities, spurred on by their attendance at church. But women also worked outside the church on causes such as historic preservation, orphan care, and helping the poor.[395] This was all done

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[392] Ian R. Tyrrell, "Drink and Temperance in the Antebellum South: An Overview and Interpretation," *Journal of Southern History* 48 (November 1982), 485-510; W.J. Rorabaugh, "The Sons of Temperance in Antebellum Jasper County," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 64 (Fall 1980), 263-279.

[393] Douglas R. Carlson, "'Drinks He to His Own Undoing'": Temperance Ideology in the Deep South," *Journal of the Early Republic* 18, no. 4 (Winter 1998), 659-662.

[394] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 69-84.

[395] Christine Jacobson Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness: Unmarried Women in the Urban South, 1800-1865* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 121-122.

within an ideology that venerated frugality, self-discipline, industry, and sobriety. These were all aspects that were considered part of a "Yankee" mentality, but were clearly evident among the growing middle-class in the South and, more specifically, in Georgia.

Beyond education reform, the most popular reform movement in Georgia was temperance. The earliest temperance societies were formed under church auspices, whether through direct church authorization or through the prominence of clergy in membership of societies, urging church members to be sober as part of responsible Christian behavior.[396] By the 1840s, however, temperance societies were being formed outside the churches to shed any sectarian overtones and to welcome members from various denominations or no church affiliation. With clergy no longer leading the temperance movement, middle-class white men and women became the leaders of the movement. By the mid-1840s, membership in temperance societies was booming, with over 15,000 members statewide. Membership tended to be strongest in urban areas. For example, in 1844, in Richmond County, the location of Augusta, 23% of the total white population were members of temperance groups while in Chatham County, the location of Savannah, 13% of the population were members.[397]

Although there were rich and poor members of the temperance movement, both historians of religion and of temperance have found that the temperance ideology of the 1840s and 1850s was one that was well suited to the developing middle class. Evangelical rhetoric trumpeted the values of thrift, hard work, self-denial, simplicity, and opposition to luxury. With salvation being linked to personal behavior, it has been found that artisans, clerks, and merchants were the main drivers of a temperance revival in the 1840s. Membership was high in urban areas in the central and western part of the state, as well as in Augusta and Savannah, but did not

[396] Carlson, "'Drinks He to His Own Undoing.'" 665.
[397] George White, *Statistics of the State of Georgia* (Savannah: n.p., 1849), 479.

prosper in plantation districts, in the mountainous northwest, or in the pine barrens of the southwest.[398]   By 1851, the Sons of Temperance, a fraternal lodge based on temperance principles, had over 13,000 members in Georgia. The leadership of the organization complained that the wealthy classes did not lend their support to the temperance cause and instead membership was made up of middle-class townspeople, typically artisans, merchants, doctors, and lawyers.[399]

The membership and ideological patterns of the temperance societies of the 1840s and 1850s were decidedly middle-class because they focused on respectability and success. The temperance literature of the time made it clear that to enjoy a successful career, one needed to abstain from alcohol. One usually started drinking as part of social graces, in order to fit in with the wealthy classes. Temperance advocates argued that planters were not interested in abstaining from alcohol because drinking was part of their desire for luxury and leisure. Alcohol was for the lazy and vapid and temperance literature warned that skill and industry denoted true character and merit. Reverend William Henry Fonerden of Dalton wrote that "the dupe of sinful fashion" would drink "to his own undoing" and would meet his end as a "hell-deserving sot."[400]

The ideology of temperance was one that embraced modernization as well. In fact, some evangelicals invoked temperance as a means of achieving a more righteous society through progress and technology. The Reverend Henry Bunn of Richland Church was a trustee of Mercer University and a member of the executive committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention who "espoused the temperance cause from its inception." Reverend Bunn argued that Christians should perform "good works" of activism by availing themselves of "Steam-ships, Railroads,

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[398] Tyrrell, "Drink and Temperance," 490-492.
[399] Carlson, "'Drinks He to His own Undoing.'" 673-675.
[400] William Henry Fonerden, *The Temperance Treasury; Being a Collection of Orations and Poems on Temperance* (Dalton, GA: T.T. Christian, 1854), 189.

and Telegraphic wires to send the pure word of God." As historian Frederick Bode argues, Bunn was invoking technology and progress as blessings that Christians could use in their temperance crusade.[401] The Reverend J.E. Sharp of Jeffersonville Church urged for "*practical piety*" among his Baptist charges, which he linked to trains, mills, and telegraphic wires. Much like Bunn, Sharp was arguing that modern technology could be used to spread the word.[402]

Just as education reformers linked fashion with useless curriculum, so too did temperance reformers link fashion with useless hospitality. In the minds of temperance advocates, the wealthy had somehow conflated fine wines and liquor with gracious hospitality. As the Savannah *Daily Republican* reported, "intoxicating drinks were considered indispensable in the hospitable entertainment of one's friends." However, the temperance movement was showing to "every man of common sensibility" that abstaining from alcohol would bring them "pleasure and incalculable benefit" from taking the pledge to not drink.[403] Temperance reformers focused on simplicity and plainness as a way to earn respect and to advance both socially and financially. Moral and material improvement would come to the temperate, frugal, and industrious, not the lazy and wasteful. Because male temperance leaders were typically artisans, merchants, doctors, and lawyers, themes of self-help, self-control, and respectability were prominent. In a report to an Athens newspaper, the Union Temperance Society argued that members who had given up drinking showed an increase in talents and strength while also becoming more prosperous. The Society was seeing "good results" and was having a "moralizing effect" on the area. [404]

This was part of a greater ideology of modernization that was inner-directed and appealed to conscience. Modernization was tinged with elements of piety and how individuals appeared

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[401] Bode, "The Formation of Evangelical Communities in Middle Georgia," 739.
[402] Minutes of the Ebenezer Baptist Association (1852), 4.
[403] Savannah *Daily Republican*, December 7, 1843.
[404] Athens *Southern Banner*, August 1, 1844.

to friends, kin, and clients. After all, many of the occupations that middle-class Georgians pursued were based upon serving the public and appearance was important in gaining patrons and doing business. Respectability and self-control were important within the family as well and intemperance could bring shame to a husband or father. In his diary, Isaac Scott, a Georgia banker and railroad investor, complained that his son William had brought him "nothing but trouble and mortification" because of his "habits of intemperance and crime."[405] Scott was worried for his son's welfare as well as how his son's reputation might impact his standing in the community. Disorder in the home could surely lead to problems in one's profession. It should not be surprising, then, that it has been found that middling men often joined temperance societies in an attempt to find "entrepreneurial and professional opportunities."   This is not to say that temperance members did not believe in the cause, but, rather, that the middle-class men who joined groups like the Sons of Temperance were replacing the tavern as a meeting place with the temperance hall. What better place to meet a like-minded person who also believed in hard work?[406]

Scott also noted in his diary that he worried his son was too dependent on his family because of his intemperance. While kin ties were important, Scott was also expressing the middle-class theme of self-help and independence. Independence was further linked to freedom and republicanism and one of the themes of the temperance movement was the threat that drinking had to the working of the government. This also tied to education reform advocates, who called for an educated voting populace. For temperance reformers, alcohol would corrupt voters and threaten freedom. As Reverend Carlisle P. Beman told a temperance crowd, the people were the "sovereigns of the republic" and intemperance led "a sober and discriminating

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[405] Isaac Scott diary typescript, Middle Georgia Archives, Macon, Georgia.
[406] Rorabaugh, "Sons of Temperance," 268.

people" to "cleave down the sacred altar of their liberties" in a "drunken frenzy."[407] A clear link was made between rich people in power using alcohol to get voters drunk in order to vote for them or their candidate. One speaker at a Sons of Temperance meeting argued that rich tyrants would use alcoholic beverages to get the "appetites, interests, and prejudices" that they wanted from their "duped and submissive devotees."[408] Temperance fostered a healthy republic through personal responsibility, to one's self, family, and country. A loss of self-control was a threat to freedom.

This threat to freedom, though, was one reason why temperance proponents faced opposition from both the upper and lower classes. Although some elites did join temperance societies, historian Ian Tyrrell found that most abandoned the cause in the late 1830s as temperance reformers adopted teetotalism in 1836 and began to agitate for prohibition. As Tyrrell argues, planters seemed okay with advocating against "ardent spirits" but they rebuked the idea of teetotalism because it "threatened the right of white men to drink" and elites defected "from temperance en masse." When Josiah Flournoy tried to organize a statewide campaign to elect temperance men to the state legislature, his campaign met total defeat due to opposition from rich Democrats who opposed Flournoy's goal of outlawing liquor in the state.[409] In Athens, local elites formed their own anti-temperance society, arguing that the temperance leaders of the county disparaged reputable members of Athens and occasional drinking was not a bad thing.[410]

It appears that lower class whites did not join the temperance movement for similar reasons, arguing that prohibition and teetotalism infringed upon their freedom to both make and

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[407] Carlisle P. Beman, *An Address, Delivered Before the Temperance Society, on Their First Anniversary, at Mount Zion, July 4, 1830* (Mount Zion, GA: n.p., 1830), 10.

[408] Alexander Means, *Address Delivered Before the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance of the State of Georgia, at Their Annual Session, in Macon, October 29, 1849* (Savannah: n.p., 1849), 8.

[409] Tyrrell, "Drink and Temperance in the South," 489-490.

[410] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 125.

consume spirits. A letter writer using the pen name "Primitive" argued in the *Albany Patriot* that

proposed temperance legislation that was attempting to ban the right to make liquor for "retail

traffic" was just a way to use "coercion as an element of moral reform." Primitive further argued

that the government had no right to take away the "choice of those who wish to indulge" in

alcohol. If legislation such as this was passed, personal liberty was at stake.[411] The upcountry

plain folk around Athens felt that their economic livelihood was threatened by the potential loss

of a market for selling their surplus corn as liquor.[412] The lack of support from the rich or poor

led one reformer to complain that "the two extremes of society—the very lowest, and those

who…stood highest, agreed in disdaining the movement."[413]

Women and Their Role in Reform Movements

While the image of the South and women's roles within the region still tend to be one

where patriarchy and hierarchy prevailed, the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening did

create an evangelical culture in the South. While in rural areas the church remained in the hands

of males, in the towns and cities of Georgia one finds evangelical associations and networks of

women who were active in the community. Although the clergy were men, women often took on

the leadership positions in church-affiliated benevolent groups. This gave urban white women,

whether married or single, a social outlet beyond the family unit and allowed for a certain level

of autonomy. This was still occurring within an atmosphere of patriarchy and hierarchy that was

dominated by men, but the urban landscape provided an emerging world of sisterhood as women

engaged in benevolent work in towns and cities throughout Georgia. This activity did not always

attempt to disrupt the social order, but it did provide women with a chance to engage with the

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[411] *Albany Patriot*, May 13, 1853.
[412] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 127.
[413] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 70.

world outside the home by taking on leadership roles, speaking in public, and writing in newspapers and magazines. While many of the benevolent societies women participated in sought to help the poor, preserve historic properties, or ban liquor, some women did use their benevolent work to advocate for women's rights.[414]

Women were a driving force in the temperance movement, also utilizing the language of personal responsibility in the process, and these women also seemed to largely be from the middling class. According to the numbers of the Georgia Temperance Convention of 1844, roughly 44% of all temperance society members in the state were women. Of the 123 societies in the state, women were the majority of members in 25 of them.[415] During the 1840s, there was a phenomenon of "Washingtonian" temperance societies being founded and women formed parallel Martha Washington groups, which allowed further autonomous involvement in the movement. Although the Martha Washington societies have often been thought to have only been active in the North, newspaper research shows mention of potential Martha Washington groups active in Columbus, Savannah, and Atlanta.[416] If these mentions were not outright Martha Washington chapters, they appear to at least be female-led temperance societies operating in Georgia. One such example is Daughters of Temperance groups, which were organized by women. Based on newspaper reports, it appears that Daughters of Temperance groups were active in Macon, Milledgeville, and Savannah. Furthermore, there is evidence that

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[414] For examples of this benevolent work in urban areas and how evangelical work could sometimes allow significant avenues of expression for women in Georgia, see Christine Jacobson Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness: Unmarried Women in the Urban South, 1800-1865* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006) and Frederick A. Bode, "A Common Sphere: White Evangelicals and Gender in Antebellum Georgia," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 79 (Winter 1995): 775-809. Suzanne Lebsock found a similar phenomenon in Petersburg, Virginia in her work *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990)

[415] Carlson, "'Drinks He to His Own Undoing,'" 682.

[416] *Columbus Enquirer*, November 24, 1841; *Savannah Georgian*, March 9, 1848; Savannah *Weekly Georgian*, April 3, 1841; *Atlanta Weekly Intelligencer*, May 26, 1859.

the students at Wesleyan Female College formed their own temperance group in the 1850s.[417]

All of this points to evidence that women in urban areas of Georgia were among the most active

temperance reformers.

Just as the men's organizations did, women's temperance groups argued that liquor posed

a danger to morality and, by extension, liberty and freedom. Women argued that temperance

would make for better fathers and husbands because, without alcohol, they would be driven by

reason and not passion. The common perception among temperance organizations was that

alcohol led "the mind astray" by becoming obsessed with "appetites and passions."[418] As Mary

Gay, a popular Baptist temperance speaker from Decatur, argued in a speech before the Sons of

Temperance, liquor could turn a man into "a brute" who would be driven by drink and not by his

duties as a husband or father. Furthermore, liquor did not allow a man to think clearly because it

"poisons his mind" and "introduces contention and discord."[419]

The temperance groups were part of the broader trend that saw urban white women in

Georgia participating in benevolent work. Although much of this work was influenced by the

Second Great Awakening, women participated in both work that was part of the church structure

or evangelical in nature as well as secular causes. The combination of evangelical religion and

affinity for traits such as hard work, frugality, and industriousness led many middle-class women

to see benevolent work as a responsibility. Advocating for temperance was done to help both the

rich and the poor avoid the vice of alcohol. Benevolent work done on behalf of the poor was

seen as way to be a useful Christian and to help those beneath you. The evangelical impulse to

be a useful Christian and responsible member of society drove benevolent work. This is what

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[417] *Savannah Daily Georgian*, July 17, 1853.

[418] Savannah River Baptist Association Minutes, 1816, 8-9, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[419] M.A.H. Gray, "Temperance Address," in *Prose and Poetry*, 2nd edition (Nashville, TN: Southwestern Publishing House, 1859), 103-104.

also resisted, albeit in subtle ways, the constraints of hierarchy. Women in urban areas were the principal instigators of benevolent projects and used this work to extend their sphere beyond the household and into the surrounding community.[420]

Throughout Georgia, towns and cities were sites of female charity work, often designed to create moral uplift and educational improvement. In Savannah, women founded the Female Seamen's Friend Society, the Female Asylum Society, and the Infant School Society.[421] Macon women founded the Charitable Association "to relieve the necessities of the Poor of this City." When founded in 1849, the group had seventeen managers and officers, all of whom were women.[422] The Macon Female Tract Society was formed to distribute religious literature and distributed nearly 3,400 tracts in 1856.[423] Women in the town of Rome formed a Ladies' Benevolent Society to aid the working poor of the manufacturing town.[424]

Most often, women participated in benevolent work through organizations and causes that their churches offered. Although church leadership was almost always male, religious historians have found that women filled the rosters and pews of southern churches in hugely disproportionate numbers.[425] Involvement in religious institutions offered women the chance to engage in public activities, social interaction with peers, and hands-on work through benevolent causes. As historian Cynthia Kierner argues in her work on women's place in the early South, "Religion was the key loophole through which most women, southern and northern, entered

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[420] Bode, "A Common Sphere," 781.
[421] Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness*, 121.
[422] Baber/Blackshear family papers. MS 11. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[423] *The Christian Index* (Macon), January 21, 1857.
[424] *Rome Tri-Weekly Courier*, various issues in 1860-1861.
[425] Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 113.

public life."[426] Women raised money to improve church buildings or even to hire new leaders. In Twiggs County, a Methodist church fell into disrepair and only had nine remaining members, all women. The women raised money to erect a new church building and recruited seventy new members.[427] Savannah had a large Jewish population and the women of the synagogue raised money to hire a regular rabbi for the congregation.[428] Women, working with the Methodist Church, established an Orphans Female Asylum in Columbus and were responsible for fundraising and the day-to-day activities.[429]

Women engaged in church-related benevolent work were integral to the growing Sunday school movement that swept the region after the Second Great Awakening. In Savannah, both Jewish and Gentile women raised funds for Sunday schools as well as taking on roles as teachers in said schools.[430] During the 1850s, many congregations had societies devoted just to raising funds for Sunday schools. For example, the Methodists formed a Sunday School Society in 1851 and the Baptists, arguing that Sunday schools contributed to the spirit of improvement of the day, formed the Georgia Baptist Sunday School Convention in 1855.[431] These Sunday schools were seen as sites of conversion and moral instruction, but also providers of rudimentary education, especially in rural areas.

It is not hyperbole to say the Sunday schools would have never succeeded without women and church leadership acknowledged as much. The costs associated with Sunday schools rose throughout the antebellum period, as the schools began to invest more in teachers and the

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[426] Cynthia A. Kierner, *Beyond the Household: Women's Place in the Early South, 1700-1835* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 181.
[427] Frederick A. Bode, "A Common Sphere," 785.
[428] Mark I. Greenberg, "Savannah's Jewish Women and the Shaping of Ethnic and Gender Identity, 1830-1900," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82 (Winter 1998): 751-774.
[429] Louise Jones DuBose Papers, Columbus State University Archives, Columbus, Georgia.
[430] Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness*, 122-128.
[431] Bode, "A Common Sphere," 791-792.

development and distribution of literature appropriate to beginning readers. Without the role

women played as fundraisers, many Sunday schools surely would not have been able to meet the

rising costs.[432] The Baptist newspaper *Christian Index* pointed out that women raised the funds

to open Sunday schools, enlisted the pastor's support, and "persuaded him to teach on the

subject." The Sunday school then would help recruit new members, which would allow the

church to not only reach more people, but also allowed more fundraising to build a library or

help the poor.[433] Methodist Reverend George Gilman Smith concurred with this view, arguing

that the conversion of one hundred persons in his parish in Monroe County was due to "our

sisters" who had started "our Sunday-school."[434] Perhaps being a tad too boastful, J.R. Hand, a

minister at Richland Baptist Church, insisted that thousands had been led to conversion

"wherever Sabbath schools have been properly conducted."[435]

Conversion and education were at the center of evangelical causes such as seamen's aid

and temperance. The former was popular throughout American port cities and featured

prominently among reform efforts in Savannah. When the Female Seamen's Friend Society was

founded in 1844, the constitution stated that the organization was designed to "improve the

moral and religious character of Seamen" who came through the port city.[436] They intended to

do this by building and maintaining a sailor's home, which would give sailors traveling to

Savannah a place to go to avoid the vices that the city offered. By February 1845, the society

celebrated the opening of the Sailors' House with funds raised completely by the society. This

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[432] Startup, *The Root of All Evil*, 102.

[433] *The Christian Index* (Macon), June 9, 1853.

[434] *Southern Christian Advocate*, November 1, 1860.

[435] Minutes of the Ebenezer Baptist Association (1844), 9. MF 6923-11.

[436] Constitution of the Female Seamen's Friend Society of Savannah, Burroughs Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

was done without any oversight from men, as the remaining records indicate that the Female

Seamen's Friend Society's leadership and membership was completely made up of women.[437]

The home was a good representation of the reform efforts that women undertook in

Savannah and the rest of the state. The sailor's recuperated from illness, were fed, attended

religious worship and religious education, and signed pledges of total abstinence from alcohol.

These are all indicative of the type of benevolent work that women undertook in Georgia's towns

and cities. Just three years after opening the home, more than 1,500 men had been entertained,

with over 1,000 men utilizing the sailor's home in 1848 alone. According to the minutes of the

society, the boarders of the home got religion, stopped drinking, and made personal moral

improvements.[438] The goal of extending moral influence to men outside their social circle and

class was working and the women who belonged to the society likely felt as if they were

contributing to the city's well-being as well as doing their duty as Christians.

Although evangelical religion was the impetus for many reform movements, there was

benevolent work that was not religious in tone. This benevolent work was still often done by

women who attended church, but these organizations were not formed through the church and

did not attempt to convert people. These secular causes often had goals of helping the poor,

orphans, and widows. The Savannah Female Asylum was founded in 1801 in order to help the

city's girls who were poor. This organization was founded in response to a men's society that

was formed in 1750 to assist destitute boys. When the Savannah Female Asylum was formed,

the founders stated that they felt compelled to assist "the suffering of our own sex." Membership

was limited to women and the organization established a home for girls, aged three to ten, where

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[437] Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness*, 136.
[438] Minutes of the Female Seamen's Friend Society of Savannah, Burroughs Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

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they received care and education. Furthermore, as the girls got older, they received occupational instruction.[439] The Female Benevolent Society of Macon formed a Society for Orphan Female Education which sold "many useful articles" in order to achieve their goal of "Educating and Clothing destitute Females."[440]

Historian Christine Jacobson Carter has found that "less affluent women" had more influence in organizations such as the Savannah Female Asylum because the orphans home created a community principally populated by women. It was middle- and lower-class women who had all the jobs at the house, serving as teachers, nurses, cooks, and laundresses. While elite women were surely part of the organization, Carter finds they were more often on the board of trustees and preferred to contribute funds whereas it was middle- and lower-class women who worked directly with the orphans on a daily basis.[441] The Widow's Society, which was founded in 1822, was similar to the orphan's home. Middle- and lower-class women worked in the home for elderly women, usually as nurses, cooks, seamstresses, and laundresses.[442] The same pattern held true with benevolent organizations that were formed to help factory workers. Middle-class women, often the wives of professional men, formed such societies in cities such as Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, and Macon, all of which had large amounts of industrial workers in the late antebellum period.

Engaging in benevolence work influenced women and led some of them to discuss notions about gender roles. Rather than being a vehicle for protecting the status quo, evangelical religion was utilized by reformers as a way to attempt to modernize gender roles in the state.

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[439] Timothy J. Lockley, "A Struggle for Survival: Non-Elite White Women in Lowcountry Georgia, 1790-1830," in Christie Anne Farham, ed., *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 29-31.
[440] *Macon Georgia Telegraph*, July 7, 1840.
[441] Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness*, 140-144.
[442] Widow's Society Minutes, September 1849, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

Female reformers used their platform as speakers and writers to advocate for a new role for women in society. Because so many reform movements were tied to evangelical churches, some women within churches pushed for rights within the church. In 1846, female members of the First Baptist Church of Savannah voted regarding a dispute with the minister of the church and women at the First Baptist Church of Macon voted on church business at least until 1860.[443] While this likely gave many church members pause, there are several letters to the popular Baptist newspaper *Christian Index* that argued in favor of women's voting rights within the church.[444]

Outside of the church, women argued against the idea of female inferiority. Sometimes this was coded in a language of deference, but other advocates were willing to be blunt. Mary Gay, a popular temperance speaker, in speaking to a Sons of Temperance meeting, told the crowd that women were "legitimately entitled" to the same position as men. Gay believed that the women in the crowd "would ultimately have availed yourselves" of the rights that women were owed. Gay encouraged other women to "transcend the conventional barriers of feminine delicacy, and to occupy a position so conspicuous" as she was by speaking in front of a largely male crowd.[445] Mary Bryan, a young writer who lived in Thomasville, was surely atypical in that she married at fifteen, but soon abandoned her husband (although stayed married) to move back in with her parents. Bryan complained that living in the "wilds of the West" with her husband was unbearable and she had to return to Georgia. The young writer echoed Gay's sentiments about transcending the role expected of women. She confided to a correspondent that being a wife led her to make "no progress whatsoever" in her education and she was happy to be

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[443] Bode, "Common Sphere," 783.
[444] *Christian Index*, March 21 and November 7, 1860.
[445] Gay, "Temperance Address," 101-104.

able to continue her reading and writing and give up "housekeeping duties." Bryan pointed out

that she had "respect for housewifely accomplishments" but also felt women who wanted to

strive for more should do so.[446]

As discussed earlier, women's education advocates and reformers argued against

perceived female inferiority as well. In the realm of education, reformers discussed the equality

of women's intellect. Often times, these advocates argued that women's roles as wives and

mothers necessitated higher education because women were the educators at home. George

Foster Pierce, a Methodist bishop and educator, told an audience at a female college in Madison

that women should be trained in all branches of learning because then women could govern the

domestic sphere with "deep knowledge of human nature and its secret springs of action, ability to

trace actions to their principles and principles to their results, and wise discrimination of the

effect of the same discipline on different minds and temperaments."[447] William Carey Richards,

a newspaper and magazine editor, argued that women could understand science and math just as

well as men, but were rarely given the chance because of the "superficiality…of our system of

Female Education." Instead, Richards advocated for a "right earnest" education for women to

fix the "incorrect estimate" that men and women could not receive the same education.[448]

Of course, there were people who disagreed with Pierce and Richards. W.J. Sassnett, a

professor at Emory College, wrote in 1853 that women's paramount responsibilities were in the

domestic sphere and "the highest powers of mind, of invention…are not taxed in this sphere."

Sassnett worried that female education would reverse the order of nature and give women

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[446] James S. Patty, ed., "A Georgia Authoress Writes Her Editor: Mrs. Mary E. Bryan to W.W. Mann (1860)," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 41 (1957), 427-428.
[447] Rev. Atticus G. Haygood, ed., *Bishop Pierce's Sermons and Addresses, with a Few Special Discourses by Dr. Pierce* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, 1896), 105.
[448] *The Orion* (December 1842), 122-123.

ambition beyond their grasp. He further argued that women were not endowed with the aptitude for metaphysics or mathematics.[449] In a reprinted article, described as "ingenious" by the editor of an Athens newspaper, one writer argued that women were "disqualified" from understanding "the stronger currents of ordinary life" such as business and "political investigations." The writer thought women could learn about "elegance and neatness" but also felt the "female intellect" was not capable of grasping the affairs of the world as men could.[450] A letter writer, using the pseudonym Bibliothecum, argued in a Macon newspaper that women were intellectually inferior and should not attempt to "compete with man…in a physical or intellectual course" because that would be against "Divinity itself." Bibliothecum believed that anyone who challenged the "spheres of the different sexes" would feel "the stern resistance of a higher authority than society itself."[451]

Despite the resistance from both men and women who viewed the discussion of female intellect as scientifically or religiously ludicrous, reformers continued to push forward. One writer stated that when a man deprecates "female intellect" or denounces "female influence," one could "infer" that he is not "wise."[452] Nearly two decades later, an obituary for Josephina White discussed Mrs. White's education and argued that "the female intellect" allowed the deceased "to adorn any sphere in society."[453] While this was surely flowery language given the circumstances, it is interesting to note the idea that female intellect could be used to not necessarily break down the separate spheres, but allow women to at least access spheres outside the traditional domestic one.

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[449] W.J. Sassnett, "Theory of Female Education," *Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* 7 (April 1853), 255.
[450] *Athenian*, April 20, 1830.
[451] *Georgia Telegraph* (Macon), May 14, 1835.
[452] *Federal Union* (Milledgeville), March 5, 1839.
[453] *Southern Recorder* (Milledgeville), April 8, 1856.

The efforts by both male and female reformers show that Georgians were willing to discuss and sometimes challenge gender roles. Women who worked in reform movements in the state often used that experience to critique society. This is not to say that the criticisms were bold or even challenged traditional gender ideology within the state, but many middle-class women did use their platform as reformers to take on roles that had traditionally been reserved solely for men. And some women, such as Mary Gay and Mary Evans, did vocally challenge the idea that women should not be allowed to transcend the roles that society wanted to limit them to as mothers or wives.

<u>Mutual Aid Societies: Middle-Class Workers Helping Themselves</u>

Historian Jonathan Daniel Wells argues that occupational identity was one of the integral aspects of the growth of the southern middle-class. It was in their roles as teachers, doctors, lawyers, ministers, merchants, and artisans that many antebellum southerners began to see themselves as distinct from their neighbors and began to coalesce around a separate identity.[454] This can be seen in the growth of mutual aid societies that sought reforms for specific occupations and provided aid for colleagues who had fallen on hard times.

The Athens Mechanics Mutual Aid Association is a perfect encapsulation of this movement. The society was formed in 1832, setting a goal to establish mechanics as a respectable class in Athens through "mutual improvement…to become better mechanics and more useful and intelligent citizens."[455] Mechanics in the city paid dues to join the association. In return, the mechanics society offered burial insurance, widow's pensions, charitable relief for injured mechanics who could not work, and educational orations and debates. The society's

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[454] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 7-9.
[455] Athens *Southern Banner*, May 12, 1836.

constitution, which was ratified in 1836, provided rules for operating a library and by 1844 the association had accumulated enough books to open a reading room. By 1850 the reading room contained fifteen hundred books. By the late 1850s, the society acquired a Mechanic's Hall that served as a meeting space, library, and housed a school for children of mechanics.[456]

In Augusta, a mechanics society was formed in 1790, but it was defunct just a decade later. The Mechanics' Society of Augusta (MSA) reemerged in the 1830s in concern for artisans, who seemed under threat from slave labor and a lack of political power. The MSA gained substantial political power in the early 1800s, which was oddly part of the reason it dissipated. As officers of the MSA gained political power, they often forgot about their artisan constituency and cozied up to planters.[457] The newer iteration of the MSA embraced more occupations to swell their ranks and sought to make improvements for members. Much like the Athens association, the MSA held educational events, raised money for the local free school, and opened a library. The general goal was to aid the "moral and intellectual character of our mechanics" while also providing "philanthropy" to the city.[458]

Savannah was a city with a broad range of artisans, laborers, and mechanics and, therefore, several associations were formed in the city. The Savannah Mechanics Association had its roots in the 1750s, but was officially formed in 1793 and invited mechanics, doctors, lawyers, parsons, and farmers to join their organization. Although the Savannah organization was formed largely to advocate politically for mechanics, a large fire in the city in 1796 made the organization add charitable relief to its duties. The Savannah Mechanics Association remained active throughout the antebellum era and was a source of vocal and organized opposition to the

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[456] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 114.
[457] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 48.
[458] *Tri-Weekly Chronicle and Sentinel* (Augusta, GA), August 6, 1839.

ruling classes of the city, largely because the ranks of artisans and mechanics were filled with immigrants from Ireland, Spain, France, Scotland, and New England.[459] More specialized organizations such as the Savannah House Carpenters' Association sought social respect for its members and profession, but also established a relief fund for indigent workers.[460] The Mechanics Benevolent Society of Savannah was formed in 1845 with the sole purpose of helping poor and unemployed members of the profession.[461]

Athens, Augusta, and Savannah tended to be the exception, though, as mechanics' societies formed in other cities came and went in a matter of years, sometimes months. Societies were formed in Milledgeville, Columbus, and Macon, but all fell apart after a few years. The objectives of these associations were more often to advocate on behalf of their occupation than to promote philanthropy or educational improvement. By being more political than philanthropic, and by often arguing in favor of repealing slaves from participating in their occupations, societies in places like Milledgeville were viewed with derision and suspicion. The local newspaper stated that the idea that competition from slaves kept mechanics away or injured the town somehow was ridiculous and "ought not to avail to anything."[462] A writer in Madison was even more extreme, arguing that a well-trained slave could outwork "any dozen mechanics you can produce." While admitting that mechanics were "respectable" and a "learned profession," the writer still felt their aversion to competition from slaves was unwarranted and unfair to slave-owners.[463]

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[459] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 167-169; Fred Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," *Civil War History* 27, no. 3 (1981), 224-228.
[460] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 61.
[461] *Georgia Journal* (Milledgeville), December 2, 1845.
[462] *Milledgeville Statesman and Patriot*, November 25, 1829.
[463] *Southern Miscellany* (Madison), August 26, 1843.

This backlash, though, is what facilitated a growing sense of consciousness among mechanics and artisans as different from their neighbors, a phenomenon that was occurring within other middling professions as well. Although the mechanics societies and associations in most Georgia towns and cities lasted only a matter of months, this is still a clear indication that there was an attempt throughout the nineteenth century to organize artisans in order to provide political power as well as philanthropic funding for their brethren and sometimes the community. This was a clear signal that, especially in urban areas, non-agricultural workers were willing to vie with their more powerful planter neighbors for political and social control.

Reform movements in Georgia were modeled on their northern counterparts and were part of the middle class worldview that tied reform to frugality and hard work. Middle class women became engaged in reform movements and, at times, challenged conventional gender norms. Education and alcohol reform were described as civic goods that would help everyone in the state. Middling Georgians saw reform movements as a way to enhance their status in society and as a way to position themselves as leaders in their community, actively changing their town and state from the ground up.

CHAPTER IV

URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL DISSENT

In comparison to the North, the South still lagged far behind in terms of manufacturing output, urbanization, and internal improvements. However, changes within Georgia from the 1830s to 1860 show transformations in virtually every aspect of the economic, political, and cultural life of the state. This was driven by the growth of cities in Georgia as well as the political agenda of the growing middle-class to get the state legislature to spend tax revenue on public education, internal improvements, and other modernization projects. Solely comparing the South to the North diminishes the tremendous development the region was seeing in industrial and urban growth during the late antebellum era. The growth the state did see allowed for the proliferation of professions that made up the middle class and the development of cities was tied to modernization and reform, as seen in the previous chapter. Urban development, this chapter argues, had an effect on the politics of the time, as urban middling Georgians largely joined any opponents of the Democrats. Politics played out on the local level, with support for manufacturing, banks, internal improvements, and raising taxes on the wealthy to pay for public education.

Due to their occupations, many middle-class Georgians lived in the growing cities and towns of the state. The rapid growth of industrialization during the 1840s and 1850s meant that towns such as Macon, Atlanta, and Columbus saw their populations skyrocket while older cities like Savannah and Augusta also saw continued growth. In rural areas of the state, the population was declining. As land prices soared and western lands opened up, Georgians left and sought

greener pastures, or cotton fields, in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas.

Although rural areas of the state were often linked to towns and cities due to commerce, there

was a growing divide between urban dwellers and rural residents. Urban residents tended to

have occupations that were not dependent upon agriculture, sought protections from hired out

slave artisans, and promoted modernization efforts. Although leaders of the state knew that

manufacturing and urban growth was necessary for the state economically, there was unease

about what urbanization would mean socially and politically.

Urban areas gave propertyless white men unattached to agriculture a degree of political

power unprecedented to that time. Politicians in cities and towns had to appeal to shopkeepers,

doctors, lawyers, businessmen, merchants, and artisans, who often made up at least a quarter of

the voters, in order to win. Beginning in the 1830s, the Whig Party became the home of many

middle-class white men because in Georgia's cities and towns, Democrats tended to favor

slaveholders and would not enact restrictions against slaves being employed in certain

professions. The Whigs also supported modernization efforts, such as internal improvements,

public education, and some reform movements such as temperance, which led middle-class men

to further gravitate toward the party. Even after the Whig Party dissolved, many middle-class

voters flocked to any party that formed to oppose the Democrats as white workers felt that

Democratic lawmakers and their planter allies had no desire to assist them. What emerged from

the 1840s forward were elections for local and state government that pitted traditional elites

against representatives of the middle class. As industrialization and urbanization grew, the battle

for power in these areas only increased.

Urbanization and politics intertwined as sectional tensions grew, further dividing much of

the middle-class from advocates of southern nationalism in the state. Many middle-class

merchants and businessmen had financial ties to the North and wanted to emulate the industrial

growth they saw in the North. Urbanization was a good thing to these middling workers and

small-business owners, as they felt the growth of cities was part of progress. However, when

many planters and advocates of southern nationalism in the state looked to the growth of cities in

the North, all they saw were strikes and riots that disrupted society. All cities did was harbor

disorderly groups who would threaten the culture of the state.

The growth of cities in Georgia was a challenge for southern nationalists. On the one

hand, many of them promoted the growth of manufacturing, railroads, and urban markets as a

way to put the state on equal economic footing with other states in the country. Cities also

provided a place to coordinate high-volume communication with like-minded newspaper writers,

politicians, and financiers in the state and region. On the other hand, cities in the state were

whiter, had more immigrants, more industry, and more cosmopolitan culture than the rural parts

of Georgia. Georgia's cities became glaring outliers and this provided some secessionists with

fodder in advocating for the pastoral ideal of the South, even while many of these same

advocates were themselves living in cities.[464]

<u>Expanding Urban Development in the 1840s and 1850s</u>

As industrialization expanded in Georgia during the late 1830s and early 1840s, middling

Georgians envisioned a future for the state, and the region, that would be based around rapid

urbanization. For many advocates of modernization in Georgia, urbanization was the logical

route to increased wealth, for themselves and the state, and expanding the manufacturing base.

Middle-class Georgians were not advocating for an end to slavery or the plantation system, but

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[464] Andrew L. Slap and Frank Towers, "Introduction: Historians and the Urban South's Civil War," in Slap and Towers, eds., *Confederate Cities: The Urban South During the Civil War Era* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 9-11.

they did believe that the state needed to diversify its economy in order to compete on a national level. If the state stayed rural and was made up of just scattered villages, Georgia would become a state with "stagnant life, and comparative poverty and imbecility."[465] Richard Arnold, a Savannah physician and politician, traveled to New York and was struck by the complexity of the city and hoped to mold Savannah in its image.[466]

Middling Georgians such as Arnold favored urbanization because they saw cities as encompassing many of the ideals they held. Cities and large towns were seen as places that aided in expanding the manufacturing base of the state while also encouraging intellectual advancement. The professional class of workers that made up the middle-class not only often lived and worked in cities and large towns, but they also established or patronized schools, literary societies, libraries, theaters, lyceums, debating societies, and professional associations to promote education and interest in intellectual culture.[467]

The rapid growth of railroads in the state during this time period led to the establishment and growth of an increasing number of communities. The railroad networks linked these towns and cities in a spreading, hierarchized urban network.[468] Towns accumulated more functions, became centers of shipping and industry, and needed more lawyers, doctors, dentists, newspapers, merchants, and teachers. The means and variety of communications grew. The growth of the railroads in the state changed the social, political, economic, and cultural

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[465] *De Bow's Review* 11 (August 1851), 142.
[466] Richard D. Arnold to M.W. Houston, June 3, 1860, in Richard Shryock, ed., *Letters of Richard D. Arnold* (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 94.
[467] Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 89-110.
[468] David Moltke-Hansen, "Urban Processes in the Confederacy's Development, Experience, and Consequences," in Slap and Towers, eds., *Confederate Cities*, 51.

landscape, all of which helped shape the town-centered identities of the growing middle-class in the state.

Although Georgia remained a largely rural state, the urban population in the state rose swiftly in the two decades before the Civil War, thanks largely to the rapid expansion of the railroad. The number of people living in urban areas rose 58 percent in the 1840s and 93.5 percent in the 1850s.[469] The expanding urban population was driven by the availability of jobs in the cities and towns, which led both native-born whites and immigrants to flock to Savannah, Augusta, Macon, Columbus, and Atlanta to find work and educational opportunities. In the Georgia lowcountry, advertisements were placed in northern newspapers to entice immigrants to venture to the state, promising waiting jobs.[470] The immigrants, often Irish or German, who ventured to Georgia typically became laborers in the emerging working class and sometimes political and economic leaders of their new cities.

Perhaps this was always an aspect of urban life, but historians of the urban South argue that during the late antebellum period there became a growing consciousness that the interests of the cities and towns were sometimes at odds with those in the countryside. As many cities formed chambers of commerce and merchants and businessmen gathered together in organizations to promote their business, towns and cities became "centers of professional self-consciousness."[471] The Atlanta Mercantile Association was formed in 1860 to represent the interests of city merchants in the state legislature to promote local projects and to prevent Atlanta

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[469] Donald B. Dodd, comp., *Historical Statistics of the States of the United States: Two Centuries of the Census, 1790-1990* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 2-93.

[470] Timothy James Lockley, *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 39.

[471] E. Brooks Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1795-1860* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 33.

being charged higher railroad rates than plantation counties.[472] Historian Steven Stowe found that cities "shaped the way" medical students "fashioned themselves as nascent professionals." Studying in cities made them feel more cosmopolitan and fostered a sense of identity.[473]

Many city and town dwellers dismissed their rural neighbors. When compared to the people she knew in Savannah, Mary Telfair found that "the indolence…of people in this country is unexampled." Telfair found that "*up country* notions" were "the *antipodes*" to those of the people of Savannah.[474] Mary Bryan, a writer and voracious reader, complained to her editor that she envied him living in a city like Augusta. Bryan complained that the cultural atmosphere in Woodland, outside of Thomasville, was stunted as the people, though "good" and "kind," had "no literary pretensions." She was sure it was nothing like her editor, William W. Mann, must have encountered in a city like Augusta, full of educated people who read widely.[475]

While perhaps exaggerated, the complaints of Telfair and Bryan were not without merit. Although rural and urban areas were often linked by religious, political, cultural, and economic ties, urban areas still had a cultural and social character of their own. Opportunities to attend school, join a library, hear a lecture, meet new people, participate in a society or professional organization, attend parties, and join benevolent organizations were available in towns and cities during the 1850s. These were largely unavailable in rural areas. As Jonathan Daniel Wells argues, the combination of economic and cultural vitality contributed to the evolution of not only

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[472] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer* (February 21, 1860)

[473] Steven M. Stowe, *Doctoring the South: Southern Physicians and Everyday Medicine in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 32.

[474] Mary Telfair to Mary Few, February 17, 1828 and January 15, 1838. William Few Collection, Georgia Archives, Morrow.

[475] James S. Patty, ed., "A Georgia Authoress Writes Her Editor: Mrs. Mary E. Bryan to W.W. Mann (1860)," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1957), 421.

an increasingly complex urban social structure, but also the growth of the emerging middle class.[476]

Urban residents often celebrated their towns and cities due to the social and economic activity available. Although boosters of Georgia's cities are synonymous with the New South era, many town and city dwellers advertised the benefits of coming to Columbus, Savannah, or Atlanta in the antebellum years. One Augusta booster argued that the surrounding countryside was "idle and unproductive" for parts of the year, but his city was constantly teeming with business due to Augusta's location on the Savannah River, the opening of the Augusta Canal in 1847, and the expanding rail network. The latter allowed Augusta to connect to the rest of Georgia, northern Alabama, and much of Tennessee. Town-boosters and business promoters argued that additional economic opportunities and profits were available to those who came to the city. Furthermore, Augusta's boosters pointed to how the growth of business had allowed the city council to pour money into improvements such as city markets to sell produce, fire services, health protections, street repairs, the installation of street lamps, and a water works.[477]

Town boosters had visions of extensive market connections and new commercial and industrial combinations that would benefit their cities, and the entire state. These boosters called for a new commercial orientation that would be based on the dominant roles of manufactures, railroads, and inland rail centers, rather than just agricultural commerce.[478] Merchants and mayors in Savannah and Augusta worked together with dreams of a commercial empire based

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[476] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 8.

[477] W.K. Wood, "A Note on Pro-Urbanism and Urbanization in the Antebellum South: Augusta, Georgia, 1820-1860," *Richmond County History* 6 (1974), 25-26.

[478] Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 10.

around railroad enterprises.[479] Alabama lawyer and author Daniel Hundley traveled throughout the South in the 1850s to conduct an analysis of the class structure of the region and thought Georgia's growth in trade and speculative activities was primarily due to the influence of middle-class individuals. Hundley was often disparaging of the middle class, but conceded that they did contribute to "the present prosperity of the Slave States" and concluded that Georgia had the "best specimens" of middle-class southerners.[480]

Hundley may have been able to see the positive benefits of the middle class influence on the economy, but many other southerners feared what a diversified economy could lead to. Even John P. King, President of the Georgia Railroad, argued that "progress is well enough within proper bounds" but he was worried that a "diseased mania for progress" could lead to "blighting affects" such as "increased unemployment among the poor" and localities pushed into "deprecated credits."[481] Newspaper writers echoed King's concerns. They feared the effect of children and women working in factories based on the stories they heard from England and the North. One Athens newspaper writer argued that women would lose their domestic virtue as wage earners. Additionally, the writer worried that women wage workers would assert independence, which could lead to all sorts of societal problems.[482]

Much of the fear of the city was the corrupting influence it could have on the state, the region, and its inhabitants, free and slave alike. In Savannah, there was a running dispute between plantation owners outside the city and business interests in the city regarding the sale of

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[479] Anthony Gene Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 145.
[480] D.R. Hundley, *Social Relations in Our Southern States* (New York: Price, 1860), 131-157.
[481] *President's Report to the Stockholders of the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company, May 10, 1859* (Augusta, 1859), 7-8.
[482] Michael J. Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 23.

liquor to slaves. Many slaveholders and their allies attempted to pass ordnances that would not allow sales of any goods on Sunday's as a way to curtail the trade, but they met with fierce resistance from merchants and grocers. Advocates of the Sunday ban argued that too many city dwellers were "without the habits of industry" and did not seem to care that they were making the slaves they sold goods to "idle and disobedient." A grocer retorted that slave owners should be blamed for their own inability to discipline their slaves.[483] One yeomen farmer in the Upcountry argued that city dwellers were subjected to the "fluctuations of commerce" and were not able to maintain the independence that those in countryside could. This made the people of large towns and cities hungry for money and continuously forced to try to secure the means for survival.[484] A writer in a Georgia newspaper argued that the drive for government funds by "selfish intriguers" representing the cities and towns of the state was due to an "unnatural political union" that "retarded" the growth of rural counties. The writer was sure that not only were these policies preventing rural areas from getting their fair share of government resources, but it was also having a corrupting effect on the people of cities.[485]

Much as the example of John P. King shows, it appears many Georgians were willing to selectively adopt some aspects of modernization, such as technological advances, but they rejected the social, cultural, political, and intellectual changes that could come with modernity. In effect, Georgia conservatives wished to somehow strike a balancing act where the economy may modernize, but the society would not.[486] One of the principal fears of the growth of towns and cities throughout the 1850s was the fear that such growth would destabilize the culture of the state. In a speech published in the local newspaper, Athens lawyer and politician Wilson

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[483] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 86-88.
[484] Cassville *Standard*, November 26, 1857.
[485] *Georgia Patriot*, April 13, 1826.
[486] Michael F. Conlin, "The Dangerous *Isms* and Fanatical *Ists*: Antebellum Conservatives in the South and North Confront the Modernity Conspiracy," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 4, no. 2 (June 2014): 205-233.

Lumpkin argued that cities were breeding grounds for "traveling agents and lecturers" who tried to "secure the election" of "friends of the slave."[487] Lumpkin's fear was that if the South had cities the size of Boston or New York, an abolitionist sentiment could sprout in the South too. For Lumpkin, it appears city living and abolition went hand-in-hand.[488] When writing to a friend in New York, Savannah's Mary Telfair, although a critic of the uneducated in the countryside, expressed disgust with the constant superficiality of city life when compared to rural areas, arguing that there was no place for women to show intellect in the competitive social scene that put more emphasis on fashion and beauty. Other Savannah women critiqued the city's inhabitants as rude when compared to the citizens of the countryside.[489]

An overt aspect of the fear of cities was the assertion that urbanization would lead to an erosion of traditions. The growth of cities was seen as in opposition to the Jeffersonian vision of the state and region as a place for independent farmers and a rural population. The fear was that cities would bring crime, corruption, immigrants who failed to assimilate, overwhelming poverty, strikes by laborers, and an overall threat to the southern way of life.[490] A long editorial in the Milledgeville *Federal Union* argued that agriculture would always be more profitable than "manufactures or commerce" because agriculture came from nature and from the soil. Agriculture was natural. By comparison, "commerce and manufacture are chiefly artificial" and were prone to the demands of labor. Whereas agriculture and the ability to own property had a civilizing affect and led to the "most striking social and political revolutions in history,"

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[487] Lumpkin was a Democrat who argued in this speech that southern Whigs were allowing their northern counterparts to introduce anti-slavery legislation without rebuke and were becoming anti-slavery themselves.
[488] *Southern Banner*, September 25, 1840.
[489] Christine Jacobson Carter, *Southern Single Blessedness: Unmarried Women in the Urban South, 1800-1865* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 21-22.
[490] Frank Towers, "To Be the 'New York of the South': Urban Boosterism and the Secession Movement," in *Confederate Cities*, 84.

commerce and manufactures led to dependency and "bondage."[491] A letter writer from middle

Georgia argued that being a farmer was the most "honest, upright, and sure way of securing all

the comforts of life" whereas one could go bankrupt in the city from "speculation."[492] Future

Governor Joseph E. Brown argued that whereas farmers had "commercial independence," the

"laboring class" in the city were "paupers" who had to resort to strikes due to their dependency

on others to make a living. This led laborers to instigate "riots and mobs" since they could not

win "at the ballot box."[493]

Savannah and Augusta, due to their exploding Irish immigrant population during the

1840s and 1850s, became standard-bearers for this threat. One fixation of writers was the

differences between rural farmers and city wage laborers. The foreign-born population in those

two cities exploded and most of the men worked as laborers, while about a third were skilled

workers, usually in the railroad and construction trades.[494] These immigrants were viewed with

disdain, regardless of their profession, because they were seen as competitors for jobs who had a

lack of industry, temperance, and ambition. What made matters worse was that many

immigrants were willing to cooperate with free and slave black laborers both inside and outside

the workshop.[495] A group of slaveholders who lived up the river from Savannah argued that the

immigrants and nonslaveholding native-born whites who were willing to fraternize with slaves

were lazy and jealous of the "fruits of their own labors" that masters achieved.[496]

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[491] *The Federal Union* (Milledgeville), April 24, 1849.
[492] *Southern Cultivator* VII (1849), 10.
[493] *Southern Banner*, November 20, 1861.
[494] Fred Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," *Civil War History* 27 (1981), 225.
[495] Michele Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World: White Artisans in Slaveholding Georgia, 1789-1860* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004), 167.
[496] Preamble of the Savannah River Anti-Slave Traffick Association, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

The free white immigrants did not see the benefits of their alleged racial privilege when compared to the slaveowners who seemed to be opposing them politically and economically. Historian Michele Gillespie argues in her work on Georgia artisans that the slaveholders in the state were becoming increasingly ambivalent about the place of the city-dwelling white skilled workers, immigrant or not. While white slaveholders may have been willing to mollify native-born white men to win their votes, they were much less interested in attempting to gain the votes of immigrants.[497] This was in no small part because it appears that the vast majority of immigrants had little interest in becoming slaveholders and did not believe that social or economic mobility was tied with slaveholding. Therefore, Savannah and Augusta's immigrants were shown as prime examples of the dangers of urban development. Growing cities would promote settlement by wage laborers with no ties to the region and no prospects of assimilating.

The disparaging view of immigrants was seen throughout the state in the 1840s and 1850s. One writer in Columbus argued that "Foreigners" were "Traitors" because they voted with unionists in an 1850 election. The writer accused the immigrants of being unwilling or unable to understand the society in which they now lived.[498] For one newspaper editor in Augusta, this showed that these men were "incapable of self-government" and should be disenfranchised.[499] In the same city, an anti-immigrant Know-Nothing argued that the influx of immigrants were a "sore on the body politic" and accused immigrants and their allies of trying to change the city into the Lowell of the South.[500] The latter accusation is an interesting one because while many boosters of industry and manufacturing cited "Lowell of the South" or

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[497] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 169.
[498] Columbus *Times* as quoted in Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," 227.
[499] Ibid., 230.
[500] Florence Fleming Corley, *Confederate City: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1865* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1960), 46.

"Empire State of the South" as something to aspire to, this Augusta Know-Nothing clearly saw the attempt as denigrating.

Immigrants were an easy target for anti-urbanization advocates because they were easily seen as different, but native-born white city dwellers could cause just as much fear and consternation. The problem with living in cities was the level of vice available. As one writer of a religious column argued, "no man becomes corrupt in action until he first becomes corrupt in imagination." In the writer's opinion, urban areas ministered to the "depraved and corrupt appetite" of men and it was only natural that people who lived in urban areas would be sinners.[501] A letter writer using the name "Reformer" wrote to the Columbus newspaper that "the causes…of crime" were exacerbated by living in a city where "the elements that foster these passions of human nature are natural." The "preventives of crime" were obvious in a country that was blessed with "fruitful soil."[502]

So much of society was dependent on social control that the fear of the disorder urban development could bring was at the forefront of many critiques of urbanization. The fear of conflict that would forever alter society was viewed as a real possibility. Immigrants were seen as "alien…by birth, training, and education" and the fear was that they would spur a conflict that would "make it difficult to maintain free institutions."[503] This was a view, though, that was not just reserved for immigrants. Some writers and politicians argued that wage workers in urban areas might have to be shorn of their political rights if social stability was to be maintained. Workers in towns and cities remained economically dependent because they were not self-employed and so the thinking went that they would always remain unable to assert independent

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[501] *Daily Chronicle and Sentinel*, April 20, 1851.
[502] *Columbus Enquirer*, July 10, 1849.
[503] Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," 229.

political participation. As Athens industrialist Augustin Clayton, an advocate for small, rural

factories, argued in Congress, the problem with having urban growth and an industrial society

was that workers involved in commerce lost the liberty to act independently. "A slave is a slave;

the color of the skin does not relieve oppression; and depend upon it, white slaves are as

dangerous as black ones, and all experience hath shown they are quite as ungovernable."[504]

For some, the growth of cities was something to be feared due to crime, the influx of

immigrants, the lack of independence workers involved in commerce had, and the general

upheaval to the social stability cities represented. To the growing middle-class, though, cities

were integral to the modernization of the state and region. Large towns and cities were places of

educational, cultural, and economic vitality where people could pursue a variety of business,

professional, and extracurricular activities. In order to achieve the transformation of society that

many city and town boosters imagined could occur based on an urban social and economic

structure, the growing middle class would turn to political representation that sought to promote

their interests.

<div align="center">Persistent Whiggery: Urban Political Dissent</div>

In the 1840s and 1850s, a growing disparity began to emerge in the politics of many city-

and town-dwelling middle class white men and women in opposition to their neighbors in the

countryside. While some scholars have noted that there was a synchronicity between rural and

urban politics in Georgia[505], there is also ample evidence that during the 1840s and 1850s there

was a growing schism between the politics of the city and the politics of the countryside. This

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[504] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 24.
[505] The most cited example is J. William Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society: White Liberty and Black Slavery in Augusta's Hinterlands* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1985)

was in no small measure due to the growing middle class that advocated for economic and social projects that would benefit large towns and cities at the expense of their rural neighbors.

There were two things that seemed to bring middle-class Georgians together to act as a class: education reform and connectivity to the Whig Party. This does not mean that all middling Georgians who were interested or engaged in politics identified as Whigs. The Democratic Party utilized a rhetoric of class conflict and egalitarianism that often appealed to middle-class Georgians who felt planters stood in the way of economic progress. But, the Whigs were viewed as the champions of industrialization, internal improvements, and education reform. Thus, middling Georgians were often natural allies of the Whig Party.[506]

This becomes even more prominent when one focuses on urban areas. As a correspondent to the *Savannah Republican* pointed out, rural counties "do not pay into the State Treasury, taxes enough to meet the actual expenses of their representatives in the legislature." How could these rural areas "complain about inequality, injustice, oppression, and the like." In the writer's estimation, it was urban areas that were treated unequally.[507] According to research done by historian Anthony Gene Carey, who has written extensively on Georgia's antebellum politics, the Whigs had a strong base in both urban areas and the state's black belt region. The latter, though, was partially due to sheer numbers since over sixty percent of the votes cast from 1830 to 1860 were by black belt voters. Furthermore, Carey finds a change in 1840 as the national Whig party endorsed a national bank and suggested a program of economic development and diversification. This did not necessarily scare off slaveholders who were

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[506] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 155-156.
[507] *Savannah Republican*, December 27, 1851.

Whigs, but it did bring more merchants and voters who promoted commercial interests into the party.[508]

Michael Holt argued in his seminal work on the Whig Party that the party's support was bolstered by businesspeople and professionals in the South.[509] This was certainly true in Georgia. The Newton County Mechanics' Society represented a group of organized mechanics in middle Georgia. The artisans pledged their allegiance to the Whig presidential ticket in 1840 because they felt the party was sympathetic to industrious, hard-working men such as themselves.[510] The Whigs reciprocated the interest in mechanics and artisans. On the state level, Georgia Whigs found mechanics and artisans to be an important ingredient in establishing a balanced economy. Mechanics and artisans were seen as integral to upward mobility and economic expansion.[511]

The proprietary interest in artisans by the Whigs was seen in cities and large towns, where numerous protective laws were passed in favor of artisans and master mechanics. The pro-manufacturing editor of a Savannah newspaper thought legislation like this was necessary because "the road to prosperity and wealth lies plain and direct" in manufacturing and promoting economic diversity.[512] People like the editor felt that protective legislation was necessary to promote commercial expansion and business dynamism. Politically, this increasingly was seen on the local level, where town leaders, mayors, and city councils advocated for industrial development and pushed for investments in education and internal improvement projects.

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[508] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 108-114.
[509] Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and the Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.
[510] *Augusta Chronicle*, July 28, 1840.
[511] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 140.
[512] *Savannah Mercury* as quoted in *Augusta Chronicle*, June 25, 1828.

Perhaps the best example of this can be seen in the career of Dr. Richard Wayne, a

Savannah Whig who served in a variety of political posts throughout the 1840s and 1850s. As

early as the mid-1830s, there had been debates between shopkeepers and grocers on the one side

and slaveowners and concerned citizens on the other regarding illicit Sunday trading between

African Americans, both freed and enslaved, and storeowners. The city laws allowed

bondspeople to come to town to trade on Sunday in the city's open-air market, but all other

retailers were "forbid under severe penalty." This annoyed white shopkeepers who knew

enslaved people, especially from the surrounding area, would not come to town to trade except

for Sundays, when they were forced to be closed. This seemed to give slaves privileges not

afforded to white shopkeepers. Local grocers argued to the town council, beginning in the

1830s, that either they should be allowed to open their shops on Sundays or bondspeople should

be allowed to come to town to trade on Saturdays too.[513]

Despite protests from grocers and other storeowners, the mayor and city council

throughout the 1830s and early 1840s continued to either affirm the Sunday ordinances or just

ignore the issue altogether. What emerged was an illicit trade and historian Timothy James

Lockley argues that this trade exacerbated class tensions among whites more than any other issue

in Savannah. The elites were unwilling to end the trading privileges of slaves on Sundays while

the middle-class shopkeepers, grocers, and storeowners ignored the wishes of the elite by

continuously breaking the law and trading on Sundays, even though their stores were supposed

to be closed.[514]

As Lockley finds, city elections frequently rested on the issue of Sunday trading and by

1850 the shopkeepers had an ally in Dr. Richard Wayne. After being elected mayor in 1848,

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[513] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 92.
[514] Ibid., 93.

Wayne was persuaded by shopkeepers to not implement the Sunday ordinances. The ordinances were on the books and were not amended or overturned, but Wayne simply did not enforce them. This enraged elites of the city, but Wayne won re-election in 1850 by arguing his opponent "would fine every shop-keeper one hundred dollars who might be convicted of breaking the ordinances."[515] Wayne's nonimplementation of the Sunday ordinances were even opposed by the City Council and local judges, ousting the mayor as opponents stated it was the "duty" of voters to "put a stop to a practice which is so utterly inconsistent with the character and professions of a Christian community."[516]

Wayne's defeat was not permanent, however, and in 1857 he once again rose to win the mayoralty. After several years of being under pressure from the City Council, Wayne's return meant that shopkeepers once again could breathe easy regarding their Sunday trading. Letters to the newspaper argued that Wayne's return meant that liquor shops were entertaining "a large body of negroes" and that his electoral victories were coming on the backs of voter intimidation by Irish immigrants.[517] Savannah's elites once again fought back, with Richard Arnold and Charles Colcock Jones, a large slaveholder, winning the next two mayoral elections, both running on tickets that advocated strict control of Sunday trading. Jones argued since Wayne's administration left the Sunday ordinance "a dead letter…the rum shops are filled with Negroes drinking at all hours of the day and night. Gambling is rampant. *In fine*, the present condition of the city is anything but desirable."[518]

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[515] Shryock, ed., *The Letters of Richard D. Arnold, M.D.,* 46.
[516] *Savannah Morning News*, May 9, 1854.
[517] *Savannah Republican*, September 28, 1857, October 9, 1857.
[518] Charles C. Jones to Rev. C.C. Jones, October 6, 11, 1859 in Robert M. Myers, ed., *The Children of Pride: Selected Letters of the Family of the Rev. Dr. Charles Colcock Jones, 1860-1868* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 523-525.

Although Wayne was defeated as mayor, the illicit trading never stopped. At times this was due to sheer resourcefulness on the part of shopkeepers and bondspeople, but it was also due to political action. Although Whigs and Democrats agreed on many other principles, the division over the Sunday trade drove city politics in Savannah in the 1840s and 1850s. This drove a wedge between slaveholders and nonslaveholders in the city and gives insight to a larger point about the growing middle-class. The nascent group was not trying to abolish slavery and were willing to work with slaveholders who shared their views on internal improvements, economic diversification, and modernization, but middle-class Georgians viewed the future of the state and region shifting from a slave society to a society with slaves.

While some members of the middle class did discuss the possibility of ending slavery, the more common refrain was to work within the framework with slavery's continued existence, but to push for modernization efforts that would allow non-slaveholders to become prominent members of society socially, politically, and economically. Slaveholders could not remain the dominant policymakers and agriculture driven by slavery could not be the only system of revenue for individuals or the state. The growing middle-class were willing to challenge slaveholders and their surrogates who did not share this view, using the political arena to push for policies they felt would spur the state forward toward a modern social structure and diversification of the economy.

This philosophy can be seen in the debates regarding the widespread hiring of slaves in Georgia's cities and towns. Enslaved men were hired out and came into direct competition with white artisans. In turn, artisans turned to politics and the law to protect them from what they perceived as the unfair competition of slaves. White artisans quickly understood that the white elite of planters and lawmakers had little desire to assist them. In the 1820s, white butchers in

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Savannah petitioned the City Council to limit the amount of enslaved butchers that could sell

meat, but the Council postponed and then never acted on the petition. Throughout the 1830s and

1840s, the butchers would try multiple times to bar enslaved butchers from competing in the

meat trade, but to no avail.[519]

In other areas, artisans saw more success. In the 1840s and 1850s, artisans achieved a

series of "limited, though unparalleled" successes in legally restricting black access to skilled

work.[520] Historian Robert Starobin found that while Democratic politicians who supported the

possibilities of manufactures spoke glowingly of artisans in the 1830s, the praise dissipated in

the 1840s and 1850s as many artisans asserted themselves politically and worked as a group to

achieve successes.[521] At a meeting of a state convention of mechanics in July 1851, delegates

argued that their stated aim was to try to limit the employment of blacks in artisan trades, arguing

that "the instruction of negroes in the Mechanic arts…is believed to be inexpedient, unwise, and

injurious to all classes of the community." The mechanics went on to denounce abolitionism and

"express their firm and abiding devotion to the peculiar institution of the South" but still felt

protection from African American competition was necessary for "the mechanical interests" and

"to southern youths engaging in industrial pursuits."[522]

The active call for protections by artisans led to increased tensions between white artisans

and slaveowners who hired out their slaves. As agricultural prices fell in the 1840s, more and

more slaveholders near towns and cities hired out enslaved men and women. Savannah, Macon,

Augusta, and Columbus all saw increases in the population of urban slaves, ranging from a 32

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[519] Lockley, *Lines in the Sand*, 73.
[520] Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia, 223.
[521] Robert S. Starobin, *Industrial Slavery in the Old South* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 212.
[522] *Southern Recorder*, July 15, 1851.

percent increase in Savannah to a 111 percent increase in Columbus.[523] With local artisans

already facing competition from goods being delivered by railroad, the influx of enslaved

laborers only intensified the desire to bar African Americans from laboring trades. According to

research conducted by Ronald Takaki, "a strange and unique pattern of class conflict" was taking

shape during this time, largely fueled by debates over hiring out enslaved men and women.[524]

Middle-class artisans utilized their voice to exert political pressure and got several laws passed in

their favor. In 1845, a Whig-controlled legislature passed a measure which in effect barred all

persons of color from building trades.[525] The Whigs passed heavy taxes in 1849 and 1850 on

slaves who hired out their own time and increased taxes on slave labor overall. The former tax

was unique to Georgia.[526]

These measures were met with alarm by many Georgians even though the laws favoring

white laborers were not always enforced. Englishman Charles Lyell, who was traveling

throughout the South during this time period, observed that there was "a deep conviction

prevailing in the minds of experienced slaveowners, of the injury which threatened them" from

this legislation.[527] Newspaper editors were sure that those who favored legislation that regulated

slavery would eventually turn on the institution itself. A letter writer to a Columbus newspaper

argued that if slavery was not allowed to diversify, "she must perish." Expansion into the cities

and industry was necessary and any argument otherwise smacked "of the success of the

abolitionists."[528] The editor of the *Rome Southerner* made a similar argument, stating that if

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[523] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 157.
[524] Ronald T. Takaki, *A Pro-Slavery Crusade: The Agitation to Reopen the African Slave Trade* (New York: Free Press, 1971), 47.
[525] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 159.
[526] Siegel, "Artisans and Immigrants in the Politics of Late Antebellum Georgia," 224.
[527] Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1849), 83.
[528] *Columbus Times,* May 2, 1851.

slavery was "driven from one field, they will drive them from all."[529] Even onlookers from

outside of Georgia were worried by the incidents occurring there. Charleston merchant H.W.C.

Conner wrote a letter to John C. Calhoun, pointing out that cities such as Savannah and Augusta

were "becoming daily more and more unsound and uncertain" on the peculiar institution and he

opined that issues between free and slave labor would soon become problematic in the South.[530]

Although agricultural prices rose again in the 1850s and slaveowners were thus less

reliant on income from hiring out, the issue still remained at the forefront during the decade

before the Civil War. In Macon, mechanics organized the Mechanics' Society of Macon in the

early 1850s to promote the use of machinery and to improve local architecture as well as

discourage the hiring of black mechanics because they deprived white mechanics of work.[531]

White artisans made up 10 percent of the white male population in Georgia by 1860, with their

numbers being even more significant in cities and large towns. White mechanics found

themselves working to preserve their place in society, with increased conflicts over competition

throughout the 1850s.[532]

On the state level, Whigs drew support from slaveholders, including planters, but still

often represented the concerns and interests of the growing middle class. Whig politicians and

voters repeatedly compared the quality of education in the state to that of the North, advocated

for increased school funding, and decried the lack of good teachers and schools. Middling

Georgians often believed education was a way for their children to advance socially and

economically. There was simple party politics involved as well. Democrats, especially in the

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[529] *Rome Southerner* as reprinted in *Albany Patriot*, August 7, 1849.
[530] J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 1188-1190.
[531] *Georgia Citizen*, May 17, 1851.
[532] Gillespie, *Free Labor in an Unfree World*, 161.

statehouse, typically opposed using tax revenues to support education projects. Furthermore, Whigs argued that an educated citizenry would be able to see past the demagoguery of the Democrats. John Berrien complained that Democrats were unprincipled and would constantly shift their allegiances and interests based on what the voters wanted. To combat that, Whigs needed an educated voting populace that could see through the Democrat's tricks.[533]

Georgia's Whigs saw it as the state's responsibility, even obligation, to fund the expansion projects that were good for the community. This was one of the few things that drove party adherence on the state level. As historian of Georgia politics Anthony Gene Carey argues, Georgia's party divisions were not based on state policy concerns. Instead, the division between Democrats and Whigs often came down to national issues such as national banks, tariffs, and how to deal with westward expansion.[534] However, party division did come to the forefront over the passage of bills in the state legislature that dealt with matters such as taxation, banking, and railroads. Furthermore, party divisions arose in cities and towns over issues such as protections for artisans, trading and selling on Sunday, and taxes on selling liquor.

Taxation and state assistance were inextricably linked because the state legislature was devoted to tax-free finance. Whigs were more willing to support higher taxes, assuming the state would use the tax revenues for the common good by financing schools and internal improvement projects. In the early 1850s, when Whigs were in the ascendancy in the state, an ad valorem system of taxation was passed which greatly reduced the property taxes, as well as taxes on merchandise, in towns and cities while slightly raising taxes on slaves and rural land. State representatives and senators from large towns and cities voted in favor of the tax reform 13 to 0

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[533] John M. Berrien to George W. Crawford, November 25, 1844, Berrien Papers, University of Georgia.
[534] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 131.

in 1851.[535] The fact that these urban politicians should vote for ad valorem reform should come as no surprise, as town dwellers, and especially merchants, received "considerable" benefit from the measure.[536] The ad valorem tax allowed urban landowners and merchants to double and even triple the value of their lots, which in turn helped facilitate the growth of towns in the 1850s, while yeomen farmers and planters in the countryside were paying double or even triple the taxes that they had before ad valorem taxation.[537]

Beyond reforming taxation, Whigs emerged as champions of the state-funded Western and Atlantic Railroad, which ran from Atlanta to near Chattanooga. Beginning in 1841, when the state faced a fiscal crisis, the further construction of the W&A appeared to be grinding to a halt. Democrats opposed measures to use the little state tax revenue to appropriate funds to continue construction that were pushed forward by Whigs in the state legislature. Despite the opposition, Whigs were able to pass legislation to extend the W&A and by 1850 the line reached Chattanooga. Urban residents, especially in Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, and Savannah, largely supported the funding of the W&A because they profited from trade on the rail line. Market-oriented farmers and planters certainly benefited from the expanding railroad network as well, yet regional blocs of Democrats steadfastly opposed state tax revenue being used for the W&A until the late 1850s.[538] Democrats were willing to enact a small tax on the net annual income of the Savannah-based Central of Georgia Railroad and Macon-based Georgia railroad, but urban

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[535] *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia*, 1851 (Atlanta: The Stein Printing Company), 453-454; *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia*, 1851 (Americus, GA: Southern Printers), 377-378.
[536] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 134.
[537] Peter Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South: Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 57-58.
[538] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 137.

representatives, mainly Whigs, voted against taxing railroads, arguing that it would hurt businesses in urban areas.[539]

The success of the Western and Atlantic led to a debate regarding what to do with the profits the railroad was generating. By 1854, the state-owned road was beginning to contribute to the state treasury and the surplus led legislators to debate between tax cuts or increased spending. Democrats, typically from rural areas, advocated for eliminating the ad valorem tax now that the railroad was generating revenue. Former Whigs, who had formed an opposition party in the state once the national Whig party dissolved, in urban areas supported retention of the ad valorem system and urged expanding support for education and welfare institutions.[540] While Georgia's rural Democrats seemed fixated on efforts to reduce tax revenue and focused on deficits, former Whigs pushed for increased state spending.

One of the impediments to the state funding public education was the fact that few Democratic politicians or newspaper editors were willing to recommend increased property taxes or costs to the state to fund such a project. Whigs, however, argued that only state funding could lead to better education. The Whig-controlled Committee on Public Education reported in 1847 that "all will agree that education cannot be made general without the aid and direction of the State. It is an enterprise too great to be accomplished by individual efforts."[541] This was followed by two major reports in 1851 that both campaigned for a statewide system of common schools that would be funded by the state. Both reports argued that funds from the Western and Atlantic Railroad could be used to finance the school system. In 1858, "friends of Public Education" argued that Democrats who called for reducing the taxes were leading people astray.

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[539] Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South*, 54.
[540] Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South*, 59-61.
[541] *Journal of the House of Representatives* (1847), 519-520.

According to their research, "three-fourths of the voters of Georgia will derive more direct pecuniary benefit by devoting it to Free Education, than be relieving them entirely of taxation."[542]

By the late 1850s, there was bipartisan support for utilizing the net earnings of the railroad to fund common school education, largely driven by Democratic Governor Joseph Brown. However, former Whigs and their middle-class allies also pushed for funding from the state for higher education and this was met with fierce opposition, mainly from rural Democrats. Efforts were undertaken to request appropriations for the University of Georgia and four medical colleges in the 1850s. Legislators displayed a clear-cut sectional pattern in voters on appropriations for higher education as yeomen representatives from rural districts overwhelmingly opposed state spending projects. Democrats such as Herschel V. Johnson, who served as Governor from 1853 to 1857, argued that higher education should be supported by the state to prevent Georgians' from leaving the state to attend college and to provide "educated teachers" who would sympathize with "Southern interests and institutions."[543] Despite this argument, and similar ones made by Joseph Brown during his term as governor, such proposals received limited popular commitment as debates raged among yeomen on whether higher education would actually benefit their sons and daughters.[544] Rural farmers did not see how state funding to teach and produce doctors and lawyers was beneficial for them.

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[542] David W. Lewis, comp., *Report on Public Education* (Milledgeville, GA: Boughton, Nisbet, and Barnes, 1860), 11-32.
[543] *Journal of the House of Representatives* (1857), 26-27.
[544] Wallenstein, *From Slave South to New South*, 72.

Dissent from Southern Nationalism

While there was a clear divide over local and state matters between urban and rural, Whig and Democrat in the two decades before the Civil War, party divisions were much more apparent when it came to national issues. As calls for southern unity in opposition to the North were promoted, many middle-class men and women recoiled from these calls. Due to factors previously discussed in this work, middle-class Georgians did not look upon the North as antithetical to the South. While the vast majority of middle-class Georgians did agree that abolitionists were a cause for concern and should be denounced, they also felt that the radicals in the North were no different than radicals in the South. Namely, they were a minority who needed to be kept from power. Even as the 1850s progressed and sectional tensions increased, there were still many middle-class men and women in the state who believed compromise could be reached between North and South, just as long as moderates were in positions of power on both sides.

Reaching at least as far back as the Nullification Crisis of 1832-1833, Georgians had shown an uneasiness regarding discussion of secession or even overt southern nationalism. Indeed, when South Carolina's John C. Calhoun advocated for a united south, one of Georgia's most prominent Whigs, Robert Toombs, argued that Calhoun's attempts at southern unity needed to be controlled and crushed.[545] When Calhoun's Southern Address was adopted by a group of southern congressmen, only three Georgians signed on and all were Democrats. The document became a Democratic manifesto and Toombs reveled in the result, arguing that Calhoun's

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[545] Robert Toombs to John J. Crittenden, January 3, 1849 in "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb, "Annual *Report of the American Historical Association,* Ulrich B. Phillips, ed., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 139.

"miserable attempt to form a Southern party" had been defeated.[546] At the same time, Toombs and fellow Whig Alexander Stephens were becoming disillusioned with the national Whig party because it refused to take a strong stance in favor of slavery expanding to the territories. As early as 1849, the ties between Georgians and the national Whig party were disappearing, but this did not mean that there was not opposition within the state between Democrats and Whigs.

The galvanization of Georgia's Whigs would come largely from events outside of the state. In 1849, Democrats trumpeting sectional rhetoric swept fall elections throughout the South and a call was made to attend a meeting in Nashville in June 1850. At that meeting, southern politicians could finally form the southern party Calhoun advocated.[547] Democrats seemed to have the upper hand as the two sections argued over admitting California to the Union. In fact, the Democratic-controlled state legislature authorized elections to be held in April 1850 to vote for two delegates from each congressional district to attend the Nashville Convention. This could have signaled Georgia's overwhelming willingness to take southern nationalism seriously, but instead Henry Clay offered his Compromise of 1850 to deal with the western territories and Georgia Whigs had something to cling to.

The reaction to Clay's proposals in Georgia broke strictly on party grounds. Despite some reservations, most Whigs supported the idea of compromise and argued the proposals could ease sectional tensions. The vast majority of Democrats criticized Clay's proposals, arguing that they were not a compromise at all, but would favor the North in the long run. While politicians argued over Clay's compromise, evidence shows that most people in Georgia favored any attempt at conciliation. Howell Flournoy, a town commissioner in Athens, summed up many people's feelings when he said, "We are all sick of the discussion in Congress about California.

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[546] Ibid., 141.
[547] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 158.

We are worn out with it, it has become very stale."[548] Iverson L. Harris, a judge in Dahlonega,

wrote to Whig John Berrien to inform him that "a large majority of the people of this section are

in favor of the Compromise & opposed to everything like a dissolution of the union."[549]

Whig leaders used this opening to frame the Nashville convention movement as the

equivalent of disunion. This was also the widespread belief of the public, who thought Calhoun-

style Democrats were using the convention as an excuse to foment discussion of secession.

Hopkins Holsey, a former lawyer who now published the *Southern Banner* in Athens, believed

the convention was a "revolutionary moment" and predicted that the convention would attempt

to "*dissolve*" the Union.[550] The elections for the delegation to the convention reflected the

popular mood. Few delegates chose to run and most of the candidates chosen never actually

went to Nashville. Statewide, in fifty-four counties, only 3,700 votes were even cast.[551] As

James Gardner remarked, the voting proved "a virtual repudiation by the people of Georgia, of

the proposed Southern Convention."[552] Not only that, it also appeared to be a repudiation of any

discussion of disunion.

The editor of an Augusta newspaper was astute in predicting that, moving forward, the

"future struggle in Georgia" would be between the "Clay compromise party" and partisans of the

Nashville Convention.[553] The former banded together after a call for a state convention to

discuss Clay's compromise proposals to run convention delegates who took a stance that a vote

for them was a vote in favor of preserving the Union. Complex issues were reduced to campaign

[548] Howell C. Flournoy to Howell Cobb, April 7, 1850. Howell Cobb family papers, ms 1376. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[549] Iverson L. Harris to John M. Berrien, April 25, 1850, in the John MacPherson Berrien Papers #63, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
[550] *Southern Banner*, February 14, 1850.
[551] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 162.
[552] *Columbus Times*, April 9, 1850.
[553] *Augusta Constitutionalist*, August 2, 1850.

slogans as Democrats, advocating for southern rights, called Whigs "submissionists" to abolitionism.[554] Procompromise forces, who took on the mantle of Unionists, argued that "if you think this Government should be abandoned as a failure, vote the resistance ticket; if on the other hand you wish to remain the admiration and praise of the whole earth, and to bless your children as it has blessed you—select a Union ticket."[555]

The November election proved that few Georgians desired even discussing secession as a viable option in 1850. Unionists elected 243 of the 264 convention delegates, with Union candidates receiving sixty-five percent of the nearly 72,000 votes cast.[556] Areas that previously voted heavily for Whig candidates returned huge majorities for Unionist candidates despite the schism with the national Whig party. It appears that old voting habits die hard. The state convention that followed issued the Georgia Platform, written largely by former attorney general Charles J. Jenkins. The Platform argued that the congressional compromise advocated by Clay and the state should abide by the compromise "as a permanent adjustment of this sectional controversy." The Platform did contain a resolution that stated Georgia would "resist, even (*as a last resort*) to a disruption of every tie which binds her to the Union" if Congress prohibited the interstate slave trade, refused to admit a state because it recognized slavery, excluded slavery from the territories of Utah or New Mexico, or repealed or altered the fugitive slave law.[557] The Platform spoke to the potential of future sectional discord, but also embodied a path toward enduring sectional peace.

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[554] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 166.
[555] *Columbus Enquirer*, November 2, 1850.
[556] *Milledgeville Southern Recorder*, December 10, 1850.
[557] *Journal of the State Convention, Held in Milledgeville, in December, 1850* (Milledgeville, GA: R.H. Orme, State Printer, 1850), 12-19.

Georgians who were outright Unionists or who favored at least attempts at compromise between the North and South continued to rely upon the Platform was a bulwark, yet many of the supporters were left without a political home once the Georgia Whig party crumbled in 1851. The rest of the decade was an era of unprecedented Democratic ascendancy. Most former Whigs refused to switch allegiances and joined any movement that opposed the Democrats. In the initial years after the Platform, former Whigs joined together to create an opposition party based around the Georgia Platform, with Charles J. Jenkins running as their candidate for governor in 1853. Impressively, Jenkins lost the bid for governor by less than 500 votes after running under the guise that a vote for his Democratic opponent was a vote for secession.[558]

This was the pattern that Georgia politics would take on throughout the 1850s. Many former Whigs simply refused to join the Democratic party, even if they were the only national party left in the state. As Alexander Stephens wrote, "The truth is the Southern Whigs must strike out a lead for themselves."[559] When the Know-Nothings became popular in the North, one former Whig was willing to give the organization his "sympathies" chance simply because they were "against" the Democrats.[560] While the Know-Nothings, or American party as they were officially known, never gained traction in the state, the sentiment expressed by this Georgian was not abnormal.

Old Whigs continuously sought out any alternative to the Democrats, even after the Republican party emerged in the North, which was vilified by many Georgians as being an abolitionist party. While former Whigs did deride the Republicans, they also still could not find themselves fit to support Democrats. That was because they saw their Democratic neighbors as

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[558] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 180-182.
[559] Alexander H. Stephens to W.W. Burrell, June 26, 1854, in "The Correspondence of Toombs, Stephens, and Cobb," 166.
[560] W.W. Paine to Alexander H. Stephens, February 23, 1855, Alexander H. Stephens Papers, Library of Congress.

the same as abolitionists in the North—if northern abolitionists were driving the Union toward a secession crisis, so too were the southern Democrats. The editor of an Augusta newspaper argued that the "reckless…demagogues" of the Democratic party were determined to either rule the nation or ruin it.[561] A Macon editor agreed, arguing that the Compromise of 1850 and Georgia Platform had "finally disposed of" sectional tensions and "heedlessly and needlessly" stoking fears over a sectional crisis was only going to bring "the Republic to the brink of disruption and overthrow."[562]

Despite this rhetoric, Democrats continued to win all major elections in Georgia by relatively wide margins, usually with around fifty-five percent of the vote. However, this also shows that even without a sustained national party to ally with, former Whigs were still able to rally support and provide an opposition party and voice. This would prove vital in 1859 and 1860 when many old Whigs would band together to oppose attempts at southern nationalism and secession.

Even without a national opposition party to join, the attempts by middling Georgians to align against the Democrats show that politics in the state was largely grounded in localism. On the local level, especially in urban areas, middle class Georgians united behind support for modernization, expansion of manufacturing, support of banks, and increased taxes on the wealthy to fund public education. The growth of towns and cities in the state during the 1850s allowed for professionals to band together to seek protections by the law, which they pursued through political action on the local level. Due to this, by the end of the antebellum era, there was a growing divide between urban and rural, Democrats and their opponents.

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[561] *Augusta Chronicle & Sentinel*, October 17, 1856.
[562] *Macon Georgia Journal and Messenger*, September 9, 1857.

CHAPTER V

NORTHERN INFLUENCE

Whether it was through reading periodicals, professional associations, or correspondence, many Georgians shared an open and fluid exchange of ideas with northerners. This not only affected their view of northerners in general, this chapter argues it also influenced the ideology of the nascent middle class in Georgia. Periodicals, professional relationships, travel to the North, and family connections all played a role in the formation of Georgia's antebellum middle class, who were inspired by the economic and cultural modernization of the North and thought the same could occur in their state and region under their guidance and leadership.

One aspect of Georgia's growing middle class is that even at the height of sectional antagonism and with politicians and newspapers advocating for southern nationalism in the late 1850s, many middle-class men and women were still reading northern publications. Despite attempts by southern nationalists to promote literature written by southerners for southerners, the extant records show that Georgians consumed northern periodicals and newspapers avidly all the way up until secession. Just as northern ideals about education had an influence upon the thinking of Georgia's nascent middle class, so too did the consumption of periodicals that discussed the benefits of internal improvements and manufacturing, new ideas about technology, intellectual and literary trends, and even roles for women.

Northern influence upon the middle class of Georgia was not just dependent upon the consumption of periodicals. Many in the middle class, especially because of their vocations,

traveled to the North or interacted with northern colleagues. During this time of professionalization, many doctors and lawyers established personal and professional relationships with northerners while creating bar or medical associations. Georgians interested in education reform often carried on correspondence with northern counterparts. Many of Georgia's merchants interacted with northern businessmen to acquire goods to sell. At times, some middle class Georgians traveled in the North not for business, but for pleasure. An influence from the North also came from the amount of men and women who moved to Georgia from northern states, mainly New England. Many of these emigrants moved to Georgia's cities and promoted manufacturing, education reform, and economic diversification.

<div align="center">The Northern Middle Class</div>

In order to understand what middle-class Georgians were aspiring to emulate, one must understand the formation of the middle-class in the North. As historian Stuart Blumin points out in one of the seminal studies on the formation of the northern middle class, the group emerged from the transition to a capitalist, manufacturing economy from an agrarian economy. Blumin argued that the northern middle class were decidedly urban, non-manual workers who focused on order and education. Order and education intertwined, with middle-class northerners focusing on promoting advancement through hard work and frugality. These traits could be taught in school and in the home and reinforced in voluntary associations, social and vocational organizations, and churches.[563]

For Blumin, the distinction between manual and non-manual work is critical in understanding the emergence of middle-class self-awareness in the early nineteenth century in

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[563] Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

the northern cities he studies. This self-awareness is what allowed the middle class to emerge

through the formation of white-collar neighborhoods, a distinctive middle-class home, and new

patterns of social association among like-minded workers.[564] In her study on the growing middle

class in the South, Jennifer R. Green found that values that the northern middle class advocated,

such as self-restraint, self-discipline, and industriousness, were promoted by southerners in non-

agricultural professions, such as doctors, merchants, and teachers.[565] Thus, the growing middle

class in the South was clearly influenced by already established northern middle class.

As Paul Johnson argues in his work on the rise of the middle class in Rochester,

businessmen, professionals, and craftsmen linked moral and intellectual progress to

industrialization and urbanization. These people moved their houses to exclusive residential

districts, condemned alcohol, and argued that virtue and order were the ways to advance socially,

economically, and spiritually.[566] The developing middle class of Georgia and the South saw the

northern model and argued that only through diversifying the economy could the state and region

provide the conditions for intellectual and artistic growth. Cultural expansion was only possible

through economic expansion.[567]

<u>Interest in Northern Intellectual Culture</u>

As more extensive transportation networks were built in the United States during the

1820s and 1830s, at the same time there was a communications revolution as the United States

Post Office grew exponentially. The combination of transportation networks and expanding Post

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[564] Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class*, 1-16.

[565] Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 10.

[566] Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979)

[567] Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 170.

Office led to a wide distribution of newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, and personal correspondence.[568]   This allowed new ideas to be spread and this only increased in the 1840s and 1850s in Georgia as educational opportunities increased and literacy rates followed suit. Based on the extant records from periodical subscriptions, as well as letters and diaries, it appears that most Georgians consumed a wide array of literature, but most of it tended to originate from the North. Even Georgia's newspapers tended to reprint dozens of articles from their northern counterparts. There appears to have been an unshakable interest in northern society.

Georgians tended to read local newspapers to get their news, but research shows that many in the state had subscriptions to northern periodicals such as Philadelphia's *Graham's Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Magazine* and New York's *Knickerbocker* and *Harper's*. Although dozens of periodicals were founded in Georgia from the 1830s to 1850s, it appears that most readers in the state favored publications from the North. Subscribers to northern periodicals were found in large numbers in Augusta, Savannah, Milledgeville, Macon, and Columbus. Even those literary periodicals formed in the state tended to quote from northern magazines published in New York (*Knickerbocker, Mirror, Ladies' Companion*) and Philadelphia (*Burton's Magazine*).[569]

Robert Foster Williamson, who was born in Pike County, was licensed to preach in 1859 and became an itinerate minister for the Georgia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In his diary that covers the years 1846 to 1862, Williamson constantly notes that he is reading northern or English periodicals such as *Harper's* or *The Quarterly Review*, based out of

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[568] Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 43.
[569] Bertram Holland Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines: Literary Periodicals to 1865* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1944). 187-191.

London.[570]   William Sydnor Thomson, a Virginian who moved to north Georgia to teach, relentlessly requested his brother John, who was attending the Fort Edward Institute in Pennsylvania, send him copies of the New York Tribune. John was not sure the newspaper "would be permitted to reach you" given the political climate in 1859 and 1860 when William requested the newspaper. Despite John's misgivings, his brother persisted in his requests.[571] Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, who grew up in Augusta in the 1840s, referenced not only reading northern books and periodicals, but excitedly described trading them with friends and relatives. In her diary, Ella noted that she took "*Harper* and *Graham*" to read while her sister read "*Peterson* and *Godey*." Once they were done reading their respective magazines, they would trade. Thomas added that "the reading in those books and those I have loaned me occupy all my spare time."[572]

These Georgians were not alone. Although there was a growing number of southern authors and periodicals, it appears that Georgians, and southerners in general, preferred northern authors and works. Jonathan Daniel Wells found that the Boston publishing house of Ticknor and Fields, which produced some of the most important works of American and British authors, saw a steady increase of sales in the South even amid increasing sectional tensions. According to Wells' research, Ticknor and Fields saw a rapid increase in sales in the South from 1849 to 1859, with approximately 20,000 books being sold to southerners in 1859.[573] This represents just one northern publishing firm, albeit an important one, and shows that even as sectional

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[570] Diary and Memoirs, Robert Foster Williamson papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[571] William Sydnor Thomson to John Thomson, December 18, 1859 and February 2, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[572] Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas Diary, April 11, 1855, Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University.
[573] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 55.

tensions mounted, southerners made a conscious decision to consume northern writers and publications despite materials being produced by southerners being available.

Many Georgians appeared willing to read some southern periodicals, such as the Richmond-based *Southern Literary Messenger*, but they also favored northern writers and publications due to content. Mary Edwards Bryan, a writer who lived near Thomasville, complained that "our Southern press" was not discriminate enough and would publish any southern writer just to gain "praise from the press and the public." Bryan felt northern periodicals were more discriminate in what writers they would publish and Bryan argued the southern press did "not yet" understand "that judicious criticism will do more to help the literature they are anxious to build up than injudicious and universal praise."[574] In his research on Georgia magazines, Bertram Flanders found that Bryan was correct in her assertion, arguing that there was often "indiscriminate praise of an author or work" due to "Southern bias." Flanders also found that readers in Georgia preferred "Northern periodicals" due to their "illustrations, fashion, music, and many other attractive features."[575]

There is evidence that the consumption of northern periodicals had an impact on the outlook of some middle-class Georgians. In Macon, Sarah Lawrence Griffin was driven by northern examples to create her own monthly literary magazine. Specifically, Griffin's *Family Companion and Ladies' Mirror* was designed to have substantive essays on topics such as science and education to "cultivate the higher intellectual powers by essays of a more labored character."[576] Griffin was willing to accept and adopt the proslavery views of the region, but she

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[574] James S. Patty, ed., "A Georgia Authoress Writes Her Editor: Mrs. Mary E. Bryan to W.W. Mann (1860)," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1957), 423.
[575] Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines*, 189-192.
[576] Sarah Lawrence Griffin, "Salutatory," *Family Companion and Ladies' Mirror* 1 (October 15, 1841), 64.

wanted to "obliterate narrow prejudice" harbored against educated women.[577] Griffin wanted to use her magazine to prove that women could be just as good of writers as men. The aforementioned Bryan was named editor of the Whig reformist newspaper *Temperance Banner* in 1858 and used her platform to satirize the fashionable belle and called for women to take education and literature seriously. In her writings, Bryan explicitly praised *National Magazine*, a Baltimore-based journal founded by Mary Chase Barney, an advocate for personal and political rights for women.[578]

In the mid-1840s, Macon became the center of the production of periodical literature in the state and that was driven by the presence of the Georgia Female College. In addition to Griffin's magazine, Macon was also home to the *Southern Ladies' Book*, which was inspired to promote the education of women. The journal was co-edited by George F. Pierce, the president of the college, and was devoted to promoting literature, science, and the arts. The prospectus of the periodical argued that the journal was founded "for the adornment of the mind" and to promote female writers. The editors admitted that they were partially inspired by northern periodicals such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, but also wanted to distinguish themselves by focusing less on fashion and dress pictorials and more on substantive matters.[579]

The consumption of northern periodicals was maddening to ardent southern nationalists. Southern partisans realized that southern independence required education, literature, and culture that was distinct and separate from the North. Intellectual independence would lead to political independence.[580] The Southern Education Society of Dalton, Georgia, was formed with the

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[577] Griffin, *Family Companion and Ladies' Mirror* 1 (December 15, 1841), 192.
[578] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 128-131.
[579] Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines*, 39-42.
[580] Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 70.

explicit goal of defending slavery through education. The society planned to publish textbooks, establishing schools and colleges for both men and women, and publishing a newspaper. Their ultimate aim was "to create a literature for the South, by the publication in the South of school books, bibles, hymn books, periodicals, and newspapers, and as far as practicable all other books and publications suited to or required by the public."[581]

This was but one example of an initiative to establish southern literary independence from the North. While many middle-class Georgians read northern magazines, periodicals, and books, southern writers such as William Gilmore Simms bristled at the lack of interest by southern readers in materials written and published by southern authors. Poet Henry Timrod, a South Carolina native who attended the University of Georgia, complained that "in no country, and a not period that we can recall, has an author been constrained by the indifference of the public amid which he lived, to publish with a people who were prejudiced against him [the North]."[582] The editor of the *Southern Literary Companion*, published in Newnan, argued that Georgians were "able of themselves to build up and maintain a literature of the highest order and merit" but it was nearly impossible to get readers to support such efforts.[583]

Advocates of southern commercial conventions sought to promote the blending of literary and economic independence from the North. To avoid northernizing the South, commercial convention attendees argued that southerners could simply build their own schools, write their own textbooks, vacation in the South, and avoid northern influence altogether. Diversifying the economy could make southerners less reliant on the North economically, but it

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[581] Southern Education Society, *To the People of the Slaveholding States*, undated circular, Rare Book Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 8.
[582] Michael T. Bernath, *Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 7.
[583] I.N. Davis, Sr., "An Appeal to Southern Men and Women," *Southern Literary Companion*, January 23, 1861, 2.

could also pay dividends culturally.[584] However, these movements, although largely a creation

of the urban South, did not gain many converts within the middle class. Whereas middle-class

southerners sought to modernize the region, advocates of commercial conventions sought ways

to insure maximum rewards from agriculture and maintain the status quo. This led to their ranks

being filled with elites with ties to the agricultural economy.[585]

While southern nationalists blamed northern publishing houses for flooding the region

with magazines, periodicals, and pamphlets, it appears that many readers in Georgia simply

found northern periodicals more interesting and entertaining. Furthermore, many journals

published in Georgia tried to blend literature with agricultural and horticultural writings. Many

readers, especially in urban areas, found the inclusion of the agricultural writings to be

uninteresting. Furthermore, these periodicals were largely viewed as by and for planters and did

not have the general appeal of northern periodicals that focused on art, prose, and poetry.[586]

Cyrena Stone, a Vermont native living in Atlanta, noted that her friends enjoyed reading

Harper's because it discussed "the latest styles" in fashion.[587] Atticus Haygood, a writer and

minister living in Atlanta, complained that southern periodicals were squeezed out between

harvests and lacked the stimulating material of northern counterparts.[588]

<div align="center">Traveling North for Business or Pleasure</div>

Beyond just reading about northern culture, many middle-class Georgians traveled north

for business, education, or vacation. Georgia's merchants and industrialists were often almost

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[584] Richard N. Current, *Northernizing the South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983), 43-44.
[585] Vicki Vaughn Johnson, *The Men and the Vision of the Southern Commercial Conventions, 1845-1871* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 6-7.
[586] T. Conn Bryan, *Confederate Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1953), 210-211.
[587] Cyrena Bailey Stone diary, ms 1000. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.
[588] Bernath, *Confederate Minds*, 108.

completely dependent upon northern firms for machinery and merchandise. Early textile factory owners in the state turned to northerners for advice and expertise. As historian Bess Beatty argues, "early southern mill owners were influenced far more by Yankee example than by planter example."[589] The financial links between the two sections also included the cotton trade, although most middle-class Georgians were not personally involved in that venture. However, many middle-class Georgians pointed to the shared financial links as a reason to preserve the Union.

While vacationing in the North has often been portrayed as something only the elites of the South could afford, there are accounts of middle-class Georgians vacationing in the North. Eliza Salter noted that "several of our Macon friends" had come to visit her in Brooklyn. Eliza, a native Georgian, married a Connecticut man and was sad to see her fellow Georgians "leave for home tomorrow."[590] Traveling gave Georgians a firsthand view of the region that many of their neighbors derided. Although there were criticisms of the North, there were also Georgians who visited the region and came away with admiration for the public school system and modernization efforts. Dr. Richard Arnold of Savannah traveled to New York and found the city sophisticated and modern. Arnold was especially amazed by the fact "almost every store and restaurant and all the places of public amusement had private lights, either outside or inside."[591] Travels to the North often opened people up to the idea that the two regions were not so different and that there were commonalities that could be relied upon to quell political disputes. Alexander Caruthers, a native of Virginia and one-time medical student who became a writer,

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[589] Bess Beatty, "Lowells of the South: Northern Influences on the Nineteenth-Century North Carolina Textile Industry," *Journal of Southern History* 53 (February 1987), 39.

[590] Eliza Salter to My Dear Mother, September 3, 1852, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[591] Richard D. Arnold to M.W. Houston, June 3, 1860, in Richard Harrison Shryock, *Letters of Richard D. Arnold, M.D., 1808-1876* (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 94.

spent many years in New York City and Philadelphia before settling in Savannah in 1837. Caruthers argued in his novel *The Kentuckian in New York* that "no region…contained the perfect American." Caruthers felt "all have something to contribute to a stable American character." Throughout the novel, Caruthers criticized those who emphasized sectional differences as foolish because the similarities between the sections were greater than their differences.[592]

The majority of middle-class Georgians who traveled north, though, tended to do so for occupational reasons. Many of the trips were undertaken by merchants and storeowners, but others, such as doctors and lawyers, traveled to the North to attend meetings and other functions associated with occupational associations. Letters written to family members or colleagues at home described the positive aspects these Georgians found in the northern states. Thomas Harold, of Macon, wrote to Elizabeth Cotton to tell her how "no bills of tuition" were required for students in New York, where he was visiting. Harold was amazed that education was free in the North and compared that to his native state where children grew "up in ignorance" if their parents could not afford schooling.[593] At the height of sectional tensions, merchant Isaac Scott confided to his diary that he was confused by "how lightly people speak of the North." Scott traveled to the North many times for business and found northerners to be "kindred" spirits and fine "Neighbors." Scott admired the enterprising businesses of the North and predicted economic ruin for Georgia should disunion occur.[594]

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[592] William Robert Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 210.

[593] Thomas Harold to Mrs. E. Cotton, January 1, 1850, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[594] Isaac Scott diary, November 29, 1860, December 8, 1860, Middle Georgia Archives, Washington Memorial Library, Macon, GA.

Scott's sentiment is one that is seen in many merchant families who traveled north for business. To be sure, there were some merchants who subscribed to derogatory images of Yankees, but strong ties to the commercial market fundamentally shaped the view of the North for many merchants and their families. Many merchants had respect and affection for northerners and their culture. Georgia's merchants viewed northern cities as places of education and erudition. Charles Cotton, who was engaged in the mercantile business in Macon, wrote his daughter from a business trip to Saratoga Springs, New York. Cotton told his daughter that he intended to bring her on a future trip to see "many of the great natural curiosities" that she could only "read about" in Georgia. Cotton also thought his daughter would benefit from "the company" of the people he met on his travels to New York and Connecticut. He was sure she would quickly understand the "advantages of traveling."[595] Savannah merchant James Sullivan traveled to New York City and Syracuse in 1855, expressing curiosity about uniquely northern traits, but also voicing a deep respect for the cultural and economic achievements of the cities he visited.[596]

Buying trips in the North became annual traditions for many merchants, with most traveling to New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. These trips greatly informed their view of the North and northerners. By the late 1850s, southern nationalists opposed these trips on the grounds that they impaired the growth of a strong mercantile business in the South. Despite these protests, merchants continued to sally north because there was more available credit, more selection, and a wider range of goods.[597] When reflecting back on his career as a merchant, Isaac

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[595] Charles Cotton to My Dear Daughter, August 1, 1838, Cotton family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[596] James Sullivan Daily Memorandum Book, September 1, 1855, Peter Hynes and James Sullivan Papers, MS 412, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

[597] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 34.

Scott remembered his "first trip to New York" to buy goods for his store in Macon. Scott recalled that in New York, he could procure "goods on credit…without cash in my pocket."[598] Scott was not alone as many shopkeepers and merchants were reliant upon northern credit to acquire items to sell in their stores.[599]

Georgia's manufacturers and industrialists were also reliant on northern businesses for machinery. The Athens Factory bought machinery and equipment from Paterson, New Jersey, and Philadelphia from 1833 to 1858. During the height of the Nullification Crisis, the owners of the Paterson machine-building firm thought the trade between the two manufacturers could help resolve sectional tensions.[600] The Roswell Factory outside Atlanta also purchased machinery from Paterson. Henry Merrell, who had been the superintended of the Roswell Factory for several years before building his own factory in Greene County, purchased older machinery from defunct southern factories to save money. When his business failed in the 1850s, he blamed the poor machinery and regretted not buying machinery from the North.[601]

Rather than seeing northern firms as competitors, Georgia's industrialists saw northern manufacturers as peers and a guiding example to strive toward. A writer for the *Federal Union* in Milledgeville boasted that Athens was "like a Northern manufacturing town…and like them, her condition is flourishing." During a time where cotton prices were down, the newspaper pointed out that the manufacturing town was "in full operation…amidst the decline and dilapidation of other places" in the state.[602] In this instance, the northern manufacturing town

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[598] Isaac Scott diary, Autobiography of Isaac Scott, Middle Georgia Archives, Washington Memorial Library, Macon, GA.
[599] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 61.
[600] Michael J. Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 43.
[601] James L. Skinner, ed., *The Autobiography of Henry Merrell: Industrial Missionary to the South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 135.
[602] *Federal Union*, April 1, 1845.

was something to strive toward for economic vitality, not something to look down upon as foreign to the state or region.

Advocates of industrialization argued that northern cities set examples Georgia should follow. Northern cities featured economic diversification and industrial promotion, which provided for a work ethic that promoted hard work, frugality, and honesty. As one writer argued, "It is indispensable to the prosperity of Georgia to the development of her resources, that capital and labor should be diverted from the culture of cotton, and directed to farming and manufactures."[603] Not all middle-class Georgians were willing to challenge the cotton culture, but they were willing to advocate for emulating northern economic success through diversification and Yankee enterprise and energy.

Yankees in King Cotton's Court

Perhaps more impactful than native southerners traveling to the North for business or pleasure were the number of northerners who moved to Georgia during the antebellum era and brought ideas regarding society with them. In the 1840s and 1850s, there was a rapid growth of immigrants from the North to Georgia due to the development of cities and the rising need for jobs, especially in manufacturing. Additionally, large numbers of teachers, merchants, lawyers, and doctors moved to the Empire State of the South. While some of these transplanted Yankees adopted the social norms of their new home, many others, especially those who moved to urban areas, attempted to transport aspects of the North to their new home. Many transplanted northerners joined native-born middle-class Georgians in advocating for public education, internal improvements, economic diversification, and political representation and power for those in their class.

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[603] "The State of Georgia—Its Duties and Its Destiny," *Southern Quarterly Review* 8 (October 1845), 456.

Migrants from the North could be influential, especially those who became ingrained in business. A person engaged in business in a city or town became able to shape the local society and economy. They had a platform to advocate for internal improvements, banks, public schools, and industrial growth. William Young, a New Yorker who moved to Georgia in 1824, began a mercantile career by representing a northern clothing company. A decade later, he was a successful businessman who pushed for railroad expansion.[604] A Savannah bricklayer wrote to a friend in Massachusetts and said that the city was an "immense field" ripe for speculation, open for manufacturing expansion, and "a man has open before him in these parts to make a fortune."[605]

In Georgia's urban areas, northerners flocked to fill much needed positions for skilled workers and management in the burgeoning manufacturing sector. Henry Merrell, a native of Utica, New York, moved to the small town of Roswell in 1838, determined to create a "Southern Manufacturing System" while also urging cultural and economic interaction between the two sections.[606] Merrell felt that it was "a patriotic calling to try and inaugurate a line of things tending to reconcile unhappy differences between the North and the South."[607] Merrell was lured to Roswell to become the manager of the Roswell Manufacturing Company, which had been founded by Roswell King, another northern emigrant. The Roswell Manufacturing Company was an imitation of a New England mill and King had even laid out the town of Roswell to imitate a New England town. Additionally, Merrell found that there was a northern influence throughout the state. As Merrell later pointed out, "Preachers of New England descent were in almost every pulpit and lectures and books and periodicals [from the North] ran to and

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[604] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 23.
[605] James L. Rossingol to John R. William, September 5, 1839, James Louis Rossignol letters, MS 669, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
[606] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 24.
[607] Skinner, *The Autobiography of Henry Merrell*, xxiii.

fro up and down the land."[608] Merrell even found northern influence in education, where many

of the teachers in the state tended to be northerners too.

Merrell was soon lured to Athens to run the Mars Hill Factory and later moved on to

neighboring Greene County to manage the Cutright Manufacturing Company and the

Greensboro Manufacturing Company. The Cutright enterprise took a similar approach as

Roswell King, establishing a company school and church adjacent to the factory.[609] Merrell

moved to Arkansas in 1850, but during his time in Georgia he had managed four of the largest

textile factories in the state. By the time Merrell left the state, the textile industry in Georgia was

booming.[610]

Merrell's story is by no means abnormal. When Athens built the Georgia Factory in the

late 1820s, John Johnson of Massachusetts came to be the first factory superintendent. Johnson

Garwood, a native of Pennsylvania, superintended the Mars Hall Factory in the early 1840s until

Merrell took over in 1844. William Mason, a native of England who moved to New Jersey as a

small child, was the Princeton Factory, in Athens, superintendent from 1850 to 1860.[611] Unlike

many of the native-born southerners who were early converts to industrialization in Athens,

historian Michael Gagnon finds that many of the northern-born emigrants did not see

industrialization as an avenue to planter status or as way to invest their plantation earnings.

Instead, these northern emigrants often never had any desire to become planters and invested

their earnings in a variety of business opportunities.[612]

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[608] Skinner, *Autobiography of Henry Merrell*, 63.
[609] Richard W. Griffin, "The Textile Industry in Greene County, Georgia Before 1860," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 48 (March 1964), 83.
[610] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 24.
[611] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 66-67.
[612] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 74-93.

Albon Chase, a native of New Hampshire, came to Athens as a printer and newspaper editor. He took over the printing of the newspaper *Athenian* in 1831 and then was the co-editor and co-owner of the *Southern Banner*, Athens' largest newspaper. Chase retired from the newspaper business in 1846, but his career did not end there. He was elected to local political offices and helped found the Athens Mechanics Mutual Aid Association and served as its secretary. Chase formed partnerships with carriage builders, book binders, and book sellers and helped found the Pioneer Paper Mill one year after getting out of the newspaper business. Chase was continuously seeking profits from various business opportunities. In the latter parts of his life, Chase became an insurance salesman and member of the council of a telegraph company, all while still serving as the Pioneer Paper Mill's agent.[613]

William P. Talmage is another example of a northern man who moved south and promoted manufactures in an attempt for upward mobility. A New Jersey native, Talmage came to Athens in 1834 as a blacksmith, but moved around for several years, bouncing between New Jersey, Georgia, and Alabama. When his brother was declared insane in 1841, Talmage came back to Athens to take over his brother's blacksmith shop. By the 1850s, Talmage, much like Albon Chase, diversified his business enterprises by investing in a foundry and a steam company, purchasing stock in the Pioneer Paper Mill, and managing a saw mill opened on the outskirts of town. Talmage, like Chase, served as an officer of the Athens Mechanics Mutual Aid Association, which was founded as a vehicle for class improvement.[614]

It was not just industrialists who moved to Georgia and attempted to advocate for societal shifts, both large and small. Doctors, lawyers, and teachers all moved to the state, seeking out

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[613] Ernest C. Hynds, *Antebellum Athens and Clarke County, Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1974), 94-95, 163-165, 176-177.
[614] Gagnon, *Transition to an Industrial South*, 91, 114, 171.

opportunities that were lacking in their home states. Reverend Henry Kollock moved to

Savannah from New Jersey to become the pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church.

Kollock played a leading role in founding Savannah's Library Society as well as the Chatham

Academy, the first serious educational establishment in the city. Kollock's reputation as an

educator was so celebrated that he was invited to become the first president of the University of

Georgia, an offer he declined. William Thorne Williams, a native of Philadelphia, moved to

Savannah to found the first publishing house in the city and later became a bookseller, mayor,

and treasurer for the Chatham Academy.[615]

The link to education for Kollock and Williams was something that was seen throughout

the state. Many northerners emigrated to become teachers not only in Georgia, but throughout

the South. Furthermore, northern immigrants often advocated for the educational reforms that

native-born middle-class Georgians pushed for as well. Amelia Akehurst Lines began her career

as a schoolteacher in New York, but decided to move to Georgia to seek new opportunities.

Lines felt she could make more of a difference in the South and also saw an opportunity for

upward mobility in Georgia. As historian Thomas Dyer, who edited Lines' journals and letters,

argues, "Jennie" Lines "had a powerful conviction that social and economic achievement would

come to those who were diligent and worked hard." Bringing her middle-class values to

Georgia, Jennie felt "that hard work, piety, and personal commitment were all that were needed

to reap the promise of American life in the mid-nineteenth century."[616]

Jennie Lines held a variety of teaching positions in Georgia, living in and around Atlanta

for most of the 1850s and 1860s. Throughout her journal and letters, Lines shows that she held

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[615] Paul M. Pressly, "The Northern Roots of Savannah's Antebellum Elite, 1780s-1850s," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 87 (Summer 2003), 157.

[616] Thomas Dyer, "Introduction," in Amelia Akehurst Lines, *To Raise Myself a Little: The Diaries and Letters of Jennie, a Georgia Teacher, 1851-1886* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1982), 1.

physicians, educated ministers, and educators in high esteem, while at the same time struggling to understand why teachers held little prestige in the state. Jennie found herself thinking little of poor whites who did not "prize education" to her mind, but she also had trouble understanding how planters could "take their children from school" to work on their plantations. Because of this, Lines found herself "very reluctant to leave Atlanta and go into the country."[617]

Much like Jennie Lines, Susan Nye Hutchinson was another teacher who traveled south to teach. Hutchinson was motivated by the Second Great Awakening to transform society and thought moving to the South would be the best way to do that. Hutchinson initially moved to North Carolina and opened an academy in Raleigh, but she relocated to Augusta, Georgia, after learning of an opportunity to establish an independent female school in the city. Unlike a competitors school that offered "all the solid and useful branches of a well regulated female education," which consisted of the classics, painting and embroidery, "Miss Nye's school" offered courses in reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, composition, astronomy, philosophy, chemistry, and geometry.[618]

Lines and Nye are both indicative of the larger movement of northerners who emigrated South to become teachers, but they are also examples of female educators who thought women deserved opportunities to prove they were the intellectual equal of men. They also saw economic opportunities to improve their lives by utilizing the teaching profession. Nye specifically structured her course of study to be as rigorous as men and encouraged her students to become teachers as well, utilizing her curriculum.[619] In 1858, Lines moved to Covington to become a faculty member at the Female College, thinking she could teach her students to yearn

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[617] Lines, *To Raise Myself a Little*, 61, 73.
[618] Kim Tolley, *Heading South to Teach: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 61.
[619] Tolley, *Heading South to Teach*, 62.

for an "intelligent, substantial society."[620] Throughout her long career as a teacher, Lines believed the profession could be a way to gain social and economic mobility and encouraged other women to become teachers.

Even if they were not teachers, emigrants from northern states tended to be involved in educational endeavors in their new Georgia homes. In Savannah, not only did Reverend Henry Kollock found the Library Society and Chatham Academy, but fellow northern transplants founded educational institutions as well. John Stoddard, a merchant who came to Savannah from Boston, played a leading role in founding a public school system in the city in the 1850s. When Kollock's Library Society fell on hard times in the 1830s, northern-born merchants Homes Tupper and William Crabtree stepped in and revived the society. Building off of the idea of the Library Society, several northerners, led by Dr. William Bacon Stevens, a native of Maine, founded the Georgia Historical Society. Utilizing the collection of I.K. Tefft, a transplant from Rhode Island who worked for the Bank of the State of Georgia, the society set about creating an important library of historical documents, the bulk of which were donated by Tefft.[621]

The influence of transplanted Yankees was just as great in Atlanta. In fact, historian Don Doyle went so far as to call Atlanta a "northern enclave on foreign soil" during the 1850s and early 1860s.[622] Amherst Stone, a lawyer from Vermont, emigrated to Atlanta in 1850 in search of opportunities because there were so many lawyers in his hometown of St. Albans. His wife, Cyrena, was a writer who published many anonymous stories in newspapers throughout Georgia. When Amherst opened his law practice in Atlanta, he did so in a building owned by a fellow

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[620] Lines, *To Raise Myself a Little*, 111.

[621] E. Merton Coulter, "William Bacon Stevens: Physician, Historian, Teacher, Preacher," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 33 (June 1949), 91-109; Pressly, "The Northern Roots of Savannah's Antebellum Elite," 157.

[622] Don Harrison Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 34.

Vermonter. The Stones soon made friends with many other fellow northern transplants who were among the city's leaders in real estate, construction, banking, and politics. William Markham, a native of Connecticut, was one of Atlanta's wealthiest citizens and was a storeowner, banker, real estate developer, and served as mayor. Lewis Scofield, a transplant from New Jersey, owned a rolling mill business and produced iron rails for the expanding railroad network. Jonathan Norcross, dubbed the "Father of Atlanta," grew up in Maine, but moved to North Carolina and then Georgia to teach. He soon quit teaching to get involved in the lumber business and was among Atlanta's first residents in 1844. Norcross opened a sawmill, was co-owner of the Whig-leaning *Daily Intelligencer* newspaper, and helped organize the Atlanta National Bank. Lemuel Grant was another native of Maine that became a leader of the Atlanta business scene, having stakes in real estate and various railroads. James L. Dunning came to Georgia from New York and was a partner in the Atlanta Machine Works. Julius Hayden, a native of Connecticut, was a lawyer, judge, and eventual owner of the Atlanta Gas Light Company.[623]

Much like in Savannah, the northern immigrants in Atlanta expanded their reach to social life in the city. Amherst Stone played a leading role in establishing the Atlanta Female Institute. Stone partnered with Alexander Wilson, a teacher who had moved to Atlanta from east Tennessee, in advocating for a public school system in the city. When the city council failed to allocate funds for such a system, Stone and Wilson shifted their focus to the institute. Norcross spent the early 1850s advocating for moral reform of the city and proposed doing so through

[623] Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 12-17, 35-38; Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 75-76.

educational measures such as debates and lectures, as well as ridding the city of vice.[624] Under

the leadership of men such as Norcross and Markham, the city government expended funds on

improving city streets, installing lights, creating a fire department, and helped establish the

Atlanta Medical College in 1853.[625]

Blending with like-minded native-born white Georgians, northern transplants to the state

encouraged growth, innovation, and diversification. Many northern emigrants advocated for

policies that aided economic growth and encouraged politicians to push for internal

improvements. Much like their native-born counterparts, northern middle-class men and women

wanted to encourage education and industrialization. They wanted to see tangible manifestations

of change in the state, such as railroads, factories, and public schools. The combination of

northern influence and actual northern transplants in the state allowed for backing of state and

urban growth and led to changes socially, economically, and politically in Georgia. Those

changes would be put to the test during secession winter.

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[624] Thomas H. Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders: A Comprehensive History of the Gate City of the South*, vol. 1
(Atlanta: Century Memorial Publishing Company, 1902), 90.
[625] Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, 1: 105-117.

CHAPTER VI

ANTI-SECESSIONISTS

The preceding chapters discussed the ways in which the middle class developed in Georgia during the decades preceding the onset of the Civil War. Culturally, economically, and politically, the growing middle class were dissenters who had an alternative vision of the future of the state and the region as a whole. While the vast majority of the nascent middle class in Georgia were willing to work within the confines of the slave system, the things they advocated for, such as public education and industrialization, sought to undermine the stranglehold on power the planters of the state had. Many within the middle class felt that if their vision for the state began to be enacted, they would rise to power socially, economically, and politically to challenge the hegemony of the planters. This chapter will argue, therefore, that the middle class worldview led some middling Georgians to oppose secession.

In a state like Georgia, planters were not always the enemies of progress that they were made out to be. In fact, many of Georgia's richest planters were actually Whigs who supported internal improvements and industrialization as a way to glean more profit from their plantations.[626] However, despite this, the popular view among the middle class in Georgia was that planters and large slaveholders were their opposition. In many cases, they were right. The

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[626] Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 18-19

vast majority of planters opposed tax money being used to fund public education efforts and opposed state revenue being used for railroad projects. Most planters and large slaveholders were Democrats whereas most middle class Georgians were Whigs and then joined parties opposed to the Democrats after the Whigs dissolved. Right or wrong, the perception among many middle-class Georgians was that slave owners were an impediment to economic diversification and cultural progress. While it was not politically expedient to challenge slavery as an institution, the middle class were willing to challenge the power of the slave owners.[627]

This struggle for power would play out over secession. The debate in Georgia regarding the expediency of secession in 1860 echoed many of the same discussions that had occurred in the state for at least a decade. By no means did all middle-class Georgians oppose secession, but many of them did. Already opposing the calls of southern nationalism since at least 1848, if not earlier, many middle-class Georgians still did not see the appeal of dissolution of the Union. Secession would cause a catastrophic financial disruption and would cause extensive relationships that were forged with northern counterparts to be permanently damaged.[628] In the run-up to the election of 1860 and in the heated debates after Abraham Lincoln was elected President, many middle-class Georgians held fast that Democrats were simply out for power, most northerners were reasonable people with whom compromise could be reached, and any breakup of the Union would be an economic disaster for the state and the South. The struggle over secession was really a struggle over who would hold power in the state moving forward. Many middle-class Georgians believed secession was the power play of slave owners who feared

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[627] David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: The New Press, 2008), 14-23.
[628] Jonathan Daniel Wells, "The Southern Middle Class," *The Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 3 (August 2009), 658.

losing power in a diversifying society.[629] As one letter writer to the Atlanta *Intelligencer* argued, secession was simply "a political revolution growing out of the slavery question" and large slaveholders were "a privileged order of gentlemen" who felt they had "a divine, or some other supernatural right" to rule in politics and society. The writer was sure planters were enemies of democracy who wanted to use secession as a way to pass "class legislation and hence, the people, or poor folks, must be deprived of a voice in law-making assemblies."[630]

Middling Georgians had plans for new railroads, shops, and factories. The collapse of the Union would endanger these plans. Any economic disruption could also jeopardize the social and political influence middle-class Georgians achieved up to that point. As historian Harold Wilson argued in his work on southern manufacturers, many businessmen "maintained steady business communications with the North" and "took a Whiggist perspective on national economic issues such as the tariff, banking, and railroad development; and they vigorously opposed the violent rhetoric of nullification and secession."[631] Samuel Richards and his brother ran a bookstore in Atlanta and feared that secession could mean financial destruction. Richards, an avid diarist, felt outspoken secessionists were men "who have but little or nothing to lose in any event, or *politicians* who aspire to office in a Southern Confederacy." Richards complained that all the talk of secession was curtailing business even before Abraham Lincoln was elected and declared that Georgia was in a time of "momentous crisis." Richards was sure if Georgia left the Union, it would bring "distress and ruin upon us."[632] Atlanta Unionist James Dunning

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[629] Harold S. Wilson, *Confederate Industry: Manufacturers and Quartermasters in the Civil War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 246.
[630] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, January 27, 1860.
[631] Wilson, *Confederate Industry*, 246.
[632] Samuel P. Richards Diary, November 10 and 17, December 8, 1860, Samuel P. Richards papers, MSS 176, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

remembered years later that merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen, artisans, and mechanics were the true Union men in the city who opposed secession.[633]

While it would be unfair and incorrect to label all but a small minority of middle-class Georgians as unconditional Unionists, extant evidence does point to a substantial portion of middle-class Georgians who would be considered anti-secessionists. Throughout the secession winter, middle-class Georgians opposed secession and aligned with former Whigs, Constitutional Unionists, and cooperationists. They could be found in any coalition that opposed secession.[634] In the debate regarding secession, these people were quick to point out that Georgia, and the South, had to be respected by the North and needed to have equal treatment under the Constitution, but they were also quick to argue that secession was not the remedy. The Georgia Platform, which came about during cries of secession over the Compromise of 1850, was held up as a course the state could follow yet again.[635] The Union was worth preserving and middle-class Georgians argued vehemently that disunion would only lead to disaster. These were people who felt resisting hasty action was vital and argued that those responsible for the current political crisis were fanatics in both sections of the country.[636]

<u>Debating Secession</u>

The discussion of southern rights in the Union was a topic that had been long discussed. However, the ferocity with which average Georgians began to enthusiastically support calls for a separate southern nation grew in 1859 and 1860, partially driven by John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry in October 1859. In homes, businesses, stores, and newspapers, the great issues of

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[633] Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 29.
[634] Williams, *Bitterly Divided*, 29-35.
[635] Athens *Southern Watchman*, November 22, 1860.
[636] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 122; Wells, "The Southern Middle Class," 658.

Union and disunion dominated discussions. Georgians in favor of disunion accused those opposed of being abolitionists. The *Atlanta Intelligencer* noted that D.S. Newcomb, a native of New York who worked as a clerk at a dry goods store, had drunkenly toasted John Brown, "calling him 'brave'." The paper believed Newcomb was not representative of the feelings of very many citizens of Atlanta, but also warned that "gentlemen of the abolitionist cloth" should be wary "of expressing such opinions and sympathies, for it is a noted fact that our climate invariably becomes unhealthy to such."[637]

The newspaper was right: Newcomb's outburst, drunken or not, was not the norm. Very few Southerners expressed such open admiration of John Brown or even had a very substantive critique of slavery. However, despite assertions against their honor and accusations of being abolitionists, Georgians who opposed secession were willing to openly debate the topic, either in public discussions, in their homes, or in newspaper letters and editorials. James Stewart, an Atlanta businessman, openly expounded a Unionist philosophy that outright rejected the mere idea of secession, publishing editorials in local newspapers under his own name.[638] In one letter to the newspaper, Stewart argued that the Harpers Ferry incident was being used "as a favorable pretext on which to precipitate a dissolution" of the Union.[639] Savannah merchant John Randolph Wilder felt some people in his city were advocating secession, a step they "will regret," because Brown's raid led them to "fear we will all be butchered by the Negroes." Wilder considered this fear unfounded and the impulse for secession a foolish one.[640]

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[637] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, January 5, 6, 1860.
[638] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 31.
[639] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, January 27, 1860.
[640] John R. Wilder to Joseph Wilder, February 11, 1860, King and Wilder families papers, MS 465, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

The willingness to speak out regarding sectional issues and the threat of disunion went back at least as far as the Nullification Crisis, but was further exacerbated by the impact of the panic of 1857 in the state and the divisions it sowed. Because of the booming economy in the early 1850s, the state of Georgia saw feverish railroad construction, expanding cotton production, expanding industrial investment, rising land and slave values, and the chartering of dozens of new banks. When the financial panic of 1857 struck, many people blamed the banks, including Governor Joseph Brown, who argued that banks took advantage of the common people. A Democrat, Brown often used Jacksonian language to rail against aspects of the modernization that middle-class Georgians favored. While Brown's supporters called for the gradual abolition of banks and paper currency, most former Whigs defended the banks and their practices.[641]

An important outcome emerged from this debate that would have ramifications once secession was discussed in earnest. The banking debate drove a further wedge between those who favored economic diversification and those who wanted to focus exclusively on agriculture. Although some planters and large slave holders remained committed to investing their extra income into industrialization efforts, the panic scared many more away. The panic also convinced many Georgians that agriculture was a safer investment than railroads, manufacturers, or internal improvements. Large slaveholders found it safer and wiser to invest in more land and more slaves. At the same time, Brown convinced many yeomen that corporate power ruled the state and the people needed to take power in their own hands. In the words of one historian, "a decisively anticorporate sentiment" rose in the state that saw "all large economic

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[641] Anthony Gene Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 214-215.

concerns…lumped together as a source of evil."[642] The result was that there was a sharp decline in the number of incorporations in the state in the following years, partially due to tepid support from Democratic politicians. Due to Brown's response, middle-class Georgians, who overwhelmingly favored modernization efforts, saw Brown and his supporters as steering the state backwards, against the rising tide of innovation and diversification. Thus, when discussion of secession did reach a crescendo, many who opposed secession did so because they thought Brown and his supporters were driving it to further entrench the agricultural system while stymying attempts at forward progress.[643]

There was also a simple force operating in the debates regarding secession, at least in Georgia: basic party politics. Although the Whig party was no more, the adherents of the party continued to band together in opposition to the Democrats. Various historians of the politics of the time period point to what Thomas Alexander termed "persistent Whiggery."[644] Namely, former Whigs tended to be Unionists or at least opposed immediate secession as recourse for Lincoln's election. In his study of southern dissenters, Carl Degler found that there was a "continuity of Whiggish voting with Unionism. For whatever reason, Southern Whigs were more Unionist than Democrats."[645] Middle-class Georgians had been adherents of the Whig Party and many continued to support any rival of the Democrats. Democrats were viewed as proponents of secession purely as a way to maintain power. Democratic leaders in the state, such as Howell Cobb, identified the state's ambitions as being opposed to the expansion of business

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[642] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 18.
[643] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 215.
[644] Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South, 1860-1877," *The Journal of Southern History* 27 (August 1961): 305-329.
[645] Carl N. Degler, *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century* (Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2000 edition), 110.

and industry.[646] It was this type of rhetoric that made the middle class fearful that secession was designed to allow agricultural titans to remain politically hegemonic. John Beach, a Yankee expatriate and former Whig, was a partner in a dry goods business in Atlanta. Beach feared secession because his business was dependent upon the expansion of industry and business ties to the North.[647] While for some adherence to the Union may be ideological, for many middle-class Georgians, such as Beach, economic motives were perhaps more important in opposing secession.

Newspapers in Augusta and Savannah, which had previously been messengers for the Whigs, decried that "insane *party spirit*" and "reckless *political charlatanry*" were the reasons for sectional tensions, but these party problems were those of the Democrats, not their opponents. Reckless Democrats were more interested in stirring up issues that were "a humbug, a cheat, and a swindle." The Democrats were "essentially a disunion party" and if secession occurred "the fault will rest" with leaders of the Democratic party.[648]

Former Whigs were only more convinced of this when Democrats in the state split into Unionist and Southern Rights wings in the late 1840s. When the national Democratic party began to fracture over the issue of endorsing congressional protection of slavery in the territories, former Whigs were persuaded that secessionists were purposefully destroying the party in order to achieve secession. John S. Dobbins, a merchant and farmer, wrote to his son, then attending college in Virginia, that "this cry of protection [of slavery in the territories] is a masked battery

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[646] Numan V. Bartley, *The Creation of Modern Georgia, Second Edition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 29.

[647] Wendy Hamand Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 28.

[648] *Augusta Chronicle & Sentinel*, July 26, September 19, 1860; *Savannah Republican*, September 22, 1860.

behind which the disunionists have rallied to concoct their dark plots."[649] Alexander Stephens, in a letter to his friend David Cotting, argued that "the real cause" of the break-up of the Democrats was "disappointed ambitions…Patriotism in my judgment has nothing to do with their object or schemes."[650] John H. Martin, the editor of the moderate Columbus *Daily Enquirer*, thought the dissolution of the Democratic party would have dire consequences for the Union and was occurring simply because Democrats lusted for power.[651]

Although many middle class Georgians believed that southern rights within the Union needed to be respected by the North and many opposed the Republican party coming to power, there was still a feeling that Georgia's Democrats were arguing over abstractions. After all, congressional nonintervention in the territories was supposed to be the policy agreed upon by the South. Attempting to force congressional protection of slavery went against this policy.[652] Those who advocated for economic diversification and progress believed that southern rights Democrats were attempting to stymie those efforts through disunion. James Stewart, an Atlanta miller, argued that secession would "clip the telegraph wires—stop the transportation of our mills—close up our workshops and factories."[653] The editor of the *Upson Pilot* agreed, arguing that after secession the state would likely be cut off from northern markets and surely slaveholders would "impose a heavy tax upon the manufacturers" of the state to raise revenue.[654]

Opponents of the fire-eaters argued that advocates for secession were simply trying to hold on to power and were utilizing generalities to point to a conspiracy by the North against the

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[649] J.S. Dobbins to W.H. Dobbins, October 13, 1860, John S. Dobbins papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[650] Alexander H. Stephens to David G. Cotting, November 24, 1860, Papers of D.G. Cotting, 1845-1874, Joseph Francis Burke papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[651] Stewart C. Edwards, "River City at War: Columbus, Georgia, 1860-1865," (Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1993), 48-49.

[652] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 221.

[653] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, July 7, 1860.

[654] *Thomaston Upson Pilot*, February 2, 1861.

South. Alexander Stephens summed up these feelings when he argued that "our rights may be maintained and our wrongs redressed in the Union. If this can be done it is my earnest wish. I think also that it is the wish of a majority of our people." Stephens was sure that those who advocated secession started a movement that "will, before it ends, I fear, be beyond the control of those who started it."[655] Newspapers in Augusta, Griffin, Rome, and Thomaston reported county-wide meetings throughout the state that argued that the election of a presidential candidate by Constitutional means was not sufficient enough reason to "disrupt the ties which binds us to the Union." Any attempt at secession was a foolish power play.[656] Even Governor Joseph Brown, a Democrat who was by no means opposed to states' rights, felt many of Georgia's political leaders were destroying the national party over personal ambitions.[657]

The disbanding of the national Democratic party did come, as many feared. The party's convention, meeting in Baltimore in 1860 after a previous convention in Charleston ended with southern delegates walking out, dissolved over the seating of delegates. When the majority of the Democratic convention voted to seat national Democratic delegations from Alabama and Louisiana, most southern delegates withdrew to create a new convention. Nineteen states were represented at this new convention and chose Kentucky's John C. Breckinridge, the current Vice President, as their candidate. The delegates who had stayed at the national convention, mostly northerners, chose Illinois' Stephen A. Douglas on a nonintervention platform. Georgia's

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[655] Degler, *The Other South*, 127-128.
[656] David Williams, Teresa Crisp Williams, and David Carlson, *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's War: Class and Dissent in Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 15.
[657] Carey, *Parties, Slavery, and the Union in Antebellum Georgia*, 222.

Herschel Johnson was chosen as Douglas' running mate. The split of the national Democratic party was official.[658]

In May 1860, the new Constitutional Union Party held a national convention. The party, a coalition of former Whigs, Know-Nothings, and others felt that politicians created the sectional controversy and the slavery issues could be resolved by not discussing them. The convention chose former Whig John Bell of Tennessee as their candidate for President. Bell ran on an ambiguous platform that essentially called for the preservation of the Union and devotion to the Constitution. While some of Georgia's non-Democrats balked at the idea of a party with no real platform, many others flocked to the Constitutional Unionists as the only alternative to the Democrats. Whatever their thoughts on the party or the platform, Georgia's backers of the Constitutional Unionists could rally against the Democrats, who they felt were the cause of the country's problems. The tension between the Democrats and their opponents had been evident throughout the 1850s but was at its height during the 1860 campaign.[659]

Within the middle class in Georgia, support for the Constitutional Unionists was strong. The party was no stranger to the state, an iteration having been formed in 1850 to gather support for the Compromise of 1850. The party was dissolved in 1853, but at the time supporters thought the party may have to reform in the future. John W. A. Sanford, Jr., a lawyer in Milledgeville, and Dr. L.F.W. Andrews, a Macon doctor, argued that the party would surely have to emerge again when "Southern Seceders…controlled and directed by selfish and factious

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[658] Armstead L. Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage: The Demise of Slavery and the Collapse of the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 24-25.
[659] Luke Fain Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution: The Georgia Parties and the Crisis of the Union, 1859-1861," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974), 87-90.

calculations" resurfaced.[660] The party, of course, did reform in 1860 and even though the

platform of the party was ambiguous, the Constitutional Unionists were viewed as moderates

who would save the state from fire-eaters. The fact the party wished to preserve the Union was

reason enough for many middling Georgians to support Bell. As one northern agent traveling

through Georgia commented, "Not a merchant or businessman do I meet that favors a

withdrawal from the Union."[661] Atlanta bookseller Samuel Richards threw his support behind

Bell because he felt the Democrats were led by men "who have but nothing to lose in any

event."[662] In Columbus, a city that was experiencing an industrial boom, merchants and those

affiliated with the railroad were found to be enthusiastic supporters of the Constitutional

Unionists.[663]

The Constitutional Unionists found their strength with conservatives, who feared the

disruption to society that secession could cause. Chief among this group were middling

Georgians, who felt the region's best protection was in the Union. One historian posited that a

majority of the South's businessmen and merchants supported the Constitutional Union party and

local and statewide studies of Georgia support that assertion.[664] A.H. Brisbane, a South Carolina

railroad engineer who moved to Albany in 1841, was a vocal supporter of the Constitutional

Unionists. According to historian Mark Wetherington, Brisbane was representative of middling

Georgians in the area, who favored expanding beyond a localist identity and were not committed

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[660] John William Augustine Sanford, Jr. letter and Constitutional Union Party of Georgia address, MSS 497f, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
[661] Silas Wright Burt Reminisces, November 1860, New York Historical Society.
[662] Samuel P. Richards Diary, November 10, 1860, Samuel P. Richards papers, MSS 176, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
[663] Edwards, "River City at War," 52.
[664] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 53.

to the current social order.[665] In Thomasville, Constitutional Unionists were led by "professional men" such as lawyers William J. Young and Augustin Hansell, newspaper editor Lucius Bryan, druggist Edward Seixas, and businessman James T. Hayes.[666] In Greene County, historian Jonathan Bryant found the Constitutional Unionists were made up of merchants, businessmen, and some planters, all of whom viewed themselves as progressives, with a commitment to scientific improvement of agriculture and the expansion of commerce.[667] Thomas Dyer found that in Atlanta, support for the party was high among those affiliated with the railroad, merchants, and clerks.[668]

With the fracture of the Democratic Party, many in Georgia felt the result could only end in disunion. The Republicans may be able to win the election thanks to the divided nature of America's only national party. While Stephen A. Douglas had some support in the South, the contest in most of Georgia was largely between Breckinridge and Bell. Supporters of Bell pointed out that the Constitutional Unionists were the only true national party and that the southern Democrats were just as bad as Republicans because Breckinridge supporters were radicals. Bell supporters declared non-Douglas Democrats secessionists and "enemies of the country," linking them with radicals such as William Lowndes Yancey of Alabama.[669] An "Old Whig" wrote that the reason the "country was in trouble" was "old…political parties have preyed on its vitals and brought it to the verge of dissolution." In this writer's estimation, the

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[665] Mark V. Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Piney Woods Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 58.

[666] William Warren Rogers, *Antebellum Thomas County, 1825-1861* (Tallahassee: The Florida State University, 1963), 118.

[667] Jonathan M. Bryant, *How Curious A Land: Conflict and Change in Greene County, Georgia, 1850-1885* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 48.

[668] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 39.

[669] Michael P. Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic: The Secession of Georgia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 12.

Constitutional Unionists were a breath of fresh air compared to the old parties.[670] In Columbus, supporters of Bell pointed toward Henry Benning, a lawyer turned Democratic politician who had been advocating secession since 1850, as evidence that the Democrats were simply hell bent on disunion. Some supporters claimed the fire-eaters aligned with Breckinridge leaders to purposely split the Democratic Party along sectional lines to ensure a Lincoln victory, which would pave the way for secession.[671] Constitutional Unionists in Georgia were highly confident that enough men were opposed to secession that playing the disunion card would work in their favor.[672] Ultimately, the Constitutional Unionists argued that the South, including the institution of slavery, was best kept safe in the Union and a vote for Breckinridge would put the region and its way of life in peril. One of the most popular slogans in the state among Constitutional Unionists was: "A vote for Breckenridge is a vote for Lincoln."[673]

One thing that supporters of Bell, Breckinridge, and even Douglas had in common was portraying their candidate as the best protector of southern rights. Prominent Columbus attorney Absalom H. Chappell publicly spoke in defense of Douglas because he thought the Illinois Senator was a staunch defender of southern rights and the best hope of defeating Abraham Lincoln.[674] Nedom Angier, a New Hampshire-born Atlanta doctor and real estate speculator, openly campaigned for Douglas, arguing the Illinois Senator was the only true national candidate.[675] Peyton Colquitt, editor of the *Columbus Daily Times*, told an audience in Dalton that the states only hope was to choose Breckinridge because only he would guard their rights.

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[670] *Savannah Republican*, July 20, 1860.
[671] For examples, see *Savannah Republican* July 7 and September 19, 1860 and *Rome Weekly Courier*, November 2, 1860.
[672] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 12-15.
[673] Laura Jensen, "The Struggle for the Union: The Constitutional Union Party in the Election of 1860," *Constructing the Past* vol. 6, issue 1 (2005), 17.
[674] Columbus *Daily Enquirer*, June 15, 19, 1861.
[675] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 37.

John Martin, editor of the *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, heard of Colquitt's speech and retorted that only Bell truly represented the South because most southerners were moderates.[676] Thomas County lawyer J.R. Alexander delivered, according to one newspaper account, a "convincing, eloquent, patriotic, and conservative" speech that advised citizens of Thomas County to vote for the Bell ticket.[677] A.J. Macarthy, editor of the Albany *Patriot*, argued that Breckinridge was the only candidate that would allow "Southern rights" to triumph over "Northern fanaticism."[678]

In the days and weeks leading up to the election, tempers ran high among the factions. The mere mention of Lincoln's name could get people in trouble. In Atlanta, a carpenter and recent transplant from Maine named Benjamin Franklin Longley publicly declared his support for Lincoln. According to the *Intelligencer*, Longley was driven from the city by community pressure before he could be adequately punished. Therefore, the paper printed a detailed description of Longley in the hope that he might see justice.[679] Outside of Atlanta, a laborer named Osborne Burson was overheard saying he would have voted for Lincoln if the Illinois man had been on the ticket. Again, the *Intelligencer* was dumbfounded how Burson escaped punishment, especially upon learning that the laborer declared that "negroes were as free as he was…and if he had a chance he would assist in freeing them." Accusing Burson of "tampering with negroes," the newspaper called on authorities to punish the man for his misstep.[680]

After much discussion, debate, and rancor, election day arrived on November 6, 1860. Despite all the angry editorials and hot-tempered speeches of the previous weeks and months, voting went smoothly in Georgia. When the returns came in, Breckinridge had managed a slim

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[676] Edwards, "River City," 52-53.
[677] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 7, 1860.
[678] Albany *Patriot*, November 1, 1861.
[679] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, November 4, 1860.
[680] Ibid., August 13, 1860.

victory over Bell. The Southern Democrat garnered 48.8 percent of the vote in the state while

Bell tallied 40.3 percent. Douglas finished a distant third with 10.9 percent.[681]

Within a few days of the election, before the returns had been published or were known,

it was still thought that Abraham Lincoln would be the next President. While this was not

entirely unexpected, many residents of Georgia were still stunned by the result and its

implications. Intense debate immediately began regarding what the proper course of action

should be for Georgia and the entire South. On average in the state, Breckinridge supporters

favored immediate secession while Bell and Douglas supporters took a more cautious approach.

Democrats felt Lincoln's moderate image had been purposely designed to lull the South into

complacency. Many Bell and Douglas supporters were quick to acknowledge the possible

dangers of a Lincoln victory but argued a Republican administration could be tolerated or

neutralized.[682]

It would be a fallacy to say that many Georgians were unconditional Unionists after

Lincoln's election. Warner Thomson, a Virginian whose son lived in northern Georgia, was

perplexed when his son told him that men previously opposed to secession were now in favor

simply based on the election results. Thomson wrote, "Men voted for Breckenridge, but they are

strong Union men and they want nothing towards secession until some overt act of the incoming

administration…But now you say things have changed and that good Union men join in and cry

disunion!! What are they about?"[683] As this shows, the election of Lincoln undoubtedly turned

some anti-secessionists into people who were at least willing to consider secession as recourse

for the Republican victory. However, many feared the implications of secession and felt that

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[681] Ollinger Crenshaw, *The Slave States in the Election of 1860* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), 298.
[682] Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution," 102-105.
[683] Warner Alexander Thomson to William Sydnor Thomson, November 23, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

taking a cautious, wait-and-see approach was the best way moving forward. The editor of the *Columbus Daily Sun* was not willing to make the leap for secession just yet. Surely, the election of the Republicans was "to be deprecated by every lover of the Union and good government." However, since the Republicans did not have a majority in Congress, it was felt there was "hope for the future" because Lincoln was "powerless for evil" plans to come to fruition.[684] Julius Hayden, president of the Atlanta Gas Light Company, had not been deeply involved in politics before Lincoln's election, but he become openly opposed to secession and became more active than he "had ever done before" because of his fear of secession.[685]

At a mass meeting in Thomasville on November 17, the majority of the citizens that attended felt a state convention should convene to decide Georgia's fate, but advised such a convention to take a cautious approach. After all, "it requires many long years…to build up a nation; but a very *few days* to reduce it to anarchy, revolution and ruin."[686] Even formerly radical Thomas County Congressman Peter E. Love decided to chart this course. Love had disrupted a "Friends of the Union" meeting in Thomasville, the county's seat and largest town, in 1850. He disagreed with the South accepting the Compromise of 1850 and interjected his views upon the Unionist meeting.[687] Now, ten years later, he backed the resolutions of the citizens calling for moderation. Furthermore, Love was the only Democratic Congressman from Georgia who did not speak out in favor of immediate secession. Love believed the South should at least attempt

[684] *Columbus Daily Sun*, November 8, 1860.
[685] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 43.
[686] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 21, 1860.
[687] David Williams, Teresa Crisp Williams, and David Carlson, *Plain Folk in a Rich Man's War: Class and Dissent in Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 186.

to save the Union and would "cheerfully" accept constitutional guarantees of Southern rights instead of secession.[688]

Despite Love's willingness to go against party lines, this was certainly not the norm. The presidential election campaign showed that Georgia had partisanship and divisiveness that could color post-election politics. Some disunionists feared that this partisanship could lead anti-secessionists to form a Southern Republican party.[689] J. Henly Smith, a political ally of Alexander Stephens, argued that the Republicans could "have adherents all over the South—in every state…The non-slaveholders will very generally adhere to the new party, and slavery will be crushed out everywhere."[690] Those advocating secession feared that Georgians would be receptive to Republican offers of patronage. Secession became a necessary alternative to Lincoln's election because the hegemony of the slaveholders was suddenly in question, not just from an external threat, but also an internal one.[691] Slaveholders and their allies felt that secession was the only way to unify the South and save the peculiar institution.[692] The impetus was on Georgia's conservative leaders to prevent immediate secession.

Democrats and former Whigs, or at least Bell and Douglas supporters, simply took on new labels: immediate secessionists and cooperationists. Immediate secessionists were in favor of their state seceding without waiting for other southern states to do likewise. Cooperationists

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[688] *Savannah Morning News*, December 24, 1860.
[689] This is the basic thesis of Michael Johnson's *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*. He argues that despite anti-secessionist feeling by the common man, Georgia's state convention voted for secession because the elite men at the convention were afraid of the political and social divisions within the state that could lead to Republicans getting a foothold in the state. Some other studies, notably J. William Harris' *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society,* have argued against Johnson's interpretation. Harris argues that both slaveholders and non-slaveholders had ties and these did not break down until after the war began. Hence, both sides supported disunion and it was not a vast conspiracy by slaveholders and elites.
[690] Keri Leigh Merritt, *Masterless Men: Poor Whites and Slavery in the Antebellum South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 293.
[691] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, xx.
[692] Williams, *Bitterly Divided*, 31.

were harder to define. Some wanted to simply delay secession until other Southern states could come together and unify to make an attempt at cooperation. Others were opposed to secession except as a last resort. Still others in the cooperationist camp were unconditional Unionists.[693] What united cooperationists, though, was their contempt for immediate secessionists. They may not agree on what course the South should take, but they certainly did not agree with immediate secessionists charting the course.

Middling Georgians largely fell in the cooperationist camp, which is hardly surprising since many cooperationists were former Whigs who voted for Bell in the 1860 election. The range of views of the cooperationists can be seen in the varied reactions to Lincoln's election and the possibility of secession among the middle class. Atlanta bookstore owner Samuel Richards was opposed to secession for fear of economic ruin and because he thought secessionist leaders were rash, but he also believed that the state had the right to secede if necessary.[694] Cooperationists such as Jacob Young, a store owner and clerk of the superior court in Irwin County, were not against slavery or slaveholders, but opposed secession as hasty and ill-advised.[695] Columbus businessman John Horry Dent was opposed to secession at any point, fearing that war would only lead to ruin for the state. Dent argued that Georgians needed to "maintain our rights and honor" in the Union rather than "wildly" exit the Union with "imprudence." To the end, Dent was sure compromise could be reached between North and South.[696]

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[693] For a discussion of the viewpoints of cooperationists, see Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 7-8 and 25-27.
[694] Samuel P. Richards papers, MSS 176, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
[695] Mark V. Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Piney Woods Georgia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 77-78.
[696] David Williams, *Rich Man's War: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 46.

Immediate secessionists tended to be better organized based on their more unified position and came out firing against the cooperationists. In fact, they did not call their opponents cooperationists, but submissionists. A.J. Macarthy, editor of the Albany *Patriot*, told southerners that would fall for "the sweet lullaby of the Union" that the election of Lincoln would leave the South to submit to the North. Southerners ran the risk of being slaves to the northerners and anyone who was willing to admit that submission to the North was "Treason to the soil of his nativity" should let their "motto be 'Resistance!'" The "rallying cry" that should "be heard from the mountains to the seaboard…'Lincoln SHALL NOT BE PRESIDENT!'"[697]

Cooperationists of all stripes bristled at the label and Lucius Bryan, editor of a Thomasville newspaper, was quick to point out that they simply opposed taking a "fatal leap into the abyss of disunion" and thought it "cowardly" to give up their rights in the Union without a fight.[698] An editor in Macon argued the real submissionists were South Carolina's Democratic senators, who had both vacated their seats, and had reduced the majority in Congress opposed to the Republicans.[699] Many cooperationists further argued that the South need not secede. After all, their best protection was in the Union since Lincoln and the Republicans could do nothing to affect the South for they would be protected by the Supreme Court, the majority in the Senate, and the majority in the House of Representatives. The Republicans' lack of majority led many cooperationists to argue that would keep Lincoln and his followers from infringing upon southern institutions. They argued the South was best served by staying in the Union and preventing the Republicans from having their way.[700]

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[697] *Albany Patriot*, November 22, 1860.
[698] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise,* November 21, 1860
[699] *Macon Citizen* as quoted in *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 21, 1860.
[700] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 42-43.

By mid-November, Governor Joseph E. Brown advocated for a state convention to decide Georgia's course of action. Brown called for immediate action from the state legislature and the governor preferred secession. In fact, Governor Brown attempted to get the legislature to pass an immediate secession resolution, but the legislature refused. Instead, on November 21, the legislators agreed with Brown's call for a convention and ordered a body to meet on January 16, 1861 to decide Georgia's fate in the Union. The legislature set January 2 as the date for the election of convention delegates and adopted a resolution urging the formation of a Southern Confederacy.[701]

Almost immediately, the factions that had fought over the election of 1860 were now fighting over the election of delegates to the convention. The names had changed from Democrats and Constitutional Unionists to immediate secessionists and cooperationists, but the game remained the same. The cooperationist editor of the Columbus *Enquirer* questioned whether a state had "any right to quietly secede from the Union?"[702] One of the Columbus *Sun*'s two editors felt there were "remedies within the Union of sufficient strength to cure all the ills we complain of."[703] Lucius Bryan of the *Southern Enterprise* in Thomasville suggested that the delegates from the county should be "compromise men" who would oppose "all rashness and haste." These men needed to be "cautious and moderate" and having reasonable men from both parties would be ideal, but not necessary.[704] Atlanta Unionists urged for a moderate slate of delegates, led by newspaper publisher George Adair and James M. Calhoun, a lawyer and former Whig mayor, because they felt moderates best represented the sentiment of the people.[705] Peyton

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[701] N.B. Beck, "The Secession Debate in Georgia, November, 1860-January, 1861," in *Antislavery and Disunion, 1858-1861*, ed. J. Jeffery Auer (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1968), 335-336.
[702] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, November 14, 1860.
[703] *Columbus Sun*, November 24, 1860.
[704] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 28, 1860.
[705] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 45.

Colquitt, editor of the *Columbus Times*, spoke for many in arguing that secession was the remedy for the South, if nothing else than for self-preservation.[706] A.J. Macarthy, of the Albany *Patriot*, thought Georgia had no choice but to choose secessionist delegates because the alternative was submission to the North. "Submission is slavery," Macarthy wrote in an editorial, "and slavery is worse than death."[707]

Letters to the editor poured in to the state's newspapers, describing differing points of view. "John Hancock" wrote to the *Daily Sun* in Columbus to express the cooperationist point of view. While stating that he was in favor of secession if necessary, Hancock disagreed with the notion of separate state action. Instead, Hancock thought the South's only chance at success was if the Southern states cooperated. As such, Hancock thought the state convention was a waste of time as Georgia would likely secede by herself and "without any regard to what other States may do."[708] Still worse was the fact that immediate secessionists assumed that all of the Lower South states had enough support to secede individually. If this belief was wrong, it could lead to disaster in Hancock's opinion. Hancock was simply asking for secessionists to "stop and deliberate."[709] For this writer, the only chance at success was through cooperation.

The vast majority of letter writers in Columbus disagreed with Hancock. One citizen felt that the South must secede for "her final independence, glory and freedom."[710] Waiting for other states to join in would be folly because "each sovereign state alone has the right to [secede] for itself, but not for another." While Georgia could counsel with other Southern states, she could only act for herself. The thing that bothered immediate secessionists was the notion of not only

[706] *Columbus Daily Times*, November 16, 1860.
[707] *Albany Patriot*, December 13, 1860.
[708] *Columbus Daily Sun*, November 26, 1860.
[709] *Columbus Daily Sun*, November 28, 1860.
[710] *Columbus Daily Times*, November 20, 1860.

waiting on other states to act, but also perhaps refusing to act altogether because one of the "slave States" would "submit to Lincoln's rule."[711] One of the major rallying cries was that cooperation was "tantamount to…submission." Several writers pointed out that Muscogee County had had three large meetings and all three had unanimously favored "*immediate, separate, State secession*."[712]

While some claimed a spirit of harmony, it became obvious that party ties did matter to many with the fate of the state, and country, on the line. Indicative of this was a letter to the editor of the *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, written by someone calling themselves "Decision." The writer stated that "Breckinridge men were moving everywhere to have secession" and that Union men would have to show up and vote or else the convention would declare for secession "contrary to the wishes" of the people.[713] As one writer simply put it, "The question is before us; are the people or the politicians to rule the land?"[714] This argument became popular with many cooperationists as they sought to rally what they thought were the vast majority of moderate Georgians.

<u>Electing Delegates and the Convention</u>

With the fate of the state and country in the balance, prominent Georgians such as Alexander Stephens and B.H. Hill spoke out in favor of cooperationism. In Columbus, State Senator Hines Holt "denied that the election of Lincoln…was any cause for resistance." Holt admitted that the Southern states had suffered wrongs at the hands of the North, but Lincoln's

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[711] *Columbus Daily Sun*, November 27, 1860.
[712] *Columbus Daily Sun*, November 27, 1860.
[713] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 28, 1860.
[714] Warner Alexander Thomson to William Sydnor Thomson, November 23, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

election did not "justify secession."[715] Holt went so far as to introduce a series of resolutions in the state legislature aimed at staving off secession, but all such efforts were defeated. Fifteen cooperationist subscribers to the *Columbus Times* cancelled their subscriptions to the paper because of the "dishonorable…and dangerous" opinions the paper was espousing.[716] The cooperationist cause was largely taken up by former Whigs, so much so that "Whiggery and Unionism became almost synonymous." The bulk of middle-class Georgians were Whigs and supported the cooperationist cause that attempted to stave off secession.[717]

Advocating the cooperationist cause could be dangerous though. When bricklayer William Stewart admitted he had voted for Bell and now was in favor of cooperationist candidates for the convention, Dougherty County planter Thomas Moughan and his overseer J.L. Dozier ran Stewart out of the county. Thomas Healey, a partner in a brick making and construction firm in Atlanta, openly advocated against secession and was called a sneak, a traitor, and threatened by opponents.[718] Perhaps Albany bookseller L.E. Welch, who was born in the North, took notice. Welch burned every issue of *Harper's Magazine* he had in the middle of Broad Street. The audience that watched were elated and the editor of the *Patriot* thought this proved Welch was "with us."[719]

Welch's experience highlighted one of the essential aspects of the middle class experience in the state during the secession crisis. Because most middle-class Georgians made their living in non-agricultural positions and relied on clients and customers, ideology and

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[715] Speech of Hines Holt, *Columbus Daily Times*, December 1, 1860.
[716] *Columbus Daily Times*, December 3, 1860.
[717] Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South, 1860-1877," *The Journal of Southern History*, 27, no. 3 (August 1961), 306.
[718] Deposition of Thomas G. Healey, January 11, 1873, claim of Thomas G. Healey, Records of the Southern Claims Commission.
[719] *Albany Patriot*, December 13, 1860.

business could clash. Perhaps this was always true, but it became more pronounced. In his research on the middle class in the South, Jonathan Daniel Wells found that the middle class was reluctant to support secession. At the same time, though, he found that most middle-class southerners felt too vulnerable to openly dissent if the popular mood in their area was for secession. Many middling southerners simply stayed quiet, keeping their true opinions hidden to letters, diaries, and their homes.[720] George Palmes, a Savannah grocer whose father was a native of Connecticut, opposed secession, but did not speak up for fear of "closing up business."[721] Rebecca Latimer Felton remembered, years later, that many "of the finest educators" in Georgia did not speak of their opposition to secession due to the "mad-hysteria that always presages war."[722]

The cooperationists wanted to delay the state's final decision to either give Lincoln time to redress grievances or to give southern states time to unite and coordinate. Savannah merchant John Randolph Wilder related to his son Joseph that a group of citizens called the "Wide Awakes" were formed and drilling in case "any attempt is made by the South to prevent the inauguration of Lincoln."[723] While the threat of violence in support of Lincoln was surely unrepresentative of the majority of Georgians, many middle-class Georgians were quick to point out that the South faced no immediate harm from the incoming administration. Joseph Atkins, writing to his son Thomas, a medical student, said that he was "astonished at the way people is talking about dissolution of the Union and that because Lincoln is constitutionally elected President. That of itself is not sufficient cause. It is said that in a few days the people of Georgia

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[720] Wells, *Origins of the Southern Middle Class*, 222.
[721] George F. Palmes to unknown, November 1, 1860, Palmes family papers, MS 604, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
[722] Rebecca Latimer Felton, *Country Life in Georgia in the Days of My Youth* (Atlanta: Index Printing Company, 1919), 80.
[723] John R. Wilder to Joseph Wilder, November 1860, King and Wilder families papers, MS 465, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

will be called to say union or disunion. I for one will say union unless something turns up that I know nothing of at this time."[724] In Lucius Bryan's opinion, the "Precipitators" were attempting "to *force* all who differ with them in opinion, to go for secession." While this was a time where southerners should unite as one, the cooperationists argued that these Democratic fire-eaters were leading the South down "such a course" that would be "most ineffectual." The "secession of the cotton States would be a *surrender* of their rights" and thus moderation was the right course.[725] Warner Thomson wrote to his son, a teacher in northern Georgia, hoping that "Southerners and fire eaters…will conduct themselves as sensible and patriotic men and yield with the best grace they can. After so much noise and threatening of the Union wait until Abe and his party actually do something so bad for southern endurance." In an earlier letter, Thomson stressed that he thought Lincoln would prove "that the apprehension of the South was without any foundation."[726]

The main problem that cooperationists were having was their contempt for secessionist leaders. Opponents thought secessionist leaders rash, demagogic Breckinridge supporters. According to cooperationists, the Democrats were petulant men who were risking everything to be the leaders of a new nation since they no longer held power in the Union.[727] William Sydnor Thomson, a teacher in northern Georgia, told his father that secessionist leaders were "demagogues" intent on "breaking down all laws."[728] Lucius Bryan thought the secessionist leaders clearly sprang from "the old Democratic party" and were determined to "rule or ruin."

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[724] Joseph Atkins to Thomas Washington Atkins, November 10, 1860, Atkins family papers, ms 3710. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.

[725] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, December 5, 1860.

[726] Warner Alexander Thomson to William Sydnor Thomson, November 5 and 8, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[727]   For a discussion of this line of thought on the part of cooperationists, see Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution," 201-205.

[728] William Sydnor Thomason to Warner Alexander Thomson, undated, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

One "strong Breckinridge man from Thomasville" stated that if the Southern Democrat came and made Unionist speeches "he would be *tarred* and *feathered*."[729] Before the election, Bryan railed, these Breckinridge supporters had claimed to be "the best Union men in the country," but now they were willing to disavow their own candidate for President simply because he *might* consider advocating staying in the Union.[730] Secession was considered rash because it posed economic problems and could jeopardize slavery, among other things, but one of the biggest problems was that Democrats were at the forefront of secessionist leadership.

Bryan, editor of the *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, laid out the case against secession in a lengthy editorial published December 12, 1860. Under the Constitution, the South, he contended, had grown to "be a great, prosperous and happy people" and was almost perfect, if not for "internal dissensions." Even though nothing had been done by the Federal government that would necessitate secession, Breckinridge men, who were "not very smart," were willing to advocate for secession for things that might occur. And even though slavery had been a divisive topic, Bryan argued the South's peculiar institution was better off for the discussion because slavery was now defended by the Constitution and not regarded as evil. It was neither brave nor patriotic to invite civil war for something that might happen. Yet, these fire-eaters had "rejoiced at the split" of the Democratic Party because they believed it would end with the "dissolution of the Union." People who would support such men should consider themselves "literally insane" if they thought these secessionists were leading them to some promised land. These men were not statesmen, as they refused to even attempt compromise and acted as if secession was inevitable. The people of Thomas County and the entire South needed to "be cautious."[731]

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[729] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 21, 1860.
[730] *Griffin Union* as quoted in *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 21, 1860.
[731] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, December 12, 1860.

Bryan argued forcefully that Thomas Countians needed to vote for cooperationists come January 2.

Secessionists were sure that the growing middle class was suspect at best and potential traitors at worst. One Savannah secessionist wrote, "We have a heavy Northern element, and a Southern element Northernized to contend with in our borders."[732] A letter writer in Macon was sure these elements would sow "discord, insubordination, and insecurity throughout the South."[733] An Atlanta secessionist echoed earlier sentiments of the possibility of a Southern Republican party, but this writer specifically placed the threat on businessmen who wanted to create a "new dynasty…engaged in building up a party in our midst." The writer was sure there were plenty of businessmen who would join Lincoln's party in order to receive "offices and emoluments from his hands."[734]

Despite the assertions that the state and the South were places that featured harmonious relations, a writer for the Charleston *Mercury* described the fear of class fracture in the South. Although this letter was written in South Carolina, it was reprinted in several Georgia newspapers. The writer argued that there were "thousands" in "every county" who wanted to "make gain out of the future" that would "come out in support of the Abolition Government…They will organize; and from being a Union party, to support an Abolition Government, they will become, like the Government they support, Abolitionists…The contest

[732] Rev. C.C. Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 15, 1860, in Robert Manson Myers, ed., *The Children of Pride: Selected Letters of Rev. Dr. Charles Colcock Jones, 1860-1868* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 628.

[733] *Macon Telegraph*, November 5, 1860.

[734] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, November 15, 1860.

for slavery will no longer be one between the North and South. It will be in the South, between the people of the South."[735]

Historian Michael Johnson, who studied the secession of Georgia closely, argues that secessionists pushed so hard for immediate secession in the aftermath of Lincoln's election because they felt they had to move quickly, realizing the state was not as harmonious or homogenous as elites said. In other words, they needed to demonstrate the necessity for immediate secession before the lower and middling classes realized secession may not be in their interest. As David Cotting asked his old Whig friend Alexander Stephens, "Is there not some secret reason kept hidden from the poorer and humbler classes, for the advocacy of secession which it seems to me would bring ruin upon us, without in the slightest alleviating any ills we may unconsciously labor under but aggravating them instead?"[736]   Thus, Johnson asserts, secessionists actually had to directly contradict declarations about Georgia's society and were forced to admit that slaveholders had more to gain from secession than nonslaveholders.[737]

It appears that many middle- and lower-class Georgians were aware that slaveholders stood to gain more from secession than they would. Certainly, many nonslaveholders still supported secession for other reasons, but it is important to note that during the debates over what Georgia should do, just as many middle- and lower-class Georgians opposed secession, arguing it would be to their detriment. Many with business ties to the North opposed secession simply because they thought it was economically ill-advised for the state and themselves.[738]

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[735] *Charleston Mercury*, reprinted in *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, October 15, 1860 and *Athens Southern Banner*, November 1, 1860.

[736] David G. Cotting to Alexander Stephens, November 22, 1860, Joseph Francis Burke papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[737] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 39-46.

[738] James Alex Baggett, *The Scalawags: Southern Dissenters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 51.

Anti-secessionists remembered that planters had adamantly opposed an 1858 bill to take earnings from the Western and Atlantic railroad and use them to fund public education. Historian Keri Leigh Merritt argues that in the Deep South, including Georgia, planters opposed public education attempts not only to avoid paying taxes, but also to keep others dependent upon them for information, moral guidance, and political beliefs.[739] Middle-class Georgians challenged this by openly advocating for public schooling. Lawyers and merchants remembered that planters viewed them as greedy outsiders. Many northern-born Georgians were well aware that their slaveholding neighbors had grown antagonistic toward them. These examples of the battles that occurred in the 1850s certainly played a role in middle-class Georgians who held steadfast to the anti-secessionist cause because they felt secession was a political, economic, and social power play by planters.

The secession of South Carolina on December 20 weakened the cause of the anti-secessionists. Georgia's Congressional representatives, with the exception of Thomas County's Peter Love, denounced compromise and stated that sectional reconciliation was impossible, especially with news of South Carolina's secession. Several Congressmen signed a letter stating compromise was impossible after the Crittenden Compromise had collapsed before the end of the year.[740] Only four Georgia Congressmen did not sign the letter and of those only Love was a Democrat. This added more fuel to the fire that Democrats were disunionists hell bent on secession no matter what. One newspaper editor complained that these Democrats "aggravate instead of soften" and "let not an opportunity pass to throw obstacles in the way" of potential

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[739] Merritt, *Masterless Men*, 152-154.

[740] The Crittenden Compromise had been proposed by Kentucky Senator John J. Crittenden. It was designed to resolve the secession crisis by addressing the concerns of the Lower South states through Constitutional amendments. The compromise failed and has often been seen as the last attempt to stave off war.

compromise.[741] The idea of a vast conspiracy on the part of Democrats to force Southern states out of the Union was thus reinforced.

With the year winding down and the January 2 election creeping ever closer, both sides made one last push to arouse support. The *Columbus Times*, which had heretofore treated the cooperationists in mocking language, toned down its rhetoric and admitted that those supporters were not submissionists after all. However, the paper could not understand why anyone in Columbus would oppose secession when the "people of Muscogee" were "against the…policy foreshadowed in the address of the candidates of 'the friends of cooperative resistance.'" The paper promised that "the canvass shall neither be embittered or poisoned" but still called the cooperationist candidates "honest but deluded."[742] The pro-secession elements of the state, and even some cynical cooperationists such as Alexander Stephens, acted as if secession was a foregone conclusion and inevitable. This general assumption caused the most rancor for cooperationists and unionists. One cooperationist felt it was better to "fall in defence of justice and truth, than to be even victorious and triumphant in the advocacy of error." Secession was not the answer and it did not show "true patriotism…without making a single struggle to maintain" the Union. To secede without even attempting compromise seemed simply unforgivable to cooperationists.[743] Dr. Daniel Lee of Dougherty County argued that due to the financial importance of cotton, the "true policy of the North is to let the people of the South govern themselves" in the Union. Lee was confident the South was safe in the Union and that secession was due to "party and fanatical impulses."[744]

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[741] *Athens Southern Banner*, December 27, 1860.
[742] *Columbus Daily Times*, December 27, 1860.
[743] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, January 3, 1861.
[744] *Albany Patriot*, December 20, 1860.

A popular tactic among middle-class Georgians was pointing to quotes from northern newspapers which proved, in their mind, that northern opponents of the Republicans were everywhere and did not want the South to break up the Union. At the same time, in an editorial, Lucius Bryan pessimistically proclaimed that surely "Georgia will secede" after delegates were chosen for the convention because "the plan of the secessionists has been successful." These secessionists, he claimed, were ignoring "the interests of the people" in favor of "prejudice, selfish ambition, or party ties." Bryan warned readers that George Washington had been scared at the prospect of building the country up, yet these secessionists did not tremble at the "appalling magnitude" of the prospect of tearing it apart. The editor urged Georgians not to fall for the trap and vote for cooperationist candidates, but at the same time his editorial read like it was written by an angry, defeated man.[745]

Yet, who could blame Bryan for feeling defeated? As 1860 wound to a close, it appeared that the immediate secessionists were likely to win the majority of seats at the convention. To be sure, Bryan and many other middling Georgians felt that the result of the January 2 election would not be the popular sentiment of the people. Bryan and many cooperationists felt the people of Georgia were being bamboozled by secessionist leaders who continued to harp on issues that either were not true or could be dealt with due to the Republicans not having a majority in Congress. The cooperationists, however, somewhat had no one to blame but themselves. Cooperationist leaders such as Alexander Stephens did little, if any, speaking throughout the state while secessionist leaders, such as Henry Benning, Robert Toombs, and Howell Cobb toured throughout the state to advocate for secession. Furthermore, the

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[745] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, January 2, 1861.

secessionists even brought in people from outside Georgia, such as Alabamian William Lowndes Yancey, to bolster their campaign.[746]

As the new year beckoned, there was both excitement and trepidation in Georgia. Many residents realized that a decisive moment in the history of their county, state, and country was fast approaching. On December 16, Muscogee County Douglas supporter turned secessionist Absalom Chappell wrote his wife: "You can not form an idea what a dead stand all business is. Cotton is no more sold here than if it were mid-summer. The perfect stillness of things is like that which prevails…just before a mighty earthquake."[747] Around the same time, Tom Dowtin, a resident of Cass County, wrote his mother, who lived in South Carolina, to tell her he thought Georgia would stay in the Union "as long as she can. The people here have no notion of fighting as long as they can keep from it."[748]

Perhaps forebodingly, January 2, 1861, dawned rainy and cold all throughout the state as Georgians slogged to the polls to cast their votes for delegates to the state convention that would decide whether or not the state of Georgia would remain in the Union. Alexander Stephens called it the "worst day" for an election he had ever seen.[749] Ballots were cast and the waiting game began. Peyton Colquitt was confident that "we have done all in our power to carry the State out of the Union." Secession was "the only safety for the South" and cooperationists "will repent" when "Georgia has spoken."[750] James Bethune hoped for a secessionist triumph, seeing the alternative as the victory of "allies here to help" the North "whip us in to submission."[751]

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[746] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 39-46.
[747] Edwards, "River City," 58.
[748] Tom Dowtin letters, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[749] Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution," 232.
[750] *Columbus Daily Times*, January 3, 1861.
[751] *The Corner Stone*, January 1, 1861.

Very little was written or said by the cooperationists, thus making one think they did not like their prospects of success.

When the state convention convened on the 16th, the outcome was nearly a foregone conclusion. Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi joined South Carolina in seceding from the Union. Momentum alone seemed to be pushing Georgia toward secession. However, cooperationists like Lucius Bryan felt Georgia should "view the whole ground" and chart "her course with that dignity and firmness, which has always characterized her movements."[752] Immediate secessionists held a numerical majority in the convention and appeared to be better organized as well. The official Georgia vote total was 50,243 for secessionists and 37,123 for cooperationists.[753]

Immediately, the secessionists dominated the convention, with pro-secession former Governor George Crawford elected President of the convention and Columbus' Albert Lamar named secretary. Commissioners from Alabama and South Carolina addressed the meeting and asked Georgia to join her sister states out of the Union. Crawford noted in his opening speech that disunion was Georgia's only viable option due to the South's grievances against the North.[754] In an attempt to counteract the strong secessionist language, a pro-Union petition was presented to the convention. This petition was written by novelist L. Virginia French and featured the signatures of "hundreds of important women, both of the border slave States and of

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[752] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, January 19, 1861.
[753] These figures were published by Governor Brown in April 1861 after several cooperationists asked for the total, thinking they had the actual majority. In the 1970s, research showed that Brown had falsified the returns and the actual total was much closer. In fact, the cooperationists may have actually had a majority after all. Michael P. Johnson has estimated the actual vote at 44,152 for immediate secessionists and 41,632 for cooperationists. See Johnson, "A New Look at the Popular Vote…," 259-275.
[754] Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution," 243; Allen D. Candler, *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia*, 6 vols. (Atlanta: Charles P. Byrd, 1909), 1: 212, 216, 219 (hereafter Volume I unless cited otherwise).

the North." This was yet another attempt to prove that there was a spirit of conciliation among northerners and that secession was unpopular in the border states.[755]

On January 18, delegate Eugenius A. Nisbet offered a resolution to uphold Georgia's "right and duty" to secede and advocated the state's participation in the creation of a southern confederacy.[756] This motion was a gauge to see if a secession ordinance would pass. In response, cooperationist Herschel Johnson presented a substitute resolution asking the convention to postpone final action until a convention of all Southern states could meet and make a coordinated action. Judge Richard H. Clark remembered that Johnson had a "strong conviction…that for existing causes secession was unwise, unnecessary, and destructive."[757] Johnson's goal was simply to stall secession as long as possible and his substitute motion triggered intense debate. Perhaps the key speech was given by Alexander Stephens.[758] Stephens said that secession would never receive his blessing, but it seemed obvious to him that secession was inevitable. Both Johnson and Thomasville's Augustin Hansell, elected to the convention as a cooperationist, described Stephens as a beaten man and Hansell later recalled that "there were several members near me who had been disposed to wait a little but they came at once to the conclusion that it was time to act" after hearing Stephens' speech.[759] It appeared that not only Johnson and Hansell, but many delegates who had favored cooperationism were swayed by Stephens' speech. Following the debate, Nisbet's resolution passed with 166 in favor and 130

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[755] Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage*, 30.
[756] Candler, ed., *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia*, 229.
[757] Wylie, ed., *Memoirs of Judge Richard H. Clark*, 291.
[758] With the exception of Stephens' speech, none of the debate was recorded.
[759] Crutcher, "Disunity and Dissolution," 246; Augustin Harris Hansell, "Augustin Harris Hansell Memoirs, 1905," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Southern Historical Collection.

against.[760] With the vote in favor, a committee with members of both factions was appointed to draw up an ordinance of secession.

The next day, Nisbet presented the ordinance of secession was presented to the convention. In an attempt at delaying secession, Benjamin H. Hill resubmitted the Johnson resolution from the previous day, asking the convention to delay action until after all the Southern states could convene. The vote was close, but Hill was shot down 164 to 133.[761] With Hill's resolution defeated, many cooperationists felt further resistance was futile and joined the disunionist majority in backing a secession ordinance. Nisbet offered the secession ordinance and it passed with 208 in favor and 89 opposed. Even B.H. Hill had voted in favor, but Alexander Stephens did not, staying true to his word.[762]

On January 21, the Secession Ordinance was publicly signed before large crowds. Six delegates refused to sign, but cooperationist leaders Linton Stephens, Alexander's half-brother, and Herschel Johnson gave speeches backing the ordinance. The editor of the *Columbus Times* was not surprised by the response of men like Stephens and Johnson. He felt that cooperationists had been "as loyal to Southern interests as the secessionists" and would "give all they have and hope for the South and will be found gallantly fighting her cause when imperiled."[763] Many cooperationists had said all along they would go along with the state and many did. However, there was concern that secession would not be as peaceable as all of the secessionists had claimed. Further, there was also nervousness by the editor of the Columbus *Enquirer* that the convention had been "a triumph of one section" of the state "over the other" and there was genuine concern that the secession of the state of Georgia could lead to further divisions in the

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[760] Candler, ed., *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia*, 236-238.
[761] Ibid., 252-256.
[762] Ibid., 256-260.
[763] *Columbus Daily Times*, January 14, 1861.

state.[764] There was even talk that Georgia should not join the other southern states in a nation because if the old Union could dissolve, what would stop a new Union from fracturing?[765] Columbus newspaper editor Peyton Colquitt had an answer, stating that "in unity, there is strength" and the Southern states would be better off banding together and their common interests would keep them together.[766]

But talk of common interests could fall on deaf ears. Warner Thomson, a Virginian whose son was a teacher in northern Georgia, was enraged by the thought of secession and blamed extremists in both sections for the calamity. In a letter to his son, Thomson railed, "I begin to think there is as much fanatic sentiment in the South as in the North and the <u>nigger</u> question, the everlasting <u>nigger</u>, is about to drive many crazy and turn our country into a huge insane hospital. I am still hopeful this thing will settle down in peace and quiet and this business will be resumed after political demagogues have sickened and worried people out with their cries of fire! Fire! Wolf! Wolf! They certainly have done more mischief and unsettled the country more."[767]

Some cooperationists were not enthusiastic about the prospect of collaboration with the people they had just been competing with for national, state, and regional offices. Thomasville newspaper editor Lucius Bryan wrote that southerners had been talking about how they had the welfare of the whole country at heart but had actually embarked on a "fruitless" assault on the North. Instead of preserving the country, they had "compelled to surrender up that country *so dear to our hearts*" and now "not one remains to raise a voice" for the good of the whole

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[764] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, January 22, 1861.
[765] *Augusta Daily Chronicle and Sentinel*, January 29, 1861.
[766] *Columbus Daily Times*, January 31, 1861.
[767] Warner Alexander Thomson to William Sydnor Thomson, December 3, 1860, William Sydnor Thomson papers, 1858-1889, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

country. Not so subtly, Bryan blamed the Democrats, writing that "the victory of the enemy has been complete."[768] Bryan was so enraged that the ordinance of secession was placed on the second page of the paper and in small type.

Despite railing against abolitionists and the Republicans, cooperationist sentiment in many parts of Georgia remained apprehensive, at best, to the state's secession. P.W. Alexander, a delegate to the convention from cooperationist Upson County went so far as to present a resolution advocating the Union's reconstruction "whenever…the full measure of the rights and equality of the people of the slaveholding States" could be guaranteed just one day after the Secession Ordinance had been signed.[769] The resolution ended up being buried in the newly formed Committee on Foreign Relations but the idea of reconstruction of the Union would be discussed until the firing on Fort Sumter precipitated the start of war in April. Cooperationists in many parts of the state saw reconstruction as a possibility because they felt that war was the likely outcome otherwise.

Middle-class Georgians argued that the secession question should again be submitted to the people. Thomas Crussell, a contractor in Atlanta who had voted for cooperationist candidates in the special election, argued that people needed to ratify the ordinance of secession. In that case, Crussell wrote, "Georgia never would have gone out. That is my opinion. I am confident she never would have."[770] James A. Stewart wrote that he was sure if the "incoming administration will not countenance or recommend war against the erring people of the South" then "the Union men, at the *ballot-box*, will effectually put down the revolution."[771]

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[768] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, January 23, 1861.
[769] Candler, ed., *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia*, 262.
[770] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 46.
[771] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, March 9, 1861.

With seceded states clamoring for the federal government to abandon property in their states, it was feared that war would commence and the states would be destroyed. James Stewart wrote in a letter to a Nashville paper, which was reprinted in Atlanta, that military preparations in the South were a "stupendous farce." Stewart was sure these military organizations were attempting to coerce "Union men into support of their revolution."[772] Matthew Williams, a West Point graduate who resigned his commission to become a lawyer and then a professor of astronomy and math, confided to his diary that he was sure those advocating for war had never experienced it. "War is a dreadful evil! It is the duty of every Christian man to pray earnestly and constantly for peace."[773] As Lucius Bryan argued, "the Seceders have declared their Secession to be *peaceable*," but were chancing war by agitating the federal government. What would be the point of dissolving "*peaceably* so great and renowned a Government as this *was*" to only "go to war on so insignificant a question as the territories?"[774] This was obviously a shot at Southern Democrats, who had been agitating secession over the issue of slavery being extended to the territories for many years. Bryan went so far as to call Democrats "absolutely demented" for instigating the "political ruin" that had occurred.[775] The editor of the *Columbus Enquirer* complained that Democrats were only out "for the accomplishment of selfish ends" and were nothing more than demagogues.[776] Despite all the calls for unity now that secession had occurred, deep political divisions remained.

Although there were divisions, it is also important to note that the act of secession had immediate consequences. Almost overnight, many cooperationists and conditional Unionists fell

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[772] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, March 9, 1861.
[773] Diary of Matthew J. Williams, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[774] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, January 30, 1861.
[775] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, January 30, 1861.
[776] *Columbus Enquirer*, January 30, 1861.

in line behind secession. When given the choice between loyalty to the Union or to their home state, many chose the latter, no matter how vociferously they had opposed secession. James Clay, an Atlanta stonemason, was sure that the state was "equally divided" on secession after Lincoln's election, but after secession occurred, Clay felt "the great body of the people" shifted and were "in favor of the separation."[777] Others still opposed secession, but became silent for fear of reprisals. Madison Berry, an Atlanta contractor, was an active Unionist before Georgia seceded, but afterwards he kept his views to himself, despite never embracing secession. He felt it was safer to remain silent.[778]

Berry was likely correct in his assumption. The aforementioned James Stewart, an extremely outspoken Atlanta Unionist, wrote a pro-Union letter to a Nashville newspaper, which was reprinted in the Atlanta *Intelligencer* in less than a week. The editor of the Atlanta paper decried Stewart as a "dangerous man" and compared him to "traitors and midnight assassins." The editor concluded that "all such men as this Stewart is must leave this community 'peaceably if they may, forcibly if we must.'" The newspaper called "upon the proper authorities to do their duty and promptly. Let treason and traitors be expelled from our community, now, or we will soon be a ruined and servile people."[779] Within days of the publication of his letter, the mayor of Atlanta visited Stewart and urged him to make a statement in support of his state and the South. Stewart publicly admitted his political error and never published another letter on the topic of disunion until after the war was over, but he still sought to influence events through private correspondence.[780]

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[777] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 46.
[778] Deposition of Madison R. Berry, June 10, 1873, claim of John Silvey, Records of the Southern Claims Commission (Allowed Claims).
[779] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, March 9, 1861.
[780] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 49.

Within a few weeks, the idea of Georgia being independent started to sink in but debate raged over what course the state should take. Both the cooperationists and the immediate secessionists jockeyed for power in newly independent Georgia. In Thomas County, the secessionists had been in the minority, but were now loudly expressing their views on how the state should proceed. To their opponents, like Bryan, this was yet another example of "the leaders of that party" attempting to "hold" on to their influence and power, only now in the independent state.[781] The vitriol toward Democrats was still there, but it was less about taking Georgia out of the Union and more about who would control the state post-secession. The conservatives in Thomas County admitted that the reunification of the Union was an admirable goal, but was totally unattainable.[782] The goal had shifted from staving off secession to keeping the Democrats from controlling the state and the South.

Middle class opposition to secession was not only driven by political allegiance, though. Middling Georgians who opposed secession appear to have done so for a variety of reasons. Some, especially those with trading ties to the North, believed that secession would lead to economic disaster for them, regardless of whether war broke out or not. Others felt that Lincoln's election was simply not reason enough to secede. Many of the Georgians studied for this project argued that northerners were not as radical as Lincoln or his party and those elements in the North would rally against any revolutionary policies the Republicans may attempt to enact. Regardless of why they opposed secession, the extant evidence points to many middling Georgians regarding secession as a foolish decision, fraught with pitfalls, and led by men who were more concerned with power than the welfare of their state or region.

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[781] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, February 6, 1861.
[782] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, February 13 and 20, 1861.

CHAPTER VII

ANTI-CONFEDERATES

Once secession occurred in Georgia, many anti-secessionists, including prominent

Georgians such as Alexander Stephens, accepted that there was no turning back and decided to

support the state and growing calls for a confederacy of southern states. While some, like

Stephens, resigned themselves to acceptance, other anti-secessionists became enthusiastic

supporters of the decision to secede and the growing idea of a unified southern nation. Despite

this, though, there remained a strong contingent of men and women who opposed secession and

its aftermath. As with those who did not support secession, it is fallacy to call the men and

women who did not support the calls for a separate southern nation Unionists. While there were

some people who did remain Unionists throughout secession and then civil war, the men and

women who did not support secession and then the new southern nation are generally better

described as anti-Confederate. Some hated the Confederacy while others were apathetic. Some

actively undermined the war effort while others used more passive resistance. While none of the

ways that the middle class dissented were different from other groups in the state or the

Confederacy as a whole, they are not a group that is often discussed when it comes to opposition

to the war. Thus, this chapter argues that the middle class was just as apt to dissent from the war

as groups such as the poor or yeomanry, which has received far more discussion. In whatever

shape or form anti-Confederate feelings and actions took, this chapter will further argue that

middle-class Georgians who failed to heed calls for southern nationalism and chose not to

support the war politically, socially, or economically were part of the ultimate demise of the southern nation.

After Secession

Secession did not just remove Georgia from the United States, it also allowed for what historian Michael Johnson has termed a double revolution. Secession was "a revolution for home rule—to eliminate the external threat." The second revolution occurred when the secession convention was tasked with writing Georgia's new state constitution. This was "a revolution for those who ruled at home—to prevent the political realization of the internal threat."[783] Thomas R.R. Cobb, an Athens lawyer and younger brother of famed politician Howell Cobb, was in charge of the committee tasked with rewriting the state constitution. Cobb and his committee hoped to preserve the social order by protecting against any internal threats while still feigning respect for established democratic ideals and practices.[784]

While Cobb was not explicit in the few speeches he gave, in the aftermath of secession, many newspaper editors were quick to argue that Georgia should make sure their new government was overtly pro-slavery. Otherwise, what was the point of secession? The editor of the Atlanta *Daily Intelligencer* wrote that "ours is a pro-slavery form of Government, and the pro-slavery element should be increased." The editor proposed making voting contingent upon owning slaves, therefore making the threat to slavery nonexistent.[785] Although he was not a slaveowner himself, Governor Joseph Brown agreed, arguing that if slavery and voting were tied together, it would link "together by the chain of interest, which, after all that may be said is the

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[783] Michael P. Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic: The Secession of Georgia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), xx.
[784] Ibid., 125-127.
[785] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, June 23, 1861.

great motive power in government."[786] A slaveholder who wrote to an Augusta newspaper argued that "the first and foremost thing to be secured is the protection of slavery. It is of more importance than the form of government itself." This writer was sure that slavery required defense from domestic foes because "all this ultra pro-slavery feeling will, in a few years give way" because the "disproportion between slave- and non-slave-holders under the present order of things, will continue." The slaveholder went so far as to argue for "one body of the legislative department of the Government to represent the slave interest."[787] It was thus tacitly, if not explicitly, understood that those who did not own slaves may not be pro-slavery and therefore may oppose not only secession, but anything that came afterwards.

Most, if not the vast majority, of middle-class Georgians did not oppose slavery per se, but they did oppose the unfettered power that slaveholders had. In the immediate aftermath of secession, there was growing concern that slaveholders were using secession as a way to not only cement their stranglehold on power, but to add to it as well. James Stewart of Atlanta was sure that the only thing that could come out of secession was "aristocracy, monarchy, and despotism."[788] Thomas Colquitt Andrews, writing to his brother-in-law Thomas Washington Atkins, a medical student, stated that "all the wrongs politicians complain of are anticipated. They do not exist in fact…I can only see anarchy and trouble in the future…Such may not be the case, but I have but little reason to hope otherwise, for fanaticism is as rife here as it dare be North."[789]

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[786] *Milledgeville Southern Federal Union*, April 30, 1861.
[787] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, February 9, 1861.
[788] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, March 9, 1861.
[789] T.C. Andrews to T.W. Atkins, January 14, 1861, Atkins family papers, ms 3710. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.

The concern that secession was simply a power play was only exacerbated in the weeks and months immediately following Georgia's exit from the Union. Supporters of secession felt that all citizens needed to fall in line and support the newly independent state. In Atlanta, the Minute Men of Fulton County, an organization of political and economic elites, formed to support the state's efforts to be independent. Furthermore, groups like the Minute Men had the goal of ridding the city of individuals "hostile and dangerous to the rights and interests of the city or state."[790] These extralegal groups instilled fear in anyone who dared to openly oppose secession or still support the United States. An Athens editor was sure that there "are yet some traitors and tories among us" and those people had to be dealt with because all Georgians should be of "but one mind now."[791] Utilizing similar language, Tazewell Howard wrote to his brother, Dr. Thomas Henry Howard, and asked if there were "any Tories in Floyd" county. Tazewell was especially worried that his brother was not for secession.[792] One man wrote to Howell Cobb and was "rather inclined to the opinion that the hangman will have to perform his duties in Georgia before we have a united people."[793]

It was clear that in this post-secession period, power was potentially up in the air. As one writer to a Macon newspaper noted, there was a possibility for "radical tendencies" in the aftermath of independence. This particular writer advocated for the convention delegates to "reform all abuses" by taking away the "election from the people" to prevent "anarchy and mobs" from ruling.[794] Despite protestations that race unified all white men, it was clear in

[790] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 131.
[791] *Athens Southern Banner*, April 3, 1861.
[792] Tazewell Howard to Dr. T. Henry Howard, July 30, 1861, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[793] John B. Cobb to Howell Cobb, January 28, 1861, Howell Cobb family papers, MS1367. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[794] *Macon Telegraph*, January 24, 1861.

actions that many people feared the opportunity that secession allowed for a shift in political and social power. An Augusta newspaper editor sensed this as well, arguing that the break from the Union should be followed up by getting "back to conservatism." The editor urged "great changes in our internal management."[795] Another editor concurred, arguing that "when our government is in a revolutionary state…much needed change can be easily effected."[796]

Although the moment could be deemed revolutionary, the delegates of the secession-turned-state constitution convention were much more interested in conservative proposals and actions. These proposals were intended to firm up the power of the ruling elite, not to challenge the status quo. The committees that drafted the new state constitution and discussed reducing the number of Senators and Representatives in the state assembly were dominated by secessionist delegates from counties with high rates of slaveholding.[797] The convention preserved nearly all of the federal structure in Georgia in order to stabilize rather than threaten the state's society. The only real change the convention made was deciding that federal judges in the state would lose their commissions and new judges would be appointed by the governor.[798]

While preserving the general structure of the government, the convention attempted to reform government institutions to quell any potential political threat from below. The new state constitution was hammered out from May 21 to 23, 1861, during secret sessions. Despite protestations from some delegates who believed that the sovereignty of the people restricted the power of the convention, the majority of delegates had no such qualms. Linton Stephens, Alexander Stephens' half-brother, argued that the convention "cannot exceed" the "powers" the

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[795] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, November 24, 1861.
[796] *Rome Weekly Courier*, February 1, 1861.
[797] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 145.
[798] Ibid., 147-148.

people "delegated to us."[799] But Stephens was in the minority, with most delegates arguing that the sovereignty of the people was represented by the convention, which gave the delegates virtually unlimited power.[800] As Robert Toombs stated, "We are only limited by God and Right. We are the People."[801]

Toombs' statement was proven by the fact that the convention gave a delegation of ten Georgians, to represent the state in the Confederate convention in Montgomery, "full and plenary" power to agree upon a provisional Confederate government and constitution. The Confederate Constitution would then be "submitted to, approved, and ratified by" the state convention.[802] After the delegates to the Confederate convention returned in early March, the Confederate Constitution was ratified by the Georgia convention and the state was now part of the Confederate States of America.[803] The people of Georgia were never consulted in this decision, with the convention assuming they had the right to attach Georgia to the newly formed Confederacy.

With this completed, the convention went about revising the state constitution. In secret meetings over the course of three days, the majority of delegates favored changing the constitution so that the state government was one that would preserve the society that existed and would be unhindered by political challenges. The government would be led by Georgians with high social standing who favored the established order. As one writer put it, the government needed men who recognized Georgia was a "community of interests" and representatives needed

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[799] Report of convention debates in *Macon Telegraph*, January 24, 1861.
[800] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 153.
[801] Report of convention debates in *Macon Telegraph*, January 26, 1861.
[802] *Journal of the Public and Secret Proceedings of the Convention of the Public of Georgia, held in Milledgeville and Savannah in 1861* (Milledgeville, GA: Boughton, Nisbet, and Barnes, State printers, 1861), 91.
[803] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 156.

to "discard" narrow notions of representing just a district or county in favor of representing "the honor and interests of the State."[804]

In order to achieve this, the delegates reduced the size of the state legislature. Ostensibly, the argument was that the legislature needed to be diminished to save money, but most arguments asserted that a smaller legislature would simply be better because it would have better men. Simply put, fewer representatives would mean the best men would win and "wrangling demagogues" and "county politicians" would be excluded.[805] Not only was the legislature made smaller, cut by one-third, but its power was also neutered. The new constitution empowered the judiciary to review all legislation to set up a permanent and reliable institutional check on the legislature.[806]

The judiciary would serve as a check to the legislature under the new constitution, but it too needed to be updated. The old constitution required the legislature to elect supreme court judges and the people to elect all other judges. The new constitution took the appointment of judges out of the hands of the people completely. The supreme court and all other judges would be appointed by the Governor. According to delegates such as T.R.R. Cobb, the new constitution sought to insulate judges from the "party bias" of the legislature or voters.[807] Martin Crawford, President of the convention, argued that judges would now be held to a "standard" that "will be advanced still higher to independence."[808]

On March 23, 1861, the convention assembled for the last time. During that meeting, the convention adopted the new constitution and provided for it to be ratified by a vote of the people

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[804] *Savannah Morning News*, March 21, 1861.
[805] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, March 1, 1861.
[806] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 172-173.
[807] Cobb speech as reported in *Athens Southern Banner*, April 10, 1861.
[808] *Journal of the Convention*, 286.

three weeks later. What voters could not ratify was the ordinance of secession or the state's

entrance into the Confederate States of America. Before voters ever went to the polls to cast

their votes in favor or opposition to the new state constitution, Federal troops fired on Fort

Sumter in Charleston, Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers to put down the rebellion, and four

more states seceded.   The adoption of the new state constitution suddenly became less important

and, yet, the new constitution did in fact elicit spirited discussion.[809]

Many Georgians opposed the power the state convention had assumed by even creating a

new state constitution. One writer to a newspaper in Upson County asked, "Was ever

Aristocracy—was ever Oligarchy—was ever Monarchy more insolently assuming?" This writer

was angry that the convention decided "to self-constitute themselves our agents…and all without

a word of approbation or consent from us."[810] A writer in Columbus agreed with this sentiment,

pointing out that "the people are entitled to a voice and a vote on many subjects which they now

so summarily disposing over their heads."[811] An editor in Atlanta voiced similar concerns,

reminding "Our public servants" that "the people are the source of all power."[812] By taking

power from the people to decide if they wanted to join the Confederacy or even ratify secession,

there was the possibility of "an Oligarchy, or a military despotism; either of which will tend to

make the rich richer, and the poor poorer."[813]

As an Atlanta editor pointed out, these critics tended to be "opposed to the ordinance of

secession. For awhile they were disposed to acquiesce but as the great principles of

Government, which arise out of the secession movement is being gradually developed…the

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[809] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 177-181.
[810] *Upson Pilot*, March 9, 1861.
[811] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, March 15, 1861.
[812] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer,* February 19, 1861.
[813] *Upson Pilot*, March 16, 1861.

muttering thunders of their indignation cannot be suppressed."[814] The act of secession itself, and

the fact it had never been put to a vote by the people, still bothered many cooperationists and

Unionists. James W. Ailer, who lived northwest of Atlanta in Cherokee county, wrote to

Governor Brown to say "we do not in tend to submit to [the] desision of the sesession

movement." Ailer was sure "the people of Cherochee want to stay in the union so I hope you

will let us go in peace and we will set up for our celves and still remain in the union." The

critical point for Ailer was that secession had never been put to the people. "If the people of

Georgia will vote to go out of the union we will submit to it as quick as ever you seen and if it is

not brought back to the people we will fight it as long as there are men to fight."[815]

The changes to the state constitution only made things worse. As historian Michael

Johnson points out in his seminal work on secession in Georgia, many cooperationists feared that

secessionists were anti-democratic and the reports out of the state convention only exacerbated

this fear.[816] A writer in Milledgeville heard rumors "that some of the leading members" of the

convention "are in favor of restricting the right of suffrage."[817] Another writer thought the

convention had "encroached upon the privileges of the people" and was suspicious whether the

people would know the full measure of the constitutional changes.[818] Some Georgians feared

that the new constitution favored large slaveholding counties over areas with fewer slaves. The

interpretation was that non-slaveholders were having their political power neutered in order for

slaveholders to be the "representative population" that the government embodied.[819]

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[814] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, March 27, 1861.

[815] James W. Ailer to Gov. Joseph E. Brown, February 15, 1861, Telamon Cuyler collection, mss 170, series 1. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.

[816] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 158.

[817] *Milledgeville Southern Federal Union*, January 29, 1861.

[818] *Upson Pilot*, March 9, 1861.

[819] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 183.

Although Governor Joseph Brown argued in a message to the legislature that the new constitution was ratified "without serious opposition," there actually was substantial opposition when voters went to the polls.[820] Despite the fact that voting on the new constitution did not occur until July 1861, when civil war was in full frenzy, or perhaps because of that fact, 48 percent of the votes cast opposed ratification. Turnout was relatively low, with only one voter participating in the ratification election for every four who voted for delegates to the secession convention.[821] Many newspapers reported little interest in the constitution ratification, which led some editors to question whether the "expression of the popular will" had actually given consent for the new constitution.[822] There was some truth to this argument, as Michael Johnson has found that wherever voter turnout was higher, opposition increased and wherever turnout was lower, support increased.[823] It was with this constituency, in this climate, with substantial opposition to secession and then measures such as the new state constitution, into which the attempts to foster Confederate nationalism and support for the war effort would falter.

Dissent from the Confederate Cause

By the time the state constitution ratification was voted on, civil war between the United States and the Confederate States had begun. Much like after secession, a section of the white men and women who opposed the act to withdraw from the Union changed their minds and began supporting the state and their new nation. Once war broke out, many people decided that it was time to accept the new reality and, thus, a group of those originally opposed to secession or war were cleaved off. However, there still remained a sizable minority who, even with war

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[820] Allen D. Candler (ed.), *The Confederate Records of the State of Georgia* (Atlanta: Charles T. Byrd, 1909), II, 112.
[821] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 184.
[822] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, July 9, 1861.
[823] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic*, 185.

underway, refused to join or aid the Confederate effort. This anti-Confederate resistance took many forms and could be active or passive. Based on the existing accounts of middle-class men and women, dissent by that group largely centered around avoiding military service, openly voicing opposition to policies such as conscription and impressment, desertion for those who did serve, or simply staying at home and keeping to themselves. The latter did not feel like open criticism was possible, but refused to aid or abet the nation they lived in, but did not accept. In their own ways, all of these middle-class dissenters were part of the downfall of the Confederacy.

It is likely impossible to develop an overall picture of when disloyalty took hold among the middle class. Furthermore, it is hard to discern if middle class people were more likely to be dissenters or what percentage of dissenters they made up. And yet, the extant evidence certainly points to middle class men and women dissenting from the Confederate cause on an individual basis. Some dissented immediately because of their background as Whigs, Constitutional Unionists, and cooperationists. Some initially supported the Confederacy, but soon became disenchanted by impressment, higher levels of taxation, and conscription. Others became disillusioned by Confederate defeats and mounting casualties, arguing for an end to the war before more bloodshed and deprivations occurred. Regardless of when they became anti-Confederates, though, it is clear that middling Georgians were part of the core of resistance that fought the war from inside the Confederate nation.

Avoiding Military Service

On July 28, 1861, Euphemia McNaught Smith, the daughter of an Atlanta businessman with interests in insurance and paper mills, wrote to her sister, worried about her son, Bob. Euphemia explained that her son "came home from Atlanta engaged to be married and now they

are talking about drafting men and I am in constant terror for fear he will be drafted." In spite of the war fever that was gripping the state, Euphemia wrote, "I won't let him go if I can possibly help myself. Could he be bought off, or hire a substitute, or could I get him to Canada?"[824] One of the simplest, yet most effective, ways that middle-class men and women dissented from the Confederate cause was by avoiding military service themselves or by encouraging friends and family members to evade service.

These actions did not go unnoticed, as loyalty was constantly a topic of conversation, especially for those middle-class Georgians who emigrated from the North or had substantial ties, either business or social, with the North. One newspaper correspondent wrote of Northern-born Atlantans, "Let us have all such looked after, and allow no man to remain among us who would, in *any way*, give comfort to the enemy."[825] Newspapers warned of spies and abolitionist agents who were intent on arousing discontent among slaves.[826] Anyone deemed a stranger was watched carefully or even imprisoned until authorities could determine why they were in town. Although what made one disloyal became contested, an Atlanta newspaper argued that the true enemies of the southern nation were "neutral Yankees" and their allies. The newspaper charged that these people were able to fight for the Confederacy, but would refuse and would try to stay neutral. The paper did not accuse these people of being spies or traitors, but simply not aiding the Confederate cause as much as they could.[827]

In many ways, the paper's writer was correct in the assertion that anti-Confederates were not aiding the cause. Some men that were too old to serve in the military set about aiding those

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[824] Euphemia McNaught Smith to My dear sister, July 28, 1861, William McNaught Papers, MSS 156, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.
[825] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, April 24, 1861.
[826] Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 57.
[827] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, August 4, 1861.

of military age in avoiding service. Thomas Dyer, in his research into Unionists in Atlanta,

found that William Markham and Lewis Schofield, two staunch Unionists who owned one of the

largest rolling mills in the South, employed over fifty skilled laborers who did not ever serve in

the Confederate military. According to Dyer's research, Markham and Schofield knowingly and

purposefully employed many of these men so they would not be forced to join the war effort,

which the two business owners opposed. Markham and Schofield then went so far as to conspire

to keep production low and to operate the mill at minimum capacity. They even tried to sell the

enterprise to the state or private buyers, but never had success.[828] Atlanta bookseller Samuel

Richards had opposed secession, but he supported the Confederacy once Lincoln called for

troops. However, Richards changed his mind when conscription was enacted, believing the

Confederate government had no right to force him to join the war. Richards and his brother

bought a newspaper in order to qualify for an exemption and both brothers received a draft

deferral, thus evading service.[829]

Middle-class families who had ties to the North tried to use those relations in order to

avoid military service. Cicero Arnold, a young attorney in Monroe, related to a former classmate

that he was going to "the ice-bound regions of the north" to avoid participating in the war.[830]

Once the Confederate Congress raised the conscription age to forty-five, John Erskine, a lawyer

and partner in a mercantile firm in Atlanta, used his familial ties to flee to New York. His

business partner, William McNaught, did the same, except he fled to Canada, where his daughter

lived, to avoid serving the Confederacy.[831] Nedom Angier, a well-off businessman, utilized the

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[828] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 77-79.
[829] Wendy Hamand Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 111.
[830] Cicero Arnold to Dr. Thomas Washington Atkins, February 24, 1862, Atkins family papers, ms 3710. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.
[831] William McNaught Papers, MSS 156, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.

fact he had a relative serving as an associate judge advocate for the United States War Department to escape to New York.[832] John C. Peck, who had moved from Minnesota to Atlanta in 1858 and became a successful carpenter and contractor, decided to flee Atlanta in 1864 to return to his native state. Not only did Peck leave Atlanta, but he also provided detailed descriptions of the city's defenses and arsenal to Union officers.[833] Vermont native Amherst Stone, who was a fairly successful lawyer in Atlanta, feared conscription once the age was raised, but also feared accusations of disloyalty considering he was a northern native who had opposed secession. Despite the dangers of escaping from the South, Stone still fled to his native Vermont in April 1863, leaving his staunchly Unionist wife in Atlanta. Interestingly, Stone left under the guise that he was going to run the Federal blockade and bring merchandise back to Atlanta from New York. In reality, Stone had no such plans to return for fear of impressment into Confederate service.[834]

Concocting a ruse that one was going to support the Confederate cause, but actually the goal was to "get through the lines and get out of the fight" was not something that just Amherst Stone did.[835] In relating a story to the Southern Claims Commission nearly a decade after the war ended, Atlanta schoolteacher and native New Yorker C.T.C. Deake and Thomas G.W. Crussell, an Atlanta contractor and builder, told of a scheme in which they would raise a small company of sappers and miners and take them to Skidaway Island, near Savannah. From there, the men planned to escape to the Union fleet offshore. Deake recalled that both men feared having "to go into the military service" because they were eligible for conscription based on their

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[832] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 139-140.
[833] Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 137.
[834] Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 115-120.
[835] Deposition of C.T.C. Deake, January 23, 1873, in *Crussell v. U.S.* (case file no. 10491), Court of Claims, RG 123, Federal Records Center, Suitland, MD.

age.[836] The men recruited Dr. Holmes Sells, a dentist, to assist them and enlisted carpenters and

mechanics that they deemed trustworthy. In the end, twenty men who wanted to avoid military

service and get out of Atlanta joined the company, but none of them were able to escape to the

fleet in Savannah and all ended up back in Atlanta, wary about their safety.[837]

Some middle-class men did not think they could openly avoid service, but could get jobs

with state or Confederate authorities that would not require active duty and would prevent

accusations of disloyalty. John Randolph Wilder, a Savannah merchant, sent his son away to

school so he would not have to serve. The elder Wilder then decided that he would accept a

paymaster job with the state so that he would "not be liable" to serve in the field.[838] Tazewell

Howard advised his brother, who was a doctor, "to be appointed Surgeon or Physician of a

regiment" because it would be "profitable and honorable" but would allow his brother, who

opposed secession, to avoid fighting.[839] In Columbus, four young men who had just reached

draft eligibility organized a home-guard company of other young men and children. They said

the purpose was to protect bridges in the area, yet a local citizen named James Campbell wrote to

the Governor, sure the young men simply wanted to escape combat service.[840] Attorney Henry

P. Farrow left his home state of South Carolina in disgust because he was vilified for opposing

secession. When he moved to Cartersville in 1860, Farrow immediately supported Stephen A.

Douglas as a compromise candidate and spoke out against disunion. Farrow avoided

Confederate service as long as he could, but he was conscribed in 1862, managing to avoid

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[836] Deposition of C.T.C. Deake, January 23, 1873, in *Crussell v. U.S.* (case file no. 10491), Court of Claims, RG 123, Federal Records Center, Suitland, MD.
[837] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 137-139.
[838] John R. Wilder to Joseph J. Wilder, June 1, 1861, King and Wilder families papers, MS 465, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
[839] Tazewell Howard to Dr. T. Henry Howard, April 29, 1861, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[840] David Williams, *Rich Man's War: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), 134.

military service by obtaining a position in the mining and nitre bureau. Farrow boasted after the war that despite his conscription, he never supported or aided the Confederacy.[841]

Many men joined the Georgia militia because they knew Governor Brown refused to allow the militia to serve outside the state. In most cases, the militia units never left their own county so joining the militia would allow one to serve, yet stay away from actual fighting and avoid leaving home. A conscription officer in Augusta complained that many men in that city were joining the Georgia militia to avoid active service with the Confederate army. He grumbled that these men "are doing no service whatsoever to the Confederacy" and argued the militia "sympathize with and encourage" deserters or those refusing to aid the Confederate cause.[842] When a militia officer named John B. Cumming suggested that his unit be sent to South Carolina to assist there, his men refused to go, argued that "the government have no right to hold them" and demanded that he resign. Cumming argued that the men "disgrace themselves" with their actions and refused to resign, prompting over one hundred men to desert. In the end, Cumming compromised by keeping his position, but rescinding his request that the unit leave the state.[843]

Opposition to Conscription and Impressment

Despite the fact nearly three-quarters of all enumerated southern white men served in the Confederate forces and many people who opposed secession were in that number, the statistics belie the fact that many people who opposed secession did not suddenly become volunteers. According to historian Paul Escott, most of the opponents of secession who served in the

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[841] George L. Jones, "The Political Career of Henry Pattillo Farrow, Georgia Republican, 1865-1904," (Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 1966), 5-11.

[842] Confederate States of America—Conscription Papers, E. Merton Coulter manuscript collection, ms 2018. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.

[843] Mark V. Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Piney Woods Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 212.

Confederate military were drafted.[844] This assertion was bolstered by recent research by Joseph

Glatthaar, who found that there were strong ties between volunteers early in the war and

involvement with slavery. This is not to say that there were not slaveholders who opposed

secession or non-slaveholders who supported secession, but by the 1850s much of the growing

middle-class in Georgia and the South did not have direct ties to slavery. If nothing else, most

middle-class Georgians simply could not afford to buy land or slaves to even enter the

slaveholding system. Glatthaar found that "the vast majority of the volunteers of 1861 had a

direct connection to slavery."[845] Non-slaveholders, who, in Georgia, were more likely to oppose

secession and less likely to volunteer, still faced the prospect of being forced to serve in the

Confederate military through conscription. Impressment impacted middle-class families by

making it harder for them to buy or sell goods. These measures, which opponents viewed as

unconstitutional, unduly harsh, or aimed at non-elites, bred resentment, damaged attempts at

unity, and were resisted throughout the war.

In April 1862 the Confederate Congress passed an enrollment act, which gave the

president the authority to force men aged eighteen to thirty-five into the military with or without

their consent. Commonly known as the conscription act or the draft, this act made young

southern white men subject to involuntary service. There were exemptions to the draft, with

government employees, war-related occupations, and some skilled industrial workers all deemed

too important to be draft eligible. Most egregiously to non-elites were exemptions that allowed

for the hiring of substitutes, paying the government an exemption fee, or signing a contract to

provide foodstuffs to the government for an exemption. The infamous twenty-slave law, which

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[844] Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 99.
[845] Joseph T. Glatthaar, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Defeat* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 20.

excused planters from the draft outright, was put into effect in October 1862 as part of a second conscription act.[846] All of these exemptions were only achievable by the wealthy.

Reaction to conscription quickly became negative. Even soldiers that had volunteered found the law repugnant. Writing from camp, Georgia soldier Edward Harden stated, "I find every body opposed to this tyrannical conscription law."[847] What exacerbated the situation was the employment of conscription officers to scour the cities and countryside to round up soldiers eligible for duty. In Atlanta, conscript officers made the public aware through the newspapers of the names of those who had been called to serve but heretofore had not shown up for service.[848] A similar tactic was utilized in Augusta, but with little effect. Even though it was designed to shame men into joining the military or reporting for duty when they were conscripted, the conscription officer in the city complained that men would "openly defy the power of the enrolling officers." In one report, the officer recounted that of the 500 men told to report for service, only seventy-five actually appeared. The officer concluded that the conscription law "is inoperable unless a force is sent to compel the people to a proper performance of their duty."[849]

Because conscription was viewed by many as unnecessary and unconstitutional, there were many anti-Confederates who openly refused to serve or comply with the draft. Willis Bone, who owned and operated a corn mill, was demonstratively opposed to the war itself and he specifically defied Confederate enrolling officers to challenge the authority and legitimacy of the Confederacy.[850] In Habersham County, which overwhelmingly opposed secession, Horatio

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[846] Armstead L. Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage: The Demise of Slavery and the Collapse of the Confederacy* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 152-154.
[847] T. Conn Bryan, *Confederate Georgia* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1953), 142.
[848] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 147.
[849] Confederate States of America—Conscription Papers, E. Merton Coulter manuscript collection, ms 2018. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.
[850] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 214, 216.

Hennion, a New Jersey native and skilled artisan, led a group of men in chasing off a conscription agent. Hennion thought about fleeing North, but decided to remain in the area to help keep men out of the army.[851] In areas that were traditionally unionist, evading enrolling officers was not only tolerated, but encouraged. The majority of opinion in these areas was that conscription was not legitimate and, often times, groups of men banded together to intimidate or even threaten enrolling officers.

Conscription officers often met with ridicule and scorn and returned that in kind by thoroughly scouring the state for men attempting to evade service. In Atlanta, two enrolling officers barred the doors of a theater and began to check the crowd for draft dodgers, eventually arresting six men.[852] Conscript officers even attempted to force men into the army who were supposed to be exempt. R.A. Dykes, an engineer at the naval yard in Saffold, had been drafted despite having an essential war-related job and his supervisor asked for his release. Similarly, the superintendent of the telegraph office in Columbus complained that the telegraph line "would have to be abandoned" if three of his operators who had been drafted were not returned after conscript officers picked them up. A group of citizens in Miller County, in the far southwest corner of the state, petitioned the War Department to allow Joshua Brown, a blacksmith, to be discharged from duty and returned to the county.[853] Merchant Heyman Herzberg hired a substitute, but he still avoided the local provost marshal, who sent all able-bodied men to the army regardless of their exemption status.[854]

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[851] Keith S. Bohannon, "They Had Determined to Root Us Out: Dual Memoirs by a Unionist Couple in Blue Ridge Georgia," 103 in John C. Inscoe and Robert C. Kenzer, eds., *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004)

[852] Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 111.

[853] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 131.

[854] Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 147.

Foreign nationals were supposed to be exempt from conscription, but the consulate of Great Britain received dozens of letters from worried subjects, all regarding the draft. Thomas Hogan, who settled in Augusta but was still a British citizen, wrote to the consulate in Savannah because a newspaper in Augusta said that "unnaturalized foreigners was liable to this draft…I am very much in dread that I will be drafted and so are all other British subjects. We have none to protect us from the hands of the oppressor."[855] Conscript officers often arrested and imprisoned British subjects because they either did not believe them or they accused them of having fake papers. The Prussian consul in Savannah wrote that several subjects of the German states were drafted immediately after making it known they did not intend to become Confederate citizens. The consul felt this could not be a coincidence and asked for their release, which was granted.[856]

Conscript officers went to seemingly great lengths to enroll recruits, but they were not above taking bribes. C.T.C. Deake, the schoolmaster who had unsuccessfully attempted to escape to the Union navy off of Savannah, returned to Atlanta and avoided service by bribing conscript officers for at least two years.[857] E.H. Grouby, who moved from Alabama to Blakely, Georgia, in 1859 and immediately established a newspaper at the county seat, complained about the ability of rich men to bribe conscription officers. In one editorial, the newspaper owner grumbled, "It is strange to us that the Government allows its officers to conscript poor men who have the appearance of *dead men*, while they turn loose rich men who are *young, hale and*

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[855] Thomas Hogan to A. Fullarton, July 22, 1863, Great Britain Consulate (Savannah, Ga.), Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[856] Bryan, *Confederate Georgia*, 139.
[857] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 147.

hearty."[858] W.B. Overstreet of Coffee County made a similar complaint, arguing that a local

enrollment officer was exempting the rich for money while sending the poor to the front.[859]

<div align="center">Rich Man's War</div>

Whether true or not, the perception that rich people were able to avoid military service

while those of lower classes were forced to fight ran rampant. The *Early County News*, the

newspaper run by E.H. Grouby, a vocal critic of war policies, featured several letters that

complained about the fact that planters were the driving force behind secession, yet did not do

their share of the fighting. One anonymous letter writer argued that local elites constantly

shouted "for their fellow citizens to go to 'the front'" yet never joined up themselves. The writer

sardonically suggested that one could get rich in the life-insurance business selling policies to

"those applicants" because you would never have to pay out on the policy.[860] Another writer to

the paper argued that Confederate policies proved that there was nothing for Georgians to fight

for "but to keep the Yankees checked, so that our own Government may oppress them more."

Grouby agreed, writing, "Our freedom is now gone!"[861] A woman from Fort Valley wrote to

Governor Brown to complain "that all poor men from here had gone and the rich remains who

has slaves…" The woman was sure the rich had "no mercy on the soldiers families" and were

benefiting from others sacrifices.[862]

Middling Georgians did not only point to Confederate policies regarding military service

as evidence that the war was for the benefit of the rich. Prices of basic necessities were

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[858] *Early County News*, March 30, 1864.
[859] David Carlson, "'The Distemper of the Time': Conscription, the Courts, and Planter Privilege in Civil War South Georgia," *The Journal of Southwest Georgia History* XIV (Fall 1999), 6.
[860] *Early County News*, December 14, 1864.
[861] *Early County News*, February 10 and 24, 1864.
[862] Mark A. Weitz, *A Higher Duty: Desertion among Georgia Troops during the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 122.

skyrocketing, but that did not seem to affect the rich as much as those below them. The burden of taxation fell mainly on middling Georgians while impressment hit the middle class and poor the hardest. Despite the fact that it had largely been middle-class Georgians calling for the state to diversify its economy, it was rich Georgians with capital that were now taking the reins of industrialization projects in the new era of independence.[863] Despite being asked to curtail planting cotton in favor of planting foodstuffs, many planters ignored such requests and some areas of Georgia had bumper crops of cotton during the war.[864] While middling and poor Georgians were asked to sacrifice, the perception among the middle class and poor was that the rich were getting richer all while avoiding dying in the war. When, in February 1864, the Confederate Congress authorized President Jefferson Davis to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and impose martial law due to anti-Confederate sentiment, it was made clear that anyone who voiced opposition to the social and economic policies that seemingly protected the rich could be punished harshly.[865]

All of these policies aroused disaffection at the least and outright hostility at most. Cities were already taxed at a higher rate in Georgia and when Confederate taxes were added to that, many people resented it. Middling professions, such as merchants and storekeepers, had to pay higher taxes than many of their neighbors because their inventory in stores and warehouses was taxed.[866] The Confederate inspector for the First Congressional District of Georgia wrote in an official report that a number of citizens were refusing to pay their Confederate taxes.[867] R.H. McCroskey, who had moved from LaGrange to Atlanta in 1861, openly refused to pay taxes and

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[863] Chad Morgan, *Planters' Progress: Modernizing Confederate Georgia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 17-47.
[864] Susan Eva O'Donovan, *Becoming Free in the Cotton South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 66-70; Weitz, *A Higher Duty*, 122.
[865] Escott, *After Secession*, 203.
[866] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 148.
[867] Bryan, *Confederate Georgia*, 154.

was declared disloyal by the local tax collector. McCroskey owned a store in Atlanta and was threatened to have his store shuttered if he did not pay his taxes. Still McCroskey refused and eventually his store was confiscated and sold.[868] Atlanta mill owner James Stewart, in a letter to Alexander Stephens, related that there was a growing resentment at increasing taxes.[869] In Pulaski County, the inferior court decided to keep Confederate tax money and distribute it among needy soldiers' families, arguing they needed it more than the central government.[870]

Nearly as much as conscription, impressment was extremely unpopular. In theory, impressment included slaves, but most planters were able to avoid the policy.[871] The system of impressment aroused opposition from its very inception and only increased as the war continued. Impressment officials were accused of preferential treatment toward elites while harassing small farmers, merchants, and shop owners. In Macon, impressment placed disproportionately heavy burdens on nonslaveholders, artisans, and laborers.[872] Middling Georgians rightfully complained that impressment agents tended to enact their policy in cities, towns, and other places near transportation lines.[873] But even in rural areas impressment could cause resentment. George Reid, a Wilcox County man who ran as a cooperationist candidate in 1860, complained that the burdens of impressment caused his county to be to the point where "starvation is certainly close at hand."[874] Writing from near Atlanta, A.W. Davidson noted in a letter that impressment was making times hard, as Confederate officials were confiscating nearly all the corn and bacon in

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[868] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 81.
[869] J.A. Stewart to Hon. A.H. Stephens, November 5, 1861, Alexander H. Stephens Papers, vol. 23, Library of Congress.
[870] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 212.
[871] O'Donovan, *Becoming Free in the Cotton South*, 77-82.
[872] Joseph P. Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation South: Central Georgia, 1800-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 114-115.
[873] Rebecca Christian, "Georgia and the Confederate Policy of Impressing Supplies," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 28 (March 1944): 1-33.
[874] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 213.

the area.[875] Impressment was a policy that asked Georgians to sacrifice their independence in favor of patriotism, yet to many in the state, impressment was unconstitutional, unjust, and unequally enforced. One historian of impressment in Georgia has gone as far as to say that "discontent and dissatisfaction" with the policy contributed to the ultimate "failure of the Confederacy."[876]

One way that middling Georgians and their allies struck back was through voting. In the 1863 elections for local, state, and Confederate offices, many of the politicians who espoused secession were voted out of office in favor of candidates who openly opposed secession, some who were rumored to be Unionists, and others who were simply opposed to the policies of the Confederate government. Georgia's voters sent nine new legislators to the Confederate Congress, eight of them elected on platforms directly opposed to the policies of the Confederate government. The prior legislators had supported impressment and conscription whereas the new legislators opposed such policies.[877] Former congressman Joshua Hill emerged from political retirement to win a seat in the state senate. Hill ran on a campaign that simply reminded voters he had opposed secession because all it would do was lead to "the destruction of the Union" which "would be followed by a long and bloody war." Hill ran on a peace platform and as early as September 1864 was trying to gain legislative support for a separate peace between Georgia and the United States.[878]

In local elections, groups united to flex their political muscle. A coalition of mechanics and artisans joined together to run their own slate of candidates for local office in Columbus.

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[875] Davidson-Terry family letters, MSS 87f, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

[876] Christian, "Georgia and the Confederate Policy of Impressing Supplies," 33.

[877] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 135.

[878] James Alex Baggett, *The Scalawags: Southern Dissenters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 75.

According to a local newspaper this group "prevailed by a very large majority" in the October election.[879] The success was so surprising and alarming that some local elites advocated reinstituting extensive property qualifications for voting and holding office.[880] The editor of one of the local newspapers argued that this new voting bloc was "antagonistic" toward the political establishment and thought they would just create "careless divisions of our citizens into classes." The editor was sure all this would "produce hurtful collisions."[881]

A local man who identified himself as a "Mechanic" did not take kindly to the chastising tone of the local newspapers. In a letter, the writer bluntly stated that the newspapers were wrong in claiming there was no reason for antagonism in the city. Instead, the mechanic argued that there was a group of people in Columbus who "have lost sight of every principle of humanity, patriotism, and virtue itself." These were people who only had a "thirst for gain." The writer observed "that all the capital, both in money and property, in the South, is passing into the hands" of this class of people while everyone else were left "to escape a bondage more servile than that imposed by the aristocracy of England on their poor peasantry." It was due to the rich that class antagonisms were occurring and the mechanic argued that "we claim the right, as the first alternative, to try and avert the great calamity, by electing such men to the councils of the nation as we think will be represent our interests. If this should fail, we must then try more potent remedies."[882]

Columbus, much like Atlanta, had an economy based largely on industry and it should come as little surprise, then, that many citizens of the city agreed with the anonymous mechanic. Several local secessionists wrote to Governor Brown to tell him they were worried about spies

[879] *Columbus Daily Enquirer,* October 9, 1863.
[880] *Columbus Daily Sun*, October 13, 1863.
[881] *Columbus Daily Enquirer*, October 9, 1863.
[882] *Columbus Daily Sun*, October 13, 1863.

and traitors in their midst. The elections in 1863 seemed to confirm that they were many people opposed to the new regime in the textile city. Many of the city's skilled laborers and industrialists were not native southerners. As early as 1850, over half of the city's skilled workers were not native to Georgia. Men such as railroad superintendent William Clark, merchant Calvin Stratton, merchant Charles Terry, iron foundry owner William Brown, former mayor Joseph Morton, merchant Joseph Hill, and businessman John G. Winter were all openly critical opponents of Confederate policies.[883]

A direct outgrowth of this open opposition to Confederate policies was an open invitation to end the war and make peace. In fact, one historian has gone so far as to say that by 1864, no state had antiwar meetings as "frequent or insistent" as Georgia.[884] Although seen throughout the state, Columbus had one of the largest active memberships of the Peace Society, a loosely organized group that promoted ending the war and making peace. The society kept no records and held no regular meetings for fear of imprisonment, but historian David Williams estimates that in the Columbus region "active membership clearly numbered in the thousands, and thousands more were sympathetic to the peace movement."[885] The society's objectives included the spread of dissension among soldiers and civilians and actively promoting desertion. One soldier in the Confederate Army of Tennessee reported that the Peace Society was active within that army in promoting desertion and had even infiltrated the Conscript Bureau to prevent the conscription of men in the area.[886]

In many parts of Georgia, people opposed to the war expressed the idea of simply ending the war and reconstructing the Union by having the seceded states reunify with the North.

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[883] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 138.
[884] David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: The New Press, 2008), 235.
[885] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 139.
[886] Robinson, *Bitter Fruits of Bondage*, 245-246.

Perhaps unrealistic in retrospect, it was still a popular notion among anti-Confederates. Cyrena Stone, a staunch Unionist, published columns in the *Atlanta Commonwealth*, a newspaper owned and edited by Josiah Peterson, a Rhode Islander born to Danish immigrant parents, that advocated such reunification ideas. In essay after essay, Stone recounted battle scenes that made her writing similar to other works of the day, but Stone's were designed to promote peace and reconstruction by showing how pointless the war effort was.[887] James Stewart was another Atlanta anti-Confederate who promoted an immediate reconstruction of the old Union. An owner of a mill, Stewart was sure that "bread stuffs and other necessaries" would run out if war continued. Stewart heard that mills in Memphis were already stopping operations and he related that supplies of flour in Atlanta, as early as late 1861, were already "very limited." Stewart was sure that a "gathering storm of discontent betokens a counter revolution" that was "the legitimate result of rash, unjustifiable, and precipitate secession."[888] The only answer was to end the war and reconstruct the Union.

The peace movement gained more traction when, in February 1864, the Georgia legislature, now dominated by men who had been largely lukewarm, at best, to secession, passed a resolution that asked Confederate President Jefferson Davis to make overtures of peace as well as urged all southern states to exercise their right under the Declaration of Independence to chart their own destinies. Driven by three staunch critics of Davis, Governor Joseph Brown, Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens, and Stephens' half-brother Linton, a member of the legislature, the legislative peace movement was bolstered on the ground by two Augusta newspaper editors who criticized Confederate policies under the guise of patriotism. The papers

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[887] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 60, 69.
[888] J.A. Stewart to Hon. A.H. Stephens, November 5, 1861, Alexander H. Stephens Papers, vol. 23, Library of Congress.

built up the hope and desirability for peace while also tearing down faith in Davis'

administration.[889] In a private letter, Linton Stephens argued that peace was necessary "to

preserve our liberty from the assaults of our government." Stephens also thought a "Northern

peace party" would have to come to power, but he believed peace activists in the north had to

"be built up by us…It is a strange thing, when you come to think of it, that this bloody war

should have been through three long weary years, without an offer of peace from either

government to the other; and stranger still that both governments should agree in disseminating

the idea among its own people that any truce offered would be hurtful to its dignity…I believe

our fate depends on the action of Georgia."[890]

Many Georgians, of all classes, wanted to see the war come to a conclusion to end the

bloodshed and many realized the Confederacy had little hope of winning a military struggle. As

the war dragged on and Confederate fortunes waned, the peace movement gained strength. John

Randolph Wilder, a successful Savannah merchant, had been opposed to secession and the war

from the beginning, yet his calls for peace in letters to his son intensified starting in 1863. By

1865, after parts of South Carolina were overrun by Union troops, Wilder wrote that he was

"glad to know of the humbling of Carolinian pride, for she has always been a pestilent little

state."[891] Wilder hoped that this would finally spur peace talks between the two nations. Eliza

Jane Atkins was a firm supporter of the war despite coming from a family that was split on

secession. However, after her brother, a doctor, and brother-in-law were both killed at

Gettysburg in 1863, Eliza tired of the war and began advocating for peace to her husband, who

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[889] John E. Talmadge, "Peace-Movement Activities in Civil War Georgia," *The Georgia Review* vol. 7, no. 2 (July 1953): 190-203.

[890] Linton Stephens to James Thomas, March 11, 1864, James Thomas correspondence, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[891] John R. Wilder to Joseph J. Wilder, February 22, 1865, King and Wilder families papers, MS 465, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

was serving in the Georgia militia. By September 1864, Eliza wanted peace and she was sure "reconstruction is going to take with the people pretty generally, though I don't think it will with the leading characters of this war." The purpose of her letter was to convince her husband to "think seriously" about peace and to "talk to others about it…The war will get worse the longer it lasts, that is one thing certain."[892]

Desertion

Although men from all socio-economic backgrounds deserted, historians have found that most deserters were from the middling and poorer classes.[893] Desertion was a problem for military authorities in both the North and the South, driven by opposition to conscription and the increasing bloodshed as the war continued with no end in sight. In one of the first works on the subject, Ella Lonn found that many southerners who deserted did so because they were "little identified with the struggle."[894] For middle-class men who joined the military or were drafted and then deserted, this was often the case. Mark Wetherington found that in central Georgia, most of the deserters were anti-Confederates who came from poor to upwardly mobile middle-class backgrounds.[895] Many of the deserters did not favor secession or were opposed to the war in general. One middling soldier, who described himself as a "strong Union man" wrote his father in 1863 to tell him he planned to desert "if I ever get a good chance…I never expect to kill a Union man."[896] Driven by family concerns at home, disillusionment with the war, or

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[892] Eliza Jane Atkins to Robert M. Walker, September 25, 1864, Atkins family papers, ms 3710. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.
[893] Keri Leigh Merritt, *Masterless Men: Poor Whites and Slavery in the Antebellum South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 311.
[894] Ella Lonn, *Desertion during the Civil War* (1928; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), vi.
[895] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 218.
[896] Bryan, *Confederate Georgia*, 142.

opposition to Confederate policies, many middle-class Georgians walked away from military service, even with the threat of severe punishment.

Desertion was an issue almost as soon as the war started, but it became problematic once the initial wave of volunteerism ended and Confederate authorities had to rely on the draft, or the threat of being drafted, to bolster the ranks. The draftees consisted of men who had, obviously, not volunteered and therefore were being compelled to join the military against their will. Tazewell Howard was one of the initial waves of volunteers in 1861, but he warned his brother, a doctor who had been opposed to secession, that "a soldiers life is a hard one I tell you." Tazewell related that he was sure this "will be one of the bloodiest wars that was ever waged." Because of that, he was sure "you can't compel a man to go to war unless he is drafted."[897] An officer with the Confederate Bureau of Conscription in Augusta complained that the "armies are fearfully, almost fatally, depleted by unwarranted absenteeism."[898]

Men such as William "Bill" Wall provide a perfect example of the middling anti-Confederate deserter. Wall was a teacher who also owned and farmed three acres of land. Opposed to secession, Wall nevertheless volunteered for the Coffee County Guards in March 1862, fearing that he would be conscripted. Wall was able to get a furlough to return home and he never rejoined his company. Instead, he stayed in Coffee County, which had become a largely anti-Confederate community that willingly harbored deserters. Wall, who called supporters of the war "Confederate trash" who were willing to sell their neighbors into "bondage" for the cause, even led an anti-Confederate takeover of the town of Irwinville.[899] This

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[897] Tazewell Howard to Dr. T. Henry Howard, April 29, 1861, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[898] Confederate States of America, Bureau of Conscription Circular, February 13, 1865, E. Merton Coulter manuscript collection, ms 2018. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries
[899] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 215, 224.

takeover included a symbolic secession from the Confederacy to return to the Union, three

cheers for Lincoln, and a threat of "instant death" to a Confederate enrolling officer.[900]

By 1864, desertion was rampant and Senator Benjamin H. Hill, a staunch ally of

Jefferson Davis, confided to his wife that "the independence of the Confederate States has

become a question of secondary importance." Hill thought defeat was a foregone conclusion and

laid the blame on secessionists and corrupt government officials. "This revolution is the result of

feeling, not judgment; of passion, not statesmanship. Its whole progress has been distinguished

by an utter absence of reason, humanity, and ordinary good motives."[901]

Although Hill was a supporter of the war effort, he had opposed secession and even

spoke against the measure at the secession convention. His view of why the war was lost echoed

the sentiments of many who deserted. Writing from near Atlanta, A.W. Davidson, a

businessman, encouraged his brother to desert because Davidson was sure wheat and bacon were

being "reserved" for the wealthy and corrupt officials.[902] One officer reported that men in his

unit were deserting because "there is entirely too much Demagogueism in this Department of the

Army." The officer was sure too many of his fellow officers were "trimming his sails for future

political use" and that was discouraging to the troops.[903] Robert Foster Williamson, a Methodist

preacher, related as early as April 1861 that his neighbors were "very much depressed…about

the war." Williamson also noted that "the papers are full of war and sorrows of war."[904] David

Snelling, a native of Milledgeville described as a young man of good education, joined a

Confederate infantry regiment in May 1862, but he deserted less than three months later because

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[900] *Albany Patriot*, March 1, 1865.
[901] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 171.
[902] Davidson-Terry family letters, MSS 87f, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
[903] Bryan, *Confederate Georgia*, 141.
[904] Robert Foster Williamson Diary, April 25, 1861, March 16, 1862, Robert Foster Williamson papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

he developed an "abhorrence of slavery as an institution" and believed the war was being fought for slaveholders and slavery.[905]

Savannah was Georgia's largest city in 1860 and, as such, sent a large proportion of troops to the Confederate military. While many of the troops who deserted came from areas with low rates of slaveholding, soldiers from Savannah and Chatham County deserted in high rates as well. Historian Mark Weitz found that many of the deserters from the city and county were typically engaged in middle-class professions such as blacksmiths, merchants, watchmakers, dentists, carriage makers, carpenters, clerks, tailors, and grocers. Some of these men may have supported secession or even volunteered for the war, but once they were serving back in Georgia, they deserted in droves.[906]

The main impetus for desertion, though, was stories from back home about the deprivations friends and family members were facing. One soldier from a middle class family became disillusioned when his father wrote and informed him that enrolling officers and "big men" were "hiding themselves behind little offices" to avoid active service. Not long after receiving this letter, the soldier deserted.[907] Leander Cobb, a miller from Floyd County, was conscripted in 1862 and deserted in July 1864 as his unit dug in to defend Atlanta. Cobb was a husband and father of eight children and upon hearing his family was suffering in his absence, he promptly fled to Union lines, took the oath of allegiance, and went home.[908] Benjamin Putnam Weaver, an officer in the 42nd Georgia, wrote to his parents from the defenses outside Atlanta and related, "Two of my men ran away last night. I think they have gone home. A great many

[905] James C. Bonner, "David R. Snelling: A Story of Desertion and Defection in the Civil War," *The Georgia Review* vol. 10, no. 3 (1955), 280.
[906] Weitz, *A Higher Duty*, 134.
[907] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 220.
[908] Weitz, *A Higher Duty*, 130.

of our men have run away to see after their families."[909] This was not uncommon, as many

Georgians fled during the fight for Atlanta. One soldier from a cavalry regiment deserted from

the defenses of Atlanta and wrote that he wanted to "tell them old cecesers that I have but little

faith in the gloryous cause."[910]

Women as Anti-Confederates

Middle-class white women were just as likely, if not more so, than their male

counterparts to be anti-Confederates.[911] Just as with middle-class men, some women were

opposed to secession and war from the very beginning and some became disillusioned as the war

dragged on. The experience for middle-class women was different, though, as they were

sometimes left behind by men who fled the state, joined the army, deserted and hid, or died.

Middle-class women were afforded some protection by their gender and social status, which was

sometimes used to resist the Confederacy or even actively aid the enemy.[912] As discussed

earlier, women often played a vital role in the high rate of desertion, often encouraging men to

leave the army for ideological or practical reasons. Middle-class women were just as important

to the overall failure of Confederate nationalism as their male colleagues.

Just like men, women were often caught up in the initial patriotic frenzy that broke out in

the first year of the war. However, as it became increasingly clear that the short and glorious war

was going to be long and protracted, women began to question the policies of the government

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[909] Benjamin Putnam Weaver to Dear Father and Mother, August 18, 1864, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[910] Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight*, 220.

[911] David C. Downing, *A South Divided: Portraits of Dissent in the Confederacy* (Nashville: Cumberland House, 2007), 186.

[912] For discussions of the limits of violence against white women during the Civil War, even to Unionists, see Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerilla Conflict in Missouri during the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995)

that left them wanting for food and the growing casualty lists. Women were accused of undermining morale and contributing to desertion with gloomy letters to soldiers. Women were just as apt to have their loyalty questioned as the realization that the Confederacy may not win became more likely. While some women were surely anti-Confederates from the beginning, many more abandoned the cause because they refused "to accept the economic deprivation further military struggle would have required" and "directly subverted the South's economic and military effectiveness."[913]

Many women were opposed to conscription, arguing that the policy devastated families, leaving them destitute and without protection. George Rable found that as early as 1862 fewer women willingly sent their men off to war, deciding that devotion to family was more important than devotion to country.[914] Middle-class women often used their husbands or sons' professions to try to keep them from service. The wives of blacksmiths, shoemakers, tanners, and millers, among others, sent letters to Governor Brown, asking for exemptions. Artisans' wives argued that they could not master their husbands' skills and so the family was dependent on their earnings.[915] Julia Davidson advised her husband, who was a shopkeeper, to seek an exempt position as a printer. If that failed, she suggested he should "catch" rheumatism just badly enough to secure a certificate of disability.[916]

If not writing to request exemptions or suggesting feigned diseases, middling women were not afraid to tell the men in their lives to avoid service altogether or suggest desertion.

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[913] Drew Gilpin Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War," 198, in Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, eds., *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992)

[914] George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 74.

[915] For examples, see Mrs. M.J. Porter to Joseph E. Brown, July 22, 1864, and Barthena Busbee to Joseph E. Brown, September 3, 1864, Governors' Papers, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta, Georgia.

[916] Julia Davidson to John M. Davidson, May 1, 1862, John Mitchell Davidson papers, 1851-1960, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

When Confederate authorities came to take Eliza Gilmer's son away after being conscripted, she told him to make his way to Union lines as fast as possible. Gilmer came from a family, involved in the iron foundry trade, that opposed secession and the war and she did not want her son to play any part in the war effort.[917] Mollie Evans of Butts County related to her husband, who was in the service, that several women in her community were gathering all the money they could to hire substitutes to get their husbands or sons out of the war.[918] Maryann Mosely of Bibb County wrote to her son in December 1861 and encouraged him "to come home" no matter "how in the world" he could, including deserting.[919]

Desertion could be encouraged simply by recounting the daily problems of life at home. William Deloney, a University of Georgia graduate and former state representative, raised a cavalry unit in his native Athens. His wife Rosa had been encouraging about his service, but by 1863 she sent word that everyone at home was giving up on the South's ability to win the war and she insisted her husband return home as soon as practicable.[920] William S. Grady, a successful Athens businessman, responded to a letter his wife sent him in early 1862, complaining that he was a "little surprised of the contents" of her letter. Grady reminded his wife that she had "consented" to him raising a company and assured her that it was "as hard for me to be away from home and my dear wife and little one as it is for you to do without." Grady closed his reply to tell his wife that he could not leave the army to just "come home and be

[917] Keith S. Bohannon, "They Had Determined to Root Us Out," 110.
[918] Mollie Evans to John B. Evans, March 8, 1863, John B. Evans Papers, Duke University Library.
[919] Spencer B. King, Jr., *Georgia Voices: A Documentary History to 1872* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1966), 299.
[920] Rosa H. Deloney to William G. Deloney, August 2, 1863, William Gaston Deloney papers, MS 184. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.

drafted…I feel it to be my duty, I hope you will be reconciled and encourage me rather than complain."[921]

While neither William Deloney or William Grady deserted from the Confederate army, these types of letters were viewed as undermining the war effort and a blow to the morale of the troops. Even Jefferson Davis, as early as August 1863, concluded that women were contributing to the decline of the military manpower of the Confederacy. In public remarks, Davis stated that many of the soldiers who were absent from duty left because wives and mothers wrote them letters telling them of the suffering their families were enduring.[922]

Many middle-class women had ties to the North and those divided loyalties certainly played a role in their experience during the war. Nellie Kinzie Gordon is a perfect example of this. Born into one of the first families to settle Chicago, Nellie's father was a government agent and her mother was the author of several books about pioneer life in Illinois. Nellie was well-educated and met William Washington Gordon II, of Savannah, while she was attending a school for young women and he was studying law at Yale. The two were married in Chicago in 1857 and moved to Savannah afterward, living with Gordon's widowed mother.[923] Nellie "was bitterly opposed to" secession and, when war broke out, Willie's desire to join a Confederate cavalry unit, but she also laid blame on northern abolitionists. Although Nellie was adamantly opposed to slavery, she blamed the war on Abraham Lincoln. By late 1862, her mood had shifted and she renounced her allegiance to the Confederacy and began to actively undermine the war effort. Not only did Nellie openly criticize the war and urge her husband to desert, she also

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[921] William S. Grady to Ann Eliza Gartrell Grady, February 14, 1862, Henry Woodfin Grady papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[922] Rable, *Civil Wars*, 89.
[923] Mary D. Robertson, "Northern Rebel: The Journal of Nellie Kinzie Gordon, Savannah, 1862," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (Fall 1986), 477-479.

sought his permission to leave the South, accepted aid from Union officials, fought with her in-laws and friends in Savannah over the war, and sent information about Confederate troop movements to her Northern relatives.[924]

William Gordon did join the war effort and was commissioned an officer in a Georgia regiment. Initially, Nellie adopted the Confederate perspective and supported her husband, who had explicitly told her she had to choose between him and her family, who he deemed "the enemies of this country."[925] Although Nellie still wrote letters to her mother, in the early years of the war she constantly told her family that she had to support her husband above all else. Yet, Nellie did not join any soldiers' aid societies, visit hospitals to serve as a nurse, or raise money for the troops.[926] This simple act was a way that other Northern-born middling women resisted aiding the war effort too. In Atlanta, Vermont native Cyrena Stone and Massachusetts born Emily Farnsworth refused to become members of hospital aid committees, work in Confederate hospitals, or provide support to soldiers' families.[927]

By the spring of 1862, like many other women, Nellie's support for the Confederacy began to waver. When nearby Fort Pulaski fell to Union forces, Nellie surmised that the southern defeat resulted from laziness due to slavery. Nellie thought the institution led southerners to be "used to being worked for, that they don't know what it means to work and they won't do it."[928] This was a common critique of what slavery did to the South of not only northerners, but also middle-class Georgians. What ultimately eroded Nellie's support, though,

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[924] Carolyn J. Stefanco, "Poor Loving Prisoners of War: Nelly Kinzie Gordon and the Dilemma of Northern-Born Women in the Confederate South," 152, 154, in John C. Inscoe and Robert C. Kenzer, *Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001)

[925] William Washington Gordon II to Eleanor Kinzie Gordon, July 29, 1862, in the Gordon Family Papers #2235, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

[926] Stefanco, "Poor Loving Prisoners of War," 156.

[927] Dyer, *Secret Yankees* 76.

[928] Robertson, "Northern Rebel," 494.

was the loss of her brother John, who was killed fighting for the Union, and the arrival of her pro-Union cousin Maria Steuart. Maria was married to Confederate officer George Steuart, but she was outspoken in her opposition to the Confederacy.[929] Maria became so fed up that she eventually, with the aid of her uncle Union General David Hunter, fled north, but Nellie stayed behind because William would not allow her to leave Savannah. Although Nellie defied her husband in many ways, she refused to leave Georgia without his permission. Once Savannah fell to Union forces in December 1864, though, Nellie used that as her chance to flee to her family in Chicago. Willie wrote her after the war ended, saying it was misery knowing "you do not think as I do, you do not feel what I feel. You have other thoughts and feelings and wishes foreign to me."[930]

While Nellie Gordon's experience was similar to many women in Georgia, no matter their birthplace, in seeing a shift from supporting the war early on to advocating against it once casualties and hardships mounted, other northern-born women never accepted the Confederacy and actively undermined the war effort from the beginning. The aforementioned Cyrena Stone and Emily Farnsworth quietly opposed the war (although Cyrena wrote anonymous editorials opposing secession), but when Union prisoners began being housed in Atlanta is the late spring of 1862, the two women gave aid and comfort to imprisoned soldiers. The two women were joined by Bridget Doyle, who operated a small store in Atlanta since 1852, and at least six other women in sneaking money, food, and wine to Union prisoners throughout the war. According to Thomas Dyer, these mercy missions took on great importance to these women because they felt

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929 Stefanco, "Poor Loving Prisoners of War," 158.
930 William Washington Gordon II to Eleanor Kinzie Gordon, June 5, 1865, in the Gordon Family Papers #2235, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

more overt forms of resistance were futile, if not impossible, but their silent program of aid was one way to strike a blow at a war they opposed.[931]

A Revolutionary Experience Lacking Proper Revolutionary Leadership

The birth of the Confederacy led to a period of intense industrial growth throughout the South. As has been discussed earlier in this work, Georgia was already experiencing rapid industrial growth, especially in the decade preceding the outbreak of war. However, the war only intensified that growth. A transformative economic revolution occurred as the Confederacy had to industrialize in order to supply and equip armies. Cities and towns where industrialization occurred became swollen in size and importance. As Emory Thomas argues, the industrial revolution the Confederacy experienced also led to an urban revolution.[932] Quite naturally, many middle-class men thought they would be at the forefront of this dual revolution. After all, the calls for industrialization in Georgia and the South were largely driven by middling men and women. And, yet, the few private contracts that were given out by the state or Confederate government often went to planters, who had the necessary capital to build new factories or transition older factories from peacetime to wartime production. In most instances, the state and Confederate government expanded its own arsenals, built its own factories and enterprises, and maintained control of the productive capacity. In so doing, the government avoiding altering the social order by not creating a new entrepreneurial class, but instead entrenching the power of the planters.[933]

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[931] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 82-86.
[932] Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 79-99.
[933] Numan V. Bartley, *The Creation of Modern Georgia, Second Edition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 30.

At the beginning of the war, efforts to establish factories were met with pride and satisfaction. These measures were considered the height of patriotism. As one Atlanta writer argued, "He who engages in a useful branch of manufacture fights and whips the Yankees as effectually as he that marches to the field of battle."[934] The editors of an Atlanta newspaper urged "the manufactures" to "extend their limits and facilities, and throw out their branches until every hamlet shall resound with the clack of the water wheel or the puff of the steam engine."[935] Whereas previously broader participation in manufacturing pursuits, especially after the Panic of 1857, was viewed with caution and suspicion, suddenly industrial pursuits were desirable.

Initially, many of Georgia's middle-class men involved in business pursuits, who were not strict Unionists, saw the outbreak of war as a way to mold the state the way they had been advocating, as well as a way to make money. Established industries were in the vanguard of the shift to war-related manufacturing, but new industries popped up, eager to profit from wartime demand. Although many middling Georgians viewed secession as folly, they saw war as a chance to modernize and industrialize the state, just as they had been advocating for years. In Augusta, men like S.S. Jones converted their hardware business to meet wartime demands, manufacturing canteens, camp utensils, and belt buckles. At the same time, Jones continued to manufacture articles for domestic consumption.[936] In Columbus, William R. Brown, who owned a "modest" iron works obtained government contracts to manufacture cannon and, later, ordnance.[937]

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[934] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, December 8, 1861.
[935] *Atlanta Southern Confederacy,* September 6, 1861.
[936] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, May 11, 1862.
[937] Frank E. Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords: Josiah Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1994), 148.

The transition of peacetime businesses into factories for war materials was seen throughout the state. Far from being done for selfless or patriotic reasons, historian Mary DeCredico found that the evidence suggests that many of the men were driven by an already-established belief in economic independence through industrialization and felt that wartime needs presented a golden opportunity to achieve those goals. Surely some of the men were driven by patriotism, but the overwhelming evidence suggests that they were fully alert to the profits that could be achieved by wartime production and wanted to demonstrate the viability of industrialization as a vital component of the economic health of the state.[938]

Brothers Louis and Elias Haiman are perfect examples of this. The sons of Prussian immigrants, their father established a small hardware store in Columbus in the 1830s and upon his death the brothers took over the business. At the time the Haiman brothers took over, the business was described as "not…of much strength" by R.G. Dun and Co.[939] When war broke out, the brothers leased a building and began manufacturing swords. Business was so profitable that the brothers bought the Muscogee Iron Works to meet rising demand and Elias spent most of the war in Europe, running steel through the blockade to Louis. The operation expanded again, with the factory turning out mess kits, tin cups, saddles, and bayonets. Louis even designed a pistol modeled after the Colt navy revolver and Confederate authorities ordered ten thousand.[940] There is no evidence that the Haiman brothers were ardent secessionists or supported the war effort, but they certainly benefited financially from the outbreak of war and improved the value of their business exponentially.

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[938] Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 31-34.
[939] Georgia, vol. 23, p. 101, R.G. Dun and Co. Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, Cambridge, MA.
[940] Williams, *Rich Man's War*, 66-67.

For middling Georgians who attempted to get rich from the war, the boom was short-lived. Because the South lacked raw materials, the Confederate government began to confiscate iron, steel, and saltpeter from private sources. The region also lacked the requisite number of skilled mechanics to work in foundries and factories. Although both the Georgia and Confederate governments exempted mechanics and arms manufacturers from conscription, there was still an inadequate supply of labor. By 1863, due to these shortages, the Confederate government was compelled to assume almost total control over the allocation of resources and the manufacture of military goods. Confederate authorities reasoned that greater centralization would lead to greater efficiency, which would in turn lead to greater production. By the end of the war, the Confederate war bureaus exercised a monopoly in many sectors of the economy.[941]

The control over war industries had serious consequences in Georgia and led many middling Georgians to turn against the Confederate government, if not the war altogether. The pressures of war suddenly placed the interests of the middling classes against the state's interests and they continued to diverge as the war interminably dragged on. The government seizure of plants and materials in Atlanta did not necessarily affect the workers, but it did lead many middling Georgians who had been awarded government contracts to lose their business. Naturally, many of these men became vocal critics of the Confederate government and blamed government policies for the changes in the general welfare of the state. The implementation of martial law in Atlanta and the rapid inflation only led to further demoralization.[942] Disaffection was perhaps highest in Atlanta, but similar conditions occurred in Columbus, Augusta, and Macon as well. A representative of V. Werner and Company of Macon complained that the

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[941] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 43.
[942] James Michael Russell, "Atlanta, Gate City of the South, 1847 to 1885," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1973), 109-110.

government takeover meant "the present proprietors" would be "ruined, unable to meet present liabilities and without good credit to continue operations."[943] As government controls tightened, prosperity faded and the shopkeepers, store owners, and businessmen who had converted their shops to war industries were blaming the government for not only their personal misfortune, but also the shortages, speculation, and inflation that were occurring to the population at large.[944]

Further breeding disaffection was the fact that industrialization within the state was not being driven by the antebellum proponents of economic diversification. Even before the Confederate government began taking over industries, both government-funded endeavors as well as private enterprise were led mainly by large slaveholders. In fact, historian Chad Morgan found that wartime industrialization "consolidated rather than weakened the power of the planters."[945] Middling Georgians were angered by the turn of events. While middle-class men and women had been advocating for modernization and industrialization for years before secession occurred, once war broke out, they were largely left out of the picture as large slaveholders took control of manufacturing undertakings. In Morgan's estimation, slaveholders controlled wartime industrialization in order to block the potential ascendance of promoters of industry.[946]

In the early years of the war, Georgia became a model for other states to follow, with Confederate arsenals being placed in Augusta, Macon, Atlanta and Columbus while factories making arms and materials needed by the Confederate military sprung up in those cities as well. The establishment of war industries and the production of war goods resulted in an economic

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[943] V. Werner and Co., undated, Civil War collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.
[944] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 43.
[945] Morgan, *Planter's Progress*, 47.
[946] Ibid., 17.

boom in several Georgia cities, but as the war dragged on, the prosperity that led the exigencies

of war to be extolled as a positive suddenly bred disaffection and demoralization.[947] Georgia's

cities saw an influx of population from the countryside or other parts of the Confederacy that had

been conquered by Union forces. This led to more competition for jobs, food, and clothing,

which was becoming increasingly scarce due to the tightening Union blockade. Georgia's

industry grew to meet the growing demand for uniforms, rifles, ammunition, and other supplies

of war, but the domestic economy reverted back to old methods of home manufacture. Soon, the

same people who had been celebrated for ingenuity, innovation, and diversification in the face of

war were being labeled extortioners and war profiteers.[948]

<div align="center">Distrust and Hostility</div>

In one of the seminal works on Confederate nationalism, Drew Gilpin Faust argued that

reform was central to the national purpose of the Confederacy. Military victory could not be

achieved without moral reform and social change on the home front. It was necessary to have

public consensus in order to achieve independence and areas of southern life that seemed

seriously awry needed to be dealt with for final success.[949] This was evident in a sermon given

in Savannah in 1863, when a preacher told his congregation that there was a "great moral battle

at home." The preacher argued that the "spirit of extortion and speculation" that existed in the

city "must be checked before we can rejoice in peace."[950] According to Faust, two sins came to

hold unchallenged preeminence in the discourse surrounding this reform and social change.

Anxieties about greed and unease about slavery, according to Faust, rivaled distress over military

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[947] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 27-41.

[948] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 179; Morgan, *Planter's Progress*, 56-57.

[949] Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 41-42.

[950] John W. Heidt to Leila Villard, December 13, 1863, in John W. Heidt letters, MS 380, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

matters.[951] It was in the fears of the former that middle-class Georgians would be engulfed and vilified.

In many ways, Georgia's growing middle class were outsiders during the antebellum years. They were viewed with suspicion due to their occupation, education, background, and commercial activities. This was only exacerbated by the war, not only because some middle-class men refused to serve or support the Confederacy, but also because many in the middle-class were seen as profiteers and speculators who were attempting to profit off of the suffering of others. As George C. Rable argues in his work on southern women during the Civil War, most southerners felt the actions of the state legislatures were inconsequential and public affairs seldom touched private concerns.[952] The war changed this attitude and while what the national, state, or local government did now mattered more to the average person, it was also easier to lay blame on groups of people that were close by and had always been seen as outsiders. Even if they were vocal supporters of the Confederacy and the war effort, middle-class Georgians, especially those who worked in the commercial sector, had their commitment questioned.

Colonel George Washington Lee, the provost marshal for Atlanta, viewed the men and women of the commercial classes as domestic enemies and likened them to "debris." Lee, writing to the Confederate secretary of war, wanted to raise troops in the city to smash the "traitors-Swindlers-extortioners-and-counterfeiters" that he believed were plaguing Atlanta. In Lee's estimation, the "refugees shirking military duties" found a safe haven among the men and women of the commercial classes, who he thought was made up of "Jews" and "New England Yankees."[953] As early as October 1861, the mayor of Augusta wrote a letter to a local newspaper

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[951] Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 41-42.
[952] Rable, *Civil Wars*, 102.
[953] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 179-180.

to request shopkeepers to avoid placing artificially high prices on necessary goods. "Common patriotism demands that all our citizens should make sacrifices for the common good, and not that advantage should be taken of those least able to suffer. I sincerely trust that while these troublesome times shall exist, our merchants and traders will be satisfied (as they were before) with *living profits*."[954]

Materialism was seen as a sin in southern society before the war and the pressures of the war only added to this view. Selfishness and greed were "Yankee" traits that had been brought to Georgia by commercial expansion and needed to be eradicated before moral degeneration set in. Even in a state like Georgia that saw rapid industrial growth during the 1850s, most Georgians still were not dependent on market transactions. Suddenly, with the privations of war, thousands of men and women in Georgia were swept into the marketplace.[955] With the death and destruction the war wrought, the southern economy swept up men and women who had been self-sufficient and lived relatively isolated lives. Now, social classes became competing objects due to the war.[956]

Methodist minister George F. Pierce hoped that the war would "arrest the corruption of prosperity" that he saw in the state, but instead merchants and shopkeepers were viewed as greedy and profiteering was viewed as a way to upset the social order.[957] Ten Mercer University students beat up merchant Isaac Harman outside his store, with the students claiming Harman was exploiting his neighbors. Even though Harman had been operating his store for years, he

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[954] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, October 23, 1861.
[955] Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 43-44.
[956] Paul D. Escott, "The Failure of Confederate Nationalism: The Old South's Class System in the Crucible of War," 22-23, in Harry P. Owens and James J. Cooke, eds., *The Old South in the Crucible of War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983)
[957] George Foster Pierce, *The Word of God a Nation's Life: A Sermon* (Augusta, GA, 1862), 17.

failed to win support from the community.[958] One Confederate officer wrote that he was not upset when Atlanta was lost to Union troops in September 1864 because it was just a "nest of speculators and thieves."[959] George Mercer, a lawyer turned Confederate officer, complained that in his native Savannah "the rich are ruined, the poor grow rich; some of the best property in this City…has been purchased by German Jews, who were lately the poorest of the poor. Anyone who is willing to buy, keep, and re-sell at a profit can grow rich."[960]

The striking aspect of Mercer's commentary is that he represented the view that not only was the social order being disrupted, but it was "outsiders" who were taking advantage of the war to get rich. As Faust points out in her work, most of the accusations of profiteering were levied against non-natives and others deemed anathema to the southern way of life.[961] The editor of the *Milledgeville Federal Union* informed his readers that the "disposition to speculate" was "a species of Yankee trick that assorts with the noble cause in which our country is engaged."[962] While Mercer argued that it was the poor who were getting rich in Savannah, in most cases the complaints were that middle-class shopkeepers and merchants were taking advantage of the war to gain exorbitant profits. In Augusta, local merchants were universally blamed for putting profits above "friendship, honor, country."[963] Merchants in the state were viewed with anger and outright hostility and were compared to corrupt Yankee con men.[964] One anonymous writer asserted that the men who had gone to fight would be surprised to find out "that they were leaving an enemy in the rear more dangerous than that in the front." Surely soldiers would be

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[958] Jonathan M. Bryant, *How Curious A Land: Conflict and Change in Greene County, Georgia, 1850-1885* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 72.
[959] Bryan, *Confederate Georgia*, 150.
[960] Diary entry, September 14, 1863, in the George Anderson Mercer Diary, #503, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
[961] Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, 48-49.
[962] *Milledgeville Federal Union*, October 8, 1861.
[963] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, July 3, 1862.
[964] Morgan, *Planter's Progress*, 46-47.

shocked to discover that "a more cruel and detested enemy would be waging a war of want and famine" upon the families of Georgia.[965] W.A. Lewis, a newspaper correspondent in Athens, complained that business "is in the hands, and conducted principally, by cadaverous looking, cushion-footed Jews, that infest and have cursed every hamlet, village, town, and city in the land."[966]

The fact George Washington Lee and W.A. Lewis singled out Jews was no coincidence. While scholars such as Robert Rosen have found that southerners generally accepted Jews, it is important to note that many Jewish Georgians were store clerks, innkeepers, merchants, tradesmen, and tailors.[967] In other words, they were men who could easily be accused of profiteering due to their occupations. Cities such as Atlanta, Savannah, Augusta, Columbus, Albany, and Macon had large Jewish populations and in many of these places, Jewish men served as shopkeepers and store owners and were targets for resentment and frustration. A Talbot County grand jury issued a public pronouncement denouncing Jews as profiteers, which was squarely aimed at Lazarus Straus, the only Jewish merchant in the county. Straus was so enraged by the pronouncement that he left Talbotton and never returned.[968] The citizens of Thomasville denounced Jews as extorters and prohibited any Jewish people from visiting the town. What's more, any Jewish residents of the town were told to leave as soon as practicable.[969] Heyman Herzberg, a store owner in Cartersville, and his two brothers all fled to Philadelphia to escape recruiting officers, who constantly harassed the men even though they all hired substitutes. Herzberg was sure the recruiting officers, who had to be bribed, only hassled

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[965] *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, July 3, 1862.
[966] *Southern Watchman* (Athens, GA), April 30, 1862.
[967] Robert N. Rosen, Esq., "The Jewish Confederates," in Susannah J. Ural, *Civil War Citizens: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity in America's Bloodiest Conflict* (New York: New York University Press, 2010)
[968] Bertram W. Korn, "The Jews of the Confederacy," *American Jewish Archives* (April 1961), 58.
[969] *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, August 31, 1862.

the men because they were Jewish merchants.[970] A group of "German Jews" in Savannah met

and resolved that the newspapers of the state needed to denounce such persecution and

recommended "every Jew to withhold from" patronizing and supporting "all newspapers giving

currency to this slander and intolerance."[971]

The extant evidence does not point to the state being any more or less anti-Semitic than

other parts of the United or Confederate States at that time.[972] However, because so many

Jewish men were engaged in marketplace occupations, they were easy targets as outsiders to the

community, in terms of both their ethnicity and profession. Because of this, Jewish men were

often required to prove that they were loyal to the state, region, and Confederacy. Henry

Solomon, a Jewish merchant in Augusta, reported to his brother in 1864 that "every attempt" he

made to "remedy our finances seems to provoke additional distrust." Henry tried to assure his

customers that he was making "every proposed alteration" possible, but still he was accused of

profiteering.[973] Historian Mark Greenberg found that in Savannah, native-born Jewish families

were accepted into "middle-class Savannah society" of various philanthropic and social

activities, yet Savannah Jews who relocated from Europe or the North were viewed with

suspicion and generally not accepted. The latter group were forced to prove their worth by

joining aid societies or publicly pronounce their loyalty.[974]

Many non-Jewish merchants and shopkeepers decided to publicly plead their case too,

hoping to alleviate criticism. Josiah Sibley, owner of a long established store in Augusta, was

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[970] Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 205-206.
[971] *Savannah Republican*, September 13, 1862.
[972] See Rosen, "The Jewish Confederates," in Ural, *Civil War Citizens*, 157-186.
[973] Henry Solomon to N.E. Solomon, June 8, 1864, Henry Solomon Papers, ms 745, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.
[974] Mark I. Greenberg, "Becoming Southern: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-70," *Western Libraries Faculty and Staff Publications* 45 (1998), 12-13.

criticized for not lowering prices and was accused of hoarding goods to sell at outrageous prices. Sibley was forced to defend his reputation in the local newspaper and denied rumors that he was buying large quantities of goods in order to achieve huge profits later. Sibley admitted that there were some unscrupulous merchants in the city, but he was not one of them. Interestingly, Sibley closed by arguing that it was not his duty to sell goods to women and children at low prices and, instead, it was incumbent upon the city, state, and Confederate government to provide for those who were made destitute by the war.[975] Oliver Chappel, a merchant in Macon, was accused of raising prices because he shared sympathy with the Union. Chappel publicly fired back, stating that such talk was just gossip spread by jealous neighbors.[976] Similarly, Atlanta dry-goods merchant Michael Myers was accused of Unionist leanings for refusing to accept Confederate money, but his unwillingness to accept Confederate currency was also considered proof that he was trying to turn a profit off of the war. Myers issued a public statement confirming his loyalty to the Confederacy, but many southern patriots refused to accept his statement or frequent his establishment.[977]

While manufacturers, merchants, and shopkeepers were accused of profiteering, it was actually the government policies that forced higher prices in the marketplace. Poor economic policies bred shortages and rising prices.[978] As historian Mary DeCredico points out in her work on Georgia's urban manufacturers during the Civil War, low government prices forced manufacturers and merchants to operate at a loss. To compensate, they were compelled to raise prices. Manufacturers claimed that government interference discouraged profit-making, which would allow for reinvestment in the operation and expansion of production. What made things

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[975] LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 68-69.
[976] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 188.
[977] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 103.
[978] Douglas B. Ball, *Financial Failure and Confederate Defeat* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 19-25.

worse, to manufacturers and merchants, was that increased controls on materials and production had not significantly increased the effectiveness of supplying the needs of the army or the general populace. In fact, Georgia's businessmen charged, the policies had heightened speculation and created popular disaffection.[979] William Hack, a merchant in Augusta, complained to his cousin that "it is not worth while to try to do any business in the Dry goods line. Every thing has gone up to such prices. Provisions have gone up to starvation prices."[980]

Hack's complaint was that his customers could not afford to buy anything from him because of rising prices and yet often times it was merchants like Hack who were blamed for said rise. While there were some complaints regarding overproduction of cotton by planters from middling and poor Georgians, it seems that more vitriol was directed at supposed speculators and profiteers. While the state legislature passed a law early in the war to prevent speculation, hoarding, and monopolies of foodstuffs and other articles of general use and consumption, the legislature refused to set production limits and impose a tax upon planters who grew more cotton than was deemed necessary. Even after Governor Brown publicly urged the assembly to restrict the cotton crop, the legislature refused.[981] This was despite the fact that the majority of planters did not curtail planting cotton in favor of food crops. One Augusta merchant told an angry crowd that higher prices were due to the natural workings of the marketplace and pointed toward planters hoarding supplies as the main source of problems, but it was his store that was targeted for public insult.[982]

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[979] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 67-69.
[980] William Hack to Daniel de Bruce Hack, Sr., November 17, 1861, Daniel de Bruce Hack Sr. and Daniel de Bruce Hack Jr. papers, MS 353. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
[981] Teresa Crisp Williams and David Williams, "The Women Rising": Cotton, Class, and Confederate Georgia's Rioting Women," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* vol. 86, no. 1 (Spring 2002), 59.
[982] Whites, *Civil War as a Crisis in Gender*, 68.

In the final years of the war, stores were targeted not only for public insult, but also direct action. Mobs in Atlanta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah forcibly broke into shops and took goods. Although many food supplies were being housed by Confederate authorities, riots often took aim at stores run by private citizens. An "immense" crowd in Columbus targeted the store of Gans & Co. and then a shop owned by the Waltzfelder family during a riot in April 1863.[983] As historian Frank Byrne points out, these riots showed the growing desperation of the mobs as well as the marginal position of shopkeepers.[984] Even if mob action was decried as illegal, newspaper editors often still argued that shopkeepers were speculating and their goods should be confiscated by the government. Thus, the mob was wrong in its application, but not necessarily in its diagnosis of the problem. Direct action came from the government too, with the Georgia legislature passing a Monopoly and Extortion Bill in response to mob actions. The bill was aimed specifically at businesses that could be accused of profiteering, namely shops that sold foodstuffs and other necessities.[985]

In many ways, it was the accusations of profiteering and speculation that prevented the middling class and the "plain folk" of Georgia from working together to end the war or alter the power structure of the state. The state government, and local governments, did little to ease the burden on the plain folk of Georgia, with destitution and hunger leading white men and women to plead for food. When that did not work, stealing food was necessary. The destitution was blamed on the market economy and, especially in cities, merchants and shopkeepers were blamed for maintaining a tight grip on scarce food resources. Whereas merchants and shopkeepers blamed government policies for rising prices and inflation and pointed to planters

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[983] *Weekly Columbus Enquirer*, April 21, 1863.
[984] Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 191.
[985] Morgan, *Planter's Progress*, 57.

who refused to grow corn or grain, plain folk, especially in towns and cities, blamed those from whom they were trying to buy goods amid skyrocketing prices.[986]

When the plain folk struck back through direct action, merchants and grocers complained that the government did not protect them. On that account, they were correct. Due to pressure from soldiers' wives and food riots in Columbus, Macon, Atlanta, Savannah, and Augusta on privately owned stores, Governor Brown called for legislators to require planters to supply soldiers' wives. When legislators balked at forcing planters to restrict cultivating cotton, Brown made it budgetary policy to include funds for widows, orphans, and disabled veterans.[987] While middling Georgians would likely not have had an issue with widows, orphans, and veterans receiving aid, merchants and shopkeepers were irate that the government raised these funds by taxing them. While property taxes were waved for those deemed destitute by the war, taxation increased on merchants, grocers, shopkeepers and store owners, with taxes based off of how much stock was in the store and how much profits in excess of a fair return one earned. This tax was squarely aimed at privately owned businesses, many of which were accused of extorting citizens. To enforce the tax, the law provided that persons not complying faced a prison sentence and a doubling of their tax rate.[988] This drove not only a further wedge between middling Georgians and the state government, but also between poor and middle-class Georgians, who saw themselves on opposing sides as the war's deprivations continued. It was an almost endless cycle of blame that led to tensions amongst all involved.[989]

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[986] Williams and Williams, "The Women Rising," 52-55.
[987] Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 198-199.
[988] William D. Samson, "The Nineteenth Century Income Tax in the South," *Accounting Historians Journal* 12 (March 1985), 47.
[989] Williams and Williams, "The Women Rising", 52-55.

Middle-class Georgians dissented from the Confederate cause in a variety of ways. Some were active and some were passive. The middle class opposed the war in similar ways as other groups pointed to as dissenters. Therefore, the middle class should be included in discussions of opponents of the Confederacy and the failure of Confederate nationalism. Some middling Georgians were willing to publicly oppose the war. Some even publicly called for peace. While their efforts to bring peace talks to fruition were unsuccessful and ultimately the war was ended through military action, it is still important to understand that if poor whites and enslaved persons assisted in the demise of the Confederacy through their opposition, so too did middle class dissenters. Through using similar tactics, the middle class undermined the war effort as well and were part of the core of resistance fighting the war from the inside.

CONCLUSION

It should come as no surprise that Atlanta journalist Henry Grady was the man credited with popularizing the term "new south." After all, although Grady's father served in the Confederate army, William Grady was a merchant who opposed secession. Henry was raised in Athens, which saw industrialization as early as the 1830s. Like many wives of soldiers, Henry's mother wrote letters to William, asking him to leave the army so that he could come back and support his family. After graduating from the University of Georgia, Henry became a journalist and worked in New York City. When he came back to Atlanta to serve as a reporter and editor for the *Atlanta Daily Herald* and *Atlanta Constitution*, Grady promoted the creation of a state vocational educational school to train workers for new industries, supported antiliquor laws, and advocated for building a new library.[990] All of this made Henry Grady a man of the New South, but all of the foundations of his thoughts and ideology came from the Old South. Grady's promotion of industrialization and education, his willingness to hold up the North as a model to emulate rather than ridicule, and even his prohibitionist zeal were all beliefs of the growing middle-class of the late antebellum period in Georgia. To think Grady's ideas for the post-war South, and especially Atlanta, was not impacted by his upbringing in Athens, with a merchant father, seem imprudent.

The War Ends, Power Struggle Continues

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[990] Harold E. Davis, *Henry Grady's New South: Atlanta, a Brave Beautiful City* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990)

As William Tecumseh Sherman's troops captured Atlanta and then marched to the sea to end 1864, Georgia was effectively cut off from the remainder of the Confederacy. Some anti-Confederates welcomed not just the end of the war, but Union occupation as well. In Atlanta, James Dunning climbed a pole to fly an American flag and Cyrena Stone pulled her own flag out of hiding to welcome Union troops.[991] James Ormond III, a co-owner of the Atlanta Paper Mill who relocated to Canada during the war, was less excited, but still wrote his wife after Atlanta fell to say that now that the war was surely over, they could "begin life anew."[992] A group of men who emigrated to New York during the war met in February 1865 to begin discussions of returning to Atlanta and made appeals to all "loyal Georgians" to disavow the Confederacy and not only submit to, but accept reunification with the North.[993]

One of the goals of the meeting of middling Georgians who fled to New York was to discuss how they could take power upon their return to the state. They were certainly ready to resume their lives and to do business again, but they also wanted to be rewarded for not supporting the Confederacy by assuming power upon the end of the war. Anti-Confederates assumed that they would benefit politically, socially, and economically from not supporting the breakaway nation. The 1850s saw a power struggle between the growing middle class and the planters and their allies who held power. Because the latter largely supported secession and war, many members of the former category who opposed secession and war thought they would ascend to positions of power to guide the state forward. Although secession and war led to carnage and destruction heretofore unseen in Georgia, many members of the middle class

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[991] Thomas G. Dyer, *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 193.

[992] James Ormond III to his wife, October 31, 1864, William McNaught Papers, MSS 156, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center.

[993] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 216.

believed the fact the Confederacy lost the war now gave them the opportunity to modernize

Georgia, just as they had been advocating for years prior to secession and war.[994]

At the end of the war, loyalty was just as hotly contested as it had been during the

secession crisis and war years. Abraham Lincoln had consistently emphasized southern

Unionists as the backbone for Reconstruction and, after Lincoln's assassination, anti-

Confederates assumed they had an advocate in Andrew Johnson, viewed as an unconditional

Unionist. In the immediate aftermath of Union occupation of cities such as Atlanta, Augusta,

and Savannah, anti-Confederates were given an influential role in the administration of those

cities. This led to a definition of who counted as loyal. While active supporters of the Union

were the obvious loyalists, Georgians who were draft dodgers, deserters, or did not actively aid,

or provided as little as possible, the Confederate cause were considered loyalists as well. Many

men who opposed secession yet joined the fight against invading Union armies desired loyal

status, but often met with scorn from anti-Confederates.[995]

Many middle class anti-Confederates assumed they would govern Georgia as former

Confederate supporters were punished for their support of secession and war. In the early days

of Reconstruction, the power dynamics in the state did seem to be shifting. Men such as John W.

Duncan, an Atlanta banker, and William F. Herring, an Atlanta clothing store owner, were

denied government appointments because anti-Confederate Alexander Wilson, a teacher who

moved to Georgia from east Tennessee, wrote a letter to President Johnson with a critical

appraisal of their wartime activities. Instead, men such as Wilson, Nedom Angier, and John

Erskine, who had all opposed secession and the war, were chosen for government posts in the

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[994] Carl N. Degler, *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1974), 203-205.

[995] James Alex Baggett, *The Scalawags: Southern Dissenters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 124-125.

immediate aftermath of the war. James A. Stewart, one of the state's most outspoken critics of the Confederacy, was awarded a federal post as well.[996]

Initially, the largely middle class anti-Confederates were a political force in post-war Georgia. It was abundantly clear that once suffrage was restored to the vast majority of white male southerners in the fall of 1865, holding political power that was not federally appointed would be a challenge. Due to this, many anti-Confederates joined the Union League, which was initially comprised of only white membership, but quickly was opened to African American men. This was because men such as David Young, a drugstore owner who lived in Columbus and then Atlanta, argued that freedmen were "as good as a white man" and should be cultivated as voters, as well as taught and included in society.[997] Young was not the only anti-Confederate to take this view, as Alexander Wilson, Amherst Stone, James Dunning, and William Markham, later president of the Union League in Georgia, all embraced biracial politics and were persistent advocates for black education and black rights.[998]

The Union League not only aimed at political power, but also were driven by an embittered feeling regarding their wartime treatment. Josiah Parrott, an attorney from Cartersville, argued that the leaders of the secession movement should be tried and "all efforts to tax the poor" to repay the war debt would be resisted. Parrott argued that if the war debt was paid at all, it should fall upon secessionist leaders.[999] The local chapter of the league in Savannah adopted resolutions opposing any "sympathizers with secession" as being eligible to

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[996] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 228-230.
[997] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, July 6, 1865.
[998] Dyer, *Secret Yankees*, 232.
[999] Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 167.

hold office.[1000] In Augusta, Rufus Bullock, who had been opposed to secession and spent the war working as superintendent of the Southern Express Company, argued that the only way to avoid "political troubles" was to make sure "old wartime political leaders" were not allowed back into the fold.[1001]

The Union League in Georgia certainly counted many outsiders and newly freed blacks in their ranks. However, it is also striking how many middle-class anti-Confederates, especially in urban areas, became members or even leaders of chapters in the state. In north Georgia, P.M. Sheibley of Rome, a professor who spent the war doing various things to avoid conscription, Dr. L.P. Gudger of Dalton, and attorney Henry P. Farrow of Atlanta all founded councils of the Union League.[1002] The latter in many ways personified the middle-class anti-Confederate Georgian. Farrow moved from South Carolina to Cartersville before the war and settled in Atlanta once the war ended. Farrow left his home state in disgust because he was vilified for opposing secession. When he moved to Cartersville in 1860, Farrow immediately supported Stephen A. Douglas as a compromise candidate and spoke out against disunion. Farrow avoided Confederate service as long as he could, but he was conscripted in 1862, managing to avoid military service by obtaining a position in the mining and nitre bureau. Farrow boasted after the war that despite his conscription, he never supported or aided the Confederacy.[1003] Farrow would eventually organize several chapters of the Union League, serving as president at one point of the statewide organization, and founded the Georgia Republican Party.[1004]

[1000] Louis T. Griffith and John E. Talmage, *Georgia Journalism, 1763-1950* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1951), 33.
[1001] Russell Duncan, *Entrepreneur for Equality: Governor Rufus Bullock, Commerce, and Race in Post-Civil War Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 19-20.
[1002] Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 169.
[1003] George L. Jones, "The Political Career of Henry Pattillo Farrow, Georgia Republican, 1865-1904," (Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 1966), 5-11.
[1004] Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 170.

The initial feeling of optimism among middling anti-Confederates quickly dissipated. As early as September 1865, Wilson was concerned that there was open hostility toward the federal government. Wilson was sure the only way anti-Confederates could hold power would be by keeping the military presence in the state and by convicting and executing Confederate leaders such as Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Joseph E. Johnston.[1005] Dunning wrote to President Johnson, arguing that the prewar elite were attempting to regain power by promoting leniency toward ex-Confederates. If leniency occurred, Dunning was sure anti-Confederates would be angered because they were still suffering persecutions from neighbors for not supporting the war. To see those who supported secession and war not punished while those who had stayed true to the Union persecuted would make people turn against the administration, Dunning warned.[1006]

Johnson did not heed the warning, as his decision to reestablish the basic civil rights for the vast majority of former Confederates made sure that the political weight of the anti-Confederates opponents doomed their aspirations. A few men, such as Markham, Angier, and Wilson were successful in city politics and had long political careers, but the majority of anti-Confederates did not hold relevant political power. The initial voting for congressional seats largely went to men who had vocally supported secession. When the state legislature cast its votes for United State Senate candidates, upwards of eighty percent of the votes went to supporters of secession and the Confederate war effort. Many anti-Confederates were aghast when James Johnson, the provisional governor and a former Whig who kept a low profile during the war after opposing secession, was defeated for a Senate seat by former Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens. As one historian pointed out, Confederate veterans dominated the

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[1005] Alexander N. Wilson to Andrew Johnson, November 25, 1865, in Paul H. Bergeron, ed., *The Papers of Andrew Johnson, Volume 9, September 1865-January 1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 431-432.
[1006] James Dunning to Andrew Johnson, July 2, 1865, in Bergeron, ed., *The Papers of Andrew Johnson, Volume 8, May-August 1865* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 339.

Georgia legislature and so it was no surprise that anti-Confederates were largely shut out of political positions.[1007]

The potential political power of the middle class anti-Confederates was further neutered by the ascent of Georgia Republicans who joined the party simply to seek place or position. Many of these Republicans were former Confederates who switched allegiances in name only. After William Gibson, an Augusta judge, was made a delegate to the Republican party's national convention in 1868, several Republicans in that city complained that Gibson was chosen over a Union man even though Gibson was a rampant rebel. Furthermore, Gibson, according to one anti-Confederate, was simply a man who had a "love of office" and would "always be found on the strongest side."[1008] Making matters worse, Republicans like Gibson were of the belief that African American men were guaranteed suffrage by the new state constitution, but they were not guaranteed to serve in public office. This went against what the Union League in the state had been preaching for several years and it cost many Republicans the votes of black men, who were more likely to vote for their own leaders or stay home. In the end, most Georgia Republicans, with the exception of those who were popular among white voters, such as Joseph Brown, could not make up in white votes what they lost in black votes.[1009]

By December 1870, when state elections were held, the Republicans in Georgia suffered from internal divisions and "redemption" of the state by Democratic politicians began in earnest. Rather than seeing the planter class of the state destroyed and replaced by a rising bourgeois merchant class as C. Vann Woodward argued in his work on the New South, the political, economic, and labor systems of post-war Georgia allowed the planter elite to retain, and in some

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[1007] Elizabeth Studley Nathans, *Losing the Peace: Georgia Republicans and Reconstruction, 1865-1871* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 14.
[1008] Baggett, *The Scalawags*, 247.
[1009] Nathans, *Losing the Peace*, 120-125.

cases actually improve, their economic and political power.[1010] Democrats won control of the

legislature in 1871 and the governorship in 1872, thus paving the way for state legislation to

support efforts of pre-war elite to retain their dominant position in Georgia society.[1011] While the

so-called Bourbon Democrats of the state, led by Joseph Brown, Alfred Colquitt, and John B.

Gordon, did promote the interests of big businessmen in cities like Atlanta, they did virtually

nothing to help anyone else.[1012] In researching southwest Georgia, historian Lee Formwalt

concluded that the planter elite actually increased their share of wealth compared to pre-war

figures "largely at the expense of the upper-middle group" which consisted of "those below the

top 10 percent but within the top 40 percent." This reversed a trend found in the 1850s, when

"the upper middle group…increased its share of the wealth at the expense of the planter

elite."[1013] In other words, while middle-class Georgians made strides economically when

compared to the planter elite in the late antebellum era, those gains were lost during the

Reconstruction era. This despite the fact that the planter elite largely supported secession and the

war.

The Old South in the New South

Even if middling Georgians did not always reap the benefits, their economic vision of the

state did take root. Led by Atlanta, trade and financial ties with the North were restored.

Suddenly talk of diversifying the economy beyond agriculture and pushes for modernization

were the norm, rather than the exception. Although the political leadership still remained similar

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[1010] C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951). For an example of Woodward's theory tested and rejected in Georgia, see Lewis Nicholas Wynne, *The Continuity of Cotton: Planter Politics in Georgia, 1865-1892* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986) and Lee W. Formwalt, "Antebellum Planter Persistence: Southwest Georgia—A Case Study," *Plantation Society* I, 3 (October 1981), 410-429
[1011] Wynne, *Continuity of Cotton*, 105-119.
[1012] Charles. E Wynes, "The Politics of Reconstruction, Redemption, and Bourbonism," in Kenneth Coleman, ed., *A History of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 222-224.
[1013] Formwalt, "Antebellum Planter Persistence," 418-419.

to that of the pre-war period, all of the ideas and plans for Georgia's post-war economy and society were ideas that had been advocated in the antebellum years, especially in the 1850s. The state invested heavily in economic and cultural projects that middling Georgians deemed important. A free public school system was mandated in 1866, although it took until 1872 for it to finally take shape. Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, and Athens all built economies based upon diversified small industry.[1014]

Of course, this vision was still not universally accepted. Critics such as Thomas E. Watson argued that New South promoters were submitting Georgia to northern interests and oppressing small farmers. Watson appealed to an older way of life, arguing for the traditional agrarian economy over industrialism. Although Watson supported middle-class plans like public education, his disdain for industry and his emergence as a voice for the rural over the urban did not make him popular among city-dwelling middling Georgians who favored the vision of men like Grady.[1015]

Although critics such as Watson certainly had an audience, the middle-class calls for a commercially-centered economy came to fruition in cities such as Atlanta, Columbus, Athens, and Macon, which were not totally dependent on either the cotton market or the seacoast trade for their economic livelihood. The leaders in these cities were willing to diversify and innovate to meet postwar demands. Historian Mary DeCredico found that leaders in these cities became convinced that industry was a necessary component to the local economy and this allowed cities

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[1014] Alan Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), 21-39.
[1015] Ferald J. Bryan, *Henry Grady or Tom Watson? The Rhetorical Struggle for the New South, 1880-1890* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1994), 18-24.

like Atlanta to rebuild much more quickly than other cities in the South that were physically devastated by the war.[1016]

The resurgence of these cities was attributed to "progressive men" who focused on trade and commerce.[1017] Critics complained that "the old customs" were being thrown in a "monumental heap" and these so-called progressives had "no use for" the way things were done before the war.[1018] Many of the same people who advocated industrial development as a necessary complement to agricultural commerce were leaders of the postwar drive to reestablish railroad connections, open stores, and establish small-scale manufacturing establishments. Interestingly, though, proponents of industrialization did not see manufacturing attain the levels they hoped for. While merchants and storekeepers experienced a trade boom in urban areas, the Panic of 1873 and high railroad freight rates slowed the drive for industrialization.[1019]

Although middling Georgians still were not politically powerful by the late 1860s, their antebellum vision of a diversified state began to come to fruition in the postwar years. By 1870, urban populations had increased over 1860 levels, the number of manufacturing establishments had grown from 1,890 to 3,836, capital investment in manufacturing had increased, the value of manufactured products rose by almost 100 percent over 1860 figures, financial ties with the North were reestablished, and a public school system was in place.[1020] As one scholar of Augusta argued, "liberated men from a dead past" led the charge in attempting to change the worldview of the state and try to bring about a realization of Grady's vision.[1021] Georgia's

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[1016] Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia's Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 130.
[1017] *Atlanta Daily Intelligencer*, February 8, 1870.
[1018] *Atlanta Daily New Era*, January 3, 1867.
[1019] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 133-134.
[1020] DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 149.
[1021] Randolph D. Werner, "Hegemony and Conflict: The Political Economy of a Southern Region, Augusta, Georgia, 1865-1895" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1977), 20.

middle class did not enjoy unchecked successes in the postwar period, but after a protracted struggle throughout the antebellum and war years, their struggle for modernization of trade, manufacturing, urbanization, and education reform came to fruition in the postwar years. There were still battles with the planter elite and those afraid of urban growth, but the building of a New South in Georgia not only owed a tremendous debt to the middle class, its roots can clearly be seen in the antebellum years.

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Claremont, Alexa Ilene. "Creators of Community: Cassville, Georgia, 1850-1880." Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 2005.

Crutcher, Luke Fain. "Disunity and Dissolution: The Georgia Parties and the Crisis of the Union, 1859-1861." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974.

Edwards, Stewart C. "River City at War: Columbus, Georgia, 1860-1865." Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1993.

Jones, George L. "The Political Career of Henry Pattillo Farrow, Georgia Republican, 1865-1904." Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 1966.

Russell, James Michael. "Atlanta, Gate City of the South, 1847 to 1885." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1973.

Werner, Randolph D. "Hegemony and Conflict: The Political Economy of a Southern Region, Augusta, Georgia, 1865-1895." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1977.

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VITA

Thomas W. Robinson

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EDUCATION

Masters of Arts, History

May 2010

James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

▪ Concentration Areas: American History, Antebellum South, Civil War Era, Modern Europe

Masters of Science, Library and Information Studies

December 2004

The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

▪ Concentration Area: Knowledge Management

Bachelor of Arts, History

April 2001

The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

▪ Concentration Areas: Civil War, Southern History, Religion

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Instructor, *Tallahassee Community College*   August 2015-present

- ■ **SLS 1510** – College Success
- ■ Assisting with the pilot of this newly redesigned course

- **AMH 1041 –** American Experience I: Institutions and Values in a World Setting

- **AMH 2020 –** American History II

Instructor of Record, *The University of Mississippi* August 2014 – December 2014

- **EDHE 105** – First Year Experience

- Taught a special section of this course as part of a living-learning community of high-risk students

Teaching Assistant, *The University of Mississippi*   August 2012 – May 2015

- **His 102** – History of Europe Since 1648

- **His 105** – The United States to 1877

- **His 106** – The United States Since 1877

- **His 405** – Special Topics in History: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy

- Both discussion leader and grader in the 100-level courses and a grader and guest lecturer in the 400-level course.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Development and Financial Director, *Museum of Florida History*   July 2018-current

- ▪ Coordinate all fundraising, sponsorship, and membership initiatives at the Museum of Florida History and Knott House Museum

Clerk, *State of Florida, Department of Education*   December 2016-June 2018

- ▪ Process and scan grant paperwork related to currently funded projects at both public and private schools, as well as colleges and universities, in Florida.

Development Officer, *Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library*   January 2010 – August 2011

- Focused on creating relationships with area corporations and private and public foundations. Researched giving interests and history of corporations and foundations to determine suitability of soliciting for the WWPL. Secured corporate sponsorships for special events.

- Wrote and assembled of grant proposals to corporations and foundations.

- Day-to-day gift accounting, including posting gifts and preparing daily reports. Created and managed record-keeping and database system for tracking gifts, donor identifying, and cultivating of prospects. Prepared thank-you notes and generated gift receipts.

- Maintained development and fundraising portions of the WWPL website. Helped maintain and update social media, including Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter. Assisted with IT needs.

- Assisted with other development and marketing tasks including individual prospect

  research, writing and assembling of newsletter, school tours, special events, and public outreach. Assisted the Director of Museum Operations with exhibit design and development.

- Coordinated effort to re-establish WWPL's membership program. Wrote new

  membership benefits and giving levels to modernize WWPL's membership program.

  Coordinated the membership program, including sending acknowledgement letters and

  membership cards.

- Supervised interns.

Program Coordinator for Development, *Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation*

February 2007 –
December 2009

- Developed lists of prospective individual and corporate donors including background

  information about interests and giving history. Researched prospects and foundations. Maintained a database of over 2,600 donors and prospects with biographical information, giving interests and history, and other pertinent information.

- Conducted the writing and assembling of grant proposals to corporations and foundations.

- Prepared solicitation materials, set up meetings and events, and tracked donations and acknowledgement letters.

- Assisted with other foundation activities that further the foundation's fundraising efforts, such as seminars, outreach and promotional activities, etc.

- Prepared reports to the Executive Director, Development Committee, and Board of Trustees.

- Created internship program to work with local colleges and universities

Archival Consultant, *The Clermont Trust,*   October 2006 – February 2007

- Oversaw inventory process of the Clermont Farm estate and prepared archival objects for

  packaging and storage. Specifically in charge of all books and archival objects.

- Prepared the Estate library and papers for transfer to Clarke County Historical
Society.

- Used PastPerfect software to catalog archival objects and assign them accession numbers.

- Supervised and trained new staff on proper museum and archival procedures.

- Coordinated all ongoing research dealing with project.

Historian and Archivist, *Coastal Heritage Society – Roundhouse Railroad*
August 2005-August 2006

- Conducted research on the political, economic, and social history of the museum site.

- Assisted with exhibit design and installation.

- Provided guided tours for groups, both private and school groups of all ages. Created and
refurbished several on-site guides including the interpretive guide, the building guide, and the
self-guided tour pamphlets as well at the markers that coincide with the pamphlets.

- Served as the Librarian for the Roundhouse Railroad Museum. Created the museum's library
and archives system from ground up and continued to keep it updated and organized.
Reorganized the Coastal Heritage Society's library and archives and brought them up to current
standards.

- Managed the museum gift shop and staff as well as the maintenance staff. Processed point of
sale purchases in the gift shop and make daily earning records and deposits.

- Assisted the Site Director with crafting a 1-year, 5-year, and 10-year plan for the future of the
museum. Also supported the Events Coordinator with special events at museum and filled in at
Old Fort Jackson, another CHS site, as necessary.

- Performed administrative tasks such as copying, faxing, answering the phones, and taking
messages. Answered visitor inquiries about the site.

Cataloger, *Florida Department of State – State Library and Archives of Florida*
January 2004 –June 2005

- Oversaw cataloging activities for Florida Folklife Project, part of the Florida Memory Project.

- Completed original and copy cataloging of historical monographic and serial materials.

- Used MARC 21, AACR2, and Library of Congress subject heading and name authorities for cataloging digitized images. Entered data using Library of Congress standards in MARC or DublinCore format.
- Researched materials not previously identified for posting on Florida Memory webpage.
- Performed research using State Archives of Florida, State Library of Florida, and databases such as Ancestry Plus, WilsonSelect, and Lexis Nexis.

PUBLICATIONS

- "Following the Fellows," Rose Library Scholar Blog (September 2016)
- "'Just before a mighty earthquake:' Muscogee County, Georgia, During the Secession Crisis," in *A Press Divided: Newspaper Coverage of the Civil War*, edited by David Sachsman (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014)
- "One Division Saves an Army," *North and South*, 10.3 (2007).

PRESENTATIONS

- "The Rise of the Antebellum Middle Class in Georgia, 1848-1865," St. George Tucker Society Annual Meeting (King Edward Hotel, Jackson, MS), July 28, 2017.
- "The True Heirs of 1776: The South and the Memory of the American Revolution," Nineteenth Century Studies Association Conference (Charleston, SC), February 4, 2017.
- "The Unequal and Opposite Reaction: Georgia's Middle Class and Dissent, 1848-1865," Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library Research Talk (Emory University, Atlanta, GA), May 6, 2016.
- "Un-Confederate Southerners: Georgia's Middle-Class during the Civil War Era," AUM Southern Studies Conference (Auburn University Montgomery, Montgomery, AL), February 6, 2016.
- "The Nullification Crisis and the Coming of the Civil War," Guest Lecture, U.S. History to 1877, The University of Mississippi, Spring 2014.
- "What we can learn from Archaeology," Guest Lecture, History of Slavery Honors course, James Madison University, November 29, 2010.
- "'Just before a mighty earthquake:' Muscogee County, Georgia, During the Secession Crisis," Symposium on the 19th Century Press and the Civil War (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Chattanooga, TN), November 12, 2009.
- "One Division Saves an Army," Tennessee Conference of Historians (Cumberland University, Lebanon, TN), September 29, 2009.