

379
N81
No. 7434

SOUTHERN GENRE PAINTING AND ILLUSTRATION
FROM 1830 TO 1890

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

By

Carrie Meitzner Akard, B.F.A.

Denton, Texas

December, 1997

Akard, Carrie Meitzner, Southern Genre Painting and Illustration from 1830 to 1890. Master of Arts (Art History), December 1997, 257 pp., 98 illustrations, references, 148 titles.

The purpose of this thesis is to give a concise view of stylistic, iconographical, and iconological trends in Southern genre paintings and illustrations between 1830 and 1890 by native Southern artists and artists who lived at least ten years in the South.

Exploration of artworks was accomplished by compiling as many artworks as possible per decade, separating each decade by dominant trends in subject matter, and researching to determine political and/or social implications associated with and affecting each image. Historical documents and the findings of other scholars revealed that many artworks carried political overtones reflecting the dominant thought of the white ruling class during the period while the significance and interpretation of other artworks was achieved by studying dominant personal beliefs and social practices.

379
N81
No. 7434

SOUTHERN GENRE PAINTING AND ILLUSTRATION
FROM 1830 TO 1890

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

By

Carrie Meitzner Akard, B.F.A.

Denton, Texas

December, 1997

Copyright by
Carrie Meitzner Akard

1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	v
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	
Methodology	
Review of the Literature	
2. THE 1830s AND 1840s, A GROWING SENSE OF SEPARATION.....	12
3. THE 1850s, THE PROSPEROUS YEAR	33
4. THE 1860s, INTO WAR.....	71
5. THE 1870s AND 1880s, RECONSTRUCTING A NEW SOUTH.....	108
6. CONCLUSION.....	152
ILLUSTRATIONS	155
BIBLIOGRAPHY	246

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate	Page
1. S. Barnard, <i>View Along East Battery, Charleston, 1831</i>	155
2. John Toole, <i>Skating Scene, 1831</i>	156
3. Martha Gillespie Fain, <i>Hunters, 1836</i>	157
4. Thomas Middleton, <i>Friends & Amateurs in Musik, c. 1837</i>	158
5. Unknown, <i>JK Polk / Knoxville, Tennessee, 1840</i>	159
6. William M. G. Samuel, <i>West Side of the Main Plaza, 849</i>	160
7. William M. G. Samuel, <i>East Side Plaza at San Antonio, 1849</i>	161
8. William Henry Brown, <i>Hauling the Whole Week's Picking, 1840</i>	162
9. William Henry Brown, <i>Mrs. Sarah Vick on Horseback, 1840</i>	163
10. Mary Catherine Noel, <i>Hunting Scene, 1833 or 1834</i>	164
11. George Caleb Bingham, <i>The Jolly Flatboatmen, 1846</i>	164
12. George Cooke, <i>View of Athens From Carr's Hill, c.1840</i>	165
13. William Frye, <i>View of Huntsville Spring, 1845</i>	166
14. T. Addison Richards, <i>River Plantation, c.1850</i>	167
15. Robert Weir, <i>The Last Communion of Henry Clay, 1852</i>	168
16. George Caleb Bingham, <i>The County Election, 1851/52</i>	169
17. David Hunter Strother, <i>Southern Militia, 1859</i>	170
18. George Caleb Bingham, <i>Canvassing For a Vote, 1852</i>	171
19. Francis Blackwell Mayer, <i>Leisure and Labor, 1858</i>	172
20. Richard Petri, <i>Ft. Martin Scott, c. 1858</i>	173
21. David Hunter Strother, <i>Negro Girl with White Scarf, c.1856</i>	174
22. William Browning Cooper, <i>Mrs. John Bell Hamilton, 1853</i>	175

Plate	Page
23. Richard Petri, <i>The Pioneer Cowpen</i> , c.1855	176
24. Richard Petri, <i>Going Visiting</i> , c. 1855.....	177
25. Unknown, <i>Springs in Virginia #1</i>	178
26. Carl G. Von Iwonski, <i>Theatre at the Old Casino Club San Antonio, Texas</i> , 1858	179
27. Charles Giroux, <i>Cotton Plantation</i> , c. 1850-65	180
28. Unknown, <i>Life on the Plantation</i>	181
29. David Hunter Strother, <i>The Horse Camp in The Dismal Swamp</i> , c. 1856.....	181
30. John Antrobus, <i>Plantation Burial</i> , 1859	182
31. Francis Blackwell Mayer, <i>Independence, Squire Jack Porter, 1858</i> ,	183
32. William D. Washington, <i>Marion's Camp</i> , 1859	184
33. Unknown, <i>View of Montgomery</i> , c. 1860	185
34. Conrad Wise Chapman, <i>Camp Near Corinth, Mississippi</i> ,1862	187
35. Conrad Wise Chapman, <i>Camp, 59th Virginia Infantry</i> , 1863	187
36. Conrad Wise Chapman, <i>Old Shine-Negro Fiddler</i> , 1863.....	188
37. Conrad Wise Chapman, <i>At Chaffin's Farm, Virginia</i> , 1863	188
38. Conrad Wise Chapman, <i>Battery Marshall, Sullivan's Island 1863</i>	189
39. John A. Mooney, <i>Surprise Attack near Harper's Ferry</i> , c. 1867	190
40. Hunt Wilson, <i>Elk Horn Tavern at Pea Ridge</i> , 1862.....	191
41. Allen C. Redwood, <i>Confederate Battery in Action</i> , 1862.....	192
42. William D. Washington, <i>Jackson Entering Winchester</i> , 1863	192

Plate	Page
43. Richard Norris Brooke, <i>Furling the Stars and Bars</i> , c.1865.....	193
44. Adalbert Volck, <i>Smuggling Medicine</i> , c. 1863.....	194
45. Adalbert Volck, <i>Sewing for the Soldiers</i> , c. 1863.....	194
46. Adalbert Volck, <i>Melting Church Bells</i> , c. 1863.....	195
47. Adalbert Volck, <i>Tracks of the Federal Armies</i> , c. 1864.....	196
48. David Hunter Strother, <i>Cotton Depot at Memphis Landing</i> , 1862.....	197
49. William D. Washington, <i>Burial of Latane</i> , 1864.....	198
50. William Aiken Walker, <i>Circular Church in Ruins</i> , 1868.....	199
51. William Aiken Walker, <i>St. Finbar's Roman Catholic Cathedral</i> , 1868.....	200
52. Lucien Whiting Powell, <i>The Old Log Cabin</i> , c. 1865-70.....	201
53. Thomas Satterwhite Noble, <i>The Last Sale of Slaves in</i> <i>St. Louis</i> , 1866.....	202
54. Thomas Satterwhite Noble, <i>The Price of Blood</i> , 1868.....	203
55. Thomas Satterwhite Noble, <i>Man in a Brown Suit</i> , c. 1868.....	204
56. John Beaufain Irving, <i>Little Johnny Reb</i> , 1866.....	205
57. Theodore Sidney Moise, <i>Life on the Metairie</i> , 1868.....	206
58. William Aiken Walker, <i>Plantation Economy in the Old South</i> , 1881.....	207
59. William Aiken Walker, <i>Big B Cotton Plantation</i> , 1881.....	208
60. William Aiken Walker, <i>Wagon Scene</i> , 1888.....	209
61. William Aiken Walker, <i>Taking Cotton to Market</i> , 1885.....	210
62. William Aiken Walker, <i>On The Road to Natchez</i> , 1888.....	211

Plate	Page
63. William Aiken Walker, <i>Wagon Scene with Barrels</i> , 1884.....	212
64. Everett B. D. Julio, <i>Haw Yar</i> , 1871.....	213
65. Hal Alexander Courtney Morrison, <i>Weighing the Cotton</i> , 1885.....	214
66. William Aiken Walker, <i>Where Canal Meets the Levee</i> , c.1882.....	215
67. William Aiken Walker, <i>The Levee</i> , 1884.....	216
68. Unknown, <i>Negro Boys on the Quayside</i> , 1880.....	217
69. Paul Poincy, <i>Three Mule Cart on Decatur St., N.O.</i> , 1871.....	218
70. William Aiken Walker, <i>The Old Cotton Picker</i> , c.1887.....	219
71. William H. Huddle, <i>The Slave</i> , 1889.....	220
72. Virginia Keane Bryce, <i>The Charity Patient</i> , c.1885.....	221
73. Willie M. Chambers, <i>Uncle Hamp and His Cart, Montezuma Georgia</i> , c.1880.....	222
74. George Henry Clements, <i>Sharpening the Knives</i> , 1881.....	223
75. Andreas Molinary, <i>Prisoner</i> , 1876.....	224
76. John Adams Elder, <i>A Virginy Breakdown</i> , 1877.....	225
77. John Adams Elder, <i>Contentment</i> , c. 1877.....	226
78. William Aiken Walker, <i>Cabin Scene</i> , c.1883.....	227
79. William Aiken Walker, <i>Cabin Scene</i> , 1883.....	228
80. Richard Norris Brooke, <i>A Pastoral Visit, Virginia</i> , 1881.....	229
81. Richard Clague, <i>Back of Algiers</i> , c.1870.....	230
82. Richard Clague, <i>Trapper's Cabin</i> , c. 1870.....	231
83. Richard Clague, <i>Spring Hill, Alabama</i> , c. 1870.....	231

Plate	Page
84. Marshall J. Smith, <i>Bayou Farm</i> , 1877	232
85. William Henry Buck, <i>Louisiana Landscape</i> , c. 1880.....	233
86. William Henry Buck, <i>Mississippi Delta</i> , c. 1880.....	234
87. William Henry Buck, <i>Fishing Camp on the Lake</i> , c. 1880.....	235
88. Paul Poincy, <i>Volunteer Fireman's Parade</i> , 1872.....	236
89. William Aiken Walker, <i>Cardplayers on the Steamboat</i> , 1880	237
90. Unknown, <i>Manegold Confectionary Tent</i> , 1888.....	237
91. John Genin, <i>Surf Bathing, Grand Isle</i> , 1870.....	238
92. William Buck, <i>Summer Resort</i> , c. 1880	239
93. William Aiken Walker, <i>Boy With Goat</i> , 1872.....	240
94. John Beaufain Irving, <i>The Patient Fisherboy</i> , 1873.....	241
95. Robert Loftin Newman, <i>Girl Blowing Bubbles</i> , c. 1880.....	242
96. Stephen Seymour Thomas, <i>Weighing the Puppy</i> , 1884.....	243
97. Carl Von Iwonski, <i>The Schenck Sisters</i> , 1870.....	244
98. Thomas Satterwhite Noble, <i>Idle Dreams</i> , 1877	245

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study of Southern genre images by Southern artists came about as the result of several days in the library poring through books on the subject of genre in nineteenth-century painting. Overwhelmingly, and with few exceptions, the bulk of the artists in these books were from the Northern states. Well-known names such as Eastman Johnson, Henry Inman, William Sidney Mount, David Gilmore Blythe, and Winslow Homer were repeated over and over. It seemed as though Southern genre artists did not exist, as though there were no Southerners able or willing to record aspects of Southern life. This thought led to a search for Southern genre by Southern artists with the idea that Southern artists would, through their choice of subject matter and artistic style, reveal trends in social, political, religious, and moral attitudes while reflecting the attitudes and character of their fellow Southerners. During the initial search for subject matter, the need for a study such as this was supported by the very few authors who specialize in Southern art. Estill Curtis Pennington remarked that "art historians have allowed the plastic heritage of Southern culture to sleep on in romantic decay." He further suggested that the reason for such complacency might be due to the fact that "if a people's politics are deemed unworthy, their

goods are even more suspect."¹ Further, Jessie Poesch lamented that "few books have been written that provide a general view of the arts in the South."² With these and other authors' similar comments in mind, a chronological study of Southern genre by Southern artists from 1830 to 1890 was felt to be a worthwhile endeavor.

The South was and is usually defined as those states which still held slaves during the nineteenth century, including Kentucky, Missouri and Maryland, those states below the Mason-Dixon line, or those states which chose to secede from the Union. For this study, the South is any state below the Mason-Dixon line and a Southern artist is one who was born and had lived in the South or one who had adopted the South as home for at least ten years, and, in many cases, showed clear Southern sympathies during the war years. In tracing the development of genre in the South, one finds that Southern artists faced particular hurdles. First, travel was considerably more difficult in the South than in the North. Second, the Southern population was much more agrarian than urban contributing to the lack of an established art center. Both of these factors affected the availability of patrons and the distribution of prints, thereby limiting the amount and type of work attainable for native artists. The hurdles faced by artists then have had a direct effect on the availability of images and information accessible for study now. Images are often found in obscure places throughout the South and very few collections of nineteenth-century Southern art have been

¹Pennington, Estill Curtis. *The South on Paper: Line, Color, Light*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Robert M. Hicklin, Jr., 1985. p.1.

²Poesch, Jessie J. "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South, 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983.

established. A third factor affecting the study of Southern genre is the fact that we may never know to what extent artworks were lost during the Civil War. However, it would seem probable that while fleeing destruction, people would save portraits of family members rather than decorative genre images.

To narrow the breadth of this study, the time span chosen is the period between 1830 and 1890. These were pivotal years in the South. During the 1830s and 1840s, the South's cotton culture was developing and spreading westward into the virgin lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and eventually Texas. This turn of events renewed the South's dependency upon slave labor, while igniting the abolitionist cause in the North, causing a growing sense of separation between the South and the rest of the nation. The 1850s can best be described as the prosperous years when cotton was king and fortunes were high. The 1860s saw war, death, destruction, severe poverty, and the nearly complete breakdown of Southern culture as it had developed over the past two hundred years. During the 1870s and 1880s, the white and black South struggled to rebuild and redevelop their relationship with one another.

By viewing Southern genre images created by Southern artists, one can study the effects of the changing social and political scene on the images. From 1820 to 1850 the Old South transformed "from a spirit of American to one of Southern nationalism."³ According to Jessie Poesch, during the period around 1859 "there is an effort to identify and proclaim cultural distinctiveness."⁴ One of

³Braden, Waldo, W. editor. *Oratory in the Old South, 1828-1860*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970. p. 19.

⁴Poesch, Jessie. "Growth and Development." p. 84.

the most telling areas of Southern distinction is found in the changing images Southerners created of blacks. While many Northerners and Europeans created portrayals of slave sales or runaways, Southern artists defended their peculiar institution by producing idyllic images of plantation life filled with contented faceless and nameless black laborers. During the war years, Southern artists portrayed blacks as faithful and trustworthy family servants who were devoted to the South. In contrast, after the war, blacks are suddenly portrayed as picturesque low-life who are often lacking in moral character. These trends are in direct relation to the political and social environment in the South.

Scholars have shown that artists in the South were influenced by Neoclassicism and Romanticism much the same as artists in the North. However, as seen with the changing images of blacks, many of the figure types used in defining Southern life were distinct from those in the North and changed between 1830 and 1890. Peter C. Marzio points out that American types were a "product of a short-lived social environment which illustrates the character of the age."⁵ William D. Washington's painting *Burial of Latane*, 1864, is just one example of types peculiar to the Southern political and emotional climate. The popular painting depicts a typical Southern household during the Civil War, composed of resolute and virtuous women, small children and faithful slaves, as they alone bury and mourn a Confederate officer. "The painting became a symbol of the sacrifice and courage of the men and women who had

⁵Marzio, Peter. "The Not-So-Simple Observation of Daily Life in America." *Of Time and Place: American Figurative Art From the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D. C. : Smithsonian Institution, 1981. p. 185.

experienced the debacle of war. . ."⁶, while further portraying the traditions and significance of hierarchy, history, family, and endurance found in the South. Through choices of subject matter and artistic style, Southern artists revealed the trends in social, political, religious and moral attitudes which shaped the Southern character during the pivotal years of 1830 through 1890.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this thesis is to give a concise view of stylistic, iconographical, and iconological trends in Southern genre--both painting and illustration--between 1830 and 1890 by native Southern artists and by artists who lived in the South at least ten years during that time.

Methodology

The art historical methods of research employed in this study have included stylistic analysis, iconography, and iconology. The exploration of subject matter was carried out by compiling as many genre works as possible per decade. Each decade was then studied and the works were separated by dominant trends in the subject matter. Once the works were separated by subject matter, research was carried out to determine the political and/or social implications associated with and affecting each image. It was found through the research of historical documents and the findings of other scholars that many of the artworks carried political overtones reflecting the dominant thought of the white ruling class during the period. Insight into the significance and interpretation of other artworks was arrived at by the study of dominant personal beliefs and social practices as revealed in the diaries and recollections of those

⁶Poesch, Jessie. "Growth and Development." p. 87.

living during the time period. The 1830s and 1840s were combined due to there being no significant change in subject matter from one decade to the next. The 1870s and 1880s were combined for the same reason.

Southern genre artists and images, as well as Southern history, have been explored in the books, exhibition catalogs, nineteenth- and twentieth-century magazine and newspaper articles and museum registration and accession records listed in the attached bibliography. Several books are first-hand accounts of life in the South from the 1830s through the Reconstruction period.

A visit was made to the Morris Museum of Art in Augusta, Georgia to view the works of John A. Mooney, Thomas Satterwhite Noble, and William Aiken Walker. The work of John Genin, William Aiken Walker and one anonymous genre artist were viewed at the Birmingham Museum of Art in Birmingham, Alabama. Works by William Henry Buck, Richard Clague, Marshall J. Smith, John Genin, and Paul Poincy were viewed at the New Orleans Museum of Art. The Historic New Orleans Collection was visited and corresponded with about Richard Clague and William Aiken Walker. Two works by William Aiken Walker were closely examined at the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts in Florida. Thomas Middleton's *Friends and Amateurs in Musik* was viewed at The Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, South Carolina. Although the Southern art collections of W. E. Groves and Robert P. Coggins were not visited, catalogs of their collections were acquired. Extensive correspondence was carried on with the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Virginia, where several hundred pieces (mostly war illustrations) by Conrad Wise Chapman and numerous pieces by William Ludwell Sheppard are owned. They kindly supplied a copy of the 1969

exhibition catalog titled *William Ludwell Sheppard, A Retrospective Exhibition of His Works* and the registration records for the pieces they own. The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, supplied an original copy of the catalog for the 1946 exhibition called *Nineteenth-Century Virginia Genre*. James Kelly, Assistant Director of the Virginia Historical Society, was helpful in communicating possible sources for Southern genre works. He also revealed that the Virginia Historical Society owned John Elder's *Contentment* and Virginia Bryce's *The Charity Patient*. The Virginia Historical Society was also the source for numerous copies of original magazine and newspaper articles concerning Virginia Bryce, John A. Elder, William D. Washington, and Conrad W. Chapman. Lisa N. Oakley, Collections Manager at the East Tennessee Historical Society was helpful in supplying information about Elizabeth Gillespie Fain. She also supplied possible leads for further information on Southern genre. Carole A. King of the Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery, Alabama, supplied information about *Painting in the Capitol* and also revealed the existence of *The Manegold Tent*. Many other institutions or individuals were written and/or called, as possible sources for Southern genre works, with limited or no success. A couple of works which may have turned out to be by previously undiscovered Southern artists could not be substantiated due to the lack of response to inquiries. Some of the other institutions contacted include the McClung Historical Collection in Knoxville, Tennessee; Namuni Young of Knoxville, Tennessee; Jim Hoobler at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville; the American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc.; the Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, South Carolina; Arlington Historical House in Birmingham, Alabama (also visited); Steve Cotham at the Knox County Public Library System,

Knoxville, Tennessee; Todd L. Ferguson, Historic Preservation Specialist with the State of Arkansas; The First White House of the Confederacy in Montgomery, Alabama (also visited); the Museum of East Tennessee History in Knoxville, Tennessee; the Hermann-Grima Historic House in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Florence Museum of Art, Science and History in Florence, South Carolina; the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Dallas Museum of Art; the Hickory Museum of Art in Hickory, North Carolina; the Gaston County Museum of Art and History in Dallas, North Carolina; the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, Alabama; the Knoxville Museum of Art in Knoxville, Tennessee; the Hunter Museum of Art in Chattanooga, Tennessee; and The Commonwealth Club, Richmond, Virginia.

Review of the Literature

While the subject of Southern genre painting is covered in limited breadth in many publications which often repeat one another, the subject of Southern genre in illustration between 1830 and 1890 is rarely presented anywhere. However, several authors have mentioned Southern artists, such as William Ludwell Sheppard, Conrad Wise Chapman, and Allen C. Redwood whose depictions of Southern life were published in magazines including *Harper's Weekly*.

Estill Pennington's book *Downriver* gives a brief account of the changing images of black life in Louisiana along with a limited look at the accompanying social ideologies. Pennington's *A Southern Collection* is an exhibition catalog of paintings in the Morris Art Museum. Some of the works cataloged include genre scenes from the Civil War and black life. *American Genre Painting in the Victorian Era*, by Jane L. Richards, is an exhibition catalog which includes one

Southern image. Two Southern genre artists are included in Pennington's *Look Away: Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Pennington offers an insightful look at Southern sensibilities and habits, as well as influences on artists. However, there is no specific focus on genre. Elizabeth Johns' *American Genre Painting: The Politics of Everyday Life* is informative in its discussion of the North versus South mentality in the years leading up to the Civil War. It also discusses the stereotypical images of blacks and, briefly, the absence of women in antebellum genre images. In addition, Johns gives documentation which would indicate that Southern plantation owners were patrons of genre art. However, her book deals almost exclusively with Northern artists and their works. *Mirror to the American Past*, by Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., is a survey of American genre painting from 1750 -1900. Four Southern genre painters are mentioned in this book with brief biographies of each. Patricia Hills' *The Painter's America: Rural and Urban Life, 1810 -1910* mentions one Southern genre artist and has a brief discussion of black people in pre-Civil War painting. Her discussion of the social and political response to the Civil War includes no images by Southern artists, but provides insight into certain attitudes and problems of the period. *Art and Artists of the South: The Robert P. Coggins Collection*, by Bruce W. Chambers, is an exhibition catalog which includes seven Southern genre artists with brief biographies of each. Chambers' "The Southern Artist and the Civil War" is a discussion of several artists who concentrated on images of the war in the capacity of draftsmen for the Confederate Army. Jessie Poesch's essay "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830 -1900" is a brief twenty-five pages, but provides an informative history of art in the South. She does not concentrate specifically on genre, but does mention eleven Southern artists who

painted genre scenes, giving brief descriptions of their work and situations.

Capital Image, Painters in Washington, 1800 -1915 gives a brief look at three Southern artists who painted genre images.

In exploring the social and political fabric of the South during this period, one finds that most of the sources already mentioned reveal insight and information to varying degrees. *The Portrayal of the Negro in American Painting* gives much detail about prevalent attitudes, both Northern and Southern, while exploring painting and illustrations from sources such as *Harper's*. Bertram Wyatt-Brown's *The Antebellum South as a "Culture of Courage"* explores Southern culture and character as it pertains to ideas of family, community, and honor, while trying to define a Southern identity. *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, by Bruce D. Dickson, is a study of the Southern "cult of chivalry." Paul Escott's *The Uses of Gallantry* is an insightful discussion on the Southern ideal of honor and chivalry as it pertained to "The Lost Cause." *Within the Plantation Household*, by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, gives an informative social view of black and white women's personal lives as they interacted in Southern households. Her book cites numerous women's private diaries and letters. Clement Eaton's *The Growth of Southern Civilization, 1790 -1860*, gives a comprehensive view of Southern social evolution.

Other sources for background history include: *Harper's Weekly Magazine*; *Traveler's Accounts of the Southern Character: Antebellum and Early Postbellum period* by Kenneth R. Wesson; *The City of Savannah, Georgia*, written in 1888 by I. W. Avery; *New Orleans*, written c. 1886 by Charles Dudley Warner; *Dixie After the War*, written by Myrta Avery, who grew up on a Virginia Plantation; *A Southern Planter, Social Life in the Old South* by Susan Dabney

Smedes, who was born in 1840 and lived through the Civil War and Reconstruction; *Mary Chesnut's Civil War Diary*, edited by C. Vann Woodward, is also an invaluable source of the attitudes of the antebellum South.

None of these publications gives a chronology of the evolution of Southern genre, explains how the drastically changing social and economic climate between the years of 1830 and 1890 affected subject matter, nor shows how that subject matter was expressed through changes of style, figure types, and theme. As genre is the depiction of everyday life, this study of genre images during this period presents a picture of the changing moods, beliefs, morals and traditions of Southern society.

CHAPTER 2

THE 1830s AND 1840s, A GROWING SENSE OF SEPARATION

During the 1830s, the American people were shifting toward an enjoyment and pride in their "local selves" while becoming more responsive to the ordinary and the non-fictional.¹ Politically, the Democrats had found success due to their broad appeal to the common man. Ralph Waldo Emerson, who stressed the importance of the individual, felt he summed up the mood in America during the 1830s and 1840s when he said in an address to the Harvard class of 1837, "The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life are the topics of the time..."² But did these ideas, springing from an industrialized Northern society, include the Southern state of mind with its lingering Colonialism, provincial caste system and overwhelmingly agrarian and paternalistic lifestyle? Studying the images Southerners produced of themselves may help to reveal whether or not they viewed themselves as owning widely believed, pre-Civil War, Southern characteristics. These characteristics have been listed as "conservatism, hierarchy, 'cult' of chivalry, the unmechanized civilization, the folk society, the rural character of the life, and the clan values rather than the commercial values."³

¹Taylor, William R. *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and the National Character*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1963. p.71.

²Hoopes, Donelson F. *American Narrative Painting*. New York: Los Angeles County Museum and Praeger Publishers, 1974. p.18

³Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. "The Antebellum South as a Culture of Courage." *Southern Studies*. 20 (Fall 1981): 213-246. pp. 218-219.

As the South was, at this early date, primarily a rural and agricultural region, cities where artists could make a living were rare. The dearth of railroad lines and decent roads was also an important factor making the job of the itinerant artist laborious. The scarcity of a thriving art market and professional artists did not, however, deter the layman from producing works of art for him- or herself. In the South, as in Europe, at this time, an educated and cultivated person dabbled in the various forms of art, and the visual arts were no exception. Artists such as William Henry Brown, Mary Catherine Noel, John Toole, and S. Barnard were busy recording the ways of life around them. By looking at the works they created, one can begin to pick out the distinctions of Southern life as they were depicted by the people who called the South their home.

During the 1830s and 1840s there were three main themes in genre images of Southern life--social gatherings/entertainment, life at home, and economic development. The largest category was social gatherings/entertainment. These two topics are set together because there is often a fine line between entertainment and a gathering of people for some pragmatic reason. For example, a political election would necessarily bring about a social gathering, but it could also double as a form of entertainment for a rural society that was without frequent social gatherings established exclusively for entertainment. Anyone familiar with farming, the most common way to make a living in the South during this time, knows that Friday and Saturday nights are more likely spent doing farm chores than enjoying a recital. Even hunting with one's friends was an essential which was not done purely for entertainment and sport, as today. The

great distances between plantations and their distances from towns and cities were a great hindrance on white families' social and cultural outings. In the larger Southern cities, however, life was not devoid of culture, refinement and entertainment for entertainment's sake. The artists who depicted these leisures not only revealed popular social activities but popular social attitudes as well.

Social Gatherings / Entertainment

In 1831, when native Charlestonian S. Barnard painted *View Along the East Battery, Charleston* (Plate 1), the era of "King Cotton" was beginning. Lands in the Deep South had recently been opened to cotton production and with this expansion came a renewed belief and justification in the necessity and propriety of slavery. This new wave was in direct contradiction to the popular belief that slavery, after the Compromise of 1820, would disappear. "No one suspected that about a decade later (around 1830) the opening of virgin lands to cotton culture, and the apparently insatiable demands of English and then French mills for raw cotton, would give slavery a new lease of life." ⁴ The debate over slavery was becoming an increasingly volatile situation. Tensions in Congress became so great that a gag rule, forced by the Democrats, prevented all discussion of the issue.⁵ While the North increased industrialization, the South concentrated on agriculture and their right to own slaves and to govern themselves.

S. Barnard's painting of the East Battery, while a rendition of a popular gathering place and promenade for society, might also be read as a political

⁴Ferrell, Robert H. and Richard Natkiel. *Atlas of American History*. New York, NY: Facts on File, Inc., 1987. p.44

⁵Johns, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting. The Politics of Everyday Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. p.106

message meant to perpetuate the idea that blacks and whites were not at all equal. *View Along the East Battery, Charleston, 1831*, an oil on canvas, is in the Mabel Brady Garvan Collection at Yale University Art Gallery. While being essentially a view painting in the tradition of vedute done by Canaletto and other Italian painters of the eighteenth century, the people portrayed are part of an important storytelling agenda. The scene is racially mixed, although segregated, with fashionably dressed whites strolling along the water's edge at the far right, while blacks are shown loitering along the road's edge at the far left. Two white gentlemen, wearing top hats and carrying canes, stand in the center of the road. The road divides the painting into two vertical halves. The men become the focal point, not only due to their careful positioning, but also due to their gestures. The strategic placement and use of these compositional elements expose the didactic nature of the picture.

The men stand in the middle of the road in the middle of some apparent discussion, with the man on the left pointing towards the right. On the boardwalk at far right, a man, attended by his young son, points towards the scene in the street. Oddly, the scene on the right side of the street contains at least eight dogs running about becoming socially acquainted in the uninhibited way that dogs do. In contrast, the left side of the street is dogless and peopled by black men, women and children who sit, talk and visit along the rough edge of the road.⁶ Their arrangement is one of disorder compared to the very orderly and regular spacing of the persons on the right. Opposite the area where most of the dogs

⁶The depiction of blacks loitering along city streets was a common portrayal well into the 1880s and 1890s and are often seen in William A. Walker's work.

congregate, to the left side of the two gentlemen, two black youths, their hats strewn about in the street, are having a fist fight. Standing above and apart from this brawl scene are the fine large homes that Charleston is famous for.

Mr. Barnard's painting is not just a picture of a particularly lovely view, or a generic and vague view of various social activities. It is a not-so-subtle image of segregation, a record of the beliefs and values of the artist, his patrons and ruling society and the disguisement of social unease behind a screen of genteel respectability. Elizabeth Johns reveals, "As tensions over slavery gathered strength in the 1830s, blacks were condemned as having a strong propensity to violence...they were set apart as different." The "stock assessment" from Massachusetts to Georgia was that blacks were "childlike, lazy, and natural (sensual), they thereby distinguished them from the vast hordes of otherwise undistinguished white citizens who--putatively at least--had the innate capacities for equality: mental acumen, economic drive, and self-control."⁷ As distasteful as it may be, the black race is pictured as carefree, frolicking, and bestial as the dogs that are shown opposite them. As for the artist himself, little is known beside the fact that he was considered a youth native to South Carolina and that he did two other views along the harbor at the same time.⁸

On a lighter note, the painting *Skating Scene* (Plate 2) done by John Toole (1815-1860) in 1831 shows a more straightforward depiction of a boisterous group

⁷Johns, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting, The Politics of Everyday Life*. New Haven, New York: Yale University Press, 1991. p.100.

⁸Rutledge, Anna Wells. "Artists in the Life of Charleston." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*. 39 (Philadelphia, 1950): pp. 102+. pp. 153-154.

of men and boys engaged in what appears to be a form of lacrosse on ice. The work is an oil on canvas and is at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Although born in Dublin, Ireland, Toole was taken as a young boy to Charlottesville, Virginia, where he lived with an uncle. According to Robert Bishop, "Toole began painting at the age of seventeen, and soon after his marriage in 1836 he began to rely entirely on commissions to support his growing family."⁹ The artist was also a Mason and used this connection to his advantage by investigating the financial reliability of his patrons through brothers in the Masonic Order.¹⁰ Toole was self-educated as an artist and spent much of his time as an itinerant portraitist. "His art, as did that of many, evolved from angular 'primitiveness' to subtler professionalism."¹¹

With mountains in the background and a typically gray and blustery winter sky, Toole's painting shows a spirited group falling, sliding, swinging, and skating in every direction. A farmhouse sets directly to the right of the playing ice where a woman stands in the doorway, safe from the action, with a baby in her arms. In the distance the rooftops of town can be seen just below the tall spire of a church. A sleigh with a team of horses sits while its occupants enjoy the spectacle. This painting is remarkable for its unpretentious mood which shows all the starkness of the wintry landscape and the wild enthusiasm of the players. Toole's painting is a

⁹Bishop, Robert. *Folk Painters of America*. New York: Greenwich House, Crown Publishers, 1979. p.162.

¹⁰Ibid., p.163.

¹¹Poesch, Jessie J. *The Art of the Old South, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, & the Products of Craftsmen, 1560-1860*. New York: Harrison House, 1989. p.276

wonderful example of the distinctive Southern characteristics of folk society and the rural character of everyday life. An unlikely comparison comes to light between Pieter Breugel's *Winter Landscape with Bird-Trap*, 1565, and Toole's *Skating Scene*. Toole's painting shows an unusual choice of subject matter for the artist and bears a remarkable likeness in composition and subject matter to Breugel's work.¹² One glaring difference, however, is the lack of a sense of decorum in the skaters' behavior as they fly, arms out, every which way. According to Toole's painting, this group of Southern Americans is a spirited and rambunctious bunch.

Depicting a more genteel scene of an outdoor social gathering, *Hunters*, 1836 (Plate 3), was painted by Martha Gillespie Fain when she was only twelve years old. The painting is now in the collection of the East Tennessee Historical Society. Miss Fain was the oldest surviving daughter of wealthy Tennessee farmer, businessman, merchant, justice of the peace and legislator, John Fain. At the center foreground, the painting shows three men cordially gathered around a fallen tree, taking a break from their hunting activities. The landscape contains, in the right background, a large tree with branches and foliage which extend beyond the top and right borders of the painting. In the right middle and foreground are detailed clusters of flowers while the left fore- and middleground contain two disproportionately small trees. The men's tents, against which the rifles are neatly

¹²Other artists used elements resembling Breugel's work during this period including William Sidney Mount's *Farmer Nooning*, 1836, which includes a farmer sprawled on his back asleep very similar to Bruegel's in *The Harvesters*, 1565. William D. Washington's 1859 *Marion's Camp*, also contains a similar figure, though probably taken from Mount's popular work.

stacked, stand in the left background. The flatness of the figures and lack of deep space in the painting give it a distinctly folk quality.

According to Lisa Oakley, collections manager of the East Tennessee Historical Society, *Hunters*, while being naive in appearance, shows the influence of academy arts and knowledge of popular methods of genre painting in the early nineteenth century.¹³ This influence can be seen in the "details in the flowers and the stylized faces of the men, as well as the ability to create a unified painting with disproportionate elements." Ms. Oakley also points out that *Hunters* is similar to a painting of Revolutionary General Francis Marion by G.W. Mark and that "it is likely that Martha based her work either on the painting or on her own conception of the popular story which was passed down through Revolutionary lore."¹⁴

The story of General Francis Marion, also known as the "Swamp Fox," was a popular genre subject for artists. This was due in large part to the best-selling fictionalized biography of Marion written by Parson Weems in 1809 and the engraving distributed by the Apollo Association of New York in 1840 -1841. The biography by Southern novelist William Gilmore Simms in 1844 further endeared the story to a Southern society that held a special reverence for ancestors, a close relationship with the land, and strong ties to their colonial beginnings.¹⁵ The story of Marion, according to biographers, tells of the General and his men offering to share their meager rations of roasted sweet potatoes with a British

¹³ *Newsline, A Quarterly Newsletter of the East Tennessee Historical Society*. Volume 9, number 1 (Spring 1993). p.2.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989. p.8.

officer who had arrived in their camp under a flag of truce. The officer was so astounded at the appalling conditions the men were willing to endure in the name of liberty and freedom that he eventually relinquished his commissions and retired from the military.¹⁶

Dr. Bruce W. Chambers gives insight into the popularity of images of Marion as genre by explaining that genre and history painting could be merged by "underscoring the larger political and social issues at their points of contact with daily life."¹⁷ By society's recognition of the moral virtues portrayed in an otherwise historical piece, the work could take on the appeal of a genre image where the general public could associate their everyday life to issues of "loyalty to family, kindness to strangers and the conscientious pursuit of duty."¹⁸ For Southerners the image had mass appeal; not only was Marion one of their own, but it affirmed their chivalrous self-identity--an identity that included good manners, endurance, and sacrifice for an ideal.

Between 1835 and 1840, Thomas Middleton (1797-1863) created a wash drawing with touches of white titled *Friends and Amateurs in Musik* (Plate 4). Middleton was an amateur portrait and topographical artist whose distinguished Charleston family owned one of the most extensive private collections of paintings found in the South at the time.¹⁹ It was the room in Arthur Middleton's home

¹⁶Poesch, *Art of the Old South*. p.295.

¹⁷Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1984. p.70

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Poesch. *Art of the Old South*. p.300.

where this collection was displayed that was chosen as a suitable location for these men of leisure to gather for socializing and the entertainment of an amateur musical session. One of the paintings in the room is recognizable as the portrait of Thomas Middleton (1753-1797) painted by Benjamin West in London. The painting by West and this by Middleton are today both in the Gibbes Museum in Charleston, South Carolina.

The men's interest in music seems not to have been a passing fancy as, according to the artist, who left a lengthy description on the reverse of the work, this group had been meeting for several summers. The description also relates who the various persons were, who liked alcoholic beverages, and who the group comedian was. All this was done with the respect and warmth of a man who must have truly enjoyed the gatherings of the *Friends and Amateurs in Musik*. Importantly, the artist also revealed his purpose for creating this work. He wrote

The within picture I beg leave to dedicate to posterity. I mean posterity of those whom it was intended to represent. Should it still be preserved after a lapse of many years, it will convey a pleasing idea of the custom of these times, and the habits of their forefathers.
20

The painting, while being somewhat naive in the depiction of perspective, records an accurate view of the clothing, furnishings, and decorations of the period as might be seen in the homes of land-owning upper classes. The South's long-established hierarchy was based on England's landed gentry and titled nobility.²¹ The highest class in the Southern caste system was made up of

²⁰Severens, Martha R. *Selections from the Collection of the Carolina Art Association*. Charleston, South Carolina: The Carolina Art Association (Gibbes Museum of Art, 1977. p.55.

²¹Pennington, *Look Away*. p.6.

landowners. Descending from there, in hierarchical order, were merchant, tenant farmer and slave. On a psychological level, from the painting and its description, it can be gathered that the artist wished to preserve, for future generations, an image of Southern gentlemen as genial, jovial, refined, and educated in the aesthetics of art as well as music.

On the political scene, an unknown artist painted the earliest known Tennessee genre painting titled *JK Polk / Knoxville, Tennessee* (Plate 5). James C. Kelly suggests that the painting is a depiction of James K. Polk's address to Democrats in Knoxville on July 4, 1840.²² In 1840, Polk tried unsuccessfully to win the Democratic vice-presidential nomination as the running mate of Martin Van Buren. Although the artist is unknown, the painting has never left Tennessee and the artist is believed to be the same who painted a south elevation view of the State Capitol, ca. 1855. It is, therefore, presumed that the artist worked and lived in Tennessee between 1840 and 1855.

Polk's political address takes place on a wooded hillside. The focal point is a group of four men who sit and stand on a temporary, raised, wooden platform which stands in the far left quarter of the painting. The remainder of the painting shows the hillside and the crowd which faces the platform. The hill creates an outdoor amphitheater which provides the audience with a convenient view. The crowd is made up of no fewer than one hundred people, the vast majority of whom are white males. One black family stands at the foot of the platform speaking with a white woman, but their significance is unknown. No carriages can be seen and

²²Kelly, James C. "Landscape and Genre Painting in Tennessee." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. 44 (Summer 1985) 1-152. p.25

this would seem to indicate that women, who could not vote anyway, were, for the most part, not present. The only form of transportation seen are horses. There is a wooden tub of drinking water, also in the lower left corner, from which two men take drinks. The men in the crowd sit on logs or the ground, stand, or continue to stay on horseback. Some appear to be gentlemen wearing top hats, while others appear to be farmers or other laborers. All are intently engaged either in listening to the orator or in discussion with each other. The whole crowd appears congenial and the various classes are integrated into a common group.

Another artist who depicted large gatherings of people was William M. G. Samuel (1819-1906), one of the earliest arrivals in San Antonio sometime in the late 1830s. A soldier from Missouri, he served in the Mexican War and later with the Quartermaster's Department of the Confederate States of America. Samuel was credited with being a dead shot and ridding San Antonio of some of its worst belligerents.²³ Today, he is credited with having painted, in a naive and unpretentious style, from a window in the old Bexar County Courthouse, the people and scenes that surrounded him.²⁴ "His paintings have provided important documentary evidence of the integration of the various races, classes and occupations of people who came together to create San Antonio's social and economic environment."²⁵

In *West Side of the Main Plaza, San Antonio, Texas* (Plate 6), 1849, the foreground is dominated by a large expanse of dusty roadway. Here, there is so

²³Bishop. *Folk Painters of America*. p.238.

²⁴Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, The Nineteenth Century*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1967. p.31.

²⁵Bishop. *Folk Painters of America*. p. 238.

much going on at once that it seems probable that the artist added individuals, horses, dogs, carts, etc., over an extended period of time. One finds it difficult to believe that so much chaos could happen in one place at one time. Components creating the disorder include a loose cow being chased by a man on horseback, no fewer than eight dogs, a man with a crutch on a mule, another man repairing the wheel on an ox cart, a stage coach, another team of oxen pulling a cart, a mule pulling a cart, a group of men congregating, and another man in fancy Mexican dress galloping through the center of it all. It is safe to say that a multitude are coming and going in the plaza and it is every man for himself. If there are any women in this medley anywhere, they are far off in the shadows. Racially, however, the scene is not segregated and there is a mingling of Indians, Mexicans and whites.

Samuel's *East Side Plaza at San Antonio* (Plate 7) is quieter and less populated. It is not, however, without an errant horse running through it. This picture, in contrast to the former, shows three women. The women are not white, but Mexican. Two of the women balance large containers on top of their heads while the third woman stands with her husband and child. The pictures are significant for their details. Various styles of dress are shown, as well as various modes of transportation. However, what these people are doing, where they are going to or coming from is mostly a mystery. What is clear, however, is that the public square was no place for women and potentially hazardous for men! The pictures also show that while Texas was a part of the South and eventually one of the Confederate states, it was also a part of the frontier and literally the wild West.

Thus far, women have not appeared to play an active or significant role in the minds of any of the male or female artists. The women who have been depicted play no major part in any of the pictures' compositions. Barnard's ladies merely stroll down the walk on the arm of a man. The two women shown at Polk's address are not even paying attention to the oration. In Middleton's painting there are no women musicians involved with the *Friends and Amateurs in Musik*. It seems that the social activities of women at this time were either non-existent or not of sufficient importance to record. Women did not stand in the middle of the street raising political and moral questions or attend political rallies. They did not participate in public sports and they were not famous war heroes who became icons of all that was good and honorable.

Instead women's lives were spent at home raising children and tending house. This can be seen from Augustus Köllner's 1845 sketch of a plantation family in Virginia. Here, the master of the house is seen departing his family. As a black man with bare feet holds his horse, he bids his wife and two children good-bye. His wife stands well under the porch awning, holding the children's hands as they bid their father farewell. The image of a woman standing in the protective shelter of a doorway with a child is also seen in Toole's skating scene. In William Samuel's paintings, barely visible hints of women stand in distant doorway shadows.

Life at Home

Most genre images of family life that survive from this time period are images of plantation or rural life. Some of the most charming work is that of William Henry Brown (1808-1883). Brown, who was born in Charleston, was a silhouette artist. During the 1840s, while in New Orleans, Brown met a member of

the Vick family, for whom Vicksburg, Mississippi, is named. He was then invited to their plantation where, "to amuse the children and as a gift to the family,"²⁶ he created *Hauling the Whole Week's Picking* (Plate 8) and *Mrs. Sarah Vick on Horseback* (Plate 9) done with silhouette cutouts which were then painted with watercolors. *Hauling the Whole Week's Picking*, of which *Mrs. Sarah Vick on Horseback* is a part, depicted life on the plantation and was, in all, five feet long.

One particular section of the panorama shows the labors of six barefooted black slaves. The focal point is a wagon loaded with baskets of cotton being pulled by a team of oxen that are directed by a man carrying a whip and dressed in patched trousers. Following the wagon is a slave woman carrying a basket on her head and immediately behind her are two small slave children. A male youth behind them labors with apparent difficulty under the weight of a basket. His clothes are terribly tattered, and presenting a bit of comic element, his bottom sticks out through one of the tears. The man who brings up the rear of this procession carries a rake, an ax, and a bucket. The images are amazing for their accuracy of proportion and scale. That Brown could "with wonderful facility and accuracy" cut with ordinary scissors the silhouettes of any form, person or object cannot be doubted.²⁷ The figures of the people show their individual musculature and facial features without the degrading use of caricature that is often found in early depictions of blacks' physiques.

Another section of the five-foot piece is called *Mrs. Sarah Vick on Horseback*. As in the previous panel, this one shows Brown's uncanny ability at

²⁶Poesch. *Art of the Old South*. p. 304.

²⁷*Ibid.*

cutting silhouettes. Sitting confidently on her horse while still pulling on her gloves, Mrs. Vick waits while a black man offers a bucket of feed to her mount. This is a rare glimpse of a woman out of the house and off the porch, but still at home. And, it should be noted, in contrast to the masses, she was part of the privileged land-owning class where riding and hunting were done as much for sport and pleasure as for necessity. Mrs. Vick's proud countenance reflects her position in society, a society where "the figure of the lady, especially the plantation mistress, dominated Southern ideals of womanhood."²⁸ Mrs. Vick's deportment also suggests her importance in the household. Southern society revolved around plantation and farm households where the issues of production, reproduction, labor relations and gender relations were ascribed. And, while this system reinforced the domination of men as head of households and guaranteed the power of men in society, it appointed the plantation mistress as the domestic delegate of the master. Domestic duties were considered the woman's sphere and it was the mistress's duty to care for and manage the household and its servants. The master seldom interfered, but it was common knowledge and proper etiquette that only he could override the mistress's authority in this arena. "Male visitors, even near kin, were subject to the mistress within the household and could properly discipline the servants only through her."²⁹

For the vast majority, hunting and riding were not sport and recreation. They were a method of maintaining life in a rural and agricultural region. Hunting

²⁸Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1988. p.47

²⁹Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p.141

was a common daily occurrence, characteristic of the rural way of life, and vital for maintaining the family larder. Mary Catherine Noel, a student artist from the Salem Female Academy, a school that Miss Fain would also attend, painted *Hunting Scene* (Plate 10) in 1833 or 1834. Her style is more sophisticated than Miss Fain's, appearing more three-dimensional with greater depth of space due to the use of atmospheric perspective and more accurate proportions. Her picture shows a simply dressed man in the right foreground stepping forward, his dog standing quiet at his side, to take aim at several fleeing ducks. The foreground shows a pond and a variety of foliage. In the right background is a stand of trees which visually balance the ducks flying away on the left. It is interesting to note that while today we associate paintings on velvet with images of Elvis Presley, watercolor on velvet was a common medium for women in the early nineteenth century. This piece is unusual because, "although countless theorems were executed on velvet, realistic scenes such as depicted here are far more rare." ³⁰

Economic Development

A third subject area during the 1830s and 1840s is economic development -- commerce and manufacture. The Mississippi River and the river boats that traveled on it were of vital importance to the South. George Caleb Bingham, one of the most important Southern artists of his time, recorded the flatboats and the Southern men who were the conveyers and bearers of Southern culture and commerce.³¹ As Estill Curtis Pennington points out,

³⁰Bishop. *Folk Painters of America*. p.165.

³¹Pennington, Estill C. "The Climate of Taste in the Old South." *The Southern Quarterly*. 25, no.1 (1986): 7-31. p.15

The question of who is Southern and what constitutes a Southern artist can be no more debatable than in the instance of painter George Caleb Bingham. His character, his ambitions, and the life he pursued flow into the very mainstream of Southern thought at the time.³²

Bingham was born in Virginia in 1811, but moved to Missouri with his family at a young age. He was a devout Baptist and primarily self-taught as an artist. Bingham's 1846 oil painting *The Jolly Flatboatmen* (Plate 11) records a distinctive way of life in its depiction of the men who supplied the labor on which the growth of the Southern economy depended. The flatboatmen carried the hemp and tobacco of the upper South and the cotton of the lower South.³³ The men portrayed in this work are obviously enjoying some lax time, a habit for which they were notorious. Classically composed in a pyramidal arrangement, two men sit, at the far right and left edges of the painting, on their giant oars which extend out of the picture. Slightly inside and above them, two musicians sit on barrels while playing their fiddles. Between and above them, a dancer, arms extended up and out, leaps about on a crate. Directly below the dancer, a man lounges slightly off center of where the oar handles meet. Two other men can be seen standing in the background on the boat's bow. Like the images of blacks, at the time, the flatboatmen, portrayed as rural folk characters, are shown as being happy with their lot in life and "will appear time and again as potent symbols of the imagined contentment of the labor class."³⁴

³²Pennington, Estill C. *Look Away: Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989.

³³Pennington. "Climate of Taste in the Old South." *The Southern Quarterly*. p.15

³⁴Pennington. *Look Away*. p.51.

George Cooke (1793-1849) worked as an itinerant artist throughout the Deep South during the 1840s.³⁵ Although *View of Athens from Carr's Hill* (Plate 12) may be termed a topographical scene, the picture is too full of human interest to be ignored as genre. The background of the painting is a sweeping panorama of hill and dale, forest and pasture, factories, public buildings and homes. The foreground and middle ground, however, portray a train which has stopped on the hill overlooking the city. Men and women stand and survey the scene below them, while a man on horseback cuts across the pasture. A black man races toward a carriage and team of shying horses which another man tries desperately to hold back. In the right foreground, near the train and track, lie large bales of cotton, boxes and barrels. These are being lugged about by a single black man.

The laborers and purveyors of commerce in this scene are black men who load and unload the train of its cargo and passengers. Unlike Bingham's image, the black workers do not appear as unique individuals and whether or not they are jolly and content cannot be ascertained. They are, no doubt, laborers at the insistence of their owner and not by their own will. The hint at the supposed comic element of the Black's behavior is not missed, however, and is seen in the gestures and stances of the men who wrestle with restraining scared horses. Meeting the "lowest common denominator in white's assessments of African-Americans," Cooke's painting continues the artistic tradition of making blacks the "clowns in the middle of a group."³⁶

³⁵*Ibid.*, p.42.

³⁶Johns, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting, The Politics of Everyday Life*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1991.

View of Huntsville Spring (Plate 13) is another portrait of a place which is rich with human activity. Painted by William Frye in 1845, it depicts a spring which has been hemmed in to power a water wheel. Frye (1821-1872) was born and educated in Vienna, Austria. He arrived in Louisville, Kentucky, around 1845 and moved to Huntsville, Alabama, in 1847. There, he married Virginia Catherine Hale and remained until his death in 1872.³⁷ The picture, bathed in glowing light, shows the site to be lush with green vegetation but extremely rocky. The rocks have been cut into large squares which have been used to develop a waterway and mill, which occupies the foreground. To the far left, two men in suits stand surveying the scene on a ledge near the water. The man nearest the edge points toward the water wheel and perhaps expounds upon the clever use of nature to do man's work. A black youth with characteristically tattered shirt and ragged pants stands, with no apparent purpose, to their left. Southerners valued fashion "as a sign of the distance that separated superiors from inferiors in a hierarchical society."³⁸ The portrayal of blacks, or whites, in tattered clothing was a widely accepted and understood way for artists to denote the lowly status of a subject. On a lower bank, a white boy stands, in untattered clothes, with his fishing pole extended over the water. To the far right, a man in a buggy drives his horse over a low water crossing. Further on, near a little white house on the bank, a white man and youth stand on a foot bridge. The youth seems to be gesturing toward the black person who sits in the house's doorway. The scene is one of

³⁷Rubin, Cynthia Elyce. *Southern Folk Art*. Birmingham, Alabama: Oxmoor House, 1985. p.64

³⁸Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. p.223

picturesque harmony. No one rushes or runs. Everyone appears to move along as languidly as the water and glowing clouds. The romantic and luminous setting seems to portray an idealized vision of contentment and the harmonious blending of nature with progress--a kind of rural utopia created by men and articulated by the Virginia statesman and plantation owner, Thomas Jefferson .

The artworks thus far cannot be pigeon-holed into any particular style. They range from amateur to naive professional and from sophisticated realism to pastoral idealism. They represent a wide range of individual needs and desires, whether a school girl cultivating her talents, an amateur recording an event, or a professional recording a distinctive way of life. The artworks encountered can, however, reveal some of what life was like during the time. They reaffirm the fact that the South was a patriarchal society dominated by the activities of men. Men are seen creating propaganda espousing popular Southern sentiments which justify the holding of slaves. They participate in sports, hunting, music, politics, business and the development of an agrarian idealism projected by Thomas Jefferson. Where are the women and children, the family life that Emerson speaks of? They appear only as compositional fillers reassuring us that they did exist, but were not deserving subject matter in and of themselves. The pictures do indicate a necessarily close relationship with nature, and men are pictured outdoors again and again as they make the most of an iced-over stream, float down the great Mississippi River, tame a river to produce power, or even attend a political rally. Hierarchy, chivalry, unmechanized civilization, folk society and rural character of life are all evident, but so is an active interest in the intellectual pursuits of politics, music, art, industry and status.

CHAPTER 3

THE 1850s, THE PROSPEROUS YEARS

In the South, the 1850s have generally been referred to as the prosperous years. The forced removal of Native Americans from Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi opened up rich agricultural areas to white settlers from the North and South.¹ Production of cotton soared and was at its height with approximately 4,500,000 bales produced in the year before the onset of the Civil War.² With the admission of California as a free state and the termination of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, Congress tried to pacify and reassure the South with stricter fugitive laws. However, the severe terms of the Fugitive Slave Act, while placating the Southern slave holders, merely fueled the fire of abolitionism in the North. And although in 1850, three-fourths of white Southerners had no connection with slavery and less than five percent of the population of Georgia lived in mansions, the rift between North and South over the issue of slavery continued to escalate.³

Art trends at this time closely followed those of Europe and England. And although "architecture was the queen of the arts, providing the outward form of

¹Poesch, Jessie. *The Art of The Old South: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and the Products of Craftsmen, 1560-1860*. New York, NY: Harrison House, 1989. p.213

²"Cotton and its Kingdom." *Harper's Magazine*. Vol.LXIII, No.377, 1880. p.45

³Poesch, Jessie. *The Art of The Old South*. p.242

the symbols of state, religion, and home,"⁴ a record of a way of life was left in the less permanent media of painting and drawing. In spite of the growing political and moral animosity between the North and South, artists from both regions shared ideas on subject matter and style. However, the South's overwhelmingly rural and agricultural character continued to be a dominant factor shaping the lives and art of Southerners. As the decade began, the increased agricultural prosperity secured the continued interest in depictions of utopian visions of life upon the great plantations. Luminism, with its nearly invisible brushwork, pervading stillness and emphasis on light, was the popular mode for expressing romantic pastoral representations of plantation life. At the same time, more realistic, but still idealized and quaint, slices of Southern life were conveyed in a more painterly style influenced by the French Barbizon School. Both characterizations were careful in their renderings so as to promote the Southern lifestyle and not offend the viewing public. Social propriety, ideals of beauty, and denial necessitated the omission of the negative features found within the South's peculiar institution of black bondage.

In politics, the beginning of the decade saw the passing of the last of the old men who had shaped, and then held together, the nation after the Revolutionary War. No doubt, the loss of men such as Henry Clay, also known as The Great Pacificator, added to the increased instability of North/South relations. As a result of the intensifying unrest, politics played an increasingly important role in the subject matter depicted as artists tried to convey the controversial and complicated ideas and attitudes of a society stressed by

⁴ibid. p.213.

arguments over expansion, states' rights and slavery. The controversial nature of politics often resulted in the satirization of realist subject matter, such as in paintings by George Caleb Bingham, while maintaining a high degree of naturalism. In other instances, artists attempted to encourage introspection and contemplation of political and moral issues facing the South through canvases done in a highly finished naturalism and organized in a restrained classical manner (Robert Weir) or in a more down-to-earth painterly realism that was less static and less grandiose (Francis Blackwell Mayer).

Isolated from the arena of politics, images of women appear to have been slightly more prevalent during this period. Depictions of their lives were still confined within the socially acceptable and strictly limited contexts of wife, mother and servant. The works of David Hunter Strother, Richard Petri and William Browning Cooper reveal something of the private life of women in a variety of artistic styles. The depictions found of women in public bring to light the forms of leisure and entertainment which were considered safe, respectable and appropriate for the entire family. Artists' portrayals of leisure activities also expose the special significance Southerners placed on social connections and standing, while displaying the popular places where these social links were developed and maintained.

With few exceptions, the black person was still conspicuously absent as a primary subject for Southern artists. In contrast, Northern and European artists living outside the Southern social system devoted entire canvases to the lives of slaves. Artists such as George Cruikshank, Hammat Billings, Eyre Crowe, John Rogers, Eastman Johnson, James Clonney and William Sidney Mount painted romantic and/or dramatic images of slave life, whether projected as acceptable

and charming or offensive and deplorable. These artists also used the black person as subject matter to reflect their abolitionist or anti-abolitionist sympathies--a practice avoided by the Southern artist at this time. Another feature alluding to the gravity of the slave issue is that much of the comic element found in the depiction of blacks in previous years had disappeared. Instead, Southern artists such as T. Addison Richards, Charles Giroux, and David Hunter Strother carefully continued to use the black figure as merely a backdrop to Southern life, more a matter of fact than of any consequence. Not until the end of the decade does one find an image portraying blacks with individual personalities and the spirit of free will.

Closing the decade, three paintings stand out as harbingers of change and war. All three bring attention to important catalysts pushing the South toward a collision with the industrialized North. John Antrobus' 1859 painting titled *Plantation Burial* shows an unsentimental and authentic portrayal of slaves as distinct and willful individuals involved in their own personal concerns. The second painting, Francis Blackwell Myer's *Independence, Squire Jack Porter*, shows a prosperous white man lounging in the afternoon shade while seeming oblivious to and untouched by the looming uncertainties of the current day. In the last painting, *Marion's Camp*, 1859, by William D. Washington, the threat of conflict is prepared for through a defensive and renewed public interest in the depiction of a stalwart old Southern hero who represented the cherished Southern attributes of chivalry, rurality and paternalism.

Prosperity and Passing of the Old Order

The 1850s began with a continuation of the Luminist manner similar to that seen in William Frye's c.1845 *View of Huntsville*. The successful years of

the 1850s were recorded in a style typified by T. Addison Richards' (1820-1900) c.1850 painting titled *River Plantation* (Plate 14). Frye's earlier painting shows the Luminist tenets of sharp naturalism transcended by clear atmospheric light, but is naive in its conception when compared with the work of Richards, whose peopled landscapes are imparted with an atmosphere which conveys an element of mood and emotion. This sultry quality and the slow quietude of the people are the personification of Southern attitudes which revered life in an unindustrialized realm. The intense sense of pride of place, which is a common characteristic of the Southerner, was also a crucial point of inspiration throughout the artist's career. In 1842, he and his brother William produced a small book called *Georgia Illustrated* and in an essay on the landscape of the South for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1853, the artist lamented that "so inadequately is its beauty known abroad or appreciated at home."⁵ The artist lived in the South with his parents and brother for approximately ten years. After 1848, although living in New York, he continued to travel South to collaborate with his brother, living in Athens, Georgia, on the *Southern Literary Gazette*, producing both illustrations and articles. The artist also traveled widely in the South to sketch and paint while writing articles and novelettes for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*.⁶

River Plantation, a scene along a quiet reflective river, is tranquil, peaceful and bathed in a luminous light. It is a vision of utopia. Strolling, two by

⁵Ibid. p.284.

⁶Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1984. p.19.

two, black inhabitants trek along the road which follows the river. A black man, sitting bareback on a white horse, with two brown horses standing lazily alongside, gazes off into the distance past the four slaves who travel the road. A small dog scampers in the left foreground near the horses and an empty boat peeks out from under a great moss-covered tree at the middle of the painting. As seen in the images of blacks from the 1830s and 1840s, those shown here are merely of picturesque interest and shown as types rather than as individuals. The very nature of slavery "defied the principle of individualism itself."⁷ The harsh reality of slaves' lives is denied, and instead they are romantically portrayed in an enviable position of leisure. This portrayal reiterates slaveholders' complaints that "at home we see them, the idlest, laziest, fattest, most comfortably contented peasantry that ever encumbered the earth. . ."⁸

Although this work reflects the transcendentalist influences of romanticism and the extolling of the beauties of nature as proposed by Emerson, it is doubtful that the artist was directly influenced by the writer's ideas. More likely, the style of art was suitable to the portrayal of the Southern atmosphere with its abundance of light reflected through heat and humidity. Emerson's abolitionist stance and denial of traditional religion won him a great deal of condemnation in the South.⁹ One Southern woman accused Emerson and other

⁷Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. p. 375.

⁸Ibid. p. 358.

⁹Ibid. p. 357.

Northerners of using anti-slavery as a 'lucrative hobbyhorse' and 'the beast to carry him highest' in the philanthropy trade.¹⁰

If the romantic utopian images of agricultural and rural bliss, such as painted by T. Addison Richards, echo Jeffersonian ideals of an American economy which relied on agriculture and slavery rather than on industry with its believed threat to democracy, then Robert Weir's painting *The Last Communion of Henry Clay* (Plate 15), 1852, could be seen as a herald of the impending end of such ideals and the social fabric that supported them. It was Henry Clay, the moderate American statesman from Virginia, who, in 1820-21 labored to engineer the Missouri Compromise maintaining peace and an equal balance between free and slave states. Shortly before his death he again played a pivotal role in the temporary avoidance of civil war when he helped win acceptance of the Compromise of 1850, which, besides enacting The Fugitive Slave Act, admitted California as a free state but left the issue of slavery up to the legislatures of the newly founded territories of Utah and New Mexico. Often labeled an abolitionist, a title he vehemently denied, Clay was actively involved in the American Colonization Society for the Free People of Color, an organization devoted to the transfer of free blacks to the African colony of Liberia. Clay's interest in the relocation of blacks was not motivated by good will towards slaves. To the contrary, he believed that "free blacks were generally corrupt and that their presence threatened the stability of the slave institution and therefore

¹⁰Ibid. p. 357.

social order" and that "slavery depressed the economy and held down wages" to the detriment of poor whites.¹¹

The painting of "The Great Pacificator" is approached in a crisp naturalistic manner with a classical triangular composition. Weir shows the dying statesman sitting in a day bed, bathed in streaming sunlight, and propped against a large white pillow. The gray-haired old man gazes reverently toward heaven while his hands lay clasped in his lap. Alluding to the temporal nature of life, a watch and flower sit on the windowsill next to the bed. In attendance is an Anglican clergyman, dressed in a white robe and black stole. He stands over the dying man while offering, in a gold chalice, the wine of Holy Communion. On the floor, beneath the clergyman's elbow, kneels a very well-dressed black servant whose head is respectfully bowed in prayer. Estill Curtis Pennington believes that the significance of the servant is as a symbol of "the devoted followers who would subsequently turn out by the thousands to pay their last respects."¹² However, in light of Clay's personal feelings towards blacks, the kneeling man may serve as a contrast in status to the standing white clergyman and seated statesman, thus alluding to the compromises that helped to preserve the status quo of white mastery and superiority over slaves and free blacks in the South.

In addition, the painting represents, by means of figural placement, the accepted hierarchical ordering of society--God, white man, black man, while

¹¹Birchfield, James, Albert Boime, William J. Hennessey. *Thomas Satterwhite Noble 1835-1907*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum, 1988. p.32.

¹²Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Peachtree Publishers, 1989. p. 87.

implying the belief of many Southerners that slavery was an acceptable practice in the eyes of God. Weir was a devout Episcopalian who approached religious painting "as a means of inspiring the faithful with religious zeal."¹³ By giving prominence to the clergyman, God's representative on earth, the painting also expresses a spreading trend in the South during the final years before the Civil War. Christian gentility and "submission to divine will" were gradually becoming the respected mode of conduct replacing the old ethic of honor which looked for and found "salvation in community praise."¹⁴ Only one year after Clay's death in 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe's book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was serialized in the abolitionist press, and a scant two years later violent and deadly disorders between pro- and anti-slavery groups erupted in Kansas.¹⁵ *River Plantation* and *The Last Communion of Henry Clay* signal the beginning of the end for slavery, the quest for agricultural dominance, and the dream of rural utopia.

The World of Men and Politics

In the interim, however, men and the politics of government kept up their machinations at an ever-increasing pace. And during the controversial years before the Civil War images of military men and politics were increasingly common themes in Southern art. Again, as in previous decades, women were not depicted in the sphere of politics. It was accepted, especially so in the South, that men represented the family and household and that the household

¹³ibid. p. 85.

¹⁴Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. "The Antebellum South as a Culture of Courage." *Southern Studies*. 20 (Fall 1981): 213-246. p.230, p.244.

¹⁵Hills, Patricia. *The Painter's America, Rural and Urban Life, 1810-1910*. New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1994.

was under their governance and protection. A Mr. Henry Wise summed up the prevalent attitude when he wrote in a letter to his wife, "My wife is not competent to advise the statesman or the politician--her knowledge, her advice, her ministry is in a kindlier sphere."¹⁶ The household contained the woman's sphere and a woman alone in public was believed to be at risk. Accordingly, women of all social classes were excluded from the arena of politics. Moreover, women seldom had contact with other women of differing social status, a situation not true for men, who crossed class lines to discuss and debate politics.

George Caleb Bingham's 1851/52 painting titled *The County Election* (Plate 16) is a visual record of how class boundaries were overcome by politics--at least for a day. According to Fox-Genovese, "Politics, not to mention the exigencies of self-preservation, required that slaveholders treat nonslaveholders with a modicum of respect, even if privately they did not consider them gentlemen."¹⁷ Politicians, especially, were required to carry the pretense of equality to greater lengths in order to ensure for themselves the votes of the common man. Speaking of his father's reputation, the son of politician Thomas Butler King reported that he was constantly being asked about his father's well-being and that those inquiring were not "the so-called gentlemen of this part of the country--I speak of the second & third class." Apparently Butler King was remembered and loved "for never did you think yourself too good to sit down and talk to a poor man."¹⁸

¹⁶Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p.195.

¹⁷Ibid. p.224.

¹⁸Ibid. p.225.

The County Election contains an extensive array of facial expressions upon a wide range of social types. There are well-dressed drinkers, slovenly drunks, suited businessmen, and those obviously down on their luck. The only black man pictured is shown serving a jolly fat white man a drink. As in the painting of the address of J. K. Polk, all classes of white men intermingle in various displays of debate and conversation. Patricia Hills points out that Bingham had several times written of his "contempt for the radical politics of the Locofocos" and that "the emphasis on unattractive types indicates that the work may be a subtle indictment of the new laws which extended franchise to the propertyless classes."¹⁹ The Locofocos was a faction of the Democratic Party called the Equal Rights party. It has also been noted that the unsavory types depicted are a "mocking contrast" to the Jacksonian banner leaning against the courthouse pillar reading "The Will of the People the Supreme Law."²⁰ Bingham is as important a social historian as he is an artist, recording in a grand and revealing manner what was commonplace during his life time.

Another commonplace and unsavory type was portrayed in the sketches of David Hunter Strother (1816-1888). Strother was born in Martinsburg, Virginia, and although he found little success as an oil painter, he became quite successful as an illustrator of Southern people and landscapes for *Harper's*.²¹

¹⁹Hills, Patricia. *The Painter's America*. p.53.

²⁰Nygren, Edward J and Peter C. Marzio. *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution and Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1981. p. 37.

²¹Poesch, Jessie J. "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South, 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983. p.80.

During the mid-1850s, Strother drew satirical sketches of the Southern militia (Plate 17). They are the nonslaveholding and propertyless whites referred to as armed rabble in one Southern woman's diary.²² Accordingly, in Strother's sketches they appear as hunch-backed, cross-eyed and careless. Strother ultimately joined the Union during the Civil War where he worked as a topographical engineer. For this breach of Southern sympathy, Strother was estranged from family and friends an impasse which eventually faded away with time. Judging by his unsympathetic view of Southern militiamen, perhaps Strother knew early on which side of the conflict he would support.

Politics are represented less opprobriously in Bingham's *Canvassing for a Vote* (Plate 18) of 1852. Depicted are four respectable-looking men of the working and leisure class as they congregate on the sidewalk outside a business establishment believed to be a hotel. A younger man in top hat and tie sits upon a wooden crate as he talks and emphatically uses hand gestures to communicate with three men. An older obese man and a well-fed middle-aged man sit listening with slight smiles that are nearly smirks. These two strike one as financially well-off and content members of the planter class. The third man stands between the first two and exhibits a less well-off appearance, though no less amused. His hat is crumpled, his clothes are frumpier and he lacks a jacket. The fact that he stands as though he may have to rush off at any second and wears an apron indicates that he is probably the proprietor. Behind the proprietor, and barely discernible, a grungy-looking man with his hat pulled low over his forehead stands on the sidewalk. His nose is pressed nearly against

²²Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p.356.

the window pane as he peers through the glass into the hotel. According to Pennington, in contrast to the opinions of past art historians, Bingham's political genre images are not simple genre pictures in the Dutch tradition but, rather, an "illustration of the very complex issues of the day" and a depiction of the "political conscience of the old South."²³ In recent study of ante-bellum politics, especially of the 1850s, it has become apparent that the concept of states' rights and "secessionism was a complex movement involving social intimidations of lesser men against the wealthiest and even generational strains."²⁴ These classifications or types of men are represented here in the contrast between old and young and richer and poorer. They also bring to mind male stereotypes described as "the three shades of our political ethics--old fogysm, conservatism and radicalism."²⁵

Another social commentary with political overtones is found in Francis Blackwell Mayer's (1827-1899) *Leisure and Labor*, 1858, (Plate 19). Mayer's work has been described as visually representing concepts manifested in everyday life rather than a scene of everyday life.²⁶ In other words, the picture is meant to convey a message that the people of the period would have recognized. The setting of *Leisure and Labor* is a blacksmith's shop on an

²³Pennington, Estill Curtis. "The Climate of Taste in the Old South." *The Southern Quarterly*. 25, no.1 (1966): 7-31. p15.

²⁴Wyatt-Brown, Bertram "The Antebellum South as a Culture of Courage." *Southern Studies*. 20 (Fall 1981): 213-246. p.216.

²⁵Birchfield, James, et al. *Thomas Satterwhite Noble, 1835-1907*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum, 1988. p.41.

²⁶Poesch, Jessie P. *The Art of The Old South*. p.298.

Autumn day. Except for the darkened interior of the shop, the shaded scene is dappled by rays of sunshine passing through the trees. Mayer's work shows the influence of the French Barbizon School in its looser brushwork. His composition combines close attention to particular details with an emphasis on the overall effects of unusual lighting. The blacksmith, his shirt sleeves rolled up as he attends the horse's hoof, works just inside the doorway of the darkened shop. Another figure works within the dim interior. To the right, a young man dressed in the riding attire of the landed gentry leans against a wall while waiting patiently in the sun. At his feet his greyhound-type hunting dog watches, with unusual attentiveness, the blacksmith at work. Beside the young gentleman, a plow lies in the dirt with various metal-working tools leaning against it. Clearly, the blacksmith was working here before his young and privileged customer came along. On the barn door, to the right of the young gentleman's head, is a poster which shows Father Time running within the symbol for eternity--a circle created by a snake whose tail is in its mouth. Beneath this is the legend: "Stop Theif [sic]." ²⁷

Meyer's diary indicates his familiarity with William Hogarth's series on the industrious versus the idle apprentice.²⁸ Thus, the visual commentary on time may allude to the careless and unproductive use of time on the part of the leisure class, the wasted potential of the young man, or, more specifically, to the time this young man is wasting for the blacksmith and the farmer whose plow sits

²⁷Nygren, Edward J and Peter C. Marzio. *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution and Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1981. p.38

²⁸Ibid.

idly by. Further, the fact that the horse being tended is still saddled indicates the young man was not obliged to wait, resulting in the immediate interruption of the blacksmith's previous job. In this case, the viewer must weigh the importance of sport against that of agricultural necessity and consider the priority each should be given. The idea of time running out may very well point to the inevitable demise of the slaveholding leisured class. Thus, it could be that this young man's self-indulgent days of leisure and sport, at the expense of others, are numbered.

Far away from the entrenched and traditional lifestyles on the eastern edge of the South, Richard Petri recorded the participants of the political and military presence on the Southern frontier. In 1857, the year of his premature death by drowning, Petri (1824-1857) painted some of the wide variety of characters found at Fort Martin Scott in Texas. Petri and fellow artist Carl Hermann Frederick Lungkwitz first arrived in America from Germany in 1850. Due to the belief that a milder climate would be beneficial to Petri's frail health, the two artists soon made their way to New Braunfels, Texas.²⁹ The artist chose as his home an area of Texas that had strong ties to the rest of the Old South and he recorded the lives and lifestyles of the people there. Fort Martin Scott was important to the defense of settlers in the far west of the South. But, it also served as a trading post which was just as significant to the settlers' well-being and preservation.

²⁹Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, the Nineteenth Century*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967. pp. 74-75.

Petri's painting, in a grand academic style learned while a student at the Akademie de Bildenden Künste in Dresden, is typical of mid-Victorian art which "sought to compose message pictures with inspired composition."³⁰ The men in the right half of *Fort Martin Scott* (Plate 20) focus their attention on a white military man and a Native American woman. The white men depicted show a wide variety of types including trappers, soldiers, farmers and shop keepers, several of whom converse with Native American men who probably worked as scouts. The focal point is the man in military garb who is believed to be Captain George Thomas Howard, the Indian agent for the United States Department of the Interior.³¹ He gazes chivalrously at an Indian woman while appearing to offer her his arm. In front of his feet, a bare-bottomed cherubic Indian baby crawls toward the crowd. One man, sitting on the ground to his left, stares, his mouth hung open in a look of surprise. The exact significance of all these gestures is not known. Perhaps, one is expected to deduce the honorable intent of the American government on behalf of the native population, particularly the women and children. Although two Native American women have been portrayed, there are no white women depicted in the crowd. Still, as elsewhere in the South, white women did not participate in the larger arenas of commerce, politics or everyday public life.

³⁰Kelly, James C. and Estill Curtis Pennington. *The South on Paper: Line, Color, Light*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: R.M. Hicklin, Jr., 1985. p. 9.

³¹Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas*. p. 86.

Women's Sphere

Instead, women's lives were concentrated around home and family. Extant artworks from the period give insight into the lives of women and their diverse lifestyles. David Hunter Strother recorded a young slave woman in an ink wash drawing titled *Negro Girl with white Scart* (Plate 21). She stands tall and proudly, dressed plainly but neatly in a simple frock with a full skirt, tight bodice and apron. She wears a white scarf around her neck and, significantly, shoes, which masters were more times than not derelict in providing.³² Her hair, parted down the middle, is pulled back into a neat bun. The quality of slave clothing varied widely in accordance with the conscience and affluence of the master. But, most slaves' clothes were made of plantation woven homespun made by slave women. Documented accounts reveal that slave women took particular pride in their ability to spin, card, dye, and weave.³³

Slave owners consciously and legally sought to "establish uniformity in slave clothing."³⁴ The young woman pictured here appears in a type of slave uniform that can be found in the artworks of Eyre Crowe and others. Her outfit was a conscious effort on the part of slaveowners to enforce respect for the conventions of hierarchy and to create a "badge of servitude."³⁵ Common notion held that "every distinction should be created between the whites and the

³²Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p.182.

³³*Ibid.* pp.181,182.

³⁴*Ibid.* p.184.

³⁵*Ibid.* p. 307.

Negroes, calculated to make the latter feel the superiority of the former."³⁶ However, as with slaveholding women whose attire was a clear indication of social status, a slave woman's dress could demarcate her place within the plantation hierarchy. This was especially true of slave women who worked in the house. Often to the distress of their mistresses, they had an acute awareness and "appreciation of dress as the badge of class or quality."³⁷ This young woman's proud air seems to suggest her awareness of this social distinction.

The lives of slave women and white women were socially and economically worlds apart, yet the dangers of childbirth treated no one deferentially. In the same vein as the deathbed scene of Henry Clay, William Browning Cooper (1811-1900) painted *Mrs. John Bell Hamilton* (Plate 22) in 1853. Browning Cooper had a successful career in Tennessee while also traveling into Alabama and Mississippi to work. In the painting, Mrs. Hamilton is shown seated in a pose of mourning next to the dead bodies of her daughter and grandchild. Mourning or memorial pictures were common throughout the United States, although they were usually done by folk artists who were friends or family of the deceased. This painting is unusual due both to its being a professional commission and for its obvious depiction of the dead. In many cases custom and decorum dictated that the deceased be pictured as sleeping or dying rather than dead. In any case, it was the wish of Mrs. Hamilton to be painted with the lifeless figures of her only child and newborn grandson.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid. p. 216.

Above the bodies of the reclining woman and infant, whose pale gray complexions indicate their death, an angel hovers in a celestial light affirming that they are being conveyed to God's care. Mrs. Hamilton, her skin tones pink with life, appears lost in deep thought. According to Jessie Poesch, "the angel was drawn from the print of Daniel Huntington's *Mercy's Dream*, one of the icons of the Gothic Revival movement in America."³⁸ The painting is both disturbing and heart-wrenching. It reminds the viewer of the brevity and frailty of life. For women, whose lives were given primary importance and meaning by their role as mothers, the painting vividly communicates the dangerous nature of childbirth at the time. The fact that Southern women embraced the belief that their "natural, personal and social identities converged in the role of mother"³⁹ gives further affirmation of the great sense of loss Mrs. Hamilton must have felt over the deaths of her only child and grandchild.

Southern women's diaries of the period reveal that their faith in God and heaven provided an important antidote to and consolation against loss. According to one woman, "her fiercest hopes concerned her future reunion with all her family in heaven."⁴⁰ Likely, Mrs. Hamilton's sensibilities were in accord with Sarah Gayle's diary entry exclaiming

Mighty God, I should be tempted to rush into thy presence unbidden, to draw to me those who I love, and madly seek all I have lost--all to which I was idolator.⁴¹

³⁸Poesch, Jessie. *The Art of The Old South*. p. 83.

³⁹Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 281.

⁴⁰Ibid. p. 277.

⁴¹Ibid. p. 277.

Diaries also indicate women's resigned acceptance of the dangers of childbirth. Anne Davis wrote that childbirth was 'the most severe trial of nature.' She further wrote, '...but it is my Master's will that in giving birth to my first born he may call me home, but glory to his ever-blessed name.' According to Fox-Genovese, "the recurring dangers deeply informed their religious convictions, which functioned first to prepare them to meet unexpected as well as predictable deaths."⁴² Mothers, such as Susan Davis Hutchinson who wrote about her infant son, revealed their faith in and reliance on God concerning their children. Hutchinson wrote, "the merciful Redeemer will I trust to take him especially under his care either living or dying."⁴³ *Mrs. John Bell Hamilton* is a visual representation of all of these sentiments and one can safely assume that she consoled herself with thoughts such as those expressed by Mary Jeffreys Bethell who wrote, "we are pilgrims, traveling to a better country, to a home in our Father's house in heaven."⁴⁴

Recording the life of neither slave woman nor slaveholding woman, Richard Petri painted a charming farmyard scene of two women milking cows titled *The Pioneer Cowpen* (Plate 23). Unlike slaveholding Southerners, Petri came from a European bourgeois society. The son of a well-to-do shoemaker, he was unaccustomed to the hard work of pioneer life and not affluent enough, and perhaps not inclined, to own slaves. Petri, like other cultured Germans,

⁴²Ibid. p. 277.

⁴³Ibid. p. 278.

⁴⁴Ibid. p.278.

came to America after the failure of the liberal revolution of 1848 in the hopes of finding a peaceful place to pursue art. By 1854 the artist and five family members had built a log house near the Pedernales River near Fredericksburg, Texas. The log cabin is visible in the upper left corner of *The Pioneer Cowpen*. Petri left a rich pictorial record of early life in Texas that is invaluable and unrivaled.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, due to the scarcity of artistic supplies, much of Petri's work was done on fragile materials that are now lost.

The Pioneer Cowpen, however, survives and is an excellent example of the artist's style which is "executed with the same warm domesticity and faithfulness found in old Dutch paintings."⁴⁶ The watercolor gives a glimpse into the everyday life of the non-slaveholding yeoman woman. The yeoman class were small landowners who performed the household work themselves with possibly, but infrequently, the help of one slave. Petri has depicted his two sisters, Teresa and Marie, milking longhorn cows. In the fenced barnyard other cattle lie or stand and numerous chickens dash around. This image of women milking cows is unusual and is an indication of the social class of the Petris. The actual milking of cows was not a customary chore of plantation mistresses, although the providing of milk for the household did fall into their sphere of responsibilities. The socially elite plantation mistress would have been mortified at being pictured doing work which was believed to be beneath her station.

⁴⁵Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, the Nineteenth Century*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1967. p. 83.

⁴⁶Ibid. p. 83

Indeed, the artist's European roots and education allowed him to envision his sisters' work as a worthwhile and picturesque scene of domesticity.

Popular Southern ideas and ideology concerning domesticity were not akin with those of the North and other bourgeois industrialized societies. Typically, Southern women of the slaveowning class could not envision the Northern lifestyle of home which saw a "housemaid's duties elevated to the highest scale of human refinement."⁴⁷ One Southern woman living in the North wrote, 'the nobility and elevating influences of labour are lost in the daily, hourly strife with petty cares and means. . . women sink beneath the double burden of natural and assumed duties. . . society is inevitably lowered.'⁴⁸ Petri's artistic style reflects none of these attitudes and does not reveal the true difficulties of farm life on the Texas frontier. Likely, the Southern slaveowning lady would have found another of Petri's watercolor and pencil drawings titled *Going Visiting* (Plate 24) not any more charming or quaint than *The Pioneer Cowpen*.

Going Visiting, c.1854, is another record of life in the far west fringe of the South. As in *The Pioneer Cowpen*, the artist has given a romantic look to an outing that was probably hot, dusty and difficult. Out for an afternoon of visiting, the artist has pictured himself leading two oxen pulling a rustic cart. In the front seat of the cart are Lungkwitz and Elise (Petri's sister and Lungkwitz's wife). In the back seat are Petri's sisters Marie and Teresa.⁴⁹ Paradoxically, all the ladies are dressed in their Sunday finery and carry ruffled parasols. From Petri's

⁴⁷Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 364.

⁴⁸Ibid. p. 369.

⁴⁹Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas*. p. 83.

picture one can assume that despite difficulties on the frontier, attempts were made to preserve, in a rustic way, a semblance of the civility and fashion of refined society, though a Southern belle might have found the scene pretentious. To the modern viewer, however, the picture is a charming record. It recalls a time when visiting a neighbor constituted a rare moment for leisure and entertainment and could prove to be a major effort in a part of the country that lacked adequate roads and feared attacks from Native Americans. Society from the deep South was not entirely callous to the difficulties of life on the frontier as evidenced by the comment of Thomas Butler King who praised one Texas family for keeping a very comfortable house, 'for Texas.'⁵⁰ In spite of difficult living conditions in Texas and shortage of art supplies, Petri's artistic talent and expertise shine. His compositions are carefully balanced, skillfully composed and rendered with utmost attention to detail that enriches the visual texture while enlivening the scene.

Leisure and Entertainment

During the prosperous years of the 1850s, many Southerners found the time and means for forms of entertainment more elaborate than a visit to a neighbor. White Sulphur Springs in Virginia was a popular vacation spot for the Southern elite. An unknown artist recorded the social scene at one Virginia spring which very likely is that of Sulphur Springs. Sulphur Springs had been a fashionable spa since, at least, the 1830s. The scene, titled simply *Springs in Virginia, #1* (Plate 25) shows one- and two-story cottages nestled into the surrounding trees. The viewer is made to observe the scene through the tall thin

⁵⁰Ibid. p. 207.

trunks of the trees. The cottages, of diminishing size, form a diagonal line from left to right as they reach into the distance. Around the foremost cottage a great deal of activity can be seen taking place. Ladies and men sit in the shade on a wooden bench, children run and play and a cradle or boat swing has been hung between two posts. Two children sit in the swing while a gentleman in a coat pulls the rope which controls the swinging motion. To the left of the swingset a couple are walking into the woods toward a crowd of people who have gathered there. The entire scene is relaxed and conveys an image of genteel leisure.

The Virginia Springs provided a gracious reprieve from the sickly summer months in the humid and hot Southern states of particularly North and South Carolina. However, men, women and children would travel to the Springs from as far away as Texas or Louisiana.⁵¹ The Springs were of major importance in providing suitable surroundings and circumstances for social networking. They provided a gathering place for the elite where married women, who seldom ventured outside of their own households, formed social ties with other women of their class and station. Young women of marrying age, in the hopes of attracting a suitor, showed off their beauty, grace, manners and breeding at the gay balls. And, men forged and cultivated political and business alliances. Ironically, the elite patrons at Sulphur Springs could forego their sense of decorum. Artist John H. B. Latrobe revealed, in a letter to friends describing his stay, that "bribe high and you live high; fail to bribe and you starve; look sharp and eat fast, you forget manners."⁵²

⁵¹Ibid. p. 196.

⁵²Posech, Jessie. *The Art of The Old South*. p. 302

Another avenue for social networking is found in Carl G. von Iwonski's (1830-1922) 1858 painting of an evening of dramatical entertainment called *Theatre at the Old Casino Club, San Antonio, Texas* (Plate 26). The artist came to Texas from Germany in 1845, when he was just fifteen years old. His art training consisted of drawing and painting classes while a youth and lessons from an unidentified teacher in New Braunfels, Texas. Around 1850 Iwonski and his family relocated to San Antonio. While still maintaining close ties with New Braunfels, Iwonski painted a variety of subject matter reflecting his interest in the local scene and everyday incidents.⁵³ *Theatre at the Old Casino Club, San Antonio, Texas* is a record of one of the activities shaping the San Antonio social scene. The painting shows a lively group of performers on the stage which occupies the right third of the picture. The play being performed is not known, however several couples are made to appear as though standing in the street while a policeman points his finger incriminatingly at a gentleman in a top hat. To the far right, in front of the stage and with their backs to the viewer, two little girls, one with pigtails, give the performance their rapt attention.

In the audience, which occupies the left half of the painting, the ladies are seated on benches while men line the side aisles near the walls. The men's presence in the foreground nearly obscures the female audience. Giving further clues to the true motives of the artist's depiction, two prominent male figures occupying the center foreground are chatting rather than watching the play. The attention given to the men's individual features and the detail of their attire suggests that the artist was creating a visual who's who by portraying particular

⁵³Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas*. p. 125.

men of social importance. In contrast, the women appear as an anonymous group with only three profiles being visible. The artist's lack of formal training is evident in the primitive quality of the flat two-dimensional figures, vague depth of space and the flat even lighting which offers no sense of atmosphere. In contrast to Petri's style, the painting is not romantic in any sense of the word. Instead, it is simply an accurate view of a particular episode in the entertainment and social world of San Antonio. The scene is conveyed in the same matter-of-fact current event style that was found in the painting *JK Polk 1840/ Knoxville, Tennessee*. And, like the earlier work of Texas artist William M. G. Samuel, *Thatre at the Old Casino Club, San Antonio, Texas*, is more important for its content than its artistic finesse.

Life Close to the Land and Slave Existence

Returning to the basics of everyday subsistence, one finds that life dependent upon, and therefore close to, the land is a crucial characteristic of existence in the South. Petri recorded intimate aspects of yeoman life in the Texas hill country through a romantic lens. Likewise, Charles Giroux (b.1828), who is known to have been in and around New Orleans from c.1865 to 1885,⁵⁴ recorded a languid and sultry existence on the cotton plantations of Louisiana. Life and labor appear easy in both artists' work. The fact is, in both cases, appearances are deceiving. Petri's *The Pioneer Cowpen* and *Going Visiting* were conveniently in a style that painted a rosy picture which would show his kinsman in Germany how well they were getting along.⁵⁵ Giroux's c.1850-65

⁵⁴Pennington, Estill C. *Downriver, Currents of Style in Louisiana Painting 1800-1950*. Gretna Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Co., 1991. p. 90.

⁵⁵Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas*. p. 83

painting titled *Cotton Plantation* (Plate 27) similarly paints a rosy, unrealistic view of the hardships of black field laborers. His landscapes do, however, reveal the sultry Southern atmosphere that dictated the pace of life. Painted in the highly finished manner of the French academic style, the artist consistently constructed his pictures around a centrally placed road where vanishing perspective could be utilized to establish a focal point and sense of visual unity. His tranquil depictions of flat land beneath a vast and uniquely lit sky recalls the paintings of Martin Johnson Heade. Judging by the pink-tinged clouds on the horizon and the tall shadows on the road the time of day would be around sunrise or probably sunset. The vantage point of the viewer, rather than being on the same plane as the picture, is at a higher altitude as though one were hovering above and outside of the scene. This visual element and the romantic quality of the scene reveal that, in contrast to Petri, Giroux may have been in the landscape but he was not one of its occupants.

The real occupants are the sixteen black men, women and children who work long hot hours picking the cotton. The majority of this work force is shown strolling leisurely away from the viewer down a dirt road which follows the left bank of an irrigation canal. Both the road and the irrigation canal disappear into the center distance. As they trek down the road, women hold the hands of children while men carry cotton picking sacks over their shoulders. One man is seen with a basket upon his head. To the right of the canal, in the cotton field, a figure carries a basket full of cotton while two other laborers, their sacks at their sides, stand near an additional full basket. In the far distance, beyond the cotton

field next to where the road fades from sight, several white buildings are clustered in front of a wooded area. To the left of the road in the middle ground, surrounded by a tall picket fence, a small white house with two front doors and green shutters seems to stand guard over its fenced in compound. Within the compound, a smaller building with smoke exiting its chimney indicates that this is probably the kitchen. Perhaps, this is where the laborers are heading.

Another view of slave life is presented in *Life on the Plantation* (Plate 29). While the artist and the date are unknown, the painting is useful as a contrast to Giroux's impersonal and detached depiction of slave life. *Life on the Plantation* offers a rare and close-up glimpse into the life of slaves after their work was completed and they were amid their own homes and communities. Five slave cottages with front porches, chimneys and two doors each are depicted. All appear to be clean and in good repair. This would seem to indicate the wealth and/or principles of the plantation owner as the size and quality of cabins rested upon the size and wealth of the plantation. Generally, slave cabins during the ante-bellum period consisted of one room of about sixteen by eighteen feet with wood plank floors. Slave labor was used most often to construct cabins but the master determined their continued condition through yearly cleaning, whitewashing and repair.⁵⁶ The activity of the slaves is centered around one large black woman who wears an apron and a head scarf typical of the Carolina low country and Louisiana. She stands behind a table while serving food from a large round black pot which is set in front of her. "On some plantations, one woman would cook for all the slaves" while the last meal of the day was usually

⁵⁶Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. pp. 95, 149.

prepared by individual families.⁵⁷ The scene, reminiscent of a school cafeteria, displays the tendency of masters to prefer communal kitchens where they could more closely control and account for the rations they disbursed. Archaeological evidence suggests that cooking utensils were minimal and usually consisted of one cast-iron pot per cabin. Slave cooks were highly acclaimed for their one-pot meals of meat, vegetables and grain which owed much to the women's special knowledge and use of herbs and spices.⁵⁸ Gathered around the cook, who busily dishes food into a cup, are many children or perhaps, adults of disproportionate size. To the far right, several men sit on the ground eating while carefully surveying the viewer. A black man wearing a black hat and carrying a handled container on his arm strides from the direction of the cottages towards the cook and her pot. One male figure stands at the far left with his hands shoved in his pants pockets. He, too, stares straight out at the viewer. The exact situation taking place is unknown. It appears to be the middle of the day and, because some of the men wear white shirts and dark hats, it may be Sunday. Slaves were normally given Sundays off and would dress their best to attend church.

Artistically the painting is naive when compared with the work of Giroux. The perspective of the cottages appears slightly askew contributing to the painting's primitive quality. However, the trees and the foliage surrounding the quarters appear more sophisticated, being stylized and romantic in conception. Under atmospheric perspective the foliage is highly detailed but idealized in the

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 161.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 160, 151

foreground while being wispy and soft in appearance in the background. The juxtaposition of a foreign academic style with a homespun primitive one is possibly a manifestation of Southern culture which, throughout the ante-bellum period, found it perfectly acceptable to "combine imported high style goods with locally made objects into one setting."⁵⁹ Further adding to the juxtaposition of styles is the realistic, if primitive, portrayal of the slaves. They are depicted in the foreground and seem almost an after thought, appearing to be more on the landscape than within it. The slaves shown here are not romantically conceived anonymous field workers as in Giroux's painting. Instead, they are intimately portrayed individuals who are part of a tangible community with its own particular conditions, situations and practices.

The well-constructed, if rudimentary, slave cabins seen in *Life on the Plantation* were probably not the norm. Most likely, the average slave dwelling was somewhere in between those and the shack pictured by David Hunter Strother in *The Horse Camp in the Dismal Swamp* (Plate 29) of 1856. According to Fox-Genovese, the least comfortable slave dwellings "might compare favorably with the housing of the poorest whites, whose dwellings in truth resembled sheds for animals."⁶⁰ *The Horse Camp in the Dismal Swamp* is a picturesque view of horrible living conditions and was published in a September 1856 article in *Harper's*. Portrayed is the rustic shack used by the men and mules of a lumber company. To the far left, in the distance, a black man drives a

⁵⁹Pennington, Estill. "The Climate of Taste in the Old South." *The Southern Quarterly*. 25, no.1 (1986): 7-31. p. 10.

⁶⁰Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 150.

mule pulling a cart. Seen through the opening made by the roof of the shack, the ground and the lack of any walls, another man can be seen standing behind the small dwelling.

Lumber company "employees were mostly slaves, perhaps even some escaped slaves, skilled in woodcraft, who worked at fixed piecework rates."⁶¹ According to Strother, "the provisions are furnished, the work paid for, and no questions are asked, so that the matter always remains involved in mystery."⁶² The quote of one slave woman reveals the difficulties runaway slaves had in finding subsistence because 'if dey runaway fom dere mawsters, dey didn't have no place to go.' In another account of this situation a slave from Virginia relates the condition of a group of runaways--'They was in a pretty bad way. They didn't have no place to go and they didn't have nothing to eat. They didn't have nobody to own em . They didn't know what to do.'⁶³ In this particular case a white man offered himself as their new owner. Judging from Strother's picture and his comments, some work was available for runaway slaves, though the situation was probably not much more attractive than being owned. Strother's artistic style does not lend itself to objective reportage. His subjective view tends to whitewash the deplorable conditions found in the Dismal Swamp making the situation there more affable to Southern and Northern audiences.

⁶¹Poesch, Jessie. *The Art of The Old South*. p. 304.

⁶²Strother, David Hunter. *The Old South Illustrated, By Porte Crayon*. Cecil D. Eby, editor. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959. p.146.

⁶³Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 321.

The Beginning of the End of The Old South

John Antrobus (1837-1907) was another artist who chose to record aspects of the South's peculiar institution. Creating an intimate and unusual view of the private life of the slave community and its practices Antrobus painted *Plantation Burial (Plate 30)* in 1859. The artist recorded the burial service of a slave which took place on a Louisiana plantation. Compared with the meditative propriety and sense of Victorian decorum found in the death and mourning scene of *Mrs. John Bell Hamilton*, Antrobus' painting is a picture revealing the morbid curiosity of whites for the private practices of blacks. Antrobus first appeared in the South in the early 1850s. He fought for the Confederacy, and after the war married a woman from New Orleans. *Plantation Burial* was one of two paintings he actually completed and was intended to be part of a group of twelve paintings which would represent Southern life and nature. Antrobus' project was in response to the general attitude which was summed up in a New Orleans newspaper article which lamented that "Artists roam the country of the North, turning out pictures of its scenes and scenery by the hundred yearly, but none come to glean the treasures with which the grand and beautiful country of the South and its peculiar life abound."⁶⁴ *Plantation Burial* was Antrobus' answer to the neglect of painted scenes of the South's "peculiar life" which politely referred to the institution of slavery.

According to another writer in the local press, *Plantation Burial* was a faithful representation of a Negro funeral. Antrobus' painting is also another indication of the white world's obsession with death. Whether merely curiosity or

⁶⁴ *The Black Image in American Art*. p. 214.

morbid fascination, Negro funerals held the public's attention well into the end of the century. In an 1884 article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, four entire columns were given to the description of such a funeral of 1864. The article's first paragraph is nearly an exact description of Antrobus' painting. It relates

The writer was standing in a Negro burying-ground...a most beautiful situation. The summit of a high hill, which, through a vista of flowering rhododendron and dogwood, overlooked the river; a forest of huge oaks garlanded with gray moss; a carpet of vivid green dotted with wild violets. Shut in from all the world of sight and sound by the thicket of young trees that crept up its sides, the hill would have been lonely but for the luxuriant growth of untrammelled nature. No enclosure marked it as a cemetery... In the center of the plat an ugly red wound had been cut in the green carpet.⁶⁵

In Antrobus' painting, just barely visible within the picture's left border, the small figure of the white overseer leans against a tree stump. To the far right, beyond a large and rough old cypress tree, the master and mistress are also barely discernible. The white people, like the white people's city seen sitting on the distant bank of the Mississippi river, keep a respectable and perhaps safe distance from the burial proceedings. While "many slaveholders were committed to converting their slaves to Christianity,"⁶⁶ they also feared the consequences of slaves' religious gatherings. The slaves' faith in God gave them the strength to withstand abuses and bondage and became an empowering source for resistance. "Christian slaves drew upon their own faith to reject the messages of

⁶⁵Cabell, I. C. "A Plantation Funeral." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. December 1885-May 1886, Volume 72.

⁶⁶Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p.328.

docility and blind obedience and to project a future world in which the last would indeed be first."⁶⁷ The Negro Act of 1740 and other restrictions tried to prohibit slaves from assembly in the hopes of preventing secret black churches and religious meetings which slaveowners feared would become the backdrop of rebellions and revolts.⁶⁸

Under the distanced supervision of the overseer, the large grouping portrayed in *Plantation Burial* is composed of old and young slave men, women and children. Their faces are a study in various forms of expression and unlike earlier images of slaves, these people represent an individuality and sense of independence that many whites, often in minority compared with the slave population, found frightening. Forming a classical triangular grouping which creates the main focal point, a group of black mourners has gathered around the black preacher who stands beside the coffin with his arms emphatically raised toward heaven. The group of mourners is made up of primarily shabbily dressed field hands and a couple of fashionably dressed house servants. The variety of attitudes shown run the gamut from crying and kneeling in prayer to semi-interested observation to downright boredom and sleeping. One prominent and intriguing figure is the large black woman, standing in the right foreground. Wearing a white turban and leaning on a long walking stick, she appears to be glaring in the direction of the white overseer. The overall impression given by the characters portrayed in the painting is that a funeral was not only an

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid. p. 331

opportunity to mourn the loss of a loved one but also a rare moment of free time to be taken advantage of by the plantation's entire slave community.

The amount of free time allowed slaves was at the discretion of their owners. The free time of slaveowners was due to the burden placed upon their slaves. The lifestyle and living conditions of the white landowner create a disturbing contrast to the reality of the lifestyle and living conditions of the slaves discussed thus far. In a style as romantic as Giroux's and as steeped in the continued tradition of disguising social unease behind a facade of genteel respectability is the 1858 painting by Francis Blackwell Mayer titled *Independence, Squire Jack Porter* (Plate 31). The painting, intimately more revealing than Giroux's generic and picturesque depictions of people, shows Squire Jack sitting comfortably on the front porch of his stone house, his feet propped on the railing, a long-stemmed pipe held close to his mouth. Characterized by warm color and soft brushwork, the artist's handling of light and color, especially in the dappled sunlight of the distant landscape, show a continued interest in Luminism with its concentration on atmospheric light. The dominant use of earth tones and the man's neutral expression produces an ambience of contemplation and melancholy. However, in spite of his somber appearance, and with the assistance of the picture's title, one gets the distinct impression that this is the picture of a man who finds life on the land full of gratification and contentment.

The man shown is Captain John M. Porter, a veteran of the War of 1812 and the owner of a small farm in western Maryland. As in Mayer's other works that "pointed a moral or told a story," this painting is a reflection of an attitude

and a way of life more than it is a portrait.⁶⁹ It is a picture of a successful and introspective man who lives modestly but well. Squire Jack's physical characteristics and clothing have been linked with those of the young man in Mayer's *Leisure and Labor*, also of 1858, and might indicate that his image is another variation of that theme.⁷⁰ Maryland was a slaveholding state and Captain Porter does not represent the image of a yeoman farmer, so it is presumable that he relied on slave labor. As in *Leisure and Labor*, one man's leisure is dependent upon another man's labor. During 1858, the fires of the slavery issue were being further flamed by the Lincoln and Douglas debates and the impending emancipation and independence of the slaves would undoubtedly have an effect on Captain Porter's lifestyle. As the old but able veteran sits gazing out from the comfort of his porch, he is witnessing and possibly contemplating the end of an era and the inevitability of great strife within the nation.

Nostalgia and romance were common ingredients in Southern art. Love of the land, affection for the colonial past, and emphasis on heroic individual are just a few of the elements of Southern romantic and nostalgic ideals. According to Estill Pennington, the "heroic individual is a cornerstone of Southern culture."⁷¹ Perhaps, this explains the renewed popularity in the theme of

⁶⁹Poesch, Jessie. "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South, 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983. p.82.

⁷⁰Nygren, Edward J. and Peter C. Marzio. *Of Time and Place: American Figurative Art From the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1981. p. 38

⁷¹Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. p. 11

General Marion in the swamp. The increasingly rabid political environment of the late 1850s with the South's insistent demand for states' rights would have created the perfect atmosphere for the popularity of this Revolutionary War era theme. In 1859, Virginia-born artist William D. Washington (1833-1870) painted his version titled *Marion's Camp* (Plate 32). Washington studied in Düsseldorf at the academy and later with German-American artist Emanuel Leutze. After studying abroad, the artist returned to Washington, D.C. With the onset of the Civil War he returned to Virginia where he served on the staff of Confederate Major General John Floyd. Due to frail health he spent the majority of the war in Richmond. Later the artist worked as a teacher at the Military Institute in Lexington where William W. Corcoran had established the Chair of Fine Arts expressly for him.⁷²

In *Marion's Camp*, Washington shows the general and his men in a small clearing gathered around the flickering light of a camp fire. Beyond the reaches of the fire light, a dark and ominous looking forest, complete with hanging gray moss, surrounds the group of figures. Two men on horseback, appearing from the depths of the forest's shadows, approach the small band of resting men. The camp could be that of any type of men. There is no specific indication that this is a historical image and the men could just as easily be trappers. In fact, there are no specific clues indicating that they are soldiers. The group is made up of a variety of types. The men are white, black, old, young, bare footed, wearing boots or moccasins, wearing rawhide or white shirt and vest. They sit,

⁷²Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. "William D. Washington (1833-1870), Artist of the South." (Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, 1968) abstract pp. 2-3.

stand and sleep. Those who sit closest around the fire appear to be intently listening to the tale of a barefooted man whose back is to the viewer. The only black man portrayed, shown in the typical capacity of servant, tends the fire.

Plantation Burial, Independence, Squire Jack Porter and Marion's Camp, while still representing aspects of the rural characteristics of Southern life, build up to the beginning of the Civil War. In *Independence, Squire Jack Porter* we recognize the established status quo of white man as master of his land and his life. In John Antrobus's *Plantation Burial* of 1859 we detect the growing attempts of black slaves to maintain a sense of community and unity among themselves despite their dehumanizing bondage. And, in William D. Washington's *Marion's Camp*, 1859, we find that the white South's attempt to maintain a sense of pride in and continuity with the past reveals their growing anxiety, continued belief in liberty and rule by the people and their determination to carry out those values under dismal circumstances. The status quo, the oppressed people necessary to continue the status quo, and the past history and determination to maintain that status quo sum up the beginning of the end of the Old South.

CHAPTER 4

THE 1860s, INTO WAR

Life in the South during the 1860s was shaped by the situations arising out of the Civil War and its aftermath. The war began, officially, on April 12, 1861, when confederates in Charleston fired on the Federal garrison holed up in Fort Sumter. Secession had begun, however, when South Carolina removed itself from the Union on December 20, 1860. One by one, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, and Tennessee followed. The last state to secede was North Carolina, on May 20, 1861. Historians argue about the various causes of the war--difference in economic systems, disagreement on constitutional law, failure of leadership and, most importantly, slavery. Due to the continued high interest in the strategies and battles that caused so much destruction, illustrations of the Civil War abound in the hundreds or even thousands of books written on the subject. The illustrations contained in this study are included as a means of revealing aspects of the everyday existence of soldiers and civilians. All the pictures included, whether drawing or painting, by amateur or professional, are meant to give us insight into the minds and lives of people who lived within or at the edge of the war's boundaries.

The artworks presented here are organized in line with the progression of events occurring during the 1860s. The first work portraying a prosperous and verdant image of a pre-war Southern town is a quick view of the calm before the

storm. What follows is a drastic departure from the idyllic images of earlier decades. Undoubtedly, the war meant an interruption of the artist's career. Patrons of the arts became caught up in the war movement, artists either left for Europe or joined the ranks of the enlisted, and in general, money was diverted for battle and basic needs. Several of the artists joining the Confederacy continued to create works in a more official capacity by recording various military installations. However, they also recorded aspects of the everyday life of the enlisted man. Soldier life can be broken down into two main categories--camp life and skirmishes. Civilians did not merely disappear with the onset of war and the invasion of Union troops. And artists such as William D. Washington and Adalbert Volck created works which give a glimpse of the activities engaged in by the average person for the support of the Confederate cause. Works also document and ennoble the trials and tribulations endured by those who remained at home. During the war, images of blacks by Southern artists appear few and are confined to depictions of military laborers or faithful servants. After the war, artists dealt with the aftermath in very individual and often personal ways. William Aiken Walker dealt with loss and destruction, while Thomas Satterwhite Noble concentrated on paintings that revealed the evils associated with slavery, and Lucien Whiting Powell seemed to glorify the lives of blacks under slavery. The differences found between artists' perspectives on and approaches to the social and political issues of the day are as varied as the opinions of the general population during the period and thus are important as a visual representation of the complexities which faced Southerners during and after the Civil War.

The Calm Before the Storm

In the year prior to the first bombardment, an unknown artist created a naive and charming painting of Montgomery, Alabama, called *View of Montgomery* (Plate 33). The artist took pains to show a cheery view with a great deal of detail including particular homes, churches, roads, paths, fences, sheds, livestock and people. Of all the details, however, the activities of the people generate the most interest. With the city and the capitol building as the backdrop, blacks and whites are shown in a wide variety of activities. Ironically, the view strikes one as an 1860 version of the garden of Eden before the fall of man. The sky is blue with wispy white clouds and is reflected in a pond which is surrounded by lush green foliage. Animals are abundant. People walk, run, ride, work and play. To the far right, a wagonload of cotton makes its way into town while to the far left, hunters and their dog trek home across a pasture. Next to the pond, four boys wearing straw hats fly bright yellow kites. Beyond the boys, a large crowd is gathered in the yard of a modest white house. In the foreground, disproportionately large chickens lazily peck the ground. The 49 by 73 inch picture is the proud record of a community. It is an idealized image of well-being in the city that became the first capitol of the Confederacy.

In the Confederate Army

Camp Life

Far away from *View of Montgomery's* idealistic interpretation of life, but not far away in time or place, men of the Southern states went to war. The artist Conrad Wise Chapman created a rich pictorial history of the lives of soldiers including renderings of duties, everyday occurrences, and living conditions. Chapman, the son of Alexandria, Virginia, artist John Gadsby Chapman was

born in Washington, D. C., in 1842. Even as a young man of only nineteen years his work was characterized by "a freshness of color, an excellent utilization of the effects of light, a deftness of brushstroke, and a skillfull use of minute detail."¹ And although much of his youth was spent in Rome, he wasted no time in returning to the United States and enlisting in the Confederate Army at the outbreak of the war. Supposedly his posthaste removal to the United States was brought on, in part, by his father's remark "that if he were not both old and deaf he would return to fight for his native state."² In any case, the younger Chapman sold some of his paintings, traveled to Paris, and from there made his way to Company D of the 3rd Regiment in the Kentucky Infantry.

Although many of his best known works were created of forts and batteries while stationed in Charleston during 1863 and 1864, Chapman, called "Old Rome"³ by his fellow soldiers, also created small sketches, watercolors and oil paintings of everyday life for his comrades.⁴ The artist's painting titled *Camp Near Corinth, Mississippi* (Plate 34), 1862, is a sensitive study of light and color. The effects of light, as it pours through thick trees, are explored as it lands broken up on white tents. Small specks of light reflect off men who seek the shelter of shade and a quiet moment of rest. In a chromolithograph after another

¹Simms, L. Moody, Jr. "Conrad Wise Chapman." *Virginia Cavalcade*. 20 (1971) 13-28. p16

²*Conrad Wise Chapman 1842-1910, An Exhibition of His Works in the Valentine Museum*. Richmond Virginia: Valentine Museum, 1962.

³ibid.

⁴Poesch, Jessie. "Growth and Development of the South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South: 1564-1980*. Richmond Virginia: The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983. p.86.

of Chapman's paintings from Corinth, soldiers are seen in an array of activities. Except for officers, the men are dressed in all manner of rural civilian dress. Many are barefooted with their pants rolled up to their knees. A group in the right foreground busily roasts potatoes and possibly a chicken while a group behind them, sheltered beneath an arbor, take a crowded meal around a small table. Men sit, stand, smoke and play cards. In the background, black servants, including a woman, can be seen discussing some matter. The casual comfort portrayed belies the fact that "as many died here in the seven weeks after Shiloh from disease as died in the battle of Shiloh itself."⁵ In May 1863, after the artist had recovered from a severe head wound caused by the misfire of his own gun, he was transferred to a company of Virginia Volunteers under the command of his father's old friend, Confederate Brigadier General Henry A. Wise. It was during his enlistment there that Chapman painted *Camp, 59th Virginia Infantry, Diascund Bridge* (Plate 35), dated May 1863. The oil sketch shows Rebel troops leaving an encampment looking much the same as that at Corinth. A regiment of soldiers marches off into the distance, their guns laid over their shoulders. Next to a shack in the midground, a man struggles to hold a horse, while in the right foreground two men drink water from a pond.

Chapman's interest, however, was not limited to soldiers and officers as is evident in his March 21, 1863 oil called "*Old Shine*"- *Negro Fiddler* (Plate 36). The painting shows a black man seated upon a chair while playing his fiddle. Another painting titled *At Chaffin's Farm, Virginia* (Plate 37) and dated August 5,

⁵Ketchum, Richard, editor. *The American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War*. New York: American Heritage Publishing, Co., 1960. p.576.

1863, shows a black slave tending a Rebel officer's horse. Although the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued on January 1, 1863, slaves within Confederate lines were not much affected. As well, slaves in the border states loyal to the Union, Tennessee, several counties of Virginia, and in the majority of the sugar-growing region of Louisiana owned by unionists were exempt from Lincoln's proclamation.⁶ As seen in Chapman's paintings, most blacks still remained property. *Battery Marshall, Sullivan's Island, 1863* (Plate 38), also shows specific evidence of the Confederacy's use of slaves.⁷ Within a skillful composition, white soldiers drill near low elevation wood barracks in the right background while black slaves are seen in the left foreground at a high elevation filling and hauling sandbags and standing around leaning on their shovels. While officers of the Confederate army often brought their own slave or slaves with them, fugitive slaves, to the dismay of their owners, were also employed by the army to perform menial tasks.⁸

Skirmishes

The aforementioned works by Chapman show military life behind the scenes of battle. Several Southern artists recorded the more dramatic and dangerous existence of soldiers at the battle front. Two amateur artists were

⁶Berlin, Ira, editor, et al. *Free at Last*. New York: The New Press, 1992. p.95.

⁷It should be noted that the Union army also used fugitives, freedpeople, and contrabands to perform work and that often they "toiled harder and longer under federal officers and soldiers than they had under slave owner and overseers-and received inferior food, clothing and shelter to boot." Berlin, Ira, et al. *Free at Last*. New York: The New Press, 1992. p.182.

⁸Berlin, Ira, et al. *Free at Last*. p.43.

John A. Mooney and Hunt Wilson. Mooney's birthplace is believed to have been either Ireland or Buffalo, New York. Born in 1843 or 1844, he traveled South at the onset of the war and joined the 10th Regiment of the Georgia Infantry. He stayed with his regiment in Virginia for the duration of the war and was at Appomattox with Lee's forces.⁹ After the war he moved to Savannah and began his career as an artist. In the late 1860s, Mooney painted from memory the surprise attack by Union troops upon his squadron. While bathing in the Potomac River on the Virginia side of Harper's Ferry, Mooney's squadron was fired upon with shells and bullets. *Surprise Attack Near Harper's Ferry, 1863* (Plate 39) shows men, including the artist, in various states of undress as they run, stumble and fall from the water in an effort to seek cover. The painting "is almost unique in its eyewitness account of the trials of Confederate army life as portrayed by a participant in the action."¹⁰ It is also unusual for its numerous near naked male figural studies in a finished piece of work--certainly an uncommon practice at the time. The artist must have spent a great deal of time and effort to show the human figure in such a variety of foreshortened positions. The painting seems a harbinger for the 1883 painting of nude male swimmers by Thomas Eakins called *The Swimming Hole*. And, although Mooney certainly lacks the artistic genius of Eakins, it is a bold portrayal of the vulnerability of human flesh.

⁹Chambers, Bruce W. "The Southern Artist and the Civil War." *The Southern Quarterly*. 24 (Fall-Winter 1985) 71-94. p.73.

¹⁰Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1984. p.35.

The skirmishes of the war left deep impressions upon the people who experienced its savagery. Perhaps this is why so many ordinary soldiers from both the North and South recorded their experiences in the form of pictures. One such soldier was Confederate artilleryman Hunt Wilson. In March of 1862 he depicted the battle his regiment fought at Elk Horn tavern at Pea Ridge, Arkansas. *Elk Horn Tavern at Pea Ridge* (Plate 40) has an elevated and somewhat removed point of view presenting one with a panoramic view of the battle. Wilson seems to have had some form of artistic training as his picture shows knowledge of atmospheric and linear perspective and the ability to create the illusion of deep space. The two-story white tavern, complete with elk horns on its roof, is the focal point and the battle radiates out from there while raging all around. Bombs explode, dust flies, men fall, shoot and march. Hunt Wilson chose to depict the heat of battle. Whether done from memory in the days after the conflict or done on site, one feels the immediacy of the situation. And yet, the viewer has the distinct impression of being somewhat removed, as though viewing from a distance of uncertain safety--an ambiguity given by the exploding bomb in the foreground which reaches out of the picture's boundaries. The shell exploding within the ranks of the artillerymen is indicative of the ultimate defeat the confederates faced at Pea Ridge.

Many professional artists worked for the Confederate government in the capacity of draughtsmen. After the war, artists such as Conrad Wise Chapman and William Aiken Walker went back to the fine art of painting. Other artists launched highly successful careers as professional illustrators for magazines such as *Harper's*. Allen C. Redwood (1844-1922), a native of Lancaster County, Virginia, and a Confederate soldier, was one of the South's most prominent

illustrators. Undoubtedly trained in fine art, he painted the watercolor titled *Confederate Battery in Action* (Plate 41) in 1862. At this time the whereabouts of this work is unknown. In 1947 it was in a private collection in Baltimore, Maryland--a city that had clear Southern sympathies during the war.¹¹ Lacking the explosive and expressive quality of Hunt Wilson's depiction of battle, the painting shows a line of artillery men as they load and fire their cannons. Creating a very stable composition, a row of men and cannons creates a diagonal line beginning in the right foreground and gradually disappearing into the left background. Using atmospheric perspective, the artist further created the illusion of distance and space while also giving prominence to the main figural grouping in the foreground. With the aid of the large round wheels of the cannon, this grouping of five men creates a frieze-like focal point full of visual tension and, along with the dramatic inclusion of the body of a fallen soldier, the distinct air of chivalry.

The impact of the pictorial expression of chivalry upon the hearts and minds of the public was not lost on professional artists, many of whom had trained with Emanuel Leutze, the painter of the famous *Washington Crossing the Delaware* of 1851. The popularity of romantic novels in the South between 1820 and 1860 had encouraged a public consciousness full of the ideals of the cavalier. Early in the 1820s and 1830s "Southern writers began to identify slaveholders with courtly cavaliers as a taste for historical romance aided the process of regional self-definition."¹² This self-definition was based more on the

¹¹*An Exhibition of Nineteenth Century Virginia Genre*. Richmond, Virginia: The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1947. pp. 12, 19. Illus. 51.

¹²Escott, Paul D. "The Uses of Gallantry." *The Virginia Magazine*

romantic interpretation of the South's aristocratic colonial development which was believed to be "distinct from and superior to the Puritanism of New England."¹³ The South clung to its perceived history of chivalry and superiority, symbolically raising its fighting men into the ranks of the cavalier who possessed such opposing attributes as "a fierce fighter with tender feelings, a warrior who always carried his mother's Bible, love of combat with knightly delight in mirth, music, and the company of charming women."¹⁴

The artist William D. Washington took the soldier out of the battlefield and elevated him to the special status of heroic cavalier. Meant to appeal to the public's keen sense of chivalry, *Jackson Entering Winchester* (Plate 42), 1863, shows the victorious General Stonewall Jackson riding into the recaptured town on his prancing steed. In the center of the composition he sits resolutely astride his horse, his hat tipped to the ladies and men who enthusiastically fill the building-lined street to meet him. It is believed that Washington's inspiration for the painting came from an actual event, one which Judith Mcguire recorded in her diary:

. . . Winchester ladies welcome our troops with gladness. . . they rush out and join the band, singing "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and sing "Dixie" as the troops enter the streets. Was it strange that even the great and glorious, though grave and thoughtful, Jackson should...have been excited until he waved his cap with tears of enthusiasm.¹⁵

of History and Biography. 103, 1 (January 1995) 47-72. p.56.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid. p. 57, 58.

¹⁵Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. "William D. Washington, Artist of the Old

The painting is an important record of the war-time populace; both civilian and soldier. In the quiet light of evening, the artist portrayed more than twenty-eight figures including infantrymen and cavalry soldiers, slaves and the elderly, women and children and the wounded. All the figures in the composition face Jackson and regard him as their redeemer. The scene is highly dramatic and contrived in the grand manner of history painting. However, it is also an important and rare document of a city scene showing the make up and condition of urban civilians during the war.

The painting is remarkable for its rare depiction and acknowledgement of the heroic capabilities of the civilian populace proving that the ideals of chivalry were not limited to the realm of military men. Other than the soldiers marching behind Jackson, the populace of Winchester is composed of women, children, slaves and old men. One woman of the period reminds us that, "all men in the land who were men indeed were off in the army; the whole country seemed forsaken, except by the old men and the boys and the women and children."¹⁶ One old gray-haired man on the far right might possibly belong to a Confederate company, as every half-way able man or boy who was left at home tried to defend the home front when the Union got near. Thomas Dabney, Jr., recollected, during a seige on Macon, Georgia, that "Father's company was Company A, Findley's battalion, but it generally went by the name of the 'Silver

South." (Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1968) p. 84.

¹⁶Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter, Social Life in the Old South*. New York: James Pott and Company, 1914. p. 200.

Grays', from the color of the hair of the members."¹⁷ Thomas Dabney Sr. was in his late sixties.

The many white women in the painting appear in simple dresses with full skirts and aprons. It should also be noted that they are bareheaded, an unusual breach of etiquette for women during this period. The absence of hats is an indication of the dire circumstances. One woman remarks several times, as if apologizing, that ladies of the house ran from Union troops "so hurriedly that one was bareheaded." Later in the journey she again makes a point of stating that "two of us were bareheaded as we travelled. . ." It is interesting to contemplate, as well, whether or not the full skirts, worn over hoops, are laden down by a few of the family valuables. Besides burying as many possessions as possible, frightened Southern women reported that "large hoops were in fashion at this time, and we tied our silver in bags and put these under our hoops." One woman reported that we "sewed up our watches and such valuables as would be spoiled by dampness in the form of a bustle and gave it to our trusted Aunt Abby to wear."¹⁸ For the most part the women were on their own to save what they could from Union soldiers and especially the camp followers who "looked like the dregs of some city" without any honor and merely pillagers and cowards.¹⁹ With the help of servants, whose belongings were also stolen, and children, the women of the South were heroic and ingenious and could cause the pillagers to

¹⁷Ibid. p. 217.

¹⁸Ibid. p. 201.

¹⁹Ibid. p. 205.

claim in exasperation, "there's a heap o' pretty tricks in this house, not to be any silver."²⁰

Washington made a point of depicting two women nursing the injured. In her memoirs, one young woman recalled that she, her sister and their father, one of the 'Silver Grays', "made lint and tore up linen into long strips...and helped to minister to the suffering men, binding up wounds, giving them hot tea, milk, and other refreshment."²¹ Paintings such as Washington's honored not only the gallant general on horseback but also the dedicated mothers and wives of the South. After the war Thomas Dabny, Sr. wrote to his daughter Emmy, "Of all the principles developed by the late war, I think the capability of our Southern women to take care of themselves by no means the least important."²² The women in Washington's painting do not represent the helpless belles of earlier decades.

Appropriately closing out war-time images associated with battles is *Furling the Stars and Bars* (Plate 43) by Richard Norris Brooke. Brooke (1847-1920) was born in Warrenton, Virginia. He is discussed more fully in the next chapter. Believed to be a very early work by the artist, *Furling the Stars and Bars* portrays defeated Confederate soldiers as they roll up the flag of the Confederacy. The injured and war-torn group of men, ages ranging from boys to gray-haired old men, are solemnly gathered around the flag while some of them openly weep. In contrast to the artist's later works, the composition is

²⁰Ibid. p.206, 209.

²¹Ibid. p. 219.

²²Ibid. p. 275.

uncomplicated. He has placed the figures in the foreground creating a shallow frieze-like arrangement which follows the horizontal picture plane. The only indication of deep space, or of any space other than that occupied by the principal figures, can be seen in the middle of the painting above and beyond the flag which is being held horizontal with the ground. There, a man on horseback appears to be directing troops. Below the flag, behind the men's feet, rests a pile of surrendered firearms. The painting is a study of the physical and emotional state of the ordinary men who, for all their suffering and efforts, must face defeat and an uncertain future. The furling of the flag was a highly symbolic act and in most cases Confederate units would burn or bury flags rather than surrender them to Union officials. Providing insight into the emotions connected with Brooke's painting is Father Abram J. Ryan's (1836-1886) war-era poem titled *The Conquered Banner* of which a portion reads:

Take that banner down! 'tis tattered;
 Broken is its staff and shattered;
 And the valiant hosts are scattered
 Over whom it floated high.
 Oh! 'tis hard for us to fold it
 'Hard to think there's none to hold it
 'Hard that those who once unrolled it
 Now must furl it with a sigh.

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly!
 Treat it gently - it is holy -
 For it droops above the dead.
 Touch it not - unfold it never,
 Let it droop there, furl'd forever,
 For its people's hopes are dead!²³

²³Jones, Walter Burgwyn. *Confederate War Poems*. Nashville, Tennessee: Bill Coats, Ltd. pp. 22 and 69.

To comprehend *Furling the Stars and Bars* fully, one should have an idea of the Southern viewpoint. George Cary Eggleston, a Southern author of the period who remade his life in New York City, wrote in a series of essays aimed at Northern audiences, that "Southerners honestly believed in the right of secession" as "a constitutional right" and that they believed that their allegiance belonged to their state and only to the general government through that state.²⁴ Eggleston also advanced the argument that the issue for many was simply one of self-defense.²⁵ Brooke's painting shows no chivalric cavalier, only injured and tired men with their heads hung in humiliation and desperation. Men who must return to ruined homes and weary wives and children only to feel responsible for the Confederacy's loss and the invasion of the South by the North.²⁶ Aiding the viewer to understand these men's consciousness of lost honor is the response given by a Confederate veteran to the question of "why he and his comrades had fought so long beyond hope of victory." The man explained that "We were

The Conquered Banner is often referred to as "the requiem of the Lost Cause" and was first published under the pen-name, "Moina." Abram Joseph Ryan is often called the "poet-priest of the Confederacy." He was born in Norfolk, Virginia of Irish parents. He served throughout the war as a chaplain in the Confederate army. After the war Ryan founded a weekly magazine known as the *Banner of the South*. Most of his poetry was written for this magazine. He was an intimate friend of President Davis and his family.

²⁴Escott, Paul D. *Uses of Gallantry*. p.68.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid. Paul Escott reveals the state of mind of many Southerners. He writes, "A southern girl who had lost her brother voiced understandable defiance of northern invaders, and Stonewall Jackson, on his deathbed, affirmed that 'God permits us to defend our native land and protect it from outrage.'" p.68.

afraid to stop. . . afraid of the women at home. . . they would have been ashamed of us."²⁷

Those Who Remained at Home

But, as noted in reference to Washington's painting *Jackson Entering Winchester*, women, children and other civilians were not merely helpless sufferers during the war. Everyone did what they could to help the cause. Adalbert Volck's pictures attest to the fact that Southern civilians, including women, were actively involved in an effort to aid the Confederacy. Compared with works from twenty to thirty years earlier, one finds a new heightened recognition and appreciation of women. Adalbert Volck was born in Bavaria in 1828 and emigrated, due to the political repression of King Frederick of Prussia, to the United States in the 1840s. Volck's background was originally in chemistry and upon arrival in Baltimore he set up shop as a dentist.²⁸ A creative and talented man, Volck also created still-life paintings, porcelains, bronze, wood and ivory sculpture and expert works in silver. "Volck's sympathies, which matched those of his Baltimore friends and neighbors, lay with the South."²⁹ And, after the occupation of Baltimore by Federal troops, Volck became an active and passionate supporter of the Confederacy.

Under the pseudonym of V. Blada (the reversal of the first part of the artist's first name), Volck surreptitiously created and distributed his engravings

²⁷Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. "The Antebellum South as a 'Culture of Courage'." *Southern Studies*. (Fall 1981): 213-246. p. 229.

²⁸Chambers, Bruce W. *The Southern Artist and the Civil War*. p. 83.

²⁹*Ibid.*

which were often heavy with satire. In three engravings, the artist has, without caricature or outright propaganda, created images of sacrifice and devotion on the part of the Southern civilian. One print shows civilians and soldiers smuggling medicine across the lines (Plate 44). Wooden barrels and kegs set in a boat while men maneuver a heavy barrel along the river bank. While one man sits in the tree branches, presumably as a lookout, a soldier unpacks a mule of its load while it dines on a nearby tree. Volck's prints are the work of an artist not a mere recorder of events. His picture shows an extensive knowledge of figure drawing and an aptitude for composition and the representation of texture in the print medium. The men depicted are represented in a wide variety of activity and rendered in an interesting medley of poses and three-quarter views.

Volck's drawing of women spinning and sewing gives a view of a typical small household interior (Plate 45). Within the humble and tidy room, three women are busily and quietly creating uniforms for the boys at the front. A woman wearing a bonnet is shown in profile as she creates thread or yarn on a spinning wheel. Two other women sit with a needle and thread in hand. The floor is of uncarpeted wood planks, the ceiling is beamed, and a fiddle hangs on a far wall. In one Southern plantation household, the daughter of the mistress reported that "Gray cloth was ordered up from New Orleans, and uniforms cut out and made by the dozen in the house and sent to the camps."³⁰ Women's reactions to the war, per their diaries, indicate "they responded to the crisis as to a rendezvous with destiny, for almost overnight they knew their private lives to

³⁰Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter, Social Life in the Old South*. p. 195.

have become witnesses to a great historical confrontation."³¹ In another print, Volck shows a group of church members turning in their steeple bells to be melted down into Rebel cannons (Plate 46). Standing within the door of the foundry, men and women of varying ages and social standing watch the delivery of the bell to a Confederate officer. The foundry worker is shown removing the fabric cover from the crucifix-topped bell. In anticipation of the demise of the bells, the furling smoke and the beehive-shaped oven sit just to the left of the waiting bells.

The demise of Southern plantations, farms and homes was just as sure as that of the church bells. Volck's *Tracks of the Federal Armies* (Plate 47) shows a house burnt to the ground. Amidst the rubble a woman lies dead, a cradle is overturned and the family's dog and horse lay shot. A man who is presumably the master of the household, stands in front of the massacre crying out in anguish. Although Volck's depiction strikes one as a serious bit of propaganda, numerous first-hand accounts include reports of homes being sacked, women being terrorized, and slaves and livestock being killed. One woman who was threatened by Union soldiers reported that, "They had said on leaving us the evening before that they were coming back in the morning for the silver...to search for papa, and to burn up the house and us in it, too."³² This was not however, before they had gone "through every room from the garret to the cellar, and through every closet, wardrobe, bureau, and trunk, and carried off

³¹Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 346.

³²Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. p. 211.

everything that struck their fancy."³³ Whether propaganda or not, Volck's artistic expertise is not lost to mere pictorial ravings, and his prints reflect the Victorian notion that artworks should propound a moral or generate a sense of the noble.

Volck's pictures, excepting *Tracks of the Federal Armies*, give an indication as to the type of non-combat activities which occupied the average civilian. David Hunter Strother's *Cotton Depot at Memphis Landing, Tennessee* (Plate 48), 1862, also shows that despite the war and Union occupation, the production of cotton was still a major business enterprise in the South. On a high river bank, hundreds of the huge bales lie in neat rows waiting to be shipped. Black workers stand and lounge about in the right foreground while another drives a wagon laden with crates and pulled by mules up a steep incline away from a steamboat moored at the bank. In the far background many more teams of wagons and oxen are discharged of their bales of cotton. In this same area are a tent and a man who is tending a pot which hangs over a fire. The only recognizably white man leans haughtily against one of the large bales while observing the actions of the group of lounging black men. With the knowledge that the South reduced cotton production, its major cash crop, during the war, one wonders if this mass of cotton bales was unusually small compared to previous years. One Southerner recalled that in her father's house and elsewhere, "it was considered unpatriotic to plant cotton and he urged his neighbors to turn all their energies towards sustaining the Southern soldiers." And, while others practiced self-sacrifice by planting half-crops of cotton, on his

³³*Ibid.* p. 204.

plantation "every acre was planted in corn, that the army should not lack food for man and beast."³⁴

The image of sacrifice was brought to a grand and sentimental pinnacle in William D. Washington's *The Burial of Latane* (Plate 49), 1864. Not only had the South sacrificed its cash crop, but more significantly it had sacrificed its crop of bright young men. Captain William Latane was a popular young physician and the only man killed while leading a successful charge of the Essex Cavalry on June 13, 1862. Captain Latane's body was found by his brother, Lieutenant James Latane, who then placed it in a cart driven by Uncle Aaron, a servant from Westwood, the estate of Catherine and Dr. William S. R. Brockenbrough. When the Lieutenant arrived at Westwood, he found that only women and a few slaves were in the household. Catherine Brockenbrough promised "to bury him as tenderly as if he were her brother" and then, according to her sister-in-law's diary, gave the lieutenant her last horse so that he could rejoin his company.³⁵ The ladies prepared the Captain's body for burial and removed a "large lock of his hair, as the only thing we could do for his mother."³⁶ When the women's request for the services of the local Episcopal priest, Mr. Carraway, were

³⁴Ibid. p. 193.

³⁵Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. *William D. Washington, Artist of the Old South*. (Masters Thesis, University of Delaware, 1968.) p. 93.

The sister-in-law's name was Mrs. Willoughby Newton of "Linden."

According to another account in Walter Burgwyn Jones' *Confederate War Poems*, Lieutenant James Latane, "on his sad and lonely errand, was met by a party of federal troops who followed him to Mrs. Brockenborough's gate, and stopping there, told him that as soon as he placed his brother's body in friendly hands he must surrender himself as a prisoner of war." (p.68.)

³⁶Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. *William D. Washington, Artist of the Old South*. p.93.

thwarted by the Federal picket-post, the women "took the body of our poor young captain and buried it ourselves" and "the girls covered his honoured grave with flowers."³⁷

Like Norris Brooke's painting *Furling the Stars and Bars*, Washington's painting can be paired with poetry of the era. Washington and the poet John Reuben Thompson (1823-1873), the author of *The Burial of Latane*, were known acquaintances. They were both members of the Mosaic Club in Richmond, Virginia, and it was there that the artist probably heard the poem for the first time.³⁸ According to a letter from Dr. M. G. Ellzey, "Thompson and Washington were intimate friends and they were both friends with Latane as well." Ellzey went on to state that the poem and the painting "perpetuate the memory of a young and gallant Virginian who fell at the head of his company in a charge in defense of his native state"³⁹ The third, fourth and fifth paragraphs of Thompson's poem relate visually to and were certainly a guide in the composition of Washington's painting:

A brother bore his body from the field
 And gave it unto stranger's hands that
 closed
 The Calm, blue eyes on earth forever
 sealed,
 And tenderly the slender limbs
 composed:
 Strangers, yet sisters, who with Mary's
 love,

³⁷Ibid. p. 94.

³⁸Ibid. p. 96.

³⁹Ibid. p. 97.

Sat by the open tomb and weeping
looked above.

A little child strewed roses on his bier,
Pale roses, not more stainless than
his soul.

Nor yet more fragrant than his life
sincere

That blossomed with good actions,
brief, but whole:

The aged matron and faithful slave
Approached with reverent feet the
hero's lowly grave

No man of God might say the burial rite
Above the "rebel" - thus declared the
foe

That blanched before him in the deadly
fight,

But woman's voice, in accents soft
and low,

Trembling with pity, touched with
pathos, read

Over his hallowed dust the ritual for the
dead.⁴⁰

Besides using the poem for inspiration, Washington supposedly made a visit to "Summer Hill," the place of the burial, in order to study the exact location and its landscape.⁴¹ This is in spite of the fact that the romantic landscape of trees around a hill top appears rather vague without any distinguishing features.

In a pyramidal grouping, eleven people gather around the open grave and the bier. The sky above the mourners is luminous with the evening sun

⁴⁰Jones, Walter Burgwyn. *Confederate War Poems*. p. 21.

⁴¹Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. *William D. Washington, Artist of the Old South*. p. 98.

reflecting off of a cloud-filled sky. To the left of the grave, the captain's sword rests on top of his coffin and the four attendant slaves stand behind it. To the far right, on the opposite side of the open grave and the small orange heaps of dirt, four women and one female child stand in postures of mourning. At the center of the group and at the head of the bier, Mrs. Brockenbrough's sister, Mrs. William B. Newton, the poem's aged matron, stands gazing toward heaven with the Book of Common Prayer held in her hands.⁴² To her right, as described in the poem, a little girl strews pale flowers on the coffin. Leaning on his shovel with a grim expression, is the faithful slave Uncle Aaron, who had conveyed the body to Westwood and had dug the grave at his mistress's request. This pose was fashioned after that of the leaning black man in the left foreground of *Old Kentucky Home, Life in the South*, 1859, a work done by Washington's friend Eastman Johnson.⁴³ The three black women behind Uncle Aaron, though almost lost in the shadows, are depicted as sorrowful as the white ladies.

The Burial of Latane epitomizes Southerners' lofty ideals by emphasizing the moral virtues of loyalty to family, kindness to strangers, and conscientious pursuit of duty. It is also an image which portrays the civilian's spirit of resistance in spite of Yankee intrusion. According to Washington's biographer, "The artist used this touching incident to create a beautiful, harmonious painting, and at the same time to inspire religious feelings and to eulogize Southern

⁴²Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away: Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989. p. 24.

⁴³Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. *William D. Washington*. p. 90.

womanhood."⁴⁴ Apparently this appreciation was strongly felt by the Southern populace and as one old Confederate man proclaimed, "Our women were never whipped!"⁴⁵ Instead, "while filling their own places as feminine heads of the house, they were servants-of-all-work and man of the house."⁴⁶ By all appearances the artist intended for the picture to become an historical symbol, and after the war this is, indeed, what it became.⁴⁷ The work attracted large crowds when it was first exhibited, and after it was engraved, in 1868, it became a household icon of the lost cause by illustrating "the tragedy of early death, the gentleness of Southern women, the admiration of chivalry, and a deep sense of religion."⁴⁸

The Aftermath of War

A Sense of Loss

A sense of loss and of reconciliation with the past pervades the art of the rest of the decade. Artists, like the rest of the Southern citizenry, were coming to terms with their past, their present and ultimately their future. Artists John Beaufain Irving and Lucien Whiting Powell reminisced about the good old days of a now bygone era. Thomas Satterwhite Noble dealt with the bad old days as they were personified by the evils of slavery. And, dealing with the immediate consequences of war, William Aiken Walker recorded images of

⁴⁴Ibid. p. 91.

⁴⁵Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War*. p.115.

⁴⁶Ibid. p. 182.

⁴⁷Ott, Ethelbert Nelson. *William D. Washington*. p. 92.

⁴⁸Ibid. p. 104.

burned-out churches surrounded by a seemingly apathetic populace. The churches' destruction said much about the state of the people and the condition of the community. William Aiken Walker (1839 - 1921), was born in Charleston, South Carolina, the birthplace of the Confederate States of America. In South Carolina, even before the war, men between the ages of sixteen and sixty were required to participate in state militia service. Walker was a member of Charleston's Palmetto Guard and shortly after General Beauregard shelled Charleston Harbor's Fort Sumter the artist was called into the service of the Confederate Army. Only four months later the artist received a medical discharge and returned to Charleston where he worked as a draughtsman for the Confederate Engineers Corps.⁴⁹

Walker's paintings *St. Finbar's Roman Catholic Cathedral* (Plate 50) and *Circular Church in Ruins* (Plate 51), both from 1868, are "memorials to the years of tribulation Charleston suffered."⁵⁰ In his characteristically detailed style, no doubt refined by his years as a draughtsman, the artist gives the viewer a precise account of the churches' conditions. The illusion of space is achieved by linear perspective with atmospheric perspective being barely discernible. Every minute detail of the churches' brick walls is delineated and the grounds surrounding them show Charlestonians as they go about their business, seemingly oblivious to the condition of their former social and spiritual centers. Walker's very "literal approach" is indicative of his being primarily a self-taught

⁴⁹Seibels, Cynthia. *The Sunny South, The Life and Art of William Aiken Walker*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1995. p. 29,

⁵⁰*Ibid.* p. 30.

artist.⁵¹ It is interesting to note that in the two years prior to these paintings, the artist produced no known works. His biographer suggests that after many devastating personal losses due to the war the artist was "trying to find his bearings in a world profoundly changed" and that his paintings of the church only reiterate that the artist's "artistic expressions were centered on destruction and loss."⁵²

Although not genre pictures in the traditional sense, Walker's painting of these churches and the people around them are representative of the mood and condition of the people. Aiken's paintings are visual reminders of the South's invention of the "religion of the Lost Cause," a phenomenon which resulted from Southerners' struggles "to come to terms with defeat."⁵³ In the violated and empty churches one sees a symbol of the lost cause as well as the physical manifestation of divine judgment with its resultant loss of God's grace. In the people depicted, however, there is, conversely, a sense of survival and an eagerness to get back to the task of life while trying to overlook the destruction of the past. The contrast between the people of the present and the churches of the past seems to produce a chasm indicating that the latter is gone forever and the former will never return there again. In *Circular Church in Ruins* one does, however, get a glimpse of the artist's future. Atop the mounds of dirt which were once the church's yard, two black youths play while a goat grazes. Walker's

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid. p. 40.

⁵³Escott, Paul D. *The Uses of Gallantry*. p. 53.

depictions of blacks during the 1870s and 1880s were to become his financial mainstay and are what he is best known for today.

While Walker faced and dealt with the immediate destruction around him and the social fracture with the past, Lucien Whiting Powell created *The Old Log Cabin* (Plate 52), a picturesque image of happy black peasants. Perhaps as a reaction to the freeing of millions of blacks, Powell has resorted to the old tactic of depicting them as harmless, lazy and carefree. Powell was born to a distinguished family in Levinworth Manor, Upperville, Virginia in 1846. He was educated by tutors as well as by attending district schools. In 1863 he enlisted in the 11th Virginia Cavalry. Although after the war the artist studied in New York, in Philadelphia with Thomas Moran, and in Europe and eventually became known as a landscape and seascape painter, his earliest works dealt with life in the Old Dominion. In *The Old Log Cabin*, c. 1865-70, one wonders whether the artist was reminiscing about the way blacks lived before the war or showing the viewer how they lived after. The painting, reminiscent of images of seventeenth-century Dutch peasants, shows a ramshackle and carelessly pieced together cabin in front of which stands a rather comical white work horse. In front of the poor old hag, one gentleman sits playing the banjo while the other dances a jig. Behind them and to the side a woman washes clothes in a tub on a table.

Like Eastman Johnson's slightly earlier and already famous work, then called *Negro Life at The South*, Powell's characters confirmed the negative qualities that whites assigned to blacks. The figures' identities are straight out of the stereotype repertoire of the day--the minstrel show figures of Sambo the fiddler and his attendant dancer and the old auntie or mammy. Like Johnson's painting, the men are not working, there is decay and disorder, a broom, bucket,

and bits of wood litter the yard. Because of the similarities of the two works it is reasonable to look at critics' comments about Johnson's painting in finding a motive for Powell's work. Before the war, critics said Johnson's work was "a first-class character piece" but certainly "not 'high Art.'" Additionally, it was looked at by white viewers as a validation of their "negative assessment of the black while flattering their goodwill toward fellow human beings" ⁵⁴ After the war, the extremely popular *Negro Life at the South* was sold at auction and was described in the auction catalog as "a faithful and charming picture of domestic life in the South, one which will be feelingly recognized by many, and yearly increase in historic value as time speeds us onward from the 'days gone by.'" ⁵⁵ It is possible that Powell was not only influenced by Eastman's artistic style but that he was also capitalizing on the new sentimental popularity and new historical status of the subject matter--a subject which was no longer taboo to the Southern artist.

A Sense of Remorse

Boldly and confidently using this new artistic freedom, Thomas Satterwhite Noble (1835-1907) created paintings which condemned the evils of slavery. The artist was born in Lexington, Kentucky, the busiest slave market in the South. His father was a prosperous manufacturer of hemp rope and cotton bagging whose success relied heavily, if not exclusively, on the labor of slaves. After visiting New York and working in a St. Louis business house, Noble traveled

⁵⁴ Johns, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting, The Politics of Everyday Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. p. 130.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 134.

to Paris in 1856 where he was introduced to and soon became the student of Thomas Couture, Edward Manet's teacher at the same time. Of Noble, Couture once exclaimed, "Why that fellow was made for a painter."⁵⁶ Couture and Noble became friends and Noble has been characterized as one of the older artist's favorite students. In 1859 the artist returned to the United States and, although not an ally of the slave cause, his belief in the importance of states' rights moved him to enlist in the Confederate cavalry in 1861.⁵⁷ Like Conrad Wise Chapman and others, Noble returned from the battles with "his portfolio filled with most valuable sketches of the war."⁵⁸ And although a newspaper account further touted the artist's abilities, reporting that 'he is one of the best draughtsman in the country. . .his war sketches are among the best taken during the struggle,' he did not continue to dwell upon battle scenes.⁵⁹ Instead, the artist concentrated on scenes which depicted some of the atrocities of slavery. *The Last Sale of Slaves in St. Louis* (Plate 53) was completed in 1865 but lost in a fire sometime in the mid-1870s. What remains for the viewer today is a simplified replica the artist did shortly after the loss of the original.

As a visual counterpart to the Victorian Gothic novels of the period, *The Last Sale of Slaves in St. Louis* (1866) conjured up visions and feelings of violence, brutality, terror and sympathy. The setting is the east front steps of the

⁵⁶Birchfield, James D. et al. *Thomas Satterwhite Noble*. Lexington Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum, 1988. p. 4.

⁵⁷Ibid. p.5

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

St. Louis courthouse in 1865. The picture is centered around a young and pretty mulatto woman who stands on the auction block while the auctioneer excitedly secures bids. Before her and around the platform on which she and the auctioneer stand there are many more slaves. Some of these appear to be families of mothers and children or wives and husbands who will, in many cases, be separated from each other. The second group of figures which stands out from the many is made up of three white gentlemen who are engaged in earnest conversation much like those in George Caleb Bingham's *Canvassing for a Vote* from 1852. Popular stereotypes before the war, these men represent "the three shades of our political ethics -- old fogysim, conservatism and radicalism." One art critic who reviewed Noble's painting goes on to explain that the young man is the radical who is probably advancing the theory of 'equality of the races' while the middle-aged man who listens attentively is the Conservative and the "old timer," after having had his say, looks on in contempt.⁶⁰ In contrast to the fact that slave auctions were usually controversial and boisterous, the remainder of the large crowd of onlookers stands passively by as human beings are bought and sold, their lives being irreversibly and traumatically disrupted and destroyed. Having knowledge that "Reconstruction had now enfranchised blacks as citizens"⁶¹ and that terrible violence was being done against the newly freed blacks throughout the country, Noble used subject matter that had been a

⁶⁰Ibid. p. 41.

⁶¹Ibid. p. 39.

common occurrence one year earlier and turned it into a moralizing history painting which some Southern audiences still found offensive.⁶²

Just as embarrassing to Southern audiences, Noble's *The Price of Blood, A Planter Selling His Son*, 1868 (Plate 54), was a depiction of a master selling his mulatto son. The painting must have come as a shocking and open confession of the liberties that many masters took with slave women. Actually painted for a Northern audience who, no doubt, saw such images as further positive support for their action against the South, *The Price of Blood* plays to the North's fear of miscegenation and their belief that the Southern institution of slavery was the source of mulattoism. As early as 1839 Northern printmakers and newspapers depicted interracial couples and their children as grotesque caricatures. And, as Elizabeth Jones points out, New York was "the prime location (rather than the South) of the cultural construction and perpetuation of African-American character across the United States."⁶³ For the South there was not so much fear as there was denial and quiet condemnation of the behavior of some white men and for the institution that provided the opportunity for this immoral freedom. Southerner Mary Chesnut condemned slavery as a "monstrous system," while complaining in her diary that the mistress of every

⁶²Ibid. p. 40. The *St. Louis Times* reported that 'We must-without expressing any opinion as to the merits of the work- question the propriety of the subject. Art has no limits, it is true, but art has no right to distort history.' If Noble's painting was a distortion of the actual last sale of slave in St. Louis it was not, as much evidence has shown, untrue of slave auctions in general.

⁶³Jones, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting*. p. 102.

slave-owning family was unwilling to recognize her husband's responsibility for the conception of the mulatto children who resembled the white children.⁶⁴

In *The Price of Blood* the familial resemblance between the old master and the young slave is unmistakable. Standing in a dimly lit room, three men are gathered around a table. In back of the table stands the slave dealer, who busily reads a contract while keeping one hand protectively near a large pile of gold coins. In front of the table, and to the right, the master sits, leaning casually back, in his comfortable leather chair. He is dressed in a brightly trimmed and tassled robe over black trousers and delicate black slippers and with one arm propped on the chair back and the other on the table, he steadily and brazenly addresses the viewer out of the corner of his eye. To the old master's right, in a pose taken directly from Gainsborough's *Blue Boy*, his mulatto son stands as proudly as his father sits defiantly.⁶⁵ In contrast to his father, he is barefooted, carries a ragged straw hat and wears a disheveled white shirt and dark coarse trousers. The body language of the father and son, who do not regard one another in any way, conveys a mutual aloofness and even disdain. As in *The Last Sale of Slaves in St. Louis*, an underlying theme is the dissolution of families, a tragic consequence of the slave trade. In this case the situation is considerably shocking as it reveals the complete lack of parental accountability. For, how could a father sell his own child? The image drives home the popular belief that slave owners saw all humans with any black blood, even their own

⁶⁴Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. p. 352.

⁶⁵Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989. p. 18.

children, as nothing more than chattel. In her pre-war diary, Sarah Gayle wrote with great anguish, 'And those fathers whose beastly passions hurry to the bed of the slave do they feel no compunction when they see their blood sold, basely bartered like their horses?'⁶⁶ Alluding to the abandonment and sacrifice of a son, the print on the wall behind the men is of Abraham offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. Christians of the period probably made a further connection with the biblical story surrounding Abraham's miscegenetic relationship with his wife's servant Hagar. Hagar bore Abraham a son, Ishmael, who, after the birth of Isaac by Abraham's wife, was expelled along with his mother into the uncertainty of the desert to find their own way.⁶⁷ Unquestionably, the young slave pictured here is also being forced to face an uncertain future.

In an image expressive of setting out to face a new life, Noble painted *Man in a Brown Suit* (Plate 55). From the same period as the *The Price of Blood* and *The Last Slave Sale*, it is an image of any man; any black man at that time in history. Standing with his back to the viewer and with a walking stick in his right hand, he looks out into an empty horizon, a horizon of uncertainty. The frightening journey that many blacks now had to face in a white world must have seemed as uncertain and dangerous a fate as that faced by Hagar and Ishmael. Standing in rumpled coat, trousers and hat, the man seems to pause to survey the unforeseeable future in front of him. Surely, *Man in a Brown Suit*, *The Price of Blood*, *A Planter Selling His Son* and *The Last Sale of Slaves in St. Louis* were

⁶⁶Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. p. 9.

⁶⁷Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. p. 18.

able to generate a sense of sympathy and compassion in the viewer for the plight and past sufferings of the freed slaves. Except for *Man in a Brown Suit*, they also depicted aspects of American life that were finally history and in a not-so-subtle manner they condemn Southerners while peddling the North's righteous victory over the South's peculiar institution.

The Lingering Lost Cause

In contrast to Noble's condemnation of the South's stance on slavery, John Beaufain Irving (1825-1877) painted the sentimental image of a white child pretending to be a rebel soldier. In *Little Johnny Reb* (Plate 56), 1866, Irving has depicted one of his own eight children in the chivalrous stance of the cavalier protecting his home. Irving was born into a wealthy Charleston, South Carolina, family whose fortune was lost during the war. First trained in art as a youth, he traveled to Düsseldorf in 1851 where he, as had Noble, studied with Emanuel Leutze.⁶⁸ And, like Noble, his paintings possess a distinct sense of story-telling dramatics. The setting for *Little Johnny Reb* is in the dimly-lit family parlor. Standing barefoot, with his night shirt hanging off one shoulder, a sandy blonde headed child peaks around a corner into a darkened room. His one hand rests on the wall while his other holds a toy saber. It is presumed that the child is playing war, a game most little boys enjoy, and about which one Southern woman remarked in her diary that "...in time of war the favorite sport of children is playing soldier."⁶⁹ It must be remembered that during the war it was the

⁶⁸Chambers, Bruce. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. p. 39.

⁶⁹Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. p. 282.

children and women who were left at home to defend themselves. Certainly, a Southern child of this age would have understood the imminent danger involved during the war as children were not spared rough treatment by Union troops.⁷⁰

On With Life

Noble's and Irving's works suggest personal and public reflections upon the South's immediate past. Other artists during the late 1860s, however, were moving on into the future and dealing with subjects that indicated the recuperation of commerce and social life. Theodore Sidney Moise (1808-1885) was born in Charleston, South Carolina. Although an uncle offered to send him to Europe to train as an artist, Moise decided on "the more respectable and practical career of a cotton broker."⁷¹ During this time he painted portraits of his family and friends and began to acquire a "reputation spread far and wide."⁷² Soon painting became his full-time career and he traveled throughout the South figuring prominently in the art world of New Orleans. After his duty as a Confederate major during the war, he returned to New Orleans where he collaborated with English artist Victor Pierson on a grand-sized painting of the race track social scene called *Life on the Metairie*, 1868 (Plate 57).

Always very popular in the South, horse racing is portrayed with all its wild and diverse activity. As many of the spectators represented are undoubtedly portraits of prominent citizens, the painting conveys the social importance of such events. Also pointing to the prominence of the people

⁷⁰Ibid. p. 205.

⁷¹Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Downriver, Currents of Style in Louisiana Painting, 1800-1950*. p. 51.

⁷²Ibid.

depicted is the way the artist dealt with the visual space. He commands the viewer's attention to the main group of over fifty precisely depicted individuals by portraying them in deep hues of color and placing them in the foreground. This group is further set off by the muted and lightly colored grandstands and mass of humanity which occupy the background. With only a couple of barely visible women in the background, the setting is clearly the domain of men. The focal point of the painting is two horses, one bay and the other white, which occupy the center ground. With dogs running around their legs, the men who stand milling around appear to be discussing the attributes of the two horses. To the left, a short distance behind the horses a black man, perhaps a jockey, stands next to a large broad-faced cow while a group of gentlemen seem to be engaging him in some sort of conversation. With the air of a carnival or fair, the activity depicted seems to indicate that the South, at least around New Orleans which had always attracted an international population, had already begun to bounce back.

The 1860s were fraught with destruction and dramatic social changes. During the war years artists dealt with first-hand military experiences, the experiences of civilians and the glorification of Southerners and the Confederate cause. After the war, artists' expressions became more varied as they tried visually to interpret the various social and political issues along with the complicated emotional aftermath of defeat. Some artists also gave an indication that Southern society was ready to put the past aside and move on. Thomas Satterwhite Noble's black man in *Man in a Brown Suit* faces an uncertain future, while the white people in Moise's *Life on the Metairie* appear in control of their destinies and certain of prosperity. The differences between the black and white

outlook are harbingers of trouble to come. And not until the next decade did the effects of Reconstruction begin to affect the work of Southern artists.

CHAPTER 5

THE 1870s AND 1880s, RECONSTRUCTING A NEW SOUTH

The years following the Civil War were ones of poverty and social turbulence. While the war had fostered prosperity in the North, little of the South had escaped spoliation. Adding to the frustrations of white Southerners was Congress's refusal to admit Southern senators and representatives. In 1866 so-called radical republicans seized control of Reconstruction ushering in more than ten years of martial law and carpetbag rule in some areas of the South.¹ Reconstruction all but eliminated the plantation system of farming. In South Carolina and other areas of the Old South where the land had been exhausted by cotton cultivation, plantations were divided into forty acre tracts and deeded to ex-slaves or abandoned altogether. Blacks from the Southeast often migrated West to areas of the Deep South, Louisiana, Mississippi, East Texas, and the Georgia foothills, where the soil was still fertile.² Immediately following the war, black families followed the examples of white households. Women stayed at home while children went to school and men worked. This pattern, however, did not survive long. With the depression of 1872 and the withdrawal of Republican

¹Ferrell, Robert H. and Richard Natkiel. *Atlas of American History*. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1987. p. 76.

²Seibels, Cynthia. *The Sunny South, The Life and Art of William Aiken Walker*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1995. pp. 97, 98.

mandates of Reconstruction, blacks found that land was too expensive or, as often as not, denied them due to racial prejudice.³ This forced blacks to follow the trail of many poor whites into the no-win situation of sharecropping where every man, woman and child worked the land in order to survive.

Reconstruction did little to improve relations between blacks and whites. To the contrary, first-hand accounts indicate that animosity between the races had reached new heights. Widespread complaints by whites included women being pushed off sidewalks by blacks, blacks refusing to work until forced to do so by starvation, and high incidences of violent crime and intimidation by blacks. This was a complete change from the trustworthiness of black slaves portrayed during the war. And whites blamed the carpetbaggers for teaching the blacks to "despise and neglect work and to distrust and hate us."⁴ The blacks were scared of whites also. Carpetbagger politicians preyed on their fear of being returned to slavery by inciting distrust of Southern Democrats and reinforcing a belief that only brute force could protect them from enslavement. All in all, the years immediately following the war were strife with mass confusion, distrust, scandal, scoundrels and even hysteria.

Southern genre art of the period is a reflection of the white South's search for a new identity and a record of life in the shadow of destruction, poverty and social chaos. Depictions of blacks and whites are segregated. One author of the period reflected that "the result of the war has greatly changed the relations

³Ibid. p. 146

⁴Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War*. p.314.

of the two races...the colored people withdraw more and more to themselves."⁵ The images of whites are preoccupied with the glorification of childhood, the social settings of the "New South," and the dilapidated living conditions of the rural majority. Images of blacks by white artists are concerned with giving an identity to the now-free black populace. Depictions of individuals, a new manifestation in the portrayal of blacks by Southern artists, became much more common but continued to carry on old stereotypes. For the most part, these individuals are characterized as crooks, physical laborers, charity cases or happy music-makers. Another area of concentration was concerned with the home life of blacks. Always humble in appearance, depictions are limited to a glaring contrast between country-quaint and rural-ramshackle. The resurrection of King Cotton also played a large role in the renewed depiction of black laborers. As an icon of the Southern United States, images of blacks in the cotton fields were popular at home and abroad. Black laborers found at Southern shipping ports also proved to be popular subject matter and, as before the war, the ports were where a high concentration of black laborers could be found.

Images of Blacks

While federal Reconstruction tried to unify blacks and whites into one social scene, the artwork of the period painted a very different picture. As revealed by images of blacks made at this time, it becomes evident that whites tried to maintain a social division between the races much as the nations of Europe distinguished a difference between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

⁵Warner, Charles Dudley. "New Orleans." *Harper's NewMonthly Magazine*. 74 (December 1886 - May 1887) 186-206. p. 197.

Maintaining the long-entrenched characterization of blacks as manual laborers in the cotton fields were artists such as Hal Alexander Courtney Morrison, William Aiken Walker and others. The perceived and real threat that whites felt over blacks' new freedom proved a catalyst for reassuring images portraying blacks in their passive old role as contented laborer. The most prolific artist of this theme was William Aiken Walker. A native of Charleston, South Carolina, Walker was born in 1839. Showing artistic promise at a young age, he exhibited his first paintings at the South Carolina Institute Fair in Charleston in 1850 when only eleven years old. In 1861, Walker, who was then listed as an artist in city directories, enlisted in the South Carolina Second Palmetto Regiment of the Confederate States Army and later became a draughtsman for the Confederate Engineer Corps.⁶ Walker's earlier works dealt with his response to the destruction of his home city by showing the people of Charleston getting on with life in the midst of their burnt out churches. Walker's later works, during the 1870s and 1880s, concentrate on images of poor black laborers, a stereotyped vision which suited patrons of Walker's generation as well as those looking for a recognizable memento of the romanticized Old South.

Resurrection of King Cotton

Several of Walker's plantation paintings are reminiscences of pre-war slave labor conditions. *Plantation Economy in the Old South* (Plate 58) and *Big B Cotton Plantation* (Plate 59) (commissioned by a Boston cotton broker⁷) are two such paintings. Before the war, artists recorded aspects of plantation life as

⁶Seibels, Cynthia. *The Sunny South*. pp. 203, 205.

⁷Ibid. p. 92.

efficient and happy little communities living in a tranquil and idyllic environment. Mainly, slaves were portrayed without individuality, as anonymous beings in the landscape or as backdrops to the activities of whites. Walker's paintings, however, represent a very different image. Quite out of keeping with earlier decades' dictates of decorum, slaves are shown as an unromanticized group of ragged workers in threadbare clothes whose behavior and physical appearance is somewhat caricatured for humorous effect. Retaining an element of humor--a silly grin, a sideways glance, someone stealing a nap--was reassuring to white audiences who still looked to justify the past enslavement of blacks. One Southern author, writing after the war, maintained that his affection was for the "negro of the old order...The real negro I like, the poet of the veldt and jungle, the singer in the field and forest, the tiller of the soil, the shepherd of the flocks, the herdsman of the cattle, the happy, soft-voiced, light-footed servitor."⁸

Both paintings follow a sort of formula which Walker, finding it successful and popular, used repeatedly. Set up in horizontal bands to denote distance, the scene begins with a dirt road at the very bottom of the canvas. The dirt road contains a wagon loaded with cotton to which a team of mules is harnessed and around which a couple of black men are gathered. Various other individuals, most often a couple of women, a child or two and a dog inhabit the road to the left and right of the wagon. As in most of Walker's oil paintings, the figures are static and possess a two-dimensional quality that seems to freeze them in a particular moment of time. The next horizontal band consists of the cotton field where workers can be seen picking the bolls or hauling full baskets. The third

⁸Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 401.

band portrays the various buildings to be found on a plantation--the cotton gin, main house, sheds and slave cabins. Beyond this is a narrow strip of forested landscape, within which a sliver of river is perhaps sandwiched. Blue sky, scattered with clouds, occupies the top half of the canvas.

Turning to another popular formula, Walker transformed his reminiscences of plantation life into contemporary wagon scenes showing blacks taking their cotton to market or returning from market. In *Wagon Scene*, 1888 (Plate 60), and *Taking Cotton to Market*, c. 1885 (Plate 61), black families are gathered around and on their wagonload of cotton bales. Both paintings show a woman sitting on the bales along with a jug and covered basket, which is presumably their traveling meal. The men are gathered around smoking a pipe or feeding a broken-down team while a dog sleeps in the shade of the wagon. Both images strike one as deliberately posed pictures, like photographs taken while on vacation, a practice Walker was known to pursue. In *On the Road to Natchez*, 1888 (Plate 62), and *Wagon Scene with Barrels*, 1884 (Plate 63), it is the return trip from market that Walker has portrayed. In both instances the wagons are now empty of their cargo of cotton which has been replaced by crates or barrels and other goods. Again, as in nearly every Walker painting, the blacks are dressed in clothing that, though visually interesting, might better be described as threadbare rags. The most striking observation, however, are the jugs of whisky being passed around. As if to reiterate the old beliefs that blacks were an essentially irresponsible fun-loving people who lived for the moment, Walker seems to indicate that profits from long hard work were squandered for a few hours of drunkenness.

A wagon scene by Everett B. D. Julio (1843-1879) is decidedly different in nature from those of Walker. Julio, the painter of the famous history painting called *The Last Meeting of Lee and Jackson*, painted *Haw Yar*, c. 1871 (Plate 64). Born on the island of St. Helena and receiving art training in Paris during the 1850s, the artist moved to Boston just before the Civil War. Due to his fragile health and Southern sympathies, Julio left Boston for St. Louis in early 1864.⁹ By 1867, the artist had set up his studio in New Orleans where he remained until returning to Paris in 1872 to study for nearly two years with Leon Bonnat. Returning to New Orleans in 1874, the artist remained there until moving to Kingston, Georgia, in 1879 where he died.¹⁰ *Haw Yar* shows Julio's strong inclination towards naturalism. His depiction of a large hay wagon and black workers rejects the elements of humor and caricature relied upon by his contemporary William Aiken Walker. Instead, *Haw Yar*, which is the shout used while driving oxen, shows a group of blacks industriously employed in bringing their crop in from the field. As one man marches along a team of four oxen, his whip dangling over their heads, a woman and a man ride high up on the piled hay with the all important basket of cotton between them. The size of the hay wagon and team of oxen, which create a diagonal line across the canvas, give the painting focus and an imposing sense of strength. Walking on the road behind the group, a woman carries a basket on her head and a bundle in her arms. Beyond her, a man can be seen gathering wood. Although the clothing

⁹Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Look Away, Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989. p. 60.

¹⁰*Louisiana Landscape and Genre Paintings*. Shreveport, Louisiana: The R. W. Norton Art Gallery, 1981. p.23.

worn by those portrayed is ragged, their countenances do not project the flaws of personality which Walker's laborers always seem to portray. Instead, they possess a sense of purpose and respectability.

Another artist who portrayed the relationship between cotton and blacks after the war was Hal Alexander Courtney Morrison. Morrison was born on Prince Edward Island, Canada, in 1848 or 1852 and moved South around 1880. From 1883 until 1918 the artist lived in Atlanta, Georgia, where he was well-known for his still-lives of fish and game. After his wife's death he moved to Auburndale, Florida, where he lived until shortly before his death in Atlanta in 1927.¹¹

Although not a native of the South, Morrison adopted the South as his home for the majority of his life. His painting *Weighing the Cotton*, c. 1885 (Plate 65), shows a black family in their rustic but tidy farmyard. The main focal point is the group of five young men, and presumably their father who wears a vest and boots, gathered around four baskets of cotton and a scale. In contrast to the caricatured portrayals of William Aiken Walker, Morrison's painting presents the image of a poor but hard-working farm family. The clothing worn by the group is worn but bares no resemblance to the threads and patches of Walker's characters. The family presented by Morrison appear as conscientious and dedicated farmers. Five of Morrison's figures gaze out at the viewer with humble dignity rather than silly grins and the figures appear more three-dimensional as they interact with one another, the baskets or the scale. To the

¹¹Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. Columbia, South Carolina: The University of South Carolina, 1984.

far right, a portion of a wagon wheel can be seen and a loading dock used to pile the cotton high on the wagon. In the background, a small child sits on the stoop of a one-room cabin, while a nearby a dog sits quietly surveying the situation. Beyond the cabin is a cotton field dotted with white bolls to be picked.

According to an article of 1885, the farmers who prospered were known as " 'corn-raisers,' i.e., the men who raise their own supplies, and make cotton their surplus crop."¹² The author goes on to explain that the shrewd farmer raises his own bread and meat and thereby saves his land from mortgages caused when the farmer must spend comparatively higher prices for food than what he can attain from his cotton crop. The discussion and debate of the management of picking and growing cotton was widespread during Reconstruction. Many saw the resurrection of cotton as the means for the South to regain its lost wealth and prominence. Others, however, saw that cotton cultivation was devastating to the soil and that a better system of planting and crop diversification was necessary. In any case, cotton remained big business from the farm fields to the riverbanks where tons of cotton were still moved about by black labor.

Images of blacks along the docksides were another major area of concentration by artists. As with images of cotton field laborers, the ports were viewed as a befitting and long-established workplace for blacks. As in William Aiken Walker's cotton field paintings, the blacks are portrayed to stereotypical and picturesque advantage. Walker's *Where Canal Meets the Levee* (Plate 66) shows two black men lounging about on the large bales of cotton which will be

¹²"Cotton and Its Kingdom." *The South, A Collection From Harper's Magazine*. New York, New York: Gallery Books, 1990. p. 13.

shipped out on the steam boats behind them. Like the field hands, their tattered clothing, portrayed in a variety of textures, adds much to the visual interest of the figures. However, their clothing and stature were also meant to reflect a social position that reinforced white society's beliefs that blacks belonged to a different spectrum of the community. This belief becomes evident by the lack of picturesque paintings of poor whites who lived just as ragged an existence as share croppers. In a similar painting titled *The Levee* (Plate 67), which was made into a print by Currier and Ives, Walker further pointed to the societal differences between blacks and whites by showing the white cotton broker and white planter standing together proudly surveying their fluffy white currency, while black workers are, again, shown lounging about on the huge bales in the foreground.

Another decidedly controversial image of blacks along the shipping yards was painted by an unknown artist who was apparently familiar with some of the social and moral problems that white Southerners blamed on Reconstruction. Believed to be situated at New Orleans Harbor, *Negro Boys on the Quayside*, c. 1880 (Plate 68), portrays one black man and three black youths gathered on a boardwalk above the shipping yard. The figures are arranged in a pyramid with the central figure being a youth dressed in rumpled trousers, vest and jacket. He stands on a wood platform squarely facing the viewer in the demi-plié stance of a ballet dancer while holding a dime in front of his groin area. A young boy to the far right, wearing a beat up straw hat and ill-fitting clothes, covers himself in embarrassment. Having just arrived from the country, his baggage at his feet, the younger child's unease is registered on his face as he peers out from the cover of his over-sized hat. On the far left a man sits on the platform and leans

jauntily back on his elbow. With a kind of knowing grin he gazes at the embarrassed child while raising a finger to his eye communicating "look out" or "beware."¹³ The youth with the dime and another youth in similar attire, but wearing a hat, might possibly be young porters or messenger boys as their outfits appear to be a type of uniform. In any case, their expressions indicate that they are inappropriately wise beyond their years.

In *Negro Boys on the Quayside*, blacks are depicted as being generally corrupt of morals and decency. With the exception of Hal Alexander Courtney Morrison's *Weighing the Cotton*, we have seen images of public consumption of alcohol, squandering of hard-earned money, laziness, and now sexual immorality. One Southern professor and author of the period stated of the former slaves, "since he has been made free, his increase in crime and immorality has gone side by side with his educational advancement--and even in greater ratio."¹⁴ This was not an isolated judgment. Another author of the period believed that "under slavery many negroes learned to value and to practice virtue...with emancipation the race suffered relapse in this as in other respects."¹⁵ In an attempt to "assuage humiliation, provide an antidote to pain, and furnish a defense against doubt"¹⁶ white Southerners sought to justify their

¹³ Nygren, Edward J. et al. *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Smithsonian Institution and Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1981. p. 73.

¹⁴ Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 385.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Escott, Paul D. "The Uses of Gallantry." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*. p. 65

old system of agricultural production and the institution of slavery which had made it possible. During this period many Southerners seemed to forget conveniently any of the atrocities that accompanied slavery. This one-sided memory was a psychological method of raising low self-esteem, while restoring the respect of outsiders whose judgments labeled them as rebels and traitors.¹⁷

Moving away from paintings motivated by social or political propaganda, *Three-mule Cart on Decatur St., N. O.*, 1868 (Plate 69), by Paul Poincy is an objective view of a working black man and a visually satisfying study in composition. Poincy (1833-1909) was a native of New Orleans and a veteran of the Confederate army. He spent six years in France at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and apprenticed in the studio of the academic master Julien.¹⁸ Poincy painted portraits, still-lives, religious pictures and New Orleans street scenes. *Three-mule Cart on Decatur St., N. O.* is significant for its lack of overt racial bias or commentary. Occupying the center half of the painting is a team of three dark mules hitched to a flat-bed cart. The driver of the team and cart stands while snapping a whip over the mules' heads. The composition is abstract compared to Walker's and is based upon a series of zigzagging lines beginning in the foreground, which guide the viewer's eyes from right to left to right and left again as concentration is drawn from the roadway in the foreground to the ship in the background. The artist has left out all the minute details upon which Walker so eagerly concentrated. Instead his focus is on visual movement and the interplay

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Downriver*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Co., 1991. p. 128.

and balance of simplified shapes. Also, unlike Walker, Poincy has retained the dignity of the animals and their master.

The Individual as a Symbol

The depiction of black individuals is another area of concentration by white artists. Like the previously discussed portrayals of laborers in the resurrected cotton kingdom, individuals were exploited for social and political agendas or treated with, like Poincy's cart driver, a level of respect and dignity. For the most part, however, individual images still portray general types--the crook, the charity case, the fiddler and the cotton picker. These images, too, can be further broken down into reminiscences of days gone by and records of a new co-existence for blacks and whites. Of course, William Aiken Walker led the way for images of the black as the peasantry of the old and new South. The idea of blacks as the South's peasantry was an old and established argument which claimed that blacks were in their rightful place within a legitimate social order. The peasant supposedly enjoyed a carefree life close to the land. They were content with their lot and enjoyed the paternal generosity of those above them. Walker's *The Old Cotton Picker* (Plate 70) is an example of this type. The old man with gray beard, and the requisite corn cob pipe, gazes out at the viewer with a look of resignation. His clothes are the typical patchwork of threads. Walker's painting exhibits an unusual amount of care and empathy in its rendering of the old man. His features are not caricatured and he lacks the goofy countenance found in so many of Walker's other works. Likewise, the cotton field behind the man and the basket to his right are carefully and naturalistically rendered. The painting seems to represent a kind of humble regard for the cotton worker in particular and the old slave type in general.

Along the same vein is William H. Huddle's (1847-1892) painting of 1889 called *The Slave* (Plate 71). Huddle was born in Wytheville, Virginia where he attended school until enlisting in the Confederate Cavalry in 1863 at the age of sixteen. In the late 1860s the Huddle family followed the trail of other Virginia relatives and settled in Paris, Texas. There, the artist worked in his father's gunsmithing business until going to study art, first with his cousin, the portraitist, Flavius Fisher, and later in New York and Munich.¹⁹ Like Walker's, Huddle's painting appears to be influenced by his sentimental remembrances of life before the Civil War. Apparently, this painting of an old slave musician was "a 'type' he had always wanted to paint."²⁰ *The Slave* is a naturalistic three-quarter view of an elderly black man with white beard and balding head. His eyes do not greet the viewer, but instead seem to be looking off in a shy stare of quiet contemplation. This subservient attitude is much like the 'Sambo' character of earlier decades. On his lap and in his hands he holds a violin and bow.

The image of the black slave musician was reassuring to whites who felt safe in imagining blacks to be mostly preoccupied with child-like amusements. Just a few of the innumerable examples of blacks as merry music makers are found in plantation novels of the 1820s, in *Quitting Frolic* by John L. Krimmel from 1813 and earlier in *The Old Plantation*, c. 1800, by an unknown South Carolina artist. The image of the old black slave musician may have been comforting to some blacks, as well. The black poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, himself the son of

¹⁹Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, the Nineteenth Century*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1967. p. 196.

²⁰*Ibid.*

a slave, wrote such sentimental verse in the 1880s and 1890s as, "Whah's ol' Uncle Mordecai an' Uncle Aron? Whah's Aunt Doshy, Sam and Kit, An' all de res'? Whah's de gals dat used to sing an' dance de bes'?"²¹ Like Dunbar's prose, Huddle's choice of the title *The Slave* seems to suggest an acknowledgment of social disruption and a sentimental reverence for the 'good old days' when people knew what to expect from the traditional social order. Oddly, both blacks and whites mourned the passing of the negro of old. One white woman commented of her most trusted and competent house servant, "I don't know a negro of the new order who can hold a candle to her."²² In a letter to her former master, Alice Dabney wrote that "Though freedom has been given to the colored race, I often sigh for the good old days of slave-times, when we were all so happy and contented."²³ In some cases it appears that the abundance of cruelty which existed during the centuries of slavery had been forgotten. For Southerners this cruelty was never publicly approved or thought of as a suitable subject for visual or literary art, and now it had become passé for Northerners and foreigners, too, who chose to concentrate on the picturesque old Negro of the old order.

The old social order was a type of paternalism where a decent master provided the basic necessities of housing, food, clothing and medical care for his

²¹Trovaioli, August P. and Roulhac B. Toldeano. *William Aiken Walker, Southern Genre Painter*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1972. p. 90.

²²Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 181.

²³Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1914. p.55.

slaves. After the war, this sort of charity was a suitable theme in art. Not only did it recall the old system, but it reinforced the Southerners' view of themselves as a kind and caring people who would "rather fight than see his inoffensive black neighbour [sic] or employe [sic] maltreated." The author further explains the important fact that, "This attitude is sometimes an expression of the clan habit surviving the destruction of clan-life (old plantation-life in which the white man was Chief and his negroes his clansman)."²⁴ The recollections of a former slave woman states, "Law, mammy don't hab no trouble like we all, 'cuz de white folks don't forgit her."²⁵ Granted, these are the rosy remembrances, but they were morally and spiritually uplifting during a time when such views were needed to bolster a society recuperating from devastation and reeling from racial problems. In Virginia Keane Bryce's (1861-1935) c. 1885 painting titled *The Charity Patient* (Plate 72) we find an image of the sort of paternalistic devotion towards former slaves that many whites liked to glorify. Born in Richmond, Virginia, Bryce was a student at The Ecole Balleroy and a pupil of Gerome from 1874 to 1878.²⁶ Bryce's painting shows her husband, Richmond Doctor Clarence Archibald Bryce (1849-1928), administering medical attention to an elderly black woman. The woman sits in a chair while the doctor feels her pulse. The woman is dressed in the same style of attire that was most often used in the portrayals of black mammies. She wears a kerchief around her head and a

²⁴Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 402.

²⁵Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1914. p.55.

²⁶James, G. Watson, Jr. "The Story Behind Virginia's Official Portrait of James Monroe." *Virginia and The Virginia Record*. (January 1955) 18-19,60. p.18.

white shawl around her neck which is tucked in at the waist. The doctor wears the suit and facial hair popular in the two decades following the Civil War.

Another woman artist of the period was Willie M. Chambers. Her painting *Uncle Hamp and His Cart, Montezuma, Georgia* (Plate 73) suggests a warm regard for the subject. A seamstress by profession, Chambers is believed to have been born in the late 1850s. Never married, she tended her shop while taking frequent breaks to visit her brother and paint in Montezuma. On one of these trips she painted Uncle Hamp Barnes, a landowner of substantial farmlands. Unlike Walker's wagon scenes, Uncle Hamp is portrayed as a dignified elderly gentleman who, though dressed in work clothes, commands one's respect. A "well-known figure in the Montezuma community," Uncle Hamp is pictured at the reins of a flat-bed ox-cart which carries a large woven basket full of cotton.²⁷ His seat on the wagon is an old crate. Wearing a derby and sitting straight, he gazes out at Miss Chambers and the viewer. Like the stereotypes portrayed by Walker, it is possible that Chambers has likewise portrayed a popular type of the period. In a *Harper's Magazine* article from the early 1880s, the situation of cotton farming in the new South was thoroughly discussed. In his description of various farming situations the author describes "Cuffee the darky farmer."²⁸ Cuffee is described thusly

There is no more interesting study in our agriculture than this same dusky, good-natured fellow - humble, patient, shrewd - as he drives into

²⁷Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1984. p. 53.

²⁸*The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine*. New York, New York: W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc., 1990. p. 13.

town with his...one bag of cotton... From this possession it is impossible to drive him, and to this possession he adds gradually as the seasons go by. He is not ambitious, however, to own large tracts of land, preferring the few acres that he has constantly under his eye, and to every foot of which he feels a rude attachment.²⁹

Uncle Hamp is described as the owner of "considerable acreage" and so one must assume that he was, contrary to the above description, ambitious. It is highly likely, however, that he did add to his land holdings gradually as the years went by, as this was a common practice in the years after the war. Whether or not the artist was interested in the subject for its public appeal only, she has shown a great deal of sensitivity in her avoidance of caricature and stereotyped props.

Other images of blacks as individuals were not so charitable or sentimental. Though seemingly benign, they expressed the prejudices of the day. An example of this is George Henry Clements' (1855 - 1935) painting of a black youth called *Sharpening the Knives*, 1881 (Plate 74). Clements was born in New Orleans where he worked as a clerk on the Cotton Exchange until becoming a full-time artist in the late 1870s. The Clements family owned a plantation near Opelousas, Louisiana, and the artist returned there in 1887 in order to paint the local scenes. In letters to art dealer J. Eastman Chase, Clements divulged, "Have been on the plantation a week now...Lots of dogs & cows & niggers to paint -- everything primitive and innocent, except myself."³⁰ Estill Pennington further reveals that when Clements wrote about the same

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Pennington, Estill Curtis. *Down River*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Co., 1991. p.117.

locale for an article in *Arts and Letters*, August 1887, he sugar coated his previous description in a high-minded Victorian manner.³¹ The description for the public included the passage, "...gleaming groups of negroes (and negresses...the Southern peasantry) delving and singing in the green fields and cattle browsing in pastures. . ."³² Both versions reveal the racism of the period; one is more crass, while the other abides by the proper etiquette of the period.

Without knowledge of Clements' attitudes, his painting *Sharpening the Knives* appears to be a record of a young man busily at work. Its colors are a pleasant harmony of muted oranges, greens and browns as seen through the dappled lighting of sun and shade. The brushstrokes are broad and impressionistic in their rendering of the figure and landscape and give the painting an interesting sense of texture. The painting appears a pleasant bit of genre until "the monotony of the work, and the depressing circumstances of the surrounding world, are fully realized," then "the divergence between the idyllic pastoral worker and the oppressed minority becomes apparent."³³ One anecdote which might help to bring light to the general knowledge of the social implications associated with Clements' painting is found in a Civil War era diary,

Eben dressed himself in his best and went at a run to meet his Yankee deliverers, so he said. At the gate he met a squad coming in. He had adorned himself with his watch and a chain, like the cordage of a ship, with a handful of gaudy seals. He knew the Yankees came to rob white people, but he thought they came to save niggers.

"Hand over that watch!" Minus his fine watch and chain, Eben

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 118.

³² *Ibid.* p. 117.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 118.

returned a sadder and wiser man. He was soon in his shirtsleeves, whistling at his knife board.³⁴

Clements' painting is not overtly or readily disturbing to today's viewer. However, *Prisoner*, 1876 (Plate 75), by Andreas Molinary is as disturbing today as it must have been during Reconstruction. Molinary (1847-1915) was born in Gibraltar and received art training at the Academy of Seville, in Spain, and at the Lucas Academy in Rome.³⁵ As a young man, he traveled to New Orleans where he stayed for the remainder of his life, marrying the artist Marie Seebold upon his deathbed.³⁶ The exact circumstances surrounding Molinary's painting of a black man bound and tied to a chair is not known. The prisoner sits on an ordinary household chair and appears to be seated in front of a masonry hearth. The man's mouth is agape, his eyes covered with a straw hat, his feet are bare and his clothing is patched. The coloration of his face indicates rather sunken and drawn features and this, along with his open mouth, give the strong impression of agony and suffering. For today's viewer, the painting probably evokes sympathy, shock and, perhaps, remorse. To the viewer of the Reconstruction period, however, the painting might have indicated justice.

One man who lived through Reconstruction in Louisiana described it as corrupt and "so dark a chapter in our national history, I do not like to think of it."³⁷ This man may have been referring, in part, to the 1866 riots in which nearly

³⁴Woodward, C. Vann, editor. *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*. New York: Yale University Press, 1994. p. 824.

³⁵*Louisiana Landscape and Genre Paintings of the 19th Century*. Shreveport, Louisiana: The R. W. Norton Art Gallery, 1981. p.29.

³⁶Pennington, Estill, Curtis. *Downriver*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Co., 1991. p. 139.

³⁷Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War*. p. 372.

two hundred blacks were killed throughout the state. Many of the problems between the races were attributed to the carpetbaggers. One such man, during a large political rally in 1869, was quoted as announcing, "It's no harm for a hungry coloured [sic] man to make a raid on a chicken-coop or corn-pile."³⁸ Such pronouncements did not lend themselves to the arousal of rational or legal conduct on the part of blacks or whites. The stories of wrong-doing during the period are often violent. The account of General Halleck to General Grant in April of 1865 reported that "negro corps" had committed "a number of atrocious rapes" and that "their influence on the coloured [sic] people is reported bad."³⁹ According to one man, the rape of white women by black men was a product of the Reconstruction period. He mentioned nothing of the innumerable black women who had been raped by whites during slavery and after. During this time, for better or worse, whites and blacks often took the law into their own hands. And it was in New Orleans in 1867 that the most widespread of secret white societies, the Knights of the White Camelia, was formed in response to the real and supposed threat of Negro leagues.⁴⁰ Perhaps only coincidence, 1876, the year that Molinary painted the *Prisoner*, is the same year that Reconstruction government was ended in Louisiana and the freed black was no longer free to be unscrupulously exploited by the carpetbagger "who bred discord between the races."⁴¹ The black as a political tool for Radical Republicans was now tied-up

³⁸Ibid. p. 316.

³⁹Ibid. p. 377.

⁴⁰Ibid. p. 268.

⁴¹Ibid. p. 325.

so-to-speak. The painting can also be read from another angle as this was also a time when blacks faced not only the end of Federal military protection, but new and greater restrictions on their power to buy land, vote and be educated.

Portrayals of Home Life

In spite of the unrest often found between the races, the home life of black families continued to arouse interest in white audiences. Often sentimentally envisioned, sometimes caricatured, sometimes portrayed as the noble peasant, whether sharecroppers or farm owners, the lifestyle of the black family was the subject of many paintings. Among the more sentimental images were those by John Adams Elder (1833-1895). Elder was born and raised in Fredericksburg, Virginia and studied in Düsseldorf with Emanuel Leutze from 1852 to 1856.⁴² Elder returned home in 1860. After Federal troops shelled Fredericksburg in 1862, he joined the Confederate Army where he was often sent to Richmond to make drawings for the Ordnance Department.⁴³ Elder's army career provided him with enough battle exposure to create such famous action paintings of the war as *The Battle of the Crater* and *After Appomattox*. In Elder's genre images of blacks after the war, we are presented with a gentler more sentimental side of the artist's vision. The artist liked to paint from sketches he made of his own observances and so we can suppose that *A Virginny Breakdown*, 1877 (Plate 76), was not an imagined scene.⁴⁴ The White's fascination with the music and dance

⁴²Chambers, Bruce W. "The Southern Artist and the Civil War." *The Southern Quarterly*. 24 (Fall-Winter 1985) 71-94. p. 76

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Davis, Edward Morris III. *A Retrospective Exhibition of the work of John Adams Elder*. Richmond, Virginia: The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,

of blacks is, again, made the subject of curiosity, awe and art. The main figure in the painting is a young boy who, silhouetted by an open door, dances on the wood floor within the family cabin. Three small children and two women are his audience while one of the children plays the esteemed part of 'musicianer.'⁴⁵ The dance the boy is doing is called a 'breakdown' and is described as being "a rapid shuffling dance, often a fast version of traditional forms such as the jig and reel...which was performed individually or in pairs...by both blacks and whites."⁴⁶

But Elder's painting is also important as a portrayal of the living conditions of blacks. To our eyes the family appears poor. But when one observes the tightly chinked walls, the wooden floor (a luxury to poor white and black farmers), and the fact that the women and children are home (rather than in the fields), while the men are away at work, then the viewer needs to realize that this family is not experiencing the dire poverty that many rural families endured. After the end of Reconstruction when land became unaffordable or denied to blacks, they were forced to sharecrop. Sharecropping took all available hands, women and children included, to work the fields and eke out a living. Knowing this and the fact that Elder painted from sketches, one wonders whether the scene is actually from the earlier days of Reconstruction rather than after. The same vagueness of period can be found in Elder's painting titled *Contentment* (Plate 77).

1947. p. 5.

⁴⁵Cimbala, Paul A. "Fortunate Bondsmen: black "Musicianers" And Their Role as an Antebellum Southern Plantation Slave Elite." *Southern Studies*. (Fall 1979) 291-303.

⁴⁶Poesch, Jessie J. "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South, 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983. p. 88.

Contentment portrays an elderly black man comfortably relaxing in his farmyard. A sow suckles her piglets nearby while the chickens peck the ground. Behind the man is a log cabin, outbuilding or combination thereof and beyond this is a field which disappears into a wooded distance. Is this a sentimental scene of before the war when slaveowners' preferred to see their slaves as the "most comfortably contented peasantry that ever encumbered the earth...?"⁴⁷ Or is this a man who, like Captain John M. Porter in Francis Blackwell Mayer's 1858 painting, *Independence, Squire Jack Porter*, is now lord over his own life and domain, however humble? Like Squire Jack, he is dressed in white shirt and vest. He also holds a pipe, though not as fancy as the Squire's. As well, he sits relaxing in the yard rather than on a stout porch, while surveying his property. In this case he directly regards a large sow suckling her piglets. Regardless of the exact message intended, the painting does convey the sentimental attitudes of the day and white society's continued view of blacks as belonging to the peasant class.

Contrary to the stout-looking family cabins depicted by Elder, the cabins painted by William Aiken Walker look as though one good gust of wind could blow them over. As is usual for Walker, he found a compositional formula which worked and he stayed with it. There are countless numbers of nearly identical paintings by the artist which show a black family outside of a ramshackle cabin. Although the cabins painted by Walker vary in their construction according to their locale, the activities of the family are the same. In the yard of *Cabin Scene*,

⁴⁷Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. p. 357.

c.1883 (Plate 78), and *Cabin Scene*, 1883 (Plate 79), the children play and the women wash clothes or prepare food while the laundry dries on a fence. A few chickens peck the ground of the dirt yard and a dog may stand or lie around. Most often, the chimney can be seen being buttressed by long poles, a method used to drop a burning chimney, often made of logs and mud, away from the house. And, there is usually a high pole erected near the house on which gourds are tied as homes for martins--a wise form of mosquito control. Almost as if to maintain a "proper" and essential distance between the races, Walker never undertook to paint the inside of one of these cabins or a moment of intimate interaction between his subjects. In contrast to Virginia natives Elder and Richard Norris Brooke, he merely represented the black as living close to nature and still bound to the soil that they had tilled for their masters.

Like Elder, Richard Norris Brooke concentrated on more intimate and personal views of the black family. Brooke's *A Pastoral Visit, Virginia*, 1881 (Plate 80), shows a handsome black family and their pastor gathered around the dining table. Unlike Walker's work, and to a lesser extent Elder's, Brooke's figures are individuals rather than generalized types. The artist's training with Leon Bonnat in France is revealed by the artist's desire to apply Academic Realism to American subject matter. In a letter, Brooke related his belief that

'Negro domestic life has been strangely abandoned to works of flimsy treatment and vulgar exaggeration...It has been my aim, while recognizing in proper measure the humorous features of my subject, to elevate it to that plane of sober and truthful treatment which, in French Art, has dignified the Peasant subjects of Jules Breton...'⁴⁸

⁴⁸Richard Norris Brooke to Directors of the Corcoran Gallery, April 18, 1881, curatorial files, Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Painted in Brooke's hometown of Warrenton, Virginia, the artist used locals as his models.⁴⁹ With the exception of these models and the stereotypical banjo, Brooke could have been painting the interior of a French peasant's home. The wood floor, corniced cupboard, glazed window and grand-sized hearth appear extravagant compared to Walker's lowly shacks or Elder's more substantial cabins. This is not to say that such accommodations for black families in the South did not exist, but from other extant artworks, diaries and letters they must have been rare. In any case, the painting portrays the family as tidy, humble, charitable, pious and, of course, music-loving. An important indication of the artist's motivation for this painting came many years later in a June 9, 1914 quote in the *Washington Times*. Brooke restated his intent for the picture as being "a sincere reproduction of a phase of pastoral life familiar to every American. But the war changed everything. The romance, the essential pastoral quality of Negro life was undermined. I had caught the last flashes of a fast changing social order."⁵⁰

Brooke summed up what appears to have been the main motive behind paintings of blacks during the Reconstruction period and immediately following it. Some of the sentimentalism and nostalgia may have been a symptom of the growing industrialism of the South, a symptom felt earlier in the North and in Europe. But much of the sentimental imagery has as much or more to do with

⁴⁹ *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute and Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1981. p. 67.

⁵⁰ *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute and Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1981. p. 67. Clipping from the *Washington Times*, June 9, 1914, in the vertical file of the Corcoran Gallery.

healing old wounds and regaining a sense of pride in the aftermath of a great Southern humiliation. A sense that blacks and whites were inherently different seems to pervade the images of the period. Some artists chose caricature and stereotyping to various degrees, while others, like George Henry Clements, veiled their true sentiments in the Victorian decorum of the day. Even a more sympathetic artist, such as Richard Norris Brooke, harbored ingrained attitudes which led him to write of "that peculiar humor which is characteristic of the race, and varies with the individual..."⁵¹ The Southern white artists of the period, regardless of their personal sentiments, reflect the varying attitudes of the general Southern public and reveal the turmoil present as the society sought footing in a new order. Whereas in earlier decades blacks were seen in pictures as being involved, usually in a menial way, in the white person's world, after 1870 depictions by Southern artists revealed a stricter segregation of the races and a careful division between the perceived domain of blacks and whites.

Images of Whites

Images of the world dominated by white persons reflect an acute awareness of the destitution brought about by the war, a glorification of youth and a desire to return to former social endeavors of prosperous times. Like the images of the destitute rural lives of former slaves, images of the white man's rural existence are also ones of poverty and decay. New Orleans was a major center for art during this period and from this area we find artists who concentrated on the agricultural poverty of a once-prosperous region. These

⁵¹Poesch, Jessie. "Growth and Development of the Old South, 1830-1900." *Painting in the South: 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum, 1983. p. 92

images are a stark contrast to the earlier utopian visions by Charles Giroux. The pictorial realism of these works was influenced by the French Barbizon School which sought to portray nature in its more coarse and basic reality.⁵²

Rural Life and Agrarian Desolation

The most influential of these Louisiana artists was Richard Clague (1821-1873). Clague's father was a successful and wealthy English businessman, his mother a member of a distinguished Creole family. After an education in New Orleans, Switzerland and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and an expedition down the Nile as a draughtsman, the artist settled in New Orleans. In 1861 the artist served as an officer in the Confederate Army. After the war, the artist found his property and holding depleted and relied entirely upon his income from painting to support his wife and children.⁵³

There is a sense of desolation and loss portrayed in Clague's paintings. Clague's paintings *Back of Algiers* (Plate 81), *Trapper's Cabin* (Plate 82) and *Spring Hill, Alabama* (Plate 83) are as much a record of the way people lived in the aftermath of the war as they are rustic, often depressing, landscapes. Pennington points out that the district called Algiers was "considered the plight of Louisiana throughout Reconstruction."⁵⁴ *Back of Algiers* is a scene of disintegration. The land has slowly given out leaving the already financially ruined yeoman farmer and planter in further difficulty. Gone are the images of

⁵²Pennington, Estill. *Downriver*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing, 1990. p. 78.

⁵³Groves, W. E. *Louisiana Painters and Paintings*. New Orleans, Louisiana: W. E. Groves Gallery, 1971. p. 31.

⁵⁴Pennington, Estill. *Downriver*. p. 80.

fertile plantations with their busy workers and orderly buildings. The painting, done in muted earth tones, shows a small cabin to which a long and ramshackle cow shed is attached. Three bony cows and a few chickens congregate around and in the shed while a white woman stands in the doorway of a much smaller outbuilding to the far left. Similarly, *Trapper's Cabin* shows a rural white family living in poor, crude and rough surroundings. Only *Spring Hill, Alabama* seems to offer a bit of optimism. The sun glows on tidy but modest and totally artless white buildings that stand along the roadside. The small house appears much as that rented by refugee plantation owners and described as "a little cottage with four diminutive rooms...little more than closets."⁵⁵ Down through a dirt yard a young girl descends a log-lined driveway. She is an heir of the reconstructing South.

Pictorially, the artists seemed able to indicate the disheartening mood and setting of Reconstruction. One *Harper's Magazine* writer described the bleak situation as "States and cities were prostrate under the heel of ignorance and fraud, crushed with taxes, and no improvements to show for them. It was ruin on the way to universal bankruptcy."⁵⁶ Like Clague, Marshall J. Smith, Jr. (1854-1923) painted the depleted and decaying South during Reconstruction. Smith was born in Norfolk, Virginia, and brought to New Orleans as a child. During the Civil War, he and his family fled to the interior of Mississippi, the same as many other prosperous Southerners. After attending college in Virginia, he studied

⁵⁵Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1914. p. 215.

⁵⁶*The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine*. New York, New York: W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc. p. 196.

with Richard Clague and briefly with Theodore Sidney Moise before spending four years training in Rome and Munich. In 1877, the artist returned to New Orleans where his painting *Bayou Farm* (Plate 84) reflects the similar run-down ruin, portrayed in tones of brown, as found in Clague's work. *Bayou Farm* shows the same undernourished cows, dilapidated buildings and wasted land out of which people still tried to eke a living. These paintings are important, if depressing, documents of the difficulties endured by farmers and planters all over the South. The ruined land is a testament to the privations people dealt with during this time. Another student of Clague's seems to have had a slightly more optimistic view of life. William Henry Buck (1840-1888) shows human productivity and comeback rather than deserted stagnation. His *Louisiana Landscape* (Plate 85) depicts a tiny one-room cottage. Skins are nailed to the walls to dry and a young child sits in the doorway. In the field in front of the house, under the shade of a towering live oak, the child's father is busy at work on a wooden paddock in back of which small rows of crops can be seen. Again, in *Mississippi Delta* (Plate 86) a large and grand old live oak takes precedence. But, beneath the tree, a hunter sits gazing out over the water while his dog sniffs around in the brush. Buck's *Fishing Camp on the Lake* (Plate 87) is full of the activity of men. They maneuver small sailing boats, fish from row boats or from along the shore, and otherwise carry on with the business of making a living. Buck's paintings seem to hail a return to and renewal of a more orderly and productive life along with the pursuit of such traditional Southern pleasures as hunting and fishing.

Social Settings

As in the decades before the war, the social and leisure activities that whites found pleasure in were again suitable subject matter for art. As in *Life on the Metairie*, 1868, large numbers of the population were ready and willing to gather for special occasions and celebrations. In 1872, Paul Poincy along with Victor Pierson created a large (72" x 108") oil painting called *Volunteer Firemen's Parade* (Plate 88). Painted with the aid of photographs taken during the event, the image is a grand panorama of detailed activity, as well as a group portrait of the distinguished men of the city.⁵⁷ In studying the painting, one clearly finds that, with the exception of one black woman, this was a gathering for white society. White women fill the balconies of the buildings lining the procession but do not participate in the street. The one black person depicted among the hundreds is a woman, and she is standing in the street. She is given further prominence by her position in the foreground and, especially, by her bright green dress which contrasts with the red, white and black uniforms of the men filling the streets around her. She appears to hold a tray with goods on it and is possibly selling sweets. Along with the all-white Carnival krewes and secret societies which gained prominence at this time, the display of so many white males gathered together for display might also be seen as a form of self-inflated pride and power as well as a possibly paranoid means of intimidating the black population. Often men's clubs such as the Pendleton Club and others in Virginia assembled together along with brass bands to march and countermarch "with the effect of magnifying numbers to the eyes of the negroes, who had had no

⁵⁷ Pennington, Estill. *Downriver*. p.128.

idea that so many white men were alive."⁵⁸ A Mississippi man reported that his club and many others had formed a procession at least two miles long, but that "the thing to be appreciated had to be seen, the carpetbaggers and negroes are evidently staggered."⁵⁹

Other activities depicting white men include their occupations and their particularly male pastimes. William Aiken Walker's *Cardplayers on the Steamboat*, 1880 (Plate 89), depicts the still popular game of poker. The custom on steamboats during this time was to separate "the ladies and the gentlemen by the length of an enormous saloon. The gulf between the men and women was as wide as ever."⁶⁰ The length of an average walled-in saloon-deck was 250 feet and at one far end the tables would be set for the male passengers. According to a male passenger of the period, the men would usually end up gathering near the stove, as is the case in this painting. He also described the interior of the saloon as having white ribs which were upheld by white ornate supports with gilded pendants and rows of ornate colored glass windows and doors cut alternately close beside one another.⁶¹ All these details are represented in Walker's painting. As for the crates and boxes in the corner behind the men, it was not unusual for a steamboat to be so loaded with freight that it overran the passenger areas. Without the written accounts of steamboat

⁵⁸Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War*. p.361.

⁵⁹Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. p. 259.

⁶⁰*The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine*. New York, New York: W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc. p. 315.

⁶¹*Ibid.*

travel and other artworks, one would not, today, see an indication of its luxury in Walker's painting. His coarse handling of the figures and details give more the appearance of a back room in some unknown establishment.

Another scene of masculine activities during the period is found in the painting *Manegold Tent*, 1888 (Plate 90). It is an unusual painting portraying the Manegold family demonstrating their trade.⁶² The painting features five men and one woman working in a confectionery tent. Their shirt sleeves are rolled up and they wear aprons. The sign around the tent's valance advertises popcorn, homemade candies and ice cream. The Manegolds are known to have had a shop in downtown Montgomery, Alabama, from 1870 until 1914. And whether or not this scene in the tent was for some special occasion is unknown. It seems doubtful, however, that this would be a usual place for business, and with the United States flags flying from the tent posts one might guess it was the fourth of July. The artist, P. Duerimc, is unknown and the painting, until 1984, remained in the Manegold family. The painting is fairly animated, with the four sons of John Manegold, Sr. flanking their father in casual poses and happy faces. Even the family dog is included in the picture and sits squarely in front of the tent's red counter. Only the bearded Mr. Manegold and the unidentified woman (Mrs. Manegold?) appear to maintain a Victorian sternness of expression. The painting is unusual for its portrayal of a woman working outside the home. Perhaps, because it was the family business or maybe because so many women

⁶²Information on who and what is depicted came from the accession records of the *Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery*, 01 Columbus Street, Montgomery, Alabama. Carole A. King, Curator.

had to go to work after the war that an image of a woman working in a public place might not be seen as an impropriety or a reason for disgrace.

In the decades before the war images of Southern white women working outside the home, or even in it, was considered ungentleel. It was a source of disgrace and embarrassment to many men in the South that their wives and daughters had to turn their "talents to account in mending family fortunes."⁶³ One woman described her father's sentiment as "his chivalrous nature had always revolted from the sight of a woman doing hard work."⁶⁴ Therefore, the images of white women that are found during this period are most often images of them at leisure. In Poincy's *Volunteer Firemen's Parade* the women are seated comfortably along the balconies. In *Surf Bathing, Grand Isle*, circa 1870 (Plate 91), by John Genin, women are shown enjoying the beach. Genin was born in France in 1830. It is known that the artist was in this country as early as 1870. In 1876 he was listed in the New Orleans directory as a portrait, historical and genre painter with a studio at 150 Canal Street. The artist spent the remainder of his life in New Orleans where he died in 1895.⁶⁵ Grand Isle was a favorite vacation spot with families from New Orleans and elsewhere in the South. The sea and the sea air were believed to be healthy compared with the humid and often disease-ridden urban areas of the South. Genin's painting shows a long expanse of beach, beginning in the middle forefront, curving

⁶³Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 111

⁶⁴Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1914. p. 20.

⁶⁵Fielding, Mantle. *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers*. Poughkeepsie, New York: Apollo, 1987. p.319.

around to the left and disappearing into the distance. The entire beach is cluttered with tree stumps, large logs and other driftwood while overhead rain clouds are building in an effort to block the sun. Amongst the wood debris, small wooden changing huts, some painted white, break up the flat landscape. Two women in street clothes, carrying parasols, walk along behind one of these huts in the foreground. Today's viewer must wonder at their stamina and ability to withstand the heat as they trek along the beach in long cumbersome skirts. Running toward the water and her mother, a young girl wears the black bathing costume of the day. While the child's shins and shoulders are bare, a group of women wading in the water appear to be modestly covered from head to toe.

In another painting of modest feminine social activity, William Buck, a contemporary of Genin, depicts ladies out for an afternoon stroll in *Summer Resort* (Plate 92). Shaded by cypress and other moss covered trees, ladies in long white dresses and hats stroll along a wooded pathway or sit and chat on a bench. One brave woman stands on a very precarious-looking bridge which crosses a creek or a swamp and is partially held aloft by fallen trees and other debris. The ladies' dress style, with draped upper skirt, was new to Southern women after the war, and match those portrayed in Genin's painting. A visitor to New Orleans, in the 1880s, reported on the suburban resorts surrounding the city. In particular, he spoke of one on the West End of Lake Pontchartrain whose "way lies through cypress swamp and palmetto thicket."⁶⁶ Pass Christian on the Mississippi River was another popular resort and like the West

⁶⁶Warner, Charles Dudley. "New Orleans." *Harper's NewMonthly Magazine*. 74 (December 1886 - May 1887) 186-206. p. 203.

End, boasted restaurants, dancing halls, boat-houses, and "semi-tropical gardens very prettily laid out in walks." ⁶⁷ The resorts were enjoyed by wealthy local families and tourists from other parts of the South since before the Civil War. One family from Mississippi traveled to Pass Christian every summer for nearly ten years before the war. One of the children reported in her memoirs that "it was a sort of paradise to the children" where they ran wild, swam, crabbed and sailed in the mornings but had to be civilized and have dance lessons and walks with the family in the afternoons.⁶⁸ It was this sort of carefree innocence that so many Southern children lost during the war, whether rich or poor. And, it was a longing for this lost innocence that led to the sentimentality and glorification of childhood found in the post-war period.

Glorification of Youth

The renewal of the South and the sentimentality brought about by the lost cause were two factors influencing images of children during the 1870s and 1880s. It is not until this period that one finds images, other than portraits, specifically of children and youths. Up until this point in the South, children and women seem to have been rarely seen or heard. Suddenly, as is always the case with humanity, in the wake of so much death and destruction, the lives of children take on a new heightened meaning. In 1872, William Aiken Walker painted *Boy With Goat* (Plate 93), an image of a sweet-faced young boy with a small hairy goat. The child holds a switch in one hand and the goat's reins in

⁶⁷ibid.

⁶⁸Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1914. p. 108.

another. Apparently used for pulling a cart, the goat and his master appear to stand in front of a small rickety cart loaded with brush. The image lacks the caricature and humor that is found in Walker's portrayal of black children. Instead, it is a romantic portrayal of a child and his pint-sized beast of burden in a pastoral landscape of cloud swept skies and lush green fields. During this period Walker painted several other images of young boys working as newsboys or street musicians. His attention to this subject matter might possibly have been a symptom of the South's pride in their determination to overcome the poverty and demoralization of the war, or just another attempt on Walker's part to capitalize on a theme which had already been popular in the North for many years.

Oddly, Walker and other artists avoided any overt images of white men, women or children doing manual labor. We know from first-hand accounts that food was often scarce after the war and that the white South, regardless of previous social or financial status, labored hard and long just to put a little food on the table. One possible reason for this omission was suggested by a woman who was a child during the war and matured into adulthood during Reconstruction. She related that, during Reconstruction, wonderful stories were sent North of the new advantages created for blacks but the plight of whites was ignored. There were no such stories or "pictures of fields where white women and children in harness dragged plows through furrows; the artists did not portray white children in the field wistfully watching black children trooping by to school; had such pictures gone North in the sixties and seventies...some would

have said 'Just retribution for the whites.'⁶⁹ Clearly, fear of Northern prejudice may have played as big a role as pride in the avoidance of creating images of whites performing the manual labor previously done by slaves.

While Walker's genre scenes of children tend to center around the poor but industrious and enterprising, other artists such as John Beaufain Irving, Robert Loftin Newman and Stephen Seymour Thomas concentrated on the more light-hearted and spiritual aspects of childhood. The traditional chivalric view of children and women intimated that they were inexperienced and therefore, pure and therefore in need of male protection. But, during the war these pure and inexperienced beings were, for all intents and purposes, deserted by their protectors. Thus, men lost their standing as protectors of the household, women and children became self-sufficient and resourceful and the revered family order came tumbling down. The ideal Southern childhood was now a thing of the past, but in spite of the hardships faced by children artists picked up on their uncanny ability to dream and play in spite of their surroundings. Although the surroundings in John Beaufain Irving's *The Patient Fisherboy*, 1873 (Plate 94), appear upscale and comfortable, the setting is in the North and the child is the son of Southerners whose families had been financially ruined by the war. Southerner's in the North at this time often faced a hostile environment. Like Irving's *Little Johnny Reb* of 1866 indicates, the family retained its strong Southern allegiance although living in New York City where an artist had a better chance of making a living. *The Patient Fisherboy* shows a small chubby child asleep in a chair in the family parlor. The child's arm dangles over the edge of

⁶⁹Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 297

the chair and his hand holds onto a miniature fishing pole to which is attached a line and bobber which floats in a bowl of water. Although the painting is, essentially, a sentimentally sweet image of childhood, it may also be recalling the old days in the South when little boys had the time and means to go fishing. In New York City it is unlikely a child would find a convenient creek or pond in which to fish. Thus for Irving, who was also a painter of the vanished courts of Europe, the image may have indicated, like *Little Johnny Reb*, which is the same size and of a nearly identical child, a dream for the return of the Old South and its laid-back ways.

Lacking the sentimentality and political overtones of Irving's paintings, Robert Loftin Newman (1827 - 1912) painted the figure of a little girl blowing bubbles. Born in Richmond, Virginia and raised in Clarksville, Tennessee, the artist traveled to Paris in 1850. There, during stays in 1851 and 1854, he studied with Thomas Couture and was acquainted with the Barbizon painter Jean Francois Millet. While still living in Clarksville, the artist was conscripted into the Confederate army in 1864. The artist was a friend of Albert Pinkham Ryder and, like Ryder, was protected by a circle of friends, including William Merritt Chase, allowing him to work in the isolation he apparently desired.⁷⁰ His canvases are primarily small and dark with radiant colors which seem to appear from the dim with the aid of an unseen light source. Although the canvas of *Girl Blowing Soap Bubbles* (Plate 95) is dark and the child somewhat obscured by Newman's painterly and abstract style, a sense of joy and exuberance can be

⁷⁰Chambers, Bruce. *Art and Artists of the South*. Columbia, South Carolina: The University of South Carolina Press, 1984. p. 94.

found in the child's uplifted head and distracted absorption in the act of blowing bubbles. Barefooted, wearing a red skirt highlighted by pink and a white apron and blouse, the child sits on what might be a boulder. With one leg planted firmly on the ground, the other swinging above it, she leans back supported by one hand while the other hand firmly grasps the bubble pipe. As much as she is almost obscured by the darkness, she appears completely oblivious to the viewer, lost in her own world of magically floating and iridescent bubbles.

Another painting of a little girl absorbed in activity is *Weighing the Puppy*, 1884 (Plate 96), by Stephen Seymour Thomas (1868 -1956). Thomas was born in San Augustine on the eastern border of Texas. At the time of *Weighing the Puppy*, the artist was only fifteen and had received no formal art training. In later years, he studied and lived in New York, Rome, Paris and London, only returning to San Augustine to visit.⁷¹ *Weighing the Puppy* is remarkable considering the artist's youth and lack of training. He very skillfully captured the textures, details and three dimensionality of the family kitchen's furnishings and occupants. The detailed kitchen is a rare and honest view of domestic life during the late nineteenth century. Probably still a separate building from the main house, the kitchen has a wide wood plank floor and stuccoed walls. A large black cast iron stove, pots and pans hanging on the wall behind it, sets on a bed of bricks which have been inlaid into the floor. In the corner of the room is an open corner cabinet with various kitchen implements including an oil lamp, tea pot and jars lining its shelves. Along the wall is a sturdy table with a large wood

⁷¹Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, the Nineteenth Century*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1967. pp. 168-169.

bowl used for kneading bread. A straw broom stands nearby. In the middle of the room stands a little girl, the artist's sister, who is totally engrossed in weighing the tiny puppy which she has placed in a small basket and attached to a hand-held hanging scale. To the right of the child sits the mother dog who watches the proceedings with the utmost interest and perhaps concern. While the little girl is expressionless with her eyes fixed on the scale, it is the interplay between the dog and its puppy that give the painting its expression of warmth and animation.

In Carl G. von Iwonski's *The Schenck Sisters*, 1870 (Plate 97), there is no lack of animation among the human subjects. It is the animation of the two girls which makes the painting more than a portrait. The interplay between the sisters and the props shown indicate an aspect of social behavior and the romantic pastimes of young women of high social status. Attired in fancy pre-war styled party dresses with full skirts and off-the-shoulder bodices, the girls stand behind a table covered with Valentines. The girls' older styled dresses make clear the post-war frugality practiced by the family. Apparently on their way to a St. Valentine's Day party, the blonde sister holds a valentine which the brunette sister wishes to see. The blonde girl, however, is not too sure she wishes to share as she holds the letter out of reach of her sister and gives a sort of 'now now' gesture with her other hand. With one hand emphatically on her sister's shoulder and the other reaching around her sister's skirt in an effort to acquire the letter, the brunette verbally tries to convince her sister to give up the secret. The painting is a charming display of the antics of young women during their courting years, a popular subject in the literature and legend of the South. The painting is also a testimony to the efforts Southern women exhibited to be gay

and charming in spite of difficulties. Even in the aftermath of the war, "women felt it the part of love and patriotism to give good cheer", to throw "starvation parties," and to, generally, uphold the old tradition of the Southerner as "minstrel, lover, and cavalier."⁷²

Thoughts of love are also, though quite differently, represented in Thomas Satterwhite Noble's 1877 painting *Idle Dreams* (Plate 98). The title suggests that a typically Victorian moral lesson might be found within the painting. The Romantic literature lying at the girl's heel is the only indication that she is neglecting her work in favor of fanciful dreams. Judging by the coarseness of her hands, her rolled sleeves, tousled hair and rough shoes, one might assume that this is a young working-class or yeoman girl. However, it is doubtful that such a girl would have access to novels and quite possibly not even have the education required to read them.⁷³ Instead, this may be a girl whose family has had a change of fortunes which require her to take up the housemaid's duties. In the South a housemaid's work was never considered a part of human refinement. However, after the war women and girls adjusted themselves to the long-held Northern ethic which featured the kitchen as the heart of the household where work done there "became nurture and the woman's prescribed toil became a mission of love."⁷⁴ If this is the lesson then this young woman is failing miserably. Around her is the evidence of neglected duties. An empty

⁷²Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War*. pp. 167-175.

⁷³*ibid.* The author states that "the seventies found few or no rural districts without a quota of half-grown lads and lassies unable to read and write." p. 298

⁷⁴Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. p. 98.

bowl and a paring knife sit on the chair across from her while leeks, carrots and other vegetables lie on the floor and crowd the table upon which she rests her head. With the destruction of the old agricultural order of plantations and industrialization on the rise, the entire social system which had esteemed the non-laboring white woman was a fast-fading memory. While this young woman may dream of some handsome cavalier dashing in to rescue her from her drudgery, the undeniable truth was that she would probably become another housewife dependent upon herself to complete chores.

Beginning with the war, the South went through drastic social and economic upheaval. After the war, the attainment of utopia could no longer be had on the backs of slaves and with this change came the decline of clan values and the rise of commercial values. No longer were idle dreams and lives of leisure feasible or as socially acceptable. Instead, as one gentleman of the period put it, "the Southerner, when he goes into business, throws the same ardor into it that forty years ago he did into his fun, or courting, or fighting."⁷⁵ As one woman lamented, the Southern man was fast becoming "a money-maker."⁷⁶ Women "learned to practice small economies in poverty"⁷⁷ as they adjusted to lost incomes, lost husbands or both. Whites tended to reminisce about the days of chivalry before the war while having to adjust to new social and political orders. Especially problematic for whites was the fact that the black slave or

⁷⁵"Here and There in The South." *The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine*. New York: W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc. p. 488.

⁷⁶Avary. *Dixie After the War*. p. 167.

⁷⁷"Here and There in The South." *The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine*. New York: W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc. p. 490.

servant was no longer a common part of the white household or under its jurisdiction. For millions of blacks the problem was to readjust to being self-governed in their family and business affairs and to find the resources to support themselves. Blacks found work as, among other things, manual laborers along the river front, cooks in restaurants, business owners, farmers or most often as sharecroppers.

The images of blacks, in groups and as individuals, are far more common during the 1870s and 1880s than they were in earlier decades. In group paintings, artists are divided between depicting them as derelict and caricatured cotton workers in their rightful habitat, showing them in the old idyllic role as picturesque and contented peasants or sympathetic portrayals of honest hard-working farmers. Paintings of individuals simply echo old stereotypes. One striking difference in depictions of blacks by Southern painters during this period and earlier periods is the increase in the numbers of paintings supporting racist views of blacks as slovenly, lazy, ignorant, criminal, etc. In contrast, immediately after the war, during the 1860s, pictures tended toward showing the wrongs of slavery or supporting its romantic idyll. The images of whites and their world tends to bemoan the ruined land and acknowledge poor living conditions while never really showing the physical state of the people. Instead, the pictures of white people play up the return to social activities and business and the appreciation of childhood. Of sad significance, the images of blacks and whites strongly reflect the growing segregation of the races, while the numbers and popularity of derogatory images of blacks seem to represent a backlash of fear and hatred against people who were formerly publicly promoted as being contented and trustworthy.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The nineteenth-century South, through reality, myth, and tradition, possessed a character unique from the rest of the country. The imprint of seventeenth-century England's rigidly hierarchical and clan-dominated world had never quite worn off in the South. Primarily agrarian and centered around nearly self-sufficient remote households, the South was family-centered and esteemed qualities related to gender (gentle and gay women, gallant and brave men); bloodlines (who one was accounted for more than what one had accomplished); community ranking (the meter of one's success) and "honor, the ethical system that embraced" all these qualities.¹ Gentility and chivalry, a sense of refinement and gallantry pervade much of the pre-war and war years' art. Before the war, pride in the land and the rural way of life are also prominent sentiments portrayed as idyllic visions of agrarian utopias populated by generic and content slave laborers. After the war, mournful images of the desolation and poverty of the land are prominent. Politics play an increasing role in depictions from the 1830s to the 1880s ranging from pre-war debates and opinions to the more immediate effects of reconstruction. The lives of women, children and blacks are also presented in more numbers as the decades pass. After the traditionally sheltered and protected life of children is destroyed by the war, depictions of

¹Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. "The Antebellum South as a 'Culture of Courage'." *Southern Studies*. (Fall 1981): 213-246. p. 223-224.

them go from rare in the 1830s to increasingly common from the mid-1860s and after. The portrayals of blacks also proceed from being merely anonymous backdrops of the idyllic Southern world to objects of curiosity just before the war. During the war, blacks are portrayed as humble and trustworthy servants. But, after the war portrayals become harsher, varying, primarily, between degrading caricatures and paranoid portrayals of character and current living conditions and romantic visions of their supposedly past contentment and charm as slaves. A few images nobly and very boldly portray the evils of the South's peculiar institution, a subject strictly off-limits before the war. Perhaps, not so oddly, the activities of white men, which dominate the artworks from the 1830s through the 1850s decrease greatly as the images of blacks, women and children become more prevalent. Although Southern artists shared ideas of style and technique with artists from the North and, notably, Europe, their works reflect their own Southern heritage. The trends in their artworks reflect the prominent Southern social and political convictions of the day while espousing and supporting those convictions. Although, essentially ignored, the study of Southern genre is important in helping to reveal and understand the sentiments and character of the South.

This study adds to the existing scholarship by presenting the first known chronological view of exclusively Southern genre images by Southern artists from the nineteenth century, showing stylistic, iconographical, and iconological trends. The exploration of style, iconography and iconology was carried out by compiling as many genre works as possible per decade. Each decade was then studied and the works were separated by dominant trends in subject matter. Once the works were separated by subject matter, research was carried out to

determine the political and/or social implications associated with and affecting each image. It was found through the research of historical documents and the findings of other scholars that many of the artworks carried political overtones reflecting the dominant thought of the white ruling class during the period.

Insight into the significance and interpretation of other artworks was arrived at by the study of dominant personal beliefs and social practices as revealed in the diaries and recollections of those living during the time period.

This study contributes a unique perspective which, while also relating the art to the living conditions and social progression of blacks, women and children, shows that the images Southerners created of their own lives and lifestyles possessed and reflected a unique political, philosophical and social perspective and tradition of honor and family. It is believed that this study has established a framework from which further research on Southern artists and art might radiate while encouraging further research and discoveries of Southern genre which will in turn add to the scope of this study.



Plate 1. *View Along the East Battery, Charleston, S. Barnard, 1831*
Oil on canvas. Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery.



Plate 2. *Skating Scene*, John Toole, c. 1835
Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.



Plate 3. *Hunters*, Martha Gillespie Fain, 1836
East Tennessee Historical Society

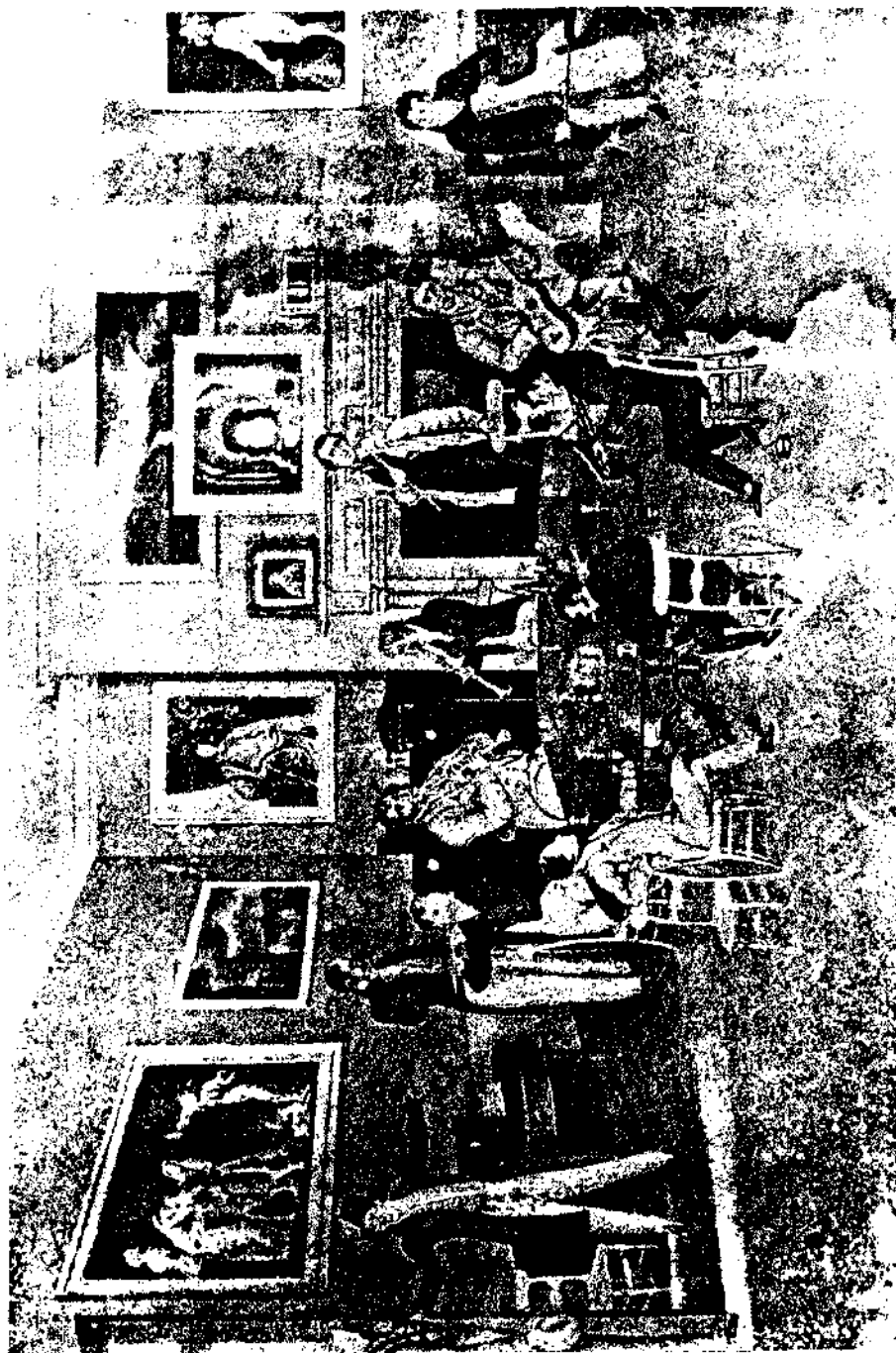


Plate 4. *Friends and Amateurs in Musik*, Thomas Middleton, c. 1835
Wash drawing with white, Gibbs Art Museum, Charleston, S.C.



Plate 5. *JK Polk 1840/Knoxville Tenn.*, unknown, c. 1840-50
Oil on canvas, Tennessee State Museum, Nashville

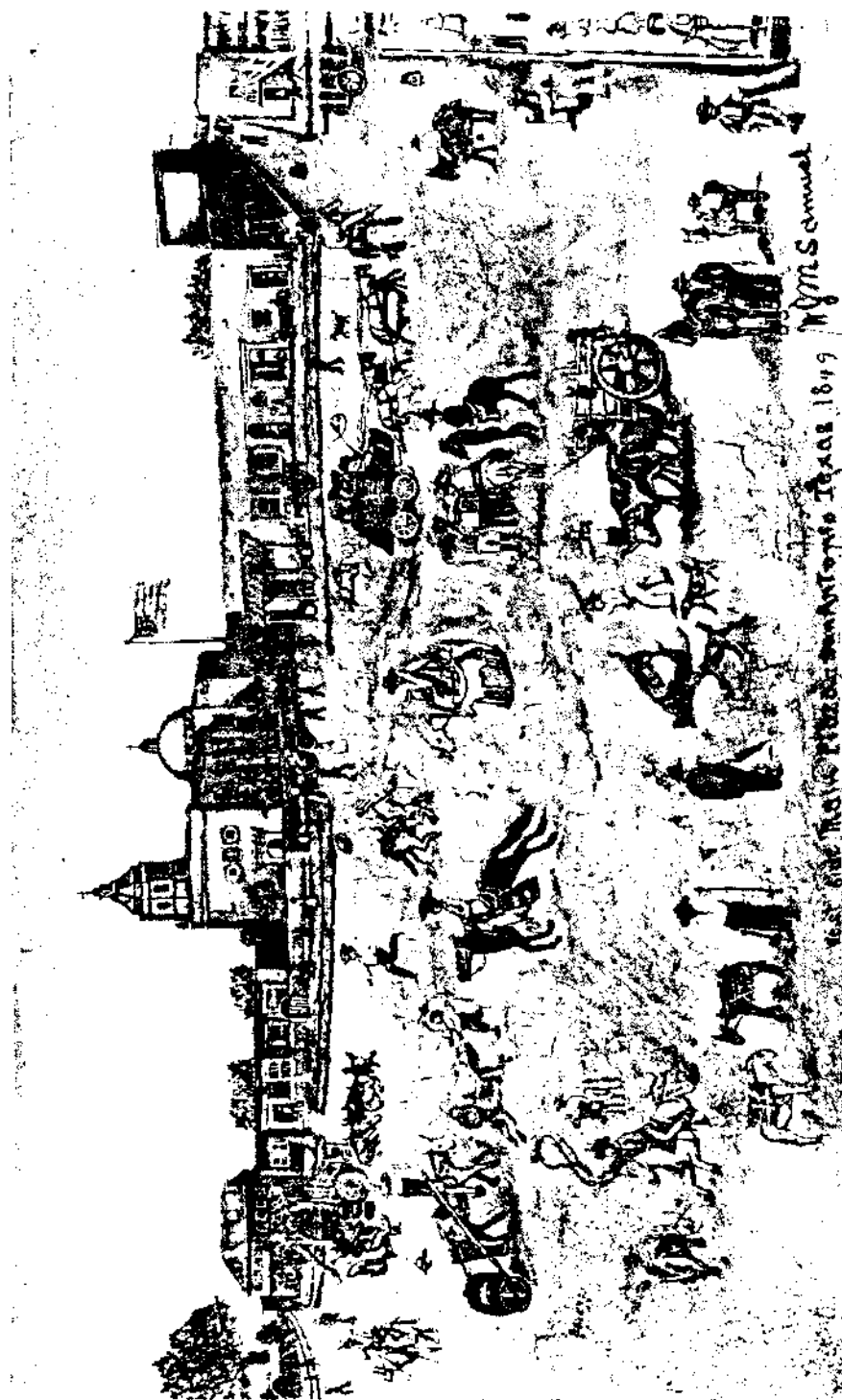


Plate 6. West Side Main Plaza, San Antonio, Texas, William M. G. Samuel, 1849
Oil, Witte Museum, San Antonio, Texas.



Plate 7. *East Side Plaza at San Antonio*, William M. G. Samuel, 1849
Oil, Witte Museum, San Antonio, Texas

HAULING THE WHOLEWEEKS' PICKING

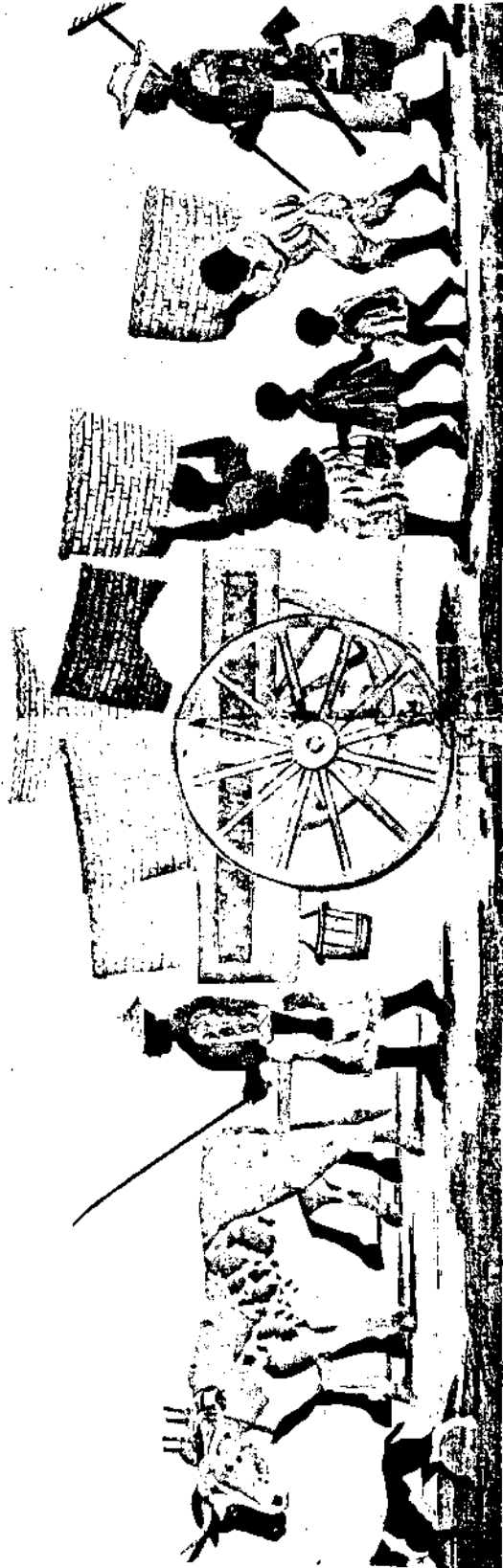


Plate 8. *Hauling the Whole Week's Picking*, William Henry Brown, c. 1842
Silhouette cutouts with watercolor, Historic New Orleans Collection



Plate 9. *Mrs. Sarah Vick on Horseback*, William Henry Brown, c. 1842
Silhouette cutouts with watercolor, Historic New Orleans Collection



Plate 10. *Hunting Scene*, Mary Catherine Noel
Watercolor on velvet, Salem Academy and College, North Carolina



Plate 11. *The Jolly Flatboatmen*, George Caleb Bingham, 1846
Oil on canvas, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Plate 12. *View of Athens from Carr's Hill*, George Cooke, c. 1845
Oil on canvas, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia

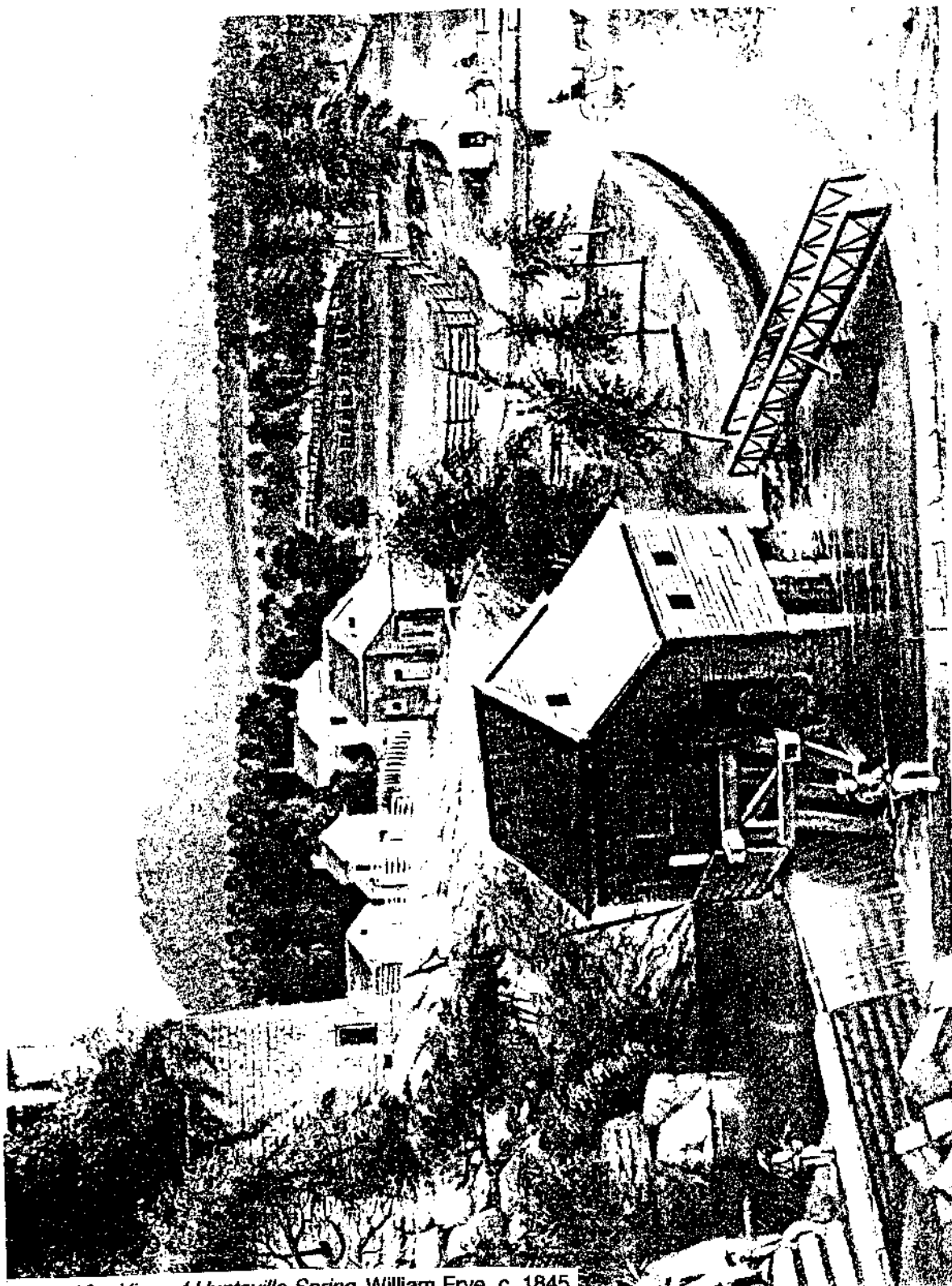


Plate 13. *View of Huntsville Spring*, William Frye, c. 1845
Oil on canvas, collection of Harry M. Rhett, Jr.



Plate 14. *River Plantation*, T. Addison Richards, c. 1845
Oil on canvas, private collection



Plate 15. *The Last Communion of Henry Clay*, Robert Weir, 1852
Oil on canvas, Robert M. Hicklin Jr., Inc., Spartanburg, South Carolina

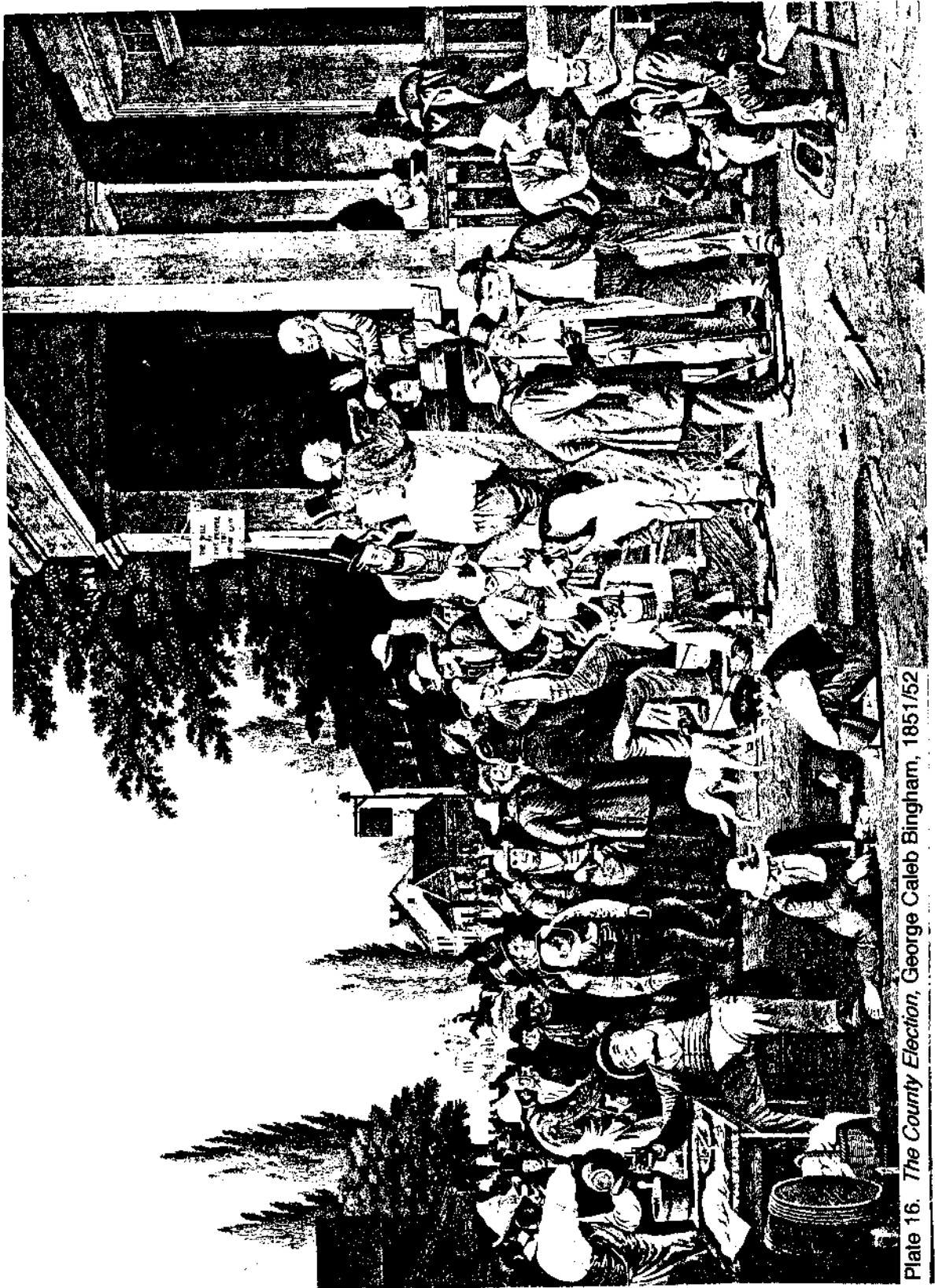


Plate 16. *The County Election, George Caleb Bingham, 1851/52*



Plate 18. *Canvassing for a Vote*, George Caleb Bingham, 1852
Oil on canvas, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri



Plate 19. *Leisure and Labor*, Francis Blackwell Mayer, 1858
Oil on canvas, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Plate 20. *Fort Martin Scott*, Richard Petri, 1857
Oil on canvas

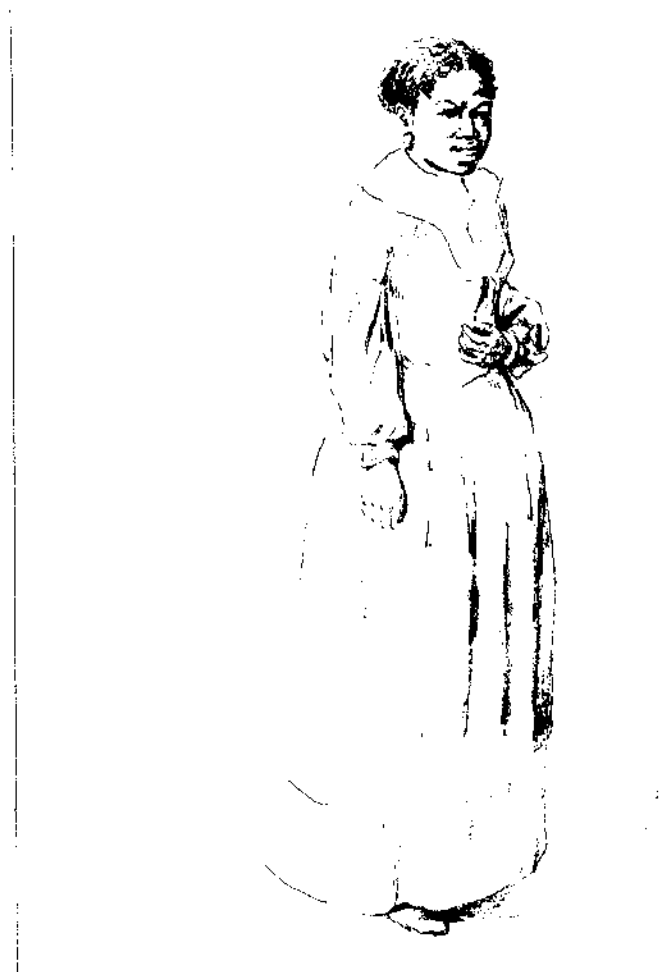
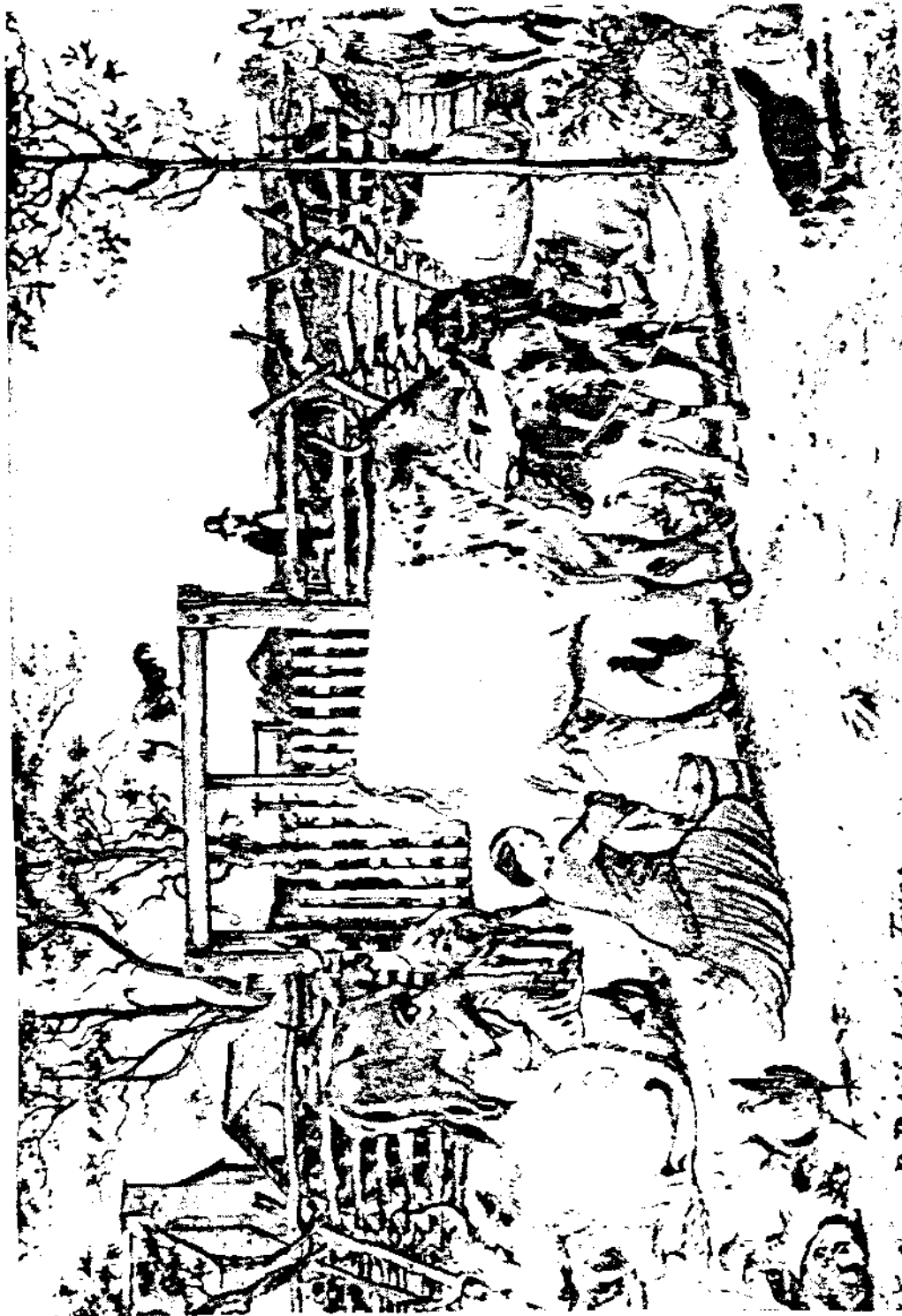


Plate 21. *Negro Girl with White Scarf*, David Hunter Strother
Ink wash drawing, private collection



Plate 22. *Mrs. John Bell Hamilton*, William Browning Cooper, 1853
Oil on canvas, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Williams Cater, Jr., Birmingham, Alabama



R. Petri, Austin - Texas.
Plate 23. *The Pioneer Cowpen, Richard Petri*



Plate 24. *Going Visiting*, Richard Pein



Plate 25. *Springs in Virginia #1*, artist unknown



Plate 26. Theatre at the Old Casino Club, San Antonio, Texas, Carl G. von Iworski

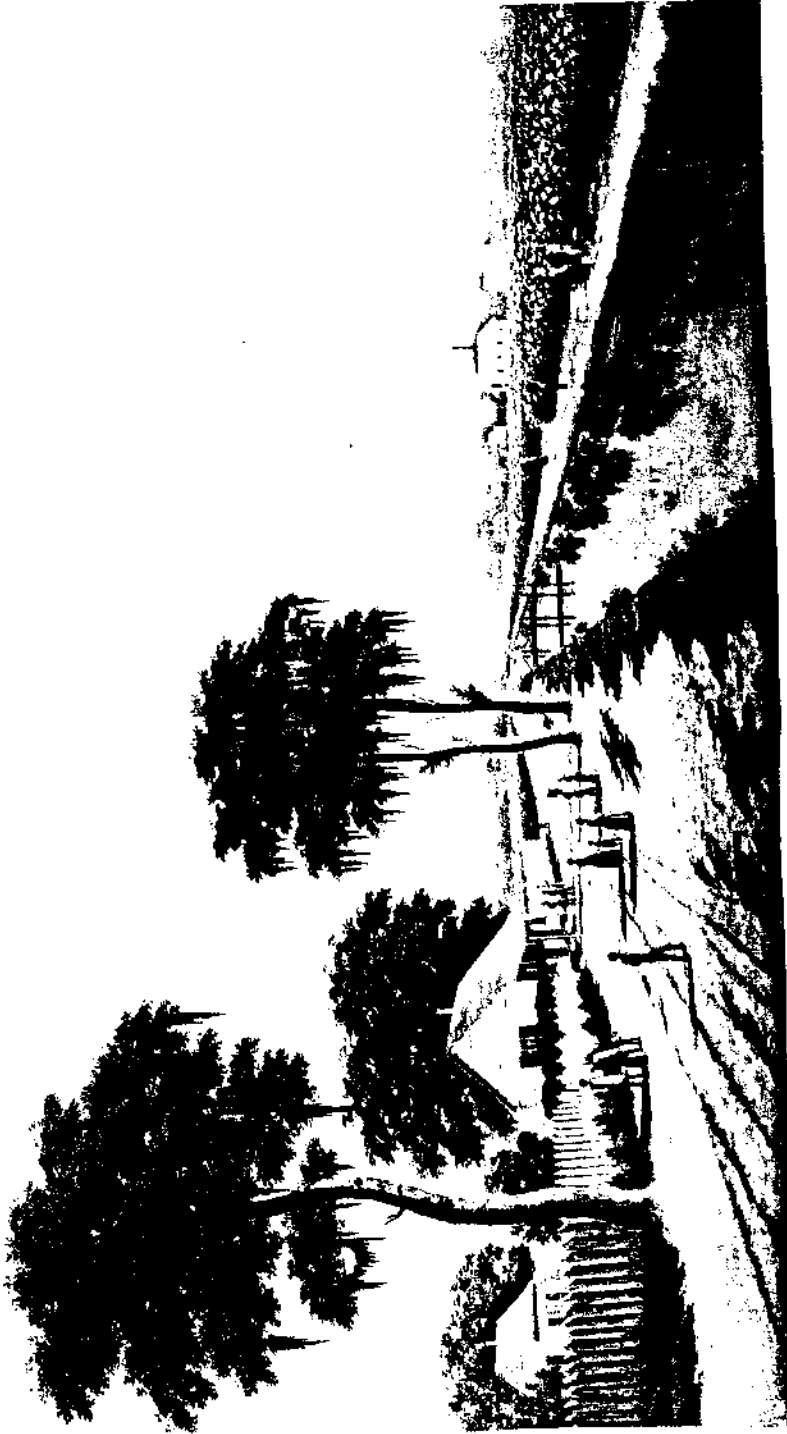


Plate 27. *Cotton Plantation*, Charles Giroux, c. 1850
Oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Plate 28. *Life on the Plantation*, artist unknown
Collection of W. E. Groves



Plate 29. *The Horse Camp in the Dismal Swamp*, 1856
Ink wash drawing, private collection

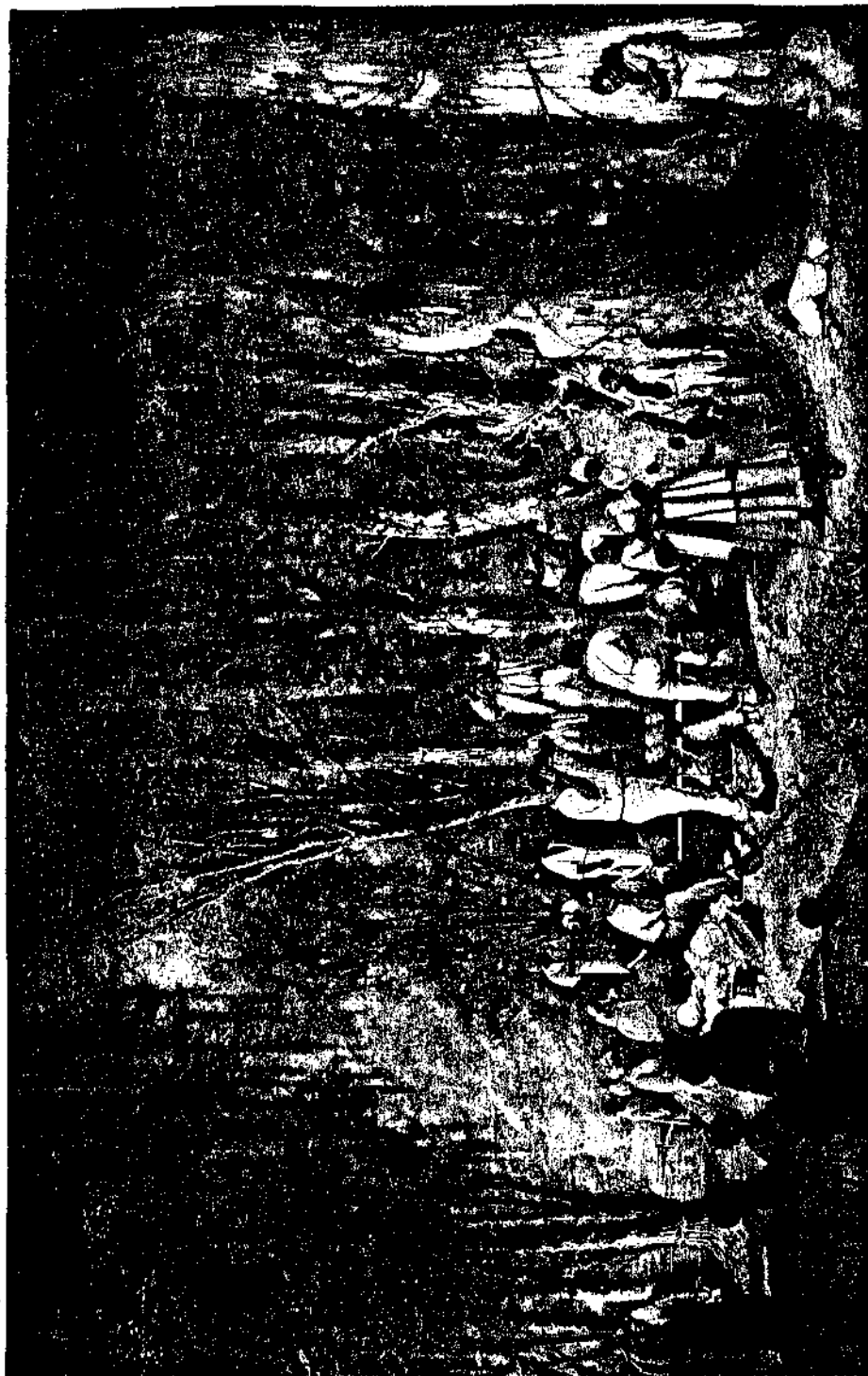


Plate 30. *A Plantation Burial*, John Antrobus, 1860
Oil on canvas, The Historic New Orleans Collection



Plate 31. *Independence*, Squire Jack Porter, Francis Blackwell Mayer, 1858
Oft on millboard, National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.



Plate 32. *Marion's Camp*, William D. Washington, 1859
Oil sketch, University of South Carolina, Columbia

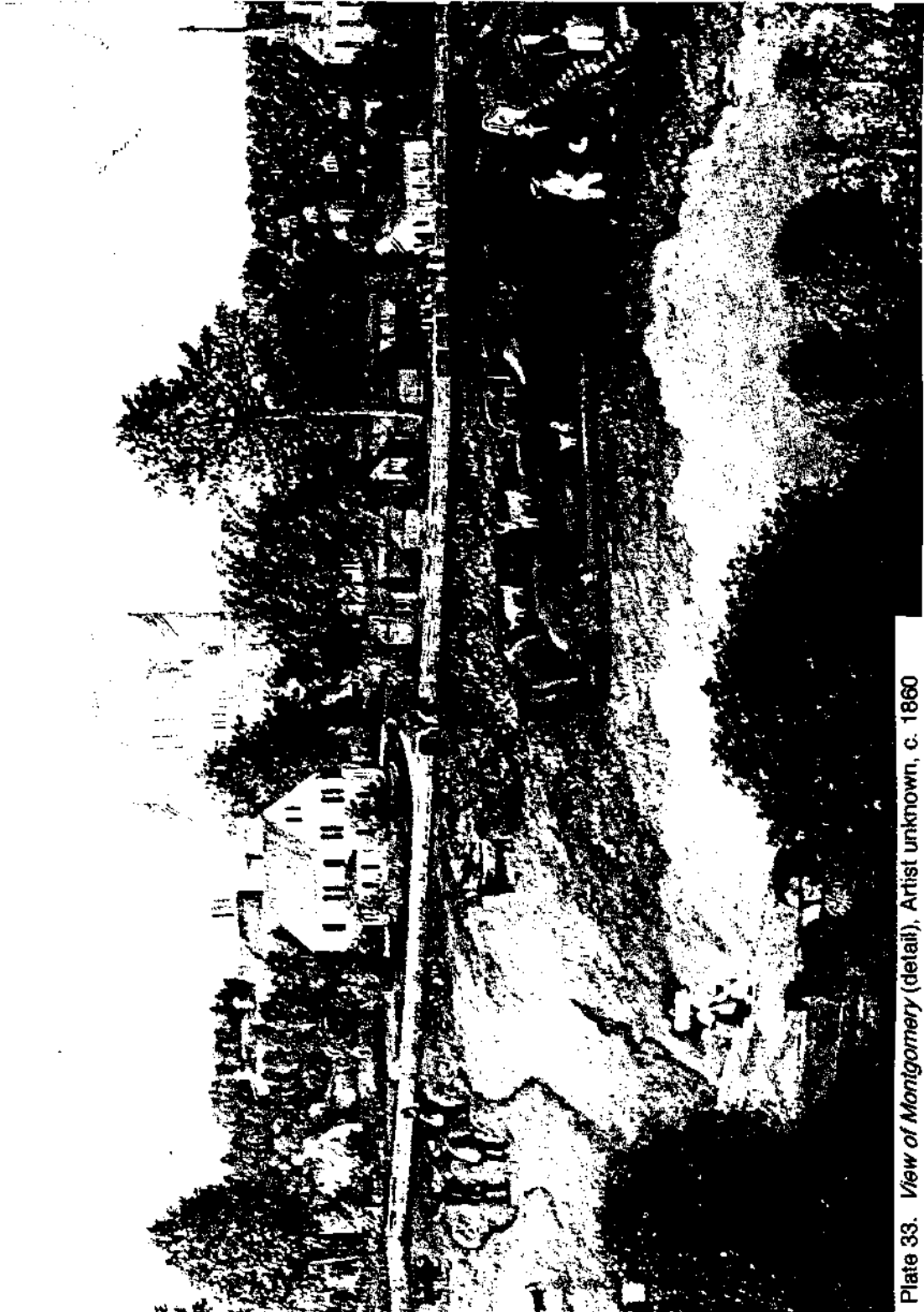


Plate 33. *View of Montgomery* (detail), Artist unknown, c. 1860
Oil on canvas, Collection of Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery



Plate 33. *View of Montgomery*, Artist unknown, c. 1860
Oil on canvas, Collection of Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery



Plate 34. *Camp near Corinth Mississippi*, Conrad Wise Chapman, 1862
Oil on board, Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia



Plate 35. *Camp, 59th Virginia Infantry, Diascund Bridge*, Conrad Wise Chapman, May 1863
Oil Sketch



Plate 36. *"Old Shine"- Negro Fiddler, Conrad Wise Chapman, 1863*
Wash, Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia

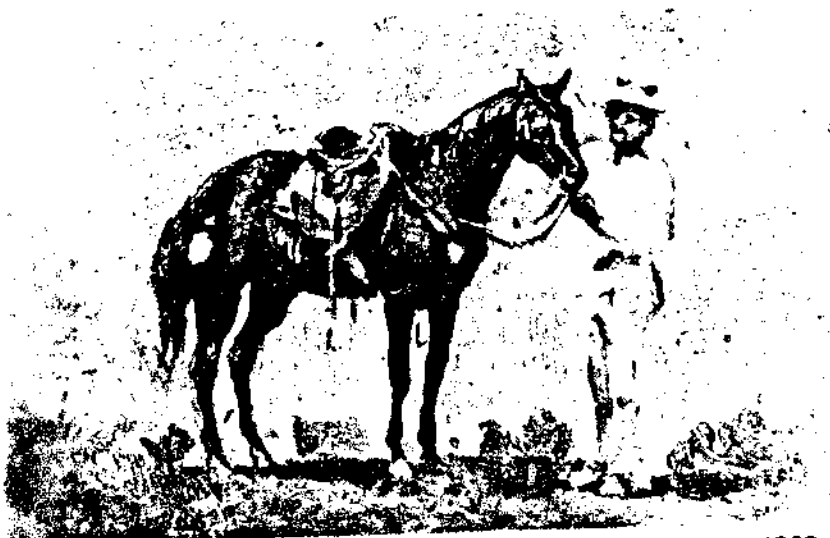


Plate 37. *At Chaffin's Farm, Virginia, Conrad Wise Chapman, 1863*
Oil on paper, Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia



Plate 38. *Battery Marshall, Sullivan's Island*, Conrad Wise Chapman, 1863
Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia



Plate 39. *Surprise Attack near Harper's Ferry, John A. Mooney, 1863*
Collection of James A. Williams, Savannah, Georgia



Plate 40. *Elk Horn Tavern at Pea Ridge*, Hunt Wilson, 1862

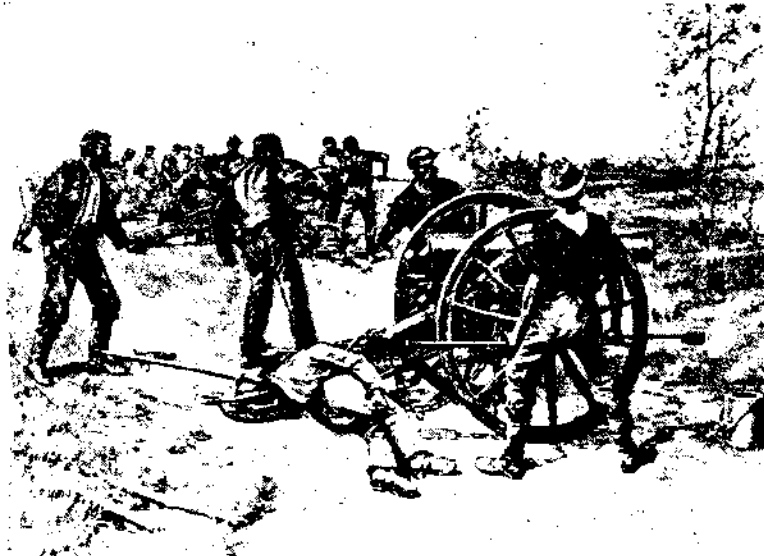


Plate 41. *Confederate Battery in Action*, Allen C. Redwood, 1862
Watercolor



Plate 42. *Stonewall Jackson at Winchester*, William D. Washington, 1863
Oil on canvas, The Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia



Plate 43. *Furling the Stars and Bars*, Richard Norris Brooke, c. 1865



Plate 44. *Smuggling Medicine*, Adalbert Volck, c. 1863

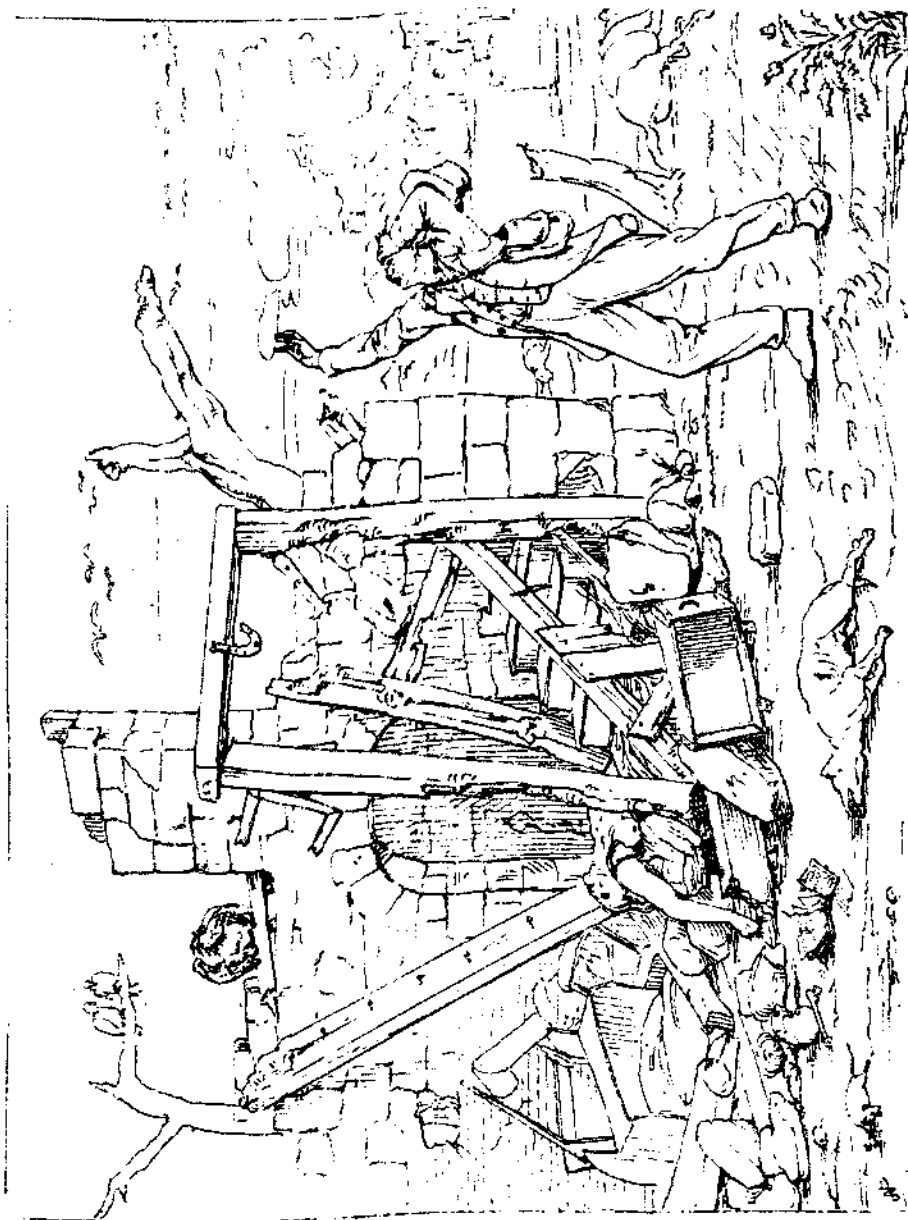


Plate 45. *Sewing for Soldiers*, Adalbert Volck, c. 1863.

PRINT DIVISION, N.Y. PUBLIC LIBRARY



Plate 46. *Melting Church Bells*, Adalbert Volck, c. 1863



M. AND M. KAROLIN COLLECTION, BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINANCIAL ARTS

Plate 47. *Tracks of the Federal Armies*, Adalbert Volck, c. 1864

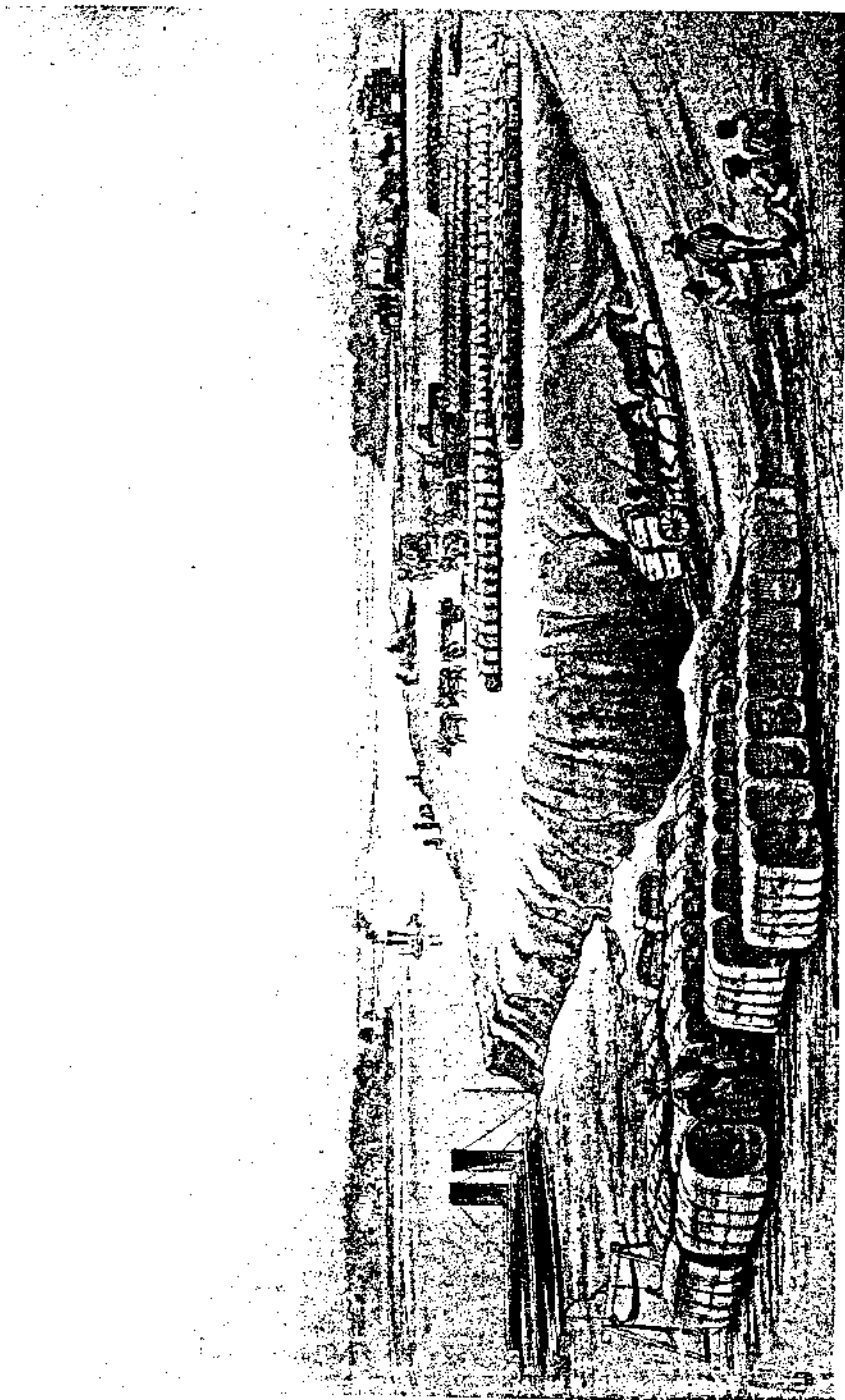


Plate 48. *Cotton Depot at Memphis Landing*, David Hunter Strother, 1862
M. & M. Karolik Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

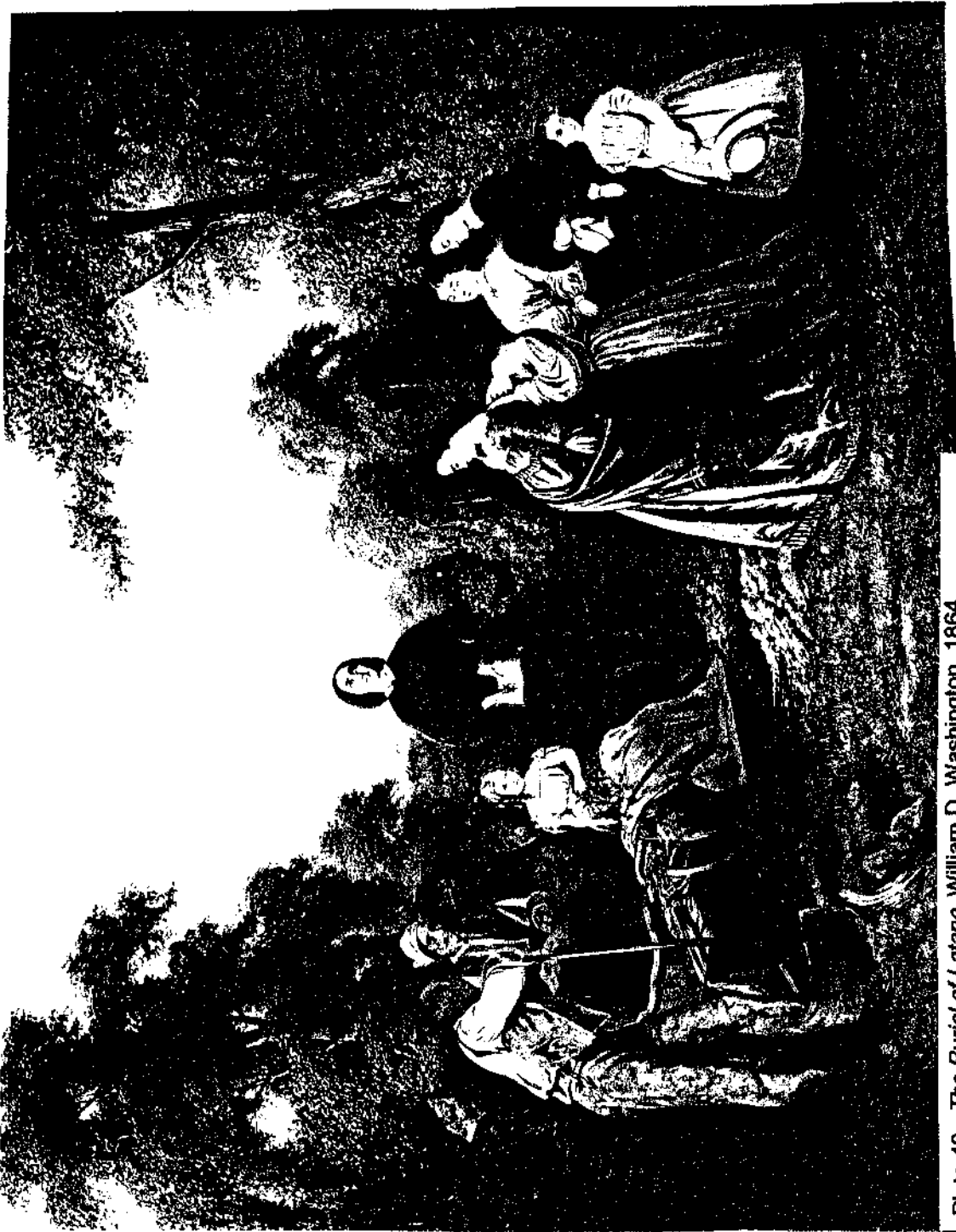


Plate 49. *The Burial of Latane*, William D. Washington, 1864
Oil on canvas, Collection of Judge John E. DeHardit, Gloucester, Virginia



Plate 50. *Circular Church in Ruins*, William Aiken Walker, 1868
Oil on canvas, Private collection

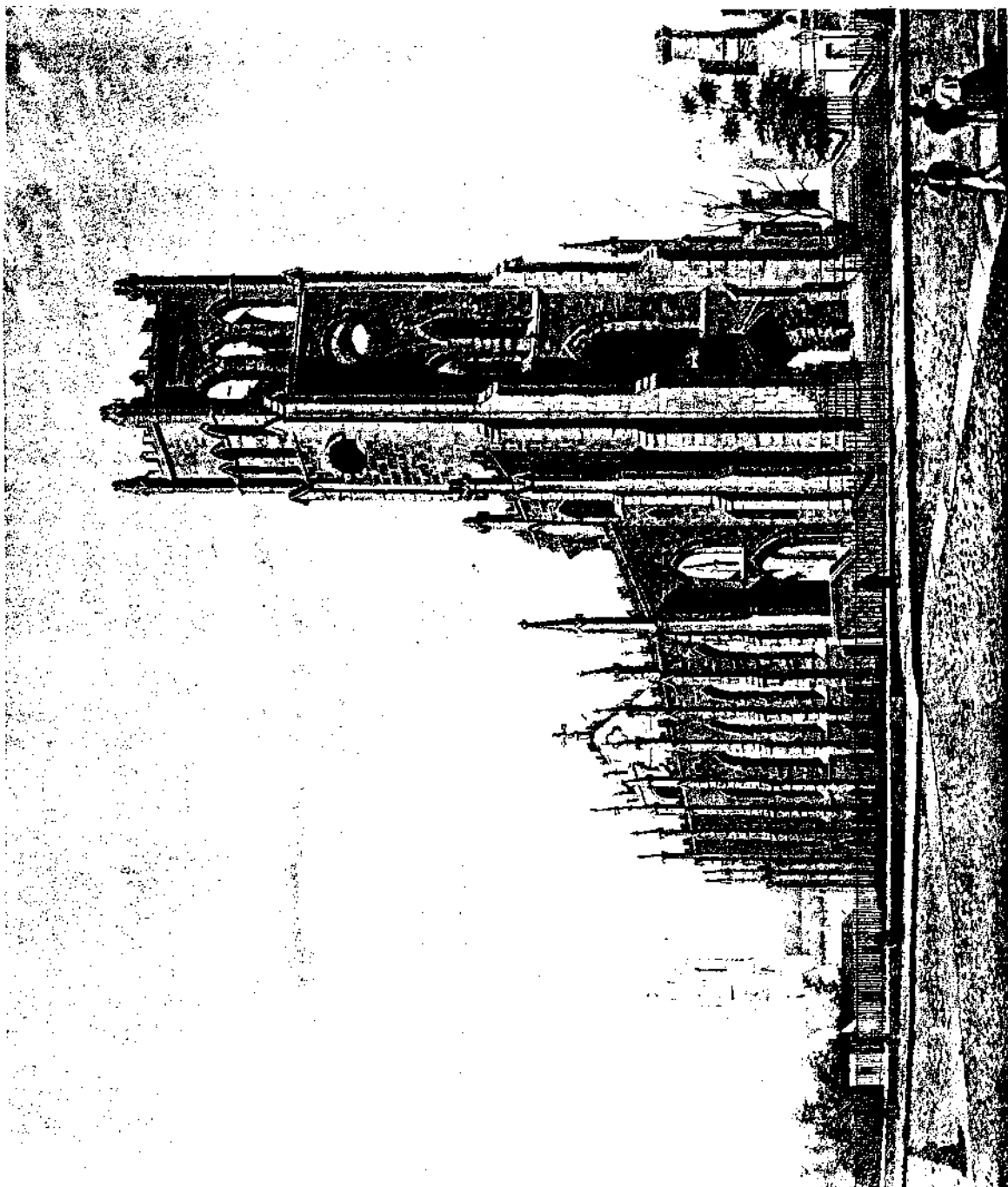


Plate 51. *St. Finbar's Roman Catholic Church, 1868*
Oil on paper mounted on masonite, Givves Museum of Art, Charleston, S.C.



Plate 52. *The Old Log Cabin*, Lucien Whiting Powell, c. 1865-70
Oil on canvas, Sagamore Fine Arts, Huntington, N.Y.

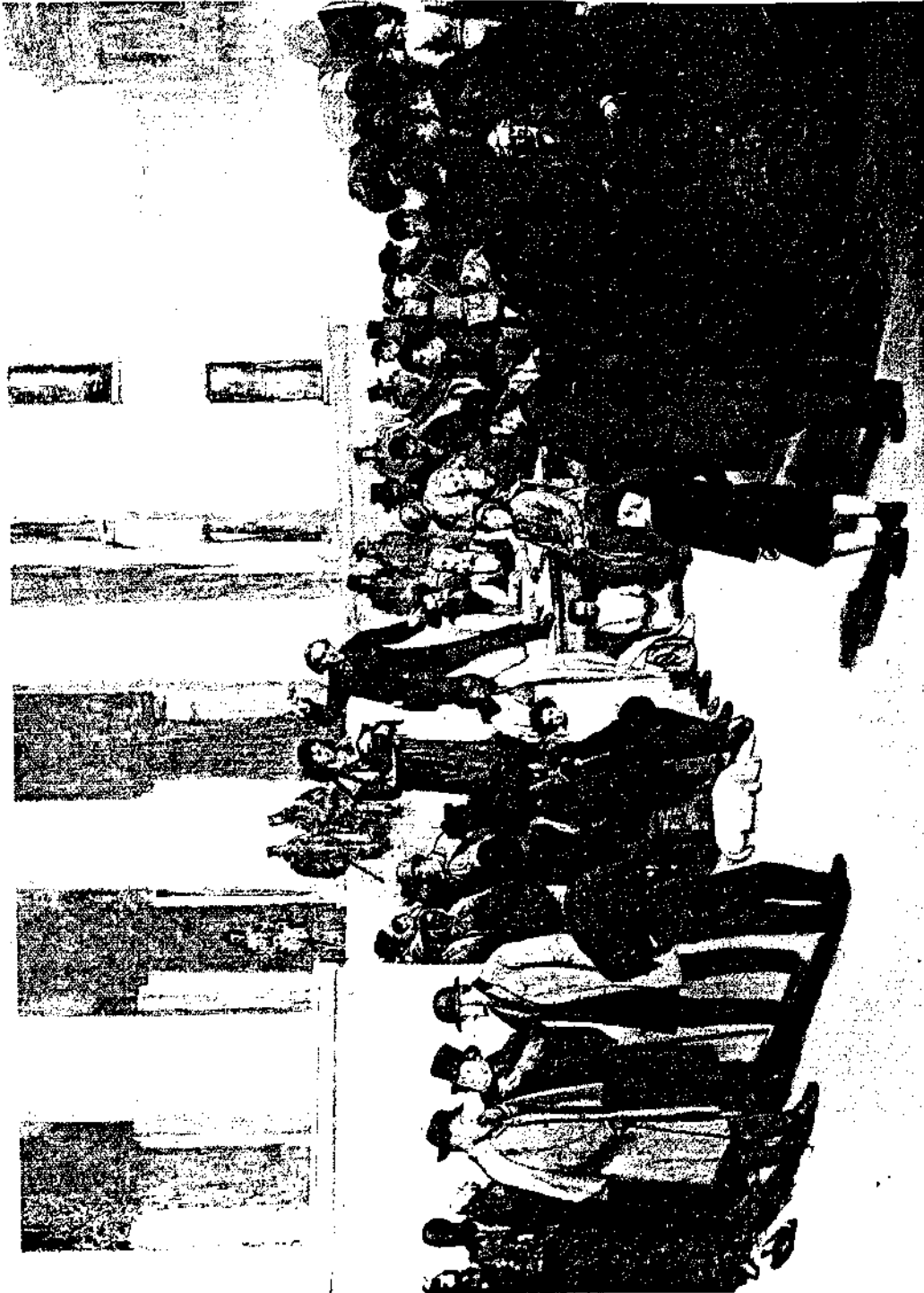


Plate 53. *The Last Sale of Slaves in St. Louis, Thomas Satterwhite Noble, 1866*



Plate 54. *The Price of Blood*, Thomas Satterwhite Noble, 1868
Oil on canvas, The Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, Georgia



Plate 55. *Man in a Brown Suit*, Thomas Satterwhite Noble, c. 1868
Oil on canvas, Yale University Art Gallery



Plate 56. *Little Johnny Reb*, John Beaufain Irving, 1866
Oil on canvas, Robert M. Hicklin, Jr., Spartanburg, S.C.



Plate 57. *Life on the Metairie*, Theodore Sidney Moise and Victor Pierson, 1868
Oil on canvas, The Fairgrounds, New Orleans

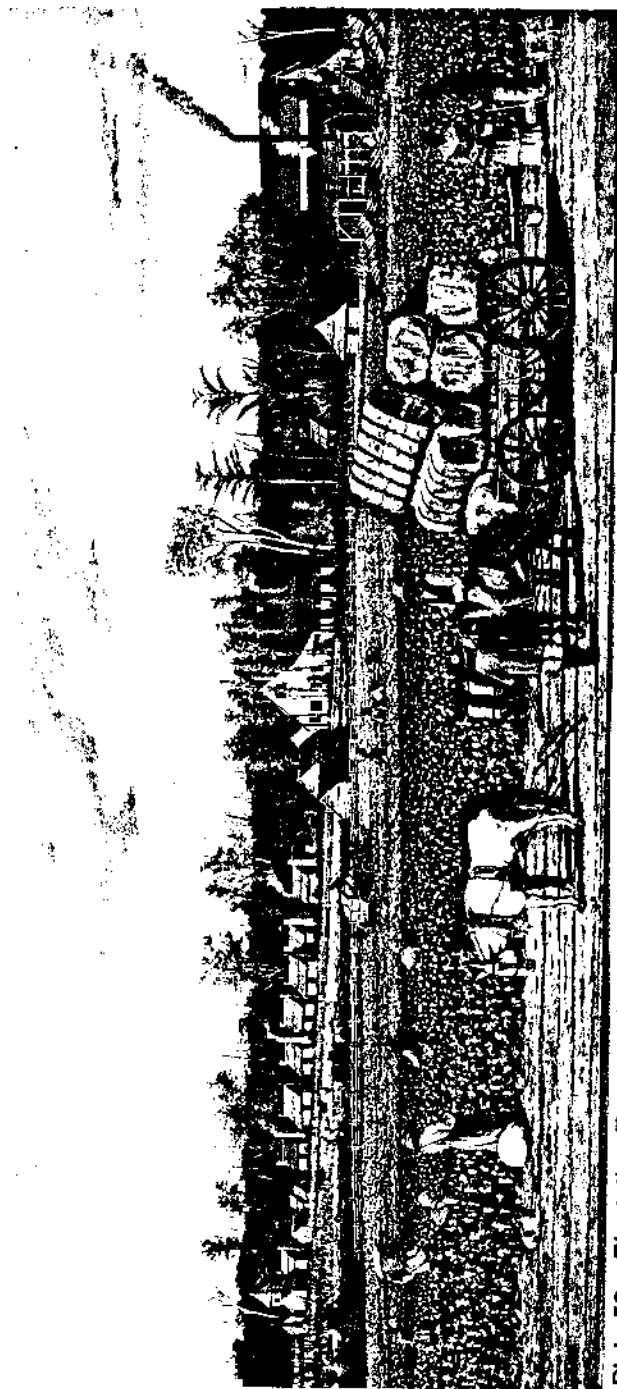


Plate 58. *Plantation Economy in the Old South*, William Aiken Walker, c. 1881
Oil on canvas, The Warner Collection of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Tuscaloosa

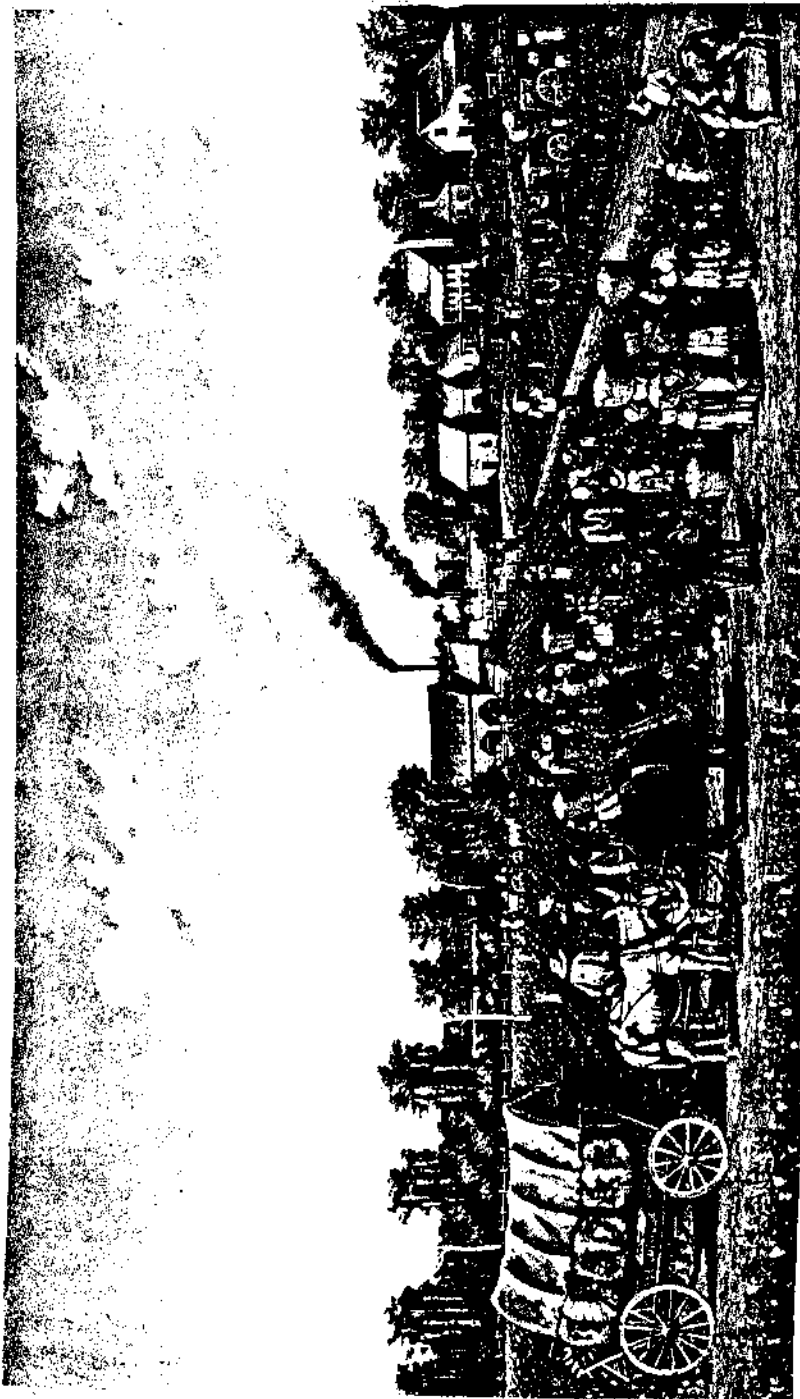


Plate 59. *Big B Cotton Plantation, William Aiken Walker, 1881*
Oil on canvas, Collection of Jay P. Altmayer, Mobile, Alabama



Plate 60. *Wagon Scene*, William Aiken Walker, 1888
Oil on Canvas, Collection of Jay P. Altmayer, Mobile, Alabama

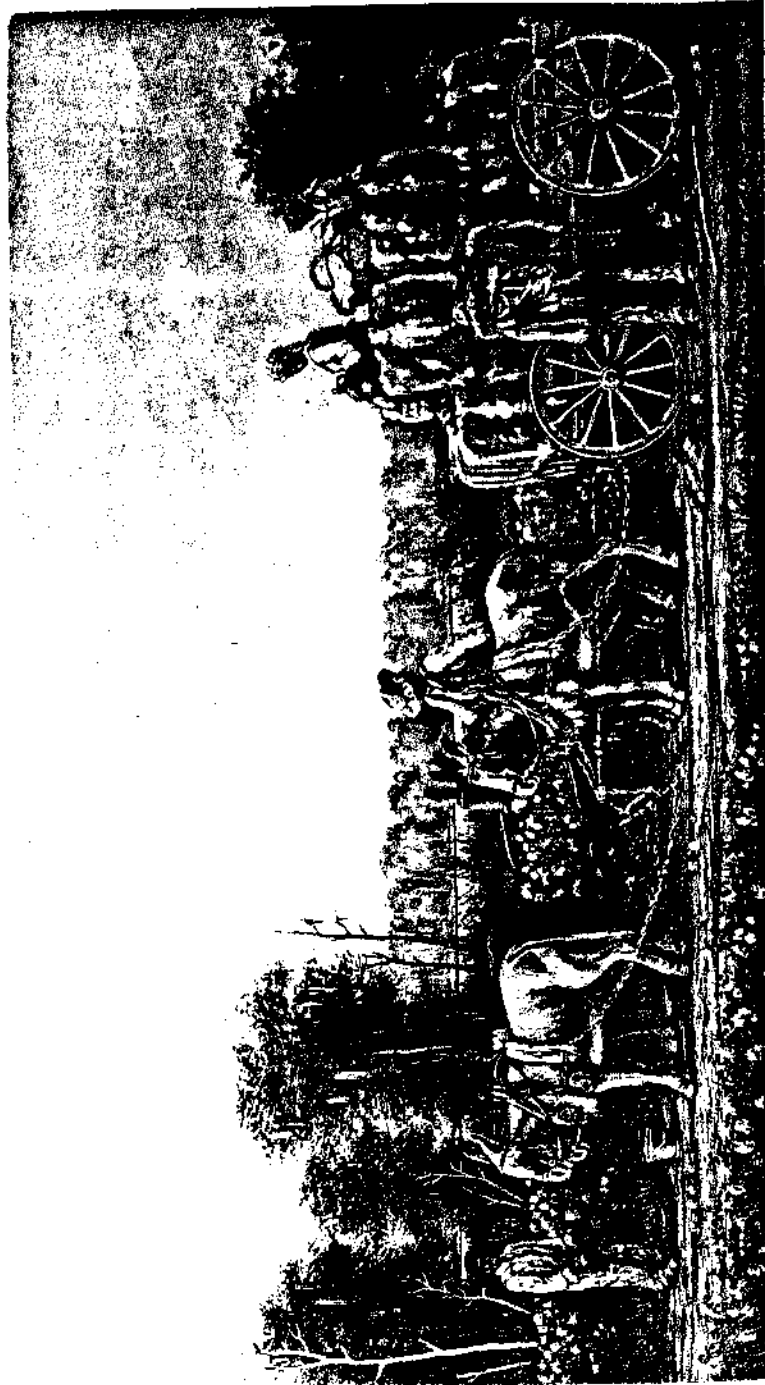


Plate 61. *Taking Cotton to Market*, William Aiken Walker, 1885
Oil on canvas, The Sewell Family Collection, Vidalia, La.



Plate 62. *On the Road to Natchez*, William Aiken Walker, 1888
Oil on canvas. Didier's, New Orleans

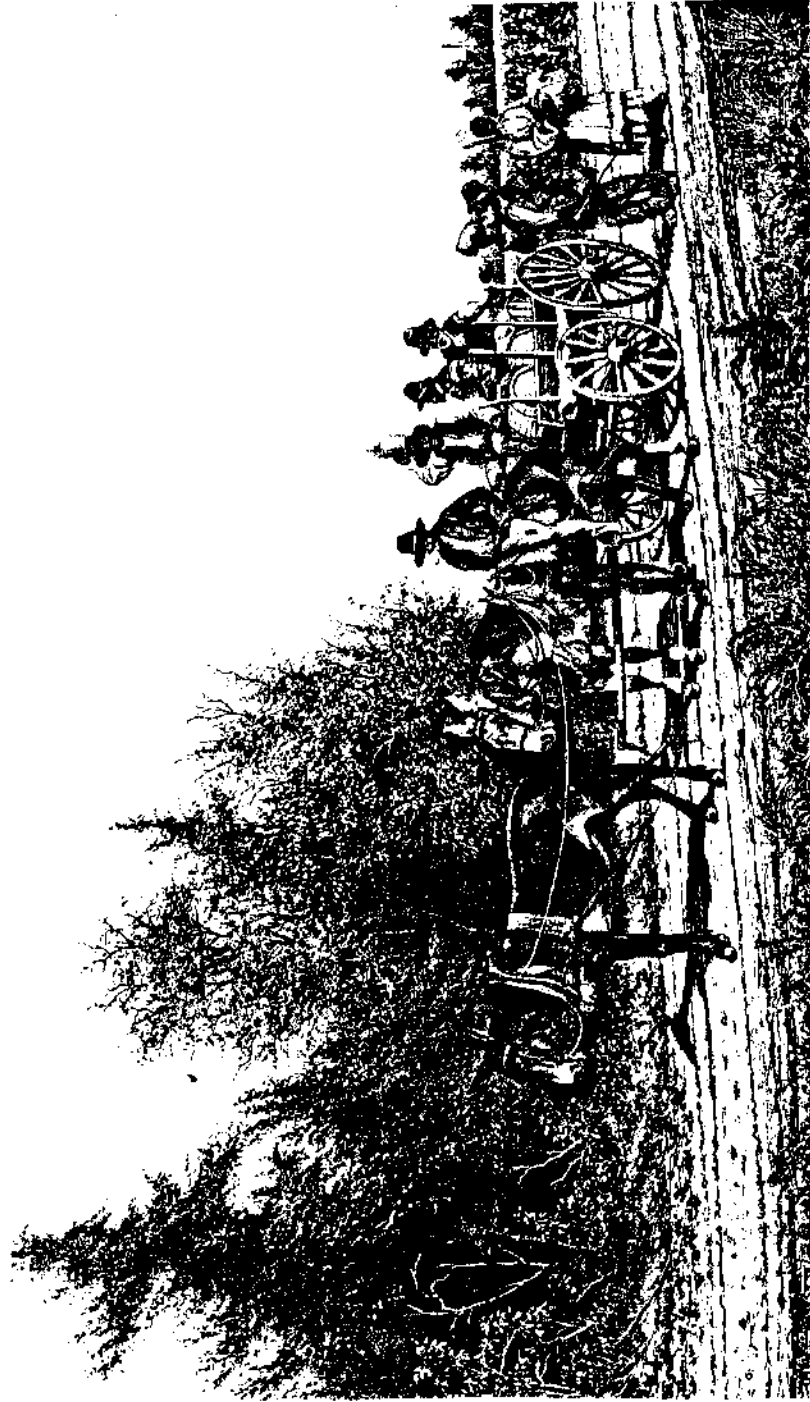


Plate 63. *Wagon Scene with Barrels*, William Aiken Walker, 1884
Oil on canvas, The Warner Collection of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.



Plate 64. *Haw Yar*, E. B. D. Fabrino Julio, 1871
Oil on canvas, W. E. Groves Collection



Plate 65. *Weighing the Cotton*, Hal Alexander Courtney Morrison, 1885
Oil on canvas, Collection of Robert M. Hicklin, Jr., Spartanburg, S.C.

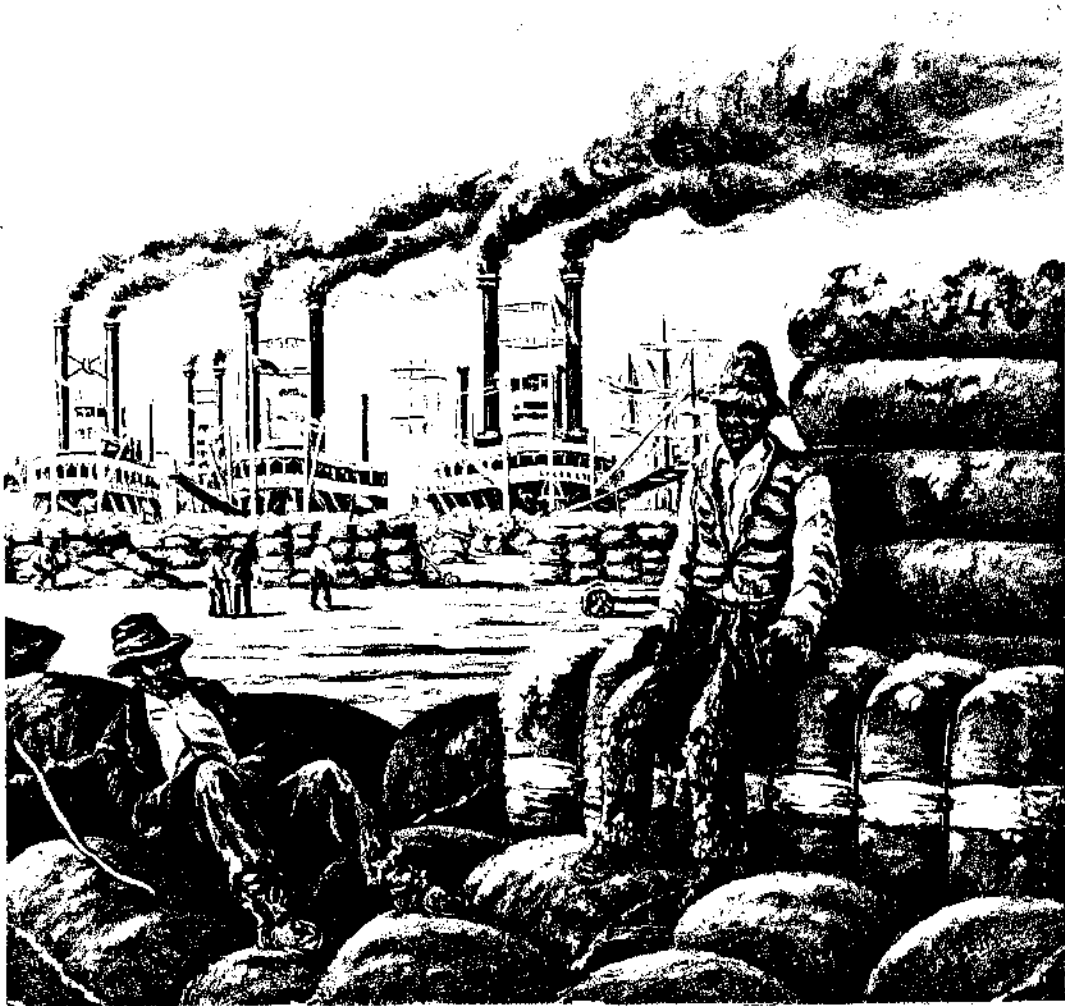


Plate 66. *Where Canal Meets the Levee*, William Aiken Walker, c. 1882
Oil on academy board, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Hussey, Jr.

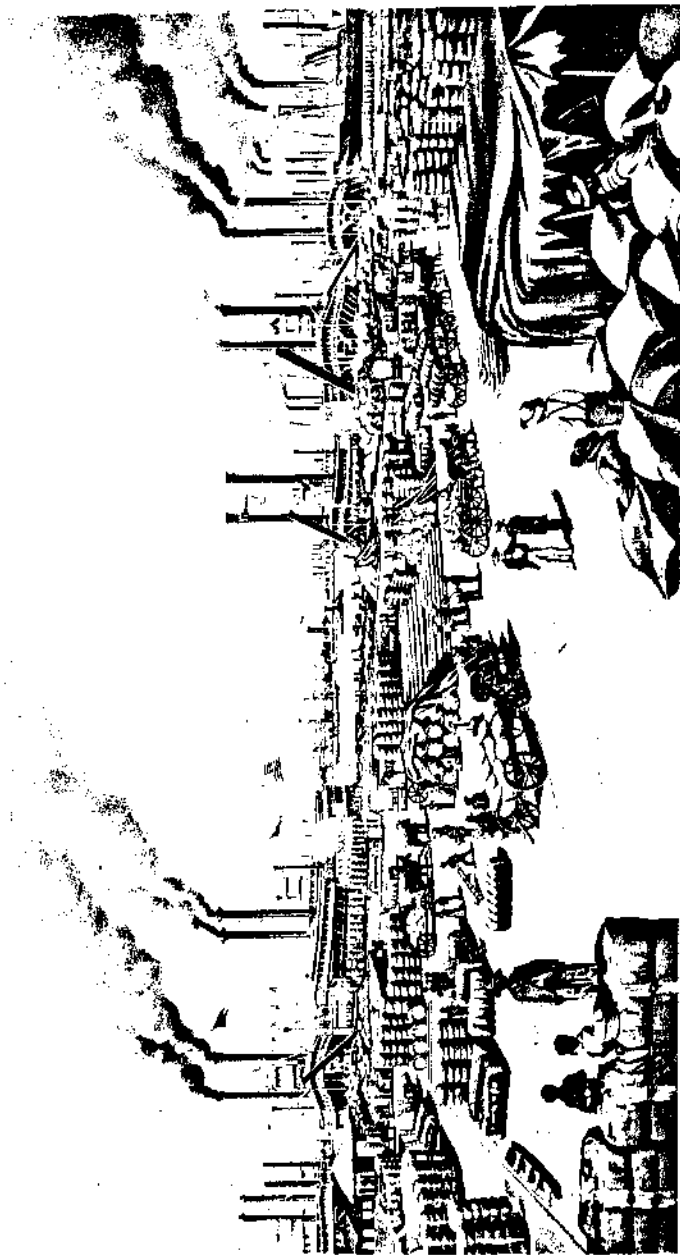


Plate 67. *The Levee*, William Aiken Walker, 1884
J. Cornelius Rathbone III Collection, New Orleans



Plate 68. *Negro Boys on the Quayside*, David Norstrup (?), c. 1880
Oil on panel, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Plate 69. *Three-mule Cart on Decatur St., N.O., Paul Poincy, 1871*
W. E. Groves Collection



Plate 70. *The Old Cotton Picker*, William Aiken Walker, c. 1887
Oil on canvas, The Warner Collection of Gulf States Paper Corporation,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama



Plate 71. *The Slave*, William H. Huddle, 1889
Oil, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts

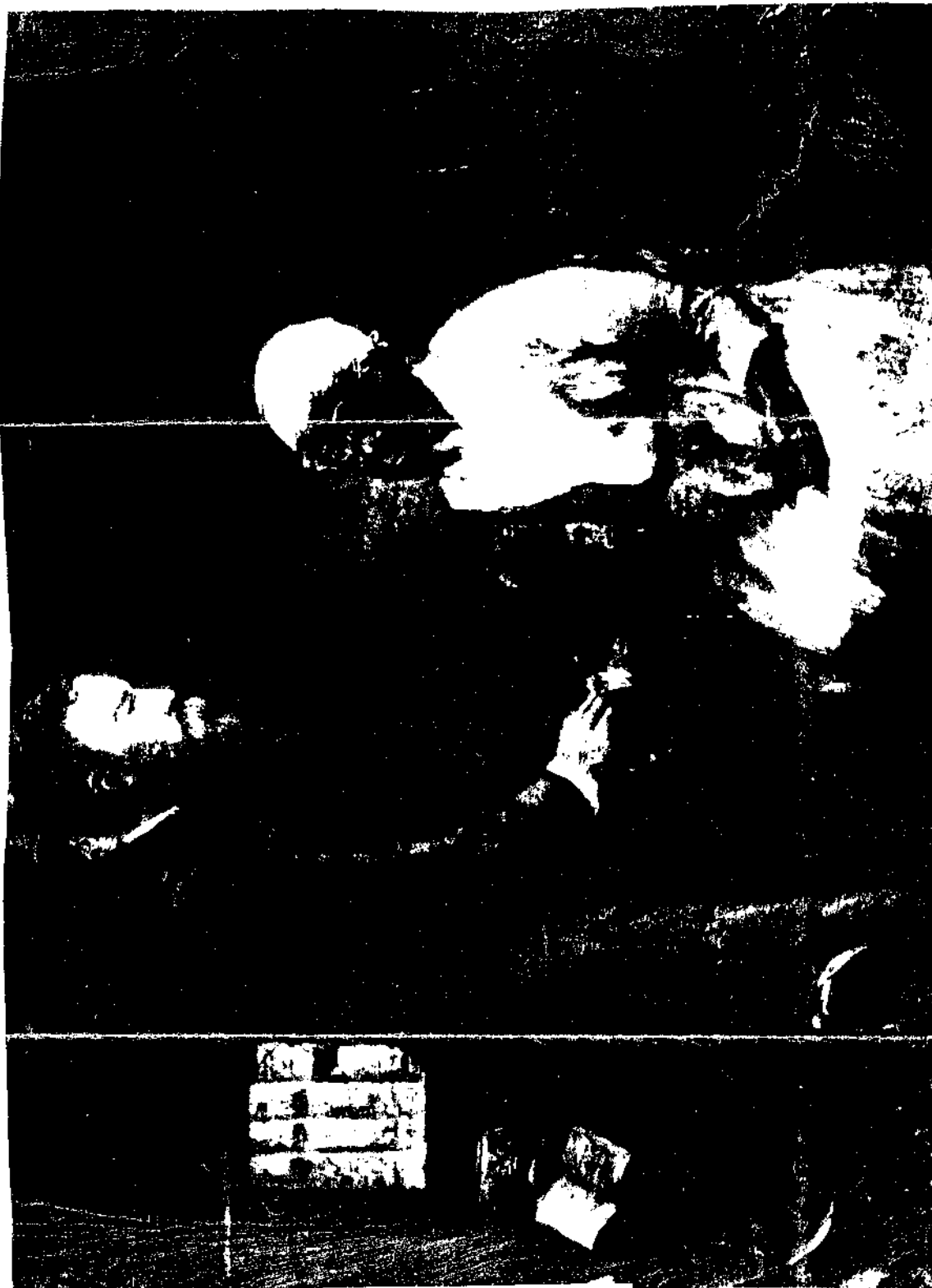


Plate 72. *The Charity Patient*, Virginia Keane Bryce, c. 1885
Collection of Virginia Historical Society

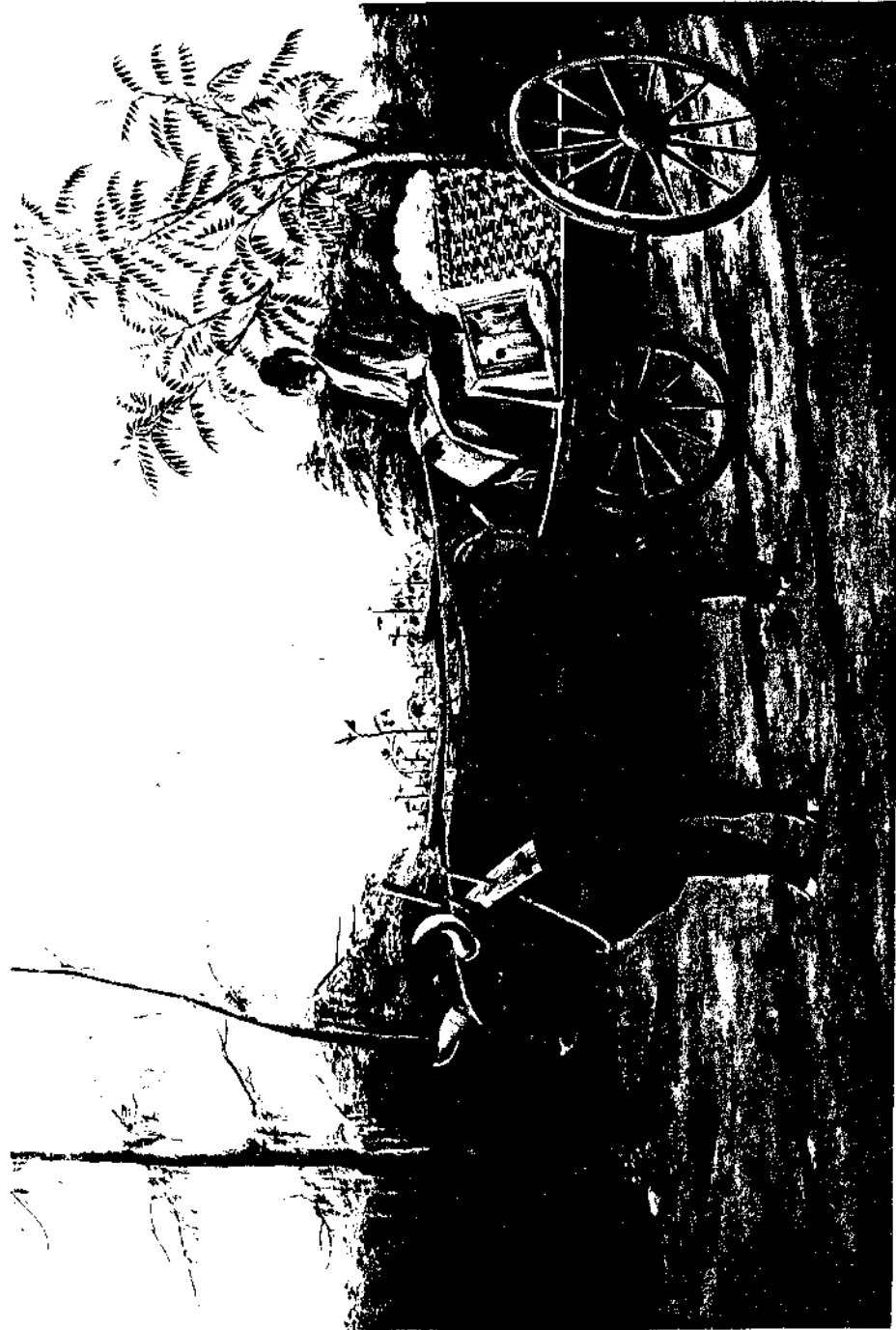


Plate 73. *Uncle Hamp and His Cart*, Montezuma, Georgia, Willie M. Chambers, c. 1880
Collection of Berry-Hill Galleries, Inc., New York



Plate 74. *Sharpening the Knives*, George Henry Clements, 1881
Oil on canvas, Roger Houston Ogden Collection, New Orleans



Plate 75. *Prisoner*, Andreas Molnary, 1876
Oil on millboard, L. Simon Nelson Collection, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

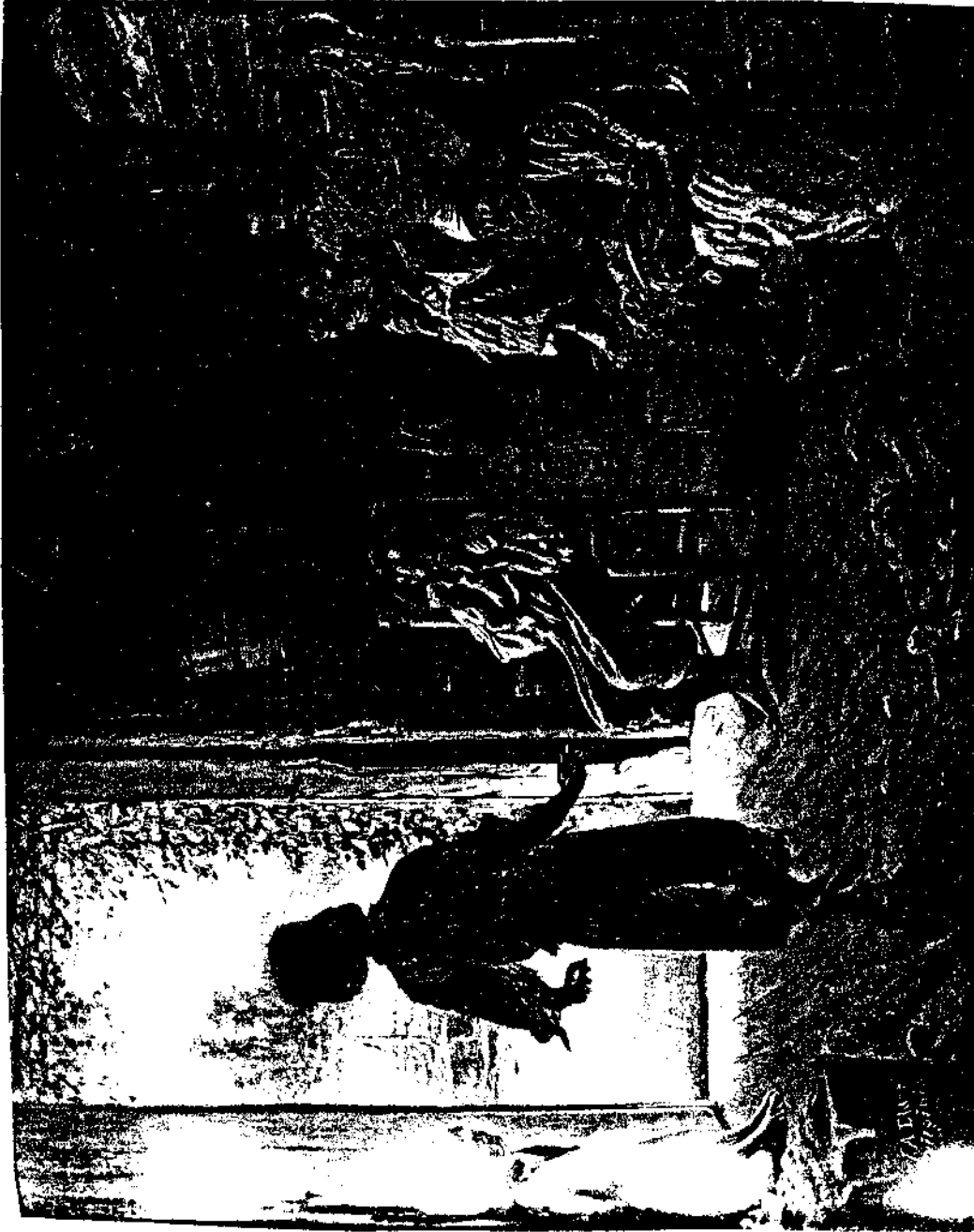


Plate 76. *A Virginny Breaktown*, John A. Elder, 1877
Oil on canvas, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia



Plate 77. *Contentment*, John A. Elder, c. 1877
The Virginia Historical Society



Plate 78. *Cabin Scene*, William Aiken Walker, c. 1883
Oil on board, Private collection, Huntsville, Alabama

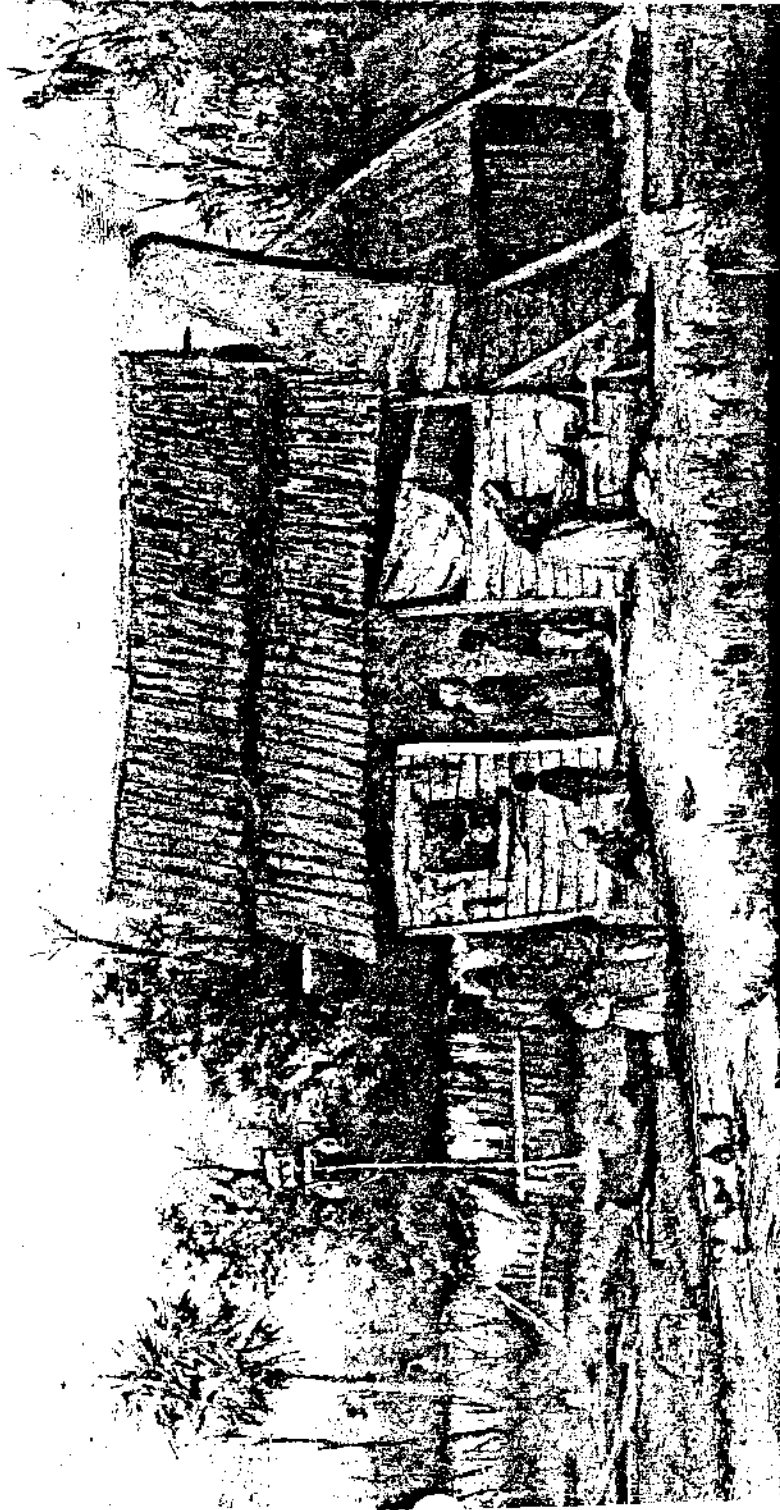


Plate 79. *Cabin Scene*, William Aiken Walker, 1883
Oil on panel, New Orleans Museum of Art



Richard N. Brooke, 1881

Plate 80. *A Pastoral Visit*, Richard Norris Brooke, 1881
Oil on canvas, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Plate 81. *Back of Algiers*, Richard Clague, Jr., c. 1870
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 82. *Trapper's Cabin*, Richard Clague, Jr., c. 1870
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 83. *Spring Hill, Alabama*, Richard Clague, Jr., 1872
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 84. *Bayou Farm*, Marshall J. Smith, Jr., 1877
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 85. *Louisiana Landscape*, William Henry Buck, c. 1880
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 86. *Mississippi Delta*, William Henry Buck, c. 1880
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 87. *Fishing Camp on the Lake*, William Henry Buck, c. 1880
Oil on canvas, The Historic New Orleans Collection

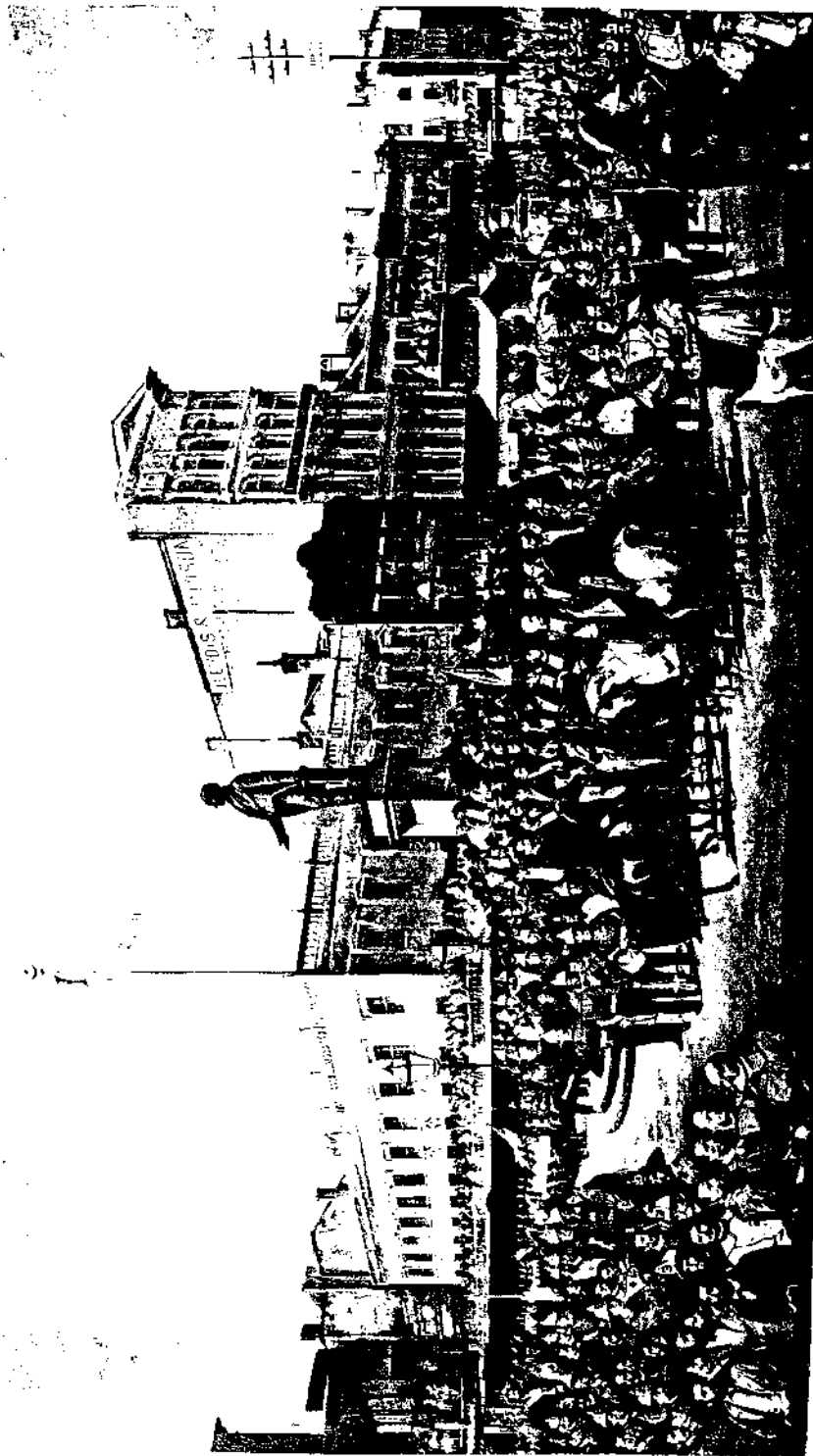


Plate 88. *Volunteer Firemen's Parade*, Paul Poincy and Victor Pierson, 1872
Oil on canvas, Louisiana State Museum



Plate 89. *Cardplayers on the Steamboat*, William Aiken Walker, 1880
Oil on board, Collection of Jay P. Altmayer, Mobile, Alabama



Plate 90. *The Manegold Confectionery Tent*, Artist Unknown,
Collection of Landmarks Foundation, Montgomery, Alabama



Plate 91. *Surf Bathing, Grand Isle*, John Genin, c. 1870
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 92. *Summer Resort*, William Henry Buck, c. 1880
Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art



Plate 93. *Boy with Goat*, William Aiken Walker, 1872
Oil on academy board, The Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, Georgia



Plate 94. *The Patient Fisherboy*, John Beaufain Irving, 1873
Oil on canvas, Private collection



Plate 95. *Girl Blowing Bubbles*, Robert Loftin Newman, c. 1880
Oil on canvas, Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Gellin H. Shepard, Newport News, Virginia

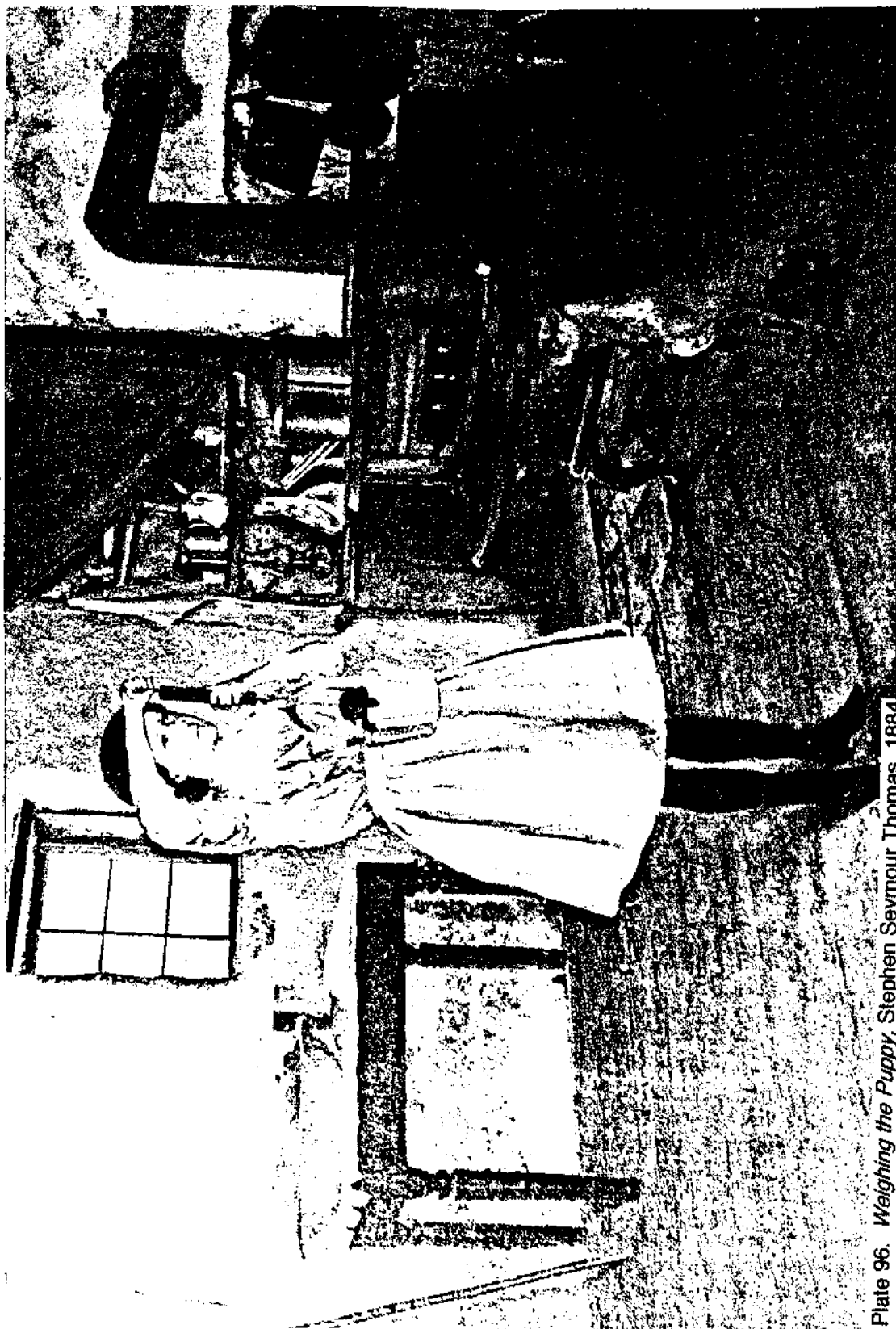


Plate 96. *Weighing the Puppy*, Stephen Seymour Thomas, 1884
Collection of Summerfield G. Roberts, Dallas Museum of Art



Plate 97. *The Schenck Sisters*, Carl G. von Iwonski, 1870
Collection of Mrs. Louis Ramella, Austin, Texas



Plate 98. *Idle Dreams*, Thomas Satterwhite Noble, 1877
Oil on canvas, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William Welleck Garretson

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "The Artistic Career of Thomas Satterwhite Noble." *Kentucky Review*. 6 (Winter and Summer, 1986.)
- "Cotton and its Kingdom." *Harper's Magazine*. Volume 63, no. 377, 1880.
- "'Good Night Old Virginia', Virginians and Their Cultures Move West." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*. Volume 101, no. 4 (October 1993): 534-546.
- "The Battle of the Crater." *The Seminary Magazine*. Richmond, Virginia: Volume 2, no. 1 (April 1869): 98-103.
- An Exhibition of Nineteenth Century Virginia Genre*. Richmond, Virginia: The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1947.
- American Art from the Gallery's Collection*. New York, N.Y.: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 1980.
- Capital Image, Painters in Washington, 1800-1915*. Smithsonian Press: Washington, D.C., 1983.
- Conrad Wise Chapman 1842-1910, an Exhibition of His Works in the Valentine Museum*. Richmond, Virginia: The Valentine Museum, 1962.
- Encyclopedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918*. New Orleans: The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1985.
- Louisiana Landscape and Genre Paintings of the 19th Century*. Shreveport: R. V. Norton Art Gallery, 1981.
- M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815 to 1865*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949.
- Microsoft Encarta '95*. Microsoft Corporation.
- Newsline, A Quarterly Newsletter of the East Tennessee Historical Society*. Volume 9, number1 (Spring 1993)

- The Portrayal of the Negro in American Painting.* Bowdoin, Maine: Bowdoin College Museum of Art, 1964.
- The South, A Collection from Harper's Magazine.* New York, New York: Gallery Books, W. H. Smith Publishers, Inc., 1990.
- Selections from the Collection of the Carolina Art Association.* Charleston, South Carolina: Gibbes Museum of Art, 1977.
- William Ludwell Sheppard, A Retrospective Exhibition of His Works.* Richmond, Virginia: The Valentine Museum, December 1969.
- Anderson, George McCullough. *The Work of Adalbert Johann Volck, 1828-1912, Who Chose For his Name the Anagram V. Blada.* Baltimore: Schneidereth and sons, 1970.
- Avary, Myrta. *Dixie After the War.*
- Avery, I. W. "The City of Savannah, Georgia." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine.* 76 (December 1887-May 1888): 257-271.
- Bacot, Barbara Sorelle. "Marie Adrien Persac, Architect, Artist and Engineer." *Antiques* 140 (November 1991): 806-15.
- Baigell, Matthew. *Dictionary of American Art.* New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979.
- Banks, William Nathaniel. "George Cooke, Painter of the American Scene." *Antiques.* 102 (September 1972): 449-454.
- Barry, Roxana. *Land of Plenty, Nineteenth Century American Picnic and Harvest Scenes.* Katonah, New York: Katonah Gallery, 1981.
- Batson, Whaley. "Thomas Coram: Charleston Artist." *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts.* 1 (November 1975): 35-47.
- Berlin, Ira, editor, et al. *Free at Last, A Documentary History of Slavery Freedom and The Civil War.* New York: The New Press, 1992.

- Bilodeau, Francis W. and Mrs. Thomas J. Tobias, comps. and eds., and Burton E. Milby. *Art in South Carolina, 1670-1970*. Charleston, South Carolina: Carolina Art Association, 1970.
- Birchfield, James D. *Thomas Satterwhite Noble, 1835-1907*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum: 1988.
- Bishop, H. H. "Art in Tennessee: The Early Nineteenth-Century." *Tennessee Art Quarterly*. 29 (Winter 1970-1971): 379-89.
- Bishop, Robert. *Folk Painters of America*. New York: Greenwich House, Crown Publishers, 1979.
- Boley, Henry. *Lexington in Old Virginia*. Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1936.
- Braden, Waldo W. *Oratory in The Old South, 1828-1860*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1970.
- Branch, Douglas. *The Sentimental Years, 1836-1860*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1934.
- Briggs, Martha Wren. "Four Professional Artists of the Confederacy." *The United Daughters of the Confederacy Magazine*. Volume 25, no. 11 (December 1992): 16-17.
- Bruce, Dickson D. Jr. *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1979.
- Burns, Sarah. "Images of Slavery: George Fuller's Depictions of the Antebellum South." *The American Art Journal*. 15 (Summer 1983): 35-60.
- Cabell, I. C. "A Plantation Funeral." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. 72 (December 1885 - May 1886): 653-654.
- Campbell, William P. *John Gadsby Chapman*. Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art, 1962.
- Capps, Gene. "Five Artists' View of Salem, 1788-1852." *Three Forks of Muddy Creek*. Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Old Salem,

- Inc., N. Y.: 43-59.
- Cederhom, Theresa Dickason. *Afro-American Artists: A Bibliographical Directory*. Boston: Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1973.
- Chamberlain, Georgia. "John Gadsby Chapman, Painter of Virginia." *Art Quarterly*. 24 (Winter 1961): 378-390.
- Chambers, Bruce W. *Art and Artists of the South, The Robert P. Coggins Collection*. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1984.
- Chambers, Bruce W. "The Southern Artist and the Civil War." *The Southern Quarterly*. 24 (Fall-Winter 1985): 71-94.
- Cimbala, Paul A. "A Fortunate Bondsmen: Black "Musicians" and Their Role as an Antebellum Southern Plantation Elite." *Southern Studies*. 18 (Fall 1979): 291-303.
- Cohen, George. *A Regional Study of American Genre Painting from 1830-1880*. Doctoral Dissertation from Boston University, 1962.
- Coleman, J. Winston, Jr. "Edward Troye, Sporting Artist." *Antiques*. 105 (April 1974): 799-805.
- Coleman, J. Winston, Jr., editor. *Kentucky, A Pictorial History*. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1971.
- Coons, Margaret. "A Portrait of His Times." *The Virginia Cavalcade*. 16 (Spring 1967): 15-31.
- Crannell, Carlyn Gaye. *In Pursuit of Culture: A History of Art Activity in Atlanta, 1847-1926*. Dissertation Emory University, 1981. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982. 8124258.
- Craven, Wayne. *American Painting, 1857-1869*. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware, 1962.
- Dalton, Karen C. "Picturing Freedom." *Southern Exposure*. (Spring 1990): 27-30.

- Davis, Edward Morriss III. *A Retrospective Exhibition of the Work of John Adams Elder*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1947.
- Eaton, Clement. *The Growth of Southern Civilization, 1790-1860*. New York: Harper, 1961.
- _____. *A History of the Old South, The Emergence of a Reluctant Nation*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1966.
- _____. "The Role of Honor in Southern Society." *Southern Humanities Review*. 10 (Supplement 1976) 47-58.
- Edwards, Lee M. *Domestic Bliss, Family Life in American Painting 1840-1910*. New York: The Hudson River Museum, 1986.
- Eby, Cecil D. *"Porte Crayon.": The Life of David Hunter Strother*. North Carolina: Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press, 1960.
- _____, editor. *The Old South Illustrated by Porte Crayon*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959.
- Ellis, Joseph J. *American Sphinx, The Character of Thomas Jefferson*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.
- Escott, Paul D. "The Uses of Gallantry." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*. 103, 1 (January 1995) 47-72.
- Falk, Peter H. *Who Was Who in American Art*. Madison, Connecticut: Sound View Press, 1985.
- Ferrell, Robert H. and Richard Natkiel. *Atlas of American History*. New York, N. Y.: Facts on File, Inc., 1987.
- Fielding, Mantle. *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*. Poughkeepsie, New York: Apollo, 1987.
- Findelman, Paul. "Thomas Jefferson and Antislavery, The Myth Goes On." *The Virginia Magazine*. Volume 102, no.2 (April 1994): 194-228.

- Floyd, William Barrow. "Portraits of ante-bellum Kentuckians." *Antiques*. 105 (April 1974): 808-817.
- Foote, Henry Wilder. "Charles Bridges: Sergeant-Painter of Virginia." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*. 60 (January 1952): 3-55.
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Fraser, Charles. *My Reminiscences of Charleston*. Charleston, South Carolina, 1854. reprint ed., 1969.
- Fraser, Walter J. Jr. and Winfred B. Moore, Jr. eds. *From the Old South to the New: Essays on the Transitional South*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981.
- Gayle, Cecile Cogburn. Letter to the First White House of the Confederacy concerning Francis Lee Wood. December 1976. Archives of the First White House of the Confederacy. Montgomery, Alabama.
- Garretson, Mary Noble Welleck. "Thomas S. Noble and His Paintings." *New York Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin*. 24 (October 1940).
- Garrett, Wendell, et al. *The Arts in America, The Nineteenth Century*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.
- Goodrich, Lloyd. *American Genre, The Social Scene in Paintings and Prints (1800-1935)*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1935.
- Groce, George C. and David H. Wallae. *New York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists In America, 1564-1980*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University, 1957.
- Grootkerk, Paul. "The Antebellum Plantation." *The Southern Quarterly*. Volume 32, No.4 (Summer 1994): 1-44.
- Happel, Ralph. "John A. Elder, Confederate Painter." *The Commonwealth*. Volume 4, no. 8 (August 1937): 23-25.

- Higham, John. *From Boundlessness to Consolidation: The Transformation of American Culture, 1848-1860*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1969.
- Hills, Patricia. *The Painter's America, Rural and Urban Life, 1810-1910*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.
- Hoopes, Donelson F. *American Narrative Painting*. New York: Los Angeles County Museum and Praeger Publishers, 1974.
- Howorth, Lisa, editor. *The South, A Treasury of Art and Literature*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.
- James, G. Watson, Jr. "The Story Behind Virginia's Official Portrait of James Monroe." *Virginia and The Virginia Record*. (January 1955): 18-19,60.
- Johns, Elizabeth. *American Genre Painting: The Politics of Everyday Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- Jones, Arthur F., and Bruce Wever. *The Kentucky Painter from the Frontier Era to the Great War*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum, 1981.
- Jones, Walter Burgwyn. *Confederate War Poems*. Nashville, Tennessee: Bill Coats, Ltd., 1959.
- Kelly, James C. "Landscape and Genre Painting in Tennessee." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. 44(Summer 1985) 1-152.
- Kelly, James C. and Estill Curtis Pennington. *The South on Paper: Line, Color Light*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: R. m. Hicklin, Jr. 1985.
- Ketchum, Richard, editor. *The American Heritage Picture History of The Civil War*. New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc. 1960.
- King, Carole A., Curator. Information on who and what is depicted came from the accession records of the *Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery*. Montgomery, Alabama.
- Kirwan, Albert D., ed. *The Civilization of the Old South, Writings of Clement Eaton*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1968.

- Mackay-Smith, Alexander. *The Race Horses of America, 1832-1872: Portraits and Other Paintings by Edward Troye*. Saratoga Springs: National Museum of Racing, 1981.
- Marzio, Peter C. "The Not-So-Simple Observation of Daily Life in America." *Of Time and Place: American Figurative Art From the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1981.
- McCann, Lucy Underwood. "A Nigger With a Card." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. 73 (June-November 1886): 991.
- McCormack, Helen G. *William James Hubard, 1807-1862*. Richmond, Virginia: Valentine Museum of Fine Arts, 1948.
- McElroy, Guy C. *Facing History: The Black Image in American Art 1710-1940*. Washington, D. C.: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1990.
- McGlaufflin, Alice Coe. *Dictionary of American Artists: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*. New York: American Art Annual, 1930. Reprint, Poughkeepsie, New York: Apollo, 1982.
- North Carolina Museum of Art. *Two Hundred Years of the Visual Arts in North Carolina*. North Carolina: North Carolina Museum of Art, 1976.
- Nygren, Edward J., Peter C. Marzio and Julie R. Myers. *Of Time and Place, American Figurative Art from the Corcoran Gallery*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1981.
- O'Kelley, Mattie Lou. *From the Hills of Georgia: An Autobiography in Paintings*. Boston and Toronto: Atlantic Monthly Press Book/ Little, Brown and Co., 1893.
- O'Neal, William B. *Primitive into Painter: Life and Letters of John Toole*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 1960.
- Ott, Ethelbert, Nelson. "William D. Washington, Artist of the Old South." (Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1968).
- Page, Jean Jepson. "Francis Blackwell Mayer." *Antiques*. 109 (February 1976): 316-23.
- Pennington, Estill C. *Antiquarian Pursuits: Southern Art from the Holdings of*

Robert Hicklin, Jr. Spartanburg, South Carolina: R. M. Hicklin, Jr. Inc., 1992.

_____. "The Climate of Taste in the Old South." *The Southern Quarterly*. 25, no.1 (1986): 7-31.

_____. *A Southern Collection*. Augusta: Morris Communications Corporation, 1992.

_____. *Downriver: Currents of Style in Louisiana Painting, 1800-1950*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1990.

_____. *Look Away: Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1989.

_____. *The Last Meeting's Lost Cause*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: R. M. Hicklin, 1988.

_____. *The South on Paper*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: R. M. Hicklin, Jr., 1985.

_____. *With Joy and Wonder: Antebellum Taste in the Bluegrass*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Art Museum, 1992.

Pevsner, Nikolaus. *The Englishness of English Art*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1955.

Pinckney, Pauline. *Painting in Texas, Nineteenth Century*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967.

Poesch, Jessie J. *The Art of the Old South, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and the Products of Craftsmen, 1560-1860*. New York: Harrison House, 1989.

Poesch, Jessie J. "Growth and Development of the Old South: 1830-1900." *Painting in the South, 1564-1980*. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1983.

Pressen, Edward. "How Different from Each Other Were the Antebellum North and South?" *American Historical Review*. 85 (December 1980): 1119-1149.

- R. V. Norton Art Gallery. *Louisiana Landscape and Genre Painting of the 19th Century*. Shreveport, Louisiana: R. V. Norton Gallery, 1981.
- Richards, Jane L. *American Genre Painting in the Victorian Era: Winslow Winslow Homer, Eastman Johnson, and Their Contemporaries*. New York: Hirschl and Adler Galleries, 1978.
- Richards, William C., ed. *Georgia Illustrated*. Penfield, Georgia, 1842.
- Richardson, E. P. *A Short History of Painting in America*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, Co., 1963.
- Roland, Charles P. *Louisiana Sugar Plantations During the American Civil War*. Leiden: Brill, 1957.
- Rubin, Cynthia Elyce. *Southern Folk Art*. Birmingham, Alabama: Oxmoor House, 1985.
- Rudolph, Marilou Alston. "George Cooke and His Paintings." *Georgia Historical Quarterly*. 44 (June 1960): 117-153.
- Rutledge, Anna Wells. "Artists in the Life of Charleston." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*. 39 (Philadelphia, 1950): 102+
- _____. "William Henry Brown of Charleston." *Antiques*. 60 (December 1951): 532-533.
- Salmon, Emily J. "The Burial of Latane, Symbol of the Lost Cause." *Virginia Cavalcade*. (Winter 1979): 118-129.
- Seibels, Cynthia. *The Sunny South, The Life and Art of William Aiken Walker*. Spartanburg, South Carolina: Saraland Press, 1995.
- Semmes, John E. *John H. B. Latrobe and His Times, 1803-1891*. Baltimore, Maryland, 1917.
- Severens, Martha R. *Selections from the Collection of the Carolina Art Association*. Charleston, South Carolina: The Carolina Art Association (Gibbes Museum of Art), 1977.
- _____. "Charles Fraser of Charleston." *Antiques*. 123 (March): 606-611.

- Shapiro, Michael Edward. *George Caleb Bingham*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993.
- Simms, L. Moody, Jr. "Conrad Wise Chapman, A Virginia Expatriate Painter." *Virginia Cavalcade*. 20 (Spring 1971): 13-28.
- Smedes, Susan Dabney. *A Southern Planter, Social Life in the Old South*. New York, N. Y.: James Pott and Company, 1914.
- Smith, Bradley. *The U. S. A. : A History in Art*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1982.
- Stahls, Paul F. Jr., *Plantation Homes of the Teche Country*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing, 1979.
- Steinfeldt, Cecilia. *Texas Folk Art*. Austin, Texas: Texas Monthly Press, 1981.
- Stoney, Samuel Gaillard. *Plantations of the Carolina Low Country*. Charleston, South Carolina: Charleston Art Association, 1938.
- Strother, David Hunter. *The Old South Illustrated, By Porte Crayon*. Cecil D. Eby, editor. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959.
- Taylor, William R. *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and the National Character*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1963.
- Travaioli, August P. and Roulhac B. Toledano. *William Aiken Walker, Southern Genre Painter*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1972.
- Wendell, Garrett, et al. *The Arts in America: The Nineteenth Century*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.
- Wesson, Kenneth R. "Travelers' Accounts of the Southern Character: Antebellum and Early Postbellum Period." *Southern Studies*. 17 Fall 1978): 305-318.
- Wiesendanger, Martin and Margaret Wiesendanger. *Nineteenth Century*

Louisiana Painters and Paintings from the Collection of W. E. Groves.
Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1971.

Wiley, Bell Irvin. *The Plain People of the Confederacy.* Gloucester,
Massachusetts: Peter Smith Publishers, 1971.

Williams, Hermann Warner, Jr. *Mirror to the American Past, A Survey of
American Genre Painting: 1750-1900.* Greenwich, Connecticut:
New York Graphic Society, 1973.

Woodward, C. Vann, editor. *Mary Chesnut's Civil War.* New York: Yale
University Press, 1994.

Wright, R. Lewis. *Artists in Virginia Before 1900: An Annotated Checklist.*
Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1983.

Wright, Gavin. *The Political Economy of the Cotton South: Households,
Markets, and Wealth in the Nineteenth Century.* New York: Norton,
1978.

Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. "The Antebellum South as a Culture of Courage."
Southern Studies. 20 Fall 1981: 213-246.